



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE  
**AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES**

**MS-915: Joshua O. Haberman Papers, 1926-2017.**

Series A: Sermons and Prayers, 1940-2016.

Subseries 1: High Holidays, 1941-2016, undated.

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Folder  
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Sermons and notes, 1950-1951.

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

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Shofar-Symbol  
of Sacrifice

U'3 10 11

TORAH taught in words

in song

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES  
in Symbols

Symbolism of 2010

RAN'S HONOR reminder of Abraham's  
Sacrifice of Ran

CAPACITY FOR SACRIFICE

Friday, Sept 28, 1951

SHOFAR - SYMBOL  
OF SACRIFICE

Enlarged Sept '57

SHOFAR : RAM'S HORN  
OLDEST WIND-INSTRUMENT  
ANCIENT JEWISH SYMBOL

CHARACTERISTIC OF APPROACHING HOLIDAY : יו"ט

יובילין יו"ט

DAY OF SOUNDING THE HORN

SHOFAR REMINDS US OF 3 THINGS

① REMINDS US OF 10 COMMANDMENTS

THUNDER CLAPS  
SOUND OF HORN

WE MUST LIVE BY DIVINE LAW

② MAIMONIDES : SHOFAR SOUNDS ALARM

AWAKE YE SINNERS  
CONSIDER YOUR LIFE  
REPENT

### 3 SACRIFICE OF ISAAC

GOD WANTED ISAAC TO LIVE  
AND NOT DIE FOR HIS FAITH

SACRIFICE PRICE WE PAY FOR FUTURE WORLD

LAW OF PROGRESS

EXPECT NO REWARDS IN OUR LIFE TIME

THE OLDER ... THE MORE WE UNDERSTAND  
THAT WE MUST SACRIFICE FOR OUR  
CHILDREN AS OUR PARENTS SACRIFICED  
FOR US — AND WE WOULD NOT  
BE WISE TO EXPECT FULL GRATITUDE

PARENT GAVE HIS SON <sup>A NICKEL TO</sup> BUY THE PAPER AROUND CORNER

EVENING FATHER FINDS SCRIBBLED NOTE

CHARGE FOR ERRAND: 5¢ IN MORNING

BOY FOUND THE NOTE  
FATHER ENCLOSED NICKEL AND WROTE

YOUR BIRTH & NURSE	\$400	
LATER DOCTOR'S FEES	300	
FOOD & CLOTHING FOR 10 YEARS	8000	
TOYS & VACATIONS	2000	
EDUCATIONAL EXPENSES, LESSONS	2000	
	<hr/>	
	\$12.700	— NO CHARGE

Mankind has moved forward chiefly because  
parents have sacrificed for children

Work & <u>Money</u> to feed them	FOOD
<u>Patience</u> to teach them	EDUCATION
<u>Time &amp; Attention &amp; Love</u> to care for them	PROTECTION

Even more inspiring is sacrifice people have made  
for others not related to them

Explorers who lost health & life in  
Search for new truth

Patriots who gave up life for freedom of country

People in dangerous professions who labor COUNTRY  
for good of society

BOULDER DAM in Colorado an enormous  
engineering job — 89 men died

Plaque "FOR THOSE WHO DIED THAT THE  
DESERT MIGHT BLOOM"

SACRIFICE ~~KEY~~ - SHOFAH REMINDS US THAT  
TO MANY VALUES

Without sacrifice of Shavoy - no friendship  
true - no education  
work - no achievement  
parents & children - no family love

MARK of a good man is his capacity for sacrifice  
Elbert Hubbard

GOD WILL NOT LOOK YOU OVER  
FOR MEDALS, DEGREES, OR  
DIPLOMAS, BUT FOR SCARS

THE FAITH WE NEED TODAY

For some years I have been puzzled and fascinated by a certain text in our Bible. The passage in question occurs in our Rosh Hashonah service. We read it again in today's Haftarah, the 55th chapter of the prophet Isaiah:

COME YE, BUY, AND EAT: YEA, COME BUY AND EAT;  
WITHOUT MONEY AND WITHOUT PRICE.  
WHEREFORE DO YE SPEND MONEY FOR THAT WHICH IS NOT BREAD?  
AND YOUR GAIN FOR THAT WHICH SATISFIETH NOT?

Just what did Isaiah mean? What was he talking about?

Generally speaking, the prophet was not talking about bread for the belly but bread for the mind. The meaning of our text becomes clearer in its second half:

WHEREFORE DO YE SPEND MONEY FOR THAT WHICH IS NOT BREAD  
AND YOUR GAIN FOR THAT WHICH SATISFIETH NOT?

In plain words: People are not buying what they really need. They are not getting the right kind of spiritual nourishment despite expense of money and effort.

Yes, they have religion, but it leaves them hungry and unsatisfied.

Isaiah might well be speaking to our generation. There are many so-called "good Jews" who are doing their share for our people, support Jewish institutions and belong to the Synagogue, yet they remain, by their own admission, spiritually empty, confused and bewildered.

Why aren't they getting out of religion a sense of strength, serenity and peace of mind? Why is spiritual satisfaction denied to them? What is lacking?

Common sense tells us that we cannot shop wisely until we know what we need. If we clearly understood our human situation in today's world and what ails us, we would have a much better idea of the spiritual ~~remedy~~<sup>vitamins</sup> to look for.

The troubles of our generation, it seems to me, are fundamentally different from previous times. But it is not the amount of suffering that makes the difference --- though with 2 world wars and a third one coming up it is hard to imagine that times have ever been so bad. THE WORST PART of our present crisis does not appear in statistics. What I am talking about is a spiritual catastrophe greater than all our physical and material losses.

Something has happened which fundamentally changed man's feeling about human existence. Suddenly, man has gotten a new estimate of himself.

Just what it is that so upset man's image of himself and of life as a whole was recently described by one of the leading American educators:

We know -- he said -- that we can kill a million, possibly millions of people.... in a single night. Can the one who might fall in the holocaust of so many still be sure that he is not just a digit or a cipher, or a quantity of grease?

Man used to look into the mirror and see himself, standing on a pedestal of sacred dignity with a crown on his head. Sometimes he was shocked by the sight of sore wounds, but the reflection of man's image was still that of a king, "little lower than the angels."



Today, man's mirror of faith has been cracked by cynical materialism and the broken fragments reflect a distorted image of man. He now sees himself as an insignificant, puny creature, -- a quantity of grease.

When God is torn out of man's life, little is left that's worth bothering about. *People ask "Why can Communist soldiers be sent to their death so easily?" Answer is obvious -- First, Communism tears down the sanctity of human life then it calls on its followers to die for the cause.*

What is the difference between real currency and counterfeit? It is not the paper --- but who issued it! With God as the author of life, man has a high value --- leave God out and man's value is gone.

And when life itself means next to nothing, who is going to get excited about human rights and freedom?

That's why after the sunset of faith inevitably follows the darkness of moral collapse.

Fortunately, Americans have not yet suffered deportation, enslavement and genocide, but all of us feel the pinch of a great insecurity: Will our families stay together? Where will our sons and husbands be next year? Can we plan our careers? What can we be sure of in today's world? SCIENCE? WEALTH? POWER? Can we depend on these things for sure protection? At last we clearly see that material means are no guarantee for peace and happiness.

In the final analysis we must learn to rely less on our external means and more on the inward resources of faith. We must learn to trust again our inner assurance that we are creatures of God and that we are here for a purpose. In fact, the more we feel lost in the shuffle of huge events, the more urgently do we need PERSONAL RELIGION.

Faith that the Lord is my Shepherd, takes fear away.

Faith that I live because God wants me to, makes life significant.

Faith that God leads me, is a tower of strength and confidence.

We need that kind of faith more than anything -- more than any material thing. As Isaiah said in our text:

COME YE, BUY AND EAT, WITHOUT MONEY AND WITHOUT PRICE

*What we need to satisfy*

~~The remedy for~~ our souls cannot be bought for money in the marketplace. If we really want it, we can have it for nothing --- because PERSONAL RELIGION is inside of us.

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES



I wish I had powers of ~~description~~ equal to the tremendous difference between formal and personal religion. *& Chasidic rabbi of the last*

*city said*

"It is conceivable," ~~one of our teachers said,~~ "that a congregation may have beautiful grounds, impressive buildings and conscientious leaders, yet the innermost point may be missing."

Well, the innermost point of religion is our personal God-consciousness. ~~Religious institutions,~~ *Synagogues* holidays, prayers, ~~activities~~ are pointless if we do not achieve a deeply private

and personal faith. Anything less is hardly worth having.

*one of the early rabbis of your Congregation - I would like to hear you still remember Rabbi Joel Blum, once said*

If God is not my God, then I have no God. The God of the universe, the God of Israel, the God of history, the God of the Bible must become my God.

②

Of course, that kind of personal religion demands a shift of emphasis in our spiritual habits. We must get away from the casual spectator attitude in the hour of worship. We must come to

Temple with a different attitude -- not with the challenge as some have it in their heart, saying to God, so to speak, "I am coming to Thy House, O God, on condition that I get an oratorical treat, a musical performance and am seated comfortably while the service is being conducted for me. Those who merely seek a form of entertainment will never have a religious experience.

Real prayer is ~~a dialogue of the human soul with its Maker.~~ <sup>a real turning to God.</sup>

When we really mean to speak to God, that sort of prayer is always answered. So, the great Spanish Jewish poet Judah Halevi testified:

Longing, I sought Thy presence  
Lord, with my whole heart did I call and pray  
And going out toward Thee  
I found Thee coming to me on the way.

If we turn to God, He turns to us. If anyone tells me that he does not get anything out of prayer, <sup>it is not because of language difficulty or because prayers are repetitions but because</sup> he has not really been praying.

If we emerge from a service without a feeling that God is nearer, without a clearer vision of life's challenge and greater confidence about meeting it, we may have been physically at the service but our hearts and minds were absent.

Most people haven't given their <sup>religion</sup> ~~madness~~ a chance to work.

It is a tragic mistake to <sup>think of</sup> regard the Temple as <sup>nothing like</sup> a religious safe-deposit, <sup>in which to keep</sup> supposed to preserve your <sup>religion</sup> ~~spiritual~~ heritage to be picked up any time you need it. The fact is that your locker will be empty if you do not regularly renew your claim.

Personal religion is a very demanding thing. It is like a field that must be plowed and cultivated all the time. ~~But it is well worth the effort.~~

But once you lose it will see you through every crisis and you'll never lose that kind of faith.

At the end of the last war a couple of American soldiers accidentally stumbled upon a strange discovery in the German city of Cologne. They ~~noticed~~<sup>new</sup> an ambulance in the process of ~~removing~~<sup>being removed</sup> a man who was ~~more dead than alive~~. It happened to ~~be an anti-Nazi who had just been pulled out from a deep, secret cellar where he had been hiding for a number of years.~~ A relative had kept him alive by ~~dropping occasionally a few morsels~~<sup>with bits</sup> of food ~~passed~~<sup>there</sup> through a small hole. Driven ~~(by curiosity,~~<sup>by curiosity,</sup> our ~~American soldiers~~<sup>these</sup> were ~~lowered themselves down the narrow passage to see what the cellar~~<sup>curious to see</sup> was like. It was no bigger than a closet, ~~in which 2 men could~~<sup>actually a hole hardly big enough for</sup> ~~hardly~~<sup>to</sup> stand erect. ~~AM~~ One of the soldiers turned on his flash-light. The ~~beam of light encircled~~<sup>fell on</sup> the following words crudely scratched on the wall:

I believe in the sun even when it is not shining  
I believe in love even when feeling it not  
I believe in God even when He is silent.

*Can you imagine the moment of*  
It was faith which had kept that man alive.

~~There are~~ situations in life when personal faith is all we have got and all we are left with, and sometimes that is just about all we need.

Today we must believe that the ~~dark~~<sup>long</sup> tunnel through which we are going has an end somewhere and that the exit will lead us into a brighter future if only we move in the right direction.

We must have faith that God is near, and that what is happening to us is not without meaning and that it is leading up to something better.

One of the chassidic rabbis who lived through the stormy times of the French Revolution and the wars of Napoleon, once offered the following prayer:

"Show ~~us~~ one thing, O Lord; show ~~us~~ what all this that is happening right now, means to ~~us~~, ~~what it demands~~ ~~of~~, what you, Lord of the world, are telling ~~us~~ by way of it."

There must be some sense to what is happening in the world today!  
Maybe the terrible wars ~~of the last 30 years~~ were necessary to teach us a lesson we would not learn otherwise.

At the turn of this century, mechanization and technology had made tremendous progress. We were turning out machines and gadgets for everything. ~~When~~ Almost logically, we were beginning to think of progress in terms of bigger and better material things. We were told to expect happiness at the end of a mighty production schedule.

Maybe the shock-treatment we have been getting in recent years was necessary to remind us that man does not live by bread alone, that progress is <sup>to be measured by</sup> the quality of our inner life and not the quantity of our possessions.

Perhaps we had to learn the hard way that "the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong."

Our prophets taught us long ago that material means and physical force are not decisive. ~~— that is, mankind —~~ Well, we ~~are~~ are beginning to learn ~~that you may win after a number of gigantic wars~~ ~~and still win nothing~~ how empty and futile military victories ~~may be.~~

The painful method of trial and error obviously is man's way of learning. ~~But somehow,~~ <sup>— and that's our hope —</sup> little by little, mankind will find out that a decent world cannot be put together with the magic of money, — not with the hammer blows of force, and that not even the tricks of science can do the job. Finally, after trying out all the wrong methods, man will turn to God's way, seeing at last that it is the only way!

Our sages tell us the story of a man who was journeying at the time of the sinking of the sun. As it grew dark, someone came and lit a candle for him, ~~and~~ and it went out; then another came and lit a candle for him, ~~R~~ and it went out. Thereupon, the old man said: From now on, I shall wait for the morning light alone.

So let us say to the Holy One blessed be He: Master of the Universe; the lamps we made have all gone out. From now on we shall wait for Thy light alone and walk in the light of Thy wisdom, for in Thy light do we see light. Amen.

