



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.

Box

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Folder

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Sermons and notes, 1955.

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

Religion, according to the Bible, began when man first expressed gratitude to God, Abel's sacrifice of the firstlings of his flock.

Abraham, no sooner arrived in the land of Canaan, when he built an altar to give thanks.

So did Isaac in Beersheba after he discovered a series of wells.

Jacob, at the worst time of his life, when Esau threatened him, began his anxious prayer with words of gratitude:

"I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies,
and of all the truth which Thou hast shown unto thy
servant...."

Gen. 32.10

The prophet Moses burst into song when he acknowledged God's help after crossing the Red Sea.

King David in his great installation prayer for his son and successor Solomon, reminded the young prince ^{to whom} ~~that~~ he owed everything ~~that~~ :

"Thine O Lord is the greatness and the power and the glory
and the victory and the majesty."

And the aged king made it a special point to explain that no human being, however generous, can really repay God:

"FOR ALL THINGS COME OF THEE AND OF THINE OWN HAVE WE GIVEN THEE"

I. Chron. 29. 10 ff

The Bible, no doubt, inspired our people to establish daily habits of thanksgiving, such as blessings before and after each meal, when going to bed and when rising up, when putting on a new garment, and when seeing a tree in blossom.

That way our forefathers acquired personal religion. Every day they reminded themselves many times of God's gifts. He was no stranger to them. They lived in constant awareness of His love, His care, His help. And so they fulfilled the little verse:

WERE GRATITUDE ITS VERY BEST, EACH LIFE WOULD BE THANKSLIVING

But we modern Jews, by contrast, systematically avoid every formal or spontaneous expression of gratitude to God. We have shut Him out of our lives.

When out for dinner with friends, I notice time and time again self-consciousness and a certain awkwardness at the moment we sit down at the table. The hosts realize there should be a blessing before the meal; but they don't want to be hypocritical and say it just the one time I happen to visit with them. And so in order to relieve the situation I usually ^{hurry up and} say the prayer for them without waiting to be asked.

It is just another symptom of the modern Jew's ~~alienation~~ *estrangement* from God, his distance from the Creator.

50 years ago, the foremost German poet, Rainer Marie ^{Rilke}, in a private letter to a Jewess, said he envied the direct and intimate approach of the Jew to his God. Today, most of us live as though He did not exist. Despite synagogue membership, religion makes no ~~and~~ visible difference in ~~the~~ way we conduct our personal lives. We have lost the sense of God's nearness. We are not on speaking terms with Him.

It is ~~not easy~~ human nature that with every disorder there comes some kind of pain or discomfort as a signal and warning to us that something is wrong.

The neglect of God in our personal life, this sin of ingratitude, this refusal to acknowledge the giver of all, also has its pain.

It is not easy to describe just how it feels to suffer from religious malnutrition, but the condition is common enough.

Do you at times feel an oppressive sense of the coldness of the world? a nameless and vague kind of fear? has there been a steady decline of your interest in success or achievement? do you have an every growing feeling of an inner void, an emptiness, a permanent condition of boredom and discontent? All of these are symptoms of divine love-starvation. Not loving God, one feels unloved by Him.

I saw a cartoon, a middle aged man sitting in an arm-chair, dejected, with a blank look in his eyes.

His wife explains to the family who had gathered:

HE DROVE HIMSELF HARD..AND BATTERED HIS WAY TO THE TOP

----AND NOW HE DOESN'T LIKE THE TOP!

Man is too small a package to find fulfillment within himself.

HUMILITY BEFORE GOD ---why is there so little of it? *Do you know a single, why don't we honor Him in our day by day lives? truly humble person?*
~~Why don't we honor Him in our day by day lives?~~
The reason is that we are obsessed with our own importance.

Yehudah Halevi, great medieval Spanish Jewish poet, in a delightful poem, entitled THE MIRROR, tells us of the lover who looks into his sweetheart's eyes only to see himself:

Upon my dark hued eyes he pressed
 His lips with breath of passion rare.
 The rogue! 'Twas not my eyes he kissed;
 He kissed his picture mirrored there.

So we too look into the world and see nothing but ourselves.
 We assume that the world is but a stage for our petty ambitions.
 Our forefathers at least had enough humility when planning for the
 future always to add *ps 23: 10* God willing!
 We talk as though we owned the world.
 We are cock sure, we are going to do this, and we are going to do that.

What do we need God for? Can't we handle things without His help?
 Aren't we living our daily lives without His interference? Where does
 He come in?
~~our godless way of life says booster~~ *If Psalm 23 were*
written today, it would start:

I am my own shepherd, and shall not want.

