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Box  
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Folder  
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Speeches, 1953-1987, undated.

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

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More jobs coming -

Congregations -

Callbacks?

Chairman of  
several committees

Baton Rouge - One person; will  
go for an interview -

Lutheran more active.

Maria -

maybe

Talk to  
Arnold -  
Tuesday  
PM

Greenwich  
E-mail Arnold

Tuesdays

More will  
happen  
afterwards

B Shuman (412-421-5084)

19-1  
11  
1959

## Topics

- ① Arabs
- ② State of Israel
- ③ Israeli's dilemma - War vs. Peace
- ④ Jewish Law
- ⑤ God
- ⑥ Commandments
- ⑦ Death
- ⑧ War
- ⑨ Job Bible
- ⑩ Community
- ⑪ Lessons for life
- ⑫ Children

15-Religion-

King's College  
University of

University  
University  
University

*Please return*

## Self Respect (Vajishlach)

The narrative portions of the Bible - the Story of Adam and Eve, of Noah, the Patriarchs, of Kings and Prophets - have always been a favorite of mine, indeed they have been the favorite of a great many people, old and young, Jew and non-jew in every land and in every age. Much of this popularity can undoubtedly be traced to the fact that the Biblical characters are very much alive and real. Unlike the protagonists of other folklores, whose princes and princesses are portrayed as paragons of virtue, pure and unblemished - and hence they appear ethereal and unreal - the heroes of the Bible are drawn vividly, as they were, as men are, with their maalousand chesrounous, their virtues and their faults, with light as well as shadow.

Take the story of Jacob, third of the Patriarchs and the man who gave his surname Israel to our people. He is one of our great heroes, to be sure - he alone of all men wrestled with the Angel and survived - yet the Biblical narrator does not spare him <sup>his sin</sup> ~~and~~ bluntly reveals a defective strain in his character. In our Parasha, Parshas Vajishlach we are told of Jacob's return to Canaan. He has been in exile for 20 years, yet still remebers the hatred of his brother. He wants to establish an amicable relationship, and so the moment he crosses the borders of ~~th~~ewhat was to be the Holy Land he sends messengers to Esau, and this is what he instructs them to say:



"Thus shall ye say to my master Esau"  
"Thus sayeth Thy servant Jacob"

Note that the technique which Jacob employs to gain his brothers favour was that of servility and submission and throughout the whole course of the narrative, until he finally succeeds in shaking him loose, Jacob maintains this servile standard of mutual relationship. Esau is always the odoun, the master, and Jacob, the eved, the servant and slave. Nor was this just a figure of <sup>polite</sup> speech, a manner of speaking, for listen to the remainder of Jacob's initial message.

"O Esau, I have oxen and asses and flocks and men servants and maid servants, and I have sent to tell my Lord, that I may find favour in his eyes."

Jacob appeals to his brother, not on the basis of brotherhood, not on the basis of the fact that they had a common father and mother, but on the grounds of self interest. He says: I have become wealthy, I can be useful to you, it is to your interest to be kind to me.

Now, while humility is a virtue , servility is not. And it was a servility which Jacob displayed at that moment - a cringing servility, unworthy of Jacob, unworthy of the dignity of any man.

More tragic of course, is the fact that in our lives and in our times in viewing our relationship as Jews to non Jews we have so frequently and of our own volition placed ourselves in the position of slaves to masters. We cry to the non-Jew - and all you have to do is to read the apolgetics of the ADL to see the truth of this assertion - we cry to the non-Jew: We Jews have made a contribution totthis country, to the world. We have men of great wealth, of wosdom and vision. Accept us if you please, we can be of benefit to you. And does this policy of servility bear fruit. Of course it doesn't unless it be a fruit of poison.

the non Jew merely laughs, and together with Esau says to the Jacobs of our day: I don't want you, I don't want your wealth your wisdom and your vision. I want your room. .... By cringing, by catering, by cow-towing, we Jews gain nothing. On the contrary, we lose, ~~lose~~ the respect of the Non-Jew and we lose the respect of the Jew our own respect our self respect.

And here, I think, we come upon the central problem facing Jews today - the question of their morale, their self respect. In the individual, self esteem is a desperate need. This the psychiatrist affirm ~~confirm~~ and our own experience confirms. As long as a man can keep his self respect he can endure everything, no matter how bad. Let him lose that, and he will be incapable of joy, incapable of creativity, perhaps even incapable of life itself. And what is true for an individual is true for a people and we can well paraphrase that brilliant observation of Goethe: <sup>the greatest that</sup> ~~nothing more~~ evil can befall a people is that it should come to think ill of itself.

The ultimate cause of this soul's disease, the loss of self-respect is not far to seek. Its root is the persistent persecution of the Jew; and of the many remedies suggested only one can stand the test of trial - Judaism.

It is interesting to note in this connection that as far as the psyche of the Jew is concerned, <sup>that</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>type of</sup> relatively peaceful prejudice found everywhere, even in America, is infinitely more dangerous than the wild anti-semitism of a Hitler era. The latter is like a blow over the head, it destroys life, but at least we are aware of the pain and psychologically we resist and pull away. Social antisemitism on the other hand is more like a pin-prick. A bit painful, irritating at most, the danger exists that we grow accustomed to it and come to disregard it entirely. And before we know it that pin-prick, the point of friction, grows into an open festering sore.

The Jew is exposed to many such pin-pricks, to almost constant irritation. In the first instance, he can never, even under the most favorable circumstances regard himself as entirely wanted by the society of which he is a part; no matter what the theoretical legal rights, socially he is never the equal; no matter how friendly the face that greets him, he is accepted only with reservation. Nor can the Jew ever be overconfident about his position - at any time, the majority may undergo a change of heart concerning him; he never knows when that latent, quiet prejudice will erupt into violent antisemitism; it is almost like sitting under a volcano that boils and you can't quite lose your apprehensions. In addition to this, every Jew has at one time or another reason to conclude that he has been penalized for his Jewishness. If he seeks employment, if he is a student going to medical school, a instructor who want to be professor, a mother who wants to get her child onto finishing school, or a suburbanite who wants to join a golf club, always he knows that his identity places a special obstacle in his way. And then of course, there are the pin-pricks of antisemitic propaganda, <sup>WHICH, THOUGH ADDRESSED TO THE NON-JEW ARE HEARD BY THE JEW</sup> in book and newspaper, in lecture and conversation, he overhears, it is dinned into his hear that he is unclean physically and degraded morally.

Now what happens to the Jew thus pricked, thus rubbed. Sooner or latter, perhaps consciously, perhaps not, he begins to reason to himself that there must be something to all this ado, that where there is smoke, there must be fire. He won't belief the antisemite's charges about himself or about his immediate friends, his circle. But he believes it about other Jews and he begins to scrutinize them for some of the vices listed by the antisemite. And as would be the case with <sup>ANY</sup> ~~any~~ other group of human beings, he finds Jews who exhibits such faults. He holds himself aloof, from them blames them for his troubles and begins to hate them. AND SO BY A STANGE TURN, ANTI\*SEMITISM

VICTIMIZES THE JEW IN A FASHION THE ANTISEMITES NEVER CONCEIVED  
IT CONVERTS HIM TO ITS CAUSE THE JEW BECOMES THE ANTISEMITE. \* See note  
reverse side

Let no one underestimate the existence of this process and its  
dire consequence. In some Jews it exists less pronounced than in  
others. But all of us exhibit some symptoms of this malady. Let us  
be honest with ourselves, how often have heard others say, how often  
have you yourself said or thought: 'The Jews are so aggressive;  
the Jews - meaning the other Jews of course, are so cliquish, so  
clannish. Too many Jews are radical. We Jews are our worst enemies.  
and the like.' Lman Hashem, for heaven's sake, when are we going to learn  
that by thinking and talking like this we play into the hands of the  
very people who seek our destruction. When are we going to learn, that  
by thinking and talking like this we speed our own destruction <sup>beginning w</sup> through  
the disintegration of our minds, of self respect, and ending with  
the annihilation of our bodies, <sup>Atkafon</sup> the Jewish people.

Well, how can we prevent this soul's disease? and its dire  
consequences. Assimilation is certainly no answer - by this method  
we achieve through a short cut just what we are trying to avoid, the  
loss of our people and the loss of self-respect. Re-enforcing our  
individual self-esteem through achievement in fields unrelated to  
Judaism also offers no solution. Just as a person accused of  
lying cannot affirm is innocence not by proclaiming he is a great  
metaphysician but only by affirming his honesty, so a Jew obsessed  
with a sense of inferiority as a Jew, cannot hope to neutralize his  
difficulty by recounting to himself his attainments in other fields.  
It is as a Jew that he questions his worth, and it is as a Jew and  
Jew alone, that his conviction of his worth can be restored.

# The Mountaineer Hotel

WADE H. LOWRY, JR., MANAGER

Williamson, W. Va.

Not many years ago Prof. Hays was eminent founder  
of the psychology of people's acclaimed: Thank God that  
I am not a Christian - at least I am not exposed to  
~~indulging in~~ the most detestable of all vices - Anti-Slavery.  
Little did Prof. Hays know his people, they too are  
exposed & have become subject to this ~~to~~ malady.

It exists among us, there can be little doubt.  
Even if his soul's desire is less pronounced in other  
some than it is in others among us. On the one hand  
we have our ~~other~~ <sup>other</sup> ~~beings~~ <sup>beings</sup>.



Here then is the answer to our problem. The struggle of the Jew to maintain his self respect can only be waged on the level of Judaism. The more we know about Judaism, the more we learn to love the tradition and culture which made us; the more we become involved in and stimulated by Jewish life, the more we are imbued with the conviction of the worthiness of our faith of the meaningfulness of the whole Jewish enterprise, the greater will be our ability to withstand adverse psychic influence. Some months ago I told you that ~~the health of our bodies depends on Judaism~~ that we can gain the respect of the non-Jewish community through increased devotion to the faith of our fathers. The same holds true for our self respect. For the health of our souls as well as our bodies we need not less Judaism, but more and more of it.

We pray then this day for God's gift of knowledge. May we learn to know Judaism <sup>as JEWISHNESS</sup> as honorable and meaningful <sup>IN OUR LIVES</sup> realities so that we will be able to walk forward with head held high, bowing to no one, calling no one master and fortified with ~~out~~ a sense of our own dignity <sup>A SENSE OF OUR OWN</sup> ~~and our~~ own worth.

AMEN

JMK

Parshas Emor  
Shall we turn the other cheek?

The traditional Biblical portion, Parshas Emor, read today which commences with the 21 Chapter of the Book of Leviticus and continues to the 25th chapter contains a large variety of laws - legislation concerning the priesthood, the holidays, laws regulating the relation of a Jew to his fellow and to the stranger that dwells within his gate. There is also the law of retaliation, cited first in Exodus and repeated here:

If a man maim his neighbor; as he hath done, so shall it be done unto him, breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. as he has maimed a man, thus shall it be rendered unto him.

This verse is a favorite of the enemies of our ~~pe~~ faith and has ever been used to demonstrate the vengeful character of Judaism as opposed to the proclaimed mercy and love of Christianity. In the Book of Mathew we read:

Ye have heard that it hath been said: an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil, but whosoever should smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

The charge that this law of retaliation is characteristic of Judaism is, needless to say, unjust. For one, this law was never applied literally by Jews. Always, so far as we are aware of it, it was interpreted to legislate monetary restitution, the payment of damages for an injury afflicted - the value of a tooth for a tooth, the worth of an eye for an eye - an interpretation which underlies the laws of damages of all modern civilized nations. Moreover, and this is most important, it is not the sole standard regulating the relationship between man and man within Jewish ethic. There are laws of a different character in our Bible; and citing the law of retaliation as final proof of Judaism's depravity is employing the technique of

citing out of context so repugnantly familiar to modern Television viewers. It would be unfait of us, ~~xxxxxxx~~ if we were to take an isolated statement from the New Testament and call that the essence of Christinity. For instance, in the Book of Mathew Jesus is quoted as saying: "Think not that I have come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword. I have come to set a man against his father, and the daughter against her mother?" These words were uttered by Jesus. He brings not peace, but a sword and comes to set the children against the parents. Of course, this is not the essence of Jesus's teaching, nor is the law of retaliation the essence of the Jewish religion. There are laws of a different character in our Bible, laws which proclaim the principle of love, the love of God for man and of man for God, and the love of man for each other. Every page of our Scripture vibrates with this thought. of love: ~~xxxxxxx~~ Just listen and remember: Veohavto es donoi elohem Thou shalt love the Lord thy God: Veohavtem es hager...love ye the stranger: Veohavto lereacho comocho: thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Adono etc. The Lord God is gracious and compassionate, longsuffering and overflowing with lovingkindness...There is the real essence of Judaism, love, a limitless love, a love which knows no bounds, a love which aims ultimately at the complete and utter obliteration of the selfish ego.

This is not to obscure the fact that there is a real difference between the Jewish and the Christian attitude toward justice. When a wrong is done to you, turn the other cheek! This is the Christian ideal. Judaism, on the other hand, faces wrong with a demand for justice, tempered by love and devoid of all vindictiveness and vengeance.



The Christian ideal of turning the other cheek, attractive as it might seem on the surface, is not convincing, nor is it moral. For one, it is unlivable - not even the best Christians practice it. For another, it ~~increases~~ generally increases evil. The one who slaps one cheek, will slap the other, if it is turned to him; he may even be emboldened to slap the cheeks of other people and thus increase evil. Finally, if I am slapped without provocation, an injustice is committed. What is unjust is immoral, and what is immoral must ever be resisted, even if the object of injustice is myself.

Judaism's ideal is more reasonable and more moral. Basically, it is a demand for justice. The value of an eye for an eye, the value of a tooth for a tooth. This is not to be confused with the instinctive reaction of the savage or the beast who exacts and on the spot two teeth for one and two eyes for one, who returns hurt for hurt and throws in something extra for good measure. To get even, to take revenge is dangerous, for by adding that something extra, by exacting two teeth for one, we throw the scales out of balance, and thus invite countermeasures which we must respond again and thus get caught in the vicious cycle of revenge. Tzedek, Tzedek tirdouf...justice, justice shalt thou pursue. but that justice must be free from hate: Lo Sikoum velou sitour: thou shalt not bear a grudge nor take vengeance. To which must be added the dictum of the rabbis: Al todin es chavercho Judge not your fellow man until you stand in his place: Try to understand the one who offends you, and understanding him, you will be capable of mercy.

Here is the same Jewish view of morality: Justice, tempered by mercy and devoid of hatred, of vindictiveness, of vengeance.

This is the theory. Now for some applications of it, and we will make this application not to distant peoples - we will not tell others how we think they ought to live. We will apply this theory to our own lives - to test whether we live up to our <sup>professed</sup> ideals.

This evening, and with this service, we mark Israel Independence Day, the sixth anniversary of the time when the Jews of Eretz Yisrael proclaimed their freedom and, in accordance with the mandate of the United Nations, set up the provisional government of Israel. It was a bright day in the history of our people; it is a bright and glorious time in the history of <sup>on every day</sup> through two thousand years of agony prayed with every fibre of his being; Leshono Habo Bi-gerusho layim...In the coming year in Jerusalem...and whose prayer has finally been answered.

Our glory is not without its sorrow...our triumph is not without its defeats and in the words of Heinrich Heine: there is a tooth-ache in our hearts, an ache, nay unbearable pain when we remember the cost of victory, when we see independence without peace, when we foresee the dread possibility of winning a Jewish State but losing Judaism. By the measuring rod of the one principle of Jewish ethics we discussed tonight, this dread possibility cannot be denied. For in our dealings with ~~xxxx~~ the Arabs the Jews, alas, have not always adhered to the principle of justice, tempered by mercy and devoid of vengeance. We can well beat our breasts - and I use the plural pronouns we and our advisedly; kol yisroel - Yea, we can well beat our breasts and say: Chotnu, we have sinned.

Of course, this self confession of guilt does not absolve others from sin. We can well imagine the anguish of our Israeli brethren who accepted the Kibya censure with grace and pain when the UN commission refused to censure the Arabs in the bus massacre of 11 Jews. The American officer in charge of the commission said: "There is no proof that the Arabs committed the attack." This is

This is tantamount to saying that Jewish soldiers killed Jewish men women and Jewish children just to make the Arabs look bad.

Yes, this self confession of sin does not give others the right to criticise us, be they gentlemen of the cloth or members of the diplomatic corps. Where were these self-same gentlemen ten years ago when six million Jews were butchered. Where were they when the Jews of Europe were hanged poisoned and tortured to death, when they were choked, drowned and frozen to death, when they were burned alive and buried alive? Where were they when Jewish children were turned loose on an open field as living practice targets for the Wehrmacht.

They did not speak then. Let them remain silent now. *Before this becoming good it is always the piece + then one who stands idly by the blessed abstract of his neighbor who must answer*

We have travelled a long course, from the consideration of justice between man and man to the practical problems of Jews in the modern state of Israel. Much more can be said, of course, but an attempt, an inroad into thought has been made.

One thing is clear. We need not be ashamed of our people. And we need not be defensive about our faith. Judaism can well stand the test of other religions. It is not an untried religion. It has been tested for thirty centuries. It has sustained men in the worst of human crises. It has maintained their hope <sup>in face of</sup> ~~despite~~ adversity. <sup>have</sup> Despite centuries of persecution Jews retained their faith in mankind. They did not surrender, to bitterness, to cynicism, to dis-illusionment. They came forth from the ghettos and crematoria to plead for reform ever believing in the justice of God and in man's capacity for good, ever confident that the kingdom of God could be wrought on earth by men. All this speaks eloquently for the great capacity of Judaism to rouse the best in man, to bring out his inner strength, to walk with head erect <sup>through the world</sup> and ever to turn upwards for higher goals and nobler visions.

Amen.

Shehechiyonu

Once again, by the grace of God we have reached this holiest day of the Jewish year - the Yomeem nouroeem, the days of awe

Once again the shrill sharp sounds of the shofar shake us from our complacency with their demand for a cheshbon hanefesh, for a self reckoning of the soul

Once again we are confronted with life's towering challenge

where art thou man? Where are you in your world?

So many days and years of those allotted to you have passed

and how far have you gotten in your world

Are you all that you might have been, all that you could have been?

How quickly the <sup>year has</sup> ~~past~~ gone by.

It seems only yesterday that we were gathered here,

a full year before us then,

~~We were happy~~  
each of its months a meadow of hope

each day a lovely flower blossoming on that field.

We were happy and confident then, as we looked ahead

But the leaves fall and flowers fade. and the months glide silently by reckoning but little of our clocks and calendars with their petty markings of times and of seasons....

Our days are as a shadow that passeth ~~away~~..they are speedily gone and they fly away

Aye, the leaves fall and the flowers fade...

so many of our hopes we e frustrated...and many of our dreams <sup>shattered</sup> ~~broken~~ on the rock of reality.

This certainly was not a good year for the Jewish people,

nor for America,

nor for most of us, for that matter.

And yet the tradition enjoins us to <sup>begin</sup> ~~begin~~ our ~~prayer~~ worship on this day with ~~prayer~~

~~sixthanksgiving~~.shehechionu with a prayer of thanksgiving

We thank Thee for having allowed us to reach this day.

It was first prayer which we recited in our homes after the Kiddush which distinguished this day



To begin with, let me add my good wishes to those of Rabbi Klein and the members of our congregation, to the recipients of the coveted assistant teachers certificate. We have all great reason for joy today, we are all enriched: the new teachers in the inner satisfaction which comes from the ability and opportunity to impart knowledge and to mold minds; and we of this Temple <sup>who</sup> are filled with a sense of pride and with the assurance which comes from the knowledge that there is an increase in the ranks of those who are eager and able to work for the perpetuation of our faith and its institutions. All these rewards were not easily attained. They represent much time and great effort, but both were well spent.

The time of our student teachers was well spent. Their hours of labor in study and teaching represent a 'time of value' - which is the title of my sermon and its theme: a 'time of value' as against 'wasted time' with particular reference to prayer. It is a theme suggested by that portion of our Torah portion which tells of Isaac's first meeting with Rebecca. You are all familiar with the details, how Eliezer, Abraham's friend and servant travels to the land of Abraham's fathers in order to find a bride suitable for Isaac, and how, upon returning with Rebecca, the two chance upon Isaac "meditating in the field." The rabbis of the Talmud, commenting upon this verse, interpret the word 'meditate' to mean 'prayer' and they declare that Isaac must be credited with instituting the custom of regular afternoon worship, adding the admonition that no time is of greater value than time spent in prayer.

Many of us would fain to disagree with such an estimate of prayer's worth. Certainly many of us can think of a great many activities we deem of greater value than time spent in prayer and the most common answer to a rabbi who asks his congregants why they don't attend worship services with a greater measure of regularity is somewhat as follows: "I try to come, Rabbi, but I'm so busy with other things, and, to be perfectly frank, I don't get much out of prayer, by way of inspiration, or in answer to my prayers, for that matter." Which is all just another way of saying that we regard prayer pretty much a waste of time, time which, or so we think, can be spent ~~in a much~~ elsewhere in a much more profitable, or at least a much more enjoyable manner.

2

Is prayer a waste of time? A rabbi's answer to this question, contrary to what may be expected of him, is not an immediate and unqualified "no." It is rather a conditional reply - sometimes yes and sometimes no - and that happens to be the only answer that I can give with total honesty, for the more I study of prayer and of the people who pray, the more I am convinced that sometimes prayer is really a waste of time.

Prayer is a waste of time, for instance, if we expect from it miracles which will change the orderly operation of nature. Occasionally we read in the newspapers of farmers assembling to plead for a change in weather, and much as we sympathize with their plight, such prayer can hardly be effective. Our spiritual ancestors pointed to this truth in a legend related in the Talmud...story of father with two daughter...And in another passage they rule, that a man whose wife is pregnant ought not to pray that the child be a boy or a girl, according to his preference, because that's a matter which has already been determined from the very first moment of conception; therefore prayers can't possibly change it. Our ancestors ~~understood~~ understood beyond doubt that foremost among the things a man has no right to pray for are requests which run counter to the laws of nature. Prayer cannot bring rain or stop rain, it cannot exorcise disease germs, nor can it suspend the laws of gravity. Any one who expects prayer to do that, and many of us do, is indeed wasting his time.

Prayer is a waste of time, also, if we look upon it purely as petition, as a means of acquiring for ourselves those protections or possessions which we are unable or unwilling to obtain in any other way. Prayer is not meant to be a substitute for intelligence or for work, it is no cosmic order blank on which we do the asking and then sit back waiting for God to supply the answers.

In one of the most dramatic scenes in the Book of Exodus, it is recorded that when our fathers were caught with the unfordable Red Sea in front and the pursuing Egyptian armies behind, Moses left his people for some moments of prayer for divine help. The reply which he received from God is startling, for it was nothing less than a rebuke for having prayed: וְהוֹדוּ לַיהוָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ Wherefore criest thou unto me: אֲמַרְתָּ וְהוֹדוּ לַיהוָה Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward. It is as though God had said:

"I have everything prepared for your action. I have done the last thing that I can do. Now it is your move. You cannot obtain by prayer what comes only as a reward of work." Such a rebuke many of our prayers deserve, for they cross over into the realm where results must be achieved, not by asking, but by working and by thinking, and hence such prayers are also a waste of time.

If this be so, if prayers which would interrupt the laws of nature and prayers through which we seek only to acquire things for ourselves are a waste of time, what kind of prayer is valid and acceptable for the modern worshipper?

In the first place, prayer is not a waste of time if we recognize that its primary purpose is to stimulate a specific kind of conduct in the person praying. Prayer is valid only if it moves us to provide a part of the answer ourselves. The preachers of old, the Baalei Midrash, commenting upon the very passage quoted a moment ago, declared that the desperate plight of Moses and our fathers was answered only when they had actually walked into the Red Sea up to their very noses - which means obviously that they had to show courage and the willingness to take action themselves before they had the right to depend upon God.

Translating that into the specific terms of our lives, it means that our prayer of thanks giving is valid only if it moves us to share more generously with others the gifts for which we are in the process of giving thanks. Our prayer for peace is acceptable only if praying for peace impels us vigorously to think and work and act for peace in our relationships. Our prayer as Jews for understanding and respect toward us is valuable only if we make it the point of departure for greater understanding and deeper respect on our part toward others. ~~In short, prayer is judged principally by the specific action and conduct it motivates.~~

In short, prayer is judged principally by the specific action and conduct it motivates. If prayer meets this standard, if it leaves us with a realistic appreciation of the respect in which we have indeed improved ourselves, proud of the decent things we have succeeded in doing over a period of ~~years~~ a day or a week, but deeply dissatisfied and disturbed with the cheap and shabby things we have <sup>done</sup> and strongly determined not to repeat them, then, far from being a waste of time, prayer becomes the most fruitful and valuable use of time that it is possible to know.

7  
Prayer for other people and for the totality of mankind is not a waste of time. <sup>either</sup>  
Prayers which move from the singular to the plural pronoun, from "I want" or "give me" <sup>to</sup>  
to grant us - such prayers represent time spent in a valuable manner.

So many of our prayers are not that. It is related of the painter Raphael that he used to wear a candle in a pasteboard wax cap, so that, while he was painting, his shadow would not fall upon his work. So many of our prayers are spoiled by our own shadow, by the predominance of the "I".

Why is prayer for others so valuable? In the first instance, of course, by praying for others we may be impelled to do for them, which is a significant function of prayer as has already been stated. But even more important, by praying for them our concept of existence shifts from an egocentric view to a more total <sup>than also more wholesome</sup> view of existence. <sup>perspective</sup>

And we need such a perspective. Our day by day existence allows us only a fragmentary view of life, ~~and the fragment we see is only the I, Standxxxxxxxpitting and~~  
consequently our needs and our problems assume overwhelming proportions. Stand close to a painting and what do you see? Only a confusion of daubs and paints. Do you wish to see the design and the pattern, stand back from the painting and behold a miracle. For as you withdraw, the strokes begin to fit together, the individual daubs take on relationship to one another, take on meaning collectively. All unite to form a pattern and design.

So  
In this business of living, we often lose the pattern because we stand too close. ~~We see only a fragment of life.~~ <sup>But</sup> By changing our prayer from the <sup>"I"</sup> to the "us", we gain a larger perspective. When we pray for others we learn to understand them, and as we do, we <sup>feel</sup> ~~understand~~ ourselves much <sup>more fully</sup> ~~better~~. When we feel the pain of others, our own pain seems less severe; when we sense the need of others, our own needs appear less demanding; when we behold the fears of others, our own fears loom less large. Prayer which can do this is surely no waste of time, nay, upon the contrary it represents a time of value.

If you will permit me to add one intensely personal note, I learned the function of prayer in this respect by lying at the bottom of my fox hole in Italy, hugging the ground until I almost <sup>was</sup> ~~buried~~ myself into it during a German Artillery barrage. I prayed



5

then and sometimes have wondered since if I could have survived without<sup>t</sup> such prayer. Not because I expected a miracle, nor because I considered my own life the most important thing in the universe. But because, having commenced, like any other human being by praying for my~~self~~ own neck, I then found it possible to pray/ for many other things of greater importance. For my loved ones at home - that they might find the strength to carry on, no matter what happened to me. For my own ability, despite the most miserable of fears, to behave in a way which would make it easier and not more difficult for those who depended upon me, to behave in such a manner that they could control their own fears. For insight, through my own anxieties and worried, for the rest of my life, better to be able to understand the anxieties and fears of others. And finally, an most important, for the ultimate survival of those ideas and deceptions for which we were fighting and whose survival was so much more important than my own life. Was that prayer a waste of time. Believe me, it wasn't. It kept me alive in a greater, more real sense than if it had turned aside a bullet headed in my direction.

When we ask therefore: is prayer a waste of time? I can only answer: it depends. It depends on the kind of person we are, on the sort of life we lead, and on our understanding of what prayer essentially means. If prayer is a challenge to more ethical behavior, and an opening of wider and deeper vision which encompasses others even more than than ourselves, then certainly it is not a waste of at all, but rather a time of great value.

Amen.

RESPONSE

Stars and Stones  
Vajishlach - Installation as Associate

①

This is a moment of great meaning in my life, as I stand before you, in the presence of my parents and my masters, the recipient of your honor and your affection. Many moods fill my inmost being at this hour - feelings of joy and of gratitude, ~~sense~~ <sup>surge</sup> of exaltation and sacred awe. The words of Jacob in our Torah portion strike a responsive chord within me: "Kotonti Mikol Hachassodim - I am unworthy of all these mercies, unworthy of this goodness."

We are told that when Jacob returned to the land of his fathers he met two angels of God along the way, and beholding them he exclaimed: "Machane Elohim Zeh - This is ~~God's~~ <sup>the</sup> Camp of God."

When I came to this community two years ago, I too met messengers of God along the way, and humble servants of his people.

I met here men and women eager "to do and to obey," determined to plant and nurture the seeds of Israel's survival. I found here a community whose leaders were capable of rising to lofty heights of sacrifice and generosity when a real need confronted them.

I met here also a spiritual leader whose noble purpose and high achievement ~~can~~ <sup>can</sup> well serve as the ideal toward which a younger colleague should aspire. Rabbi Klein has meant much to me; he has done much for me. He is always willing to overlook my failings, always eager to give me every opportunity for full development. Ours ~~has~~ <sup>is</sup> truly a relationship of uncommon spiritual harmony.

And having met such messengers of God along the way, I can well repeat the words of Jacob: "Machaneh Elohim Zeh - This is the Camp of God." Surely, this is a community blessed of the Lord.

I pray that God ~~may~~ help me in the great task to which I have dedicated my life. May he show us all His ways and grant us understanding so that together we may form an ever stronger band, united to do His will with a perfect heart.

2

On this, most sacred moment in ~~his~~ <sup>man's</sup> life, the preacher feels that only the highest thought, a central truth of Judaism, should be proclaimed and expounded to the worshipping assembly. Our Torah portion for today can well serve such purpose for it strikes a theme that is central to Judaism, the very core of our religion - man's striving for the realization of his ideals. In the remarkable biblical legend of Jacob's wrestling we can discover the key to our name, our character and our destiny.

The details of the story are familiar to all of <sup>us</sup>, how Jacob, afraid of the morrow and his meeting with Esau, wandered alone at night, when suddenly, out of the darkness, a mysterious being emerged and wrestled with him till dawn. Jacob was wounded in the conflict, nevertheless he persevered. Just before morning his adversary implored to be released: "Let me go for the day breaketh," but Jacob held fast saying: "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me." "What is thy name," asked the stranger; he replied, "Jacob." And the stranger said, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob but Israel for Thou hast striven with men and with God and thou hast prevailed." Jacob was afraid no longer. When dawn broke he gathered some of the stones obstructing his path and built an altar unto God by which he faced the future with courage and with resolution.

This legend epitomizes our entire experience as a people; indeed, it epitomizes the experience of every man. It visualizes man's destiny as a constant and persistent struggle for the realization of his ideals to which he ascribes the name of God.

Man has ideals, he builds high, the spirit within him seeks the heights. He builds the heights above the hovel, the tower above the city, the castle above the mount: and when he has reached there, he goes higher and builds - in the air; reaching for the stars, and higher than any structure he erects is man's thought which, reaching out of his mind, aims for the very stars of heaven if not beyond.

Man does have ideals. He reaches for the stars. There is only one problem. He builds with stones and no building of stones can reach the heavens. Once a people tried <sup>(in fact such a thing)</sup> and their lives and hopes were crushed beneath the ruins of Babel's tower. All too often the very stones with which we strive to build are obstacles along the way arresting our upward quest. The ideal may be on the heights, but the building, alas, is in the valley.

Life offers a constant and non-too comforting contrast between what is and what ought to be, between our ideals and our achievement. Test it <sup>out</sup> ~~ought~~ in any realm and see. For millenia even unto <sup>this</sup> ~~our~~ day, the world has cried out: "We want peace, we have enough of war," and of course we have - ~~has~~ an ideal. But the brutal fact of history is our persistent failure to achieve peace, and we see about us a world which apparently has learned nothing, which is still filled with bitter rivalries and inveterate hatreds, a world which in a time of so called peace is spending more money on armaments and has more men under arms than any other generation in a time of war. Test it <sup>out</sup> ~~in~~ in the realm of our personal ideals and see. We know well what we ought to be; we know what we wanted ~~to~~ to be. But we know also what we are and thus <sup>we</sup> ~~find~~ our personal ideals crushed under the rocks of ruthless fact.

This then is the question before us: What shall we do about our persistent failure to achieve the ideal. It is a question which is of pressing importance especially <sup>for</sup> religious people. We are the ones who proclaim the ideal - we are the ones who preach peace, and yet we <sup>also</sup> ~~are~~ are a part of this war stricken world and must ask ourselves whether or not we are just selling dreams and lies and opiate for the people. <sup>we must ask w/ or not we are</sup> ~~Are we fooling ourselves~~ when year after year we come before the throne of God, confess our failings resolving to do better, even while knowing full well that when next we enter the sanctuary we will <sup>be</sup> ~~be~~ beating our breasts for the very same sins. What shall we do about this disparity between ideal and achievement?

~~There are some who would suggest that if the ideal is beyond our reach,~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~of the real~~



(4)

There are some among us who would suggest that if the ideal is beyond the reach of the real, it ought to be adjusted downward to conform to our conduct. If the goal is too high, the realists say, place it lower and you will reach it. The trouble is, of course, that we lower our sights without <sup>this</sup> suggestion. We are past masters <sup>at</sup> the art of rationalization. Consciously or subconsciously we make compromise after compromise with our ideals - and then don't even live up to the adulterated ideal. Moreover, it is a dangerous <sup>process</sup> suggestion - for in effect it means that every time we fail, we lower our standards - and having done so once, we will do so again and again, until in the end we are left with no ideal at all.

"Well ~~then~~," says the cynic in our midst and within our hearts, "forget about <sup>it</sup> ~~all~~. Why bother with the ideal <sup>at all</sup>. For what is the 'ideal' when all is said and done...an empty dream...a vain illusion...a source of constant discontent... Give it up and have your peace at last."

But if we do so, we must ask the cynic, by what and for what shall we live? Can a rudderless ship reach the harbor? Can man make decisions which he must make in order to survive without the guiding standard of the ideal? Can we live without the ideal? Just picture, if you will, a life without human values, a life devoid of truth and goodness, of beauty and of love! Eliminate the ideal that is the spirit of music and the beautiful strains of the cello are reduced to horsehair scraping on catgut. Without the ideal man's most <sup>precious</sup> ~~things~~ things lose all their grandeur and become the butt of mockery.

Only with the ideal is life invested with meaning. Add love to a house and you have a home...add righteousness to the city and you have a community... add truth to a pile of <sup>red</sup> brick and mortar and you have a school...add religion to the humblest edifice and you have a sanctuary. <sup>Hold fast to the unchanging bond of friendship for speed toward the future</sup> Take all these things together exalt them above their present imperfections, add to them the Brotherhood of Man <sup>and</sup> the Fatherhood of God, and you have the Temple of the Future, man's millenium, the ultimate pattern of his ideal vision.

No, we cannot surrender our ideals. We cannot compromise them. We do not seem able to achieve them. What then remains, what then shall we do?

The answer of <sup>RELIGION</sup> ~~Judaism~~ to this pressing question is unmistakable. Its mandate is epitomized by the story of Jacob's wrestling. Its clarion call is a demand for unrelenting effort. It bids us climb, even though we fal. It asks us place stone upon stone no matter how often the wall tumbles. It enjoins us to stand by our ideals, full and uncompromised, and pledged to attain them, resolutely and hopefully even though we are defeated again and again.

To what end, this struggle, to what purpose? Is there any value to multiplying failure?

Of course, there is. In the first place ~~it is~~ our striving to climb the heights despite repeated failure will, at the very least, serve to keep us from slipping lower still. In the second place, it is better to fail in a good cause than to succeed in an evil one - our dignity and integrity will remain unimpaired.

And most important of all, a perseverent struggle may result in a victory for at least a part of our ideals. The growth of the individual and society toward excellence in human life is slow and arduous. It is a growth which has many stages and some are within our grasp. Many one-time ideals have been realized. Public education was once only an ideal. Religious liberty was only an ideal. Equality before the law was only an ideal. Every decent thing on earth emerged as an ideal, and yet it is and was achieved by men - men who persevered in face of defeat - men who refused to cede to failure - ~~men who layed hand on the very stones that blocked their path and built of them an altar unto God.~~

Judaism holds forth not only a mandate, but also a consolation. By uniting the past and the present and the future, it teaches us to know that the builder of today builds unawares into the temple of tomorrow. It is not

incumbent upon every man to finish the task. Men will build after ~~he~~<sup>we</sup>  
~~are~~ gone, even as men built before ~~we~~ came to earth. Let each man lay his  
little brick in the wall - others will follow and all things will  
be accomplished in God's own time, for He is the ~~Master~~<sup>Positive Div</sup> Builder.

Here then is the message of our day epitomized by the legend of Jacob's  
struggle. It is a plea for perseverance despite disenchantment, for  
a spiritual determination which will not recognize defeat, for men and  
women who will eternally proclaim: Never mind ridicule, never ~~mind~~<sup>from</sup> defeat -  
give me the heart, O God, to fight - and ~~fail~~<sup>fail</sup>, - and fight anew!

May this message sink into our hearts and cause us to mend our ways.  
May it enable us, ~~we~~<sup>we stumble</sup> though (stumbling) in the darkness of the night, to lift  
our eyes on high and search the stars. May it strengthen the hands of a  
rabbi who may fail in many ways, but whose heart is pure, pure in ~~his~~<sup>his hope</sup>  
~~to~~ to help others, help them take hold of the stones of life's hardship  
and build of them an altar unto God.

Amen.

IIa.

Ties in Peril (Vancouver)

"Mah nouro hamokom hazeh...eyn zeh ki im beys elohim...vezeh shaar hashomayim."

These words of the Biblical poet strike a responsive chord within us, as we gather in solemn assembly - men and women from many, ~~distant~~ communities, but of one faith, bound together by a mutual, sacred cause. "How full of awe is this place, Surely, this is none other than the House of God, and this, the gateway to heaven."

We are assembled in the courtyards of the Almighty, heeding a mandate as exalting and as enduring as the ~~ever~~lasting hills.

It is a mnadate from on high: hikon likras elohecho yisroel...prepare to meet Thy God, O Israel!

It is a mandate from out of the past, a voice from yesteryear... the voice of seer and sage...the voice of hero and of martyr...

Who ~~among~~ us today does not sense this swell and surge of the past, this throb and thrust of Israel's ancient history.

Our prayers are the prayers of the past;

our songs, the songs our fathers sang a thousand years ago.

We stand here, also, in answer to a summons from within:

our souls seek solace and sustenance, we hunger for inner harmony, we long for inner peace...

weary of seeking without finding, weary of journeying without arriving,

we turn from our daily toil to the rest and quiet of the House of God...

here the noise of the market place is hushed...here the clamor of commerce

is silenced, and in the quiet of worshipful devotion we can hear and heed

the divine command: Be still, and know that I am God.



But we are here not just as individuals,

as single Jews seeking the solace of faith...

we are here as delegates of congregations <sup>as members of a union together</sup> seeking the renewal of our communal lives

We are here to <sup>find</sup> ~~rediscover~~ those <sup>re</sup> ~~resources~~ of the spirit which can bring new force, new strength to ties which are in peril those ties which bind us as a community of faith.

These ties are not too difficult to <sup>locate</sup> ~~designate~~ *dispute*

Two main strands go into their making

and our program committee has denoted them by making them the two motifs which interplay to form the theme of this convention study and worship

the quest for the knowledge of God leading to his adoration.

Tomorrow's morning service and afternoon program will be devoted to the theme of prayer

I have been asked to speak of study as the sine qua non of Jewish survival.

It is a message which bears but should not really require the emphasis of repetition

for everyone, however slight his knowledge of Judaism,

knows that learning is a leitmotif of our faith,

that Torah is the <sup>overarching all-embracing</sup> ~~pre-eminent~~ symbol of the Jewish religion...

A Jew needs to study

a man must learn continuously if he is to fulfill the purpose inherent in life.

This is Judaism's conviction

This is the conviction which made the most representative portrayal of Jewish life

the picture of the young man in the <sup>Beth Hamidrasha</sup> ~~cheder~~, pouring over the pages of his talmud folio

This is the conviction which made the Jewish people a people whose

highest office is learning, not inheritance, whose most treasured possession

is wisdom and not material good.

Barsel b'varsel vochad - Iron sharpeneth iron

A knife can best be honed against the edge of another knife

The sentiments of mishle are re-echoed in the words of a modern sage:

"He who teaches as books enable only babbles...