THE JEWISH MISSION

Later this afternoon, we shall read a portion of the Book of Jonah. Jonah is one of the most interesting Biblical prophets. He was not only a great prophet but also a great sinner. His sin is not uncommon today. He was an escapist who tried to run a way from his mission or life's purpose.

It all began when Jonah received the call to go to the city of Nineveh and to rebuke the Ninevites because of their sins. But Jonah was frightened by the assignment --- not altogether without reason. In those days for a Jew to preach in the Assyrian capital city of Nineveh could be compared to an American who has been told to go and preach in Moscow today.

At any rate, Jonah ran away from his mission, and turned into the opposite direction as fast as feet could carry him. He arrived in the sea-port of Jaffa just in time to get on a ship about to leave for Tarshish which was then the end of the world. But soon trouble started. A terrible storm broke out. The captain called on all men aboard ship to help. Where was Jonah? There was no time to look around. The ship was now out of control. "Throw the cargo into the sea" shouted the captain and hurried down to the bottom of the ship to make sure that the order was carried out. Imagine his surprise at finding Jonah hidden among the baggage and sound asleep. This was the situation when the captain got hold of Jonah, shook him and shouted:

WHAT MEANEST THOU THAT THOU SLEEPEST?

Jonah 1.6

There is something very pathetic about this situation. Lives are at stake, but the prophet is asleep. So it is with every human being who runs away from his life's mission ---very soon he'll close his eyes to life's problems altogether and become a useless by-stander.

There is much waste in the world but none greater than the waste ~~and loss~~ of men's lives who sleep their years away, who never become contributing members of the crew but must be counted, like Jonah, among the baggage that must be carried along by the rest of us.

Of course, no one loses more than the person himself who must walk through life with the curse of uselessness.

How miserable we feel even during that short spell of indecision before we make up our mind about a career in life. I have often talked to young people in the midst of that brief crisis when they are in doubt as to what to do with their lives. These young folks are literally tortured by the question whether the occupation they are inclining toward is really "worthwhile" as they put it. Time and time again, I hear them say: "But I want to do something vital! I want to do something important!"

But let us not for a moment think that only young people feel the urge of dedicating their lives to something important and worthwhile. That urge is present at every age level and on every step of maturity. A purpose, or personal life mission is like health ---- you don't notice it very much until you lose it.



There is the man who gets into a rut and loses all ambition because he fails to see the significance of his job; there is the unhappy and depressed woman whose grown children have left the home and somehow the purpose of her life seems to have gone with them.

And who does not know that the curse of old age is not so much physical weakness but the horrible sense of being useless. The other day I discovered by chance what it is that keeps old George Bernard Shaw so young. It is not his vegetarian diet but some thing which he put into the following statement:

I CARE ONLY FOR MY MISSION, AS I CALL IT, AND MY WORK

There is no more vital ingredient to life than the feeling of a mission or purpose.

It would be a great fallacy to believe that it is only by doing magnificent things that you can get the satisfaction of a meaningful life. The important thing is that you do something-- however little -- for a great cause. Observe the radiant joy in this somewhat unusual prayer-poem by an English servant girl:

Lord of all pots and pans and tins, I have no time to be  
A saint by doing lovely things, by watching late with Thee  
Or praying in the dawnlight, or storming Heaven's gates.  
Make me a saint by getting meals and washing up the plates.  
Warm all the kitchen with Thy love, and fill it with Thy peace,  
Forgive me all my worrying and make all grumbling cease.  
Accept this service that I do -- I do it unto Thee.

This girl who may still be carrying on her unglamorous work found the way to make drudgery <sup>bearable</sup> easy: Dignify it with a purpose. Offer it as a service to God.

Work, any kind of work, done for its own sake is slavery. Anyone who is so wrapped up in what he does that he loses the consciousness of a higher purpose, really de-humanizes himself and progresses toward the animal state.

The story is told of a "Maal Hagole" - a coachman - who came to the rabbi for advice. His horse refused to eat oats or hay and was satisfied only with bread, rolls or cake. Even a simple-minded coachman could see that such a thing would soon put him out of business. What could he do?

The rabbi eyed the coachman for a few minutes and then started to ask him some questions:

"My good man, do you say your morning prayers?"

No --replied the coachman -- these prayers are much too long.

"And how about the Shabbes, -- do you join your brethren in worship?"

What? -- said the coachman -- and lose all those fares?

"Then, tell me, do you at least say grace before each meal?"

Again I must say no, <sup>said</sup> ~~replied~~ the coachman,

"It seems to me, then; <sup>said</sup> the Rabbi, "that it is easy to <sup>why your horse will eat only bread, rolls or cake. I'll tell you</sup> understand what's the matter with your horse. Since you live like an animal, YOUR HORSE DECIDED TO ACT LIKE A HUMAN BEING."

A man who becomes so harnessed to his daily tasks that he can think of nothing else, loses the grace of humanity.

The spiritual man may be working just as hard, except that he will always see the light of a purpose beyond his labor --- and what a difference that makes!

Among the less attractive occupations are, as everyone knows, those that make it necessary to go from house to house and push door-bells. Nobody likes to do that. But give pushing door-bells a higher purpose, like a political or philanthropic solicitation, and the same activity is done with pride by the best of people.

More important than what we do, is what we are doing it for.

Let a man take food with the thought that only by so doing can he gain strength to do God's work on earth and the purely animal act rises to the level of the holy --- worthy of being introduced with a prayer. And so all acts and deeds can become transfigured in the golden glow of a sacred purpose.

I am always deeply moved when I think of the letter which one of our great Rabbis a century ago wrote to his son; the letter was written a few days before Yom Kippur

TO MY BELOVED SON ISAAC... then comes an apology that there is too little time for a long letter.... and then the sentence:

DO NOT LET A DAY BE LOST WITHOUT SECLUDING YOURSELF AND  
THINKING OF THE PURPOSE OF YOUR LIFE

When such words are addressed to a Jew, they are not an invitation to philosophy but an appeal to his memory. YOM KIPPUR, like all of our holidays, is chiefly a day of memorial. We are asked to

remember the function of the Jewish people and to ~~behold~~<sup>fulfill</sup> the highest purpose of our life ~~in performing~~<sup>by doing</sup> our part of the Jewish mission. In fact, the whole Bible was written to bring out and ~~to~~ clarify this one point: the mission of the Jewish people. For that purpose, the Bible takes us back all the way to the Creation of the Universe. Then it goes on to tell us how God climaxed the work of creation by fashioning the human being. But somehow man does not fit into the world too well. Modern psychology talks a lot about adjustment. Well, no sooner does man make his grand appearance in the world --- and he is maladjusted. The flood comes and God pretty nearly puts an end to the great experiment of human life. But, mankind gets another chance in Noah and his descendants. Once again men multiply and once again the children of men become corrupt.

That is when God decides to pour a greater portion of his own spirit into human beings. But God does not choose the mighty Babylonians or the ancient Egyptians to be his spokesmen. He chooses the people least likely to succeed in anything, the Hebrew slaves, to show that divine truth may grow on any soil. And so, an upstart nation, the Hebrews, are pulled out of Egypt, cross the Red Sea and brought to the revelation at Mt. Sinai. That's the climax of the Bible.

From that day at Mt. Sinai down through the ages, the Jewish mission has remained the same: It is to accept the Torah and to believe that all mankind will, at some future time, live by its principles. That hope we must never lose. In every age we must search for the smallest signs of hope. And so, even today we see some light break through the dark gloom of current history.

The war in Korea is a turning point in the destiny of America and perhaps the world. It is a new kind of war. For the first time we are fighting not to defend or extend our borders, but to uphold the authority of the United Nations. It is a noble commitment. American Jews welcome, I believe, the choice our country has made. It is a step closer to the united, peaceful and orderly world -- a cause which we have championed for almost 3000 years. ~~Our~~ Our messianic goal, we note, has not grown ~~any~~ <sup>desirable</sup> less ~~attractive~~ in all these years. We must believe in it not as a dream or miracle, but as a practical possibility. We know that Jews cannot be the only instrument for the perfection of mankind. We trust that others will join hands with us in the building of God's kingdom. That's our faith. As Jews it is our business to be hopeful.

Our teachers tell us that in the end of days, on the great day of judgment, all mankind will pass before the heavenly throne. And when any man is lead to be judged before the Holy One blessed be He, 2 questions will be asked of him:

1. Have you done your duty toward your fellowman?
2. Have you shown reverence to God?

But a Jew will be asked a 3rd question: BRIGHT  
↑ HAVE YOU KEPT YOUR HOPE OF REDEMPTION?

THE JEWISH MISSION

Thomas Carlyle said: "The man without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder." He spoke as a historian who had learned that lesson from the biographies of great men and great failures. Concentration on a goal produces invincible power. The question now asked so often "How strong are we?" should be re-phrased by wiser Americans: "How strongly are we committed to our cause?" Clear vision of a purpose will multiply our strength.

Korea is a turning-point in the destiny of America. For the first time we are fighting neither to defend nor to extend our borders; we have dedicated our power to the authority of the United Nations. It is a noble commitment. When this supreme purpose of our national policy becomes absolutely clear in our own eyes, other nations will accept our leadership with growing confidence.

American Jews welcome the choice our country has made. Among Jews the hope for a united, peaceful and orderly world is almost 3000 years old. It is our messianic goal. We believe in it neither as a dream nor as a miracle but as a practical possibility. To help make it real is the Jewish mission. Of course, Jews know that they can not be the only instrument for the perfection of mankind. We recognize the contribution to be made by others and want to join hands with them in the building of God's kingdom. But it is our distinctive mission to preserve the faith -- first voiced by Israel's prophets -- <sup>that it is possible</sup> in a future ~~the day when~~ world when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation", ~~until that~~ <sup>until that</sup> ~~faith is shared by the rest of mankind.~~

*to build a*  
You Kippur excerpts (1950) for Newspaper



There is something very pathetic about this situation. A gentle <sup>reminding</sup> ~~suggest~~ to the prophet that "to worship God!"  
Lives are at stake, but the prophet is asleep.

~~That's the trouble with the escapist~~  
~~So it is with every human being~~ who runs away from his life's <sup>or his people's</sup> mission  
--- <sup>pretty</sup> soon he'll close his eyes to life's problems altogether,  
and become a useless by-stander.

There is much waste in the world but none greater than the waste ~~and loss~~ of men's lives who sleep their years away, who never become contributing members of the crew but ~~must~~ be counted, like Jonah, among the baggage that must be carried along by the rest of us.

Of course, no one loses more than the person himself who must walk through life with the curse of uselessness.

How miserable we feel even during that short spell of indecision before we make up our mind about a career in life. I have often talked to young people in the midst of that brief crisis when they are in doubt as to what to do with their lives. These young folks are literally tortured by the question whether the occupation they are inclining toward is really "worthwhile" as they put it. Time and time again, I hear them say: "But I want to do something vital! I want to do something important!"

But let us not for a moment think that only young people feel the urge of dedicating their lives to something important and worthwhile. That urge is present at every age level and on every step of maturity. A purpose, or personal life mission is like health ---- you don't notice it very much until you lose it.



Think of (2) There is the man who gets into a rut and loses all ambition because he fails to see the significance of his job; there is the unhappy and depressed woman whose grown children have left the home and somehow the purpose of her life seems to have gone with them.

And who does not know that the curse of old age is not so much physical weakness but the horrible sense of being useless.

The other day I discovered by chance what it is that keeps old George Bernard Shaw so young. It is not his vegetarian diet but some thing which he put into the following statement:

I CARE ONLY FOR MY MISSION, AS I CALL IT, AND MY WORK

There is no more vital ingredient to life than the feeling of a mission or purpose.

(3) It would be a great fallacy to believe that it is only by doing <sup>great</sup> magnificent things that you can get the satisfaction of a meaningful life. The important thing is that you do something-- however little -- for a great cause. Observe the radiant joy in this somewhat unusual prayer-poem by an English servant girl:

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This girl who may still be carrying on her unglamorous work found the way to make drudgery easy: Dignify it with a purpose.

*She placed herself as an instrument in God's hands*

*2nd* Offer it as a service to God.

*her work Him*

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Anyone who is so wrapped up in what he does that he loses the consciousness of a higher purpose, really de-humanizes himself and progresses toward the animal state.

The story is told of a "Baal Hagole" - a coachman - who came to the rabbi for advice. His horse refused to eat oats or hay and was satisfied only with ~~bread~~ <sup>sugar</sup> rolls, ~~or cake~~. Even a simple-minded coachman could see that such a thing would soon put him out of business. What could he do?

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"Then, tell me, do you at least say grace before each meal?"

Again I must say no, ~~replied~~ <sup>said</sup> the coachman, there isn't enough time to take a bite.

"It seems to me, then," said the Rabbi, "that it is easy to understand what's the matter with your horse. Since you live like an animal, YOUR HORSE DECIDED TO ACT LIKE A HUMAN BEING."

*We believe that there is a great difference between man and beast - but some have <sup>the extraordinary</sup> a capacity of bridging the ~~gap~~ gap!*

A man who becomes so harnessed to his daily tasks that he can think of nothing else, loses the grace of humanity.

The spiritual man may be working just as hard, except that he will always see the light of a purpose beyond his labor --- and what a difference that makes!

Among the less attractive occupations are, as everyone knows, those that make it necessary to go from house to house and push door-bells. Nobody likes to do that. But give pushing door-bells a higher purpose, like a political or philanthropic solicitation, and the same activity is done with pride by the best of people.

More important than what we do, is what we are doing it for.

Let a man take food with the thought that only by so doing can he gain strength to do God's work on earth and the purely animal act rises to the level of the holy --- worthy of being introduced with a prayer. And so all acts and deeds can become transfigured in the golden glow of a sacred purpose.