We go through life, it seems, unimpressed by the vast cosmic forces
 that shaped us ^{still} and envelope our puny existence.
 We see more and more of our dearest ones and friends drop off like
 gnats, but we go on unconcerned as though we alone shall live forever.
 We do not stop to figure out what tiny, ^{helpless} creatures we really are.
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 In our pride/we resemble the little fly that sat on the axle of the
 rear wheel of the chariot, and looked behind and said:

LOOK HOW MUCH DUST I RAISE!

We fail to recognize that there is something much bigger than the human
 drama in the universe ---as Isaiah suggested:

BEHOLD, THE NATIONS ARE AS A DROP OF A BUCKET

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TRUST IN GOD --how can we say God bothers with the individual, when all of humanity counts for as little as a drop in the bucket? Logically, it would be impossible to understand how the infinitely great God can be concerned with ~~the human creature~~ ^{so tiny a speck of dust as the} human creature ?

But try to apply logic to life and see how far you will get!

Logically life itself makes no sense. There is no logical reason why there should be any world at all; there is no logical reason why there should be life and human beings and death.

We only assume that God has His reason and His way of keeping the greatest things going without losing sight of the smallest.

On Rosh Hashonah, we are told God opens the book of life and judges each creature. The point of the legend is that God, busy as He is with the big job of running the universe, still is interested in every one of us, cares for us and judges us for better or for worse.

To believe in such a God, Almighty and still All-loving, is sometimes difficult, but not to believe is even more difficult.

There come times in life when believing is not just a topic for conversation or debate but a necessity.

I suppose you all saw in last night's paper the picture of a laughing woman, entitled CLOSE UP OF COURAGE.

It was Babe Didricksen Zaharias, internationally known Olympic athlete and golf-champion. Her picture was taken shortly after her 2nd cancer operation at a hospital in Galveston, Texas.

2 years ago, Babe Zaharias walked out of the doctor's office in a daze. Cancer? she said to herself. "That's impossible." She hadn't been sick a day in her life. But soon newspapers blared out the story that Babe Zaharias would never play golf again because of Cancer.

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As she lay on her hospital bed waiting for the operation, she suddenly began to look on prayer as spiritual muscles.

Without being able to explain how and why, she experienced an influx of great strength and courage, from her own prayers and from knowing that so many others were praying for her. It was no mistake.

An unaccountable source of strength had opened up for her.

Using her spiritual muscles, she soon performed the miracle of an athletic come-back. -----~~Andmmom~~

In malignancies, the first operation is bad enough, but the second often comes as a still greater shock and drives many a patient to utter despair.

Nevertheless, this time there is not the slightest trace of fear in Babe Zaharias face. The camera caught her smiling face as she announced the establishment of the Babe Didricksen Zaharias Cancer Detection fund to help other victims.

She is not worrying about herself. She has a God to trust in.

I pray with all my heart that the New Year may bring you only life, health and success, but if there are trials in store for any of you, will you have God to turn to? Have you been training your spiritual muscles to work for you in time of need?

So many of our people remind me of the old Boston Public Library, ~~whether~~ There used to be rooms lined with book-cases full of wooden blocks, shaped like books, with a strip of imitation leather and labeled: "NOTHING WITHIN."

~~members have the same label on their shelves as the members of the old Boston Public Library. A large percentage of synagogues reported in 1958 that their shelves were empty inside, dereligionized, deculturalized, and devoid of members.~~

Synagogues likewise carry on their shelves a lot of members whose label should be NOTHING WITHIN ... they are empty, dereligionized, despiritualized, deculturalized.

Change the label. Re-claim your soul. ~~And now we have a specific~~
Here are 4 suggestions:

1. Read your prayers, a saintly rabbi once said, as carefully as if you were counting money. If it doesn't ring true, if a phrase or idea has no meaning, come and join our religion classes *for adults* where we try to refresh the meaning of our beliefs.

2. Don't just come to Temple for worship. Take some religion home with you.

Remember God when you eat
Remember God when you go to sleep
Remember God when you awaken.

Let us help you if you are not sure about the proper prayers.

3. Resolve to fast on Yom Kippur if you have neglected this sacred rule of discipline. Show that for once you put ~~the~~ the spiritual above the material things of life.

4. The Chinese sage Laotse said:

THE JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES BEGINS WITH ONE STEP
So make the first step. Come back tomorrow.