Not any profane man, not any sensual, not any liar, not any slave can teach

But only he can give who has'

He only can create who is

Courage, wisdom piety love - they can teach:

"He who studies in order to teach,

will be afforded the opportunity to study and to teach"

thus taught Rabbi Yishmoel, and then he added:

"He who studies in order to do, will be afforded the opportunity to study and to teach, to observe and to do."

Here surely is the foremost reasons why the mandate to study is incumbent upon us:

because study is the antecedent of action

thought quickens into deed

because knowledge and morality are bound in indissoluble union.

We have here -

~~This is~~ another distinctive aspect of Judaism's concept of learning:

its reluctance to separate learning and ethical behavior

its insistence that ~~knowledge in and of itself does not insure the security of~~

ITS AFFIRMATION THAT ~~EVERY TIME~~ ~~IGNORANT~~ ~~MAN~~ ~~CANNOT~~ ~~BE~~ ~~PRO-~~  
~~men or of nations, that neither is fulfilled alone - that the ignorant~~  
~~man cannot be pious, but that in the same manner, the learned man who~~  
~~that once divorced from morality, learning courts no true blessing but the curse.~~

EVEN AS ~~THE~~ ~~LEARNING~~ ~~WHICH~~ ~~IS~~ ~~DIVORCED~~ ~~FROM~~ ~~MORALITY~~ ~~IS~~ ~~NOT~~ ~~THE~~ ~~BLESSING~~ ~~BUT~~ ~~THE~~ ~~CURSE~~  
The Roman emperor Nero well serves as the exemplar of this truth.

That he could play the violin was an admirable trait

it marked him better learned, more cultured, if you will, than others of his age

But when he blithely fiddled while Rome burned

he became the symbol of ~~man's~~ brutality ~~to man...~~

Nazi Germany is Neros modern counterpart

There certainly was no lack of learning in that country

Her leaders were always in the vanguard of progress

Her universities were mecca for seekers after truth

her poets were world figures and the symphonies of her composers are still played wherever orchestras assemble

Yet all of this knowledge and all of these talents found the apex of their unfoldment in what

in gas chambers, cunningly, skillfully devised to burn and to bury six million men women and little children as expeditiously ~~is~~ possible

Here is the most disheartening and at the same time the most significant lesson of recent German history

overnight the guardians of the Temple of truth became Hitler's professors

they cut the ~~nexus~~ between knowledge and morality

and when they did they felt free to pervert the truth and all their learning without the fear of heaven became a terrible thing.

The relevance of this lesson for our time does not require lengthy elaboration.

We live in crisis precisely because <sup>Spittle knowledge is hard to place in the</sup> ~~we place faith in knowledge alone.~~ <sup>former alone</sup>

<sup>But</sup> The crucial problem of our age is not <sup>a problem of knowledge</sup> ~~material is not rooted in this realm~~

<sup>How</sup> ~~ours~~ is not a material crisis, it is a spiritual crisis

it is a crisis of ideas and beliefs

were it rooted in the realm of the material alone

why then the vastness of human knowledge

<sup>man's</sup> ~~his~~ advanced technological skill

our enormous productive capacity and the many new sources of power available to us would long ago have contributed toward a solution of our problem.

<sup>They are not solving</sup> that problem...they are deepening it...heaping confusion upon confusion...leading us to the very brink of set back and of disaster.

The besetting fear of our age is not that of Malthus that sufficient food  
may not be available for man  
rather it is the fear that while food and water and the desireable things of life  
are abundant and near at hand  
the human race, like Tantalus, will, because of some perversity of fate,  
never be permitted to enjoy them  
the brilliant external achievements of our age serve only to make  
more phosphorescent the appalling stages of our inner decay.  
AND STILL WE PERSIST IN LOOKING TO KNOWLEDGE ONLY FOR  
Judaism's <sup>faith in knowledge</sup> ~~concept of study~~ is not of such a kind <sup>STUDY</sup>

It does not abide its disjunction from morality

In Judaism's view, study does not attain its completeness until it is  
crowned by the righteous deed.

Reshis chochmo yiras adonai...the beginning of wisdom is fear of the Lord.

To study...to teach...to do...

this is the three-fold mandate implicit in Judaism's concept <sup>of</sup> learning

the quest for knowledge transmitted to our children and transmuted into the

fibre of our daily lives. THIS IS WHAT WE MEAN BY LIMUD TORAH

~~THIS IS WHAT WE MEAN BY~~ <sup>Torah</sup>  
~~Limud Torah...the pursuit of learning~~  
~~THE TORAH OUR DEED OF LIFE~~  
~~MAGIC INGREDIENT OF JEWISH SURVIVAL.~~

STUDY OF THE TORAH  
LIMUD TORAH - THE PURSUIT  
THAT MAGIC INGREDIENT OF OUR  
SURVIVAL

Does anyone doubt that ~~this~~ <sup>it</sup> is ~~so~~..

study <sup>is</sup> the source of our strength, <sup>it always was</sup>, OUR STRENGTH, OUR HOPE  
~~our hope, our light, yea life itself in days of darkness.~~ <sup>OUR LIGHT</sup>

~~it gave our spirit~~ <sup>though our bodies were enchained and beaten</sup>  
~~down and crushed by tyrants rage.~~ <sup>BRINGING FREEDOM TO</sup> <sup>THOUGH THE BODY WAS ENCHAINED, & BEATEN DOWN</sup>

Yea,

even as Israel kept the ~~gave~~ Torah

so ~~did~~ <sup>has</sup> the Torah keep us.

SETTING THE  
SPIRIT ~~FREE~~  
OF OUR PEOPLE  
FREE

Chaim Nachman Bialik, that Titan of Hebrew Verse, captured the meaning of study to Judaism in what is <sup>surely</sup> ~~perhaps~~ his most magnificent creation. Perhaps you are familiar with his stirring lines:

Im vesh es nafshcho lodaas, he wrote, *If thou wouldst know*

If thou wouldst know the mystic fount from whence  
they wretched brethren, facing slaughter, drew  
in evil days the strength and fortitude ~~in~~  
to meet grim death with joy and bare the neck  
to every sharpened blade and lifted ax  
or pyres ascending leap into the flames and saintlike die  
with Echod on their lips

Is thou wouldst know the mystic fount from whence they wretched brethren drew  
divine condloence, patience, fealty  
and iron strength to bear relentless toil  
with shoulders stooped to bear a loathsome life  
and endlessly to suffer and endure

If thou wouldst know the bosom wither streamed  
they nations tears, its heart and soul and gall  
the mother merciful  
who saved her loved son's tears with tenderness  
and steadied lovingly his faltering steps

If thou wouldst know O humble brother mine  
Go to the house of study  
Thy heart will tell thee then that they feet tread the marge of our life's fount  
than thine eyes view the treasure of our soul

~~This is what study always - a source of strength for life~~  
~~This is what study always - a source of strength for life~~  
~~be for us -~~ *AND THIS IS WHAT IT CAN CONTINUE TO BE FOR US PROVIDE WE*

~~Limud Torah...~~ may be restore it to its central place in our personal and  
communal lives... *MAY WE RESTORE IT TO THIS*  
~~May our eyes see then will our eyes~~

Then will our temples be what they were meant to be  
houses of prayer and of study... where men <sup>†</sup> seek God in the companionship  
of kindred and aspiring souls

Then, ~~also~~, having heard and heeded the divine command  
<sup>and</sup>  
we will merit to witness the fulfillment of His promise

"Thou hast prevailed, O Israel, yea thou shalt prevail..."

Amen...



There is one aspect of this conviction which merits closer scrutiny  
It is Judaism's conception of study as a religious obligation  
its insistence that the pursuit of Torah is not so much a means  
for the achievement of the religious life but rather its fulfillment.

To put the matter somewhat differently,  
our faith does not equate Jewish study with religious education -  
at least not in the present meaning of the term  
for when we speak of religious education today  
we refer to a program of study which leads to the religious life  
which seeks to implant and to nurture a commitment to faith  
~~But~~ Judaism assumes the devotion to faith and urges study as its lofty  
expression

In its view religious education is not a preparation for religion  
but rather its solemn exercise.

In a word - "limud torah" is a mitzvah, a mandate, a religious commandment  
and because it is <sup>observed</sup> ~~it is~~ incumbent on young and old alike,  
nay, if anything as a mitzvah, it becomes the prior obligation of adults!  
The process of Jewish education may well begin in the religious school  
but it is intended to extend well beyond its prescribed program of study  
to last as long as life itself.

It is intriguing to note in this connection that from the perspective of J. history  
the communal <sup>ancestral</sup> education of adults antedates the establishment of schools for children.  
First the ~~synagogue~~ <sup>synagogue</sup> was born - during the Post Babylonian period -  
and synagogues were essentially institutions for the instruction of adults.  
Some centuries thereafter -  
during the Maccabean period and in reaction to Hellenistic challenge -  
the Mishnaic master, Shimon ben Shetach, organized the first <sup>Jewish</sup> schools per se,  
high schools for seventeen and eighteen year olds.

And only after the destruction of the second Temple were schools for children of elementary age established.

In other words, Jewish education began with the teaching of adults, gradually extending downward until, after six or seven hundred years, it finally reached the child.

The modern synagogue might be well advised to return to this historic pattern ~~which~~ gives priority to the education of adults

and not just out of a sense of loyalty to tradition but for sound pedagogic reasons as well...

for if the science of education has taught us one lesson then surely it is this: our children make their commitments primarily by means of identification with the ego ideal...

they look more than they listen...

~~they~~ they follow the man who is long before the man who only persuades with his lips.

The spoken and the written word ~~simply~~ do not suffice

to develop character and attitude...to implant and to nurture faith.

Those qualities of the soul which we seek to implant in our children cannot be contained in a course or conveyed by techniques however refined

they cannot be ~~ordered~~ into a curriculum and taught from a text

these essential qualities are an aspect of all subject matter not just one of its parts

and as a consequence they emerge not from a course from from an exemplar

they do not flow from a curriculum but only from a human soul.

Perhaps Rabbi Ishmael had this ~~to~~ in mind when he taught that

"he who studies in order to teach will be afforded the opportunity to study and to teach  
~~adults~~ ~~parents~~ who study rear children who study whilst ignorance breeds only itself.

Parents whose own lives do not reflect a respect for intellect and learning

cannot, in all justice, expect their children to become voide sefer,

knowledgeable and committed Jews..

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler  
Commencement Address  
University of South Carolina  
May 7, 1987

It is a privilege which I greatly appreciate to be here and to participate in the joyous ceremonies of this commencement hour, joyous because it is in the nature of a release, some of you may even think of this moment as a release from a kind of prison.

George Bernard Shaw called college even "more cruel than a prison" for, as he put it, "In a prison, at least, you are not forced to read books written by the wardens."

The passing years will mellow your judgment, as it did mine, once you begin to reap the abundant harvest planted in your minds and hearts within these hallowed halls.

In any event, I take great pride in the fact that by granting me an honorary degree, the President and Faculty of this school have made me your fellow alumnus.

In musing about what I was to say to you, it occurred to me that for all the fine words that attend our most significant life ceremonies, there is nearly always a hand gesture that marks the actual moment of transformation and passage.

At a wedding it is the exchange of rings.

At a funeral it is the first handful of dirt thrown upon the casket; mourning truly begins with that gesture of finality.

At birth it is the slap on the behind that brings forth the newborn's first, gasping cry.

And at a college graduation? Only when the sheepskin is handed to you, followed by a handshake -- only then will you all sigh and cheer and no longer secretly fear that some computer somewhere has made a mistake that will force you to repeat your English composition course.

Commencement has genuinely occurred when you walk the aisle back to your seat clutching that diploma in your hand.

My musings about hand gestures led me to remember an ancient rabbinic saying which sharpens a paradox of life that merits being brought to your awareness at this hour.

I speak of life's self-contradictory demand which enjoins us to cling to its many gifts even while it ordains their eventual relinquishment.

The rabbis of old put it this way: "A man comes into this world with his fist clenched, but when he dies, his hand is open."

We begin by grasping, ultimately we must renounce, and the art of living is to know when to hold fast and when to let go.

\* \* \*

Surely we ought to hold fast to life, for it is wondrous, full of a grandeur and a worth, full of a beauty that breaks through every pore of God's own earth.

We know that this is so, that life is passing wonderful, but all too often we recognize this truth only in our backward glance when we remember what was and then suddenly realize that it is no more.

We remember a beauty that faded, a love that waned. But we remember with far greater pain that we did not see that beauty when it flowered, that we failed to respond with love to love when it was tendered.

A recent experience re-taught me this truth. It happened less than a year ago, soon after I was hospitalized following a rather severe heart attack. I had been in the intensive care unit for long days and nights. It was not a pleasant place.

My own pains and fears aside, the noises of that hospital ward were not restful to the ear: the running feet of doctors and nurses, their whispering, the creaking of machines wheeled in for some emergency, and moans and groans and cries of pain, and on two occasions during those days the dances and the rattling of death, and then the weeping of the suddenly bereaved.

About a week after I arrived, I had to have some tests, but the required machines were located in a building at the opposite end of the hospital campus, and so I had to be wheeled across the courtyard in a gurney. And as we emerged from our unit -- the sunlight hit me. That's all there was to my experience. Just the light of the sun. And yet how beautiful it was -- how warming, how sparkling, how brilliant!

And then I looked about me to see whether anyone else relished the sun's golden glow, but men and women and children were hurrying to and fro, most of them with their eyes fixed on the ground seemingly heedless of all the glory about them.

And then I remembered how often I too had been indifferent to the grandeur of each day, too preoccupied with petty and sometimes even mean concerns to respond to the splendor of it all.

The insight gleaned from that experience is really as commonplace as was the experience itself: life's gifts are precious - but too often we are heedless of them.

Thornton Wilder makes this point in one of his magnificent creations, his immortal "Our Town."

In this play -- as many of you will recall -- a young woman who died in childbirth is allowed to return to earth for just one day. She chooses her sixteenth birthday as the day she would like to re-live. But as she comes upon the scene so familiar to her she finds that everyone is far too busy to relish the day's wonder.

And so she cries out: "Momma, Pappa, let's look at one another while yet we may." But nobody looks and nobody listens and all of the business of life goes on.

Saddened by it all, she begs to be taken back and these are her words of farewell. "Good-bye Momma, good-bye Pappa, good-bye Grovers Corners. Good-bye to clocks ticking, and hot coffee and newly ironed dresses...and lying down and getting up again. On earth you are far too wonderful for anyone to realize you."

She turns to the stage manager and asks: "Tell me, does anyone on earth ever realize life while he lives it...every, every minute?"

"No," replies he, "maybe the poets and the saints, maybe they do some."

And then she speaks her final words: "That's all human beings are, blind people..."

Is not this the malady that afflicts us? We are blind, blind to so much of the beauty which abounds in our world. We walk about in a cloud of ignorance. We trample on the feelings of those who love us. We spend and waste time as though we had a million years to live, always at the mercy of one self-centered passion after another.

How heedless we often are of our good until it is too late. Like birds whose beauty is concealed until their plumes are spread against the sky, our blessings brighten only as they take their flight.

Here then is the first pole of life's paradoxical demands on us: Life is precious, it is ineffably dear. Never be too busy for the wonder and the awe of it. Be reverent before each dawning day. Embrace each hour. Seize each golden minute. Cling to life with all your soul and might while yet ye may. Hold fast to life while yet ye may.

Hold fast to life...but not so fast that you cannot let go. This is the second side of life's coin, the opposite pole of its paradox: we must learn how to accept our losses, how to renounce, learn how to let go.

This is not as easy a lesson to learn and to internalize, especially when we are young, for when we are young we think that the world is ours to command, that whatever we desire with the full force of our passionate being can, nay will be ours.



Ah, but then life moves along to confront us with its grim realities and slowly but surely this second truth dawns upon us: Life not only offers us gifts. It also makes us suffer losses and we must learn to accept them.

In a sense, I suppose, this very moment in your lives involves a loss.

A contemporary humorist once described college as a place "that keeps you warm between high school and an early marriage."

Well, you must leave the warmth of this place, its security to go out into a colder world, and embark on a life of your own.

Nor will this be the first loss you suffered or will suffer. At every stage of our <sup>life</sup> we sustain losses -- and grow in the process. Why we even begin our independent lives only once we emerge from the womb and lose its protective shelter. Then we leave our mothers and fathers and our childhood homes. We enter a progression of schools and leave them. We get married and have children and then have to let them go, even as, in a sense, your parents are losing you today. We confront the death of our parents and our spouses. We must renounce our childhood dreams and accept the fact that life will not allow us to realize them. We must face the gradual or not so gradual waning of our own strength. And ultimately we must confront the inevitability of our own demise, losing ourselves as it were, all that we were or dreamed to be.

Life is never just a being. It is always a becoming, a relentless flowing on. We move through the various stages of life, as Shakespeare had it, each with its entrances and its exits, the infant becomes the boy, the boy the man, and there simply is no turning back.

When Rabbi Bunam, renowned Chassidic master, was lying on his death bed, his wife wept bitterly, whereupon he reproached her saying: "Don't you know that life is given to us merely that we might learn how to die?"

Life is the great teacher in the art of renunciation. To heed this truth is not only just and right. It is the very gate of wisdom.

Our parable of the open and closed hand confronts us with life's contrary, oxymoronic demands: First we were enjoined to cling to life, to appreciate its every gift. Then we are told: learn how to renounce these gifts, yea each and every one of them.

How can we do both, and at the very same time? More important, why should we do it? Why fashion things of beauty when beauty is evanescent? Why give our hearts in love when those we love will ultimately be torn from our grasp?

In order to resolve this paradox, we must gain a wider perspective, reaching beyond ourselves in time both past and future, viewing our lives as through windows that open on eternity. Once we do that we realize that though our lives are finite, the spirit born of flesh is infinite, that though our days will come to their end, our deeds on earth do weave

a pattern that is timeless. Our parents live on through us, and we will live on through our children. The institutions we build endure, and we will endure through them...

Shakespeare was wrong. The good is not interred with our lives. The beauty that we fashion cannot be dimmed by death. The love we give in life lives on long after we are gone, to bless the lives of others.

When Chanayo ben Teradyon, noblest of Jewish martyrs, was burned at the stake wrapped in a Scroll of the Law his pupils who witnessed his terrible agony cried out: "Our master, our teacher, what seest thou?" and he replied: "I see the parchment burning, but the letters of the Law, they soar on high."

Even so it is with us. Our flesh may perish, our hands will wither, but that which they create in beauty and goodness and truth, lives on for all time to come.

\* \* \*

If my baccalaureate address must have its message, then let it be this: Don't spend and waste your lives accumulating objects that will only turn to dust and ashes. Pursue not so much the material but rather the ideal, for ideals alone invest life with meaning and are of 'during worth.

Look about you and see: Add love to a house and you have a home. Add righteousness to a city and you have a community. Add truth to a pile of red brick and you have a school. Add religion to the humblest of edifices and you have a sanctuary. Add art and imagination to a series of spires and arches and you have a cathedral. Add justice to the far flung round of human endeavor and you have civilization.

Put them all together, exalt them above their present imperfections, add to them the vision of humankind redeemed, forever free of need and strife and you have the Temple of the Future, the kind of future we dream your hands will sculpt -- a future lighted with the radiant colors of hope.

Human beings have a tendency to confuse form with essence. They are prone to discern meaning in manners alone - the proper phrase or gesture, the appropriate garb - failing to go beneath the surface and test the spirit which motivates their expression.

Thus it is, the young people will often show greater concern for the marriage ceremony than for the essentials of a successful marriage. They fuss over the floral arrangements, thoughtfully discuss the menu, and enjoin the rabbi to make it short - as if the survival of their marriage depended on these things. Rest assured that no home ever shattered on the rocks of a faulty marriage ceremony, no, nor on the inability to provide a lavishly furnished home in the early days of marriage or at any other time. Broken homes are the result of a failure to perceive the essence of marriage. They are the consequence of an incapacity to comprehend what marriage really means.

Patriotism, in our case Americanism, is sometimes misunderstood in like fashion. Many would see its ultimate justification in outer forms alone: in the precision with which one greets the colors, in the enthusiasm that is mustered when the national anthem is intoned. And yet, the Quaker whose conscience will not permit him to serve in America's armed forces because he will not kill - not even America's enemies - may be closer to service than his fellow man who regards a color guard as a way to show the real spirit of America, nay, he surely is, than the Southern bigot who spits on the negro even while he salutes the flag.

A similar misunderstanding occurs in the matter of religion. Here too form and essence are confused also in the understanding of religion, when institutional affiliation and participation is suggested as the ultimate test of faith. It is not. A great many people whose names are on the rolls of synagogues and churches have no faith that really matters in their lives. A great many people who come to worship and perform the varied rites of faith have no real sense of personal involvement with religion. They come because they feel they ought to or because society says they do. They join perhaps because they feel that God's work merits support. But how many of these congregations have a religion which helps them instead of one which needs them? How many have a faith which sustains them in the hour of tragedy, which steadies them in moments of anxiety and fear? How many of them are truly influenced by their religion in their day by day decisions?

And so He does, for revelation is continuous; it did not cease with Sinai. God does not hide his light from any generation of His children who yearn for Him and seek His guidance.

We cannot grasp Him fully, to be sure. We cannot penetrate His mystery, nor hope to see Him face to face. But through the hard, unyielding framework of the unknown and the unknowable, we may catch glimpses of the divine. <sup>His goodness passes before us,</sup> ~~We see visions of His~~ <sup>though not His face,</sup> goodness, in the realm of nature and in the varied experiences of our lives.

Nor is God's language the language of men. He does not speak with the speech of men. ~~But then it is not only words which are spoken~~ <sup>But then it is not only words which are spoken</sup> ~~But words are not alone to convey deep meaning.~~ If anything, they are least successful to do so. They are but broken lights on the depths of the unspoken. Art <sup>speaks a language more profound than words</sup> ~~conveys far deeper meaning~~ - music, painting, sculpture. Nature <sup>reveals for deeper</sup> ~~speaks a language more~~ <sup>profound</sup> ~~profound than the language of words.~~ "Yom 1'yom yagi-ah oumer...day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night revealeth knowledge...though there is no speech, though there are no words."

Human deeds can speak with eloquence. Human relationships can disclose majestic meaning: a mother's love, a father's care, the devotion of friend to friend. When men rise to their best they reveal God more truly than ~~the~~ <sup>doth all the</sup> words of prophecy however striking, or ~~the~~ <sup>these</sup> creeds of theology, however persuasive.

<sup>Th</sup> Opportunities for finding God are everywhere about us. Look to the heavens and see! Look upon the earth and marvel! ~~Behold the~~ Hear the harmonies of wondrous music, behold the beauty fashioned by man. Witness the miracle of birth and growth. Feel the awakening of love. Try to understand the lives of men whose ways are touched by godliness...men of every age...men of every creed: an Albert Schweitzer who gave up a brilliant many branched career to heal the sick in a forsaken village...a Mahatma Ghandi who by spirit only brought a mighty nation to its knees... A Lincoln who requited hate with love and facing his revilers was capable to say: with malice toward none, with charity for all.

Behold all this and say as did our fathers: we see this day that God doth speak with man.



Not even intellectual acceptance necessarily comes to the heart of the matter. Often one encounters men who prove by brilliant logic that there is a God, but whose personal religion is vacuous, empty, devoid of substance. They may have a foolproof theology, which enables them to speak their credos with assurance; but theirs is a recitation by rote which lacks personal involvement. The objective acceptance of belief is a far cry from subjective identification with it.

There is the heart of the matter: a subjective experience of God, a personal involvement with the divine...kavanah...a sense of reverence, a sense of sacred awe...as that of Moses when he saw the vision of the burning bush...or that of Israel's sons when they stood 'round Sinai and having heard the voice of God as did their leader Moses they proclaimed: we have seen this day that God doth speak with man. Such personal experience alone gives meaning to religion. Such feeling alone bespeaks a belief which stirs, a faith which sustains.

There are some who will raise their intellectual eyebrows and smile in condescension. Really now, do you mean to tell me that God actually spoke to Moses, that the children of Israel heard his voice? Why that is placing stock in miracles, in supernatural events which moderns cannot possibly accept!

And yet, when all is said and done, it doesn't matter, does it, whether we accept the Biblical story in its detailed, literal sense or merely as an interpretive account. In either case, the fundamental truth is the same: our fathers had a direct experience of God. Whatever it was that really happened, they knew for certain that God revealed himself to them. They knew it with a knowledge of the heart, a knowledge greater than the knowledge of the mind, transcending logic, or reason, or the testimony of witnesses. They knew it as the artist knows beauty though he cannot touch it. They sensed it as men sense love though they cannot see it, and yet their life is changed because of that love.

How empty our religion is without such knowledge. We can build magnificent <sup>sanctuaries</sup> ~~sanctuaries~~, we can fill them to the overflowing in worship, we <sup>can</sup> ~~make~~ make their walls re-echo with the voice of our solemn rites. We have nothing unless we can say also as did our fathers: we have seen that God doth speak with man.



What a pity it is that many among us do not see, that our sense of appreciation has been dulled, that we have lost so much of our capacity to marvel at the miracles of life. Few achievements <sup>will</sup> arouse our admiration. Blandly we walk the way of life, unmoved by its essential magic.

Perhaps the surfeit of our blessings is responsible for this failure. We simply have so much that we take it all for granted: television which shows us scenes a thousand miles away, jets which streak from continent to continent, even a man made ~~whit~~ moon which repeats the orbit of creation. Or perhaps our capacity to marvel is blunted by the scientific and pragmatic temper of our times. We have been taught to accept as real only that which can be established by reason. We are enjoined to value only that which is of use, which is of practical consequence.

Whatever be the reason, there can be no doubt that <sup>Many men</sup> many of us have lost the art of imagination, the capacity for wonderment. To them <sup>according to</sup> the <sup>of prophets</sup> prophets words apply: they have eyes but they see not, they have ears but they do not hear. They do not know, they do not understand, they walk in darkness. To ~~no~~ man a "primsrose by the river's brim, a yellow primsrose was to him, and it was nothing more." To another there is a clearer vision which finds "tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones and God in everything."

To which class do we belong? Do we look for meaning in all things? Do we see God's goodness pass before our eyes as we behold His world pass before us? Do we hear a voice calling to us out of our manifold experiences?

We go back to Moses, that most inspiring figure in our history. Moses was a shepherd in the wilderness of Horeb. There were other shepherds there. A bush began to burn. Moses saw the burning bush. The others presumably did not see, and if they did they thought it just another mirage. Moses saw it and he said: Osuru no v'ere-eh...I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not consumed. Vagar adonoi ki sor lir'ous. And when God saw that he turned aside to see, then did he call unto him out of the midst of the bush saying: Moses, Moses. It was only when God saw that Moses had turned aside, only when he saw that Moses was sufficiently taken with the

wonderment, only then did He speak from out of the bush and reveal to Moses the mission and the mandate of his life.

My friends, there is a need in this down-to-earth, factual, busy world of ours, for us to re-awaken the sense of wonder in our lives, to regain the ~~capacity~~ <sup>power</sup> imagination which which will make us turn aside to see and ~~therein~~ <sup>there</sup> experience a sense of involvement with the divine. It is this sense alone which constitutes the essence of religion - a personal experience of God. All else is outer form, means to an end and not the end itself.

Synagogue and worship, prayers and rite all have but one purpose: to open our eyes that we may see through things into the heart of things, to see in blessed wonderment "all God's goodness" pass before our eyes ~~and to be moved to eager emulation~~ <sup>that we might respond to</sup> ~~Then~~ <sup>then</sup> our lives will have meaning, purpose and direction, and our years on earth, whether they be many or few, will never be empty years.

## We Never Learn

This evening and with this service, we prepare to observe our traditional Armistice Day. Members of the Jewish War Veterans are our special guests of honor, following services they will be our hosts at an Oneg Shabbat; and in a few minutes, just before the Kaddish, we will call out the names of those of our community who laid down their lives for our country and our cause.

In actuality, of course, this is no longer Armistice Day. It is Veteran's Day - some years ago we ~~designated it~~ designated it thus, and this change in name is most significant. It is symbolic, for in effect it constitutes tacit confession of our failure to fulfil the promise inherent in this day when its observance was first decreed.

After all, we cannot in all honesty observe an Armistice Day when we remember the many wars both great and small with their fearsome casualties ever great in number and never small fought since that day some thirty years ago, the day which was meant to spell an end to war. Armistice Day was established in the hope that it would soon be transmuted into an abiding day of <sup>Alas,</sup> peace. We did not even fashion an armistice, only an uncertain interlude between one frenzied fray and <sup>still</sup> another.

No, we cannot in all honesty observe an Armistice Day when we behold a world still immersed in violence. Every day we receive reports of new destruction in still another part of our globe: <sup>more</sup> ~~the~~ communities laid waste with the hurricane of fire, more smiling fields covered with the corpses of patriot dead, more hearts pierced with unavailing grief, and widows and their little children turned out rootless to wander unfriended through the wastes of their desolated land... And now calamity comes closer to our <sup>homes</sup> hearts for our own brothers are locked in deadly conflict. <sup>with those who live about them.</sup>

In all truth, we cannot mark an Armistice Day and rejoice. Its celebration would be mere mockery, a damning reminder of our failure and our shame!

In our Torah portio for today, we read the beautiful story of Jacob's dream, how he slept and in his sleep he saw "a ladder set up on the earth and the top of it reached the heavens." The rabbis of the Talmud, commenting upon this verse assure us that such a ladder is accessible to every man and that by climbing its rungs all men may reach the gate of heaven. The world does not appear to be on any such ladder; we stumble rather over the rungs of a treadmill, never able to ascend, <sup>on life</sup> ever in danger of <sup>disrupt</sup> crashing into mud mingled with blood.

We are on a treadmill because we make the same mistakes over and over again. We never learn. The renaming of the day we celebrate this night serves to accentuate one of our recurrent mistakes, for by renaming it we also refashioned its intent. The dominant theme of Veterans Day as against Armistice Day is not so much peace as preparedness, or rather peace through preparedness. We now remember not so much the vows we made to the youth whom we sacrificed on the bloody altars of Mars, but we remember rather, so it appears, to "keep ~~on~~ powder dry" and to prepare more vigilantly and more vigorously for future battles sure to come. "In order to preserve the peace, prepare for war," this is the old-new motto of our day.

And what a worn-out oft-disproven motto it is and still we affirm it. We ~~can~~ pile high our mountains of munitions <sup>to make our land invulnerable to a Host; even while we know that</sup> that peace was never obtained by such a means. Multiplying munitions may strike fear and terror into the hearts of others; but that it keeps them permanently from waging war against us is denied by every fact of history. The fears which weapons induce serve only to unleash a relentless armament race which has never failed to cause some trigger-happy individual or group to move that twitching, itching finger to plunge mankind into war after war. Not thus will we establish peace on earth and redeem our debt to those whose memory we honor this night!



Was not this very same mistake made once again in the Middle East. For years now, ever since the armistice was first concluded, Israel has stood up before the United Nations and the Western <sup>World</sup> ~~World~~, pleading with them to use their good offices ~~in order~~ to translate the Armistice of 48 into a permanent peace. And what was the answer of the Western World: redoubled efforts to maintain an arms balance - and a curious sort of balancing it was: a few more guns to Egypt that <sup>she</sup> ~~he~~ may have as effective an army as Israel, a few more tanks to Jordan that <sup>she</sup> ~~he~~ too should be as strong as Israel and so on down the line with each of the Arab States. The inevitable result was not long in forthcoming.

Israel was not to blame - we need not now re-~~state~~ <sup>her</sup> defense, for it was presented in a penetrating and <sup>compelling</sup> ~~convincing~~ fashion a week ago by Rabbi Klein. <sup>But</sup> ~~certainly~~ the free world has no right to point an accusing finger - its <sup>causative</sup> contribution to the conflict <sup>was</sup> ~~is~~ not small - alas our own government has led the parade of retreat before Nasserism. Let the West rather heed the advice of a Churchill and thank Israel and now Britain and France for retrieving the tragic failure of the West. And Churchill knows whereof he speak, for it was he who vainly pleaded with the Western World when Hitler's armies invaded the Rhineland and later annexed Austria and the Sudetenland.

The free world owes a debt of gratitude to Israel for <sup>ripping</sup> ~~pulling~~ the mask off the paper-mache <sup>dictator</sup> ~~Hitler~~, <sup>that would be Hitler</sup> and what a bluff he was, a ~~xxx~~ few columns of Israeli soldiers neutralized twenty thousand of his minions. We can well imagine how our Middle East experts in the State Department feel, <sup>now</sup> ~~those~~ who counselled appeasement of Nasser and who urged us to develop him as a staunch military ally in the struggle against Russia. Perhaps they will at long last admit that Israel is a much safer ally ~~in the defense of the free world~~, Israel whose citizens twice in one generation fought alongside allied armies <sup>and whose enemies conspired and are now conspiring with those who are</sup> ~~pledged to overthrow the free world.~~



We might add here, marginally, that we Jews of America, owe special thanks to Ben Gurion and Israel's armies for initiating the <sup>downfall</sup> ~~xxxxxxx~~ of a man who represented <sup>and still does</sup> ~~and still is~~ a great threat to us personally, for Nasser was the most virulent source in recent years for anti-semitism here in America. It was Nasser who saw to it that American of the Jewish faith were barred from serving on any of America's missions and consular offices in the Middle East. It was Nasser who boycotted American business firms ~~employing~~ owned by Jews or employing Jews in important positions - an American business man ~~xxxxxx~~ who wanted to deal with any of the Arab States ~~xxxxxxx~~ had to be cleared <sup>first</sup> ~~as~~ <sup>pure</sup> ~~non~~Aryan by the Egyptian Embassy in Washington. And it was Nasser whose paid agents travelled up and down America, ~~addressing~~ ~~Kiwanis and Rotary and sundry clubs,~~ planting the seeds of hatred against the Jew - and a few of them managed to come to Worcester in the guise of Middle east experts and what not. Surely it is no accident that among the quantities of supplies captured by Israeli forces in the Sinai desert were found also numerous copies of Hitler's Mein Kampf.

We Jews owe great thanks to Israel, and so does the free world, we have no cause for complaint, not even on the question of the United Nations. In some quarters, Israel's incursion has been interpreted as a threat to its existence. It is not. It has already ~~far~~ served as an impetus for the creation of an international police force, the one instrument which can convert the United Nations from a debating society into effective <sup>free</sup> ~~instrument~~ for the preservation of world peace.

Was not, this also one of the recurrent mistakes of history, one of those lessons we didn't learn speedily enough, the lesson that an international association is ineffective unless it is backed by an international police. We may well ask why the United Nations did not take this step and act with equal promptness when Arab countries invaded Israel in 1948? In any event, we pray that the United States will not now repeat its mistake of the twenties by failing actively to support this international police and thus betraying Israel <sup>now</sup> as were those smaller nations ~~to support the Jewish state's~~ who put their trust in a League of Nations & were sold out to Hitler.

Don't for one moment think that a rabbi rejoices over the developments in recent weeks, beneficial though as some of the results might be and ~~quixotic~~ speedy though the victory was. Would that there had been another way of achieving those same results. As for the victory, we are mindful <sup>provided by a midrash</sup> of the lesson commenting upon the passage in Exodus which tells of ~~the~~ our father's victory over Pharaoh's hosts by the Red Sea. When Moses and the children of Israel sang their song of joy, say the preachers of old, the angels on high joined with them, but God reprimanded them saying: How can you rejoice while my children are drowning in the Red Sea?

Yes, would that there had been another way...but there was not. Israel's dilemma can be compared to that of the people in the parable taught by the <sup>Brablawer</sup> ~~Sandichever~~ Rabbi who came to their King with the shocking report that whoever ate of the crop they were just harvesting became raving mad. "What shall we do, O King," they said, "if we don't eat the wheat, we will starve to death, but if we eat it we go mad." The king considered carefully and then, with a heavy heart rendered his decision: "Since no other food is available we shall have to eat it, but we ought to know that we are mad." In a world ruled by force and surrounded by antagonistic force pledged to destroy them, Israel was faced with the choice of a struggle for survival or suicide. It chose the former, while knowing full well that this too was madness, that force can never ever achieve the one element indispensable to its ultimate survival, <sup>which is peace</sup>. Israel chose the way of force in order to stave off immediate destruction and in the fervent hope that the free nations of the world will at long last wake up and pursue, not just talk about, the ideal of peace.

This too is our fervent prayer on this Armistice-Veterans Day. May we at long last learn the lessons of the ~~xxx~~ past: that multiplying munitions and balancing the instruments of war does not secure peace, that appeasing evil tyrants does not assure their good will, that an association of free nations can succeed only if its members ~~in xxxxxxxx~~ render it not only their voice, but the full support of their physical resources.

The world will remain on its tread-mill as long as we repeat the same mistakes. The rung of a ladder was never meant to rest upon, but only to hold a man's foot long enough to enable him to put his other foot somewhat higher.

By learning the lessons of the past we will ascend our Jacob's ladder and reach the gateway of heaven - ~~and then~~ <sup>while</sup> this Veteran's Day ~~will~~ <sup>long lost</sup> be ~~et~~ transmuted into a Day of Peace, for our time -- for all time to come.

S K J J J

What Difference Does My Life Make?

Some time ago, a man who committed suicide left a final note recording his reasons. "I am not really needed," he <sup>wrote</sup> ~~said~~, "Nobody gives a hang for me. I am just a peanut in Yankee Stadium. I'll step on myself once and for all."

What a poignant summation of a tragic life!...just a peanut in Yankee Stadium.. And yet, extreme an violent as was this man's end, his motivation is common enough, and his epitaph typifies the self estimate of modern man, for most men in our day no longer regard themselves as particularly important in the scheme of things, especially in their relation to communal and national behavior. Most people have come to believe that, except in small and insignificant ways, what they think and do is unimportant. They may have opinions, but see no way to give them weight; they may believe in a course of action, but they feel helpless to initiate it. "My life really doesn't make any difference" is the common plaint. "Decisions of consequence are made by the masters, lords and rulers of all lands, the very few vested with authority. Who dare challenge them, they certainly don't care about the ordinary individual." Thus we cry, and tacitly accept ourselves as insignificant beings, ordinary sort of men, peanuts in a pile, ants in an ant heap, floesam drifting aimlessly along the stream of life, anonymous members of a voiceless, faceless multitude, people who just don't count.

Our low ~~low~~ estimate of the individual offers a sharp and none too comforting contrast with man's high estate in religion's world view which hails him as the crown of creation. To be sure now, there were times when men of faith had their doubts. Overwhelmed by the grandeur of God's world - by the moon, the stars, the universe in all its vastness, - the psalmist exclaimed: "What is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou thinkest of him." But quickly his faith conquered doubt and he fervently added: "Yet Thou ~~hast~~ made him but little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou hast made <sup>man</sup> ~~him~~ to have dominion over the works of Thy hands, Thou ~~hast~~ put all things under his feet."

Rabbi Philip  
1901  
117  
Rochester



The rabbis of the Talmud went beyond Scripture in exalting the individual when they ordained that he who destroys <sup>a single</sup> life, destroys the universe and his who saves <sup>a single</sup> life, saves the universe. Not only is man master of the world, they taught, each <sup>single</sup> individual constitutes the world.

Modern man has ~~become sceptical of~~ <sup>to doubt</sup> this traditional <sup>concept</sup> ~~view~~ which, incidentally, finds its parallel in all religions. We take a dimmer view of <sup>the individual's significance</sup> ~~man~~. One disillusionment after another about human nature has crashed down on us, dreadfully accentuated by two world wars and their aftermath, until human weakness and folly have become central in our picture of man. Our experience challenges our faith and so we ask: man the near-god, or man the peanut, how is it with us? Does each life really make a difference? Does the individual really count?

In venturing an answer to this <sup>seemingly</sup> ~~pertinent~~ question we must recognize first of all that mankind's progress, great or small, was always initiated by ~~by~~ individuals. No reform, no correction of an evil, no advance of any kind in all the annals of history was ever begun without an individual to get it started.

When Israel was enslaved in Egypt, and had come to accept the bitter yoke of servitude, who kindled the flame of freedom? Was it engendered by the spontaneous revolt of the embattled masses? Did the elders and sages of the community appeal to Pharaoh? Of course not. ~~We know the answer.~~ It was an individual, ~~therefore obscure or almost so,~~ <sup>later</sup> once a pampered courtier and ~~then~~ a humble shepherd named Moses who roused his people from their lethargy and dared challenge the mighty tyrant.