I am always deeply moved when I think of the letter which one of our great Rabbis a century ago wrote to his son; the letter was written a few days before Yom Kippur

TO MY BELOVED SON ISAAC... then comes an apology that there is too little time for a long letter.... and then the sentence:

DO NOT LET A DAY BE LOST WITHOUT SECLUDING YOURSELF AND  
THINKING OF THE PURPOSE OF YOUR LIFE

When such words are addressed to a Jew, they are not an invitation to philosophy but an appeal to his memory. YOM KIPPUR, like all of our holidays, is chiefly a day of memorial. We are asked to

remember the function of the Jewish people and to <sup>fulfill the</sup> ~~behold the highest~~ purpose of our life <sup>by doing</sup> ~~in performing~~ our part of the Jewish mission. In fact, the whole Bible was written to bring out and clarify this one point: the mission of the Jewish people. For that purpose, the Bible takes us back all the way to the Creation of the Universe. Then it goes on to tell us how God climaxed the work of creation by fashioning the human being. But somehow man does not fit into the world too well. Modern psychology talks a lot about adjustment. Well, no sooner does man make his grand appearance in the world --- and he is maladjusted. The flood comes and God pretty nearly puts an end to the great experiment of human life. But, mankind gets another chance in Noah and his descendants. Once again men multiply and once again the children of men become corrupt.

That is when God decides to pour a greater portion of his own spirit into human beings. But God does not choose the mighty Babylonians or the ancient Egyptians to be his spokesmen. He chooses the people least likely to succeed in anything, the Hebrew slaves, to show that divine truth may grow on any soil. And so, an upstart nation, the Hebrews, are pulled out of Egypt, cross the Red Sea and brought to the revelation at Mt. Sinai. That's the climax of the Bible.

From that day at Mt. Sinai down through the ages, the Jewish mission has remained the same: It is to accept the Torah and to believe that all mankind will, at some future time, live by its principles. <sup>LUDWIG LEWISOW "TO BE JEWS - THAT PAYS OVA DEBT TO HUMANITY - TO BE JEWS - IS HOPE"</sup> That hope we must never lose. In every age we must search for the smallest signs of hope. And so, even today we see some light break through the dark gloom of current history.

One of the most notable intellectuals in America is Ludwig Lewissow - writer at Brandeis University. Was not always a good Jew. In fact, in early days, he was no Jew at all. Then he wanted to serve out humanity any number of causes until all of a sudden Judaism appeared to him like the captain in our text and said "What meanest thou that thou sleepest?" Then Ludwig Lewissow began to call unto God and became a Jew again. He said "To be a Jew - that's your debt to humanity." <sup>To be a Jew is to have a MISSION. BUT ALSO TO HAVE HOPE</sup>

The war in Korea is a turning point in the destiny of America and perhaps the world. <sup>It has all the old horrors of war and still</sup> ^ It is a new kind of war. For the first time we are fighting not to defend or extend our borders, but to uphold the authority of the United Nations. It is a noble commitment. American Jews welcome, I believe, the choice our country has made. It is a step closer to the united, peaceful and orderly world -- the cause which we have championed for almost 3000 years. ~~Our~~ Our messianic goal, <sup>has not grown</sup> ~~is not, has not grown~~ <sup>a bit</sup> ~~a bit less attractive~~ <sup>less desirable</sup> in all these years. We must believe in it, not as a dream or miracle, but as a practical possibility. We know that Jews cannot be the only instrument for the perfection of mankind. We trust that others will join hands with us in the building of God's kingdom. That's our faith, ~~As Jews,~~ it is our business to be hopeful.

Our teachers tell us that in the end of <sup>time</sup> ~~days~~, on the great day of judgment, all mankind will pass before the heavenly throne. And when any man is led to be judged before the Holy One blessed be He, 2 questions will be asked of him:

1. Have you done your duty toward your fellowman?
2. Have you shown reverence to God?

But Jews will be asked a 3rd question: HAVE YOU KEPT YOUR HOPE OF REDEMPTION?

Rosh. H. Ene Simon

- (a) Our educational enterprise ~~must~~ be closed as a failure
- (b) College students who don't know what we're defending  
why we are defending and whether it is  
worth defending. Maximalists vs Minimalists in defense

Add to Prohibited Free Speech

5<sup>th</sup> point

Temple Commission on Raising  
Jewish Standards

to intensify our religious  
& educational activities

on all levels from ~~kindergarten~~  
for adults, no less than children

## The Meaning of the Hebrew Kaddish

By Eli Siegel

*Then will I not hide myself from Thy face.—Job 13. 20*

### KADDISH (WORDS HAVING HOLINESS)

May His great name  
Be mighty and holy  
In the world  
His will has made.  
May this be with speed,  
And in a near time.  
Amen.

May His kingdom  
Come to be  
In your life, your days,  
And in the life  
Of the House of Israel:  
May this be with speed,  
And in a near time.  
Amen.

May His great name be blessed  
For ever, for ever.

Blessed, praised, made glorious;  
Extolled, heightened, and honored,  
Made mighty and lifted up—  
Be the name of the Holy and One,  
Whom we bless;  
Even though He is high  
Above all blessings and hymns,  
Extollings and comfortings:  
All that are uttered  
In the world.  
And say ye,  
Amen.

May peace come from on high,  
Opulently;  
And life for us,  
And for all Israel.  
And say ye,  
Amen.

May He who makes peace  
In His high places,  
Make peace for us,  
And for all Israel.  
And say ye,  
Amen.

The Hebrew Kaddish, seen poetically and philosophically, is one of the most beautifully courageous things the mind of man has come to. At the same time it is a magnificent warning, of much relevance in our uncertain day. The purpose of the Kaddish is to stop our changing grief and fear into selfishness. It tells us not to change sorrow into a dislike of what is.

The mighty words of the Kaddish are said by thousands and thousands of persons all over America and the world. They are chanted, often, with awing sobriety and beauty at cemeteries: the world for a while has an unaccustomed meaning. In synagogues, the magnificent Hebrew often rings forth, with profound dignity; and those who hear are gravely, sweetly and fearfully in touch with first things: in touch with this moment's meaning of the God of Israel, the God of astronomy, physics, spring, autumn, psychology—and one's heart, even where one does not see it.

Yet many, many persons have said the Kaddish—dutifully, indeed—but without knowing the import of what they were saying, the poetic significance of their verbal duty. The Kaddish has been mumbled; rushed through; disregarded in the hurry of a demanding day. It seems only

right that each time the Kaddish is said, something of its beauty should be felt. Repetition should make for increased emotion, not for the contrary. The emotion the Kaddish can make for is the emotion of sunset and Bach, sunrise and Beethoven, afternoon and Shakespeare; of the whole year and Moses and Heine and God. In the Kaddish, there are the magnificent severity of Michelangelo's Moses and the sweetness of Heine at his most musical, of Spinoza at his most lucid.

Were the Kaddish to be felt rightly by all who say it, all who have yet to know it, our world would take on more logic and sweetness. More meditation on the Kaddish is in order; less mumbling. An explanation of the Kaddish seems necessary; for the Jewish way and Jewish thought and Jewish poetry can be seen, always, anew—with the beginning great truth of one God and the mind of man and the world, still present, still seen faithfully, still loved. The Kaddish has to do with grief; and it is well, then, to begin with grief. What form to grief does the Kaddish give?

When a great grief comes, there is a tendency to retreat into ourselves, and there be glumly dismal. Grief can make for a flat, formless privacy; an indifference unwilling to see color in anything, goodness in any person, meaning in the universe. Selfishness is a great muffler, a great duller, a great hider; and grief often makes us more selfish, not less so. It is hard for a person to be unselfish in the deepest sense of the word, in ordinary times; that is, to be justly aware of the being and value of all others; but when we are hit by a sharp, mighty calamity, it can seem greyishly silly to be interested in what is outside ourselves.

The Kaddish asks us, when we have been pierced, cast down; when we are tired, perhaps, in strange sadness—to come to a hilltop, to be like a trumpet, to praise everything.

Imagine Isaac Leben. He has just lost his one son. He has had grief before, of various kinds. He has been puzzled by the ways of things. He has seen his son, Abner, dead. He can sink deeply. He can become bitter. He can retreat blankly.—What does the Kaddish tell him?

The Kaddish tells him he should like God and what He has made, grandly. Isaac should not think of his son, *just so*, at all. The Kaddish says, for him, and to him, in massive and graceful Hebrew:

May His great name  
Be mighty and holy  
In the world  
His will has made.  
May this be with speed,  
And in a near time.  
Amen.

There is a continual drama, in Hebrew literature, between the depths and wishes of ourselves, as separate beings, and the meaning of the world. God is constantly telling the people of Israel to leave their idols, that is, gods they can own, gods in the long run subservient to themselves. Idols are really the embodiment of the self in false grandeur.



It is hard for a man to care for what is far away, what is immeasurable, as he does for his self, so warm to him. Next to what is ourselves, are those close to us—those we own in a way. There are two evils notably present in the old Hebrew literature: the evil of seeing the world as a thing to be owned, without due respect to the cause of the world or God; and the evil of hiding from the world, in order to be comfortable in the monarchy of ego. In Isaiah, for example, we can see the people of Israel, haughty in ownership; in Psalm 139, we can see a Jew tempted to hide from reality, from the sight of everything.

Isaiah and the Psalms, of course, speak of the heart of man, not just of Jews in history. The Kaddish says that when great, not-understood grief happens, that is no time to establish a woeful, segregated self: woeful, but perhaps, likewise, contemptuous of existence and fate and of everything.

The Kaddish is aware that grief can become contempt. The more sad a person is, the less disposed he may be to find significance or meaning in anything; which means, though he may not know it, that he is more disposed to establish that dismal glory which secretly comes to be when contempt or bitterness is completely successful. The Kaddish shows an awareness of our worst and most unconscious and yet unceasing plot: a plot working quietly and darkly in us: the plot to see life as empty, the world as meaningless, the universe as gigantic rubbish; and God as uselessly shadowy, or as indifferent, or as unkind.

When Isaac Leben lost his son, he was subject to the temptation of finding all existence empty and inimical. The Kaddish tells him: *This* is the time to extol the world and the cause of it more than ever, to see God as kinder to him than ever. And the Kaddish tells one to think not only of his fate, but of what is going to happen to everyone. Isaac Leben is asked in his sorrow to think of beautiful contentment for all:

May His Kingdom  
Come to be  
In your life, your days,  
And in the life  
Of the House of Israel;  
May this be with speed,  
And in a near time.  
Amen.

In other words, Isaac Leben instead of being asked to say, "My son, my son, my only son" is asked to say, "Oh, that this world become one with God's beautiful purpose. Oh, that people know the meaning of what they have experienced, and come to see it with a form in keeping with God." We can ask what His Kingdom means: we can be sure that while not banishing utterly the world we know, in this Kingdom we shall see God's meaning; and this meaning as the beauty of eternity and the hour made one.

Follows in the Kaddish a great crash of praise. There is insistent, determined, unmeasured, magnificently defiant and endless praise of God—even while there is the remembrance of the body of someone so close to oneself, now no longer with life:

Blessed, praised, made glorious;  
Extolled, heightened, and honored,  
Made mighty and lifted up—  
Be the name of the Holy and One,  
Whom we bless;  
Even though He is high  
Above all blessings and hymns,  
Extollings and comfortings:  
All that are uttered  
In the world.  
And say ye,  
Amen.

So while Isaac Leben may be inclined to retreat into his own grief, he is told to extol God without measure—and so are the people with Isaac Leben. The Kaddish tells us that somewhere grief and rejoicing are one in God's reality.

I think then that the Kaddish is the continuation, in a time of critical sadness, of the import of Psalm 139, which tells us that there is a temptation *all the time* for the self to hide in the darkness of vanity. The Bible is aware that there is that in man which says love of all outside himself and the cause of it, is a lessening of *me*, the ego comfortable: in itself, and alone.

After the crash of praise, the Kaddish concludes in tranquil, wide amity. The Kaddish asks for a peace against the peace of despair, of numbness, of blankly staring fixity:

May peace come from on high,  
Opulently;  
And life for us,  
And for all Israel.  
And say ye,  
Amen.

May He who makes peace  
In His high places,  
Make peace for us,  
And for all Israel.  
And say ye,  
Amen.

And so it is incorrect to associate the Kaddish with a fearful monotony. It tells us that death should not freeze us. The Kaddish is a warm, kind poem, magnificent in its contradiction of a tendency in grief-surprised, grief-crushed man. It asks flesh and blood to do useful, authentic wonders.

The Kaddish can bring meaning to all men. Its beauty is deep and constant. It says that the more we can truly love reality and the cause of it, the more our moments, our days, our lives will be beautifully had by ourselves.

Let us then see the Kaddish. Let us understand it, poetically and logically. Let us see Rabbi Hillel, a mountain, and a lark in it. This means that we must stop mumbling it; we must ask what it is, and why the words are what they are. The Kaddish is not an accelerated whisper; it is not an unheard stagger. When synagogues and homes and elsewhere are places for the understanding of the Kaddish, its brave, fine assertion—not for some obscure rendition—then His Great and His Poetic Name will be heard; and in being heard will be Mighty and Holy, as, perhaps, it never was before.

There is no limit to how well we can hear.

#### NOTE

The Meaning of the Hebrew Kaddish is a revised and enlarged form of a consideration of the subject which first appeared in *The Jewish Forum*, July 1953. Eli Siegel's translation of the Kaddish first appeared in *Commentary*, February 1953.

Eli Siegel is the founder of Aesthetic Realism. He is the author of *Hot Afternoons Have Been in Montana*, *Nation Prize Poem*, 1925; and of *The Aesthetic Method in Self-Conflict*, 1946.

The Meaning of the Hebrew Kaddish has been published by Definition Press for the Society for Aesthetic Realism. Copies, twenty cents each, at Amory Books, 280 West 12th Street, New York 14, N. Y.

EVER ROSH HASHONAH

Sept 30, 1951

Center, 29.

PEOPLE OF DESTINY

My friends, I am personally very thankful and happy to be united with you in prayer on this first Rosh Hashonah which you and I are observing together. Let me wish you all from the bottom of my heart

לְשָׁנָה טוֹבָה יָשָׁר

May all of you and all of mankind be inscribed in the Book of Life for a good year, a year of peace and contentment. Unfortunately there is a great gap between our wishes and the state of affairs in the world. It makes us sad ~~indeed as we~~ <sup>to see</sup> ~~consider~~ the mood of fear and anxiety in the hearts of mankind as we are about to enter the year 5712 of our ancient calendar. It seems that each year the outlook grows darker and more doubtful.