The Riverside Church

Riverside Drive and 122nd Street
New York City

Intimations of Our Immortality

And while we live, we should try to make each day a year as far as beauty, nobility, and a warm sense of brotherhood are concerned. In a time when there is so much cruelty abroad we must generate the oxygen of love to keep the soul of the world still breathing. Religion should summon all of us to deepen the quality of life as a compensation for the diminution of its quantity, to treasure each other in the recognition that we do not know how long we shall have each other, to make life strong and brave and beautiful as our answer to the forces of death abroad in the world. We must make up for the threatened brevity of life by heightening the intensity of life. The crimes and sin for which there should be little forgiveness during this epoch are hardheartedness, selfishness, mutual cruelty, lovelessness — all of the little weapons which we use to shorten the lives of others. Our very understanding of each other can serve to deepen life even when we cannot lengthen it.

Joshua Loth Liebman

Sunday, April 24, 1955

The Morning Worship

ELEVEN O'CLOCK

ORGAN PRELUDE

*The congregation is requested to preserve
silence and to engage in private meditation.*

CATHEDRAL WINDOWS - - - Karg-Elert

PROCESSIONAL HYMN - - - No. 184

*(As the organ begins to play, the congregation
is asked to rise and join in singing
the entire hymn.)*

CALL TO WORSHIP - DR. HELLSTROM

(Congregation seated)

SANCTUS

INVOCATION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN (OLD HUNDRETH) - - - No. 11

(Congregation rising with the choir)

SCRIPTURE - - - - DR. TIBBETTS

LUKE 18:9-30

ANTHEM

A HYMN OF JOY - - - *Wm. A. Goldsworthy*

O praise the Lord, O my soul,
Who forgiveth all thy sins,
Alleluia!

Who saveth thy life from destruction,
And crowneth thee with mercy.
He will not be always chiding;
Neither keepeth He His anger forever,
Yea, as a father pitieth his children,
So the Lord is merciful
To them that fear Him.

PRAYER - - - - DR. McCracken

CHORAL RESPONSE

OFFERTORY ANTHEM - Charles Wood

How dazzling fair art thou, my Life, my Light!
How comely is thy countenance, how bright!
Sun uncreate, how keen is the enjoyment
That Saints and Angels find in thine employment!
In view thereof sing I, by day and night,
How dazzling fair art thou, my Life, my Light!

My soul, O Lord, is sore athirst for thee:
My heart doth yearn thy seemly face to see:
Dim is my sight; but one ray of thy kindness
Should quickly skill to cure mine eyes of
blindness:

Meanwhile my song and my complaint shall be,
"My soul, O Lord, is sore athirst for thee."

When shall I come to hear that Angelsong?
Nay, swell the chorus of the heav'nly throng?

Then join the noble company of Sages,
Who chaunt thee Lauds through everlasting
ages?

Now ev'ry day methinks and all day long,
"When shall I come to hear that Angelsong?"
Amen.

*G. R. Woodward
(after Johann Scheffler)*

PRESENTATION OF THE OFFERING

HYMN - - - - - No. 267

(Congregation rising with the choir)

SERMON - - - - DR. McCracken

"The Great Sin"

PRAYER

RECESSIONAL HYMN - - - No. 296

(Congregation rising with the choir)

BENEDICTION *(Congregation seated)*

*Members of the church and visitors in the congrega-
tion may greet Dr. Hellstrom and Dr. Tibbetts
at the chancel steps and Dr. Chamberlin in the
Narthex near the east stairway.*

The flowers in the chancel today are in
loving memory of
EDWARD H. GREEN, JR.

Soloists:

SARAH FLEMING

BEATRICE KREBS

ROBERT PRICE

JOHN FLEMING

ROBERTA BAILEY, *Guest Organist*

" NOTHING WITHIN "

Rosh Hashbonah Eve 1955

I have often wondered whether we are not mistaken in reading 30 pages of prayer at this our service. Perhaps we should read only one page 30 times ^{over} --- to let it sink in.

Take, e.g., the opening prayer for tonight. That was a good page with which to linger a while:

"In the twilight of the vanishing year, we lift up our hearts to thank Thee....

With deep humility we approach Thee, O our God,.....

Hidden from our sight are the events of the future. But we trust in Thee.... "

It is a beautiful prayer ---but is it true, is it honest, are we sincere in saying it?

Do we really in our hearts feel GRATITUDE
HUMILITY and
TRUST IN GOD ?

I had no choice but to read the prayer the way it was printed, but, truthfully, I wondered ~~how many it really applied~~ *could honestly say it?*

GRATITUDE TOWARD GOD ---what does that mean?

In the Bible almost every page is thanksgiving. The point of the first chapter in the Bible is to teach us that life, all life, is a creation, a gift from God.

Religion, according to the Bible, began when man first expressed gratitude to God, Abel's sacrifice of the firstlings of his flock.

Abraham, no sooner arrived in the land of Canaan when he built an altar to give thanks.

So did Isaac in Beersheba after he discovered a series of wells.