When our people was threatened with extinction after the Roman conquest of Judea, who secured the survival of our people and its faith? Was it a council of generals, or a delegation of prominent royalists or even the King of our people who prevailed on the good graces of the conquering emperor? Of course not. It was a lone enthusiast named Yochanan ben Zaccai who <sup>obviously</sup> ~~secured~~ permission to establish a humble academy at Yavneh.



When, to take an example from more recent and <sup>general</sup> ~~American~~ history, the fires of the American Revolution were burning low and men watched the flame of its hope go down towards the ashes of despair, how were those fires rekindled? Who breathed them back to life? Was it the Continental Congress? Did someone appoint a Committee on Unrevolutionary Activities? Was it a special Presidential Commission? Again, it was an individual, theretofore obscure, or almost so, Tom Paine, whom George Washington credited with saving the revolution.

And so we might continue with name after name, in area after area of human advancement - <sup>Conduct - Human Treasures for America, Public Education - Judson's Church</sup>  
When anyone asks therefore, does my life make a difference? surely the first of the answers is this: it depends, and always must upon the individual. If you have the conviction, the courage, the patience and the persistence, and if you are willing to put everything you have into the venture, win or lose, you can go immense distances, in this time or any others, as an individual.

But still, it may be objected, these that we have mentioned were after all outstanding people. They had unusual talent and vision, conspicuous ability -

or at any rate they had the sort of boldness that the majority can't claim.

<sup>It is not given to all of us to be as great as Lincoln or as wise as a Ben Zeeva.</sup>  
What about the ~~others~~ <sup>simple people</sup>, the John Does or even the Casper

<sup>Here of us</sup>  
Milquetoast ~~People~~ <sup>People</sup> who are more timid, who don't in the least want to save the single headedly, but who, at least would like to see it saved. <sup>we</sup> ~~What do they~~ <sup>as</sup> count for individuals?

<sup>real</sup>  
We count for much, oh so much, would only that we were to recognize our real power!

In the first instance, we create the spiritual climate which either nurtures or hinders progress.

<sup>אין אדם יכול לעשות דבר אחד בלי אחרים</sup>  
No visionary, however wise, can realize his ideal, without followers willing to countenance his ways. An Abraham Lincoln would have remained an unknown country

lawyer, had he failed to receive the support of many ordinary people, themselves unwilling or incapable of exercising leadership, but at least eager to accept the wise guidance of another. Similarly, a noble Supreme Court Decision of our own day will remain a dead letter unless hundreds of simple people will effect integration in the ordinary relationships of their every day lives.

It is frequently said that there are no longer good leaders: men and women with the force of character, the mentality, the vision, the integrity to steer us through the dangerous waters all around us and the storms ahead. I am not so sure that this is true. I am doubtful, very doubtful, whether good leadership is as widely welcomed as it used to be; and whether it is recognized when it appears.

I choose to think that there are men who can steer us to the harbor of safety and of peace, but they can emerge only if we encourage and support them, if we create the atmosphere under which we shall be well and wisely lead. And whatsoever the least among us does or fails to do, says or fails to say, volens volens, affects that atmosphere, for better or for worse. *or his own / in*

Here then is the first area in which each life counts. If we cannot lead crusades or initiate reforms, we can at least create the conditions in which crusades can be effectual and reforms successful. Ordinary people who believe that the individual counts can produce the outstanding individual and then help him count.

*But beyond this*  
~~In the second place, each individual is~~ *significant* ~~important~~ for his voice, no matter how *weak, he can encourage others*  
~~may elicit a response in others, & weak, he added to the voice of others and together with theirs~~ *can lead to great*  
strength. I know I rehearse I tautology, but apparently it is a truth so commonplace that we completely overlook it, else we would not *challenge the worth* ~~ask what difference~~ our lives, ~~make~~

What is a drop of water by itself? What can be more harmless? What is weaker? What is less potent for any effect? It is mist, invisible. It rises through the imperceptible paths of the air, and hangs unseen in the air, till the cold strikes it and it congeals into clouds, and falls in the form of rain upon the earth. Sinking through the earth, the tiny drop of water reaches the line of rocks from whose side it oozes out and trickles down, when, finding other drops as weak as itself, they unite their forces; and the sum of the weakness of all these drops goes to make the rivulet, which flows on, making music as it flows, until it meets counter streams. These, combined, form the river; the river forms the estuary, and the estuary the ocean itself. And now, when God has

has marshalled the sum of the weakness of myriads drops together, they lift the mightiest ship as if it were but a feather, and play with the winds as if they were mere instruments of sport.

We, in our singleness, in our individuality, may be weaker than a drop of water and more unstable; but as gathered together in the great ocean of life, we attain to a might that makes life not ignoble, but sublime.

Let no one say, therefore, what difference does my life make? There is not one among us who does not every day appreciably affect our total situation.

Individuals are every hour making a difference in other individuals and therefore in all of us. By the stand we take, or refuse to take, in ordinary conversation, in every day deed, we encourage either the true or the false, the good or the bad; we make it either easier or harder for other people to have courage, to deepen their convictions, to make right choices.

It is out of the vast complex of the relationship of individuals that the impulse comes to raise our standards or to let them drop. When we express our <sup>individual</sup> prejudices, we deepen prejudice in others; when we counter them, prejudice everywhere receives a set back.

When we ~~betray our ideals, the universal struggle for the ideal is defeated~~ <sup>deprecate ourselves</sup>, men everywhere ~~lose honor and the image of man like unto God is besmirched.~~ <sup>lose ground</sup>

~~But when we stand by our convictions,~~ <sup>then</sup> gently but firmly refusing to be intimidated, either to please a friend or to appease an enemy, conviction everywhere finds stronger rootage.

~~If we deprecate ourselves, all men lose honor, but if we + the image of man like unto God is besmirched.~~ <sup>then</sup> But if we recognize our powers as individuals + act upon that recognition, men everywhere will gain stature + strength + the confidence indispensable to survival.

In a stirring MIDRASIT we are told that when Moses came down from Sinai + saw <sup>the</sup> people dancing about the golden calf, he smashed the two tablets of the law, but <sup>he</sup> quickly gathering faith <sup>cried out</sup> 'A 16 230 23. Now everything depends upon me. ~~They are~~ <sup>also</sup> beholding a world dancing frantically about a mushroom cloud, may we also each of us proclaim - 11h 230 23 Everything depends upon me. And may this recognition of individual responsibility + power lead all mankind toward the universal land of promise + everlasting peace.

Enda see

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## What do we Owe our Children

No responsibility in all the world is as weighty and as difficult of fulfillment as is the task of rearing children. To take a young life entrusted to one's care, to nurture it, to mold it, to lead it past the many known and unknown dangers threatening its every <sup>step</sup> ~~breath~~ - there is no mandate as demanding as that and surely no parent ever took his child along life's perilous path without revoicing a hundred, nay, a thousand times, the fearful cry of David when he sought news concerning Absalom his son: "Hshalom La-na-ar - Is my child yet safe?"

Nor is there a problem in life as perplexing and as unpredictable in its consequence. All too often, here, the very best counsel is of little avail. Too often, the noblest intentions miscarry and devoted effort is mis-spent. Even the rabbis of the Talmud, who had abounding faith in man's capacity to master ~~the universe~~ life and its problems, bemoaned the rearing of children as a near impossible task; they spoke of 'tsar giddul bonim' <sup>of</sup> the sorrow, the pain, the anguish of raising sons, and they declared that more often than not the result 'tolui bemazal' depends on nothing more or less than mazel, on sheer luck, on ordinary ever-ellusive good fortune.

Where sages despair, what shall lesser men say? And still, the task is ours to fulfill as best we can, and we do well, carefully to consider and constantly to seek the better way of guidance and instruction.

Our young people themselves can help us in our quest. "He who is thy offspring can <sup>teach</sup> of thee," holds an ancient proverb, and its truth applies here with great force. Our children can speak to us of their need, and their need can give primary direction to our effort in their behalf. What do our children want? What do we owe them? What is the fundamental need of the present younger generation?

I have been asking our young people these questions and they give me an intriguing, near unanimous answer. For the past five years now, <sup>As you may know</sup> I served as Dean of the Leadership Institute of the National Federation of Temple Youth which attracts <sup>hundreds of teenagers</sup> ~~students~~ from all parts of the country and from every stratum of the Jewish community. Every year I



I ask them to complete a questionnaire which poses this central problem. If you were given the choice, what would you ask first and foremost <sup>of</sup> ~~from~~ your parents. <sup>Social standing, economic security, or emotional stability</sup> ~~Their skill set~~  
majority agree - not economic security as we might expect, nor social standing; they want their parents to give them a sense of emotional security.

The reason for their longing is not far to seek. It is rooted in the instability of their environment. Uncertainty is the dominant temper of their world with its unrelenting and terrifying threat of imminent total destruction, and, alas, uncertainty is the dominant quality of their home life what with the business of their parents in running and in getting and in spending and their concern for everything under the sun except the task of building warm and strong family affection.

How do our young people expect their parents to provide this added emotional stability.

I ask this also in my questionnaire and <sup>our young people give intriguing answers.</sup> ~~their answers are intriguing:~~

I want my parents to be with me more, says one.

Another complains: my parents always tell me what not to do, what not to eat, and not to smoke, and not to drink, but they never tell me what I should do, what books to read, what plays to see, what concerts to attend.

Another feels that a stronger religious faith could bolster her sense of security, "but," she added, "though I suppose my parents want me to be religious and that's why they sent me to Temple, they don't seem to have much faith. At least they never come."

Still another wrote; and this is interesting: "I think I would have a greater feeling of emotional well-being if only my parents were to have greater confidence in me. They want me to confide in them, to tell them everything. But they never allow me to share their plans and their problems." How often we under-estimate our young people and their sense of self-reliance. Parents want to protect their children by hiding their problems from them, but as a consequence, they exclude them from the family circle, and deny them the aegis of their family union.

And here is the most interesting answer of all and it re-appears in varying form with high frequency: "I might feel more secure, if my parents were less lenient with me, if they weren't so easy going." This is nigh to a revelation. It was for me. Our children want more discipline. They want their parents to exercise more ethical authority. We think that they want to be left alone. In reality they want to be guided firmly.

A mother of our own congregation - as a matter of fact, she is a member of the Temple Board - recently told me a story which <sup>bears</sup> ~~brings~~ out the same point. It appears that her daughter wanted to attend a social function which, for a variety of reasons, her

<sup>disapproved</sup>  
parents deemed ~~unwise~~. The daughter pleaded her case with fervor: all her friends and class mates were going and what was good enough for them was good enough for her. But all to no avail. For once her mother was firm. The girl stormed out of the room with tears in her eyes, and the mother spent a sleepless night regretting her severity: perhaps she was too old fashioned; if the other mothers agreed to send their children then surely her misgivings about the dance must have been ill founded. She almost relented, almost, that is for on the very next day she chanced to hear her daughter announce her decision to a friend, <sup>but</sup> not in a spirit of shame and rebellion, <sup>the way you</sup> but with a measure of pride: My mother won't let me go... and her friend responded not in sympathy, but with a touch of envy in her voice... <sup>(to be sure now)</sup> ~~Of course~~, no teen-ager will go to his parents and ask for more discipline, for more moral guidance, but this is what they need, this is what they respect, this is what they seek.

Why do we fail to give them this moral guidance?

Perhaps because we are too indolent, too slothful, too lazy to muster the added energy required...

Or perhaps because we ourselves lack in strong personal conviction. Our moral code is drawn not in blacks and whites but in varying shades of grey -we recognize no clear cut wrong at least as far as we are concerned. How then can we impose as absolute what we affirm only as relative.

Or perhaps we fail to exert ethical authority with our children because of an exaggerated Freudianism or because of misunderstood modern educational theory which decries suppression and undue authority and which urges a permissive relationship of camaraderie between parent and child. "We don't want to rule our children with discipline and authority" is the slogan, "we want to rule them with love." Now no one ~~gainsays~~ gainsays the worth of love. Love is fine, love is beautiful, it is the noblest of virtues. But love is not love if it means merely the inability to say no. Love is not love if it ignores the evil. It is not love if it compromises the good for the sake of being loved. Love is a power for light. It is a revulator. It discriminates between right and wrong, it extols the former and disdains the latter. It strives to extirpate the evil and it enthrones the good.

It is not suggested by any means that we try to recreate the authoritarian home of a past generation. The new won spirit of camaraderie between parent and child can be for good. But if it is to be a blessing it ought not be wasted for petty pleasures. Let it serve a lofty aim - enabling the parent to exercise moral persuasion on his child, <sup>drawn</sup> ~~impelling~~ parents and children <sup>together for good purpose</sup> ~~to do good things together~~, to read good books together, to listen to good music together, to worship together in harmony and holiness.

<sup>Sum & substance of our message:</sup> Our <sup>sum & substance</sup> ~~sum & substance~~ <sup>to our children is to speak to the</sup> My friends, we have had a birds-eye view of a serious problem. Much more could be said, of course, but an inroad into thought has been made. <sup>to best in the - not to tell the short, not</sup> The sum and substance of our message is really one of confidence and faith, confidence in our capacity to meet our responsibilities, <sup>faith</sup> ~~faith~~ in our young people.

This applies to our <sup>Society</sup> ~~community~~ as a whole - when we consider the young people of our total community. Our youth today <sup>is</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>as a whole</sup> ~~is~~ certainly no <sup>more pleasant</sup> ~~worse~~ than the youth of <sup>any previous</sup> ~~another~~ generation. I came across these lines in a book some days ago: "The earth is degenerating <sup>in our time</sup> ~~these days~~...bribery and corruption abound...young people are degenerating..." <sup>not obedient to their parents</sup> ~~degenerating~~ does this sound familiar, current? Actually it is part of a clay tablet of old Assyria which was inscribed a 1000 years before Abraham, nearly 5000 years ago.

As for our <sup>own personal</sup> ~~own~~ children here too we can look forward with confidence. <sup>our children</sup> They may give us much reason for worry, but after all, we ourselves added many a gray hair to our parents' hoary heads. Basically, our young people are sound in spirit and heart, and they will respond to the best, provided we as adults, refrain from pandering to their lower instincts and appeal to them at their best. ~~is~~

A famous European dramatist once wrote a play about a master craftsman who fashioned a beautiful church bell but then, during a time of terror and war, and to prevent its capture by the enemy, he sank the bell to the bottom of the lake. Every once-in-a-while, stirred by the waters, the muffled sounds of the bell rose from the deeps, bringing much joy to the heart of its maker. There is such a bell in the soul of our youth. It is attuned to an appreciation of beauty and truth and love. May God give us the wisdom and the patience to reach and elicit its vibrant tones. Then will <sup>Isaiah's</sup> ~~Isaiah's~~ glorious vision be fulfilled, and men everywhere, beholding our children, will say of us: that we did not "labor in vain nor bring forth for terror, that ours is the seed, blessed of the Lord!"

One of the more common of platitudes ventured in discussing the religions of the world in their relationship one to another is the opinion that all religions are basically alike. "Religion is the response to a universal need," we are told, "and since the need is universal, the response is universal also." We hear this argument most frequently when Judaism and Christianity are compared, especially by Jews in approaching their Christian neighbors. It is readily admitted to be sure, that different peoples living in different parts of the world and influenced by their peculiar environments and histories have cast their religious response into dissimilar molds. But only the mold is admitted to be different - the rituals of various religions, the language of their prayers, their ways of describing God. In such matters religions may be and are at variance, but not in their core, in their essence; ~~in~~ <sup>goals of religion constitute the soul of faith</sup> their ideals and ~~their goals insofar as man is concerned~~. The soul of all faiths is held to be universally the same.

No serious student of religion can accept such ~~a~~ statements as truth. A fundamental unity of ideal and goal among religions cannot be claimed. All rivers may run into the sea, but their course and channels differ widely; even so does each religion have its own texture and pattern, each faith its own perspective. Judaism holds views which are radically divergent from Christianity, which differ decidedly from every other faith, and this applies not only to outer form, but also to inner <sup>new</sup> goal, <sup>to</sup> and ideal, <sup>to</sup> and attitudes toward life and human destiny.

In the fall of the year just past, Abba Hillel Silver, Rabbi of Cleveland's Temple, renowned leader of American Zionism and foremost preacher of the American rabbinate published a volume entitled "Where Judaism Differed." In this work, which well adds to his not inconsiderable reputation as scholar, Dr. Silver compares Judaism to other religions, particularly Christianity, stressing the distinctiveness of our faith and the uniqueness of its teachings and ideals.

The scope and challenge of his inquiry is great. To begin with, the author was confronted with the task of formulating the beliefs of Judaism. This is not as easy as it may appear to be on the surface, for our religion is not a precisely articulated creed, it has no compact system of beliefs which can readily be reduced to catechismal principles. It is not the product of one country, nor is it the product of one age. When we speak of Judaism, we



Far different is the spirit of Judaism. Our faith is suffused with optimism, with an unshaken affirmation of life. As a matter of fact, we have no doctrine of salvation in the true sense of the world, precisely because the thinkers of our people and the molders of our faith never felt that man's life or his body is so steeped in sin and evil that he needs ~~to~~ be saved from life itself.

Judaism rejects all dualism. It ~~taught~~ <sup>teaches</sup> that the body cannot be charged with all sin, ~~and~~ <sup>even as</sup> the soul cannot be credited with all virtue.

To what may this be compared- says the Midrash - To a king who owned a beautiful garden which contained splendid figs. Now he appointed two watchmen therein, one lame and the other blind. One day the lame man said to the blind: I see beautiful figs in the garden, come and take me upon your shoulder that we may both eat of them. Sometime after the owner of the garden came and inquired of them: Where are those beautiful figs? The lame man replied: Have I then feet to walk with? The blind man replied: Have I then eyes to see with? What did the owner do? He placed them ~~lame~~ upon the blind and judged them both together...

In the basic thought of Judaism, the body and soul, good and evil are not cosmic forces in eternal conflict wherein one must destroy the other. They are complementary attributes of God's creation which are reconciled in the ~~wisdom~~ <sup>will</sup> of God,

As a consequence Judaism teaches that man should avail himself of every opportunity for enjoyment and happiness. One need not and should not renounce any gift of God. Rav, who together with Samuel established the leading academies in Babylonia and made it a center of rabbinic studies, is quoted as saying: "A man will some day have to give an account unto God for all the good things which his eyes beheld and of which he refused to partake." ~~And that~~ <sup>And by good he</sup> meant every gift of God, including those which are ~~meant~~ <sup>intended</sup> primarily to satisfy the bodily needs of man - food and drink which sustain his life, the 'yetze horah' which perpetuates it. Sexual asceticism or celibacy was never accorded the dignity of a religious value in Judaism, to marry and to beget children in order to preserve the race was considered a divine command. The rabbis held that one of the principal questions which a man will be asked on the Day of Judgment is the query: "Did you or did you not fulfill your duty in respect to establishing a family."

Moreover, the spiritual leaders of ~~the~~ Israel lived and worked and moved among their fellow men. They did not isolate themselves from the community. The cloistered virtues of convent life ~~made~~ <sup>had</sup> no appeal to them. They were not mendicant or friars going about with staff and bowl begging to sustain themselves while attending to the purification of their soul. They



Now there can be little doubt that man has always and will always be afraid of life, for there is much in life to make him afraid, much that is mysterious and evil, much of pain and sorrow. On the one hand there are the vast and imponderable forces of nature which overwhelm us - floods and storms and earthquakes and ~~flood~~ <sup>plague</sup>, on the other hand we face the destructive forces of society which we seem unable to control - wars and invasions, tyrannies and oppressions. And overshadowing all these there is the dread knowledge of ultimate death which no man can escape.

Most religions seize upon these ~~apparent~~ <sup>~~fact~~ ~~but~~ ~~truth~~ + ~~build~~</sup> sadness and futility of human existence and build an elaborate doctrine of salvation upon it. Some religions hold that the fact of life itself is evil and that man can do no better than to renounce life and to seek the extinction of his self-hood. Those of you who are familiar with Oriental religions know that this teaching is the very essence of Hinduism and Buddhism. These religions hold that all existence is suffering, that the cause of suffering is human craving and that men, therefore, should expend every effort to free themselves from the world of senses, to extirpate human desire by the roots, to deaden the will to live and thus to seek self extinction in nirvana, in a blessed release into nothingness.

Greek philosophy and subsequently Christianity and Islam, held a somewhat different view of life, but their conclusions are similar at least insofar as life on earth is concerned. Plato and Paul both perceived the ~~root of all evil~~ <sup>not in the whole of life, but in its essential part in its</sup> in the duality of life, in the conflict between body and soul. There is beauty in human existence, they said, but this beauty and joy and truth is restricted to the soul of man. ~~The body is evil~~ But the soul of man is the prisoner of his body, and the body is evil, and the soul of man cannot attain unto its innate holiness and joy until it is liberated from <sup>so</sup> ~~its~~ <sup>the body's</sup> bondage. And thus they taught that the body of man be held in contempt, that the flesh be subdued, that its urgings and prompting be renounced, through austerities and fasts, if possible through celibacy and isolation from society. Not all men can succeed in this endeavor, to be sure, but some men can - Plato called them the philosopher-kings, <sup>the</sup> Church fathers called them monks or nuns, priests or saints, - and they urged that all men strive to emulate their good example.

Lest you think that this is ancient Christian doctrine no longer <sup>is</sup> affirmed, it need only be mentioned that the leading Protestant theologians of our day, taking their cue from Kierkegaard, are the exponents of unqualified Pauline Christology and its pessimistic view of human existence.

did not run away from life out of fear of its temptations and social stresses. They felt that life itself constitutes the only battle ground where victories of the spirit can be won.

Don't for one moment think that Judaism shut its eyes to the evil and suffering in the world. It did not deny their reality. But it refused to make suffering a virtue, and pain ~~the key to the mystery of life~~ the key to the mystery of life. Sorrow is a part of life, taught the Rabbis, man must learn how to accept it, whether it be merited or unmerited, without resentment, bitterness or rebellion. He should confront it with courage and with dignity. He may even wring some blessings from the curse of tragedy, for sorrow can steel man's character, sorrow can break his inordinate pride. It can make him more compassionate, more understanding for the needs of others. <sup>It can make him more appreciation of his many blessings.</sup> But men should never glory in suffering, they should never seek the crown of ~~glorious~~ pain, for it is not only in pain that character grows, the blessings of life and its joys provide a far more fruitful soil for human greatness.

And thus it is that in Judaism man's loftiest task in life, the service and worship of God must be rendered with <sup>gladness</sup> ~~joy~~. *Ivdu es adonai besimcho* - worship the Lord in <sup>joy</sup> ~~gladness~~. Sadness is tantamount to idolatry. Sing to the Lord as long as you live. For though there is a darkness in life and the shadow of death, and sorrows and tribulations, and wrongs and anguish and the broken <sup>fragments of human aspiration</sup> ~~hopes of mortal man~~, the spirit of man need <sup>never</sup> ~~not~~ be utterly cast down. *Hochili Lelohim...* hope in the Lord, for though "weeping may tarry ~~in~~ <sup>surely</sup> for the night, joy will come in the morning."

Our brief survey of only one chapter of Dr. Silver's work <sup>labors</sup> is enough to give an indication of the extent of his ~~work~~ <sup>the</sup> and its worth. No one who reads <sup>the</sup> ~~its~~ pages <sup>of this</sup> with care will deny that Judaism has always and still does offer an approach to life and faith which is unique.

This uniqueness does not spell superiority over other faiths. Other religions too have <sup>written</sup> ~~molded~~ noble patterns of life for their followers and have succeeded in molding great civilizations and men of noble character. Nor need this uniqueness of Judaism obscure the underlying unity of the human race or the common needs of human life which all beliefs of mankind aim to serve. It is imperative though, that Jews be aware of the uniqueness of their faith so that they may be filled with a greater pride in faith and that they may be better equipped to fulfill their lives as Jews ~~and~~ if only to heed Judaism's noblest injunction which bids us join hands with men of good will everywhere ~~to work~~ <sup>firm</sup> in our convictions and reverent of theirs, all together working toward the day ~~of universal reconciliation of all peoples~~ when "they shall not hurt and destroy in all God's holy mountain for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

While it is yet night

Happy are we to behold and to participate in the solemn ceremonies of this hour - the dedication of a new flag which is to be the proud possession of Young Judea in welcome assembly here tonight. This flag is more than mere bunting, the pleasing combination of multi-colored cloth - it is a symbol, symbol of a spirit unquenchable the spirit of the Jewish people who fell a thousand times, but who rose again and again out of the very ashes of death determined to enact that role which, by God they were destined to play. Still more thrilling than the dedication of this flag is the ~~large~~ fact that so many young people are here to accept it. By their presence they signify their determination to carry aloft the banner which others before them have so nobly borne. It is because they are so determined that we welcome them to this sanctuary and this service. And it is to their noble task and its fulfillment that we invoke upon them God's most precious gift - his blessing.

The concluding chapters of the Book of Leviticus - the portion known as Bechukosai read as our scriptural portion for this evening embodies the famous Tochacha or admonition addressed by Moses to the Jewish people. Having declared the ~~ethical and ceremonial injunctions incumbent~~ ~~the Jewish people. Having declared the~~ ~~ethical and ceremonial injunctions incumbent~~ upon each and every Jew the great law-giver contrasts in startling and terrifying form the blessings and curses which await the people. If they obey the law of God then peace will be theirs, if they break it, dire calamity will befall them.

These passages have never been a favorite of mine - no one likes words of reprove or messages of ~~xxx~~ doom. What is more tragic, of course, is the fact that in our lives and in our times it is the curse and not the blessing which has been fulfilled: Ve-hey-vey-si mou-reych

bilvovom

I will send fear into your hearts  
The sound of a driven leaf shall chase you  
You shall stumble one upon the other  
And you shall have no power to stand before your enemies...

Is there a more poignant description of the shattered nerves, the crushed spirit, the fear and the trembling which fills the hearts of men today? Truly, the curse and not the blessing have been fulfilled.

The tragedy presented and brought to mind by the chapter as a whole finds some measure of relief in the reward which is held out for faithfulness to God:

"I will not wholly despise you or abhor you, says the Lord. Im Bechukosai telechu. If you will indeed walk in my statutes and keep my commandments...then will I give peace in the land and ye shall lie down and none shall make you afraid."

This juxtaposition of the blessings and the curse focuses our attention on a singularity of Jewish law and lore: no curse is ever pronounced in all of ~~the~~ the Bible and in much of our rabbinic literature without the relief of a blessing, a word of consolation always follows the message of doom, a ray of light ever manages to penetrate the deepest dark. More than this, it is only after the presaging of doom that words of hope are ever proclaimed and the lesson is inescapable: We can find great hope in adversity. Defeats and failures should never overwhelm. Look forward, not backward and learn to turn the disappointments and the tears of yesterday and of today into the laughter and the triumph of tomorrow.

This lesson would be of particular meaning to the young people assembled here today. Youth is generally described as self-confident but it would be equally correct to speak of the self-doubt of youth. In every youthful heart there is some doubt of the future. What will the world be like when I grow up? Look at it now! Where will I find the strength to face it. The answer of our parasha is clear: Each curse contains its blessing. Each defeat can be built into a victory. Out of the very stones of life's hardships will come strength.



No one can go through life without a defeat somewhere along the line. Even young people entering adulthood know this. They have their records of failures in school, in friendship, in athletics, in their social life. ~~It is easy to yield to such failures and to surrender~~ to depression and self-doubt. But if we surrender, if we throw up our hands we fail to take advantage of the one benefit adversity provides, and that is the chance to grow, for only in overcoming defeats and obstacles does man grow. Each failure can uncover a weakness within us, a weakness which can be overcome. If we utilize our defeats to learn the truth about ourselves, if we never permit one defeat to be wasted then the hard stones of failure will serve our future.

~~XX~~  
Why should man while living worry over his failures and sins of which he is the controlling master, thus says the Scripture. Mend your errors and they will become warnings, incentives to higher and to nobler striving! Cast your mistakes into the depth of the sea and do better in the years to come. Turn the defeats of yesterday into the victory of tomorrow and out of feebleness new strength will come. This is the same Jewish view of morality. Life moves on. Abide not moaning among the ruins of the past, lest like Lot's wife thou become a pillar of salt. "Forward" is the clarion call of Judaism. Leave the hidden things to God. Yours is the duty that lies before you.

My message, the message of hope in adversity, does not address itself to the individual only. It concerns our forward pressing age as well. It applies not only to the individual Jew, but to all of the Jewish people. It applies not only to the individual man, but to humanity at large.



109  
In working for the peaceful existence of our people in a peaceful world, we permit past and present failures to knock <sup>all</sup> hope clean out of us. We yield to cynicism and to despair. "Three sneers for everything, three cheers for nothing has become the motto of our day." We fail to see that this very hopelessness inside ourselves is the major obstacle to world accord. Hopeless situations may make people hopeless, but ~~essentially~~ it is the supreme and ultimate truth that hopeless people make the situation hopeless. Give us enough with the capacity to learn from past defeats not to be overwhelmed by them and people with hope ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the word can be remade.

We Jews certainly ought not to be among those who surrender to despair. We are what we are and we have what we have precisely because our fathers had the capacity to <sup>herald</sup> ~~dream~~ <sup>dreams</sup> the day while it was yet night and to fight for the realization of their dreams in face of mighty obstacles. The greatest advances the Jewish people ever made - in the realm of physical as well as spiritual progress - were made in times of greatest evil. The debacle of the forties gave ~~xxxxxx~~ birth to the Jewish State; the inquisition led to the creation of America; during the Roman conquest Jochanan ben Zaccai came to the fore and ~~spiritual~~ rabbinic Judaism was born; and during the Babylonian exile - that ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ time of anguish and tragedy when the first temple was destroyed and the Jews first tasted the bitterness of exile it was an Isaiah who dreamed a dream and saw a vision which, to this day <sup>remains</sup> ~~provides the basis of~~ all human endeavors, as the full realization of the dreams and visions of all the seers and sages of all the lands and all the ages.

Here is the secret of Judaism's wonderful endurance - the capacity of the Jew to rise from past defeat, to learn from past and present failures and to work toward the future ~~xxxxxx~~ in face of all obstacles.

The reminiscences of a history unparalleled the expectations of a future grader and brighter than human mind ever imagined. That is what made the Jew the worlds hero and martyr and that is what will ever endow the Jew with the power to do and to accomplish what no other people would or could. Yes, forward is written on Israels banner for the Lord who ever walked before Him will ever be with him. be not dismayed.

Here then is the message of the parasha and of this day. the message of a faith in God despite defeat...the <sup>plea</sup> ~~xxxx~~ for a spiritual determination which persists in face of obstacle... Never mind ridicule.. never mind defeat...let others sneer as they may...no darkness can put out the light in your hands unless you yourself drop the candle.

May we be like Chanticleer of Rostands famous play. All night long <sup>the play about animals as the symbols of men</sup> he calls for the dawn, ~~Thxxxxxx~~ he demands that the East release its warming, light and life giving rays. The other animals think him mad. What are you crowing for. Do you really think that you can wake the sun. But soon the sun does rise and the other animals break out in shrill cries of joy. They sing when all is rosy. They believe in light, but only when they can see it. Not so Chanticleer. He heralded the dawn while it was yet night.

Amen.

# WHY INSTITUTIONAL RELIGION

Privilege....never can resist ~~pressures~~ resist a call to be with NEFTY...  
a source of strength...physically not, tired of keeping up with you  
spiritually you are refreshing

enthusiasm infections

your attitudes so wholesomely natural, unhampered by the  
civilities which older people feel bound to assume

your ideals are still unblemished, ~~by~~ untouched by the cynicism  
which is the constant concomitant of bitter life experience

That is why all rabbis enjoy their work with youth and come to youth functions  
whenever ~~practically possible~~ possible.

Worcester - breath of home

Word of thanks in your behalf to Belmont's people

There was a time when ~~NEFTY~~ was considered a mere infant

in NEFTY...no longer...in course of past few years

it has become one of the finest of Youth Groups in

our area...thanks largely to the devotion of

Mrs. Hoffman, encouragement of Rabbi Grollman

It has become mandatory for after dinner speaker to offer some humorous story  
Ministers on difficult ground

Best I can do is to tell you a Jewish shaggy dog story  
Mah Nishtanno...King Arthur

Let us get to this matter of organized religion and its purpose and validity in ~~press~~  
our lives as individuals and as a community...

There are those who challenge its purpose and validity. A wit once said that we suffer  
from two kinds of Jews...revolving door Jew  
cardiac Jew

many such Jews, in truth many such Christians also who say that they are religious  
in their bones that they have ~~not~~ for all this organized religion with its  
reitualistic trappings rooted in ancient superstitions....

All too often this kind of talk becomes merely an excuse for indolence. When a cardiac  
Jew tells ~~me~~ you, for instance "I pray when the spirit moves me, and it just so happens  
that the spirit doesn't move me at 8:15 every Friday night." But when you ask such a  
person precisely when the spirit moved him to prayer last, invariably he confesses that  
that the spirit has not moved him to prayer in a very long time...

Nonetheless, it would not be fair to label all objection to organized religion as  
a sign of indolence...

it would not be fair to label all cardiac Jews and Christians as members  
of a do-nothing party

There are a great many honest, devoted, liberal minded people, people whose lives  
are filled with deeds of goodness, people who lead lives of communion with God who none-  
theless have serious reservations about Organized religion, about the institution of the  
synagogue and the Church.

For one thing they remember the Black record of institutional religion, they remember  
the many crimes which were perpetrated in the name of religion and many of which  
are listed on the ~~short checklist~~ summary sheet which you received from Rabbi Grollman

They remember those ~~mass~~ mass murders committed by institutionalized  
religion in the name of God - ~~they remember~~ those countless  
men and women who were burned at the stake by the leaders of the  
inquisition

and their fellow martyrs who were impaled by the sword of the  
crusaders

They remember the acts of ~~individual repression~~ though repression perpetrated  
in the name of God - aye a Galileo imprisoned by the Church,  
a Spinoza, and a DaCosta exiled from the Jewish community

And they witness the social impotence of religion in matters  
and their conscience is outraged...just to take one example: war



*And yet*  
This particular argument against organized religion can be answered with relative ease, for after these things that we have mentioned were committed by men who pretended to act in the name of God, but who most assuredly did not hear God's voice... moreover, there is "another side of the coin" as Rabbi Grollman put it

every evil can be counterbalanced by a good  
and when the ~~good~~ two are put in the scale, the good outweighs the evil a hundredfold...

Let me read only one paragraph which is quoted on your worksheet...

Albert Einstein... the greatest mind of our generation and here is what he said:

When the Nazis came to power, I looked to the German Universities to speak out, but they were silent. I turned to the press, but there was no word from them. I turned to the Great Labor Unions but found them speechless as well. Only in the Church and in the Synagogue were valiant voices raised on behalf of man."

There can be no doubt about it: religion has brought into this world the stuff which makes life not ignoble but sublime...

Most melodies of that beautiful symphony which is our civilization were first sung by the representatives of organized religion...

think of music, poetry and dance,  
think of the sciences and literature  
think of the ideals which move us still

trace these values to their origin, and ultimately you come upon the voice of God spoken by man within the framework of organized religion.

These things which I have said go to answer one great argument against organized religion, but there is another objection to the institution of the Church and synagogue, ~~xxxx~~ and it is a more serious, ~~thought~~ one. A great many ~~people think~~ thoughful people think and say: religion when all is said and done is a very personal ~~and~~ intimate matter... at its finest it is a personal relationship between man and God... it is the soul of man addressing its source...

it is relationship is a private concern, we mar its beauty when we make it a matter of public interest, we lessen its perfection when we try to express this relationship in ritual or in the institution

There can be no doubt about it... At its noblest religion is just that, the soul of man bound to the sole of his maker in silent communion...

The contemporary American philosopher Alfred North Whitehead expressed this idea succinctly when he said: Religion is what a man does with his solitariness... *Martin Buber*

To be with God, ultimately means to be alone... *Martin Buber meant*

Surely some of man's noblest confrontations with the divine have taken place in solitary...

think of ~~x~~ Moses of ~~xxxx~~ and the burning bush  
of Elijah hearing God's in the wilderness  
and yes, think of a Job, alone for all intents and purposes, sitting on a dung heap and nonetheless having the power to exclaim... Va-ani jodati goali choi... I know that my redeemer liveth.

Our own experience proves this also... think of those moments in life when you had a sense of the divine... were these not also moments of aloneness, though you might have been with others... when you were enraptured by a beautiful sunset or enthralled by a deed of human kindness

In those moments you may have wanted to cry out with Reb Levi Yitzchok of "erditchev: addressing God:

Where I Wander, you... where I ponder, you.  
Only you, you again, always you, you, you, you  
When I am gladdened, you, when I am saddened you  
Refrain  
Sky is you, earth is you... you above, you below...  
In every trend, at every end  
Refrain.

Try to express what you feel during those ~~many~~ rare moments of communion with God...you cannot...they constitute religion at its ultimate...

*These Godly moments*  
when we symbolize these moments we detract from their beauty  
when we institutionalize them, we mar their holiness  
when we even speak about them we impair their perfection,  
because they belong to that realm of the infinite which cannot be compressed in the finite form of language. In this sense even prayer becomes a form of idolatry...

And yet we must...symbolize

institutionalize this communion

*for* we must talk about it

for these compelling reasons, and I want to outline only a few possible answers which you can then discuss more fully in your workshops...

~~Let us begin by considering~~

1. To begin with, I think, psychological necessity, a law of life

every inner feeling ultimately has to gain outer and

concrete expression

love some one

hate someone

similarly our sense of communion — *saccharia to God*

2. Necessary for transmission of faith

*give this*  
how else can we mystical ~~expressions~~ sense of communion to others and to our children.

we have to talk about it and talk as we have seen is already a symbolization

why not use other symbols then, for they are so very much more

effective than words in the teaching of ideals

{ Providence...sukkah

{ Freedom...Pessach

Add symbols together and form an institution you have the most powerful educational force alone capable of transmitting the heritage of faith from generation to generation...

3. Disciplined confrontation <sup>of man</sup> with the ideal

we have seen that a man who relies on his spirit to move him is rarely if ever moved...

there has to be an atmosphere in which the growth of that spirit is rendered possible...

there has to be a place where man will be confronted with the ideal at regular intervals during his life...

in the world of every day life it is so very easy to get by with our conscience...

out there the little penny is so close to our eyes that we cannot see the sun

out there there ~~is a darkness which completely~~ we can always find people whose lives are worse than ours

out there there is a moral darkness which completely obliterates the greyness of our own compromises and surrenders

but within the synagogue and church a man is confronted with the ~~very~~ absolute and no man can be his best without such confrontation

4. Lastly, I think that it is within the institution that we can find the spiritual companionship and resultant strength which is necessary to lead the life of the ideal.

Alone we are too weak, alone we are like drops of water...

What is a drop of water, when all is said and done, what is weaker, less potent for any effect. It is mist, invisible, it rises through the imperceptible ethers of the air and hangs in the air until cold strikes it and it congeals into a cloud whence it drops in the form of gentle rain upon the earth beneath. Sinking through the earth, it reaches the line of the rocks from whose side it oozes forth and trickles down until it meets other droplets as weak as itself. These combine to form the rivulet which flows on making music as it flows until it meets counterstreams. These combine to form the river, the river becomes the estuary, the estuary the ocean itself, and when God has marshalled the sum of the weakness of myriads of tiny droplets together they lift the mightiest of ships as if it were but a feather and the play with the winds as if they were mere instrument of sport.



We ~~are~~ in our individuality are weaker than tiny droplets of water and less potent for any effect, but when gathered together in the great ocean of life, we attain to a might that makes life not ignoble, but sublime...

These then are some of the reasons...

- 1 outer expression to inner emotion
- 2 provide us with an excellent vehicle for transmission of faith
- 3 they give us an opportunity for ~~constant~~ regular disciplined confrontation with the ideal
- 4 and lastly they offer us a place where we can find spiritual companionship and the strength to pursue the kind of life dictated by our God belief.

Perhaps I can summarize what I have said by telling... *Bayard*

Institutionalized religion is not the matter, it is the piping, without which we could not reach the water... But it is only a means to an end not the end

It is the kemach without which there can be no Torah

The Torah is communion with God... ultimately ~~our~~ strength is tested by whether we achieve that I-Thou relationship with the divine... only when we achieve this relationship can we think of ourselves as religious in the full sense of the term... only then are our lives invested with holiness...

Until then, what?

Why until then we will simply gather in our synagogue and wait for such ~~xx~~ moments, assured that ~~xx~~ <sup>they</sup> will come, and waiting patiently, we will pray..