Some time ago General De Gaulle wrote a book which many Frenchmen are now reading. The book opens with the words "Uncertainty is the mark of our time." I suppose we all feel that way. If you are a father, if you are a mother, if you are a young man or a young woman you must be perplexed and wonder how it is possible to plan for the future or feel secure about one's family these days. Yet I venture to say that we Jews have much to be grateful for. Compared with some of the nations in the world we still stand like the old Wailing Wall in ancient Jerusalem, indestructible and defying the law of decline and decay. In a world that is literally falling apart, we Jews <sup>are</sup> still stand, ~~straight~~ <sup>up</sup>. We have seen the spirit and power of France all but broken. We have also seen in these past years how Great Britain became not so great, and even in this wonderful land of ours, America, we have come to know fear for the first time in history. But the Jews are still unbroken in spirit.

Only a few weeks ago James G. McDonald, ~~the~~ first United States Ambassador to Israel, published a fascinating book entitled "My Mission in Israel." You will find it a most absorbing experience to read this book and to see the exciting events, which have taken place in Israel the past few years, through the eyes of a seasoned and experienced diplomat and observer of public affairs.

Now the one thing that impressed Mr. McDonald more than anything else he saw in Israel was the incredible optimism of the Jews. In fact, everybody who has been in Israel <sup>would</sup> agree, ~~with the Ambassador~~. A tourist who recently returned from a trip around the world put it this way - in Britain people brood over the lost glory of the old empire. In Vienna they still dream of the gay and good old days, but in Israel people tell you: Well, things are wonderful now, but if you really want to see something come back next year. My friends, optimism is an ancient Jewish characteristic. We have always been a hopeful people and we have given frequent expression to our hopefulness and perhaps never more forcefully and eloquently than in a lovely prayer which is part of our daily morning service. This prayer says:

אשר  
מאד טוב חלקנו ומה נעים  
הוא חלקנו ומה נעים הוא חלקנו  
אשר טוב חלקנו ומה נעים הוא חלקנו

Happy are we, how good is our portion and how pleasant is our destiny/and how beautiful is our heritage! I hope that many of you are familiar with this prayer, but what you are not likely to know is the fact that this wonderfully hopeful expression, this optimistic prayer, this joyful affirmation and acceptance of the Jewish destiny, was written in a time

of great persecution, in a time when it became necessary to suspend, to abolish the public service. In precisely such a time of dark terror, this expression of happiness, happiness in the fact of being Jewish became part of our private morning devotions. This prayer is one of those typical - Nevertheless - attitudes that our history is full of. Come what may, nevertheless, we are Jews and we rejoice in that fact. But this prayer is more than a declaration of joy in being Jewish. In it you will find certain convictions expressed, certain reasons why we Jews have always felt confident and if we today can accept those convictions, those beliefs which our forefathers had we, too, shall be happy as Jews, come what may:

לַחֲסֵד וְרַחֲמֵי  
 לַחֲסֵד וְרַחֲמֵי  
 אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ  
 אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ

How good is our portion and how pleasant our destiny. You see, our forefathers had a sense of destiny which gave them great comfort. Indeed, I might say that a sense of destiny is the basic fundamental feeling of religion. Of course it is a matter of faith: Faith that there is a will at work, that there is a will ruling over our lives which is greater than our own will. Faith that our petty lives fit into an eternal plan.

Everyone, I am sure, knows our ancient custom of wishing one another at this season of the year *לחן רחוק יעד*

"May you be inscribed in the Book of Life for the New Year."

This is a picturesque way of saying that the basic issues of human life are decided by God and not man. That is why Rosh Hashonah is known as the *י' טו' ני' the day of Judgment.*

We do not believe as did the English poet William Ernest Henley who wrote the popular poem INVICTUS (the Undefeated). In his skeptical mood he addressed himself to "whatever gods may be" and in his closing

line, which is distinguished by poetic chutzpah, he shouted:

I AM THE MASTER OF MY FATE  
I AM THE CAPTAIN OF MY SOUL

IRONICALLY . . . .  
HIS WHOLE LIFE WAS UNDER  
SHADOW OF THAT AFFLUCTION

We don't believe any human being can say that.  
Our life is subject to divine judgement and control, and what we need is enough humility to face the future with a sense of our own weakness, and enough faith that God who created the world in His wisdom also wisely governs the destiny of man.

Certainly our people always put their trust in God as the merciful and loving Father in heaven and drew comfort every day and every hour from faith that God was with them, that He worked out their life in His Higher wisdom in fulfillment of his plan. That is why they could say with deep conviction "How good is our portion and how pleasant is our destiny."

Now the personal sense of destiny of which I have spoken and which was part of the perspective <sup>of</sup> life of every believing Jew was strengthened and fortified by the feeling of belonging to the Jewish people. I suppose to this day every Jew somehow finds that his life is committed to the Jewish people from birth, that being Jewish is not merely a matter of choice. I think that is a characteristic Jewish feeling.

None of us chose Judaism but Judaism chose us. The Jewish role is placed into the cradle of every Jew and this is as it should be. There is an old ~~Jewish~~ legend about the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. According to this legend, when God decided to reveal the Torah under mankind he demanded

of Israel some surety, some bond or pledge of great value as guaranty that the Torah would be properly kept and treasured and when Moses and the leaders of Israel offered to God a great amount of gold and silver the offer was turned down. Finally Moses and the leaders of Israel said to God "we offer our children as bondsmen, as surety for the Torah." It was only then that God gave the Torah to Israel, declaring that as long as the children of Israel were committed to it, the Torah would be in good hands. In other words, we became a people of religion, a people of Torah long, long ago at that historic moment when our forefathers committed all future generations, their children and their children's children and pledged them to that Torah. The reason of course was obvious - the ideas and ideals and the goals and the visions contained in the Torah cannot be achieved in a single generation. It is a task for many, many generations and we, we Jews of today, are the ~~se~~ children *that were* pledged to fulfill the Torah.

[ Now, my friends, it is this challenge which is really the great message of Rosh Hashonah. On this sacred day we hear the ancient call, the call of centuries. We hear the echoes of the voices of our forefathers calling upon us to dedicate ourselves to the fulfillment of their dreams. ] And if on this sacred day there is some ~~small~~ sense of guilt, some feeling of shame and remorse in our hearts [ that cries out for repentance, for return, ] it is because we ~~know how often we~~ have lived as though we had no obligation to the past, as though our lives had not been dedicated long ago.

We know and admit in shame that we have lived and in our day by day life ignored the task that many generations

of our ancestors trustingly passed on to us, and so we are gathered here, as all Jews are gathered in their synagogues all over the world, driven and brought together by the desire to affirm and to affirm with joy our task and our destiny as a people of God saying:

How good is our portion and how pleasant is our destiny!

Now there is just one obvious point which I would like to make tonight and it is this. The acceptance of the Jewish destiny may be the greatest source of our personal happiness when Judaism is not only something into which we have been born but something that we have learned to appreciate so much that we would choose it of our own accord. It makes a great difference if we can say with understanding and conviction as previous generations of Jews have said:

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד

How beautiful is our heritage!

I think there is no greater challenge in Jewish life today than to give our people the knowledge so that they, too, may consider their lives worthwhile and more significant because of their Jewishness. Too many of our people have just a formal sort of affiliation with Judaism. They may belong to this or that Jewish organization and they may perhaps bind themselves to our people with an annual contribution to this or that fund, but their hearts really are not with us. They remind me of the man who built himself a beautiful new home and he was particularly anxious to have automatic heat installed and he did so with great expense. He ordered thermostats for all rooms

and he asked that each thermostat be regulated at 72°. One cold winter day he moved into that new beautiful home of his and discovered then, much to his dismay, that although all the thermostats registered 72° the house was actually freezing cold, cold like an ice box, and when he checked he found that the thermostats had been set ~~all~~-right, they registered 72°, only they had not been connected with the heating unit. So it is with some of our people, they may register as Jews, their Jewish thermostat so to speak seems to indicate normal Jewish affiliation, but their Jewish heart and soul ~~is~~ frozen.

The reason is that they are spiritually disconnected. My friends, the purpose of these High Holidays is to have every one of us check on his connection with our great and ancient

*faith, and to make sure that being Jewish is not just an empty label but something that really flows within - a living faith - convictions to overcome moral indifference and vision to see beyond the plume of today. There is nothing I personally pray more for than that God give me the strength, may He help me to help you*

rediscover Judaism so that all of you might come to understand and love it saying:

How beautiful is our heritage! Let us enter our New Year together with courage and with supreme confidence in our future. Let us be sure in our hearts that God's plan will be fulfilled and that in that plan there is an important function, a great and a noble role for us Jews to play. Let us be of one mind with the author of a book on Jewish history who ended his last page with these words in big print: "To be continued." Our history is to be continued. The march of Judaism and the march of the Jews will be continued through the ages

Happy are we!

How good is our portion!

And how pleasant is our destiny!

And how beautiful is our heritage! Amen.



Wenton, R. J.

PEOPLE OF DESTINY

My friends, I am personally very thankful and happy to be united with you in prayer on this first Rosh Hashonah which you and I are observing together. Let me wish you all from the bottom of my heart

May all of you and all of mankind be inscribed in the Book of Life for a good year, a year of peace and contentment. Unfortunately there is a great gap between our wishes and the state of affairs in the world. It makes us sad indeed as we consider the mood of fear and anxiety in the hearts of mankind as we are about to enter the year 5712 of our ancient calendar. It seems that each year the outlook grows darker and more doubtful.

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Happy are we, how good is our portion and how pleasant is our destiny and how beautiful is our heritage! I hope that many of you are familiar with this prayer, but what you are not likely to know is the fact that this wonderfully hopeful expression, this optimistic prayer, this joyful affirmation and acceptance of the Jewish destiny, was written in a time

of great persecution, in a time when it became necessary to suspend, to abolish the public service. In precisely such a time of dark terror, this expression of happiness, happiness in the fact of being Jewish became part of our private morning devotions. This prayer is one of those typical - Nevertheless - attitudes that our history is full of. Come what may, nevertheless, we are Jews and we rejoice in that fact. But this prayer is more than a declaration of joy in being Jewish. In it you will find certain convictions expressed, certain reasons why we Jews have always felt confident and if we today can accept those convictions, those beliefs which our forefathers had we, too, shall be happy as Jews, come what may:

How good is our portion and how pleasant our destiny. You see, our forefathers had a sense of destiny which gave them great comfort. Indeed, I might say that a sense of destiny is the basic fundamental feeling of religion. Of course it is a matter of faith: Faith that there is a will at work, that there is a will ruling over our lives which is greater than our own will. Faith that our petty lives fit into an eternal plan.

Everyone, I am sure, knows our ancient custom of wishing one another at this season of the year

May you be inscribed in the Book of Life for the New Year.

This is a picturesque way of saying that the basic issues of human life are decided by God and not man. That is why Rosh Hashonah is known as the  
the Day of Judgment

Our life is subject to divine judgment and control. Now, to be truly religious Jews we need enough humility to face the future with a sense of our weakness, knowing that it is not man alone who ~~changes~~<sup>judges</sup> and decides the issues of life

and on the other hand we need enough faith that God who created the world in His wisdom also ~~governs~~<sup>wisely</sup> governs the destiny of man.

Certainly our people always put their trust in God as the merciful and loving Father in heaven and drew comfort every day and every hour from faith that God was with them, that He worked out their life in His Higher wisdom in fulfillment of his plan. That is why they could say with deep conviction "How good is our portion and how pleasant is our destiny."

Now the personal sense of destiny of which I have spoken and which was part of the perspective<sup>of</sup> life of every believing Jew was strengthened and fortified by the feeling of belonging to the Jewish people. I suppose to this day every Jew somehow finds that his life is committed to the Jewish people from birth, that being Jewish is not merely a matter of choice. I think that is a characteristic Jewish feeling.

None of us chose Judaism but Judaism chose us. The Jewish role is placed into the cradle of every Jew and this is as it should be. There is an old Jewish legend about the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. According to this legend, when God decided to reveal the Torah under mankind he demanded

of Israel some surety, some bond or pledge of great value as guaranty that the Torah would be properly kept and treasured and when Moses and the leaders of Israel offered to God a great amount of gold and silver the offer was turned down. Finally Moses and the leaders of Israel said to God "we offer our children as bondsmen, as surety for the Torah." It was only then that God gave the Torah to Israel, declaring that as long as the children of Israel were committed to it, the Torah would be in good hands. In other words, we became a people of religion, a people of Torah long, long ago at that historic moment when our forefathers committed all future generations, their children and their children's children and pledged them to that Torah. The reason of course was obvious - the ideas and ideals and the goals and the visions contained in the Torah cannot be achieved in a single generation. It is a task for many, many generations and we, we Jews of today, are the children pledged to fulfill the Torah.

Now, my friends, it is this challenge which is really the great message of Rosh Hashonah. On this sacred day we hear the ancient call, the call of centuries. We hear the echoes of the voices of our forefathers calling upon us to dedicate ourselves to the fulfillment of their dreams. And if on this sacred day there is some small sense of guilt, some feeling of shame and remorse in our hearts that cries out for repentance, for return, it is because we know how often we have lived as though we had no obligation to the past, as though our lives had not been dedicated long ago.

We know and admit in shame that we have lived and in our day by day life ignored the task that many generations

of our ancestors trustingly passed on to us, and so we are gathered here, as all Jews are gathered in their synagogues all over the world, driven and brought together by the desire to affirm and to affirm with joy our task and our destiny as a people of God saying

How good is our portion and how pleasant is our destiny!

Now there is just one obvious point which I would like to make tonight and it is this. The acceptance of the Jewish destiny may be the greatest source of our personal happiness when Judaism is not only something into which we have been born but something that we have learned to appreciate so much that we would choose it of our own accord. It makes a great difference if we can say with understanding and conviction as previous generations of Jews have said:

How beautiful is our heritage!