Jacob, at the worst time of his life, when Esau threatened him, began his anxious prayer with words of gratitude:

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and of all the truth which Thou hast shown unto thy
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When out for dinner with friends, I notice time and time again self-consciousness and a certain awkwardness at the moment we sit down at the table. The hosts realize there should be a blessing before the meal; but they don't want to be hypocritical and say it just the one time I happen to visit with them. And so in order to relieve the situation I usually say the prayer for them without waiting to be asked.

It is just another symptom of the modern Jew's ^{estrangement} ~~alienation~~ from God, his distance from the Creator — and it is a fairly recent development. Only 50 years ago, the foremost German poet Rainer Marie Rilke in a private letter to a Jewess, said he envied the direct and intimate approach of the Jew to his God. Today, most of us live as though He did not exist. Despite synagogue membership, religion makes no ~~any~~ visible difference in the way we conduct our personal lives.

We have lost the sense of God's nearness. We are not on speaking terms with Him. ^{I hate to say it} We have become a godless people

It is ~~unnecessary~~ human nature that with every disorder there comes some kind of pain or discomfort as a signal and warning to us that something is wrong.

The neglect of God in our personal life, this sin of ingratitude, this refusal to acknowledge the giver of all, also has its pain.

It is not easy to describe just how it feels to suffer from religious malnutrition, but ~~the condition is common enough.~~ *ask yourself*
Do you, at times, feel an oppressive sense of the coldness of the world? a nameless and vague kind of fear? *have you for no good reason* ~~has there been a steady decline~~
~~of your~~ *lost* interest in success or achievement? do you have ~~an ever~~ *unworthyness self respect precisely as outwardly*
~~growing~~ feeling of an inner void, an emptiness, a permanent condition of *respectable*
boredom and discontent? *All of these are symptoms of divine love-*
starvation. Not loving God, one feels unloved (by Him.)

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I saw a cartoon, a middle aged man sitting in an arm-chair, dejected, with a blank look in his eyes.

His wife explains to the family who had gathered:

HE DROVE HIMSELF HARD..AND BATTERED HIS WAY TO THE TOP

----AND NOW HE DOESN'T LIKE THE TOP!

The tragedy of modern who when he is successful finds he is still nowhere.

Man is too small a package to find fulfillment within himself.

God for give me for speaking on it. But do you know a truly humble man -
HUMILITY BEFORE GOD --why is there so little of it? *2 vanity!*
~~Why don't we honor Him in our day by day life?~~
The reason is that we are obsessed with our own importance.

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~~many people live in an empty shell, a large percentage of our members have the same empty shell, dereligionized, despitualized, deculturized.~~

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WASHIPPEAS OF CONVENIENCE

Return to your own self.

Let's Change the label. Re-claim your soul.

FOR A SMALL BEGINNING

TRUST IN GOD:

Here are 4 suggestions of how we may show GRATITUDE, HUMILITY &

1. Read your prayers, a saintly rabbi once said, as carefully as if you were counting money. If it ~~doesn't ring true, if a~~

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4. The chinese sage Laotse said:

THE JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES BEGINS WITH ONE STEP

So make the first step. Come back tomorrow.

RETURN TO DISCIPLINE
THE DISCIPLINE OF REQUIREMENTS

Rosh Hashona Day 1955

In the [redacted] Library of Congress in Washington there stands a column dedicated to Religion. Engraved on it is a sentence *from the Bible*

which was carefully chosen from all the sacred books of mankind
----and it should not come as too great a surprise to us that
the most fitting sentence on the subject of religion was found
in our Bible. It is Micah's justly famous 8th verse of chapter 6:

WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE OF THEE?

ONLY TO DO JUSTLY, TO LOVE MERCY AND TO WALK HUMBLY WITH THY GOD

A colleague and friend of mine, Rabbi Klein of Worcester translated this sentence poetically:

IT HATH BEEN TOLD TO THEE O MAN,
WHAT TO THE LORD IS GOOD.
AND WHAT HE DOTHTH REQUIRE OF THEE,
WHATEVER BE THY MOOD;
TO DO THE JUST AND LOVE THE KIND,
AND HUMBLY WALK WITH GOD IN MIND.

Many believe this to be the finest definition of religion ever put into a single sentence, only Micah was not the first ~~one~~ to say it.

In fact he admits *in the opening phrase* that *this was not an* original but an old definition

"It has been told thee, o man what is good"

A thousand years earlier Moses had said it first --

"And now, Israel, what doth the Lord Thy God
require of thee, but to fear the Lord Thy God,
to walk in all His ways and to love Him..."

Dt. 10.12

Note the special emphasis in Micah as in Moses on

WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE?

