



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

MS-53: Moses J. Gries Papers, 1850-1934 (bulk 1890-1930).

Series D: Sermons and Addresses, 1893-1917, undated.

Box	Folder	Item
4	8	21

“Is the Bible the Word of God?,” 1912 October 6.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the
American Jewish Archives website.

Rabbi Gries
At The Temple

Sunday morning,
October 6, 1912

Extracts from Rabbi Gries' address on

"Is the Bible the Word of God"

"Teach the Bible in the public schools" is the clamorous cry, and thereby save the American people, accused and pronounced guilty as a Godless nation of all sins and vices and crimes." If only the Bible were read and taught in the public schools, ~~in~~ a moral revolution would be achieved. It is urged as a panacea for all our moral weaknesses and shortcomings.

The American people are falsely accused, and are not guilty of the sins and vices and crimes charged against them.

To read the Bible without interpretation, expecting some kind of moral magic, is to make of the Bible a fetish. To read and to teach it with interpretation is to sow the seed of dissension and discord.

One would imagine, analyzing the argument of those who believe, that our schools would cease to be Godless and the American people would be made moral, if only the Bible were read in the Public Schools; that our jails and our reformatories and penitentiaries are full of men and women unfortunate enough never to have known the Commandments. If they had read the Bible, or if they had known the Ten Commandments, they would have been saved from sin and crime. To state this thought clearly is to make self-evident its absurdity.

4 Murderers and adulterers and thieves and perjurers know the Commandments, without a doubt. It is folly to believe they did not know it was wrong to kill and to steal, to lie.

The mere reading of the Bible, or of the Commandments, will accomplish nothing on behalf of moral discipline and the training of moral character. Our public schools, if properly organized, with competent teachers, have far better means at their command to teach the child reverence toward life, honesty toward truth; to

inculcate a spirit of loyalty and patriotism and sacrifice, and to implant a sense of fair play and fair dealing and a love of justice.

Keep the sectarian spirit and all sectarian teaching out of the public schools, which belong to all the people.