I think there is no greater challenge in Jewish life today than to give our people the knowledge so that they, too, may consider their lives worthwhile and more significant because of their Jewishness. Too many of our people have just a formal sort of affiliation with Judaism. They may belong to this or that Jewish organization and they may perhaps bind themselves to our people with an annual contribution to this or that fund, but their hearts really are not with us. They remind me of the man who built himself a beautiful new home and he was particularly anxious to have automatic heat installed and he did so with great expense. He ordered thermostats for all rooms

and he asked that each thermostat be regulated at 72°. One cold winter day he moved into that new beautiful home of his and discovered then, much to his dismay, that although all the thermostats registered 72° the house was actually freezing cold, cold like an ice box, and when he checked he found that the thermostats had been set in right, they registered 72°, only they had not been connected with the heating unit. So it is with some of our people, they may register as Jews, their Jewish thermostat so to speak seems to indicate normal Jewish affiliation, but their Jewish heart and soul is frozen. The reason is that they are spiritually disconnected. My friends, the purpose of these High Holidays is to have every one of us check on his connection with our great and ancient faith.

God give me the strength, may He help me to help you rediscover Judaism so that all of you might come to understand and love it saying:  
How beautiful is our heritage! Let us enter our New Year together with courage and with supreme confidence in our future. Let us be sure in our hearts that God's plan will be fulfilled and that in that plan there is an important function, a great and a noble role for us Jews to play. Let us be of one mind with the author of a book on Jewish history who ended his last page with these words in big print: "To be continued." Our history is to be continued. The march of Judaism and the march of the Jews will be continued through the ages  
Happy are we!

How good is our portion!

And how pleasant is our destiny!

And how beautiful is our heritage! Amen.

GLORY IN THIS!

My friends: I wonder if by chance you remember seeing a remarkable photograph which came out of the war in Korea. It appeared in Life Magazine some time ago, and showed a young Marine with a helmet strapped to his chin and his face wrapped in a muffler. His hands held a can of frozen beans. The director of the museum of modern art in New York asked the photographer, David Duncan, how he got that picture, and Duncan told him: It was just at the rise of dawn; the sky was turning gray. The marines were trying to eat their frozen rations. One of them seemed to represent them all in his chill misery. Duncan, about to snap his picture, thought the face needed a flicker of expression and so he used an old photographer's trick. He asked the boy: Say, if you could have anything you wanted right now, what would you ask for? His camera was set. He waited for a smile to match the sort of answer he expected, like --- "a steak and French fries" or "my ma's coffee and pie." But the face changed very little. The marine looked at Duncan, then said: WHAT DO I WANT? TOMORROW!

I believe the pathetic wish of this unknown GI expresses something of our deepest desire. We, too, are anxiously hoping for tomorrow and we all know just what we want tomorrow to be like. We want a tomorrow without war, when young folks can go about their peaceful careers and families need not fear the disruptions and the sorrow and the sacrifices that go with war. We want a tomorrow when all the genius of science will be used to make the world prosperous and when nations will live and let live.



But how are we going to get such a wonderful tomorrow? How do we know that it will be any better than today? What must we do to make it a better day?

I believe we find the answer in the prophet Jeremiah. Our great prophet of 2700 years ago also lived in a time of great turmoil and disturbance. Babylonia had come up as a new and aggressive military power to break the peace of the world. Dreams of progress were shattered by a series of wars. ~~The whole political and moral order of the world seemed to collapse.~~ And as everyone was asking, as we ask today, what is going to save us and make life secure and give us a better tomorrow, Jeremiah gave the following answer:

LET NOT THE WISE MAN GLORY IN HIS KNOWLEDGE  
NEITHER LET THE MIGHTY MAN GLORY IN HIS MIGHT  
LET NOT THE RICH MAN GLORY IN HIS RICHES  
BUT LET HIM THAT GLORIETH GLORY IN THIS:  
THAT HE UNDERSTANDETH AND KNOWETH ME, THE GOD  
OF MERCY, JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS IN THE LAND

Jeremiah 9.23

~~My friends~~ These simple, direct words might well be the summary of a life-time of teaching by the prophet Jeremiah. Did he see something that still holds true today? Shall we, ~~in trying to make real progress~~ reject the things Jeremiah rejected, and seek the key for a better tomorrow where Jeremiah believed that it could be found? Let us see if our own experience <sup>supports</sup> ~~is in agreement with~~ the conclusions <sup>of</sup> ~~reached by~~ the prophet ~~himself~~ - LET NOT THE WISE MAN GLORY IN HIS KNOWLEDGE.

I don't think any generation of man <sup>kind</sup> ever gloried so much in science and education as we of this 20th century. Whatever else may have gone wrong, people still say: "Thank God for our science. Look at the progress we have made."

In fact, nobody can deny ~~what~~ science has done <sup>much</sup> ~~for~~ human welfare. Bernie Baruch was recently asked to name the most

important development of our generation. He answered: It is the extra 25 years each person may now add to his normal span of life as a result of scientific progress. A life insurance company in a nation-wide advertisement ~~illustrated the same fact by telling us that~~ <sup>illustrated the same fact by telling us that</sup> when Ezio Pinza (of South Pacific fame) was born, you could expect to live around 43 years. Now, your normal life expectancy is 68 years. Unfortunately, there is a catch to these statistics. They speak of normal living, that is the years of life you may expect, provided you don't become a victim of man-made forms of destruction. Suppose you look at these grim statistics: Do you know how many persons were killed in the last 2 wars? Sixty million men, women and children! The same tools of science which ~~have~~ <sup>have</sup> long life have also been used to cut it short ~~also~~. Recently, a gushing lady after being introduced to Albert Einstein asked: ~~Talk to me professor, do you think that atomic power is here to stay? And Einstein replied: My dear lady, the question is: Are we here to stay!~~

~~The lower we go morally, and the higher we go scienti-  
tically, the more doubtful becomes the survival of the human race.~~

Human nature has been badly misunderstood. Only 50 years ago Alfred Nobel, inventor of dynamite, thought that his terrible new explosive would make war completely impossible. Little did he know what a monster man can be.

If the last few years have taught us anything at all, it is this: You just can't depend on science to improve the human being and save mankind from self-destruction. I once argued with a scientist about this point, and he said to me: Why, of course, you can't expect science to do everything. After all, science is the affair of just a few people. What you <sup>must</sup> do, is to educate the masses. I suppose some 15 or 20 years ago, everybody would have agreed with

my friend that spreading knowledge and education is the solution to the world's problem. Who would have challenged the proposition that the more education, the more goodness. Give people knowledge, and they will be moral. Build schools, said Horace Mann, and crime will be practically abolished. Well, what happened? Crime came along and hired people with college degrees and learned to use every educated trick or gadget to make crime pay. And let's not forget that the country with the most colleges and college graduates in Europe was Hitler Germany. Not even education will make people safe to live with.

OH LET NOT THE WISE MAN GLORY IN HIS KNOWLEDGE, for with all the opportunities of science and of mass-education mankind has at long last succeeded in raising a generation of mechanized barbarians. Now, if it isn't science, and if it isn't education that has the key to a better tomorrow, then what has?

I think many people would say, it all boils down to a question of money. Give people more of the good things of life, raise their income, give them economic security and they'll get along with one another. In other words, goodness is just a matter of having a full stomach. But, there is a simple way of testing this solution: No country in the world has the kind of money we have in the United States. It has been figured out that the American people now have 85 million radios, 30 million telephones, 40 million automobiles and a standard of living the world has never known. Yet, I wonder if all this prosperity ~~has~~ <sup>has</sup> raised our moral standards, reduced crime, made our family life more stable and produced a more idealistic generation of youth? And I want to ask this simple question: If we had a 1000 billion dollars to give away and if we pasted the whole earth with dollar bills, could we bribe mankind into goodness? It is doubtful

indeed that all the comforts and luxuries money can buy will make people better and safer to live with.

Now, there is another solution which is getting more and more support. Since people can't be bribed, it is argued they must be forced into good behavior. According to this philosophy: WAR IS THE ONLY WAY TO PEACE. I wonder how many more wars it will take to teach us that ~~xxxx~~<sup>weapons</sup> can win wars, but not the peace. If the pistol does your talking, the pistol will be the answer. You ~~just~~<sup>xxxx</sup> can't shoot your way into the kingdom of peace.

If ever there was an idea proven right by long and painful human experience, it is Jeremiah's warning: LET NOT THE MIGHTY MAN GLORY IN HIS MIGHT AND LET NOT THE RICH MAN GLORY IN HIS RICHES. After bleeding ourselves down to the last soldier and spending ourselves down to the last cent, we shall still find the door to peace and security locked.

It is just like the 3 gentlemen who went to New York and when they registered in the hotel, all they could get was one room for the 3 of them on the 60th floor. They decided to take that room and then they went out for the evening and when they returned, they found to their dismay that the elevator was out of order. The manager profusely apologizing offered to set up a cot<sub>x</sub> in the lounge, but the men refused. They decided to use the stairway. As they started, one of them said: You know, we've got a long climb ahead; let's do something to take our minds off the climb. Suppose, I'll sing some songs for the first 20 flights of stairs, and you, he turned to the second, you'll tell us jokes to keep us going for the next 20 flights of stairs, and you, he said to the third, you're kind of serious minded, well, so tell us some sad stories. They all liked the idea.

The first sang all kinds of songs the first 20 flights of stairs; then the second man took over and told them jokes as they climbed up another 20 flights of stairs. And when they reached the 40th floor, the third said, NOW IT'S MY TURN TO TELL SAD STORIES. I SHALL BEGIN BY TELLING YOU THAT I LEFT THE KEY DOWNSTAIRS.

So it is with us people of this 20th century. After exhausting ourselves in building up science and education, and fighting wars and spending money all over to save democracy and peace in the world, we now discover that we haven't got the key to peace.//My friends, there is only one key that can open the door to peace and that is: a change in human character. ★

It has been wisely said that TO EXPECT HUMAN CHARACTER TO CHANGE, MAY BE AN ACT OF FAITH, BUT TO EXPECT PROGRESS WITHOUT IT IS AN ACT OF LUNACY.

Humanity's most important business today is to worry about what kind of persons we are inside, and there is no change we are more in need of than a change of heart, and surely our greatest victory will be won when a new spirit within us takes over. As our prophet Jeremiah said:

LET HIM THAT GLORIETH GLORY IN THIS:

THAT HE UNDERSTANDETH AND KNOWETH ME, THE GOD OF MERCY  
AND JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS IN THE LAND.

There is one miracle about which I have not the slightest doubt. It is the sudden change that comes over a man when at some mysterious moment of life he understands and knows, as he never knew before, that he stands in the presence of God.

And when a man, at that moment, sees how utterly vain and meaningless everything else is in life, how nothing really matters except the eternal God -- when that truth electrifies his mind and he

has that sense of time standing still, ~~and so on~~, and reverence fills his heart, at that moment he is a changed man.

The miracle of the religious vision and of the changed heart is proven by millions of men and women who have come to know and understand God in some such unforgettable personal experience.

Science, power, wealth -- there is no peace, there is no security in these things. ~~Therefore~~ The betterment of mankind does not depend on material improvements, but on spiritual growth. Whether tomorrow will be better than today -- the whole fate of mankind will be decided by events in the hearts and minds of people.

LET NOT THE WISE MAN GLORY IN HIS KNOWLEDGE, NEITHER LET THE MIGHTY MAN GLORY IN HIS MIGHT. LET NOT THE RICH MAN GLORY IN HIS RICHES BUT LET HIM THAT GLORIETH GLORY IN THIS: THAT HE UNDERSTANDETH AND KNOWETH ME, THE GOD OF MERCY, JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS IN THE LAND.



DATE 12/10

Trenton - Oct 1951

# SELF-RENEWAL

CHANGE TO WHITE TORAH COVERS based on

THOUGH YOUR SINS BE AS SCARLET  
THEY SHALL BE WHITE AS SNOW  
THOUGH THEY BE RED LIKE CRIMSON  
THEY SHALL BE WHITE AS WOOL Is. 1.18

WE BELIEVE IN POSSIBILITY OF SELF-RENEWAL  
MESSAGE OF THIS SABBATH IS OF HOPE - REPENTANCE IS  
GREAT - ONLY HOPE FOR MANKIND

~~CLEANING ABENT~~ REPENTANCE IS

~~NO EASY ACHIEVEMENT~~

NO EASY ACHIEVEMENT

ELABORATE PREPARATIONS: ELLUL

Slichos

HEREAFTER EVIL HAVE  
WICKED MINIMIZE  
RIGHTeous MAGNIFY  
EVIL

THOUGH WE HAVE NEGLECTED THESE SPIRITUAL  
EXERCISES - REPENTANCE IS JUST AS DIFFICULT AS EVER

1 START WITH SELF-JUDGEMENT

WHICH IS CONTRARY TO INSTINCTIVE SELF-LOVE

COUNT ON FINGERS OF ONE HAND  
PEOPLE TAKING (CRITICISE) WITHOUT  
FEELING OFFENDED

STILL MORE DIFFICULT IS TO BE SELF-CRITICAL

2 EYES

ONE NEIGHBOR'S VIRTUES  
OTHER YOUR OWN FAULTS

THAT EYE GETS NEAR SIGHTED AWFULLY FAST

2 MASTERS OF OUR FAITH HAVE FOUND PRAYER  
INDISPENSIBLE FOR SELFJUGEMENT

CREATES MOOD FOR INTROSPECTION

LIFE MUST HAVE PAUSES <sup>WHEN WE</sup> CAN STOP  
LOOK  
LISTEN

SOME SAY I'M NO TEMPLE GOER BECAUSE  
I'VE GOT MY RELIGION IN  
MY HEART.

