Intro: I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Rabbi Dr. Heschel and The Emmanuel Temple for creating this opportunity to discuss an issue of such importance. Regret the fact of speakers & audience being exclusively predominantly white - through no fault of the organizers but it nonetheless reflects part of the situation of estrangement & polarisation between black & white which we have reached in our country. For I believe that our country finds itself in a situation of serious national crisis and I think there will be general agreement to-night on this statement. The variance or disagreement will arise when we try to ascertain what the nature & extent of this crisis is.

The central theme of to-night's meeting: "The Road to Righteousness in our Land" implies the acknowledgement that our society is an unjust one, a land lacking in true righteousness. For those of us who are adherent to either the Jewish Judaism or the Christian faith this raises an important question: to what degree are we concerned about the issue of justice in our land? And to what degree do we believe that the issue of justice is of crucial importance in determining the future of our land?
I believe there are 5 important principles subscribed to by every religion and every faith claiming to have a concern for justice and wishing to promote the cause of justice (as reflected in the teachings of OT & NT):

1. God as a God of love and justice always takes the side of all those who are oppressed, who are deprived of justice, who become the victims of the suffering under acts or systems of injustice. This does not imply that God does not love or has a concern for the oppressor but his love is one for the person ever against his actions, his policies, his practices of injustice.

2. Basic to God's sense of justice is his insistence that every human being, especially those who believe themselves to be the victims of oppression or injustice, should be granted the free and unhemmed opportunity to express in a responsible way, his view of the injustice inflicted upon him; his people, his community, have a right just society should not only cure to such blights but protect and cherish them and help people to express their convictions without fear of reprisal or retribution.

3. God as a God of love and justice wishes us, his followers, to stand in solidarity with all individuals and communities who suffer under oppression or injustice to give them voice, courage to proof of such solidarity.
Justice requires that we do everything with our power to remove every form of injustice and dismantle every system sustaining or entrenching structural forms of injustice.

5. God's justice requires that we continually look for, seek, and put into practice efforts to affect the reconciliation between opposing or conflicting groups or individuals standing in fear or enmity towards one another. For God is the God of love's peace, but He is also the God of justice and therefore constantly that no reconciliation is even possible as long as injustice has not been honestly faced and removed.

Turning now to South Africa, I would wish to 3 convictions which I hold which I regard to be fundamental prerequisites if we wish to build a society of peace with justice:

1. In the sphere of politics: There can never be peace in the justice in our land as long as a substantial section of the total community of S.A. regards itself to be in conflict with a political system which it regards as basically unjust. Could I provide you with just 3 examples to prove my point (there are many more):

   1. The quarter majority of the people of our land does not believe that the new constitution or
the present process of reform could provide the
solution to this or the basis for peace with justice in
our land.

1.2 - The greater majority of the people of our land does
not believe that any meaningful dialogue between
white and black is possible as long as the people they
regard as their true leaders remain imprisoned or
in exile.

1.3 - Regarding the treason trial starting in March an
March 29th, a trial which could last between one to
3 years — some or all of the 16 NDF leaders found
guilty of treason it will make
no difference to the feelings of millions of people
in the country who regard these 16 as authentic
heroes, as fighters for justice — as heroes in the struggle
for liberation.

2. In the sphere of econ. rights: There can never be
peace with justice in our land as long as a substantial
sector of the total working community of S. Africa regards
itself to be exploited by an economic system which
it believes to be fundamentally unjust. If you
wish to have the proof of this statement just look
at the large number of strikes in 1984 and the
ongoing number of strikes in 1985 despite the
econ. recession, despite retrenchments & dismissals.
3. In the sphere of educational rights: There can never be peace with justice as long as a substantial sector of the student community regards itself to be at war with an educational system which it regards as totally or basically unjust. Do I need to prove my point? During 1954 he had almost 200,000 students (schools 1 94%) boycotting schools of new faculties at some stage and currently 24 schools with over 40,000 scholars or students are closed.

Initial Concrete Steps Taken on the Road Towards Righteousness in Our Land:

1. We have to start with an honest and open confession on the part of all religious bodies, including the churches, that by our silence, our compromise or our fear of taking a stand through action, we have betrayed not only our faith but also our country.

2. We have to act as a primary goal of justice the urgent and desperate need for channels of honest communication between white and black — for whites to discover the deepest feelings of anger and bitterness in the hearts of blacks and for blacks to discover the terrible fears and myths prevailing in the hearts of whites. One of the major stumbling blocks — our biased or misinformed media (SABC, SATV, white-controlled print (both government + anti-government))
3. The road to justice can only be found if the people controlling the resources of the country begin to address the fundamental issues under which the majority of the people suffer.

4. The road to justice is only to be found if the people of the greater majority of the people of our land are restored. Do we realise how many members of our black community have lost so much faith in our legal system that they no longer regard it as a system of justice in crucial areas of their lives: farm laws, land, influx control, security legislation? How does one build a just society if some of the crucial pillars of justice are absent or cracked and crumbling.

5. The road to justice can only be found if there is a deep conviction in the hearts of all those who are prepared to walk that road that people of widely differing cultures, customs, races and beliefs can build a common society in the land they have a claim (based on justice).