I wonder if you can feel the major difference between the Biblical
and the modern approach to religion?

The typically modern approach is not to speak of the requirements
at all, but to stress only the advantages religion has to offer.

You hear today a great deal about how religion will give
you peace of mind, and cure you of insomnia, and keep your family
together, and to clinch the argument, the University Research Corporation
recently compiled statistical proof that men and women 50 years old,
who ~~are~~ active church-members, are likely to live 3½ years longer
than inactive church-members.

All those writers and speakers, who take it upon themselves
to sell religion, seem to have taken a lesson from the advertising
profession whose first rule is to praise the product and keep
quiet about the price.

It is all part of the grand illusion of the 20th century that
you can get something for nothing.

In politics, the most successful movements are those that
make the biggest promises without telling the people about the price.

Fascism gets the people all excited with dreams of conquest and glory. Communism, with promises of messianic fulfillment, --- but neither says anything about the regimentation, the concentration camps, the secret police, ~~and~~ the mass purges ^{the killings} that are required.

And here in our Western democracies --who do you think is more popular: the politician who promises more benefits from the state, or the one who tells the people how much it will cost them?

We have come to ~~ignore~~ overlook the requirements --so much so that we are raising our children by the ^{rule} philosophy of making the fewest possible demands on them.

Prof Andre Siegfried, a keen observer of American life, ~~was~~ recently *said*:

"American parents allow their children the freedom of a run-away horse."

Discipline --which is a system of demands and requirements -- has become ~~the~~ old fashioned. ~~What~~

I saw a picture in a literary magazine, some time ago, showing a desperate father sitting inside the play-pen, working at his typewriter, while the little brats have the run of the house.

And one family, living in a community threatened by a landslide, I read somewhere, sent their 9 year old boy to an uncle out-of town until the danger had passed. A few days later they got a telegram:

Am returning boy, please send landslide instead.

A survey of 3400 classroom teachers throughout the country brought out the astonishing fact that the number one educational problem in the opinion of the teachers is
"increased pupil restlessness"
"general deterioration of discipline"

We are raising a generation of kids [redacted] who are being ^{cuddled &} pampered [redacted] at home and at school, of whom too little is [redacted] expected, and next to nothing required, who, [redacted] being challenged so little, are bored and restless [redacted] in addition to being undisciplined.

And why We are ^{we} raising the children without discipline? -- because essentially we adults have no discipline ourselves.

WHAT DO TH THE LORD REQUIRE OF THEE? We don't ask that kind of question these days. We would rather have someone tell us what religion has to offer, ~~to us~~.

But, between you and me, do you really think that substantial benefits can be gotten from religion without meeting substantial requirements?

Can religion really give us what we want, more joy and purpose in life, and a better world, the world of justice and mercy envisaged by Micah, can religion deliver ~~that~~ so much without asking something from us?

A great Christian thinker, the Danish theologian Soren Kierkegaard, was frank enough to admit that the ^{Christian} Church in its 2000 year history has accomplished so little because it played up ~~the~~ promises of salvation instead of stressing the ~~discipline of~~ moral & religious requirements.

A religion that demands nothing is a waste of time. It is a futility. It will do nothing. It might as well not be.

I greatly fear that this is just the kind of religion a good many of us want --- ~~a Judaism without demands~~, a Judaism that will not interfere with your routines, nor interrupt your weekends, ~~that will~~ not conflict with business, ^{or officiations,} nor take time to observe. A religion which should ^{please a} entertain the children, require a minimum of education and gladly cancel its classes in favor of ~~any conflicting~~ dancing lessons, ^{or} elocution lessons, ^{or} dramatic lessons, or basket ball ^{soccer} or baseball practice; a religion which will rearrange its holidays to fall on days when there is neither public school nor business. In short, a religion which never does anything inconvenient, nor demands a personal effort, nor requires anything so time-consuming as ^{study, prayer and meditation.}

WHAT DOETH THE LORD REQUIRE OF THEE?

Now let us face it. If we are God's creatures and His servants, then He wants something from us. And fundamentally that is Micah's approach to religion.

WHAT DOETH THE LORD REQUIRE OF THEE?

Note, the question is addressed to the individual. Something is required of you. You are accountable to God for what you do with your life.

When you are interested in an item of some value, you usually offer a deposit as proof that you are serious.

Why do you belong to the Jewish faith?

Why did you join a synagogue?

Are you ^{at all} ~~really~~ serious about living the life which our holy religion ~~requires~~ demands?

Then better get used to meeting requirements.

And ~~what~~ are you willing to give up as your way of showing that you really mean to be a Jew?

What deposit, what investment of yourself ^{- not just money -} are you willing to make in this New Year to show your serious intent?