Ledor vodor naggid godlecho

Ulnetzach netzocheem kedushoscho naggid

From generation to generation we declare thy greatness  
And through all ages we proclaim thy holiness  
God's praise shall never cease from our lips  
Praised by Thou O Lord, God of holiness

# Installation Acceptance

This is a solemn and fateful mement of my life. I stand in the presence of those who loved and taught me - my mother and my father. I am inducted into office as assistant rabbi by a ~~man~~ <sup>Rabbi Klein</sup> my senior colleague and friend, who ~~has~~ <sup>has nurtured it from youth to maturity</sup> serves this community with such distinction. And I stand before ~~this~~ <sup>the</sup> congregation the men and women of this holy congregation who will look to me for guidance. I feel weighed down by the burden <sup>of responsibility</sup> which now lies upon me and anxious doubts as to my ability assail me. With every fibre of my being I re-echo the words of Israel's liturgical poet: Hineni Heoni Mi maas, niras venifchad mipachad joshev thillos Yisroel. Behold I am poor in deeds, overwhelmed and affrighted by the awe of Him who dwells upon the praises of Israel.

Kind words have been spoken. Good wishes extended. I accept both, but not for myself. I accept them for this congregation. A congregation that honors its leaders, honors itself - thus said our rabbis. Moura rabboch, ~~Smoras~~ <sup>(does to</sup> Schomayim. A congregation that honors its leaders, <sup>to</sup> honor God.

It is appropriate that my induction be on <sup>this of all Sabbaths</sup> ~~the Sabbath~~, Schabbos Bereshis. - not just because of the coincidence of two beginnings, a beginning for me and a new beginning of scriptural readings, but also because exactly ~~thirteen~~ fifteen years ago today I occupied another pulpit and recited the words of Genesis. It was my first Sabbath in America, ~~a~~ <sup>the</sup> haven of refuge, a land which has meant <sup>come to</sup> so much to me. And it was also ~~myxxxxxxxmitzvah~~ the very Sabbath on which I recited the prayers and blessings marking my bar mitzvah. Schabbos Bereshis, today, is my bar-mitzvah schabbos - a golden day in the religious calendar of my life.

The words of my haftara are meaningful, especially today. In ~~sharp, incisive~~ <sup>powerful</sup> ~~language~~ <sup>80% of my language</sup> ~~language~~ <sup>xxxxxxxxxxxx</sup> the prophet Isayah enounces the words of God on High: 181 's yk

I, the Lord, have called Thee in righteousness, and have taken hold of Thy hand, and kept Thee and set Thee for a covenant of the wpeople for a light unto the nations. ~~Lifkouach enayim ivrous, lehot~~  
~~To open the eyes of the blind, to loosen the bound, to free from the~~

Naturally these words strike a responsive chord in my heart at this emotional moment, but it is my hope thatthat the vibrations set up by that chord within me will reach out and attune themselves to yours, achieving that spiritual harmony and understnading between rabbi and congregation without which all our efforts are foredoomed to failure, but which we we can march forward hand in hand with the blessed assurance that we can fulfill in our lives and in our times ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ <sup>Isayah, which is the fulfillment of the hope & prayer of</sup> ~~the destiny and task ordained for all of us: Lifkouach enayim ivrous~~ <sup>xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx</sup>

~~To open the eyes of the blind, To etc~~  
~~This is my fervent prayer on this day of my induction.~~ <sup>at sacred moment</sup>

One of the saddest things in the world, when you come to think of it, is the boredom of so many people in the midst of ever increasing opportunity for fullness of living. Here we are, with unlimited means for enjoyment at our command, means which kings of yesterday dared not dream possible, and yet we often find life unbearably dreary and dull. Our advanced methods of production allow us more time for leisure, thanks to man's inventive genius we can travel further and faster, the miracle of electronics has brought good music art and literature to our very fingertips, a veritable flood of books challenging our knowledge in every sphere of learning beckon to our reach - and with all that so many among us are literally bored to death.

George Bernard Shaw, whose caustic tongue destroyed the mask of pretense hiding many a human failing, tersely portrayed our malady when he said of a friend by way of eulogy that he "died at thirty and was buried at sixty." Measuring our reaction to life, many of us give up the ghost long before our final breath is drawn, or at best our life assumes the form of a longish doze, a trance-like state of semi-consciousness, neither fully awake nor fully asleep, a seemingly endless yawn stretching wearily unto death.

Far different is the spirit which is reflected in the Psalm we read as our Haftarah portion a moment ago. Its gifted author lived in an age far less complex than ours, far less exciting, an age which offered not one of the many means of living we deem vital, yet listen to his life-affirming words: "Hodu Ladonoi, Kiru bishmo, Houdiu Boameem alilosov... Give thanks unto the Lord call upon His name, make known his doings among the people. Sing unto Him, sing praises unto Him, speak ye of all His marvellous works." Whatever else we may read into these lines, there can be no doubt that the Psalmist was filled with a zest for life, that he was fired with the rapturous thrill of being.

This contrast of attitudes to life and means of living underscores a truth so old that whenever it is freshly realized, it is as though it were original and new. A man's world is no greater than his <sup>soul</sup> ~~home~~. Our enjoyment of life depends upon what is within us and not upon what is out there in the world. If we fail to discover the wonder of life, it is because the capacity to marvel has failed to come alive in ourselves. If the world does not stir us to the depth of our being, it is because we refuse to bare our full emotions to its magic touch. ~~Sweet~~



There can be little doubt that our sense of appreciation has been dulled, we have lost much of our capacity to marvel at the miracles of life. By and large in our age we are not given to amazement and to wonder. Few achievements arouse our admiration. Blandly we walk the way of life, unmoved by its essential magic.

Perhaps the surfeit of our blessings is responsible for this failing. We simply have so much that we take it all for granted: television which shows us a scene a thousand miles away, jets which streak from continent to continent in hours, even a man made moon which repeats the orbit of creation. Were it not for Sputnik's threat to our safety, surely we would take this marvel in our jaded stride as we accept all wonders.

We can trace this process and its consequence in the more immediate experience of our lives. Our young people, for instance, receive so many things so early in life, that they are less excited about their wonderful and expensive <sup>belongings</sup> gifts <sup>Some of us</sup> than ~~we~~ were at the gift of shiny penny years ago. And as they grow older the pattern continues: a ranch home as a wedding gift, furnished with every comfort and appliance, even to the car in the garage...and the result, the inevitable consequence, <sup>satiate appetite</sup> ~~monotony~~, boredom, for what else can match these initial gifts, what else is there to await,,,and with boredom comes the frantic search for excitement which some find vicariously in the world of make-belief and others more dangerously in infidelity. Whatever other reasons there are for the failure of modern marriage, here surely is a common cause: too much too soon...The title of an actress's autobiography aptly epitomizes a modern sickness and tragedy: an overabundance of blessings leading to boredom.

Our capacity fully to respond to the marvels of our world is blunted also by the scientific and pragmatic temper of our times. We have been taught to accept as real only that which can be established by reason and we are enjoined to value only what is useful. As a consequence we are oblivious to the greater part of <sup>life's blessings</sup> ~~available experiences~~, unprepared and unequipped to perceive <sup>them</sup> ~~it~~.

This is not to belittle the accomplishment of the practical and scientific in our age. These are vital to our existence, but they are not the whole of life. There is a greater portion of reality which cannot be established by reason, which is rooted in imagination and emotion. And there is a world of worth which is of little practical use.

Consider the realm of beauty which is subject neither to the practical nor to the scientific. To be sure now, the musicologist can analyze a Beethoven symphony, its movements and harmonic structure, but can his program notes even begin to reveal the wonder of hearing its performance? The chemist can determine the precise pigment of its many colors, but can he convey the deathless beauty of Michelangelo's Last Judgment? The physicist can tell us that water is made up of two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen. That is a scientific fact. But is that all we can say about water, is that the sum and substance of its essence? Shakespeare read books in brooks and the <sup>Irish poet says of him</sup> ~~Palmer~~ found firm faith in stilling waters. Surely their discoveries are as real as are the technical formulas of the laboratory.

The newer discoveries of biology and psychology tell us much about man. We can describe a person in terms of cells and chromosomes. We can pierce his nature with the X-ray machine. We can measure his behavior with tests and explain his actions by psychic laws. But all this <sup>leaves</sup> reveals really very little about man. To know more we must go from fact to feeling, from <sup>intellect</sup> ~~reason~~ to imagination. Only then can we begin to appreciate his capacity to think, his ability to dream, his willingness to sacrifice. Only then do we fathom the depth of his love. Nor can reason reveal the mystery of new life, it cannot retell that most wonderful of moments when we look for the first time at a child that is born, when we feel the clasp of tiny fingers, when we hear the cry of surging life.

How flat and narrow is our world also when we measure our means alone by their usefulness, when in Rilke's happy simile, we take hold of peacocks feathers to tickle each other while oblivious to their intrinsic charm. Multitudinous are life's blessings which are of little practical worth yet which as gifts are passing wonderful: the song of day and the silent wonder of the night, the earth's green covering of grass, the blue serenity of sea and sky, the petals on the flower and the wings in the air, and friendship and beauty and love...

In all truth, we can be bored by life only so long as our heart is as empty as the world is rich, when we fail to sense the wonder of the world, because of the surfeit of our gifts or because of our unwillingness to gather only that which is of use.

There is another inner failing, somewhat related to the first, which contributes to our sense of boredom. It is our failure to embrace life spontaneously, to give ourselves wholeheartedly to whatever we undertake to do. T.S. Eliot diagnosed this malady well when in his best known poem ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ The Love Song of Alfred ~~Prufrock~~ Prufrock, he has his hero say:

I have known them all...  
Have known the evenings, mornings afternoons  
I have measured out my life with coffee-spoons

There we have it...the smallest, most prudential common measure available - a coffee-spoon. Life measured out in spoons, emotion administered with a medicine dropper. No greatness of desire, no surrender to noble purpose, no "all thy ~~heart~~ heart and soul and might" in anything.

*Why this failure - lazy - to skilful to muster the added energy required -*  
Perhaps we are indolent, or perhaps we are afraid, afraid that if we give ourselves too much we may be hurt; after all, everything in life has its end - joy, beauty, love - *everything is limited with the thing of time itself*  
ultimately we must surrender all and the fonder our embrace, the greater the pain of our loss. But whatever the reason ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~, there can be no doubt that partial living exacts its penalty in boredom and in failure.

Beauty seen through narrowed eyes can bring no joy to life...

A love which is not wholehearted, is worse than no love at all. There is no true aliveness in it. You cannot build a marriage out of the maxim that one coffee spoonful must match another and that the thing to watch is that no one gets a spoonful ahead. What is needed rather are the spontaneities, the wholeheartedness, the simple gladness of an outgoing love...

This matter applies to our religious life as well. Our faith too is often only partial. We do not committ ourselves without reservations. We cannot say with the psalmist:

O udeh adonoi bechol libi - I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart. And that is why our religion lacks power, that is why it fails to sustain us in <sup>moments</sup> ~~the hours~~ of our greatest need.

People whose lives are rich and exciting, invariably are those who have learned to live from the fullness of the heart. Wise was the counsel of the ancient teacher: Kol asher timzoh jodcho la-asous, bechol cochacho taaseh...whatever thy hand findeth to do thou shalt do so with all thy might.

Here then is the sum and substance of our message: our heart is the doorway to the world. We cannot find in it what we do not find in ourselves. Its wonder is comensurate with our admirations...its beauty responds to the beauty of our soul.

Ultimately we receive from life what we bring to life...its blessings are as rich as our capacity for understanding and appreciation...It behooves us therefore not to pray for ever more munificent bounty: more flowering, more fruitage, more gladsome quivers of the happy flesh. It becomes us rather to pray with humble hearts that whatever be the gifts bestowed, they may stir within us an ever growing sense of wonder and of worth.

For the increasing revelation of the grandeur of life, is itself the highest gift. Let us, therefore, nurture this quality. As the days glide silently by and our soul accompanies their march in thoughtful contemplation, let rapt admiration spring forth up at every step. Let wonder and worship pour from our soul. May each new hour bring us a fresh sense of the sheer magic of living, so that beholding the deathless beauty of the world, we may respond to it with the deathless refrain: life is wonderful, life is good.



Yiskor - Shemini Atseres

With this day and service, we bring to an end the cycle of our festivals: Rosh Hashonah, Yom Kippur, Succos and now, Shemini Atseres. All of these holidays have a specific purpose and meaning, all, that is, except Shemini Atseres which is of unknown significance. The Bible orders its observance without elucidation; it is presented as an appendage, as it were, to the festival of Succos. Only Rashi, greatest of our Biblical commentators, ~~next~~ ventures an explanation: he likens the ordination of this day to the request of a king who asks his guests to remain even though the time of their stay has reached an end. "We are guests in the House of the Lord during the high holiday season. With Succos, the time of parting has come. But God says to us - <sup>ROSHE OLAI PERIDAKHEM</sup> ~~Per-ai Peridaschem~~ - I am so sorry to see you go. Stay yet another day."

We trust that God is reluctant to see us go. But be that as it may, we are reluctant, we are sorry, we regret the passing of our festive season, those precious days of sanctity in our lives, days of awe and days of rejoicing, that all too brief span of time in which the divine spark within us all, slumbering during the remainder of the year, is awakened to a bright and burning flame.

The sweet sorrow of leave taking fills us at this hour, and we do well to dedicate a portion of it to the contemplation of a more personal leavetaking, to Yiskor, to the memory of our near ones and dear ones who are no more.

We are assembled for a service of sorrow. Each of us at this hour revives in memory someone he has loved and lost: a mother or father, a husband or wife, a friend, or even <sup>little</sup> ~~a~~ child. And as we recall our dead, our hearts are filled with grief and loneliness, with yearning and with pain.

Grief, sorrow, loneliness - these are the emotions which fill us at this hour, surging within us like the billows of a storm-tossed sea. <sup>6</sup> Our dominant desire is for comfort and for consolation. We long to find the still and stilling waters by which our soul may find its rest. ~~Is there a balm for grief? Can one escape grief? Is it possible to still the anguish of bereavement? It must be possible, for we all know people who rise~~

Is there a balm for Gilead? Can one assuage grief? Is it possible to still the anguish of bereavement? It must be possible for we all know people who rise above their losses ~~of the moment~~ and face the future with spirit undismayed. Consider such people for a moment and see: they accept the sorrow of life as the unavoidable <sup>price</sup> ~~penalty~~ for its joy, they resolutely refuse to yield to the obsession of despair, and with iron-bound determination they return to the tasks and responsibilities of life. In such a manner do they meet death's challenge to the spirit, and so must we, in like manner, answer the demand of the hour of bereavement.

Acceptance is that hour's first demand, the willingness to see and take life as it is, with its shadows as well as its lights, its pains as well as its <sup>pleasure</sup> ~~joys~~. Over-absorption in sorrow invariably is the result of an imperfect view of life - a view which sees purpose only in pleasure. A well rounded vision <sup>of all life</sup> assigns sorrow its due ~~place~~ and prevents it from passing legitimate bounds.

There is a tender tale told in the literature of the Greek people about Prometheus who is supposed to have brought not only fire, but all life to earth. <sup>weakly</sup> of molding the animals out of clay, he used up all the available supply of water. Consequently, when he came to make man, there was nothing with which to bind the clay together and he found it breaking apart and crumbling in his hands.

Some of the gods ~~xx~~ suggested that this was an omen that man had better be left uncreated.

Why not be satisfied with the multitude of living creatures already in existence?

But Prometheus refused to be frustrated. He looked up into the sky for signs of rain: there was not a cloud to be seen beneath the brazen vault of heaven. He searched the garden of creation for undiscovered wells and springs, the gods had dried them all up.

Even the grass was beginning to be parched.

At last, Prometheus threw himself down <sup>on</sup> the ground and wept, and then, while his grief was still unspent, he saw that his tears had moistened the clay and that it held

together. Swiftly, he molded it afresh, and before the sun went down he was ready to breathe the breath of his own life into the image he had fashioned; <sup>OUT OF THE MIXTURE OF CLAY & TEARS</sup> ~~and~~ thus <sup>was</sup> ~~was~~ man, the child of ~~desire and~~ sorrow, created.

The meaning of this myth is unmistakeable: in the composition of human life, tears are just as natural as laughter; the substance of sorrow has been in us from the beginning. You cannot have desire without heart-ache, or feel the poignancy of yearning without knowing the closeness of despair. There is no love, without its loss, no life without death.

We must accept this fact - accept it gladly, bravely. To fight it is to fight God and nature and to smash our heads against the rocks of the inevitable reaping a harvest of pain over and above what should be ours. ~~Sorrow~~<sup>So</sup> Much of our anguish in bereavement is due to our inability to see this truth; our resentment and our fears are ~~founded~~<sup>after</sup> on the belief that things might have turned out otherwise. Let us find solace in the knowledge that things must turn out as they have, for life means that eventually death must come and complete it; life simply may not be had on any other terms.

<sup>Yes,</sup> We must learn to accept our sorrow - and yet ~~we~~<sup>though we accept it</sup> must never surrender to it, this is the second demand of the hour of bereavement: not to plunge into ~~the~~ dark despair, not to yield to the obsession of sorrow, ~~not~~<sup>never</sup> to live cloistered behind the gloomy walls of an ill-controlled grief.

<sup>a great many people who</sup> There are people <sup>who</sup> turn their sorrow into a permanent melancholy until it becomes almost an emotional indulgence. Because they find themselves sometimes sorrow laden they insist upon being always so. Thus they are able to sever themselves from what needs to be done in the world. "It is all hopeless," they say, "quite hopeless!" And because they can say it is hopeless, they feel excused from trying to do anything about it. ~~There is~~

~~Surrender~~  
This is surrender. This is escape - and sorrow can be that, an escape from life. A person who succumbs to his grief often thinks that he is somehow a superior sort of person. He has faced the worst, he says, and is not deceived like other people. But he is deceived. He deceives himself. He has not faced the worst/ He has only glanced at it - and run away in complete retreat.

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH IS A PLACE OF ULTIMATE DESPAIR ONLY FOR  
~~Man must pass through the valley of the shadow of death; it is a place of ultimate~~  
~~THOSE WHO STAY IN IT, NOT FOR THOSE WHO PASS THROUGH IT. ~~Those who~~ WHO WALK BEYOND,~~  
destruction only for those who stay in it. There has to be an end to mourning. Why?

Because we must live. That is the most compelling argument man knows. We must live, live and work, live and carry on the ~~business~~<sup>business</sup> of our lives.

This, it seems to me, is the final measure we can undertake in our struggle to overcome grief: to turn from feeling to doing, from the grave to the noise of the city, from the peace that rests upon the changed countenance of the dead to the keen struggles and quick doings of the living.

Each of us has a task in life - the scientist his search for truth, the mother her child, the poet his song, the ditch digger his ditch, and the merchant his business. Bereavement does not relieve us of these obligations. There is work to be done, there are duties to be met, promises to be kept. In short, there is a life which must be lived, for life, no matter what else it may do to us, ~~we~~ cannot take from us the task and duty which it itself imposes upon us. And it is in the performance of these duties that we can find the strength to face whatever life has to offer.

Of the courage which comes from one's duty done, I could give illustrations from some of mankind's greatest souls; but the most beautiful illustration I know is found in the simple Latin inscription left by a simple Roman woman who lived over 2000 years ago. Here is what she says: "Stranger I have only little to say. Stop and read. This is the grave of a not to beautiful woman. I loved my husband with all my heart. I gave birth to two sons. One I leave behind me alive, the other I buried in his youth. I served my household, I spun my wool, I tended my hearth. Dixi, Abi! I have spoken, you may depart."

What a wealth of quiet dignity in these simple words of a simple woman. This is living with courage. This is the secret of ~~the escape from~~ <sup>what to do with</sup> grief. Not illusion, not escape. but a fulfillment of one's task in life, as best as one may.

When grief takes a hold of our lives, <sup>then</sup> let us choose the path <sup>of duty</sup>: let the mother tend her young, ~~and let~~ <sup>let</sup> the poet sing his song, the laborer dig his ditch and the merchant do his best. Let us do more than that, let us do our duty toward others, toward those less fortunate than we, for it is a strange and ~~warning~~ <sup>behold</sup> thing to see how quickly our tears of self-pity dry when we ~~see~~ the tears of others.

Is not the path of duty also the finest way of honoring our loved <sup>one</sup> who are no more? The living have <sup>an</sup> ever larger claim upon us than the dead. Nay, the noblest tribute to the



dead is not the tribute of idle weeping, but the tribute of beneficent works. Hugging a tombstone is no way to remember the worth of the dead; the better way is to espouse fervently the cause of life.

Bearing our burdens therefore means three things: the acceptance of grief as the unavoidable substance of life, the refusal to surrender all of life to grief, and a return to the tasks and responsibilities of living.

May these thoughts give us comfort and support at this hour when we recall our dear departed, as we again open the wounds which time has barely healed. May they enable us to find the valley of the shadow of death not a place whose darkness and gloom will envelope us forever, but rather as a place ~~for~~ of temporary sojourn, a place we merely walk through.

And having walked through it with bated breath, perhaps, and with pain and grief, <sup>may</sup> we come to that which lies beyond, where there is light, the light of new hope, the light of new life.

Then will we be enabled to pray with the psalmist of old:

Adonoy Roi Lo Ehsor  
There Lord is my shephard, I shall not want etc..

Memory of the past, reverence for things of the past is a leitmotif of our faith, a central theme in the symphony of noble thoughts and lofty ideals that is Judaism. The Jewish people were the very first to develop a sense of history, the awareness that past, present and future are more than just a succession of isolated events, but rather that they represent a stream of life originating from a single source and impelled by a single ~~moti~~ purpose. Judaism has always insisted on knowledge of the past - the Bible is, to a large extent, a book of history; and many of our rituals, particularly the ceremonies attendant upon our holidays (the Chanukkah candles, the Passover Seder, the Succoh of the Feast of Tabernacles) were designed and are to be observed as a means of keeping alive for our times the wondrous events of our past.

Shemini Atzeres, the festival we mark tonight, is such a holiday of history, commemorating the days when countless pilgrims flocked to the Temple on Mount Moriah to thank God for the blessings of the harvest. And a moment ago we recited the Yizkor service, the memorial prayers which recall a more immediate past, bringing to mind with loving tenderness things of the past, persons and places endeared by memory and affection.

The prayers and hymns of the Yizkor service express Judaism's ardent faith in the immortality of man. As we recite these prayers and ponder over their meaning, probing questions inexorable present themselves to us, demanding an answer: What happens to us after we die? Is there such a thing as life after death or is there only nothingness? And if there is a life after death, what kind of life will it be, will there be an actual physical resurrection or only an eternal wandering of the soul? These questions demand an answer, not only because we want consolation for the bereaved and an allaying of our own fears; these questions demand an answer, because the nature of that answer will determine to a great extent just how we are to live this life, our earthly life.

Man has always groped for knowledge of life after death, and the Jew was no exception. Throughout the generation, our greatest thinkers and dreamers <sup>expended</sup> ~~spent~~ their powers <sup>on concentration</sup> on this most perplexing theme, and a great many different answers were given: many insisted that there will be an actual physical resurrection - a time when the dry bones will be gathered together and covered with sinews and flesh and skin, when they will be filled again with the breath of life, and live; - we all recall how our parents would insist on having ~~expire~~ some grains of sand from the holy land under their coffins, orthodox cemeteries still have all graves facing the east, and the most devout of our ancestors would ~~make~~ <sup>try</sup> a final journey to the land of Israel in order to be buried there - all this a preparation for the day of physical resurrection <sup>which it was thought to be</sup> heralded by ~~the resurrection of~~ the Messiah <sup>who is to make his</sup> ~~who was thought to make~~ his first appearance in the holy land. The more mystical among Jewish thinkers <sup>as</sup> ~~gave~~ <sup>went to their</sup> vivid descriptions <sup>of life</sup> after death - hell and its horrors for the sinner, and for the devout the bliss of heaven <sup>where</sup> ~~where~~ God <sup>held</sup> ~~held~~ court surrounded by his faithful. The rationalists among us, affirmed <sup>the concept</sup> ~~a belief~~ in the immortality of the soul, <sup>the belief</sup> that though the body perish, the soul which ~~gave~~ <sup>gives</sup> it life, that spark which made of a piece of clay a living thinking breathing being, <sup>will</sup> ~~would~~ live forever more. But whatever the particular <sup>person's</sup> ~~opinion~~, whether rationalist or mystic, traditionalist or modernist, all Jewish thinkers shared one great belief, that there is an afterlife with God.

This profound conviction is based on the belief in the goodness of God. Other religions bind ~~their belief to~~ immortality to a miraculous event; Christianity sees the promise of <sup>eternal life</sup> ~~immortality~~ in the resurrection of Jesus. ~~Judaism~~ <sup>such</sup> and Jews need no miracle; they believe in God, and hence they <sup>also</sup> believe in the immortality of man, for God who created man would not want him to perish entirely.

These two convictions ~~do~~ go hand in hand - the belief in God and the belief in immortality, one without the other is quite meaningless, and both are necessary if life is to have <sup>any</sup> ~~any~~ meaning. If there is no God, if we are only colloidal solutions compounded by chance, where do we get the capacity for kindness and the impulse to love and to create? And if there is no immortality, why should we bleed and struggle and sacrifice in order to ~~create~~ preserve these values? Would God ~~create~~ <sup>void</sup> ~~create~~ man only to have him perish and with it ~~lose~~ the value ~~which~~ man represents? This would be <sup>s</sup> senseless as a human artist creating with perishable material - a great sculptor does not use sandstone to fashion things of beauty, he uses marble. If life is to have any meaning, there is a God, and if there is a God, there is immortal life for man and his soul - this is our firm conviction, our ardent faith, even though we may have to await the experience of death and what lies beyond it for the ultimate confirmation of our belief.

There are, of course, ~~some~~ kinds of immortality which we can confirm earthly through the experience of our <sup>lives</sup>. There is the immortality of memory and the <sup>of the</sup> immortality of the human deed. Those who are gone are with us, we can almost sense their physical presence whenever we remember them. And their deeds are also everlasting, they are ~~not~~ interred with their bones. This is what we mean when, in our ~~memorial~~ memorial prayers we say of our dead that they "still live on earth in the acts of goodness they performed and in the hearts of those who cherish their memory."

The deeds of men are immortal. None of us leave life the same as we found it. All of us influence life for better or for worse, or rather for better and for worse, and after we are gone, the influence of our <sup>life</sup> ~~will affect future generations both for good and for bad~~ <sup>will exist in the lives of generations to come</sup>.



Look around you and see, see the war ~~here~~ scarred cities of many lands, see our own ill-planned communities and their slums, in them live the greed and the stupidity of the dead of earlier generations. Look at some of the social derelicts filling prisons and asylums, all living out in their wretched lives the immorality of parents long since dead. Look at the disease-ridden ward of hospitals, wards which could be empty would past generations ~~have~~ have spent as much effort in fashioning instruments of health and healing as they did in finding new, deadlier ways to kill and to destroy. Yes, our own incredible inhumanity and ferocity will live on in the crushing burden of death and destruction our wars have bequeathed to future generation.

Truly, the evil that men do lives after them, God doth visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the third ~~and~~ fourth generation. But the good that men do also lives after them - it also cannot be interred with their bones. We do not have to build society new each year, and though we have our share of slums and war-torn cities, we have also hospitals and schools and many institutions of human love reflecting and retaining the goodness of those who went before us. And just as our physical civilization lives ~~and~~ breathes through the good in the lives of the past so does our spiritual civilization live and breath through the spirit of past teachers and thinkers, from Moses to Isayah, from Lincoln to Roosevelt. These many live immortal in their thoughts.

Perhaps this is the very lesson the Deuteronomist wanted to teach us when he pointed out in the Torah section read but a moment ago, that no one <sup>really</sup> knows the sepulchre of Moses, no one knows where Moses is buried. ~~Perhaps he meant to say that~~ ~~one~~ cannot bury a Moses, one cannot confine him to the four walls of a grave. He lives on in the hearts of the people whose soul is filled with his spirit. Note also, that we Jews have no Moses ~~any~~ worship and no Moses day in our festival calendar, but we do have a Simchas Torah, extolling the spiritual heritage of Moses which is eternal.

A similar thought is expressed in the <sup>rich</sup> literature of ancient Greece. When Socrates was condemned to death and was about to drink the poisoned cup, his friend Crito asked him how he wished to be buried. Socrates replied that insofar as the funeral formalities are concerned, his friends could do what they pleased, but he added, you cannot bury Socrates. ~~Men~~ might bury the body of Socrates, but ~~thy~~ can never enter the spirit which we still acclaim as Socrates.

True enough, it is not given to all of us to be as wise as a Socrates or as effective a leader as Moses, but each of us can accomplish something in life which will benefit future generations. The Talmud tells the familiar story of an old man who was seen planting a slow-bearing fruit tree ~~a~~ <sup>beside</sup> a side of road; when the passers by mocked him and told him that he would never live to eat the fruits of that tree he humbly answered: Al my life I have been eating the fruit of trees planted by those who lived long before me; should I not now plant a tree for those who come after me." It is not given to all of us to plant a mighty forest of sturdy trees. But each of us can at least plant a slender shoot which will bring shade and ~~refreshment~~ <sup>refreshment</sup> to our children.

We have thought carefully and probed diligently for knowledge of life after death. The weight of our tradition, bolstered by the insights of great men, gives us the assurance that there is an afterlife with God. ~~But~~ We accept this assurance with the prayer that our faith will find confirmation when we are called upon to take the lonely road to the hereafter.

In the meantime, may God give us the strength so to demean ourselves on earth, so that when our children will recite ~~the~~ <sup>for us</sup> Yiskor prayers they will be able to say of us, even as we say now of our parents: thy lovely words, thy lovely deeds, they are a blessing unto us.

Yizkor

My friends,

Once again we have reached this holiest of moments on this most holy Day.  
Once again we <sup>are</sup> gathered in solemn assembly to recite the prayers of our Yizkor service. <sup>And</sup> ~~Once again~~ we speak <sup>Still another</sup> farewell in memory to those who have been taken from us.

Each one of us at this hour remembers someone he has loved and lost:  
a mother or father, a husband or wife, a child or a friend.

Some among us are opening older wounds, memories of a more distant past.  
Others, alas too many, are still numbed by the anguish of recent bereavement.  
But however great or small the sweep of time since their passing,  
we still mourn... we still lament our loss...  
for we still remember... remember the happiness that was ours when they were near,  
the care they gave us in boundless measure, the love which sweetened our days.  
Their image lives within us still, a silent secret of the soul...  
and will remain with us forever.

No, we need no service of remembrance to remind us lest we forget...  
We need no reminders, we remember too well...

Memories come

to interrupt our sleep

to still our laughter

to fill our silence with the voices of the past.

We are here not to be reminded, but to be consoled, to find healing <sup>balm</sup> for the wounds of heart.

Is there a balm for Gilead? Can we find our comfort? <sup>Where is the</sup> ~~Where is the~~ source of <sup>inner</sup> ~~new~~ strength?

Perhaps we can find a measure of consolation in the knowledge of tragedy's universality, in the truth that we were not chosen ~~especially~~ for affliction in bereavement, but that we bear a destiny common to every man. We are all 'achim l'tsuroh' brothers in our agony, brothers in pain. Sooner or later we all must face the death of our loved ones; and sooner or later we too will hear the summons which comes from the unknown beyond.

It is a summons which is undeniable. No man, however mighty, can escape its call. We may think that we are strong and durable. We may boast of our power, we may glory in our ~~wealth~~ <sup>might</sup>. But when the truth is seen and told, we are as frail and as perishable as the succah which we will enter next week our strength is no stronger than the strength of this booth thrown together in haphazard fashion:

a few sticks in the ground  
an improvised wall or two  
a leaking roof  
no shelter at all against the gusts of autumn  
only a temporary dwelling erected for use during seven days...  
or is it seven decades... We are that booth, fragile and lacking in power.

The reminder of man's common destiny may not hearten us. But it ~~may~~ <sup>will</sup> serve to help us overcome at least a measure of our mourning.

For you see so very much of our ~~mourning~~ anguish in bereavement is rooted in resentment, in the somewhat self-centered belief that we were singled out for sorrow.

Or else our anguish grows out of remorse out of the wistful thought that things might have ~~turned out~~ <sup>been</sup> otherwise had only we dealt otherwise.

Let us take solace in the knowledge that things must turn out as they have for life means that death must come and complete it.

Life simply cannot be had on any other terms...

There is ~~another~~ <sup>second</sup> source of strength in the hour of bereavement.

It is the voice of duty, the voice which calls us

from the thoughts of the past to the demands of the present

from the silence of the grave to the tasks and responsibilities of life.

Each of us has his task in life

the preacher his pulpit

the doctor his patients

the mother her children

the father his profession

the poet his songs

Bereavement does not relieve us of these obligations. There is work to be done... there are duties to be met... there are promises to be kept...

In a word, there is a life which must be lived, for life - whatever else it may do to us - it cannot take from us the tasks which it itself imposes upon us and it is in the determined fulfillment of these tasks that we may well find the strength and courage to continue life.

The pathway of duty also is surely the finest way of honoring our dead.

Hugging a tombstone is no way to remember their worth

We do not honor them by weeping

We do not honor them by wailing

we do not hallow their memories by watering their graves with our tears

We honor them best when we live as they desire

when we cherish causes they embraced

when we love the living whom they loved in life.



There is still another thought which can give us comfort in the hour of bereavement.

It is the thought of God. It is our faith in His goodness. It is our conviction that He who creates life will not abandon those we love to the eternal midnight of the Tomb.

Even as we think of our dead, the sense of their continued presence is stronger than the knowledge of their death

the words they spoke

the joy they offered

the love they gave in life

these will warm and sustain us always

For these precious endowments were never bound to their bodily frame

to the fibres of their muscles,

to the marrow of their bones

they came from a spirit within them and beyond them

and this spirit lives on, for everlasting blessing.

The belief in immortality is our soul's invincible surmise.

In the hour of despair and desolation

when our fondest hopes are shattered

and we speak to unresponsive clay and weep over motionless form

This thought alone can ease the bitterness of our grief.

The hope for life eternal shines brightest in our darkest night.

It is in the desert of our affliction that we behold its radiant flame.

Through these healing balms can sorrowing man attain his peace

By accepting sorrow as the inevitable ingredient of life, and death as its inevitable ~~end~~ end; by making a determined effort to turn from the grave to

life, heeding its call to duty; and by crowning all these with faith in God

WITH THE CONVICTION THAT HE WHO PLACED MAN UPON EARTH  
AND GAVE HIM A MIND TO SEEK TRUTH + A HEART TO SEE BEAUTY  
WILL NOT CRUSH IT ALL FOREVER.

May these thoughts give us comfort as we prepare to recall our loved ones  
who have reached their horizon and are gone out of sight

May they enable us to find the valey of the shadow of death not a place of ~~per~~  
whose gloom and whose darkness will envelop us forever  
but rather a place of temporary sojourn, a place we merely walk through.

And having walked through it, with bated breath perhaps, and surely not without  
~~tears~~ ~~pain~~, may we come to that which lies beyond, where there is the light  
the light of new hope  
the light of new life.

1959

Yom Kippur Sermon

Once again, by the grace of God, we have reached this holiest moment of the Jewish Year - Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Once again we stand before the throne of the Most High and pray in the words of our teacher Moses: "כְּסִלּוֹתֵינוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ - Pardon, I beseech Thee, the iniquity of this people, as Thou hast pardoned this people from Egypt even until now." And once again we are anxious to hear the divine response: "כְּדִבְרֵי יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ" And the Lord said, I have forgiven according to thy word."

At this hour, so sacred unto Israel, the preacher feels that only the noblest ideas, Judaism's highest principles, should be proclaimed and propounded from this pulpit. We take as our text, therefore, those familiar words from the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy <sup>words</sup> which constitute the central dictum of our faith:

"שְׁמָע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֶחָד"  
"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord  
is One."

These words enshrine Judaism's greatest contribution to the making of mankind's mind. They constitute the supreme confession of faith in the religion of the synagogue declaring that the Holy God worshipped and proclaimed by Israel is One, that He alone is God who was and is and ever will be.

The Shema rightly occupies a central place in Jewish religious thought, for every other Jewish belief turns upon it. All goes back to it. All flows from it. Implicit in this sublime pronouncement is a declaration of war against all the "isms" of religion, against polytheism and dualism and pantheism, and against the belief in a trinity. The

Shema affirms that there is no intermediary between man and G<sup>d</sup>, that prayer is to be directed to God alone and to no other being <sup>to</sup> in the heavens above or on the earth beneath. Implicit in the Shema also is the Jewish affirmation of the brotherhood of man as well as Jewish Messianic expectation of a Kingdom of God on earth. <sup>For</sup> If God is one, then he must be the father of all mankind, which means, by logical necessity, that all <sup>beings</sup> human are brothers and owe each other the obligations and the love of brotherhood. And since God is One for all the universe then the day must inevitable come when all men will recognize him as such and proclaim Him as the one supreme deity. Then there will be no more man made wars nor man made poverty, but every man will sit under his vine and under his fig tree and none shall make him afraid.

Fully conscious of the spiritual wonders enshrined in the Shema, the rabbis made certain that its truths <sup>would saturate</sup> to the highest and the humblest in Israel. They assigned the Shema a central place in the liturgy of the Jew. They ordered that it be recited at least three times a day. They made the Shema a part of the Torah service. They included it in the Kedusha. They ordered it as the final prayer ~~administering~~ concluding the Neilah service, culminating worship on the Day of Atonement. And they ordained that the six words of the Shema be uttered in mans final hour when he is preparing to meet his heavenly master face to face.

The pedagogical efforts of the rabbis bore rich fruit. The Shema became the Jew's supreme confession of faith. The first prayer of innocent childhood and the last utterance of the dying, it became the rallying cry by which a hundred generations in Israel were welded together into one great brotherhood to do the will of their father in heaven. And it became the watch-word of myriads of Jewish martyrs who agonized for the Unity and died - died with "Shema Yisroel" on their lips.

Today and alas, many Jews, especially in this country, have lost some of the enthusiasm for this prayer, at least they seem to have lost passion for some of the ideals the Shema's history evokes: a willingness to sacrifice for religion, a steadfast devotion, the pride in faith that everlastingly proclaims: I am a Jew, and proud of it.

Of course there is some justification for this decline in spirit. No more than a decade ago, six million Jews were killed, ~~slaughtered~~ butchered, not in ~~the~~ wilds of Africa, no amongst primitive peoples, but in the heart and center of European and Christian civilization. And the slaughter was engineered by a people that <sup>once</sup> stood in the van of progress, whose poets were world figures, whose universities were ~~xxx~~ Mecca for seekers after truth and the symphonies of whose composers are still played wherever orchestras assemble. Knowing that Americans sprang from the same stock as did the peoples of Europe, American Jews wonder and fear whether the same passions and hostilities aroused there could not be evoked here. To avert this there are some in our midst who suggest that Jews be seen and heard as little as possible. They are overwhelmed by the fact that the Jews are a minority and being so must seek the good will of the majority, cater to its whims and accept its prejudices. But, on this Atonement Day, standing before a throng of silent worshippers and reciting the Shema, I recall the millions upon millions of Jewish martyrs who died for their faith, I recall particularly the thousands upon thousand of Jewish young men who gave themselves for America in many a war for freedom, and I think I hear their blood cry out to us in protest saying that they did not die that we here living in a land of freedom should elect for ourselves a status of inferiority and should minimize our Jewishness in order to gain the good graces of the majority.



It might be noted, marginally, that this attitude is shared by half a million Jewish War Veterans, all of us who served in the armed forces, who, ~~in the~~ on the ~~armed services had minority status~~ front lines and under fire had no minority status and who in civilian walks of life want to enjoy the same rights and privileges as our non-Jewish comrades at arms.

First things first. On the matter of this our minority status, by American principle, we are no such thing. There are five million Jews in the United States. There are scores of religious denominations numerically smaller than Jews, and yet these are not considered members of minority groups. There are fewer Episcopalians, Evangelicals, Disciples, Unitarians, Seventh Day Adventists United Lutherans and Universalists than there are Jews on the American Scene. If Episcopalians are not members of a minority group, then neither are Jews. All members of religious groups in America are members of minority religion, for no denomination has a majority in our country. Nor are we hyphenated American. We are American. The term American refers to citizenship and nationality alone and is silent about religious conviction. As American we are certainly no minority. Our minority status then is pretty much a figment of our imagination. Like the proverbial age, we are what we feel, and too many of us want to feel like a minority, and what all of us to act like one and be overwhelmed by that thought.