THOSE PEOPLE, I SUSPECT, NEED PRAYER MORE  
THAN OTHERS

WHEN YOU BEGIN TO THINK OF YOURSELF AS  
MORALLY SAFE - YOU ARE IN SPECIAL DANGER

PURE WHITE, YOU KNOW, IS HARDEST COLOR TO KEEP CLEAN

KING SOLOMON RIGHTLY SAID IN HIS MAGNIFICENT  
DEDICATION PRAYER (WHEN TEMPLE WAS COMPLETED)

"THERE IS NO MAN ON EARTH  
WHO SINNETH NOT"

~~RABBI'S THE MORE PIOUS A MAN, THE  
GREATER HIS TEMPTATIONS TO  
SELL HIMSELF WITH SIN~~

~~PURE WHITE IS COLOR WHICH  
IS MOST EASILY SOILED~~

~~THE MORE VIRTUOUS A MAN, THE MORE  
THE FINER THE CHARACTER, THE MORE  
EASILY HE IS TEMPTED TO SIN~~

MAN - NEITHER GOOD NOR EVIL  
BUT BOTH



-3- A (GOOD) MAN IS LIKE A FINELY  
TUNED VIOLIN AND  
IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH TO HAVE A  
HUMAN BEING GET OUT OF TUNE  
WITH HIS BETTER SELF

JEWISH WISDOM: MAN TOO SMALL TO  
PREVENT <sup>HIS</sup> TRANSGRESSIONS - BUT BIG ENOUGH  
TO CORRECT THEM

PRAYER - REPENTANCE ARE MEANS  
TO AN END - THE END IS CORRECTION

SAID A WISEMAN: He who knows he  
has made a mistake and does  
not correct it, is making a <sup>a</sup> still bigger  
mistake.

MAY THIS SABBATH OF REPENTANCE  
fill us with desire for self-renewal

MAY IT HELP US FORGIVE WRONGS  
OTHERS HAVE DONE US AS WE REALIZE  
OUR OWN WEAKNESS & MAY THIS SABBATH  
MAKE US LESS SELF-RIGHTEOUS AND MORE HUMBLE AND

MAY IT <sup>ALSO</sup> FILL US WITH HOPE THAT

THOUGH HUMANITY'S SINS BE AS SCARLET  
THEY SHALL IN THE END BE WHITE AS SNOW  
THOUGH THEY BE RED LIKE CRIMSON  
THEY SHALL BE WHITE AS WOOL

SPECIAL SABBATH - SPECIAL MESSAGE

DATE N/A

MAN'S MIND TOO SMALL TO PREVENT MISTAKES  
but big enough to correct them

The correction of mistakes is message of this week

THE MOST POWERFUL MEANS EMPLOYED TO MAKE US REALIZE

SLICHO TH: PENITENCE TO DAYS OF PENITENCE BEFORE R.H.

even fish in the water tremble, in Days of AWE

ROSH HASHOVA

book of life is opened

ONLY TIME WHEN  
KNEELING IS PERMITTED

SHOFAR

YOM KIPPUR (FAST)

book of life is sealed

"LIFE & DEATH ARE BEFORE THEE CHOOSE LIFE!"

Life and death often decided sooner! MARTIN BUBER'S  
EXPERIENCE WITH SUICIDE

WHICH QUALITIES MUST WE POSSESS IN ORDER

TO "RETURN UNTO GOD" i.e. improve

in character & correct mistakes?

~~REPENTANCE~~

HUMILITY : admission of mistake

← confession of sin

"Where the repentant sinner stands,  
there cannot stand the perfectly  
righteous. — Why? The perfectly  
righteous lacks the humility of  
the repentant sinner."

PUBLIC CONFESSION of our sins

JUDAISM believes in good influence of group

QUDRUM FOR SERVICES

RAB AMRAM THE DEVOUT, great scholar at Nalanda.

In moon light of night discovered gleaming treasure on roof of his house - took ladder, and half-

PRAYER

They cried: FIRE AT AMRAM'S  
WHEN COLLEAGUES CAME, THEY SAID  
"WE HAVE SHAMED THEE"  
AMRAM SAID: Better than be ashamed of me in world to come.

Evil urge is like the iron

You can bend it only in fire.

Prayer, occupation with Torah

is the fire that can bend the evil urge and make useful <sup>tools</sup> out of it.

PRAYER IS CONCENTRATION - RE-EXAMINATION

HATE SIN - FORGIVE

THE SINNER

RABBI MEIR PRAYED FOR DEATH OF EVIL NEIGHBORS

BEAURIA QUOTES PSALM "LET SINS CEASE FROM THE EARTH 104.35 AND LET THE WICKED BE NO MORE" WHEN SIN IS GONE, THERE WON'T BE WICKED ANY MORE

MEMORIAL SERVICE

This hour, my friends, reunites us with our beloved ones. We still recall their features and the true and beautiful words they spoke. We still remember their deeds of kindness. We think of their life and their faith and we wonder: Can it be that our beloved ones are no more? What is that great unknown which separates them from the land of the living? Death is life's greatest riddle. We know that we are all under the sentence of death and yet, though death is a frequent visitor on earth his countenance remains wrapped in mystery. For each of us death is certain but its meaning is not.

It is not difficult to see the logical necessity of death for life as we know it is an eternal cycle of death and birth and renewal and re-birth.

The leaves are falling, the flower fadeth and the grass withereth; this is the death of ~~the~~ autumn and ~~the~~ winter and without it there could be no re-birth in the spring. The tree which does not shed its leaves cannot grow and live. Humanity without death would be stagnant. It could never be the renewal and growth and perhaps perfection of the human stock from finish to finish. Life is growth and the growth of the new requires the death of the old and so the terms of life as we know them include death as a logical necessity and yet, though we can see it logically and philosophically, we cannot accept death personally.

George Bernard Shaw once said "No man ever really believes that he is going to die." It just proves that we need more than logic to face this most profound riddle and mystery of human existence. So we turn not only to argument and reason but

to faith to give us the answer. And to us of the Jewish faith death is not an exit but an entrance, not a disappearance but the return, not the end but the fulfillment of life. Not an exit but an entrance - how do we mean that? You have had many a dream - when did you find out that it was only a dream? Only after awakening. Could not life also be just a dream and death the awakening to a greater reality? Then death would not be the door out of existence but the door leading into a higher and more real life.

We Jews also think of death as man's great return. One of our rabbis said it may be explained by way of a parable: A king has a son whom he sends to the village to be educated before he is initiated into the way of the palace. When the son has completed his education the king in his love sends for him to bring him back to the palace. Similarly the soul which is the child of God is sent from its heavenly abode that is the village below to be prepared for ultimate residence in the king's palace and when it is ready the Heavenly King sends for the soul to abide with Him forever. The villagers, that is the people on earth, weep for the departure of every life but a wise man will say "Why do you weep? Was this not the king's son whose true place is in his father's palace and not among us?" Death we believe is a return, a return to a much richer life. We believe that that great beyond, the life for which we are destined, is more perfect than this life. It is just like the little girl who watched her grandmother work on a piece of cloth. "Oh, granny," she said, "that cloth is all full of mixed up stitches and knots. It isn't pretty at all." Then her grandmother turned the cloth over and

there was stitched a beautiful basket of flowers of all colors. "Oh, granny, that is beautiful" the little girl gasped. "My dear," said the woman, "this tapestry is just like our life. We only see the wrong side of it, a confused outline full of knots and stitches, but some day we shall see the other side and it will be a beautiful pattern."

Death, my friends, is the turning point of life, not the end of being, but rather the completion of our work, the point of fulfillment when the true pattern of life will be revealed to us. Let us see death as this point of transition, as one of the goals we must pass on our way of life eternal. It is not to be feared, it is to be expected. It is a mere incident in our journey of life and God's plan of life in the words of the prophet will swallow up death forever.

Let us then meet in spirit with our departed. Let our prayers now rise to them as a message of love and of faith and may this mystic hour renew our hope that we shall be re-united with all of our dear ones in the Abode of the Heavenly Kingdom. Amen.

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It is not difficult to see the logical necessity of death, for life as we know it, is an eternal cycle of death and birth, and renewal and re-birth.

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to faith to give us the answer. And to us of the Jewish faith death is not an exit but an entrance, not a disappearance but ~~a~~ the return, not the end but the fulfillment of life. Not an exit but an entrance - how do we mean that? You have had many a dream - - - when did you find out that it was only a dream? Only after awakening. Could not life also be just a dream and death the awakening to a greater reality? Then death would not be the door out of existence, but the door leading into a higher and more real life.

We Jews also think of death as man's great return. One of our rabbis said it may be explained by way of a parable: A king has a son whom he sends to the village to be educated before he is initiated into the way of the palace. When the son has completed his education the king, in his love, sends for him to bring him back to the palace. Similarly, the soul which is the child of God, is <sup>first</sup> sent from its heavenly abode <sup>to the village,</sup> that is the ~~earth~~ <sup>earth</sup> below, to be prepared for ultimate residence in the king's palace and when it is ready the Heavenly King ~~sends back~~ the soul to abide with Him forever. The villagers, that is the people on earth, weep for the departure of every life but a wise man will say "Why do you weep? Was this not the king's son whose true place is in his father's palace and not among us?" Death we believe is a return, a return to a much richer life. We believe that that great beyond, the life for which we are destined, is more perfect than this life. <sup>Our life on earth is no more than a hazy outline, a shadow of the real life to come.</sup> It is just like the little girl who watched her grandmother work on a piece of cloth. "Oh, granny," she said, "that cloth is all full of mixed up stitches and knots. It isn't pretty at all." Then her grandmother turned the cloth over and



there was stitched a beautiful basket of flowers of all colors. "Oh, granny, that is beautiful" the little girl gasped. "My dear," said the woman, "this tapestry is just like our life. We only see the wrong side of it, a confused outline full of knots and stitches, but some day we shall see the other side and it will be a beautiful pattern."

Death, my friends, is the turning point of life, not the end of being, but rather the completion of our work, the point of fulfillment when the true pattern of life will be revealed to us. Let us see death as this point of transition, as one of the goals we must pass on our way of life eternal. It is not to be feared, it is to be expected. It is a mere incident in our journey of life and God's plan of life in the words of the prophet "will swallow up death forever."

Let us then meet in spirit with our departed. Let our prayers now rise to them as a message of love and of faith and may this mystic hour renew our hope that we shall be re-united with all of our dear ones in the <sup>a</sup>Abode of the Heavenly Kingdom. Amen.

Kol Nidre Night  
Oct 9, 1951

## WHAT IS MAN ?

My friends, this is the most sacred night of our year, Kol Nidre Night. It is named after a prayer which has been sung to the same melody at least a thousand years or more and in all these years this prayer has opened up ~~the~~ <sup>Solemn</sup> Yom Kippur services. The greatness of the Kol Nidre lies in the fact that it expresses within a few minutes the mood which Yom Kippur develops throughout the whole of that sacred day. Now someone asked me recently why the words of this ancient prayer have been left out of our prayer books. In fact, you won't find the text of the Kol Nidre printed - isn't it strange that this prayer which is said with such feeling and reverence has not been put into print? Why? The reason is that the words of the Kol Nidre are misleading without further and full explanation. You see, the text of the Kol Nidre is this - all vows, all oaths, all promises which we shall make to God between this Yom Kippur and the next we now declare null and void, we cancel them and say that our vows are not vows, our oaths are not oaths and our promises are not promises. I might say, my friends, that we can measure our spiritual maturity by the way we understand or misunderstand the Kol Nidre. What this prayer means to say is that man habitually and notoriously falls short of his goals and his intentions. Our promises, our vows and our oaths don't count very much, neither do our resolutions, be they ever so sincere, because we human beings have so little with which to back them up. Who really knows how the next ~~holiday~~ shall find him? Strictly speaking, we have no right to make promises when it is so doubtful that we can carry them out.

This sentiment is a major theme in our religion and in one of the greatest Hebrew prayers recited toward the end of

Yom Kippur we say

Lord of all worlds, what are we, what is our life, what our goodness, what our power, what can we say in Thy presence, what can we say, what can we promise before God. Non-fulfillment happens to be the great human tragedy. Inadequacy, incompleteness and pitiful weakness our written into the flesh and bones of every human being and it seems to me that one of the greatest mistakes of the twentieth century was to ignore the fact of human weakness. We all have been brought up to expect much too much from the human being and I believe a great many neurotics and disturbed people running around inside and outside of mental institutions are the result of our exaggerated expectations. I am thinking for example of those thousands of people who deeply believe they are failures and crack up under the compulsion of trying to reach what they call the top. Oh, they pay a heavy price for the illusion that we rise only by dint of our own personal ability. They might have been taking defeat so much better had they accepted the fact that ever so often we are brought high or low by circumstances beyond our control, and I am also thinking of any number of parents who cry their eyes out because their children have turned out not exactly as they had wanted them to be. Oh, how much happier persons and better parents they might have been with just a little more modesty if only they had realized how little it is given to any human being to plan somebody else's life and character. In fact, I am thinking of our whole generation reared in the belief that you can be so-called intelligent, planning to create the kind of society world which will bring the most happiness to the most people. We should have learned from the whole history of human striving that a

whole history of human striving that even our best and most sincere efforts are not enough. After we have made some progress for a while there comes a war or some such calamity and knocks over the whole structure of human dreams. Look at them again --- The success-chasers, plagued by their sense of failure..the heart-broken parents incapable of understanding why wishing a certain kind of family life does not always make it so...the man in the street, baffled and confused, why the world does not improve as planned..... WHAT IS THE BASIC MISTAKE OF ALL THESE PEOPLE? I think it is that they all go by the fallacy that life is what we make it. They see life only in terms of their blown-up ideas of human power and human capabilities.

There once was a poor country woman who had many children and according to this story they were always begging for food, but she had none to give them. One day she found an egg. She called her children and said, "Children, children, we've nothing to worry about any more; I've found an egg. And, being a provident woman, I shall not eat the egg, but shall ask my neighbor for permission to put it under her setting hen, until a chick is hatched. For I am a provident woman! And we shall not eat the chick, but will set her on eggs, and the eggs will hatch into chickens. And the chickens in their turn will hatch many eggs, and we'll have many chickens and many eggs. But I'm a provident woman! I'll not eat the chickens and not eat the eggs, but shall sell them and buy me a heifer. And I shall not eat the heifer, but shall raise it to a cow, and not eat the cow until it calves. But I won't eat then either, and we'll have cows and calves and buy a field, and we'll have fields and cows and calves, and we won't need anything any more!