~~As before~~ nothing is imposed on ^{us} by outside authority -

Are you capable of choosing for yourself ~~a religious discipline,~~ a few self-imposed requirements, which you will vow in your heart to keep?

^{Customs obligations} ~~As before~~ your personal religious discipline?

Let me mention ^{modest ones} 3 to start with:

1. Will you read the Bible ^{the world's best textbook of moral requirements} - a page a day - ^{to find out for yourself} what God really requires of the human being.

You have spiritual insight - why not use it

2. Will you ~~promote~~ ^{stop all this platitudinous talk about} justice and brotherhood, ^{and really do something? Quit being a grand fellow} ~~but~~ becoming active in at least one ~~minimum~~ organization ^{this year?}

that's just public relations!

3. Will you ~~unwarily~~ ^{resolve} bind yourself to use ^a part of every 7th day for your own sanctification. ^{or do you want to stay the way you are.}

Are you willing to work at your religion so that it might work for you?

only if you will it

RETURN TO RELIGION?

תשובה
1955

Shabbat Shuvah: Sabbath of Repentance or Sabbath of Return
derives name from the passage in Hoseah 14.2

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה יְהוָה
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה יְהוָה

RETURN O ISRAEL UNTO THE LORD THY GOD

On surface, it seems, people are really returning to religion.
Organized religion never had it better in America than this year.

Over 5½ thousand new congreg. were started.

60% of Americans now church affiliated as against only 16% a century ago.

Judaism with a membership gain of 10% this last year has now
become the fastest growing of 3 major faiths.

Yet, this religious boom may become a spiritual bust.

This was pointed out by Eugene Blake, president
of the National Council of Churches in a recent article
in Look magazine.

Statistics show not only increase in religious affiliation,
but also in number of crimes, especially serious ones.

It raises a question whether people are looking to religion
for moral guidance or whether they are not just trying
to find in religion another gimmick with which to
satisfy basically selfish desires, such as job-security,
health, peace of mind, and the capacity

Charles B. Templeton, a leading presbyt. preacher, is also skeptical about this religious revival.

"Most people seem to want God as you want a hot water bottle in the night to get you over a temporary discomfort --- instead of seeking His purpose, they are trying to use Him for their own purposes."

Personally, I also have my doubts about the current display of religious interest. It strikes me as of questionable sincerity.

Or is it an expression of sincere religious interest when couples hold each other in their arms, swaying on the dancing floor to the sentimental popular tune entitled "I Believe" ?

Or shall we shout Halleluyah when we see in the New York Times sport-page a week ago, a picture of Archie Moore preparing for the title bout with Rocky Marciano -- showing the challenger not with his gloves but with a Bible in his hand ?

Hollywood, never bashful about cashing in on a trend, is rushing dozens of religious extravaganza which, we may be certain will highlight the love life of every Biblical hero --and if necessary invent it if it isn't in the Bible.

And congress, not to be outdone by anyone in a gesture of devotion to a popular cause, recently built a chapel for Congressmen, for the first time in nearly 170 years of congressional history.

But that wasn't enough and so Congress recently ordered to have the motto IN GOD WE TRUST printed on all new papermoney --- which falls right in line with an article in the Washington Post a few weeks ago.

The Federal Food and Drug Administration has obtained an injunction against a drug Company named In God we Trust, and located --believe it or not --- in the town named Truth or Consequences, New Mexico. (The injunction is) to prevent the drug company from advertising a sterilizer alleged to cure any virus, sinus trouble, dysentery, asthma or pimples. Concerning which item the Washington Post observed:

IN GOD WE TRUST now must tell the truth or take the consequences.

Looking at this current return to religion, we too must tell the truth and not deceive the public and say all is well with us when it isn't. The hypocrisy of church members was the major reason why organized religion had declined so badly until this present boom started, and it won't help us at all if the hypocrites from without are going to swell the ranks of hypocrites inside organized religion.

There is not yet true remorse shown by people for the kind of world in which we live - this world of hate & strife is our handiwork
If our return is to be sincere, if we are truly repentant

and want to come close to God, we must experience an inner change an inner cleansing. Before our public religious affiliation counts, there must be ^{developed by each of us} a private spiritual life.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord Thy God in Vain says one of the 10 commandments.

Temple or Church membership which ~~is~~ merely serves as a badge

of respectability is an insult to God.