Now this status of inferiority is suggested to us in the interest of good public relations. For instance, to be identified with cause about which the American people is divided must be avoided at all cost for it will serve to channel the wrath of the opposition against us. For this reasons Jews should be the leading conformists on the American scene - and this despite the heroic and magnificent record of non-comforty of our ancestors throughout the ages.

It has been assumed in some quarters that good public relations ~~could~~ for Jews could be developed by utilizing pretty much the same methods employed by

business concerns in an attempt to sell tooth paste or gasoline. Well, we Jews aren't tooth paste or gasoline. Business firms <sup>Cultivate the friendship of the public in order</sup> ~~want~~ to sell their product;

As such they are unconcerned about spiritual principles. But Judaism is, is very much concerned about spiritual principles. Judaism's task is not to win favor for Jews but to win public acceptance of its noble teachings. Judaism seeks first the applause of God and the commendation of history. It cannot compromise on its basic principles for the sake of good public relations. If, centuries ago, our ancestors had consulted public relations experts they would have been told that they could win good will, by the abandonment of their religious heritage, of their faith in God, of their adherence to the second commandment which states that thou shalt have no other God before me. Our ancestors did not relish living in ghettos, being exiled periodically, <sup>seeing</sup> ~~having~~ their sons and daughters burned at the stake. But they refused to buy good public relations at the expense of their religious conviction, for them they ~~lived~~ lived, and, if need be, for them they died.

This is not to say that we should not be eager upon achieving perfect understanding between Jews and Christians. But if, in order to have that understanding we must cease to be Jews, we must do that which makes for a minimizing of our Jewishness, then we simply have to do without such understanding.

But of course, we don't have to minimize our Jewishness in order to gain the respect of the non Jew. It is time ~~that~~ we learn this truth, the truth that the best public relations for Jews here in America can be achieved through Judaism. That the best good will publication for Jews here in America is the Bible. That the best way of winning the applause of the American community is be regularly filling the shrine dedicated to the worship of <sup>the One God</sup> ~~Jehovah~~ and by maintaining and upholding Judaism, that Judaism which has fashioned civilizations, that Judaism which produced the authors of the old and the new testament, that Judaism which gave birth to the synagogue, the church the mosque, etc. That Judaism has won the applause of history.

If we are true to our task we shall live to further great convictions about One God and one humanity, about the equality of all races and all nations and all degrees of education in the sight of God and in the sight of man. To this we must tes-

tify today in the American scene. Away then with the council of timidity! Away with the caution of cowardice! Away with those who would flatter themselves into the good graces of the powerful. Away with those who have no principles? Away with those who beg for good will and toady for favor. Who are we? We are American with our roots deep in American soil. Children of a faith whose correligionists were with Columbus when he discovered America; whose sons were with Washington at Valley Forge; who wore the uniforms of the blue and the gray; who died at Belleau Woods, at Guadalcanal, on the beaches of Sicily and on the plains of France. And who, at this very moment are rotting in the putrid camps of North Korea.

We are American. We elect to be Jews. We reject, must utterly reject, the suggestion of protective minority mimicry. We shall stand for the right as God gives us to see the right. Stand for it when it ~~is~~ is popular and pray for the strength to stand for it when it is not. We shall champion the brotherhood of all races whether a public referendum on the subject would endorse or reject it. .

We are not chameleons who constantly change color to suit majority opinion. We hold great truths and champion great principles. We shall exercise our full fledged right as American citizens with the boldness of conviction, the courage of truth, and the heroism of soldiers on the field of battle.

Have I been too vehement, too outspoken? Should I have spoken more gently? But on this Yom Kippur day I remember the millions upon millions of Jewish martyrs, I remember the thousands upon thousands of Jews who died for America. I remember particularly my own good friend, Bill Levy who was torn to shreds at my side in Italy. They did not die that we here in this land of freedom should be hesitant about our Jewishness. If we are timid, because of fear of ill will about exercising these rights, then they died in vain. If we exercise them to practice and proclaim the faith in one God and in <sup>O</sup><sub>n</sub>e humanity, then we vindicate their heroism and they sleep in peace.

strength. Grant us O God the strength

We pray then this day for God's gift of ~~wisdom and strength~~ and wisdom ~~to~~ to seek and obtain the understanding and favor of the world, not for ourselves as chameleons, but for ourselves as Jews, Jews proud of our faith, happy to affirm with full firm voice and everlastingly the clarion call of Israel's Ages: Shema Yisroel Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad. Hear O Israel, the Lord our God the Lord is One.

Once again we have reached this holiest day of the Jewish Year - Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Once again we enter our sanctuary and pray in the words of our teacher Moses:

"S'lach na la-avoun ha-om hazeh - Pardon, we beseech Thee, the iniquity of this people!" And once again we are anxious to hear the divine response: "Vajomer Adonai Solachti Kidvorecho - And the Lord said, I have forgiven even according to Thy word."

We are not alone in our prayers. "Atem Nitzovim Hayom Kulchem... All of you are standing before me this day...your leaders, your elders, your little ones...even the stranger that is your midst."

We are not individual Jews in an isolated community. All Israelites, in all lands approach God this day, and their ~~prayers~~ <sup>pleas</sup> mingle with ours <sup>to</sup> to form one mighty psalm of supplication ascending on high. The past is with us this day. The ~~prayers~~ <sup>pleas</sup> and the tears of our fathers lend wings to our own prayers and carry them to the very throne of God. In the stillness, the silent awe of this <sup>solemn</sup> hour we ~~seem to~~ <sup>can almost</sup> sense the presence of those who went before us - their souls seem to shape the <sup>very</sup> shadows that move to and fro about us - the souls of seer and sage...of Moses ~~and~~ <sup>here to</sup> Isayah ~~and~~ Jeremiah - the souls of martyrs...of Judah ~~and~~ Bar Kochbah...of Hanina ben Teradyon...of Trumpeldor ~~and~~ the men and women of the Warsaw Ghetto...the souls of 1 200 000 little children butchered by the masters of a recent day... <sup>They too are</sup> <sup>with us</sup> "Lema-anom im lo lema-aneynu" For their sake, o God, if not for ours, <sup>or</sup> ~~help~~ Thou our prayer, and forgive.



This holiest of days was given us for blessing; it opens heaven's holiest treasure house to bring peace where there is no peace and forgiveness where there is only hatred; <sup>it is here to</sup> ~~it~~ offers love and warmth to those who are alone and lonely.

Surely this is the most terrifying of all experiences - loneliness. Surely nothing is more fearful than the thought of being continuously alone. "Woe unto him who is alone" cried the Ecclesiast, and long before him, the author of Genesis wisely declared "It is not good for man to dwell alone."

And yet, for some strange reason, life forces us to be alone. We come into this world alone. Each of us is created as a separate entity, not identical with anyone else, and we are constantly aware of this our uniqueness. <sup>Again,</sup> When we reason, ~~though~~ others may stimulate our thoughts, <sup>but when it comes to</sup> ~~when we make~~ the final decision, we make <sup>have to</sup> it alone. And when we leave this earth, again we are alone, no one is with us then. / And yet we cannot bear to be alone, to be unrelated to our fellowman. Our happiness depends on the closeness we feel with <sup>to others</sup> ~~our fellowmen~~, with past and future generations. Here is the great paradox of human existence: on the one hand we must strive for independence, for the preservation of our uniqueness and particularity; on the other hand, <sup>in order to be happy</sup> ~~for the sake of our happiness~~, we must seek closeness and oneness with others.

Our Jewish faith, profoundly sensitive to the needs of the human soul, <sup>shows</sup> ~~gives~~ us a way out of our dilemma. <sup>For</sup> Our fathers, with rare insight and vision, created a Day of Atonement which is really a day of at one-ment; a day which teaches us how to be at one with others even while we are at one with ourselves. What magic does this day wield? What strange and mysterious force can achieve that inner and outer harmony?



There is nothing mysterious about this force, nor is it far from us, for it is the core of our faith the heart and soul of Judaism. <sup>and</sup> It is proclaimed in the basic principle of our religion:

Ve-ohavto le-rey-acho ko-mochu  
Love your neighbor, even as you love yourself.

Love, love is the <sup>one</sup> ~~only~~ force which strengthens our own <sup>souls while at the</sup> ~~souls~~ and yet ~~same~~ <sup>gives us the capacity</sup> to touch the souls of our fellowmen and feel at one with ~~them~~.

Now, love is a very confusing word. We speak of our love for candy, and our love <sup>for</sup> a work of art. We say that we love the downtrodden people <sup>in</sup> ~~all~~ corners of the earth; and we say that we love our beloved. People say that nothing is easier than love, and that the difficulty lies only in finding the right object, the right partner. Nothing is further from the truth. Every human being has the capacity to love, but to realize love is one of the most difficult of <sup>tasks</sup> ~~achievements~~. Love cannot be achieved unless we have a knowledge of the object of our love and hence respect it. Love cannot be realized unless we have a sense of responsibility ~~and~~ toward that which we love and care for it. In other words, love is not a passion which we <sup>are</sup> overcome, it is a state which we achieve <sup>only by work, laboring & sacrificing</sup> ~~through labor~~ for something or for someone.

Is not this the very lesson of the biblical book of Jonah read on this Yom Kippur day? You ~~are~~ all familiar with the details, how God tells Jonah to go to Niniveh and to warn the inhabitants to mend their ways lest the wrath of God befall them, and how Jonah - after his abortive escape which lands him in the illustrious belly of the whale, finally does reach Nineveh and does preach his message of doom. The men of Niniveh repent and mend their ways, and God forgives them and decides not to destroy the city. Jonah is angry, he demands justice, not mercy and love. Finally he finds comfort under the shade of a plant which God had made to grow for him to protect him from the sun. When the plant wilts, Jonah again becomes ~~angry~~ and complains to God. And this is God's ~~answer~~ <sup>reply</sup>:

"Thou hast had pity on the gourd for which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow, it came up in a night and perished in a night; and should not I have pity on Niniveh, that great city wherein there are more than six score thousand persons and much cattle?"

God's answer to Jonah is <sup>my God</sup> clear. God <sup>feels</sup> ~~explains to~~ Jonah that to love is to labor for something and to make it grow. One loves that for which one labors and labors for that which one loves.

[REDACTED]

The noblest, purest love known to man is the love of a mother for her child. Is there such a thing as a mother's love without also a mother's labor, labor in bringing the child into the world, labor in rearing it? Surely it is no coincidence that the Hebrew term describing God's love for men is Rachamim, from the root Rechem, meaning ~~womb~~. <sup>WOMB</sup> ← God is called Rachamono-one who is filled with parentlike love for his children. Moses, in his finest hour, cried out: Adonoi, adonoi, O Lord, Lord who art possessed of lovingkindness. And all of Judaism's ethical demands on man are encompassed in the phrase: Rachamono Libbo Boi - God does not want fasting, and weeping, and sacrifices, ~~he~~ wants only the heart of man.

This is the burden of my message and the central <sup>admonition</sup> ~~message~~ of this holiest of days which bids each of us to find love. You have the capacity to love, O Man. Find it within your power to realize that love. You can realize it by working for other. And if you do you will help yourself and grow in stature, you will also finally find that elusive bluebird of happiness. You will love others, others will love you. You will be at one with yourself, at one with others and with God.

[REDACTED]

Perhaps a brief glance at the opposite side of the ledger will give us a better understanding of our fundamental theme. The Baal-shem-tov used to say: one cannot really appreciate the light unless one has experienced the dark. The opposite of love is hate, hatred bred by envy, and who among us has not felt its sting.

<sup>not only is our neighbor's</sup> ~~The~~ proverbial grass of our neighbor is greener, his job is better - you see he has <sup>important</sup> ~~better~~ connections - his home is more luxuriously furnished - we simply must have as big a living room - his wife is <sup>or as beautiful</sup> so much more glamorous - <sup>yes, but</sup> of course, he can afford to buy her the ~~app~~ a ~~fitting~~ wardrobe <sup>that brings out her best.</sup>

And what is the inevitable result? <sup>of us</sup> Fretting and complaining and broken homes. Does envy make us happy? <sup>no</sup> It makes us sick <sup>it fills us with</sup> and bitter. Does it least help our own cause, does it challenge us to improve ourselves.

Of course not, we are too busy coveting our neighbor's good fortune to see the good resources in our own lives and to build on them. We even manage to ruin the lives and futures of our children by comparing them enviously with others: other children have better grades in school - ~~what's the matter with you!~~ Other children know how to play piano, they can tap dance, ~~why can't you practice~~ - and in the process <sup>of comparing, coveting</sup> we are blinded to and ~~are~~ <sup>we</sup> to cultivate the talents our children do possess.

Not even our religious life is immune to this disease - here too so many of actions, and the resulting failures, are outgrowth of envy and not love. In the Bible we are told that ~~when~~ <sup>when</sup> the high priest entered the holy of holies on Yom Kippur he wore a simple white robe, <sup>when</sup> during the rest of the year, his garments were adorned with gold and silver and tinkling bells. But on Yom Kippur he entered unadorned, in ~~simple~~ <sup>pure</sup> white. Our rabbis, with prophetic insight offer this explanation. On Yom Kippur, the High Priest came before God to ask for His forgiveness.

How could he ask for pardon while wearing gold and silver, <sup>gold</sup> the damning evidence of man's greed ~~XXXXXXXX~~, gold which would have reminded God of the sin of the golden calf. Need ~~it be spelled out~~ <sup>we celebrate</sup>. In our day we <sup>men</sup> come before God garbed in our most ostentatious calculated to arouse ~~the~~ envy in others. Our fathers came to the Kol Nidrei service wrapped in their kittles, ~~these~~ simple linen shirts, their shrouds!

I know I speak too harshly...forgive me...<sup>you know well enough</sup> ~~and believe me that the same~~ <sup>but since you won't also fill</sup> passions, and failings, and hates and conflicts fill a rabbi's ~~heart~~ <sup>mind</sup> and soul.

When all is said and done, the relationship between a rabbi and his congregation is very much like that of the two men who chanced upon each other in a deep, dark forest. The one had been lost for days, and could not find his way home. He hailed his new friend with eagerness: Thank God I found you, show me the way out of this forest. (cont'd)

The other replied: I too am lost, I also have been wandering around for many days. But this I can tell you: Do not take the way I have been taking. It will lead you astray. And now let us look for a new way out together.

So it is with us. One thing I can tell you: the way we have been following this far we ought follow no further, for ~~tha~~ way leads one astray. But now let us look for a new way together, let us find the way to love.

In a few hours we will reach Neilah, the closing service of this holy day. Again we will rehearse the ancient prayer formula: Pessach lonu sha-ab, be-eyes ne-ilas sha-ar...O<sub>g</sub>en Thou the gates at the time of the closing of the gates. The gates of prayer are closing. The gates of mercy are always open. We can enter them. We can learn to love. Others may not give us much cause to love, but after all, there is enough sinass chinom in the worl, enough baseless, senseless hate; surely we can afford a little senseless, reasonless love. Ahavas Chinom, a little Who knows? Perhaps our love will be strong enough, powerful enough to ~~en~~voke ~~kima~~ the love of others. Haboucher amo Yisroel Beahavo... Yevorech es amo Behavo. May He who chose His people in love, bless His people with love.

Amen.



Yom Kippur Morning

Welcome to your father's house all ye who seek peace in the midst of life's struggle, all who have strayed away from the path of duty and responsibility and have become estranged from your God and your fellow men. This holiest of days offers healing to each bruised heart, it opens heavens holiest treasure house to hand us all the sweetest of all gifts: God's forgiveness and love: כ' א' תשנ"ו

~~For on this day He will grant you atonement to purify you from all your sins. Before the Lord shall ye be pure."~~ For on this day He will grant you atonement to purify you from all your sins. Before the Lord shall ye be pure."

Forgiveness is the promise of this day, its precious gift; we need it much, <sup>desperately</sup> little though ~~be~~ <sup>might be</sup> our merit. It is related of the Chassidic saint, Levi Yizchok of Berditchev, that during the solemn period between New Year and the Day of Atonement he stood at the door of his house, dull and listless, altogether out of harmony with the season, indifferent to its call of repentance, when suddenly a cobbler walked by, looking for work. Spying the rabbi he called out: Have you nothing that needs mending? Have I nothing that needs mending, Levi Yitzchok echoed reflectively, and then his heart contracted within him and he wept. He wept for his sins, for all those things in his soul and life that needed mending, the scuffed places, the split seams, the run down edges, the <sup>in his heart</sup> ~~breaks~~ of which, being a saint and hence an expert on the state of souls, he was all too well aware.

Have you nothing that needs mending? Here is the <sup>ringing challenge the</sup> ~~soul-searching~~ <sup>question</sup> of Yom Kippur - and if a saint could only <sup>keep in</sup> ~~answer~~ what must we do, we who stand guilty of almost every single transgression enumerated in our 'al chet, <sup>in</sup> our confessional?

We too can only beat out breasts and weep and pray with Moses: כ' א' תשנ"ו

"Pardon I beseech Thee, the iniquity of this people." And having thus submitted ourselves to God's judgment we stand with bowed heads and contrite hearts and prayerfully await the divine reply: . . . כ' א' תשנ"ו "And the Lord said, I have forgiven according to thy word."

We do need pardon on this day and always. We seek atonement. We long to be at one with God, at one with our fellow man...



2

Yom Kippur holds forth the promise of divine forgiveness. But it does not offer remission for the sins which we commit against our fellow man. To obtain his pardon we must redress the wrong and reconcile the aggrieved, <sup>perhaps most important</sup> and we must learn to be forgiving ourselves. <sup>He who waives his right</sup> of retribution is forgiven all his sins." Here is a central theme of our day: the law of reciprocity in forgiveness. It teaches us to know that if we are to merit pardon ourselves, we must first learn to pardon others.

He who forgives, he shall be forgiven - a noble thought, a lofty sentiment, and yet how difficult in execution! <sup>here at one time</sup> All of us have been hurt to the innermost recesses of our hearts in one way or another: through slander, humiliation, the deprivation or destruction of some dear possession, a promise broken, a trust betrayed, by friend or mate, ~~by husband or wife~~ by husband or wife. Who among us, thus wounded, has mustered the strength to forgive? Often we refrain from retaliation, to be sure, and we say that we forgive but 'we cannot forget.' Yet to say this is just another way of saying that we do not forgive. We remember the hurt and continue bitter in resentment.

The road to forgiveness is not easy to travel, often we lose our way, and yet we must discover it and traverse it if only that others may find the way to pardon us.

The first step along that <sup>road</sup> ~~way~~ most assuredly is the recognition that the alternatives to pardoning wrongs: - bitterness, vindictiveness, the desire to get even, to retaliate - are all <sup>of them</sup> essentially self-destructive attitudes. It may be true, as someone has said, that 'revenge is the sweetest morsel to the mouth,' but it almost always does more harm to the one who eats it than to anybody else. The dreams of vengeance may be sweet, but their fulfillment is ~~always~~ empty and their price too dear.

Revenge can lead to a fantastic self centeredness engendered by <sup>such</sup> an obsession of the injury done <sup>to them</sup> that there is little mind or heart for anyone or anything else. We all know <sup>such people</sup> lives consumed by ancient wrongs, wives and husbands, for instance, in broken marriages, who, decades after the breach, still talk of nothing else than the injustice done them and who, in consequence, are burdens to their friends, and, by preventing themselves from making new lives, their own worst enemies.

People who hate kill off a part of their own nature - the best part, and because they do all their relations have something of a death in them. They kill off the kindness in other people, the natural friendliness that is offered them, the spontaneities that make life joyous and beautiful. Wherever they go, these people, they are killers of the soul. Yet there is nothing that they do to other people that is anything like as harmful as what they do to themselves. Human beings are not like serpents immune to their own venom: in poisoning others, they poison themselves.

The inescapable fact of the matter is that our hearts simply aren't large enough to harbor both hatred and love. One or the other must give way, and where there is no love, life perishes. Recognizing this truth, we may find our way to forgiveness, and forgiving, others will pardon us.

~~Another~~ <sup>lead us in the direction</sup> ~~second~~ step which may ~~give us the strength to forgive~~ <sup>us</sup> is the frank admission of our guilt, the recognition of the mutuality of sin <sup>in this matter of</sup> ~~whenever there is an injury~~ <sup>guilt</sup>. Only the man who thinks himself all good is quick to condemn - self-righteousness is the hand-maiden of vengeance. He who recognizes his own failings knows how to pardon.

"There is no man on earth so righteous that he sinneth not" we ought to remember this truth when we seeth with the wrath of righteous indignation. We ought to remember, when we resent slander, that we too have slandered. And when we chafe with the pain of our humiliation we ought to recall how often we have trampled upon others and shamed them.

Knowingly or unknowingly we often injure others. We even hurt the people we love and who love us: <sup>our</sup> parents, our children, our mates and friends. It is a strange and wistful thing how ~~prone~~ we are to visit our resentment upon them, as if love gave us this privilege, and we rely on our loved ones for love's sake, to bear it. Do we want them to understand that we mean no evil, to understand and to forgive? Then we too must understand those who have offended against us.

A rabbi once gave a coin to a man of evil reputation. When his followers reproached him he replied: why should I be more particular than God who gave the coin to me?

Forgiving love is possible only for those who know that they themselves are not all good, who feel themselves in need of forgiveness. Admitting this need, we may find it in our hearts to pardon others, and others will pardon us.

Our final step along the road to forgiveness is understanding, the capacity to see others as we see ourselves, and the recognition of those forces beyond the individual's control which motivate his deeds.

יחזיק אדם את חבירו עד שיהיה במקומו "Judge not your fellow man until you stand in his place." Here is <sup>one</sup> rule of life we might do well to follow, particularly in the case of those who injure us. From without <sup>they</sup> ~~the~~ offender appears a villain, but the moment we think ourselves in his place <sup>at the moment we stand</sup> ~~we~~ see him as we see ourselves, we discover that he is ~~not~~ <sup>not</sup> really ~~so~~ <sup>poor</sup> unlike us, that he too is a frail <sup>and</sup> ~~human being~~ <sup>soul</sup>, with our limitations, and our fears and our thirst for life. In short, we discover that he is us - only the position is reversed - and that from his point of view he has every right to consider us the villain.

And if, per chance, on thinking ourselves in his place, we <sup>should</sup> ~~discover~~ that he is really somewhat less the man, we can ~~then~~ at least appreciate the reasons of his failure: beginnings, noble for us, ignoble for him - opportunities available to us, closed to him - brothers helpful to us, indifferent if not treacherous to him. A Chassidic rabbi ~~has~~ taught: cherish no hate for your brother who offends because you have not offended like him. If he possessed your nature, he might not have sinned. If you possessed his nature, you might have offended as he has done. A man's transgression depend not entirely on his free choice, but often upon circumstances far beyond his power.

To see others as we see ourselves is the surest means to pardon. Ultimately, of course, there is only One who can see <sup>others as we see ourselves</sup> ~~man as they really are~~ and weigh <sup>his</sup> ~~them~~ one against the other. And in His sight the differences between the good man and the bad man are insignificant. Let us then, like Joseph of old, face our brothers who offend and <sup>greet</sup> ~~forgive~~ them saying: fear not, for am I in the place of God. Thus forgiving we ~~will~~ <sup>be</sup> ~~may~~ <sup>find</sup> forgiveness.

Here then is the three-fold path to oneness, to at onement, to atonement: the recognition of hatred's self-destroying <sup>nature</sup> ~~attribute~~, the cognizance of our own need for forgiveness, and the capacity to see others as we see ourselves. This is the sum and substance of my message.

It is a simple ~~idea~~<sup>idea</sup>, an unassuming theme. Some may prefer a more ~~learned~~<sup>learned</sup> exposition. The preacher himself was tempted by metaphysical flights ~~as~~ by problems of national and international consequence. And yet, when all is said and done, ~~are not~~ our personal problems <sup>are so</sup> much more important than all other problems ~~which are~~<sup>which are</sup> ~~not~~ for ~~are not~~ the ~~former~~<sup>former</sup> and out-growth of the ~~latter~~<sup>latter</sup>, ~~are not~~ the sins of society <sup>are</sup> merely an overgrowth of the sins of the individual? ~~We cannot expect~~<sup>How for instance can we expect</sup> the southern communities of our land ~~to~~ speed integration as long as we ourselves refuse to deal graciously even with those more akin to us in faith ~~and~~<sup>and</sup> color? ~~We cannot~~<sup>How</sup> demand that nations apply the law of love so long as we ourselves, in our simple, everyday relations, resolutely continue to bear a grudge and dream of vengeance? The most fruitful soil for universal good-will is not so much in our larger relations as in the every-day human approach, in the ~~ev~~<sup>ev</sup>ry-day meetings of men. It is here, where we stand and in these seemingly trivial meetings, that the larger destiny of men is woven.

He who forgives  
A beautiful custom of great moral worth prevailed in the synagogues of a not too-distant  
past. On the eve of the day of Atonement, <sup>just before Kollel was</sup> men and women moved about the synagogue  
and accosted one another with a plea for forgiveness. We would do well to re-institute  
this custom and to do it one better, by not only asking for forgiveness but by singling  
out those who injured us <sup>and</sup> greet <sup>with the greeting</sup> them saying: I forgive you, <sup>for</sup> you are my brother.

~~Yes~~ - we need forgiveness from somebody - shall we not give it? Is there not enough pain and unhappiness in the world without our adding to its sum? Must we not all of us suffer disease and hunger, watch those we love die, see life slip from our fingers and dreams fade? Has not each heart its full share <sup>of pain</sup>, that we must seek revenge and fill the cup to overflowing? ~~Let us not tear ourselves from one another with our~~  
~~hate. The world is cold enough. Let us rather huddle together for warmth and hold~~

~~hands for comfort, so that in this terrifying business of living we may find some~~  
~~rest & peace. Just if life must have its sorrows it may be as slight as~~  
~~we can make it - that we may spread as much happiness as the bitter ones~~  
~~then happiness will come to them.~~

~~for use according to the word. Art 17~~



Let us not tear ourselves from one another with our hatred. The world is cold enough.  
Let us rather huddle together for warmth and ~~comfort~~ hold hands for comfort, so that  
in this this terrifying business of living we may find some rest and surcease. That  
if life must have its sorrow, it may be as slight as we can make it. That we may  
spread as much happiness as lies within our power to bestow. *between this day*  
*+ dark night we all lead to the world beyond*  
*surely* Then happiness will come to us and we *may even hear* ~~will merit to~~ hear the voice of our God call  
~~us out~~ Solachti Kidvorecho - I have forgiven according to thy word.

Amen.



Our God and God of our fathers. Let our prayers <sup>and</sup> come before Thee. Turn not away from our supplication, for we are not so presumptuous and stiffnecked as to say that we are wholly righteous and have not sinned. But verily, we have sinned. <sup>וְכָל</sup> We have sinned. We have transgressed. We have dealt perversely.

These words of contrition, taken from the pages of our prayerbook, constitute the supreme confession of the Jew. The 'vidui' these lines are called, and our fathers ordained that they be spoken in the last hour of life, by <sup>a</sup> the dying person, or if he cannot speak in his behalf by a rabbi or a friend. They included the vidui also in the liturgy of Yom Kippur, as we have seen; and they recited it on that day as if it were their last on earth, as they stood in their synagogues, wrapped in their talleisim, and beneath them garbed in long white tunics made of linnen - the kittel, their shrouds, their robes of death.

We, of our generation, approach this prayer and the Day of Atonement in like spirit, and though our outer garment no longer conforms to the custom of the past, our inner being responds to this day as did our fathers. We too hear its summons to judgment. We too affirm its dread and majesty and trembling <sup>they</sup> its call: as sheep who pass beneath the shepherd's staff, we pass before the Lord, and he appoints the span of life and <sup>seals</sup> decrees its destiny.

In truth, Rosh Hashono and Yom Kippur are Days of Awe, and awesome is the mood which fills us as we contemplate <sup>our</sup> the past, as we heed their mandate which bids us search the soul. Is there anyone here who ~~can~~ approach the throne of judgment with assurance? Is there anyone here so righteous that he sinneth not? God knows the secrets of the heart and naught is hidden from His eyes.

Somber though our sentiments may be, the fundamental force impelling our worship is really one of hope, for Yom Kippur speaks to us not only of man's evil. It reminds us also of <sup>his</sup> ~~our~~ capacity for good. It teaches us to know that out of feebleness new strength can come, that we can, if we will, turn failure to fulfillment. The gates of repentance are opened, and beyond them there is healing ~~ban~~ for hearts bruised by the knowledge of sin: atonement, reconciliation, peace... God's pardon and with it the pardon that comes harder still, the forgiveness wherewith we forgive ourselves, our self respect.

The rewards of repentance are <sup>many &</sup> ~~these~~ good, but its road is toilsome to traverse. ~~Exacting~~ demands are made of those who seek its way: scrupulous self-judgment, the cognition of guilt, a determined assertion of the will. Without such disciplines atonement is impossible. Their exercise alone can help us reach its gates.

Honest self-judgment is the foremost demand of repentance: the ability to acknowledge transgression, the willingness to say when we have sinned that we have sinned, the strength to speak this truth, not only in communion with others and to God, but to the self as well.

"Deceitful is the heart above all things, and it is desperately weak."

<sup>spoke these words to the</sup> Jeremiah knew ~~us~~ well. He knew <sup>his</sup> ~~our~~ weakness for deception. Long before psychiatry, he knew that men will lie to make the wrong seem right, lie

<sup>lead</sup> to others, and <sup>work</sup> lie to themselves... <sup>And this we read in the</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>author of the</sup> ~~book of~~ <sup>proverbs</sup> ~~that~~

<sup>a shepherd always says: a lost man</sup> Omar Otzel Ari Bachutz ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~shepherd~~ says: "There is a lion in the streets.

If I go out, I shall be slain!" <sup>with</sup> ~~an~~ ancient by-word <sup>ever & again finds</sup> ~~finds~~ frequent parallel in our lives, in infinite variety...

<sup>independent boys</sup> the ~~lost~~ student who blames his failure on a teacher's grudge ~~against~~ him...

the man who cannot ~~make~~ a go of it and finds the fault alone in that the fates are evil...

the selfish, pampered person, who cannot find or keep a friend and then takes refuge in the pretense of pre-eminence: I am too good for them, too cultured for their taste...

or husband <sup>the</sup> and wife who fail to bring to wedded life the love they pledged, and, with the broken fragments of their <sup>folded dreams</sup> hearts before them, seek solace in a lie. "If only he brought more money," <sup>the</sup> cries <sup>she</sup> ~~she~~...and he "My wife just doesn't know me!" thus placing guilt at every door except <sup>his</sup> ~~his~~ own, ~~incom-~~  
~~stence.~~

<sup>Such</sup> Lies spoken to the self are fraught with <sup>greater consequence for</sup> ~~greater harm~~ than lies told to another. To begin with, <sup>no one else can challenge the truth</sup> they go ~~unchallenged~~, for no one else <sup>can know</sup> what mind speaks to heart <sup>in solitude</sup> and ~~question it~~. Moreover, so long as a person continues to lie to himself, so long as ~~he~~ <sup>so long will he</sup> refuses to know the truth about himself, ~~he will, forever,~~ be doing everything except what needs be done - the task of <sup>inner</sup> transformation.

Thus it is. that repentance begins with self recognition. When a man cheats, he should call it cheating. When he does shoddy and shabby things for shoddy and shabby reasons he should say so. When he is greedy he should call it greed. When he is burning with the fever of ambition, he should say that ambition's fever is burning within him. Whatever it is, he should call it by its honest name and not try to justify it on the basis that it is something else.

He should see these <sup>wrong</sup> ~~things~~ as in him, as a part of him, in all respects ~~that~~ make honest reckoning with himself. When he gets ready to sell out his idealism, he should say to himself: I'm about to sell out my idealism. <sup>And if</sup> you say <sup>that</sup> ~~a man~~ <sup>who speaks thus to himself is</sup> ~~and that~~, he would not likely sell out his idealism, <sup>that</sup> is precisely why he should say it. Call wrong a wrong and you are halfway to resisting it. <sup>it leaves to be a temptation</sup> Call evil and evil, and its ~~seductive powers~~ <sup>it leaves to be a temptation</sup> are cut in half. ~~Self recognition is more than the resolving of confusion...it is~~  
~~the beginning of transformation.~~

That is why self-recognition is more than the resolving of inner conflict. It is the beginning of <sup>a</sup> transformation. And that is why we pray of this Repentance Day: *Lord God, I have sinned. We have transgressed. We have done perversely.*

Repentance makes still another demand upon us. It bids us assume responsibility for our actions. It asks us not only to confess our wrong, but also to bear blame for what we do.

We are not disposed to heed this mandate. We <sup>do</sup> ~~are~~ not <sup>like</sup> ~~agreeable~~ to take on the weight of accountability. We ~~do not like it~~. Grudgingly we may <sup>advance</sup> ~~take~~ the first step to repentance - we may admit that we did wrong - but then we quickly add - and here we fail to take the ~~second~~ <sup>second</sup> necessary <sup>step</sup> - that we were caught in a web, ~~not~~ <sup>of</sup> our own spinning, that others are responsible for what we did.

<sup>Moderns</sup> We <sup>deem</sup> ~~repugnant~~ and long ago rejected the custom of our fathers who <sup>And though we doubt we action their way</sup> ~~killed a chicken or a goat as sacrifice for their sin.~~ And yet, we look with equal eagerness for someone or for something to bear the burden of ~~our~~ <sup>we</sup> guilt. I emphasize the 'something', for our favorite scapegoats are impersonal: the environment to which we <sup>are</sup> ~~are~~ exposed, both sociological and psychological, the homes we live in, our economic circumstance, the social ~~circle~~ in which we move, the social system under which we live; and beyond these, the experiences of our youth and infancy, yea even the factor of natural selection, the kind of parents who conceived us, and their parents before them. On these and like we shift the blame for all that we have done or left undone.

<sup>As for the</sup> The independent will of the self, <sup>if ever is</sup> ~~it~~ is rarely considered in our judgment. <sup>we</sup> We do not blame our failings on its weakness. As a matter of fact, we moderns are inclined to doubt its existence entirely. <sup>really do not recognize</sup> We ~~see no auto-~~ mous power in man. <sup>Everything said to</sup> ~~Everything~~ comes from without, + nothing from within.



And so ~~it is~~ with sin, ~~we are told or believe~~. <sup>we ascribe it to</sup> Its source is also without <sup>we believe</sup> and not within man. It is the consequence, not of a weakness of the will, but rather of some environmental or hereditary force which acts upon <sup>us</sup> him. And the sinner can find atonement, not so much in the House of God and through the confronting of his conscience with the ideal, but rather on a psychiatric couch where the evil of his <sup>past</sup> environment can be uncovered, where he can be re-educated, reconditioned, or <sup>adjusted</sup> to it.

Now there is much truth in all this thinking. The world about us does influence us much. Its forces mold our doing. Long ago the rabbis proclaimed: <sup>אדם ערע או יאמר לו / לא</sup> The Judge not <sup>your</sup> fellowman until you stand in his place. By this they meant to say that we should not be quick to condemn our fellowmen, for we cannot possibly know or sense the adverse influences which bring them to their evil.

And so <sup>(of the interaction of society & man)</sup> Yes, and we use <sup>our knowledge</sup> this truth to good purpose when <sup>we employ it</sup> ~~we employ it~~ to understand and forgive someone else, when it leads us to correct those aspects of society which can bring a man to wrong. But when we use this knowledge of the inter-action between society and man as a scapegoat, when we employ it not <sup>so much</sup> to forgive others, but to forgive ourselves too readily, when we blame society <sup>for</sup> everything we do, then we commit a grievous wrong, for again we will be busy with everything ~~except~~ what needs be done - the task of inner transformation.

<sup>Certainly</sup> ~~Sure~~ it would be wonderful if <sup>we could solve all our</sup> ~~we could solve all our~~ problems <sup>simply</sup> by stretching out on the psychiatrist's couch and, while a patient father substitute is listening, pour out the doleful story of our woes. Alas for our all too tender egos! Alas for our neurotic world! Alas for our faded dreams and disillusioned wishful thinking! Alas for the whole wretched business, and especially alas for us!





My friends. In a few brief moments now, we will leave this House, but then we will return for more hours of prayer and meditation. As part of our afternoon service we will be reading from the Book of Jonah. We know his story well, how he was sent by God to Niniveh to warn its citizen of their evil. But Jonah revolted against God, He refused to <sup>be the bearer of his message</sup> ~~bring His word to Niniveh~~ lest its men repent and live, for they were the enemies of Jonah's people and he desired their destruction. And <sup>therefore</sup> ~~thus~~ he was punished, in dramatic fashion. He was punished ~~because~~ <sup>denied</sup> because he ~~destroyed~~ <sup>con</sup> the ~~ira~~ <sup>conditional</sup> nature of God's decree, because he confused God's hatred of the evil in man with hatred of the evil man, <sup>as if the</sup> ~~as if the~~ evil in man <sup>is</sup> ~~were~~ evil in essence and beyond hope, condemned forever to be wicked, and with no road of repentance open <sup>to her</sup> ~~to him~~.

That is why the Book of Jonah fits so well into our Yom Kippur service and it epitomized all that we have been saying. The very essence of the Day of Atonement is faith <sup>faith</sup> in Providence <sup>but</sup> and a denial of fate, <sup>but</sup> faith in repentance and its redeeming power, hatred of evil in man and the <sup>faith</sup> ~~hope~~ <sup>cooperate</sup> that he will conquer it.

~~And here~~ <sup>And here</sup> is the essence of our prayer, <sup>that we recognize our capacity</sup> that we turn <sup>that we recognize our capacity</sup> from evil and do the good, <sup>for repentance + love upon</sup> ~~recognizing our power to do so~~. <sup>On this great day</sup> We ~~pray~~ <sup>pray</sup> most fervently for

Niniveh, for all the Niniveh's in the world, for the Niniveh in each of us.

Amen.

faith in Providence  
faith in the repentance + its redemptive power  
faith in man + his capacity to choose that  
good

Faith also, is the essence of our prayer - for  
on this day we pray for Niniveh ---  
for all the N's in the world  
the N in each of us.

Der Segen des Lebens

1960 Malden  
Yom Kippur Morning

...כְּשֶׁ אֵלֹהִים יֵצֵא לְפָנֵינוּ וְיִשְׁמַח בְּעַמּוֹתָיו

"As a shephard seeketh out his flock, counting his sheep as they pass under his staff, so dost Thou, O God, cause every living soul to pass before Thee, appointing the measure of every creature's life, and decreeing its destiny."

שְׁמַח וְשִׂמְחָה

My friends, if there is a time of sanctity in our (profane) lives, if there is a moment when the curtain we have drawn to separate us from our father in heaven is raised, and we experience, however fleetingly, a sense of communion with God; if there is a day, when that sacred spark within us, which slumbers during the year, is awakened to a bright and burning flame, it is this Day of Days, this <sup>הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה</sup> This Sabbath of Sabbaths, with its haunting melodies and plaintive prayers which touch our heartstring, and express the unspoken yearnings of our soul, the tearful plaints of our spirit. All through the long Day of Atonement the sacred service ebbs and flows - at times it sinks, reminding us of debasement, sorrow, sin, - but then it rises (up) again, giving <sup>us</sup> the assurance of God's sweetest gift to man, His forgiveness and His love.

שְׁמַח וְשִׂמְחָה

Yom Kippur is a day of many moods; a veritable eddy of emotions whirls in our breast; feelings of joy and of sorrow, of confidence and apprehension, of faith and fear follow each other in rapid and relentless succession. We would be hard put to single out one mood as dominant, but if there is such a thing as a leitmotif in the symphony of our sentiments, it is that sad and solemn sense of awe which fills our inmost being on this day, that strange and awesome terror which besets us <sup>as</sup> ~~when~~ we contemplate our life, our past, and, especially, our future, which beneath its impenetrable veil, carries all that tomorrow may bring.

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Rosh Hashono and Yom Kippur are, in a very real sense, just what our fathers called them, <sup>יְמֵי פֶּחַד וְיְמֵי אַוֶּה</sup> Days of Awe, Days of Fear. We are all of us afraid this day, afraid of the future <sup>and</sup> ~~as~~ what it may bring, afraid because we know the past because we know life and all the cruel things it can inflict on us.

We are afraid because we know that every man has his date with adversity, ~~because we know~~ (that) The cup of life runs bitter as well as sweet for all. Everyone, at one time or another, must cry out in anguish: "Why, why did it have to happen..."