And the countrywoman was getting terribly excited and gesticulating wildly when the egg fell out of her hands and broke. That is how we are, my friends, that's how we get lost in our illusions of grandeur and before we know it even the little bit of power we do have, slips from our hands and our human dreams become broken shells.

The most solidly established fact in human experience is that it is utterly impossible for a man to plan his life with certainty and to achieve security and fulfillment merely by his own effort. Usually we stumble from trial to error to failure and sometimes we also stumble into success; some time ago, I am sure you'll remember, there was a popular song entitled OPEN THE DOOR RICHARD -- and this title, it seems to me, suggests a profound truth about life. No man is a self-made man. From childhood to adult years and down to old age, there is always somebody opening doors for us.....first mother and father, then friends, then unknown people, then lucky circumstances and so we live successfully as we pass through these doors that are opened by strange hands,.. and just as surely we must live unsuccessfully and are defeated when these doors are shut into our faces. Nobody, but nobody, can open the doors of opportunity and of abundant, happy living all by himself.

Carl Jung, known as the greatest psychiatrist next to Sigmund Freud of our century, said toward the end of his practice of many years: "Of all my thousands of patients, not one of them was completely cured until he found a religious outlook on life."

And I suspect that much of that religious outlook on life is the acceptance of human weakness and insufficiency and inadequacy, in the terms of our prayer:

What are we? What is our life? What our goodness,  
and what our power?

What can we say in Thy ~~power~~ presence ?

An officer in the navy once told a group of clergymen:

"I do not think I ever cared a hang about religion or God until I got out to sea. And there, walking the bridge, with more stars above me than I ever thought a sky could hold, with endlessly tossing gray waters on all four sides of me, smelling the salt breeze that came from and was going to who knows where, I suddenly understood what a tiny shell my ship was which had looked so big in the harbor, and how really insignificant I was, a bit of a thing walking the bridge --- there I came to understand what people mean when they talk of the greatness of God."

I hope you can grasp the message of this great day: We say the Kol Nidre and declare our vows and promises null and void, not because of self-protection, but because we are dreadfully aware that man is in no position to make promises or plan anything with certainty.... and we fast this day, not to test our self-control, but to demonstrate how insignificant all material things are on earth, and only if we see life that way, only if we see our own smallness, can we begin to see the greatness of God....

May this Yom Kippur teach us what the little boy learned when one night after darkness he went outside the house to retrieve his tricycle. He had barely shut the door behind him, when again he slowly opened it and looking toward his dad who was sitting in the living room, the boy said: It's too dark outside without you, father.

The world is too dark without ~~xxxx~~ our heavenly Father.

We cannot live, we cannot hope, we cannot go on without the God of all eternity at our side. Let us find our peace and our strength and confidence in the words of the psalmist who said:

Whither shall I go from Thy spirit?

And whither shall I flee from Thy presence?

If I go up to the heavens, Thou art there,

And if I go down to the netherworld, behold, Thou  
art there.....

If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the  
uttermost parts of the sea

Even there shall Thy hand lead me and Thy right  
hand shall hold me

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; ---  
even the night shall be light about  
me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from  
Thee; but the night shineth as the day.

KOL NIDRE NIGHT  
OCT 9, 1951  
Trenton, N.J.

WHAT IS MAN ?

My friends, this is the most sacred night of our year, Kol Nidre Night. It is named after a prayer which has been sung to the same melody at least a thousand years or more and in all these years this prayer has opened up ~~the~~ <sup>solemn</sup> Yom Kippur services. The greatness of the Kol Nidre lies in the fact that it expresses within a few minutes the mood which Yom Kippur develops throughout the whole of that sacred day. Now someone asked me recently why the words of this ancient prayer have been left out of our prayer books. In fact, you won't find the text of the Kol Nidre printed - Isn't it strange that this prayer which is said with such feeling and reverence has not been put into print? Why? The reason is that the words of the Kol Nidre are misleading without further and full explanation. You see, the text of the Kol Nidre is this:- "All vows, all oaths, all promises which we shall make to God between this Yom Kippur and the next we now declare null and void, we cancel them and say that our vows are not vows, our oaths are not oaths and our promises are not promises." I might say, my friends, that we can measure our spiritual maturity by the way we understand or misunderstand the Kol Nidre. What this prayer means to say is that man habitually and notoriously falls short of his goals and his intentions. Our promises, our vows and our oaths don't count very much, neither do our resolutions, be they ever so sincere, because we human beings have ~~so~~ <sup>mighty</sup> little with which to back them up. Who really knows how the next ~~Monday~~ day shall find him? Strictly speaking, we have no right to make promises when it is so doubtful that we can carry them out. *The big question which Yom Kippur asks is WHAT IS MAN - AND JUDAISM ANSWERS*  
~~This sentiment is a major theme in our religion and in~~  
 one of the greatest Hebrew prayers recited toward the end of



Yom Kippur we say!

עליון אלהינו  
אלהינו אלהינו  
אלהינו אלהינו  
אלהינו אלהינו  
אלהינו אלהינו

Lord of all worlds, what are we<sup>2</sup>, what is our life, what our goodness, what our power<sup>2</sup>, what can we say in Thy presence<sup>2</sup>, What can we say, what can we promise before God<sup>2</sup>. Non-fulfillment happens to be the great human tragedy. Inadequacy, *insufficiency*, incompleteness and pitiful weakness ~~are~~ written into the flesh, *and blood* and bones of every human being and it seems to me that one of the greatest mistakes of the twentieth century was to ignore the fact of human weakness. We all have been brought up to expect much too much from the human being and I believe a great many neurotics and disturbed people running around inside and outside of mental institutions are the result of our exaggerated expectations. I am thinking for example of those <sup>hundreds of</sup> thousands of people who deeply believe they are failures and crack up under the compulsion of trying to reach what they call "the top." Oh, they pay a heavy price for the illusion that we rise only by dint of our own personal <sup>effort and</sup> ability. <sup>A certain number of defeats come to all and</sup> ~~They might ~~be~~ taken~~ ~~so~~ <sup>if we</sup> ~~much~~ better ~~had they~~ accepted the fact that ever so often we are brought high or low by circumstances beyond our control. // And I am also thinking of any number of parents who cry their eyes out because their children have turned out not exactly as they had wanted them to be. Oh, how much happier persons and better parents they might have been with just a little more modesty, if only they had realized how little it is given to any human being to plan somebody else's life and character. // In fact, I am thinking of our whole generation reared in the belief that you can by so-called "intelligent planning" <sup>with relative ease</sup> ~~whatever that~~ create the kind of society world which will bring the most happiness to the most people. We should have learned from the

may be)

whole history of human striving <sup>and man's tragic pursuit of happiness</sup> that even our best and most sincere efforts are not enough. After we have made some progress for a while there comes a war or some such calamity and knocks over the whole structure of human dreams. // Look at them again --- The success-chasers, plagued by their sense of failure..the heart-broken parents incapable of understanding why wishing a certain kind of family life does not always make it so...the man in the street, baffled and confused, why the world does not improve as planned..... WHAT IS THE BASIC MISTAKE OF ALL THESE PEOPLE? I think it is that they all go by <sup>the miscalculation,</sup> the fallacy that life is what we make it. They see life ~~only~~ in terms of <sup>human pride and</sup> their blown-up ideas of human power and human capabilities.

There once was a poor country woman who had many children and, according to this story, they were always begging for food, but she had none to give them. One day she found an egg. She called her children and said, "Children, children, we've nothing to worry about any more; I've found an egg. And, being a provident woman, I shall not eat the egg, but shall ask my neighbor for permission to put it under her setting hen, until a chick is hatched. For I am a provident woman! And we shall not eat the chick, but will set her on eggs, and the eggs will hatch into chickens. And the chickens in their turn will hatch many eggs, and we'll have many chickens and many eggs. But I'm a provident woman! I'll not eat the chickens and not eat the eggs, but shall sell them and buy me a heifer. And I shall not eat the heifer, but shall raise it to a cow, and not eat the cow until it calves. But I won't eat the <sup>calf</sup> either, and we'll have cows and calves and buy a field, and we'll have fields and cows and calves, and we won't need anything any more!

And the countrywoman was getting terribly excited and gesticulating wildly when the egg fell out of her hands/and broke. That is how we are, my friends, that's how we get <sup>wrapped up in dreams and plans and are</sup> lost in our illusions of grandeur and before we know it even the little bit of power we do have, slips from our hands and our human dreams become broken shells.

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And I suspect that much of that religious outlook on life is the acceptance of human weakness and insufficiency and inadequacy, in the terms of our prayer:

אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵי הַרְחִיק מִפְּנֵי  
 אֵלֵינוּ אֵלֵינוּ אֵלֵינוּ אֵלֵינוּ  
 אֵלֵינוּ אֵלֵינוּ אֵלֵינוּ אֵלֵינוּ

What are we? What is our life? What our goodness,  
and what our power?

What can we say in Thy ~~presence~~ <sup>presence?</sup>

An officer in the navy once told a group of clergymen:

"I do not think I ever cared a hang about religion or God until I got out to sea. And there, walking the bridge, with more stars above me than I ever thought a sky could hold, with endlessly tossing gray waters on all four sides of me, smelling the salt breeze that came from and was going to who knows where, I suddenly understood what a tiny shell my ship was which had looked so big in the harbor, and how really insignificant I was, a bit of a thing walking the bridge --- there I came to understand what people mean when they talk of the greatness of God."

I hope you can grasp the message of this great day:

We say the Kol Nidre and declare our vows and promises null and void, not because <sup>we want to ~~show off~~ "play safe"</sup> ~~of self-protection~~, but because we are dreadfully aware that man is in no position to make promises or plan anything with certainty.... and we fast this day, <sup>(show off)</sup> not to ~~test~~ our self-control, but to demonstrate how insignificant all material things are on earth, and only if we see life that way, only if we see our own smallness, can we begin to see the greatness of God....

May this Yom Kippur teach us what the little boy learned when one night after darkness he went outside the house to retrieve his tricycle. He had barely shut the door behind him, when again he slowly opened it and looking toward his ~~dad~~ father who was sitting in the living room, the boy said: It's too dark outside without you, father.

The world is too dark without ~~you~~ our heavenly Father.

We cannot live, we cannot hope, we cannot go on without  
the God of all eternity at our side. Let us find our peace and  
our strength and confidence in the words of the <sup>magnificent 139th</sup> psalm ~~that~~ <sup>which we read silently</sup> ~~who said:~~  
a little while ago:

Whither shall I go from Thy spirit?

And whither shall I flee from Thy presence?

If I go up to the heavens, Thou art there,

And if I go down to the netherworld, behold, Thou  
art there.....

If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the  
uttermost parts of the sea

Even there shall Thy hand lead me and Thy right  
hand shall hold me

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; ---  
even the night shall be light about  
me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from  
Thee; but the night shineth as the day.



orders. Then he stopped and after a long pause came the following electrifying confession: "I am ashamed to stand before you. I feel ashamed before these synagogue walls, before you people who have been praying here, before the prayer book in my hand. For what kind of a Jew am I? I don't know a word of Hebrew; I don't know anything about being Jewish or about the Jewish religion. I'm neither gentile nor Jew. Just nothing....."

Many of us, though born in our faith, have become --- just nothing, neither gentile nor Jew. The little knowledge we picked up in our childhood has ~~long~~ evaporated <sup>long, long ago.</sup> ~~and if we are as honest as that Jewish soldier we'll have to admit that what little religion we are left with is a half-dead thing, a remembrance of things past, but not a vital, life-directing faith.~~

From time to time it happened in my former congregation in Buffalo that parents would tell me with great pride how much their children were learning in Sunday School. That is always nice to hear, but I might tell you it is most distressing when the compliment is part of some such confession as: "You know, Rabbi, my little David (a seven year old child) has learned so much about this holiday ---- he knows a lot more about it than I."

When a second grader in Sunday School can get ahead of his parents in the knowledge of Judaism, then it doesn't prove the excellence of our Sunday School but the ignorance of our adults.

A highly learned educator and Rabbi from the old country <sup>He didn't come here to raise money - he was an exceptional visitor!</sup> recently visited America. <sup>^</sup> He went from city to city to observe and study Jewish community life, especially our system of education and religious practice. Before his departure he addressed a Jewish PTA meeting in New York. One of the fathers asked him to say something about his impressions ~~of Jewish education in America.~~ He replied:

I find that an American Jew will do anything to help his son become an educated, loyal Jew. He'll send him to Sunday School and even Hebrew School to make sure he becomes a loyal and educated Jew. When the son grows up, he in turn sends his son to Sunday School and even Hebrew School so that the boy might become a good Jew. But, will the time ever come when the father himself will want to be an educated, good Jew instead of leaving it all to the son?

The trouble is, my friends, you can't leave Jewish education only to your son or daughter. We can't teach a child very much once he finds out that he is learning about holidays which are not observed at home, about the Bible which isn't read by his parents, and is told to come to Temple from which the family stays away. Education is preparation for life and we can't successfully educate children in Judaism when it isn't being lived at home.

I was shocked the other day to read about a 15 year old Jewish girl who was converted to another faith and when she was asked why she had forsaken her own religion, she answered in all earnest that she ~~never~~ never knew that Jews had a religion.

*The prophet* Hoseah was right when he cried out: My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge!

We must have knowledge to clear the way to our faith, but remember - you can't get it in a single injection and be done with. It's just like your backyard. If you do not regularly mow your lawn and pull out weeds and rake the leaves, the most beautiful lawn becomes a wilderness in a matter of weeks. That's just what happens to our minds - soon, we become cluttered up with all kinds of mental rubbish, false and foolish ideas grow up like weeds, ~~unproductive~~ <sup>strange</sup> thoughts stray into our minds like fallen leaves, and inwardly we turn into a wilderness of confusion. The Jewish ideal



of study and contemplation is a proposition of "perpetual care."

We must regularly clean up our inner life, irrigate our souls with the ~~living~~ waters of Torah and week after week landscape our minds

with patterns of <sup>Jewish</sup> ~~acceptable~~ ideals and ideas, *That way we shall indeed become spiritually productive personalities, "like a watered garden" as Isaiah put it in today's Haftorah (Is. 58.11)*

Therefore: <sup>Sabbath</sup> ~~work~~ Clear the way!