The right way to return to God is suggested in Psalm 40 **FIRST verse
I AM COME WITH THE ROLL OF A BOOK
I DELIGHT TO DO THY WILL
THY LAW IS WITHIN MY HEART

first he took the trouble to find out what religion stands
for

he studied and familiarized himself with the demands of /
Religion

and settled the questions of faith in his own private heart

THY LAW IS WITHIN MY HEART

but then comes the second part of religion --as we read in the same
psalm a couple of verses later:

I HAVE NOT CONCEALED THY MERCY AND THY TRUTH FROM THE GREAT
CONGREGATION. Ps. 40.11

Public affiliation with a congregation based on real inner conviction
--in that there is strength.

May you in the coming days make your Temple membership more meaningful
as you seek to build up your personal religious convictions
and work out for yourself a private program of religious practice
which will put God's law within your heart.

SEEK YE [THE LORD] ME AND LIVE

y. kippur
morning 1955

The earliest eye-witness account ~~the~~ of a high holiday service is in the book of the prophet Amos, and it took place about 2700 years ago. Bible scholars are not sure whether it was Rosh Hashonah or Yom Kippur; at any rate it was a splendid congregation that had assembled in the royally sponsored & supported sanctuary of the Israelite town of Beth El.

People had come from far and wide to see a thrilling performance and were not disappointed.

"Look at the crowd. Look how festively dressed they are.

Let's see who walks in the procession. And how did you like that music?"

The trumpets were sounded, the choirs were chanting, sweet incense perfumed the air and there was the exciting burst of blood from the slaughter of animals on the altar.

Worshippers stood in line, holding their sacrifices, and patiently waited for the public announcement of their donations, and you may be certain that the congregation made comments such as

"What, Ishmael is giving only 5 bulls?

Why, he could afford 20! "

The participants obviously felt they were very good Jews but to one man in the congregation the whole thing was a farce and he told them so.

With biting sarcasm, Amos, the guest preacher from Tekoa said to the holiday assembly at Beth El:

COME TO BETH EL AND TRANSGRESS

GO ON, BRING YOUR SACRIFICES

ANNOUNCE YOUR DONATIONS --O DO MAKE THEM PUBLIC
FOR YOU LOVE THAT, YOU ISRAELITES

Amos 4.5.

BUT THUS SAITH THE LORD TO THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL
 I HATE, I DEPSISE YOUR FEASTS,
 AND TAKE NO DELIGHT IN YOUR HOLIDAY ASSEMBLIES
 TAKE AWAY THE NOISE OF YOUR SONGS
 AND THE MELODY OF YOUR MUSIC
 BUT ~~LET~~ JUSTICE WELL UP AS WATERS
 AND RIGHTEOUSNESS AS A MIGHTY STREAM.

SEEK YE ^{THE LORD} ~~THE~~ AND LIVE
 ME

Amos 5.4,21-24

Last night I discussed one of 2 sentences which R. Simlai declared as being expressive of the spirit of the whole Bible. This is the 2nd sentence R. Simlai quoted: SEEK YE ^{THE LORD} ~~THE~~ AND LIVE In it is the key to religion.

Seek ye ^{the Lord} ~~the~~ and live --- Religion must show in the conduct of life. Seek God so that you may learn to live accordingly. Not religion as such, but your life is the important drama.

Do you come to religious services, hoping to be diverted or entertained, be it by music or by oratory? If so, you miss the object of **religion**. "Take away from me the noise of your songs"

Amos was not angry against music ---he was angry against those who came for music only.

Just as Ezekiel, himself a great preacher, was not angry against ~~preaching~~ ^{sermons} only against those who came for sermons only:

"They listen to you like one listens to a song for entertainment, but really pay no attention" Ezek. 33.30

Haven't you heard people talk about religious services in still the same fashion: "What's he going to talk about?" Once a lady called me and asked:

"Is something special going on this Friday?"

Amos would have us know that religion is not a show, not a performance, not even a lecture forum or a concert and we are not to come to it as spectators but to look into our own conscience, to judge ourselves in the light of moral law, to straighten ourselves out before God:

SEEK YE ¹⁹⁴⁰ME AND LIVE

I certainly don't want to do you an injustice and suggest that everything Amos said at Beth El applies to Har Sinai. Many of you are certainly not ostentatious or selfish. Many, even hundreds of you, sincerely want to serve the Temple. There would not be enough time to report the many generous things done by our members. We receive many donations, and never once has publicity been requested. Literally hundreds of you heroically plunge into all kinds of activity on behalf of the Temple

You'll give up hours to stuff envelopes,
get your eyes bloodshot staying up late at meetings,
do decorations till your arms drop off,
get fallen arches working in the kitchen,
wear out shoes for the bazaar or the Yearbook,
run all over town selling tulips,
you write plays, pageants, sing, dance, act and model clothes
---all for the Temple, -----but is that the main purpose

of Temple membership? *The presence of some of our best workers is felt in every part of this building — except the sanctuary and the study*
~~Is being busy in a religious institution a sign that you are religious.?~~ *class*

~~Does it not depend on what you are being busy with?~~

Let there be no mistake --we need the sacrifice of volunteer work, but if it stops short of religious participation, then it is a vain sacrifice, as Amos would tell us:

YEA THOUGH YE OFFER ME SACRIFICES --I WILL NOT ACCEPT THEM
Amos 5.22

SEEK YE ^[LORD] ~~THE~~ AND LIVE
ME

The main object of our search should be fellowship with God, improvement of our character, strengthening of our integrity, and what a full-time job that is !