Men cry it, when their struggle for success in life has failed and their dear ones vainly plead for comforts others gained; women cry it, when the love they hoped to find <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ sullied; parents cry it, when their ~~children~~ children, reared with so much tender care, grow up to bring them naught but sorrow and disappointment; the diseased, cry it, suffering from keener agony than they can bear; and children cry it, brokenheartedly, over the graves of their parents. *Why & it have to happen*

We are afraid because we know that we too will meet adversity and fearfully wonder whether, and if so, when, and ~~in~~ what form, it will strike us: *Is it by the sword or by the plague?* Who will live and who ~~will~~ die, who will finish his allotted time on earth and who will not...who will perish by fire, by water, by ~~the sword or by the plague~~ *perilous only by the sword*, who will be cast down and who will be exalted."

Fear is our dominant emotion on this day, and our dominant desire - comfort, consolation, courage to face our trials, the spiritual strength born of an answer to the agonizing "why" of suffering.

Alas, it is <sup>an</sup> ~~a~~ answer which cannot be forthcoming. "Why...why suffer...why was there ever anything at all...and why, if ~~everything~~ <sup>the world, the universe</sup> had to be, was it made as it was, with evil, as well as with good..." One must be God himself fully to answer that, or to comprehend the answer, could it be written down. To expect an explanation ~~that~~ that will plumb the depths of the ~~mystery~~ mystery of suffering is to cry for the essentially impossible.



There is no answer to the why of suffering. The best we can do is to pray for strength - strength to meet our fate with dignity. And we can ask for the wisdom to recognize in our sorrows and wrest from them the <sup>few precious</sup> ~~spark~~ of blessing, hidden within <sup>them</sup> ~~these very sorrows.~~ For there are blessings in our sorrows. ~~For there are consolations even in our adversity,~~ <sup>Some admit</sup> if only we are wise enough to discern them; ~~even~~ <sup>even</sup> the evil of our life can be tamed to serve the good. The very staff which strikes us can become the staff of our support. This is the spiritual truth the author of the Book of Job bequeathed to us when he exclaimed: *Shall we receive the good at the hand of God and not the evil also?*



To begin with, adversity can give us inner strength. It can give us inner strength because it must be overcome. Every overcoming of an obstacle demands a struggle, and this struggle strengthens and steels our spiritual and moral fibre, our character.

In our readings of the biographies of great men, we always admire particularly that man who has mastered a personal crisis, who, though reared in poverty, for instance, or facing physical disability, nonetheless persevered and won. And we often wonder, as we read these life stories, whether such men would have reached their goal, had they not been born on the heights of good fortune, had they not challenged laboriously to grapple from dark night to light. Their misfortune was at the same time their great fortune. They did not succumb to it, they faced it, they made use of it, and the resulting struggle, revealed or produced their great strength.

A ~~man~~ <sup>man</sup> ~~who~~ <sup>who</sup> ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> ~~admired~~ <sup>admired</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>of</sup> ~~his~~ <sup>his</sup> ~~audience~~ <sup>audience</sup>, when, in the middle of a concert, the A string of his violin snapped, and he calmly proceeded to finish the difficult concerto on the three remaining strings of his instrument. Here is the human problem in <sup>its</sup> epitome. Getting music out of life's remainders after the break has come; winning the battle with what is left from defeat; being imprisoned, like a Joseph, and rising to dominion; or outmatched, like a David and conquering his Goliath with a pebble; or like a Franz Rosenzweig, helplessly crippled and without the faculty of speech, dictating a major philosophical work by pointing painfully to the individual letters of an alphabet board on his bed, and spelling out letter after letter, word after word, sentence after sentence, chapter after chapter of his voluminous <sup>book</sup> ~~work~~ - dependent on his wife for help in the transmission of each <sup>and</sup> ~~at~~ every syllable. - - Nothing in human life is so impressive as courage, and no one can deny that more often than not adversity has had its share in developing essential qualities.

Was it not so with our people and its life-story of perpetual pain and unmatched martyrdom. Was it not precisely this history of ever-during anguish that made us

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what we are: with all our faults and weaknesses, a community of rare intellectual industry, blessed with a strong sense of group and family solidarity, with vigorous energy and the passionate determination to survive. In all truth, adversity gives strength and bears strong character.

Our personal experience ~~can~~ <sup>it</sup> proves ~~this~~ also. We pass through difficult days, dark storms of ill fortune rage about, deep anguish afflicts us...but somehow, somewhere, we muster enough inner strength to persist and <sup>to</sup> survive. The years pass...we recall the period of our travail, but strangely enough it is not a depressing feeling of remembered pain, but rather the proud awareness of strength that fills our inmost being. ~~To be sure, there are some wounds which never heal~~ <sup>completely</sup> ~~and leave a deep scar, but surely in addition to the remembered anguish there~~ <sup>which</sup> ~~is the warming knowledge that we have been tested and have not been found wanting.~~ <sup>a pride born of the crown.</sup>

Yes, we also, sense the compensating blessing of adversity and can repeat with Job:  
*הֲיִשְׁכַּח לִּי טוֹב אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לִּי יְהוָה אֵלֹהֵי מוֹלָתִי אֲשֶׁר הָיָה לִּי כִּי אֶבְיָר וְכִי אֶשְׁכָּח  
וְכִי אֶשְׁכָּח וְכִי אֶשְׁכָּח וְכִי אֶשְׁכָּח וְכִי אֶשְׁכָּח וְכִי אֶשְׁכָּח וְכִי אֶשְׁכָּח וְכִי אֶשְׁכָּח*  
Shall we receive good at the hand of God and not evil also? Adversity gives strength.

Suffering also makes us kind. It arouses our sympathy for others. Not unlike death, it is the universal leveller which tears down the artificial barriers dividing man from his fellow.

Life is a struggle; it demands its sacrifice; and when destiny's iron hand seeks out and strikes its victim, it does not consider social position or the size of one's bank account. It knocks at poor man's hovels <sup>and</sup> <sup>at</sup> rich man's palaces alike. We choose to disregard this truth. We erect barriers between <sup>man</sup> <sup>and</sup> man as if we were of a different breed, as if we were from a different world. We lack social sensitivity and a sympathetic understanding for those we regard below our station in life. Our judgment of others is blunt and harsh. We see someone who stumbled and quickly our <sup>blunt</sup> self-adulation and self-justification is aroused. We do not ask the reason for his <sup>failure</sup> ~~favor~~ - we only damn - and in this condemnation express the unspoken thought: <sup>your proud heart</sup> Thank God, I am not ~~like~~ <sup>way that I</sup> that. <sup>I</sup> ~~am~~ better..."

*What a terrible waste of life and energy to be so proud of one's own superiority...*

But then misfortune enters the world of man and knocks on our door. Now, at last, we begin to understand. In our pain, we begin to sense the pain of others. In our anguish we begin to grasp the anguish of others. <sup>Finally</sup> ~~At last~~, we realize that misfortune does not necessarily presuppose a blemished life deserving of condemnation, that it can come to any man, without fault, and should evoke, not condemnation, but pity and sympathetic help. We become kind; sorrow has made us kind.

This, surely, is the most significant lesson adversity provides! It impells us to be mild in our judgment of others. It teaches us that no matter whether we walk along the high roads of life or stumble in its deep valleys, we are all at one in our dependence on destiny. <sup>As the wheel turns</sup> "There is a wheel in the world" - it turns, - today finds us on top, tomorrow may well find us lower - who among us dare <sup>say</sup> ~~guarantee~~ ~~when~~ it will be otherwise? We are all brothers in life, all <sup>of us</sup> ~~people~~, brothers in pain. Let us live as brothers should.

<sup>Adversity</sup> ~~Adversity~~ gives us understanding, and so we exclaim with the pious sufferer: "Shall we receive good at the hand of God and not evil also." Sorrow makes us kind.

Adversity can yield one more blessing still. It can make us just a little bit more appreciative of the good which we disregard in wanton carelessness as we walk through life.

Perhaps you remember the Play Our Town by Thornton Wilder...it has become a classic of American drama. In this play, a young woman who died in childbirth is permitted by the stage manager to return to earth for just one day. She chooses her 16th birthday as the one she would like to relive, but as she comes upon the scene so familiar to her, she notices to her dismay that everyone is too busy to appreciate the thrill of that day. "Mama, papa, let soul sit one another," she cries out, "just for a moment now we have each other." But no one looks and no one listens, and all of the business of life goes on. She cannot bear it any longer and begs to be taken back, but before she goes she turns to speak her farewell:

"Good bye, Mama, good bye Papa. goodbye Grovers Corners...good-bye to clocks ticking, and hot baths, and newly ironed dresses, and lying down and geeting up again...on earth you are all too wonde ful for anyone to realize you." She turns to the stage manager. "Tell, me," she asks, "does anyone on earth realize life while he lives it, every, every minute." "No," he replies, "the poets and saints, maybe they do some." and t en the girl turns to the world and spe-ks her final words. "That's all human beings are, blind people."

Is no this the malady which afflicts us. We are blind, blind to so much of the beauty that is in the world. We walk about on a cloud of ignorance, trampelling on the feelings of those about us, we spen and waste time as though we had a million years tolive, always at the mercy of bne self centered passion after another.

Oh yes, we remember the good times we had in the long ago, but we failed to appreciate those self same times whn we actually lived through them. We look at pictures taken yesteryear, they bring us memories of wonderful days. We remember a walk with a friend, a twilight hour spent with a loved one, the first time we came our of the hospital after a lon: illness, and saw the e-rth, the sky, the sun, embraced our loved ones. How wonderful these were, but we did not knowit t en. How wonderful these are, but we do not knowit now. We are too busy, too much concerned with either regretting the past or dreading the future, too much involved in getting and in spending, we are too blind.

Adversity remindsus of this t uth. It reminds us that what we have can be taken away. It pleads with us, therefore, to be more awa e of what we have. When one loveis taken away, it enjoins us to offer a double measure of lðve to those who remain. In demands that we confront each day with the psalmists conviction: Ze hayom....this is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Adversity reminds us of this truth and so we say with long suffering Job of Old:

Shall we receive the good at the hand of God and not the evil also  
Sorrow deepends our love for the blessings which remain.

These then are the consolations of adversity, the blessings of sorrow, the good which



comes to us from the evil, the silverlining of the storm clouds which are as much a part of our existence as sunshine and good fortune. Don't misunderstand me. I do not mean to say that the blessings of sorrow compensate us for its curse. There is anguish which cannot be forgotten, wounds which will never heal, but if we fail to recognize and win at least these blessings, if, because of our adversity we rebel against life, why then we will be left with nothing, nay with worse than nothing, for we will be denying ourselves to those who depend on our love.

Ultimately it matters no whether we understand our fate. What matters is that we bear it with dignity. For this above all we know. Sorrow comes from God, even as it leads to God. Rooted in the divine, it carries us aloft to the eternally divine.

The Lord is my light and my salvation.

Amen.

KEVAKORAS ROE EDRO MAVIR TSONO TACHAS SHIVTO

As a shepherd seeketh out his flock  
counting his sheep as they pass beneath his staff  
So mayest Thou O God pass every living soul to pass before Thee  
Appointing the measure of every creature's life, and decreeing its destiny.

My friends, if there is a time of sanctity in our profane lives

If there is a time when that curtain we have drawn between ourselves and God is lifted  
and we experience, however fleetingly, a sense of communion with the divine,

If there is a day when that sacred spark within us - which slumbers through the year -  
is awakened to a bright and burning flame...

Then surely, it is this day of days, this SHABBAT SHABBATON, this Sabbath of Sabbaths  
with its plaintive prayers and its haunting melodies

which touch the heartstring and express the unspoken yearning of the soul.

All through the long day of atonement the sacred service ebbs and flows.

At times it sinks, reminding us of debasement, sorrow, sin

But then it rises up again, giving us the assurance of God's sweetest gift:  
his forgiveness and his love.

Yom Kippur is a day of many moods.

A veritable eddy of emotions swirls within us

feeling of joy and sorrow, confidence and apprehension, faith and fear  
follow each other in rapid and relentless succession

We would be hard put to single out one mood as dominant

But if there is such a thing as a leitmotif in the symphony of our sentiments,  
then surely it is that sad and solemn sense of awe, that trembling which seizes us,  
as we contemplate our past and our present  
as we strive to pierce the veil of our future.

Rosh hashono and Yom Kippur are precisely what our fathers called them;

Yomim Nouroim - Days of Awe, Days of Fear.

We are all of us afraid today - afraid of the future and what it may bring

afraid because we know the past

because we know life and all the cruel things that it can do to us.

We know that every man has his date with adversity

It is a date which adversity will not let him forget.

The cup of life runs bitter as well as sweet for all

It brings us not just those beautiful things we crave

but also those fearsome things, in their infinite variety, from which we shrink.

Who among us has not been stunned by the tragedy of life touching too close to its loveliness

A young woman, beautiful and healthy today, ravaged by disease tomorrow

A man strong and confident one day, the crumbling like a castle of sand

built by children 'long the shore when the tides of destiny roll in

plenty and poverty...righteousness and rottenness...beauty with its sting of evanescence...

the laughter of children, and then, too soon, the silence of the grave.

We are afraid because we know that we too will meet adversity

and fearfully we wonder when and in what form it will strike us.

MI YICHJE UMI JOMUS...MI BEKITSO UMI LO BEKITSO

who will live and who will die...who will finish his allotted time on earth and who will not

who will perish by fire, by water, by pestilence and by the sword.

who will be cast down and who will be exalted...

Fear is our dominant emotion on this day, and our dominant desire:

comfort, consolation, the courage to face our fate,

the spiritual strength which is born of an answer to the agonizing 'why' of suffering.

It is an answer which is not forthcoming

Why...why suffer...why was there ever anything at all...

and why if something had to be was it made as it is, with evil as well as with good...

One would have to be God Himself to answer that, or to comprehend the answer  
could it be written down...

To expect an explanation which will plumb the depths of the mystery of suffering  
is to expect the essential impossible.

There is no answer to the "why" of suffering

All we can do is pray for courage

that inner strength we need to face our fate with dignity...

And we <sup>can</sup>~~ask~~ ask the wisdom to recognize in our sorrows and to wrest from them  
those sparse few blessings which are hidden within them

For there are consolations even in our sorrow, if we are but wise enough to discern them

The evil of life can be tamed to serve the good

the very staff which strikes us, can become the staff of our support.

Perhaps this is the truth which the author of the Book of Job bequeathed to us  
when he cried out:

GAM ES HATOV <sup>l</sup>NEKABEL MEES HO-ELOHIM VE-ES HORA LO NEKABEL  
Shall we accept the good at the hand of God, and not the evil also.

Adversity can be made to yield its good.



To begin with, it can give us inner strength, for adversity must be overcome  
Every overcoming involves a struggle,  
and this struggle steels our inner fibre.

In reading the biographies of great men  
we are always struck by those among them who mastered a personal crisis  
who, though reared in poverty or facing some physical disability,  
nonetheless managed to persevere.

We might well wonder whether such men would really have reached their goal  
had they been born on the sunny heights of good fortune  
had they not been challenged to struggle from dark night to light.  
In some ways their misfortune was at the same time their greatest fortune  
They did not succumb to it...they confronted it...they made use of it...  
and the resulting struggle revealed and steeled their strength.

A great artist once won the unbounded admiration of his audience  
when in the middle of a concert the A-string of his violin snapped  
and he calmly proceeded to finish the difficult concerto on the remaining three strings  
of his instrument

There is the human problem in its epitome:

Getting music out of life's remainders after the break has come,  
winning the battle with what is left from defeat,  
being imprisoned like a Joseph and rising to dominion,  
or outmatched like a David and conquering his Goliath with a Pebble,  
or like a Franz Rosenzweig, hopelessly, helplessly crippled,  
and deprived of the power of speech,  
nonetheless completing a major philosophical treatise  
by pointing to the individual letters of an alphabet Board before him,  
painfully spelling out letter after letter, word after word, sentence after sentence,  
paragraph after paragraph of his voluminous work ---  
entirely dependent on his wife for the transcription of each and every syllable.

Nothing in human life is so impressive as courage, as guts,  
and there is no denying that adversity has its share in developing essential qualities.

Suffering can make us strong.

It also serves to make us kind.

It awakens our understanding for others.

Not unlike death, it is a leveller which tears down the barriers separating men.

Life is a struggle. It claims its sacrifices.

And when destiny's iron hand seeks out and strikes its victims

it does not consider rank or wealth

It knocks on poor man's hovels and on rich man's palaces alike.

But we choose to ignore this truth. We erect barriers which hold us apart from others,  
as if we were of a different breed, as if we were from a different world.

We lack understanding for those whom we regard below our station in life.

Our judgment of others is blunt and harsh.

When we see someone who stumbles, our sense of self-adulation is aroused,

we do not ask the reason for his failure, we only smirk and damn

and with this condemnation express the preeings of our proud hearts:

thank God. I'm not like that...I did not go his way

Ah, but then misfortune enters the world and knocks on our door.

Now we begin to understand. In our pain we begin to sense the pain of others.

In our anguish we feel the anguish of others.

At last we realize that misfortune does not necessarily presuppose a blemished life  
deserving of condemnation,

that it can come to any man without fault

and should evoke not condemnation but pity and sympathetic help.

We become kind....

Sorrow has made us kind.

This surely is the most significant lesson adversity provides:

it impells us to be milder in our judgment of others,

it sensitizes us to them.

It teaches us to know that no matter whether we walk along the high roads of life  
or stumble in its deep shadows

we are all at one in our dependence on destiny.

GALGAL HU BO-OLOM...there is a wheel in the world ... it turns...

today we are on top...tomorrow may well find us lower...

who among us dare assert with assurance that it will be otherwise.

We are brothers in life and brothers in pain.

Then why not live as brothers should.

Adversity can teach us one more lesson still.

It can make us more appreciative of the good we receive from life

good which we disregard in wanton carelessness <sup>as we stumble through life.</sup> ~~too often, if not all the time.~~

Thornton Wilder, in his classic Our Town, dramatizes this point

in what has become my favorite passage of American drama.

In this play, as you will recall, a young woman who died in childbirth

is permitted by the stage manager to return to earth for just one day.

She chooses her 16th birthday as the day which she would like to re-live.

But as she comes upon the scene so familiar to her,

she notices that everyone is far too busy to relish the thrill of the moment.

"Mama, Papa, let look at one another," she cries,

"just for a moment, while we still have each other..."

But nobody looks and nobody listens and all of the business of life goes on.

She begs to be taken away, but before she leaves, she speaks these <sup>touching</sup> lines of farewell"

"Good-bye mama...good bye papa,...good-bye Grovers Corners...  
good-bye to clocks ticking and hot baths and newly ironed dresses...  
and lying down and getting up again...  
on earth you are all too wonderful for anyone to realize you."  
She turns to the stage manager. "Tell me, " she asks,  
"does anyone on earth realize life while he lives it, every, every minute?"  
"no," replies he, "maybe the poets and the saints, maybe they do some."  
And then the girl turns to the world and speaks her final lines"  
"That's all human beings are, blind people."

Is not this the malady which afflicts us.  
We are blind, blind to so much of the beauty that is in the world.  
We walk about on a cloud of ignorance, trampelling on the feelings of those about us,  
we spend and waste time as though we had a million years to live,  
always at the mercy of one self-centered passion after another.

Oh yes, we remember the good times we had in the long ago,  
but we did not know it then.

We look at pictures taken yesteryear...they bring us memories of wonderful days.  
We remember a walk with a friend, a twilight hour spent with a loved one,  
the first time we came out of the hospital after an illness  
and saw the earth, the sky, the sun, embraced our loved one.  
How wonderful these experiences were, but we did not know it then  
How wonderful they are, but we do not know it now.

We are too busy,  
too concerned with either regretting the past or dreading the future,  
too much involved in getting and in spending,  
we are too blind.



Adversity reminds us of this truth.

It reminds us that what we have <sup>will surely</sup> ~~can~~ be taken away.

It enjoins us therefore to be aware of what we have...

to greet each moment with full awareness

to cling to every day of our lives, with all our heart and soul and might,

while yet we may.

These then, are the consolations of adversity

the blessings of sorrow,

the good which can come to us from evil

the silver lining of those storm clouds which are as much a part of our existence as is sunshine and good fortune.

In truth, we ~~can~~ exclaim with the sufferers of old:

"Shall we receive the good at the hand of God, and not the evil also?"

Please don't misunderstand me.

I do not say that the blessings of sorrow compensate us for their curse.

There is an anguish which cannot be forgotten,

There are wounds which never heal.

But if we fail to recognize and wrest at least these blessings <sup>hidden</sup> ~~from our sorrow,~~ <sup>hidden in our sorrow</sup>

if, because of our adversity we rebel against life, <sup>and deny it</sup>

why then we will be left with nothing,

nay with less than nothing,

for we will destroy also those who still depend on our love and strength.

Ultimately, it matters not whether we understand our fate.

What matters is that we bear it with a dignity.

For this above all we know:

Sorrow comes from God, even as it leads to God.

~~R~~ooted in the divine, it carries us aloft to the eternally divine.

Adonoy Oris vishi...the Lord is my light and my salvation.

Amen.

7072  
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Rabbi Schindler  
Yom Kippur, 1976

KEVAKORAS ROEH EDRO  
MAAVIR TSONO TACHAS SHIVTO

As a shepherd seeketh out his flock  
counting his sheep as they pass beneath his staff  
so doest Thou O God cause every living soul to pass before Thee  
appointing the measure of every creature's life  
and decreeing its destiny.

My friends, if there is a time of sanctity in our profane lives  
if there is a moment when that curtain we have drawn between ourselves and our  
father in heaven is lifted  
and we experience, however fleetingly, a sense of the communion with the divine  
if there is a day when that sacred spark within us which slumbers through the year  
is awakened to a bright and burning flame  
then surely it is this day of days, this Sabbath of Sabbaths,  
with its haunting melodies and plaintive prayers  
which touch the heart and give voice to the yearnings of the soul  
All through the long day of atonement the sacred service ebbs and flows  
at times it sinks, reminding us of debasement, sorrow sin  
but then it rises up again,  
giving us the assurance of God's sweetest gift  
His forgiveness and his love.

NOW STRANGELY ENOUGH

Rosh Hashono and Yom Kippur are not really Jewish holidays, thematically speaking.

Of course these are the most sacred days in the calendar year of the Jew

But their message has no predominant Jewish connotation in the ethnic sense

THEY CELEBRATE NO SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC EVENTS ARE CELEBRATED IN THE HISTORY OF OUR PEOPLE  
no references to particular and dramatic events in the history of our people

Pessach speaks of the Exodus from Egypt, Shevuoth reminds us of Sinai

Chaunuka and Purim <sup>RECALL</sup> remind us of our people's deliverance

THOSE TIMES  
when the few triumphed over the many  
when  
and right prevailed over might.

Not so Rosh H'shono and Yom Kippur

These precious days speak to us not so much as Jews,  
as the sons and daughters of a particular folk, of a distinctive grouping.

rather  
They speak to us as individuals, as men and women, as human beings.

They seek the self reckoning of ~~our soul, our universal soul~~ <sup>universal the single soul</sup>

~~IT IS A SELF RECKONING WHICH COULD BE DEMANDED OF THE NOW JEW AS WELL~~  
They confront us with life's insistent, persistent challenge: <sup>AT OF THE JEW</sup>

where art thou man,

where are you in your world?

So many days and years of those allotted to you have passed and how far  
have you gotten in your world?

are you all that you could have been, all that you might have been?

<sup>EVEN SO</sup>

~~Nonetheless~~ <sup>did speak</sup> On Rosh H'shono, I spoke to you essentially of our responsibility  
to our fellow Jews

~~I sought to awaken the awareness of~~ I spoke of our oneness, of our solidarity.

<sup>ch</sup> insisting that our life forever demands involvement with a larger fate

-- the fate of Israel.

~~I would like to say~~  
In all truth, the individual Jew is a lie and a fraud when he is more an individual  
than he is a Jew

<sup>He</sup> He emerges whole, authentic only, once he surrenders himself to the cause  
of his people.

But today, on Yom Kippus I want to restore the balance, to underscore the  
counterpoint

to speak of those duties of the heart which extend beyond our more communal  
boundaries and embrace the world.

After all, we are not just Jews, we are human beings

<sup>So</sup> and <sup>IN YOU</sup> I want to awaken not just the awareness of our essential unity as Jews  
but that awareness also which speaks to us of a common humanity.

THERE IS A NEED TO MAKE THIS COUNTERPOINT (3)  
BECAUSE THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF TODAY  
HAS NARROWED ITS AGENDA OVERLY MUCH  
WE HAVE OUR JEWISH PRIORITIES AND PRECIOUS  
LITTLE ELSE.

I SPEAK NOW PRIMARILY OF THE AMER-JEW COMMUNITY  
THERE HAS BEEN TOO GREAT AN INWARD TURNING  
PARTICULARISM IS RAMPANT IN THE NAME OF STAYING <sup>HERE</sup> IT/  
OUR WAGONS ARE DRAWN IN A TIGHT-KNIT CIRCLE  
AND WE DIG WITHIN

NO LONGER DO WE ASK  
WHAT DOES THE LOAD REQUIRE OF US  
BUT RATHER DO WE PROBE:

IS IT GOOD OR BAD FOR THE JEW?

There is a need to make this counterpoint,

because ~~I am very much afraid that~~ the Jewish community of today

~~has become a community which has narrowed its overriding agenda overly much.~~

I SPEAK PRIMARILY OF AMERICAN JEWS

Particularism is rampant in the name of ethnicity.

THERE IS TOO GREAT AN INWARD TURNING

~~A survival ethic is beginning to replace those religious ethical values~~

~~OUR WARONS ARE IN A TIGHT KNOT CIRCLE + WE DIG WITHIN~~  
of our tradition which we presumably represent.

~~WE HAVE OUR JEWISH PRIORITIES AND ALL ELSE IS NEGLECTED~~

~~We no longer ask: what does the Lord require of ~~THE~~ us?~~

DO WE ASK  
but rather: is it good or bad for the Jews.

PO WE ASK THIS

When this question is asked in its narrow, selfish, provincial <sup>source</sup> terms,

<sup>the</sup> implication is crystal clear:

Keep silent -

keep silent about the duplicity of the administration, because the administrations

has done so ~~very~~ much for Israel.

keep silent about amnesty, because <sup>AMNESTY</sup> ~~it~~ is unpopular and <sup>its espousal</sup> may engender antisemitism

keep silent about the plight of the cities, because <sup>the president does not want to aid the CIA</sup> the President holds

Israel ~~in his hands~~ destiny in his hands;

keep silent about CIA because <sup>for LAWLESSNESS + RUTHLESSNESS</sup> it ~~probably~~ collects intelligence that is

helpful to Israel and vice versa

keep silent about the FBI because <sup>how</sup> reckless ~~as~~ it has been, it ~~probably~~ also

sniffs on Arab students and on the <sup>KEAT</sup> ~~unatic right~~

and above all keep silent <sup>CONCERNING</sup> ~~on~~ the swollen Pentagon budget which has a life all its own

because we know <sup>that</sup> Israel desperately needs ~~xxxxx~~ America's arms

Keep silent...silent...forever silent.

And thus <sup>is</sup> a noble Jewish community <sup>WHO'S SONS + DAUGHTER ARE</sup>

<sup>the descendants</sup> ~~the sons and daughters~~ of the prophets

~~been~~ <sup>TEVISE</sup> reduced to a narrow, self-righteous, inward looking defense league,

~~there~~ IS A TENDENCY WHICH <sup>REQUIRES A</sup> ~~SHOULD BE~~ REVERSED -

THIS INWARD TURNING

AND THE DOMINANT MANDATE OF YOM KIPPUR ENJOINS

US TO DO SO



Even self-interest, alone

a more knowing, enlightened self-interest

SHOULD IMPULSE US TO <sup>to</sup> requires a broadening of our concerns, & widening of our horizons.

AFTER ALL WE JEW

We cannot serve our needs alone,

We need the understanding of others,

their advocacy,

their sustaining help.

Why should a <sup>technique</sup> BAYARD RUSTIN raise his voice for Sovier Jewry if I am indifferent to the plight of ~~the~~ hungry in America's black ghettos?

Why should Roy Wilkins endorse our every pro-Israel resolution if I ignore the racial rantings of a ~~cabinet~~ <sup>CABINET MEMBERS</sup> ~~teeming hungry of America's black ghettos.~~ <sup>DOES</sup>

We Jews enjoy an influence in America far beyond <sup>THAT</sup> ~~an~~ strength accountable by our numbers <sup>strength</sup>

and one reason is surely this:

because we are involved in the electoral process

~~and~~ because we share in the life of this community in all of its aspects

because there are Arthur ~~leavitts~~ <sup>leavitts</sup> and Emil Baars and countless <sup>other</sup> Jews <sup>who</sup> <sup>are</sup> <sup>serving</sup> our country in places high and low.

Israel depends on a strong American Jewry.

Well, American Jews can be strong only in a land which is truly free

which is racially decent <sup>economically</sup> and just.

WHICH OFFERS THE FULLEST POSSIBLE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY ~~But something more than an enlightened self interest should move us.~~

TO MEN OF ALL NATIONS + CREEDS ~~Our deep felt convictions as Jews are at stake~~

AND ALL DEGREES OF WEALTH + EDUCATION

IN THE SIGHT OF GOD + MAN

But something more than an enlightened self-interest should ~~bestir us~~ <sup>LEAD US</sup> <sup>TO OPEN OUR DOORWAYS</sup>

<sup>TO THE WORLD...</sup>  
Our own suffering should move us too,

it should sensitize us to the pain of others and bestir us to help.

<sup>MY FRIENDS WE JEWS ARE NOT THE ONLY ONES TO SUFFER</sup>  
~~Not just Jews but all human beings~~

<sup>ALL HUMAN BEINGS</sup>  
are bound to one another in an unbroken unity of pain.

We cannot deny this reality.

<sup>the holocaust</sup>  
True the shoah is sui generis, unprecedented in its evil

there is a chasm, a yawning gorge of blood which separates it from all other  
cataclysms engulfing modern man,

Still it is only one fearsome road leading into the abyss of human evil,

Our age has many pathways sinking into this hell:

starvation in the midst of plenty

the archipelagoes of Russia

a rain of death all over this world

a velt brennt brider n' nit nor unzer shtetle

the world is aflame, not just our homes.

An ancient rabbi once said that no one can be human unless his heart is broken.

Well, our Jewish hearts were broken in every generation, including our own

and one meaning of this suffering must be this:

we will not stand idly by the blood of our brothers

not our own blood nor the blood of our brother man.

YES, OUR PAIN SHOULD MAKE US SENSITIVE TO  
THE PAIN OF OTHERS,

AND SHOULD LEAD US TO TURN ~~OUTWARD~~ + NOT  
INWARD BUT OUTWARD TO THE WORLD

AND SO SHOULD  
~~THEY~~

JEWISH  
CONVICTION

(7)

Our commitments as Jews, our most solemn commitments are also at stake here.

FOR ~~JUDAISM~~ <sup>CANNOT BE</sup> ~~was never ever~~ defined <sup>ONLY</sup> just in parochial terms.

Our tradition always saw the saving of the world as the necessary  
precondition of Jewish redemption.

~~And as~~ Drawing on the well-springs of our faith, we Jews do have something to say  
about the assault on liberty in America  
about the national retreat on social justice  
about the hideous neglect of the urban problem  
and about hunger in a world in which famine has become the expected way of life  
-- or rather of dearh.

Aye Judaism is a passionate commitment to life  
to this world,  
to human values  
and these values are sorely needed to keep man ~~human~~ in this callous world

These values alone give meaning to our survival as a people.

For if in order to survive AS A JEW

I ~~must~~ <sup>my</sup> turn ~~our~~ back to the world,

IF IN ORDER... MYSELF  
separate ~~ourselves~~ from human kind

IF... I ~~must~~  
and emulate the violence, the callousness, the bigotry, the narrowness of our  
enemies

I JUST AS LEAVE GIVE UP MY JEWISHNESS +  
why then ~~perhaps~~ it would be just as well were we to shuffle off this mortal coil.

ONLY AS FREE AS  
ONLY AS FREE AS

IS LIKE A CORPSE  
LIKE A BODY WITH NO SOUL

To be a Jew is to be something more than a surviving, endangered species.

To be a Jew is to be a goad to the conscience of mankind.

to be a circumcized heart of flesh and not of stone

to be a part of the civilizing and humanizing force of the universe

To be a Jew is to defy despair, though God may tary

To be a Jew, as God told Abraham thousands of years ago

is to be part of a great an enduring pople, yes,

but also to be a blessing unto all mankind.

INSERT (A)

And so, on this great and holy day we turn to God in prayer.

We pray for ourselves, for our people, for all mankind.

As American Jews we pray especially that we will have the courage and the strength

to traditions of our heritage and of this land  
 A AMERICA HAS BEEN GOOD TO US IT HAS GIVEN US MUCH  
 AND SO WE DEDICATE TO RETAIN ITS IDEAL TO STRUGGLE FOR  
 to fight against repression and for freedom  
 THEIR FULFILLMENT

against indecency and for equality

against <sup>CORRUPT</sup> ~~convulsion~~ and for justice

against fear and for hope...

in a word that we who have found this place such a pleasant place <sup>to live</sup> will do

our utmost to keep it so for all its citizens  
 AND WE HEREBY HIGHLY RESOLVE TO  
 to make America America once more.

THUS MAY IT BE WRITTEN & SEALED IN THE BOOK OF LIFE

W.H. AUDEN THAT PREEMINENT POET OF OUR GENERATION  
WHO DIED LAST YEAR

HE ONCE WROTE A LINE WHICH IS <sup>SEIZED</sup> ~~ARE~~ INTO MY SOUL  
AND CAPTURES THE ESSENCE OF MY MESSAGE:

WE MUST LOVE ONE ANOTHER OR DIE,  
HE WROTE

WE MUST LOVE ONE ANOTHER OR DIE  
AND OF COURSE WE DON'T  
AND OUR CIVILIZATION IS DYING BECAUSE OF IT  
DYING OF GREED AND HATE AND FEAR  
DYING OF THE SICKNESS WHICH COMES

OF NOT LOVING AS AUDEN WARNED  
AND WHEN THE WORLD DIES WE JEWS DIE TOO



AND SO, ON THIS GREAT HOLY DAY  
WE TURN TO GOD IN PRAYER  
WE PRAY FOR OURSELVES, FOR OUR PEOPLE, FOR ALL MANKIND  
WE PRAY ESPECIALLY FOR THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH WE LIVE  
THIS BEAUTIFUL + SPACIOUS LAND  
WHICH HAS BEEN GOOD TO US  
WHICH HAS ENDOWED US WITH SO VERY MANY GIFTS

WE RESOLVE TO SEEK ITS PEACE  
TO REPAIR ITS FOUNDATIONS  
TO RESTORE ITS DREAM  
TO ASSUME OUR FULL + EQUAL SHARE IN THE EFFORT,  
IN THE STRUGGLE

AGAINST REPRESSION AND FOR FREEDOM  
AGAINST CORRUPTION AND FOR ~~JUSTICE~~ RIGHTEOUSNESS  
AGAINST INDECENCY AND FOR TRUTH

THESE ARE THE IDEALS ON WHICH THIS LAND IS BUILT  
THESE ARE THE IDEALS WHICH MADE AMERICA GREAT  
AND ONCE THEY SHINE AGAIN  
~~UNBLEMISHED~~ UNTERMINISHED  
IN ALL THEIR ~~GREATNESS~~ SPLENDOR  
AMERICA WILL BE AMERICA AGAIN

MAY THIS BE WRITTEN + SEALED IN THE BOOK OF LIFE

Perhaps you are familiar with the story that is told concerning an archeologist who placed an ad in the New York Times which read as follows: Wanted. Man six foot four inches tall, college graduate, adventurous spirit, to accompany scientist on an expedition into the heart of Africa. On the morning following the appearance of this notice, bright and early, a Jewish man appeared at his door and announced: "I am here in response to your ad." The archeologist looked at him somewhat quizzically and exclaimed: "But are you six feet tall." "No," replied the latter, "I guess you can see that I am not much more than five feet four." Well, then, perhaps your schooling is extraordinary and then your height won't matter. What colleges did you attend, what training did you receive?" Frankly, sir," <sup>and</sup> said the other, "I didn't manage to get past high school." "Are you at least an adventurous spirit?" "No," replied the applicant, "I must confess that I am so timid that I won't even leave my house unless my wife forces me." "What in the world are you doing here, then," thundered the archeologist. "Didn't you read my ad? Didn't you see that I specifically requested the services of a man six feet four inches tall, with sound training in the sciences, and possessed of an adventurous spirit?" "I did, sir," replied the Jewish man. "I came, merely to tell you, that on me, you shouldn't count."

We laugh when we hear this story. Imagine! A man responds to an add though he knows that he cannot meet the required need, nay, without even having the slightest intention of meeting that need. And yet, we too are guilty of such failing, at times. Consider this: invitations to attend meetings or to join organizations are also advertisements of a kind. Often we respond to them with our physical presence <sup>alone</sup> ~~only~~ - we attend the meeting, we join the organization - even while knowing full well that we lack the capacity or the willingness to offer fuller commitment. Extraneous reasons compel our response: social pressure, gregariousness, ~~our~~ irrepressible curiosity, anything and everything except commitment, a wholehearted affirmation of the cause which pleads our presence and support.

Now we of Temple Emanuel sent out an add, as it were. We announced that a service would be held here tonight, and a great many have responded, men and women, boys and girls. Is this more than generous numerical response indicative of a wider identification with

All this collective activity is but an outer expression of an inner devotion to Judaism whose flames burn bright in the heart of our youth. Moreover, it is a flame which warms them not only in the synagogue, but even without these sacred walls. They feel secure in their Jewishness, much more so than did we of an older generation in the days of our youth, and they wish to be identified as Jews wherever they go. There is no shame <sup>here</sup>, no hiding, no fear, only a pride in faith.

Their sense of assurance is reflected in many ways, some significant, others apparently trifling, such as in the display of Jewish symbols. <sup>Shema David, Hazugah</sup> While from a strictly theological and intellectual point of view. I hold no great brief for the wearing of charms - as Rabbi Klein is fond of saying: a mezuzah is a doorpost and doorposts are simply too heavy to be worn about the neck - still I heartily applaud the spirit which motivates their display. In my younger years, I and my contemporaries would never have dreamed to reveal our identity in so brazen a manner. Wherever possible we chose to hide our Jewishness when in contact with the non-Jewish world. Alas, justice triumphed poetically: the generations ashamed of their Jewishness were compelled to wear its badge.

The enthusiasm of our young people for Jewish identification is manifested in more serious concerns. This past summer, at our camps for Temple Youth, we conducted an intensive study designed to test the Jewish attitudes of our teen age population, and its conclusions <sup>Let me share some of these results, for they are</sup> are highly revealing. Nearly nine six percent, for instance agreed with the statement that "if it were possible for Jews to have a choice, undoubtedly they would chose to be reborn as Jews," and many added that if non Jews had an opportunity to know Judaism, many would embrace it. I asked a similar question of adults not long ago. Their reaction was just the opposite. "Why in the world should a non Jew want to become a Jew," they asked.

The study of teen age Jewish youth revealed that our young people are not overly concerned with anti-semitism. They are cognizant of its existence, to be sure, but they have no sense of threat to their security. A similar frame of mind is evinced in their reactions to Israel. ~~A Council for Judaism would have little success in recruiting among them~~

"Israel is the goal of my people," wrote one young man. "I've never been there, but in a way, I consider it my homeland. Sure, America is my home, but Israel is my country also, whether I am there or not..."

the ideals for which this sanctuary stands? I dare not answer for all who are assembled, but I can speak for the younger people who are here tonight...my extensive association with them gives me this assurance...They did not come here to tell us that on them we shouldn't count. They are here, upon the contrary, to assure us that we can count on them. They are here to tell us that Judaism can count on them. They are here because they are committed, fully and intensely committed to the cause of our people and its faith.

Surely nothing in present day Jewish life is more heartening than this, eclipsing in significance even the creation of the State of Israel, for the latter bespeaks physical rebirth <sup>essentially</sup> while the presence of youth in the synagogue holds forth the beautiful promise of spiritual continuance. There was a time not long ago, no more than a generation, surely within the memory of many here, when fathers bemoaned the spiritual death of their sons, when the synagogue resembled much a moshav <sup>2</sup>'keneem, an institution for the aged, attracting no more than a handful of old men and a handful of old women. Not so today. Children, once more, are gathered 'round the altar of the Lord, and they have come to bless us.