Each ~~week~~ our Temple will offer you the tools of Jewish knowledge and I cannot tell you how deeply I wish that you might come and keep clear the way for your spiritual life.

And now Isaiah's second challenge:

*'N'Y P'PEN S'IC'N 'IN'??*

REMOVE THE STUMBLING BLOCK OUT OF THE WAY OF MY PEOPLE.

A colleague of mine once wrote a letter addressed only to those members of his congregation whom he never saw at services, and asked them to give reasons why they had not been to Temple. Most of the replies revealed that there really was no reason ~~for their absence from services~~ except lack of time. It may be that lack of time, being too busy professionally or socially, really is one of the major stumbling blocks in the way of religious habits. But I think all this rushing about, this absorption in endless activities, this business of never sitting still, is doing the most harm not to religion but to the person himself. How long can a man keep on eating, drinking, hurrying, and aging without stopping to think what this whole life is all about?

Leo Tolstol makes a telling point in his famous legend entitled HOW MUCH LAND DOES A MAN NEED?

There was a peasant, not rich but having enough to live on. One day he visited a rich relative and came home with envy. Now, his few acres were not enough; he wanted more. So he took all his savings, put his son out as a laborer, sold a horse and also borrowed some money and finally succeeded in buying some more acres. He sowed the land and prospered and became a man of great wealth.

He thought he knew now how much land a man needs. But soon rumor reached him of the richest kind of soil in the land of the wandering Bashkirs which could be had for a song --- thousands of acres. The peasant was fascinated by what he heard. He sold everything and travelled many miles to the land of the Bashkirs. He was welcomed and told he could have all the land he ~~wanted~~<sup>needed</sup>. The price was 1000 rubles a day --- all the land that a man could go round in a day was his for one thousand rubles, only --- he was warned --- if he did not come back before sunset to the place from which he started, the money was forfeited.

But the peasant was delighted. He knew that with his strong legs he could cover a good deal of land in a day --- in fact, all the land a man needs.

Early at dawn he arose, and with the Bashkirs watching him, he set out in a straight line. Soon he quickened his steps. It began to grow warm, but still he kept on in a straight line. There was always more of that black soil right in front. No, he could not forego that. So he continued. Now he began to feel weary and the sun was high in the heavens. He decided to turn sharply to the left --- and went a long, long distance, again in a straight line. He knew that he should be turning once again to the left --- but the soil was so rich. And so he walked on and on until he saw how far down the sun was in the west. Then he made another turn. Now he really had to hurry back to the starting point. He wanted to rest but dared not. He began to run and kept running, stumbling and staggering. His breath began to fail. His mouth was parched. His heart was pounding, yet he would not stop. He was getting nearer and nearer. Now, he could see the Bashkirs waiting and he got there just before the sun was setting --- then he collapsed and --- there he was -- dead. A Bashkir took a shovel, dug a grave

<sup>and buried him.</sup>  
seven feet long, And this was all the land the man really needed.

My friends, if a man is satisfied to go on wasting his life by getting more and more of the things which must mean less and less to him each passing year, if a man cannot see the futility and meaninglessness of ~~this foolish race~~ <sup>it all</sup> --- then he really doesn't need religion. But if you are interested in the higher purpose of life, then, I say, religion and nothing but religion can give you an answer.

The question is, will you pay the price? Will you clear the way and remove the stumbling block? Do you want to come near and seek the peace ---- the peace that comes with faith and knowledge and realized purpose in life? ~~But~~ Don't wait too long! You know, in Jewish

*tradition King Solomon is regarded as a wise man, but - we are told - he could have been much wiser if he had taken advantage in time of a great opportunity.*

*When Solomon had just been crowned as king,*  
an angel ~~came~~ emerged from a cave and offered him all the world's wisdom bound in 9 volumes. But Solomon refused to buy because the price was too high. The angel returned to the cave and burned up 3 volumes. Then he went back to the king with the remaining 6.

The <sup>king</sup> asked the price and was ~~surprised~~ <sup>astonished</sup> to hear: "The price is exactly the same as for the nine books." "Ridiculous!" -- said the king, and just then the angel burned up 3 more books. By this time King Solomon was afraid all the volumes would be destroyed and so he bought the remaining 3 books for the same amount that had been asked for all nine of them.

This is how the Synagogue comes to young people and says: Here is the Bible, the wisdom of the Midrash and Talmud and the writings of wise men through the ages. Here is all the truth seen by our teachers in 4000 years of Jewish experience. You may have all this knowledge if you will pay the price, ~~what is~~ <sup>and</sup> the price ~~is~~ prayer, meditation and study. "The price is too high," exclaims the youth.

So time burns up 20 years. Some of the youth have now become adults. Again the synagogue offers them her wisdom, but refuses to lower the price. But still some aren't ready to buy.

Swiftly the fires of time burn up another 20 years and the synagogue goes back to the same people and says: It is high time you ~~learned the meaning of life and I will sell you my wisdom~~ <sup>buy</sup> if you will pay the price. "And what is your price now?" they ask. EXACTLY THE SAME AS IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN, answers the synagogue. THE PRICE NEVER CHANGES. IT IS ALWAYS PRAYER, MEDITATION, STUDY. By this time they are usually humbled by their failures and frightened by conditions in the world and realize the need of a higher wisdom and are ready to pay the price.

But how different their lives and their world might have been if they had been willing to buy in their earlier years. And how urgent it is that we decide that we shall pay the price ---- for there are no rewards in the religious life without the effort and without the discipline of prayer and study.

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YOM KIPPUR MORNING  
Oct 10, 1951  
Trenton, N.J.

REMOVE THE STUMBLING BLOCK

This is the day, my dear friends, of reconciliation and peace for our people. And so we were glad to find in the Haftorah of this morning Isaiah's great message of peace:

CLEAR THE WAY, REMOVE THE STUMBLING BLOCK OUT OF THE  
WAY OF MY PEOPLE  
PEACE, PEACE TO HIM THAT IS FAR OFF, AND TO HIM THAT  
IS NEAR.

We repeat these words now to all the sons and daughters of Israel: SHALOM, SHALOM - Peace, peace be unto you, but especially to those who are far off, who have moved farther and farther away from the synagogue and the practice of our faith, they especially, I might say, are the object of our concern and solicitation today. And we want to consider now how we may bring them back to us. How we can clear the way and remove the stumbling block out of the way of our people? What has estranged so many of our people from our faith? What has alienated them from the house of God?

Just a few days ago I read about an incident which suggests one of the reasons why so many Jews are displaced and uprooted from the synagogue. It happened during this year's Rosh Hashonah services in a small synagogue on the West Coast. The rabbi of that congregation devoted most of his sermon in praise of a young Jewish soldier who had volunteered for military service in Korea and who had returned, minus an arm, and was sitting in the synagogue among the worshippers.

After the rabbi closed his sermon, congregants begged that the young GI be heard from. After a hasty conference, the modest youngster was brought to the pulpit and spoke a few words. He began by saying he wasn't worthy of the honor done him --- that he had merely done his duty as a citizen and obeyed his

orders. Then he stopped and after a long pause came the following electrifying confession: "I am ashamed to stand before you. I feel ashamed before these synagogue walls, before you people who have been praying here, before the prayer book in my hand. For what kind of a Jew am I? I don't know a word of Hebrew; I don't know anything about being Jewish or about the Jewish religion. I'm neither gentile nor Jew. Just nothing....."

Many of us, though born in our faith, have become --- just nothing, neither gentile nor Jew. The little knowledge we picked up in our childhood has long evaporated and if we are as honest as that Jewish soldier we'll have to admit that what little religion we are left with is a half-dead thing, a remembrance of things past, but not a vital, life-directing faith.

From time to time it happened in my former congregation in Buffalo that parents would tell me with great pride how much their children were learning in Sunday School. That is always nice to hear, but I might tell you it is most distressing when the compliment is part of some such confession as: "You know, Rabbi, my little David (a seven year old child) has learned so much about this holiday ---- he knows a lot more about it than I."

When a second grader in Sunday School can get ahead of his parents in the knowledge of Judaism, then it doesn't prove the excellence of our Sunday School but the ignorance of our adults.

A highly learned educator and Rabbi from the old country recently visited America. He went from city to city to observe and study Jewish community life, especially our system of education and religious practice. Before his departure he addressed a Jewish PTA meeting in New York. One of the fathers asked him to say something about his impressions of Jewish education in America. He replied:

I find that an American Jew will do anything to help his son become an educated, loyal Jew. He'll send him to Sunday School and even Hebrew School to make sure he becomes a loyal and educated Jew. When the son grows up, he in turn sends his son to Sunday School and even Hebrew School so that the boy might become a good Jew. But, will the time ever come when the father himself will want to be an educated, good Jew instead of leaving it all to the son?

The trouble is, my friends, you can't leave Jewish education only to your son or daughter. We can't teach a child very much once he finds out that he is learning about holidays which are not observed at home, about the Bible which isn't read by his parents, and is told to come to Temple from which the family stays away. Education is preparation for life and we can't successfully educate children in Judaism when it isn't being lived at home.

I was shocked the other day to read about a 15 year old Jewish girl who was converted to another faith and when she was asked why she had forsaken her own religion, she answered in all earnest that she had not known that Jews had a religion.

Hoseah was right when he cried out: My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge!

We must have knowledge to clear the way to our faith, but remember - you can't get it in a single injection and be done with. It's just like your backyard. If you do not regularly mow your lawn and pull out weeds and rake the leaves the most beautiful lawn becomes a wilderness in a matter of weeks. That's just what happens to our minds - soon, we become cluttered up with all kinds of mental rubbish, false and foolish ideas grow up like weeds, unproductive thoughts stray into our minds like fallen leaves, and inwardly we turn into a wilderness of confusion. The Jewish ideal

of study and contemplation is a proposition of perpetual care. We must regularly clean up our inner life, irrigate our souls with the living waters of Torah and week after week landscape our minds with patterns of acceptable ideals and ideas.

Clear the way!

Each week our Temple will offer you the tools of Jewish knowledge and I cannot tell you how deeply I wish that you might come and keep clear the way for your spiritual life.

And now Isaiah's second challenge:

REMOVE THE STUMBLING BLOCK OUT OF THE WAY OF MY PEOPLE.

A colleague of mine once wrote a letter addressed only to those members of his congregation whom he never saw at services, and asked them to give reasons why they had not been to Temple. Most of the replies revealed that there really was no reason for their absence from services except lack of time. It may be that lack of time, being too busy professionally or socially, really is one of the major stumbling blocks in the way of religious habits. But I think all this rushing about, this absorption in endless activities, this business of never sitting still, is doing the most harm not to religion but to the person himself. How long can a man keep on eating, drinking, hurrying, and aging without stopping to think what this whole life is all about?

Leo Tolstoi makes a telling point in his famous legend entitled HOW MUCH LAND DOES A MAN NEED?

There was a peasant, not rich but having enough to live on. One day he visited a rich relative and came home with envy. Now, his few acres were not enough; he wanted more. So he took all his savings, put his son out as a laborer, sold a horse and also borrowed some money and finally succeeded in buying some more acres. He sowed the land and prospered and became a man of great wealth.



He thought he knew now how much land a man needs. But soon rumor reached him of the richest kind of soil in the land of the wandering Bashkirs which could be had for a song --- thousands of acres. The peasant was fascinated by what he heard. He sold everything and travelled many miles to the land of the Bashkirs. He was welcomed and told he could have all the land he wanted. The price was 1000 rubles a day --- all the land that a man could go round in a day was his for one thousand rubles, only --- he was warned --- if he did not come back before sunset to the place from which he started, the money was forfeited.

But the peasant was delighted. He knew that with his strong legs he could cover a good deal of land in a day --- in fact, all the land a man needs.

Early at dawn he arose, and with the Bashkirs watching him, he set out in a straight line. Soon he quickened his steps. It began to grow warm, but still he kept on in a straight line. There was always more of that black soil right in front. No, he could not forego that. So he continued. Now he began to feel weary and the sun was high in the heavens. He decided to turn sharply to the left --- and went a long, long distance, again in a straight line. He knew that he should be turning once again to the left --- but the soil was so rich. And so he walked on and on until he saw how far down the sun was in the west. Then he made another turn. Now he really had to hurry back to the starting point. He wanted to rest but dared not. He began to run and kept running, stumbling and staggering. His breath began to fail. His mouth was parched. His heart was pounding, yet he would not stop. He was getting nearer and nearer. Now, he could see the Bashkirs waiting and he got there just before the sun was setting --- then he collapsed and --- there he was -- dead. A Bashkir took a shovel, dug a grave

seven feet long. And this was all the land the man really needed.

My friends, if a man is satisfied to go on wasting his life by getting more and more of the things which must mean less and less to him each passing year, if a man cannot see the futility and meaninglessness of this foolish race --- then he really doesn't need religion. But if you are interested in the higher purpose of life, then, I say, religion and nothing but religion can give you an answer.

The question is, will you pay the price? Will you clear the way and remove the stumbling block? Do you want to come near and seek the peace ---- the peace that comes with faith and knowledge and realized purpose in life?

Don't wait too long. It is told about King Solomon that an angel once emerged from a cave and offered him all the world's wisdom bound in 9 volumes. But Solomon refused to buy because the price was too high. The angel returned to the cave and burned up 3 volumes. Then he went back to the king with the remaining 6. He asked the price and was surprised to hear: "The price is exactly the same as for the nine books." "Ridiculous!" -- said the king, and just then the angel burned up 3 more books. By this time King Solomon was afraid all the volumes would be destroyed and so he bought the remaining 3 books for the same amount that had been asked for all nine of them.

This is how the Synagogue comes to young people and says: Here is the Bible, the wisdom of the Midrash and Talmud and the writings of wise men through the ages. Here is all the truth seen by our teachers in 4000 years of Jewish experience. You may have all this knowledge if you will pay the price. What is the price? It is prayer, meditation and study. "The price is too high," exclaims the youth.

So time burns up 20 years. Some of the youth have now become adults. Again the synagogue offers them her wisdom, but refuses to lower the price. But still some aren't ready to buy.

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