When weighed in the balance of active participation alone, Temple Emanuel can well be described as a congregation for youth. Consider the thousand pupils who attend our Religious School each day a week. Think of our Sabbath services and our holyday services which attract an equal number - it is only a pity that their parents <sup>do</sup> <sup>feel</sup> are not <sup>compelled to be</sup> at their children's side in the pew, but at least the children are <sup>there</sup>. Think of our High School program, completely voluntary, which still attracts the greater portion of our confirmands and in whose behest last year we added a third year of intensive study to our curriculum. And think, especially, of our Temple Youth Group whose members prefer lectures to dances, programs of social service to entertainment and who chose to write their own prayers and to create new expressions of worship for their regular meditations.

Lest you believe that our congregation is unique, look about you and see: young men and women two hundred strong not counting our own, from every part of our region and beyond, each of whom could be the bearer of equal good tidings.

Such answers reflect a wholesome sense of belonging to the Jewish group, an almost conscious casting in of their lot with Jews the world over.

We asked our teen agers some pointed questions in an effort to determine just how they evaluate the Jewishness of their parents. There was an equal division - about half ~~were~~ <sup>felt their</sup> <sup>near proper</sup> <sup>dis-</sup> satisfied with their parents' Jewishness, the others <sup>dis-</sup> were not - but no matter what their estimate, the underlying attitude was the same, for the former were pleased with the Jewishness of their parents, while the latter were critical of their lack. One young lady wrote:

"My parents aren't good Jews. Their Judaism is all put on. I don't think they feel it in their hearts. Unless someone feels religion the way I do, you are not really a good Jew..."

wrote another,

"There is a difference between my folks and me how we look at religion. I plan to build my whole life around religion. My folks aren't too good as Jews. We used to have a Christmas tree..."

wrote a third,

"They aren't good Jews, there should be more religion in the home..."

Fancy such change in attitude. A generation ago the plaint would have been just the opposite. "Our parents are too traditional, too old fashioned," would have been the answer then.

Our teen agers frown on intermarriage and because it is often the first step in this direction they frown on interdating. Their desire for Jewish identification expresses itself also in their demand for more ritual both in the synagogue and in the home. "By all means let us have more Hebrew in the service," said one young lady. "That's one way of telling that you are in a Jewish house of worship." As for ritual in the home, one boy had this to say, and his answer is typical. "We have candles for Chanuka, and we have a seder of a sorts, mostly the food, of course, and little of the story. I wish my parents would light candles on the Sabbath also. That way you now you are Jewish, and you should be proud of it."

*The case has been made to think*  
It is amply evident that the feeling of our youth for Judaism is strong and enthusiastic, and that this feeling represents a radical divergence from the sense of insecurity in their identity as Jews which marked the younger generation no more than 2 decades ago.



Lest the young people present feel just a bit too proud of their attitudes and in defense of the older generation, it should be said that the ~~Jew~~ status of Jews in America and in the world has considerable improved of late. Twenty years ago, Jews lacked the economic security they enjoy today. Twenty years ago they lacked in social recognition. <sup>which they are lacking now,</sup> Twenty years ago antisemitism was virulent - in its violent forms in Europe, culminating as it did in the martyrdom of six million of our brethren - and here in America also in somewhat calmer yet equally insidious form, here in America where economic and social <sup>disabilities</sup> restriction were commonplace. In a word, it is just a little bit easier to be a Jew today and to be firm in proclaiming one's Jewishness.

Again, it ought be said, to the merit of the older generation, that in spite of their uncertainties, in face of their many insecurities and obstacles, they ~~did not fail~~ nonetheless mustered the wisdom and the strength to build the instruments of Jewish survival. They are the ones who struggled and succeeded to improve the status of Jews in our land. They are the ones who built this house of worship and others equally glorious - with their program of intensive religious education and other meaningful activity. They are the ones whose imagination conceived the movement of synagogue youth. And all these, the work of their hands, gave birth to the fruit of pride in faith which marks the younger generation.

One more word must be said, and this by way of admonition to our youth. Mere pride in faith alone is not enough. Mere sentiment is not enough. To come to fuller and more beautiful flowering, these sentiments must find expression in deed - not just the deed of ritual - the kindling of candles, the chanting of prayer and song, <sup>but</sup> ~~Primarily, these feelings of pride must find expression~~ in the ethical deed, the deed of human kindness, in the practice of justice and love between man and man.

Curiously enough, <sup>unhappily enough</sup> our study of teen-age Jewish Youth revealed the greatest weakness here. So much of their idealism is <sup>blind</sup> ~~blind~~ - the mere rehearsing of pious phrases - and they betray grave unawareness of social problems. Little wonder. The <sup>members of the</sup> younger generation simply has it too good. Their life does not take them into the poorer sections of our community. They have no personal involvement with the social problems of the world. Poverty, to them, is an empty phrase - <sup>dimly</sup> echoing from a distant land or from out of the

distant past, It is no living reality to them and consequently they are not really concerned.

And yet these problems are a reality, ~~no less than they ever were, even in America~~  
~~albeit in amore subtly form.~~ <sup>upon whose result</sup> The survival of the world depends on their resolution,  
~~in a more immediate sense than ever before.~~ Somehow a sense of awareness for them must  
be born in our youth. Their future demands it. Their Judaism demands it. For  
Judaism is not sentiment alone, nor is it form alone. It is the blending of these two  
with morality into an indissoluble living unity. Judaism demands that religious  
pride and exaltation be transformed into a force for daily living, <sup>in the that we may</sup> exalting the <sup>day by day</sup>  
approach of <sup>man</sup> ~~man to man.~~

We are confident that this awareness will be born for the spirit from which it springs  
is there in the heart of our youth. A famous European dramatist once wrote a play about  
a master craftsman who fashioned a beautiful bell and then, during a time of terror and  
of war, to prevent its capture by the enemy, he sank the bell to the bottom of a lake.  
Every once in a while, stirred by the waters of the ~~mill~~ the deep, the bell would  
<sup>ring</sup> ~~sound~~, and its muffled sounds would reach the craftsman bringing joy to his heart.  
There is such a bell in the soul of our youth. It is attuned to an appreciation of  
beauty and of truth and of love. May God give us the wisdom and the patience to reach  
and elicit its vibrant tones. Then will Isaiah's glorious vision be fulfilled and all  
those who behold our children will say of us that we "did not labor in vain nor bring  
forth for terror, that ours is the seed blessed of the Lord."

At the turn of the 18th century a mighty religious movement swept through Eastern Europe, and brought new life and hope to the tired and despondent masses of the ghetto. The movement's name - Hassidism, and its founder, the Baal Shem Tov, master of the good name.

The rabbis of the late middle ages had demanded cold obedience to the law, the torah, the commandments of God as man's supreme duty. Obey every iota every dot of every mitzvah outlined in the Torah and its commentary the Talmud - these rabbis admonished the Jew - and you will bring nearer the coming of the Messiah and the Kingdom of God. Learn the law, study the law, day and night and then obey. That was their message to the masses. Under such philosophy of life Jewish society in the ghetto became rigidified and was split in two - an aristocracy of wealth and learning developed for only the rich could afford to study, and so the rich joined hands with those who learned - and began to snob the poorer less educated man as a lesser Jew, a man not fit to stand before his master.

But along came Hassidism, and with it a new emphasis. A stress upon the sense of mystical ecstasy in the communion of God and man; upon the joyful affirmation of life; upon democracy and brotherhood between the rich and the poor, and upon the moral values of the religious system. It does not matter whether you do much or little, said the Hassidim, it does not matter whether you work in the field, or in the shop or in the Talmud school - what matters is that you direct your heart to heaven. Baal Shem Tov, instead of

teacher in a little school - rather than drill his pupils in the aleph bet, took them out into the fields, among the trees and birds and flowers and taught them God through nature - not the book. In short the hassidim showed the Jews that one can serve God, not only through obedience, but through joy in life, through love of God.

One remarkable aspect of Hassidic teaching was, that they did not convey their lessons by writing didactic volumes and preaching mussar - sermons of reproach. The disciples of the baal shem tov went from town to town and converted thousands to their way of thought, by merely telling a parable or two, a simple story.

Tonight I will emulate these spiritual ancestors of ours and tell a story. Not only because I admire the Hassidim which I do, very much; and not only because I want to reward you - the saving remnant - who braved these walls twice in one day. But because I share the belief of recent educators that a picture is worth a thousand words, and a story, after all, is just a picture. And the story I will tell you tonight is one - to paraphrase the rabbis - that comes and says: Rabbi, preach about me, will you?

On Rosh Hashono and Yom Kippur we are told ~~that we must~~  
we have a double duty. We must rectify our relations <sup>to</sup> between  
God and man; and we must rectify our relation <sup>to our fellowman</sup> between  
~~man and man~~. Our story for this evening simplifies our  
task exceedingly, for it reduces our double duty to one.  
Now we know that service to the one is service to the other  
<sup>loving and</sup>  
too, that by serving our fellow man we love and serve God.

Amen



How full of Awe is this place, surely this is none other than the House of God and this is the gate of heaven.

Mountain - Field - House - These metaphors reveal three conceptions of God, three expressions of religion, each of them different, and yet, each of them indispensable to a fuller understanding of faith.

Abraham spoke of religion as a mountain. Mountains are massive in extent and height; they ever evoke a sense of spiritual grandeur and exaltation. In the mystic speculation of Judaism, mountains occupy a unique place and our sacred lore is rich in references to their significance. Abraham brought Isaac to a mountain. Moses ascended a mountain to hear the voice of God and once again to see the Promised Land before his death. Elijah summoned the Priests of Baal to ~~the~~ a mountain for their final and dramatic test of faith. The Temple was erected on a mountain. And the Psalmist in the hour of dark despair, lifted his eyes unto the mountains to seek the help of God.

In all of these instances it appears that our ancestors had a feeling that there is something mysterious about mountains and hill tops, that they somehow can furnish man with a clairvoyance which he does not ordinarily possess. And thus it is that the mountain has become a symbol of <sup>man's</sup> ~~spiritual~~ communion with God, a sign of spiritual exaltation, of that mystic upward reach of the soul which sweeps man out of his every day self and carries him aloft to God.

Moments of ecstatic communion are not commonplace in life, but they can be found. Moses <sup>did</sup> ~~found it~~ when he saw the vision of the burning bush and heard a voice exclaim: "Cast off thy shoes from off thy feet for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Isayah <sup>did</sup> ~~discovered it~~ when he saw the ~~angels~~ <sup>and heard</sup> call one unto another: "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory." Mystics through the ages discovered <sup>sublimement</sup> ~~it~~, even to the Chassidim of our own day, for it was their sense of at-one-ness with God which impelled them to an ~~ecstatic~~ self-sacrificing service of man. Poets wrote sublime verse, artists fashioned lasting beauty, composers created consummate music captured and enraptured by the magic of divine communion.

We too, the humbler people of the earth, have our moments of revelation; we too catch glimpses of eternity and God: at times when we see an unusual manifestation of beauty in nature, or when we behold the miracle of new growth birth and continued growth, or when we respond to the love of a loved one. Or at times the sense of the sacred seizes us in the silence of prayer, in moments of worshipful devotion - and then we know that there is God.

Such revelation is the essence of religion - Abraham taught us this truth when he compared religion to a mountain; a mystic sense of communion is central to every living faith. It is central to faith, but it is not the whole of faith, though many would have it so. Frequently people come to the rabbi and say: "Religion is a matter of an inner mood. Forget your services and your fixed order of worship. I pray when the spirit moves me - and the spirit just doesn't happen to move every Friday night at precisely 8:15 P.M. I am stirred to worship when I listen to exquisite music or when I see a beautiful sunset. That is my religion." But when we ask such a man to tell us in all truth how often, say in the course of the past year an inner experience actually moved him to come to worship or to lift his voice in prayer he is compelled to admit that he is too preoccupied with the tasks of life and that the mood for worship has not descended upon him once during the entire period.

The reason for this failure is not far to seek. It is rooted in the truth that the mountain peaks of spiritual exaltation precious as they may be do not suffice for a well rounded faith. Man cannot live perpetually on mountain tops. Far more often we live on the plains or even in the valleys of human existence, and for life in the valleys the lightening flashes of religious exaltation must somehow be transformed into a force for daily living, a force which is readily accessible and constantly applied.

One such transformation is ethics, religion's regulation of human conduct. Isaac stressed this element of faith when he compared religion to a field. The field is a symbol of man's labor with man. Isaac perceived the heart of religion in the field of human endeavor, in the practice of justice and lovingkindness between man and man.

Who would deny the primacy of ethics in religion? Did not the spokesman of God himself proclaim: It hath been told thee of man what is good and what the Lord doth require of thee, only to do justly and to love mercy? And yet, again it must be emphasized that though morality is indeed a vital element of faith, it does not constitute the whole of faith, though many would make it so. All too often a rabbi is challenged on this point: "Religion is right conduct," someone will say, "its purpose is to make man good. As for God, who needs him? We need no synagogue or church to make us good. We need no preacher or teacher, no Bible or prayerbook. Morality is the kernel of religion, the rest is only husk, let's throw it away and good riddance..."

But the evidence is clear today that the kernel of ~~religious~~ morality cannot long be preserved without the protective husk of religious belief and practice. Germany taught us this truth, and Russia bodes to repeat the bitter lesson. How is it that human beings can kill their brother man in cold blood? What was wrong with the Nazi guards of Auschwitz or the Russian tank troopers in the streets of Budapest? Where was their natural feeling of pity for the helpless, where was their instinctive sympathy for the weak? The reason is not far to seek. These nobly sentiments are neither natural nor instinctive. Mercy and justice and sympathy are the distillations of centuries of moral and religious training. This training was consciously and deliberately denied in Germany, and that is why its sons could grow up to poison and to kill.

Now it is true, that there are many people in the world who exhibit the noblest qualities of life though they have long ago surrendered formal adherence to faith; there are men and women in the world by the thousands, millions who love truth, and practice kindness and search for beauty, though they have never entered a synagogue or church or mosque. But we must not forget that the ideals by which these people live are not inborn impulses. They are the recipients of the religious training of pious ancestors. They themselves may not believe in God, but their fathers and forefathers did, and because they did ~~they~~ <sup>and in</sup> obedience to divine command, ~~taught their children~~ they taught their children to love and honor man.

Morality may be the essence of faith, but it cannot long survive unless it is sustained by faith in God and perpetuated by religious instruction and practice. Jacob reminded us of this truth when he compared religion to a House. The House is a symbol of the synagogue and the school. Jacob taught us that if religious insights and ethical values are to be permanent and concrete, they must be embodied in a house, in an institution dedicated to God.

Jacob was right. A sense of ecstasy and communion with God may be indispensable to faith, but where are we attuned for such communion - surely only in the disciplined service of the synagogue with its beauty in prayer and music and rite. Morality may be the ultimate test of religion's sincerity - but where are ethical values preserved and taught in the synagogue - in its prayer and in its instruction. It is the house of God which brings men together, inspiring them with a sense of solidarity and with faith in the ultimate victory of their cause.

Commenting upon a verse in our Torah portion: the voice is the voice of Jacob but the hands are the hands of Esau, a legendary tale of the Talmud relates that once the nations of the world entered before Abnimos the weaver. They said to him: Can we attack this nation? He said to them: Go and pass before their Houses of Study and their Houses of Prayer. If you hear children chanting you cannot attack them. But if you do not hear children chanting you can attack them. Thus our father assured us: the voice is the voice of Jacob - so long as the voice of Jacob is heard in Houses of Prayer and Study, the hands of Esau will not prevail.

Field, Mountain, House - these metaphors reveal three conceptions of God, three expressions of religion, each of them different, but each indispensable to a fuller understanding of faith. At its finest religion seeks a sense of immediacy with God. Religion's ultimate test lies in the extent to which its teachings are practiced between man and man. But that is not enough. The beliefs and practices of religion require a center, a House of God which can keep these ideals resolutely before man. Bringing each generation to the wells of spiritual power. When faith, morality and ritual are welded together into a living unity, religion can inspire men to work toward the fulfillment of ancient dream and promise, the coming of the day when "men shall do no evil and work no destruction on all God's holy mountain, for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Am en



וַיֵּצֵא אִשָּׂא לְהַלְלֵהוּ

And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at eventide, and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and behold there were camels coming... And Rebecca lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she alighted from the camel.. and she took her veil and covered herself.. And Isaac brought her into his mother Sara's tent, and she became his wife and he loved her...

These lovely lines, taken from our Torah portion for today, provide a most fitting setting for our service dedicated as it is to the younger married set of our Temple, the Mr. and Mrs. Club, and we are delighted to welcome its members to this service as our guests of honor. Young marriage is a time of romantic love, and our Torah portion tells a story of love, the story of Isaac and Rebecca, their meeting and their marriage.

The preacher is tempted to expound on this very subject, to speak of marriage and of love. Prudence bids him forbear. As Rabbi Klein so often reminds me ~~know~~adays, the first year of my marriage is over, and it is high time that I turn from love to the more serious subjects of life.

Nonetheless, my point of departure will be the same. The text of our sermon remains the verse read a moment ago: "And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at eventide. However, the development of our text will take a different direction. Its ultimate theme is suggested by the Rabbis of the Talmud, when, in a striking comment on this passage they declared that each of the patriarchs had a different conception of God, a different view of religion. Abraham, they said, pictured his faith as a mountain, for when he brought his son to Mount Moriah he declared:  $\frac{ה'}{י} \frac{ה'}{י} \frac{ה'}{י}$  On the mountain the Lord may be seen. Abraham's son Isaac compared religion to a field; our text provides scriptural proof:  $\frac{וַיֵּצֵא}{\text{And Isaac went forth to meditate in the field; his meditation was prayer, he prayed to God in the field, he found his God in the field. Jacob, on the other hand, compared religion to a House, for does not the Bible tells us that when Jacob saw his vision of the ladder ascending reaching heavenward with angels ascending and descending upon it he cried out:}}$

וַיֵּצֵא אִשָּׂא לְהַלְלֵהוּ

77-  
Mor...



## To Rise Above Sorrow

An old legend tells us that when Adam, the first man, was driven out of the garden of Eden, he came before his Maker and cried out in <sup>his</sup> despair: "God, where will I find comfort in my loneliness...how can I ease my misery...how can I soothe my grief." In response to his plaintive cry, God presented Adam with a precious gift - a tear. "This saline drop," said God, "this tear-drop is endowed with healing power. In times of sorrow it will wash away your grief, in moments of despair it will ease the anguish of your soul."

Time, even into Ours  
Since Adam's day man's plaint remains the same. Oh God, how can we overcome the sorrow that is our lot in life...how can we rise above it? Pain's balm, the tear, is still available to us, but tears are not enough, not always. There is a sorrow which is beyond all tears, a pain which chokes the channels leading to their healing source. There are times in life when we cannot even weep; and even if we could all tears on earth we ld scarcely serve to ~~xxx~~ quench our furnace burning hearts.

When all is said  
And yet, <sup>we</sup> have to meet life's central challenge to the spirit. Somehow, somewhere we must find the strength to bear our burdens and to turn from despair to hope, from the gloom of grief, to the light of life. After all, life must go on, no matter what our losses. Life must go on and a life of absorption in sorrow is only half a life...it denies its better part...the good which redeems the evil...the light which illumines the dark. Life must go on, for life is not wholly ours. It belongs also to those whose life we touch, whose soul is twinned to our soul. Whatever we do to narrow our life, narrows their life ~~also~~; whatever darkens our life is their blight as well. And they have a right to expect our full participation in life, in its tasks and responsibilities, especially those whom we love and who love us the most. No, life is not wholly ours. It is also God's who wounds and heals, who ~~costs~~ <sup>costs</sup> us down and ~~lifts~~ <sup>lifts</sup> us up again, who gives and takes our sorrow, who <sup>eternal</sup> arms will surely uphold us on our lonely journey through the shadows.

Surely, we must learn to bear our burdens. Burdens rightly borne are helps to living. Burdens wrongly borne are hindrances, obstacles barring our onward quest through life.

But how can we learn to bear our burdens? Some people say that time is the great teacher, the great healer, time can help us forget, <sup>thereby</sup> forget all evil. But do we really want to forget our sorrow, ought we do forget it? Of course not. The man who consciously drives all gloom from his mind, lives as narrow a life as the man who nurses his grief. They both <sup>of them</sup> are sick - perpetual hilarity, the constant quest to escape gloom, is as severe an illness as melancholia. They both deny reality in its fulness, they both live only half a life.

There is a sadness in life. This sadness can not be wiped away, merely by ~~saying~~ ~~that~~ forgetting it, by saying that it does not exist, by thinking positive thoughts, by whistling in the dark. Moreover this sadness has its place. Even as the light illumines the dark, so does darkness intensify our vision and appreciation of <sup>light</sup>. The sadness of life is a help to living. It can make us more sensitive, more understanding, more grateful for the good in life; it can bring us closer to the greatness which is always trying to lay its touch upon us; or, in shorter, more familiar words, <sup>Sidew</sup> ~~it~~ can help us grow a soul.

When we confront life's central tests - our defeats and our losses - a complete forgetting is as wrong and ill of consequence as a complete remembering. There is only one alternative: to forget in part and to remember in part. A man can do that, he has this double gift from god, this precious talent, the gift of selective remembrance. We can <sup>if we wish</sup> exercise a wise control over the things which we want to lay up in our memory, and the things which we wish to wipe from it.

What ought we to forget and what ought we to remember? The one great criterion is life. That which is a drag upon life is best forgotten; that which can help us in our onward journey ought to be retained in the treasure house of our memory.

~~What we ought to forget is the things which are a drag upon life, the things which are a hindrance to our progress.~~

When we suffer defeats in life, the memory of our humiliation and our shame can only hinder us, whereas, the thought of our past mistakes can help us grow. When we suffer illness and incapacity, the memory of our pain can only serve to darken our future; the thought of our resilience and our perseverance can brighten all we do. When death strikes close to home and a dear one is taken from our midst, the thought of our personal loss will prove depressing, even as the remembrance of the dead, the good and the beautiful things they did in life, must prove inspiring. It is thus that the burdens we bear, bear us, if we bear them rightly. And to bear our burdens rightly means to forget wisely and to remember nobly.

To remember only that which can be transformed into hope - here is the <sup>wonderous</sup> secret of endurance. The test is unfailing. Mankind proved this long ago by transforming the memory of the dead into the hope of everlasting life. The nations of the world prove this with their patriotism, which transforms the names and events of the past into an inspiration for the future. Our own people, Israel, proved this by turning the memory of suffering into the hope of universal salvation. Outcast and disfranchised, Israel aspired after liberty and justice for all on earth. Without honor, and driven from its home, it wove the strands of its national grief into the hope of One Kingdom for all. The very blood which Jews shed was poured into the veins of the world, so that, at some distant day, the light <sup>for</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~all~~ men might be quickened. The Jew remembered Zion but only to transform that memory into the dream of future redemption for Israel, for ~~the~~ mankind.

So let every man test his burdens by the light of this thought. Can these burdens be turned into blessings? Can each painful memory be sublimated into a glorious hope? If so, that memory ought to be retained; if not, the thought of that experience merits only extirpation.

It is as if a man bore the parcel of memories on his right shoulder and the bundle of hope on the left. Let him find out if he can shift his load from the memory shoulder to the hope shoulder. If he cannot, there must be something wrong with himself, there must be something unworthy in his reaction to pain. If he can, if his load sits

even better on the left than on the right shoulder, he has answered life's ~~challenge~~ bravely.

In this manner can we rise above our losses of the moment and turn from grief to life: by forgetting wisely, by remembering nobly, by hoping heroically.

In the midst of life's ~~struggles~~ losses we must think of life's gifts. In the midst of life's sorrows, we must remember life's joys. In the midst of life's ~~own~~ failures, we must remember its conquests. In the midst of life's despairs, we must cling to life's undying hope.

Nor are these losses separate from these gifts, these joys from these sorrows, these griefs from these hopes. One is the child of the other. <sup>(6) / 12 / 19</sup> Whatever is given is ultimately taken away. But whatever is taken is given back again. When someone dies, we <sup>may</sup> lose our love for them and they love for us ~~at~~, but <sup>only for a</sup> ~~at first~~ <sup>remembered</sup> ~~only~~. Ultimately that love returns to us through remembrance; and ~~that~~ love is more secure, more lasting than <sup>in</sup> our love ~~during~~ life, for love during life is buffeted about, <sup>it</sup> ~~and~~ rises and falls as it gives way to the stresses and strains of living; <sup>while</sup> ~~but~~ the love of remembrance is eternal. The 'ahavah rabbo' ~~the love of~~ of life's morning, gives way to the 'ahavas olam' ~~the love of~~ of life's night.

May these thoughts help us to turn to life with courage <sup>may it fill us with the Resur.</sup> ~~not~~ to plunge into despair, never to yield to the obsession of sorrow, never to live cloistered behind the walls of an ill controlled grief - but to turn from the silence of sorrow to the noise of the city, from the stillness of the grave to the tasks and responsibilities of life. May our sorrow never be so dark but that there shine through it the <sup>light</sup> of hope. And may that hope not be the last refuge of the disconsolate, but rather a mighty, life-giving force, bent upon enhancing life wherever we may find it.

Thus, bearing our burdens nobly and courageously, we will surely merit God's sustaining help and the fulfillment of his promise: l'hotzi mi'beis keleh yoshvei choshech" to bring to bright light those who dwell in darkness. Amen.



It is with a measure of apprehension that I approach my tasks this morning. It is no small matter for a ~~preacher~~ minister to address his fellow ministers, for a preacher to preach to fellow preachers. I feel very much like someone confronting a volcano, nay, volcanoes eething to erupt and I appreciate the forbearance, the heroic self-restraint you must exercise to listen to another of your kind knowing full well that you could do so very much better yourself. But then, you will have the opportunity to erupt just a little bit later on and I pray that your lava will not be too searing.

I regret much that I could not be with you yesterday. What I heard during the concluding hours last night proved to me that I miss much. I fear also that because of my absence I may touch on subjects which you have already covered exhaustively. If so, forgive me.

To begin with, let me say that I appreciate the opportunity these dialogues afford. It is good to know first hand what we believe. It is good to know what our respective commitments really are. We may not be able to avoid conflict in this manner...unhappily, there is no proof that knowledge, intellectual perception of opposing view inevitably leads to understanding and harmony. No one can claim, as an instance, that a Paul Blanchard's intensive study of Roman Catholicism ipso facto made him a friend of the Catholic Church. It is quite possible to grasp an opposing position intellectually, to understand that position fully, and yet to oppose it with a passion. Still, by getting together and by listening to one another we may discover that our areas of agreement are far wider in scope than we may have imagined allowing united action; and, perhaps even more important, we can together stake out the groundrules which will make our ~~unavoidable~~ conflict *unavoidable through* creative and socially productive.

*Conflict*  
Conflict can be productive. This is the faith on which America is built. Our economic system is predicated on the assumption that the greatest temporal good to the greatest number is most likely to be achieved if individual businessmen are free to compete on the open market for public patronage of their goods. Moreover, we are committed to this system not only in material wares, but in spiritual wares as well. Justice Holmes once declared that "the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the free market"...and over and over again the Supreme Court has ruled that the first Amendment must be interpreted to guarantee all faiths "equal access to the market of souls."

Competition among religious cultures, moreover, is consistent with the concept of cultural pluralism which was once and has become again the <sup>accepted</sup> pattern of the American Dream. It was Jefferson's treasured gift to the sons and daughters of this blessed land which we failed to appreciate fully only during those xenophobic years following World War I that not so proud period of our history which bequeathed to us among many other ills its shameful heritage of restrictive immigration laws. Hopefully, most segments of our community have outgrown this stage of adolescent nationalism with its ideal of the single American type cooked to order in the melting pot. And we can agree once again with Jefferson that "uniformity of opinion is no more desirable than uniformity of face and stature" that therefore the preservation of distinctive values is a real contribution to the richness and depth of our common American life.

If this be so - and here surely is an area of common agreement - we must come to recognize that ~~divergent~~ religions in their divergence are slowly becoming the sole source of the material for a pluralistic culture. There was a time when we could rely on the immigration of divergent ~~groups~~ ethnic groups to provide us with the varying melodies of the American symphony. This is no longer so. Immigration has become only a negligible drizzle into the vast ocean of America's population so that ethnic origin ~~has ceased to be a significant element in the make up of our country's culture.~~ A new primary source for cultural pluralism is needed and religious competition is the only answer. In a word, the pluralism that was once sustained by the large scale immigration of diverse ethnic groups must now be nourished from the competitive creativity of the diverse religious groups which make up the American Community.

How fortunate for us that this be so, for even if it were not so we would still have to be true to the dictates of our faith, would we not? There is no religion without commitment. To whomsoever He will send us we will go, and whatsoever He will command us, we will speak.



But it is so. We can be true to our faith without diminishing the grandeur of the American Dream. Upon the contrary: our commitment exalts that dream. That is why we should never be afraid if the adherents of a particular faith seek to reshape the institutions of American culture according to their own scale of values, yes even if they seek to reshape America's laws to conform to their moral code. If the established pattern is correct, the new challenge will be successfully met. If the new challenge will result in some modification of the established way, why then it can safely be assumed that at the modification, if it lasts, will have been worthwhile. Out of such never ending competition comes America's pluralistic culture, ever dynamic, ever changing, ever reflecting the stresses and strains of the multitudinous and contradictory elements, and yet, somehow, coming out as the substantially harmonious orchestration of these components. This process is <sup>the</sup> creative competition.

But competition is not creative by its very nature. It can also be destructive, when it is ill controlled and leads to acrimony and violence. That is why we must carefully create and preserve those devices which control competition in the religious sphere and help it to ~~remain~~ remain socially productive.

Perhaps the phrase 'controlling' competitions is poorly chosen, for the very first of these safeguards is, in a sense, the absence of control. I mean, of course, a free society, a state which keeps its hands off, a government which does not exert pressure in favor of a particular religion.

Perhaps because of its libertarian spirit in matters theological, and surely also because of its long history as an oppressed minority, the Jewish ~~people~~ religious group has always been filled with sympathy for the dissenter, not just for the dissenter within ~~religion~~ the body religious, but also for the secularist who dissents against all religion. Here is one reason why the American Jewish community has always insisted on the broadest possible interpretation of the first amendment, even as the Court ruled in the *Everson* and *McCullom* cases to wit that these amendments divorce the church and the state most thoroughly, that they impose upon the government an obligation to abstain from religious affairs and from granting ~~tax~~ financial or other governmental aid to religious institutions. In a word, we believe that the government is to be neutral, not merely as between different religions, but also as between religion and non religion, and indeed even between religion and anti religion.

The Jewish position on almost every single public issue, domestic or foreign can be gauged by this measure: does ~~it~~ a particular measure in any manner either directly or indirectly, yea even to the slightest degree detract from the thoroughness of the separation of church and state, if it does, we are against it, unequivocally. This explains our opposition to the introduction of religious teaching in the public schools and the release time program; this explains our unyielding objection to direct or indirect aid for parochial schools whether they be Christian or Jewish. This is what explains, ultimately, our opposition to compulsory Sunday laws.

The Jewish issue of State Church Separation quite obviously is opposed to the approach of Catholicism as we understand this approach. The Church views the first amendment as a ban against the preferential treatment of a particular religion, but not as a ban against <sup>governmental</sup> religious activity in its entirety, in other words, that the government may provide aid to religion, provided this aid is extended to all religious groups equally. We understand this view. We disagree.

The stand of Protestantism perplexes us. On the one hand we see its efforts to introduce religious teaching into the Public Schools; on the other hand we note its violent opposition to the use of public funds either directly or indirectly for parochial schools. If the former is affirmed, we cannot see how opposition to the latter can be justified on constitutional or any other grounds. Fearfully we feel that Protestantism cannot long continue thus to enjoy the best of all possible worlds.

Jewish insistence on the literal interpretation of the first amendment should not be taken for mere secularism. We simply don't see how any other interpretation will safeguard our liberties. The separate but equal doctrine failed in the realm of race relations; why assume that it can succeed in the sphere of religion. The government may well begin to allocate its support on an equal basis; ultimately the sheer numerical weight of the majority religion will begin to shift the balance of support. The bitter lesson of our experience in many lands has taught us this truth. We do not oppose religion, God knows. Religion is the very breath of our life, the be all and end all of our existence as a distinctive group. We simply prefer a secular state to state religion, choosing to support our religious life with the means available to the adherents of our faith alone. We are convinced that the best way to keep from these shores the religious bloodshed, the persecution, the intolerance which plagued mankind in the old world, is to maintain a high wall of separation between church and state in the new world.

I would speak of one more safeguard which will keep us from the excesses of religious competition. It is an inner safeguard, it is a safeguard which each faith must place on itself. I speak of the need to limit religious chauvenism, the excessive claim of infallibility in the knowledge of God's way, the refusal to recognize at least the sincerity of those who dissent.

There are motifs stressing exclusiveness and choice in every faith. There must be counter motifs also. In Judaism we have the dictum: every righteous person among the nations has a share in the world to come. Similar universal strains must be found in every religion affirming that the God who is the father of all of us would not deny his favor to any of his children who earnestly seek to find Him. And if we cannot grant it is, at least we cannot grant the freedom to err, the freedom to make a mistake.

To me perhaps the most beautiful aspect of ~~the Jewish~~ Judaism is just this strain, this claim of uncertainty in the claim of exclusive truth -

Confession

Concessions would eliminate worst elements of our competitive process.

preclude use of force

" suppressing activities

Verbal blows -

appeal to emotion

constant questioning of motives  
checked by law

To me must be also largest

If such a spirit could be instilled our competition would be a wholesome one, then we could make headway in the shaping of our common culture.

true to faith

help to preserve & deepen in beauty

The American ideal which to many of us is the crown jewel of Western Civilization & by extension therefore the proud creation of our common faith for it is the ideal common to all our fathers

which give dominant shape to western civilization

Religions on the American scene make their contribution to this pattern. They constitute a source for the materials which go into the making of a pluralistic culture. Religious values shape America's values; religious forms give form to the life of all Americans. Moreover, as Leo Pfeffer perceptively pointed out, the religions of America are slowly becoming the primary resource for cultural divergence in our land. There was a time when we relied primarily on the immigration of divergent ethnic groups to give us the varying melodies of the American symphony. But immigration has become an insignificant force here. Numerically, it has been reduced to an insignificant trickle, especially when compared to that vast ocean which is America's population. Moreover, loyalty to ethnic traditions weakens with each new generation born in this land. But the religious loyalty of these newer generations is deepened (if students of American society are correct) and it is out of this loyalty ~~that the sustaining strains of~~ <sup>the sustaining strains of</sup> American pluralism can grow.

How fortunate for us that this be so, for even if it were not so, we would still have to be true to the dictates of our faith, would we not? There is no religion without commitment. There is no faith without consecrated deed. To whomsoever He will send us, we will go; and whatever He will command us we will do.

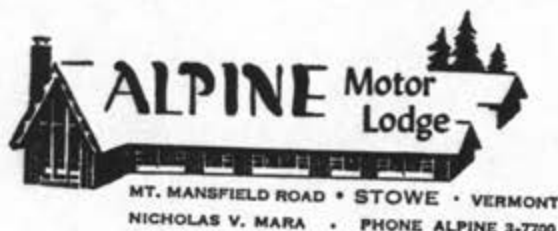
But it is so. We can be true to our faith without diminishing the grandeur of the American dream. Upon the contrary, our commitment exalts that dream. That is why we need not be fearful when the adherents of a particular faith try to refashion the life or even the laws of America in the light of their conviction. It is their duty to their faith, their right as citizens of this land. So long as our society is free, and the members of other faiths are true to their convictions, there will always be counter-efforts. Compromises will be made, modifications will ensue, a reshaping of our institutions will be the consequence. That is the American process, the growth pattern of our pluralistic culture, ever growing, ever changing, ever responding to the demands of many opposing elements and withal emerging as a harmonious whole.

8

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18000





RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT IN A

FREE SOCIETY.

Something It is with a measure of apprehension that I approach my tasks this morning. It is no small matter for a minister to address his fellow ministers, for a preacher to preach to fellow preachers. A colleague, faced with a similar duty saw himself as confronting a volcano, nay volcanos ~~seem~~ to erupt, and I appreciate the forbearance, the heroic self restraint you must exercise to listen to another of your kind, knowing full well that you could do so very much better yourself. But then, you will have the opportunity to erupt just a little bit later on, during our discussion period, and I pray that your lava will not be too searing.

I regret that I could not be with you during the entire period of your deliberations. What I heard in the concluding hours last night proved to me that I missed much. I fear, also, that because of my absence I may touch on subjects which you have already covered exhaustively. If so, forgive me.

To begin with, let me say that I appreciate the opportunity these dialogues afford. It is good to hear first hand what each of us believes. It is good to know what our respective commitments really are. We may not be able to avoid conflict in this manner. Knowledge, or rather the intellectual perception of opposing views does not inevitably lead to harmony; it is quite possible to grasp an opposing view <sup>a contrary position</sup> intellectually, to understand a ~~contrary position~~ fully, and yet to oppose it with a passion. Still, by sharing our views, by expounding our reasoning to one another, we may discover areas of agreement far more extensive than we might have imagined. Or, at the very least, we can together set down groundrules which will make our interaction, our conflict, ~~unavoidable though it be~~, creative and socially productive.

Competition can be productive. This is a major credo in the faith that is America. Our economic system is built upon this precept, assured that our material well being is enhanced when businessmen are free to compete on the open market for public patronage of their goods. Our world of thought and spirit is built on similar foundations - though there are those in every age who would deny it - and we agree with Justice Holmes that "the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the free market."

facial Thus it is that cultural pluralism has become the accepted pattern of the American dream. We do not seek <sup>to create</sup> a single American type cooked to order in the melting pot. Uniformity of opinion is no more desirable to us than is uniformity of feature. And we see in the continuance of distinctive ways and values a deepening, an enrichment of the American way of life.

Religions on the American scene were mostly, comparatively, unimportant.

The Dybbuk, which we are about to see, is a classic of Jewish literature. Written at the turn of the century, it immediately captured the imagination of the Eastern European Jewish masses. Through translation into most major languages, but also in the original Yiddish and in Hebrew, the Dybbuk has been performed in the chief theaters of the world. No less than three times did the Dybbuk reach Broadway - a Yiddish version by the Marica Schwartz troupe, the Hebrew Version of the Habimah and an English translation starring Judith Anderson in the leading role of Leah. In recent years two operas were written, based on the theme of the Dybbuk - one Italian version, and an English opera produced last year by the City Center Opera Company.

The spiritual sphere in which Chassidism lives and has its being is Chassidism - this was the last great religious movement in Jewry, before the positivistic temper of a scientific era undermined all religious belief.

The founder of Chassidism was Israel Baal Schem Tov, a saint a rabbi, known to later generations simply as the Besht. Before he came to the fore Judaism was well on its way to being mummified. The study of the Talmud and its innumerable commentaries had absorbed the entire intellectual energies of its men of learning. The greatness of the scholar consisted in his ability to inwrangle Talmudic tangles rather than in opening new horizons of thought. Piety meant a fear inspired observance of the countless little things permitted or forbidden by the law, and the religious Jew was fear ridden lest he forget to do this or that at the prescribed moment. Judaism became essentially legalistic and intellectualistic; emotionalism was identified and feared as the mysticism out of which grew the false Messianic movements which brought so much disaster to Judaism.



The Baalshem tore apart these heavy clouds. He saw rigid law as the creation of man, and not the creation of God. He saw the world as a mystic whole ~~xxxxxxx~~ of which man is an integral part - man could become a part of God by constantly increasing his love of God.

The immediate effect of his teaching was that it put an end to the pre-eminence of the scholar. The pious, god loving unlettered found himself ~~on~~ an equal plane with the ~~next~~ greatest scholar. The fear of transgressing the law vanished - God looked for purity of heart, not for external piety. Hope supplanted despair, gloom gave way to good cheer, and Jews sang and danced in a mood of pious ecstasy.

It was Ansky's purpose, in writing the Dybbuk, to present life in a Chassidic community, a life hovering on the boundary between two worlds, the world of reality, and the faith created world of supernatural forces.

The specific folk-lore upon which the dybbuk is based, was the mystic belief that <sup>some</sup> ~~the~~ souls ~~of~~ of the dead can find no rest, and thus pass into the bodies of living, in the form of a Dybbuk until they have attained purity.

The first words that come to my lips as I stand before you on this Sabbath day is a fervent prayer for the speedy recovery of Rabbi Klein. May he be with us soon and in full strength able to teach and to preach to interpret the words of the very God of <sup>LOVE</sup> ~~Love~~ before whom we all stand in awe and humble reverence tonight.

The sermon which Rabbi Klein <sup>hoped</sup> ~~intended~~ to deliver tonight <sup>was arranged for the</sup> ~~is~~ entitled: "How Essential is Law to Judaism?" <sup>In his message Rabbi Klein</sup> ~~in which he~~ intended to discuss the proposed Reform Shulchan Aruch which is <sup>meant</sup> to be a Code of Ritual Practice incumbent upon all members of reform congregations. This subject forms the core of the controversy around which the latest issue of American Judaism Magazine is built. <sup>Most of you have this magazine in your home; I commend the pertinent article to your consideration.</sup> I hope you will forgive me <sup>if</sup> I do not address myself to the theme chosen by Rabbi Klein for himself. When all is said and done, a sermon is very much like a jacket or a suit, it fits only one person well, another cannot wear it. To be sure now, preachers very frequently speak about the same thing, and they utilize similar or same ideas. After all, the primary source for all rabbis is the same: the Bible, the Midrash, the holy literature of our people and our faith. And yet each preacher, if he is a true preacher, adds something of his own - he speaks not only from memory, <sup>gives of</sup> he pours out his heart and his soul - <sup>the</sup> ~~each~~ <sup>he presents here</sup> idea passed through the fire of his feeling and his thought. That is why no one preacher can speak the words of another.

I will diverge from established practice <sup>of this Temple</sup> in still one other way. I will not base my sermon for tonight on the scriptural passage of the week. I will base my sermon rather on an experience which fell to my lot not too long ago.

This is not to say that I reject the convention which requires that a sermon begin with a text - a verse from scripture or from rabbinic literature which summarizes the theme that is to be presented by the preacher. But what is a text, when all is said and done. It is the experience of some man boiled down to the size of an epigram. →

At some time in the past a great prophet or Saint wrestled with the basic problems of life, he contemplated this universe and then proceeded to distill his experience into a single line for those that would come after him. That is a text.

But it is not only ~~the~~ great people - saints and prophets and heroes — who contemplate God and life and death. We too ~~like~~ the plainer folks of the earth, live and laugh and suffer, we too catch glimpses of eternity and the things that people do. There are texts in us too, in our every day commonplace experiences, if we are only wise enough to discern them.

One such experience, a textual experience, fell to my lot not so long ago. There was nothing dramatic about its setting - at least it was a commonplace setting for a century used to war and death. There was nothing too unusual in the circumstance of my experience. And yet to me it was a moment of discovery, a moment of revelation.

It happened during the Second World War. Our Company was quartered in an Italian Farm house somewhere in the Po valley. It was a cold wintry <sup>A DAY</sup> day filled with violence, the violent storms of nature, the violent ragings of men. Bombers ~~thundered~~ and fighters ~~screamed~~ overhead; ~~from the~~ <sup>thundered</sup> ~~not too far distance~~ the rumbling of deadly guns was heard. A little boy, perhaps five or six, <sup>he was badly</sup> ~~the boy was~~ <sup>scattered</sup> ~~scattered~~ across the court yard; ~~frightened~~ <sup>FRIGHTENED BY THE NOISE + BY THE PRESENCE OF STRANGE MEN</sup> tears trickled down his cheek. ~~Suddenly~~ <sup>AT THE</sup> his mother appeared. She said nothing. She merely opened her arms and smiled. The boy ran to her; <sup>NO LONGER IN THE FLOOD</sup> he stopped his weeping; he was ~~at peace~~ <sup>he was at peace</sup> and safe.

This is my experience, that is all there is to it, and yet so long as I live I shall never forget that moment. A little boy frightened by noise a mother saying nothing yet bringing peace - a simple, commonplace experience - who has not shared it at one time or another in his life. and yet so long as I live I shall never forget that moment.

Now that I have had time to think about this experience, and I do think about it often, I know why <sup>the experience</sup> it made such a profound impression upon me. <sup>it</sup> This experience taught me the value of silence, <sup>it</sup> this experience taught me the strength of silence. <sup>for it</sup> This experience brought into sharp contrast the <sup>loud</sup> blatant voice of evil with the quietness of spiritual force, the thunderstorm of war and a mother's love - the one obtrusive, boisterous, the other inaudible, imperceptible - and it was the mother's love which prevailed.

It is always so. Silence always triumphs over noise. To be sure, we human beings are sensitive to noise, loud things <sup>claim</sup> our attention - but they do not hold our attention. Spiritual forces which make no noise reach deeper, take hold harder and last longer than any other forces.

History should long ago have taught us this truth? All that made noise in ancient <sup>Greece</sup> Egypt is gone, but the Illiad and the Oddysee and the Dialogues of Plato, the dream of beauty and the love for truth, these still remain. All that made a noise in Israel of old is gone, yea even the Temple, with its <sup>priests and their pagentry</sup> ~~priests and their pagentry~~ and trumpets <sup>these</sup> have vanished; but the faith of the Psalmists and the insights of the prophets have not vanished.

This truth is not just a historical matter. It finds ample evidence in our time as well. Books of violent adventure can be read once, the silent simple poem can be read over and over again. A life of violence may claim attention and hit the headlines of the tabloids; a silent man in a sleepy village - Einstein in Princeton - leaves a more profound and lasting impression on mankind. <sup>Silence is still the best reply to aggression</sup> Thought is silent; love is silent; growth makes no noise. Creative power works in stillness - and yet without these forces nothing would be, nothing would exist:

"there is no speech, there are no words  
neither is their voice heard...  
And yet their line is gone out through all the world.



A rabbi of the Talmud assigns silence an important role in the acquisition of knowledge: Syog lachochmo shessiko, the safeguard of wisdom is silence. On the surface of it, this seems like strange advice - gaining wisdom through silence - silence seems too negative too passive a quality for the gaining of knowledge.

And yet, here too silence triumphs. After all, if we want to learn, we have to listen, in order to listen we have to keep ~~xxxxxx~~ silence. The trouble with most of us is that we talk - talk is fine - it is natural to talk - there is only one fault with constant talking, when you talk you cannot listen, and if you don't listen you cannot learn. This surely is what another rabbi meant when he said: All my life I ~~xxxx~~ have lived among the wise and found nothing better than silence.

Listening is not enough to the acquisition of wisdom. Many wise men who can teach us much, do not live near enough to us that we might listen to them. Many lived centuries ago. We can still learn from them by reading their books. ~~Again then,~~ if we want to read, we have to keep silence. And if we want to understand and learn to apply what we read we have to think, and thinking requires silence...again it is a silence, the silence of reading and thinking which opens for us the treasure house of wisdom.

We can find God only in silence. He speaks not in the blatant voice of evil but with a still small voice. We can find him if we seek him, not in ~~the~~ turbulence and din of violence but in quite place, <sup>in the stillness of worship</sup> ~~by still waters,~~ kindness where beauty dwells and truth is found, where ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ rules, yea we can find Him where a mother silently opens her arms to embrace her child with love.



If we could all only learn and act upon this truth, if we could all only recognize that the inward force we so desperately need cannot be found in noisy places. And that is where we foolishly look for it even when we don't have to: <sup>the moment we leave a full house</sup> we rush out with our cars along a noisy highway speeding to get into a night-club filled with smoke and noises of discord, <sup>we rush</sup> then back again to our houses just in time to flick the <sup>TV</sup> dials in a desperate effort to catch the ~~late~~ late show...all because we are afraid to be alone with ourselves one single minute, because we are afraid of silence.

We need our souls restored, but thundering airplanes and falling bombs do not restore the soul, no, nor <sup>raffling cars</sup> clanging subways and shouting crowds and all of the other blaring noises of our busy days. Only in quiet places, by green pastures and beside the still waters can God restore our souls.

This is the insight that came to me one cold wintry day in Italy when I stood watching a mother embrace her child: the value of silence, the strength of the still small voice.

~~Silence is the force of creation. It is the force of life. It is the force of love. It is the force of wisdom. It is the force of power. It is the force of peace. It is the force of joy. It is the force of hope. It is the force of faith. It is the force of grace. It is the force of God.~~

The destiny of creation is in the hearts of forces that make no noise.

Let us respond to this <sup>force</sup> ~~force~~ of silence. <sup>They</sup> ~~It~~ can bring us a heart of wisdom. <sup>they can</sup> ~~It~~ can provide us with an inward reinforcement of spiritual power.

<sup>they can</sup> ~~It~~ will help us find our way to God, yea even the God on High who looks down upon His <sup>noisy</sup> ~~children~~ quarrelsome children and says: "Be still and know that I am God."

Amen

1

This evening, as you have heard, it is my task  
to extend the remarks which I made in the concluding section  
of last night's presentation  
when I spoke of theology as one of the 'new frontiers' of  
Reform Jewish education  
as an aspect of our work which will receive increasing emphasis  
in the years ahead.

Shove FORWARD your PRACTICE -  
When we speak of theology

(and I trust this is what the program chairman had in  
mind when he selected and assigned my topic)

we speak not so much of a specific discipline  
of a realm of knowledge, an intellectual structure which we  
wish to impart to our children

But we refer rather to the wider task of creating and  
deepening their faith.

The teaching of specific concepts is an important aspect of this  
greater task

But it is not sufficient for the need

For we want to give our children not merely a knowledge concerning  
God, but also, and even more important, the knowledge of God

We mean not only to enlarge their mind

But to direct their will

and to touch their heart, as well.

very appreciative

Theology, when seen in this light, is not one segment of the  
curriculum,

It emerges rather as a theme which permeates the whole  
a leitmotif which dominates each <sup>+ everyone</sup> of its parts.

It is with this broader understanding of the term theology, then,  
that we approach the subject of our discourse

" Teaching Theology to our children "

The subject is admittedly broad

Too broad, perhaps, and the danger of voicing vague generalizations  
confronts us

(I resisted the assignment on that score, as Rabbi Mintz  
will tell you)

Let me begin by posing some general principles  
alluding to their concrete applications on various levels  
of our school

And in the hope that our subsequent discussion will give us  
further opportunity to reach concrete conclusions.

4

The first of these general principles is the proposition that the essence of any subject may be taught to any one at any age in some form, and that as a consequence we ought never to underrate our children's capacity to grow in knowledge and understanding.

Jerome S. Bruner of Harvard University, who perhaps more than anyone else is responsible for fomenting the revolution of thought which has transformed the American School system, makes this proposition the very corner stone of his theory of education. In The Process of Education, his report as the director of a national conference of scholars, scientists and educators he writes:

"We begin with the hypothesis that any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development. It is a bold hypothesis and an essential one in thinking about the nature of the curriculum. No evidence exists to contradict it. Considerable evidence is being amassed that supports it."

*Repeat*  
I call your particular attention to the adjective "intellectually honest" which he employs.

The principle of integrity is inextricably interwoven with our first proposition.

We can teach a great deal more than what we <sup>often</sup> think,

But what we teach

and whatever the form in which we cast our teaching

Its substance must be honest

in full conformance with the convictions which we <sup>ourselves</sup> affirm as adults.

6

We can teach a great deal more than what we often think,  
but what we <sup>teach</sup> ~~teach~~ must be intellectually honest  
true to our ~~own~~ convictions as adults -  
this is the first principle which we should have in mind  
in approaching our tasks.

The second proposition flows directly from the first  
and focuses on the noun of our proof text  
the form which we choose to transmit the the knowledge of God  
must not only be intellectually honest  
it must be intelligible to our children.

Our students can indeed be made to understand a great deal  
but we must speak to them in a language which they understand  
approaching them on their level  
in the realm of their actual living experience.

"To speak to little children of metaphysics" -  
our brilliant colleague and my predecessor, Dr. Borowitz  
once wrote, "to speak to them of ontology, or providence  
or omnipotence, is worse than silence, for in silence  
God, at least, is not locked out."

To reach our children with our teaching we must think  
in terms of what they feel and know.

Even the youngest of our children have experiences which give  
birth to the religious spirit

experiences with wind and sun and rain

with seeds and flowers and fruit

with insect life and animal life and human life

with birth and growth and death

Out of such experiences, and man's grappling with them, all religions  
have sprung

Out of such experiences, the faith of our children will spring and  
burgeon as well.

WE CAN HE



In this manner we provide them with meaningful content for concepts whose names they hear but do not understand as yet. We give them the raw materials out of which the God belief is formed even though we wisely refrain from designating it as such.

What are some of these raw materials which go into the making of a life of faith?

A bare listing will suffice. You know them well, can even add to what I offer:

- a sense of beauty and of order
- a feeling of confidence and trust
- the capacity for wonderment
- an awareness of the relationship between human life and the life of the world
- a respect for life itself and its great worth
- the knowledge of man's potentiality for good

1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 9th 10th 11th 12th

~~an appreciation of the difference between poetry and prose~~

*poet vs. prosaist in trees, books, in life*

the realization that there is a world of the spirit, a world which though extra-physical has a reality all its own.

*H<sub>2</sub>O - steel, rocky waters also practical work Rilke Earth's green covers*

*the work of places, of things - T.S. Eliot*

Limitless are our opportunities as teachers to provide these raw materials to our charges

We can find them in the experiences which our children actually have or those which we create for them in ~~class~~ school as well as the experiences of others which we relate to them in our teaching

I will not insult your intelligence and imagination as teachers by telling you concretely and in great detail just how you can exploit these opportunities

Indeed the ways are infinite in number.

Let me give only one <sup>illustrate</sup> example, so that you may know precisely what I <sup>have in</sup> mean <sub>mind</sub>

Our strictures against abstract considerations  
against the teaching of theology as a discipline  
with all of its traditional categories  
does not apply in the upper grades of the school  
Here the children are able to deal with the broad abstractions  
involved  
Here they actually manifest a need for system and logical  
consistency  
and we ought to meet this need with every resource at our command.

Let me voice only one note of caution here:  
We do not enough when we present our children with a ready made set  
of values  
or even if we trace their unfolding from genesis to present state  
When we do, our students will listen to us politely,  
perhaps even with interest, but surely no more  
They will not give their hearts and minds in full involvement  
until we explore these concepts in their fulness  
until we expose them to the winds of challenge which come from  
contemporary thought

THIS THEN IS THE SECOND -

More than this, we have to establish the particularism of our <sup>INTELLIGIBILITY</sup>  
ideas and ideals, to justify their designation as Jewish.  
For you see, the lines of cultural demarcation have become somewhat  
blurred in our time  
Values which at one time could readily be identified as Jewish  
have today become part and parcel of general society's  
constellation of ideals  
at least so it appears to our young

and this is why they want to know just why they should remain  
Jewish

why they should continue to be practicing and believing Jews  
not just as a matter of pietätsgefuehl, of loyalty to a tradition  
merely because it is a tradition

but in order to gain for themselves and to preserve for others  
those values which we insist on designating characteristically  
Jewish

The rabbis of old insisted that an event such as this should be an occasion for the outpouring of a powerful lesson for life. "Mere sentiment melts away," they said, "while a truth taught remains engraved upon the mind to be a joy forever.

In seeking a subject appropriate for such a lesson tonight, I finally determined to speak to you about the goals theological and philosophical which underly reform Judaism's program of religious education.

It is a subject with which I have been concerned of late, but it is as subject which is also close to the thinking and doing of the man we honor. The advancement of Jewish education has always been uppermost in Max's scale of concerns for Jewry. You know this on a local level. You may not know that he was recently appointed to the Commission on Jewish Education, national policy making body for Reform Judaism in the realm of religious education, a body representing both the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

In any event, a ~~knowledge~~ of the goals of our religious education effort is not just the concern of rabbis and educators and administrators. All who are interested in Jewish survival, all who have a share in the religious rearing of our young <sup>and there is not many who do not so much</sup> must have a knowledge of them.

The moral and spiritual generation, creation of man can well be likened to the fashioning of an elaborate mosaic. It is a mosaic created not by one but by many artists, each adding individual stones at different times. Unless the grand design is known to all, unless that design is followed always, the mosaic will never be completed, at least not in the fullness of its potential beauty and no matter how rare and radiant may be the single stones added by the single craftsman.

<sup>Robert Siegel</sup>  
~~Mr. Siegel~~ suggested that we spend <sup>moments</sup> our ~~hours~~ this day in re-considering the goals, theological and philosophical, which underly Reform Judaism's program of religious education. We do well to do so; he gains no wind who has no port in view. Nor is the designation of this port, of these goals, the concern of rabbis and administrators alone. All who have a share in the religious rearing of our young must have a knowledge of them.

The moral and spiritual generatio<sup>n</sup>, creation of man can well be likened to the fashioning of an elaborate mosaic. It is a mosaic created not by one but by many artists, each adding individual stones at different times. Unless the grand design is known to all, unless that designed is followed always, the mosaic will never be completed, not in the fullness of its potential beauty, and no matter how rare and radiant may be the single stones added by the single craftsman.



My hesitation, my apprehension is <sup>still further</sup> deepened by the awareness that in this audience are men and women more knowledgeable than I by far - my colleagues of the rabbinate my fellow panelsists and, not in the least, Abraham Siegel, whose blandishments beguiled me to accept this invitation.

Their contributions toward the advancement of Jewish education are many and meritorious. They have a life time of experience in endeavors in which I have scarcely been tested. <sup>And in this presence I can well speak the words of David</sup> HINENI HE-ONI MIMA-AS. Behold, I am poor in deeds.

It is a privilege which I greatly appreciate to be here tonight and to participate in this service. Although I am a stranger to most of you, your rabbi. I have known him for many years, know<sup>of</sup> him for <sup>years</sup> many more and I <sup>have always</sup> respect him for the many qualities of mind and heart he brings to his endeavors, for his integrity, his knowledge, his kindness - for the ability to transmit these ideals meaningfully articulated in the written and the spoken word and in the manner of his life. If it is true that a congregation <sup>receives</sup> ~~desires~~ the kind of leadership it <sup>needs</sup> ~~has~~, why then these words are meant not for him alone, but for all the sons and daughters of this holy congregation.

Our service unites the parents and the teachers of this religious ~~school~~ in a <sup>worship hour</sup> ~~service~~ dedicated to Jewish Education. The combination of ~~parents and teachers~~ is not in appropriate by any means. <sup>For the consideration of</sup> Our tradition equates the two. In the pages of our religious literature the teacher is often given the <sup>appellation</sup> ~~title~~ "Av" father, parent. In one dramatic passage <sup>an</sup> ~~one of the~~ Amora<sup>m</sup> went so far as to decal<sup>re</sup> that when a lad his father and his teacher are held in captivity: PODE ES RABBO V'ACHAR KACH PODE ES OVIV...the teacher must be rescued even before the father.

Now Rabbi ~~Gossman~~ suggested

When death takes those we love...when our children slip through our arms...when dread disease makes waste our strength...when we think or even say, now I have reached the bottom of the sea, now I can go no deeper and yet we go deeper, why then we need a different faith, then we need the kind of faith that led the Psalmist to proclaim:  
GAM KI ELECH BEGEI TSALMOVES LO IRO RO KI ATTO IMODI...Yea though I I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for though art with me.

These then are the levels of the committment which we seek: knowledge leading to deed, then soaring into a rapturous communion with the divine.

This is the design of the mosaic which we mean to fashion. It is a pattern not just for the future but for the present also. The kind of Jewish adults we want our children to become is precisely the kind of Jewish adult which we ought to be. Indeed, our children can never, will never be what we are not. Emerson taught us this truth 105 ago when he proclaimed that he "who speaks as books enable, as fashion dictates only babbles, not any profane man, not any sensual, not any liar, not any slave can teach. Only he can give who has. He only can create who is. Courage, piety, wisdom, love, they can teach.

And this is why we honor Max Berman, is it not? Because of what he has, because of what he is... *because he is a prophet in his life long the history of the*  
Because he demands from others only what he gives of himself:

in integrity

in devotion

and in love

9

There we have it - "a vague folk tradition, not a genuine faith which has <sup>an</sup> impact on the conduct of its adherents." Is not this the inevitable consequence of a teaching which emphasizes appreciation rather than commitment, the presentation of a religion which makes no demands on its adherents, <sup>who ask for nothing</sup> where every man does what is right in his own eyes.

Is not this the consequence of the ethical inconsistency with which we confront our charges: the preaching of one standard, but the practice of a standard diametrically opposed, , the <sup>practicing</sup> preaching of spiritual values within the synagogue - but the relentless, unceasing quest for material success without, adults who <sup>instruct</sup> teach children to <sup>lead</sup> pray but who <sup>never</sup> do not pray themselves, who do not even believe.

Is there any wonder that our children see through ~~our~~ us, that they <sup>recognize</sup> rebel against this hypocrisy for what it is and when they get to college they <sup>are</sup> teach what their elders may not have preached but what

10

Aye, and is not this the consequence of a Jewish education which stops just short of ~~its~~ fulfilling its ultimate purpose - the implanting of faith, the clarification and intensification of man's relationship to the divine. For this above all is what we want our children to be - believing Jews; this above all is what we want them to attain: a mature and an abiding faith in God.

We come here upon a crucila problem for, quite ibviously Reform Judaism is not unkfied in its theological pre-suppositions. There are those among us who are humansist naturalists, to whom God is an impersonal force, sustaining, or rather constituting the physicle and moral law which binds the universe. There are others, and I count myself among them, whose approach to theology is more traditional, to whom God is the Creator, Revealer and Redeemer, who ~~fashioned~~ fashioned man and gave him the power to eneter into a dialogue with the divine. These divergences in theological position make it difficult to offer a unified philosophy of Jewish education.

With all that, even the naturalists will agree than their faith is more than just an intellectual excercise, that it involves feeling as well as thinking, that it demands the affirmation of the heart as well as of the mind. And both naturalists and supernaturalists are at one in their agreement that under no circumstances must the theological enterprise be dâsdained and neglected, certainly not in our approach to religious education.

Indeed, Reform Judaism's Comission on Jewish Education, enjoins us as the "primary goal of our educational effort "to inspire our children witha positive and abiding faith in the Jewish religion."



Now, whatever else we may mean by the Jewish religion - ceremony, conduct, tradition - at its core there is a concept of a continuing <sup>Covenant</sup> ~~relationship~~ with God. And whatever our particular idea of God may be, faith in Him means more than verbal profession more than intellectual persuasion much more indeed than a refined doubt sublimated into a hesitant assumption. Faith demands an all consuming inner conviction, involving the full faculties of man, his heart and mind and will and spirit too, all of them blending into a rapturous communion with the divine. This is faith. This is what it means to believe in God.

Those whose approach to religion is primarily intellectual may well disagree, but the blunt truth of the matter is that there is no Judaism without the numinous experience. Our faith requires a consciousness of divine presence, KAVONOH leading to D'VEIKUS, a sense of reverence which flames into a cleaving, a commitment, a full heated response to the divine command: as that of Abraham when he ascended Moriah, or that of Moses when he saw his vision of the burning bush, or that of Israel's children when they stood round Sinai and having ~~heard~~ seen the lightening and heard the thunder and the voice of God as did their teacher Moses they proclaimed: HOYOM HAZEH ROINU KI JEDABER ELOHIM ES NO-ODOM We see this day that God does speak with man.

12

when death takes those we love...when our children slip through  
our arms...when dread disease makes waste our strength...when we  
think or even say: now I have reached the bottom of the morass,  
now I can go no deeper and yet we go deeper, why then we need a  
different kind of faith, then we need the kind of faith that led the  
Psalmist to proclaim: GAM KI ELECH B'GEI TSALMOVES LO IRO RO  
KI ATTO IMODI...yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of  
death I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.

These then are the three levels of the committment which we seek:  
knowledge leading to deed then soaring to <sup>craftwork</sup> communion with the Divine.

This is the design of the mosaic which we want to fashion -  
and <sup>my</sup> you are the <sup>craftsmen</sup> ~~craftsmen~~ whose creative talents will <sup>help</sup> make it to be.  
Our simile is not ill chosen, for teachers in truth are artists,  
artists of the spirit. They seek to fashion beauty not in silver  
nor in gold but in the living soul of man. And surely that person  
who can take a little child, an earth bound creature and work out in  
him the divine image will one day rise higher by his work than  
any artist genius who ever lived and wrought upon the earth. For  
there is no material like human nature, and there is no dignity like  
working in it and there is no grandeur like success in such a working.

May we be true to our noble calling, then having heard and heeded  
the divine command we will merit also to witness the fulfillment of  
His promise: Thou hast prevailed, O Israel...yea, thou shalt prevail.

12

Again, there will be voices of objection: Come now rabbi, do you really believe this, do you mean to tell me that God actually spoke to Abraham, that the children of Israel really heard His voice? Why that is placing stock in miracles, in supernatural events which we modern cannot possibly accept.

*When all is said & done*  
And yet <sup>it</sup> does not matter, does it, whether we accept the <sup>Biblical</sup> story in its detailed literal sense or merely as an interpretive account: in either case the fundamental truth remains the same: our fathers had a direct experience of God. Whatever it was that really happened, they knew for certain that God revealed Himself to them. They knew it with a knowledge of the heart, a knowledge greater than the knowledge of the mind, transcending logic or reason or the testimony of witnesses. They knew it as the artist knows beauty though he cannot touch it. They sense it as men sense love though they cannot see it and yet their lives are changed because of such a love.

Oh, how empty, how shallow our own faith is compared to this! We have our synagogues, to be sure, and we attend them. We cherish the principles of our faith and pray the world to keep them. We even recognize our ties to the K'LAL YISROEL and support our brothers wherever they may be. We even believe in God, some of us do, in an intellectual sort of way. But something is missing, my friends, something that makes the difference between cold, conventional religion and its vital transforming reality. That something our fathers discovered, and we need discover it too.

We need to, desperately, for while routine religion suffices to sustain us in our lighter hours, when life runs out into its depths, why then we need a deeper faith...

~~Undoubtedly~~  
 With all that, the realities of Jewish life in America make it impossible to use Hebrew as the primary tool of the educational process. English will have to <sup>serve that purpose</sup> ~~be that tool~~ and our children will read the great documents of Judaism largely in translation. But the use of the vernacular need be no hindrance to commitment; after all, our children live ~~and grow~~ physically and intellectually by means of their native tongue and there is no reason to assume that they cannot grow spiritually <sup>by the same means</sup> ~~through it as well~~. The admonition of Maimonides gives us assurance; though positing the study of Hebrew as a <sup>most</sup> noble Mitzva, he nonetheless proclaimed that "it does not matter whether one studies the subject in Hebrew, Arabic or Aramaic; the main point is to understand the subject. To study is all that <sup>really</sup> matters."

The Sidra of today - Pashas Mishpotim, the 21 chapter of the Book of Exodus opens with the laws regulating the acquisition of Hebrew slaves. These laws are noted for their humaneness, especially when we consider the time in which they were promulgated. No Jew was to be enslaved for all time - not against his will anyway. Every seven years was designated as a shemitha year, a year of release - and when it came around all slaves had to be freed and their property returned.

The author of this law - <sup>once</sup> again revealing a profound understanding of human nature - envisages the possibility that a slave may wish to renounce his freedom, that he may prefer the security of servitude to the duties of freedom. We read in our text:

Veim Omar Joumar Ho-eved: Ohavti Es adoni  
But if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, I will not go out free; then his master shall bring him to the judges (to repeat before them his determination to be free) and then he shall bring him to the door or the door-post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him forever.

The Jew who voluntarily renounced his freedom ~~xxx~~ had his ear placed against the door-post and pierced with an awl, and thus he bore for all time and for all to see the ineradicable mark of shame, the sign of bondage of a man who was offered freedom but renounced it.

<sup>inner</sup>  
The meaning of this strange ceremony has been explained by two masters of our talmud: Rabbi Jochanan ben Zaccai and Rabbi Simeon and though their explanation differs in detail, their interpretation teaching the identical lesson. Rabbi Jochanan ben Zaccai said:

"Why was the ear ~~fixati~~ chosen above all other organs of the body? Because the Holy one, blessed be he said: It is the ear which heard my voice saying: for unto me are the children of Israel servants, they are my servants, not the servants of servants, yet this man went and acquired a master for himself - let his ear be bored."



Rabbi Simeon expounded:

"Why the doorpost? The Holy One blessed be he said: the door and the doorpost were witnesses in Egypt when I passed over them and proclaimed: For unto me are the children of Israel servants, they are my servants, not the servants of servants - yet this man acquired for himself a master - let him be bored against the doorpost."

In this striking manner, two distinguished rabbis of the Talmud, <sup>hundred</sup> separated in time by nearly two ~~thousand~~ years teach the all important lesson and meaning of freedom for the Jew: man is free in order to serve God. Man must choose freedom in order to be free for the service of God. Self enslavement is a denial of God, a denial of manhood, a denial of the Torah.

Once again Scripture reveals its profound understanding of human nature as well as its timelessness. Ever and again, since the time of Moses, men, as individuals and as nations, have surrendered liberty for security. Ever and again, since the days of Moses men have of their own free will chosen servitude ~~because they were afraid to be free.~~ because they were afraid to be free.

We need not go far back in history to find evidences of this self-enslavement impulse in nations. Post World War I Germany was in chaos. An infant Republic struggled manfully to meet the problem. The democrats needed time and help - government is more difficult if you rely upon voluntary aid, rather than slave labor - if, instead of dictating you respect and take into account divergent points of view. But the people were tired of thinking, of struggling. They wanted to be told what to do. They wanted security quickly. They chose a leader who promised efficiency - and he brought efficiency, efficiency in war and murder. A ~~man~~ invaded France was in chaos. Again the people were afraid, afraid to take the helm themselves. And they chose another dictator <sup>Pétain</sup> who promised efficiency - and efficiency he brought, efficiency in treason.

Dai Remiso Lechachimo - a word to the wise is sufficient say the rabbis. Both the German and French Republic's constitutions were sound, unassailable documents of freedom. But it takes more than a

piece of paper to defend a deocracy. It takes men who have faith in democracy. Who believe that democracy works in times of trouble as well as in times of peace. ~~Who believe that freedom cannot be~~  
~~protected by suspending freedom~~ Who are not afraid of the duties of freedom. Who are not afraid of the dangers of freedom. Who believe that freedom cannot be protected by suspending freedom. Who will not permit themselves to be seduced by the sweet song of sirens who promise security the quick and easy the efficient way. There is an old German proverb which we might well take to heart:

Surely it is the most stupid calf  
That runs to the butcher to be cut in half.

Surely it is a most stupid calf  
that chooses the butcher who will cut it in half.

The ~~impulse~~ disease of auto-slavery is not limited to nations. Its malignant tentacles reach out and infest the individual as well. Many men, afraid to be free, choose slavery. Men, of their own free will serve many masters.

I do not refer to physical bondage. The feudal plantation owner system has been abolished. Even here, I suppose, there are still many who surrender freedom for security. The hardy pioneer, the man who strikes out for himself, is an increasing rarity.

However, I refer primarily to mental and to emotional bondage.

Men are slaves to their passions. The lust for money, temper, rage, prejudice, enslaves their lives. We speak of the binding power of drug and drink. Men greedy for money are slaves, no matter what their gold may buy. Men who rage are slaves no matter what concessions their raging may obtain. Men who hate are slaves, no matter what their hatred will procure and destroy. They are slaves to their emotions. And a man who submits to his emotions is not free, and he is not happy. Emotional freedom is not easy to attain. Esc hu giber

Men are also intellectual slaves, they become the servants of ideas. They hear an idea from another and accept it, or they make up their mind at an early age and then refuse to budge from their point of view. It's far easier to hold on to old ideas than to seek out new ones. Any challenge to that old idea is regarded as a personal attack. And men of ideas are suppressed as subversives.

Progress cannot long occur when the impulse to think is stifled.

~~Scientists are non-conformists. Thinkers are non-conformists. Prophets are non-conformists.~~ Judea exiled a Jeremiah, Athens poisoned Socrates, the Holy Roman Empire silenced Galileo. All three lost power. Scientists are non-conformists. Thinkers are non-conformists. Prophets are non-conformists. Permit them to think and progress is assured. Stifle them - then men and nations and civilizations will perish.

A Hassidic rabbi once exclaimed: The real slavery of Israel in Egypt is that they had learned to endure it. To which we might piously add: and no slavery is more abject than that which is self imposed. And men and nations do, of their own volitions ~~choose masters for themselves.~~ choose masters for themselves.

Most tragic is the sight of Jews who elect bondage. Redemption from slavery is the keynote of our existence, the beginning and the end of our <sup>being</sup> ~~existence~~. From that point of view one must acknowledge that Hitler was right in viewing the existence of the Jewish people as a danger to his nefarious scheme. Totalitarianism, the abandonment of the right to think, the subjection of the individual to the will of one man is contrary to the innate spirit of Judaism. No greater compliment was ever paid to the Jew and his teaching than that it was singled out as the arch enemy of Nazism; and though it has cost us untold sacrifice, if the doctrine of freedom has emerged, it was worth the awful cost.

Not every man can claim his freedom. Some men ~~are~~, alas to many are pressed into slavery by brute force. But when the day of freedom dawns, and man of his own volition chooses slavery, let him be branded with the badge of shame forever. He has renounced his manhood, betrayed his Judaism, profaned his God. "Unto me are the children of Israel servants, they are my servants saith the Lord of hosts and the servants of God cannot be slaves to men

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Today is the 144th Anniversary of the birthday of Abraham Lincoln. Today we join all Americans in honoring the memory of the greatest of all Americans. We pay a tribute in memory to the one and only hero America has given to mankind - Abraham Lincoln.

It is altogether fitting and proper that we do this. Ordinarily, the adulation of a national hero is out of harmony with the spirit of a religious service. But we do not honor <sup>Abraham</sup> him for what he did - <sup>through</sup> and his achievements were great & he emancipated the slaves and preserved the Union. We revere him for what he was: a human being of rare humanity, of profound humility, a man of faith and fortitude in the midst of vast tribulation, a giant, rising from the clg of the common life yet suffused with the splendor of <sup>uncommon</sup> eternal love.

Abraham Lincoln was a Tzaddik - a saint, in the full sense of the word. He was one of the Chassidei Umous Ho-oulom - one of the righteous men among the nations of whom the rabbis said that they will <sup>be awarded</sup> merit an honored place in the world to come. His name can well be pronounced within these holy halls when we call the roll of the great saints of the Jewish past. Like unto a Moses and Isayah and Jeremiah, Lincoln was fired ~~with~~ by a lofty ideal. He fought for it. He suffered for it. He died for it. He was a <sup>A worthy</sup> Tzaddik - a saint.

Jews have always admired the saint - our tradition ~~has always~~ insisted that we do <sup>him</sup> the ~~saint~~ honor, but <sup>but</sup> for our sake, not for the saint's sake. Great men do not need our praise. We recount their <sup>saintly</sup> deeds in order to improve ourselves. Lincoln ~~himself~~ expressed this thought so eloquently when he spoke of the self-dedication of the living rather than the hallowing of a stone or piece of ground. A Lincoln day celebration is meaningless unless we try to reate Lincoln's life to our own. The customary ad loved practice of reciting the tales of the holy men in our ~~past~~ is purposeless unless we strive to pattern our lives by their example.



Can we do this. Can men ~~aspire to be~~ a Moses or an Isayah or a Lincoln. Is not holiness a gift from God limited to a given place or age, granted only to a few rare individuals in a generation.

By curious coincidence our Torah section for today gives us the beginning of an answer to this <sup>really</sup> searching question: We read in today's parasha:

And thou shalt speak unto all thā are wise-hearted, whom I hve filled with the spirit of wisdom, thā they make Aaron garments to sanctify him, that they may minister unto me"

"that they make <sup>4</sup> Aaron garments to sanctify him..."holiness, here is likened to a vestment, a piece of wearing apparel, that can be made by man, that is obtainable by his will. It is a raiment which can be fitted to man's needs, lengthened or shortened as the wearer or the season may demand. It is visible; it is concrete; and its vesting is made the indispensable requirement for the service of God.

And we can become holy by emulating the attributes of saintly men.

An eminent Chassidic Rabbi once gave his last coin to a man of evil reputation. When his students and followers reproached him for it, he replied: Shall I be more particular than God who gave the coin to me? This parable points to the first of the virtues inherent in the makeup of holiness; it is the first mark of the great man, the saint...humility. All great men are humble; Moses meekly exclaimed: Mi onochi ki elech, who am I that I should go." Abraham cried: I am but dust and ashes. Isaiah, faced with the glory of Divine revelation, cried out: "Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips..." And it was a Lincoln who wrote: "I must say in candor that I do not think myself fit for the presidency."

The greater a man, the more humble he becomes, for he is conscious of his limitations and comes to recognize more clearly that boundless realm of

knowledge which is forever closed to him. Only the truly gifted knows how little he actually knows. Only the truly great knows how little he really is.

Isn't it always so. The do nothings boast most of their achievement. The know-nothings brag most of what they know, or rather don't know. (It is something like the preacher who in the margin of his prepared sermon manuscript wrote: argument weak, yell like hell). The rabbis of the Talmud drew an unforgettable simile when they pointed out that a tree rich in fruit is dragged to earth by its fruit and its branches hang meekly downward. But a tree that is barren and withered stands upright without bending, stretching its branches vaingloriously into the sky. The opposite emotion of humility - pride - deludes one into a false feeling of achievement and stifles advance. Humility alone can assure progress; only the humble knows how little has been done, and how much is yet to be done and he does it.

The second mark of the great man, the second sign of the existence of holiness is the constant striving for self-improvement. Man is the handiwork of God and his most precious possession is the faculty of free will, the chance to make himself/

"See," charged Moses, "I have set before thee this day life and good and death and evil, choose then life..." and the rabbis emphasized: "Everything is in the hands of heaven save the fear of heaven." Here is one domain where man alone holds sway. The power to rule <sup>his</sup> ~~one's~~ destiny is in the hands of man. <sup>God + man</sup>

Lincoln made himself - this quality more than any other endeared him to the world. Born in ignorance, adversity and want, he rose. By sheer self-mastery, and effort, and struggle, he rose. He may have had to walk a mile to borrow a book, but he borrowed the book and he read it. He may have had to read his book through the long hours of the night and by the dim light of a log fire, but he read it. and he rose. He may have had

had to climb, as it were, with bleeding hands upon the rungs of knowledge.  
but he did and he rose.

We have well-stocked libraries, well-lit rooms, well-staffed schools,  
and ample leisure. We don't read, and we don't rise. And then we complain  
that the fates are against us. To be sure, the agencies opposing man  
- environment, physique, society - are mighty. But man has modified them  
all and can continue to mold them to serve his ends. Man can make himself.  
And with man making there is no limit that can be set to human achievement,

The golden rule sets forth the last great sign of saintly living. "Thou  
shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Love must be the primary principle  
in dealing with our fellow man, a limitless love, a love that knows no  
bounds, a love ~~that is not limited by race or nationality~~ not just for this or that man  
but for all men, regardless of race or nationality, regardless of wealth  
or position. "Love ye the stranger, for ye were strangers in the land of  
Egypt." You were not just strangers in Egypt, you were lowly slaves  
despised by all. And yet, even the lowest must be honored, for he too  
is a creature of God.

Lincoln was a man of great love. The story is told that one day he was  
out driving with a friend, when he discovered along the road several  
young birds that had fallen from their nest. He insisted that his companion  
stop and he immediately proceeded to return the birds to their nest.

"My friend," said Lincoln, "you may laugh, but I could not have slept well  
tonight if I had not saved those birds. Their cries would have rung in my  
ears." Is it to be wondered that the man who heard the cries of young  
tender birds, should not have failed to hear the cries of thousands  
of human souls bound by the shackles of slavery and bondage?

*with such a power as to move the world*  
"Love thy neighbor as thyself." A world cannot exist half slave and half  
free."

And so, within the realm of our own religious heritage, and embodied in the image of the man we honor today and with this service, we come to see true holiness as it affects our lives. Humility, self-improvement, reverence and love for all that lives - these three become united in the hearts of those who strive for holiness within their own lives.

<sup>Al</sup>  
Veossu Bigdei Aaron Lekadsho "Thou shalt make Aaron garments to sanctify him" The threads of Aaron's garments are still available and we can weave them into a garment to cover ourselves. It is not a garment that can be woven in one day or in one year or even in one decade. The weaving of it occupies a life; but even in the weaving of it we come to place a bit of holiness, a bit of greatness into our lives each day. We may not be able to finish the task - we cannot all be an Aaron, a Moses or a Lincoln - but we can attain to certain aspects and find true comfort and happiness, comfort in the knowledge that others too are weaving a garment such as this, happiness in the realization that by our lives and our deeds we sanctify the world and bring the Kingdom of God nearer to the earth

Amen