In the days of Moses an Arabian king very much desired to meet the great law-giver of whom he had heard so much, but it was not proper for the king to take the initiative. And so he commissioned an artist to bring him a faithful picture of Moses.

When the artist returned, the king showed the picture to his counsellors and said : What qualities do you see written in his face?

"I see murder in his eyes" said one

"I see pride" another

"I see hatred" still another

And so it went, some of the worst characteristics were seen in Moses by the king's counselors. Many years later the king *finally* ~~also~~ met Moses in person and was tremendously impressed by him -- and he told him how very wrong his counselors had been and how badly they had misjudged him. To which Moses replied:

"No, my friend, your counselors were right.

All the evil they saw I actually have, only all my life I have tried to overcome it."

Just think of this: the greatest moral genius of mankind barely managed to keep the evil in him under control --- how much more vulnerable must we common mortals be?

At best we might apply to ourselves the eulogy of a preacher who tried to be honest about the departed and so he said:

HE WASN'T A GOOD MAN FOR HE NEVER GAVE HIS HEART TO THE LORD,
BUT HE WAS WHAT YOU'D CALL, A RESECTED SINNER.

It is the contention of our Yom Kippur prayers that we are chronic evil-doers ---and if that is so, than it follows logically that ^{nothing less than a} ~~supreme~~ ^{effort} ~~is unnecessary~~ can cleanse and purify us of the evil traits which are part of human nature.

And can it possibly be that we shall achieve on this one day what Moses was unable to accomplish in a life-time?

~~If only we put as much effort into the care of our souls as we give to the preservation of material things.~~

If only the average man cleansed his inner life as often as he washes his automobile; and the average woman were as careful about refreshing her soul as she is about polishing her silver.

We budget and plan for everything else,

we save up for vacation trips

we take out insurance for our children's college education

we set aside fixed schedules for work, for recreation &

for being with the family ---- ^{What's} your schedule going to be for religion and character development this year?

Woodrow Wilson said: CHARACTER IS PRODUCED IN THE GREAT MANUFACTURE
OF DAILY DUTY

And what ^{can you} ~~do you hope~~ to produce by performing your religious duty ~~just~~ ^{only} once a year?

Today we Jews ask God for so many things.

We pray for wealth, we pray for health, for success, for the respect of people, for honor in the community, we want to get ahead in the world ---yet Amos would reminds us today:

SEEK YE ^{ME} ^{LORD} ~~THE~~ AND LIVE

Make godliness also one of life's ambitions

Don't let your soul *deteriorate*.

As Karl Kraus said in his wise little poem:

What crazy existence is this we have led
That so undermined us?
We have rushed straight ahead
And left ourselves behind us.

דפיקת קורן Yom Kippur will end today with the long Shofar blast known as the *דפיקת קורן* which in ancient times was the signal for the release of slaves from bondage.

May this Yom Kippur release you from the bondage of purely material ambition ---and may you wish not only to have more, but also to be something more, a better, more spiritually minded person.

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SINCERITY IN RELIGION

Kol N. Dre
1955

"Which sentence is the best expression of the whole Bible ? "

This question was once asked of R. Simlai.

He answered: There are two such sentences --each contains all of the commandments , and one of these two sentences is from the prophet Habakkuk 2.4:

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY HIS BELIEF

Apply your belief to life. Be sincere.

My friends, I could share with you tonight my anxiety over our country's role in world affairs, or my grave concern over our brethren in Morocco, or the hopes every Jew has for our people in Israel in their brave struggle against hostile neighbors, but our foremost concern tonight is with the good religion can do --- and it seems to me that religion will have absolutely no influence on these or other international issues if the principles of religion do not even operate in our private, personal life.

We shall never gain confidence in the larger vision of religion for the world, if we do not first experience religion as a real power shaping our individual life.

I therefore have only one theme this year for everyone of these high holiday services, namely, HOW CAN YOU MAKE RELIGION A REAL FORCE and Habakkuk gives the answer:

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY HIS BELIEF

Our Sincerity , our willingness to live by what we profess, could make religion a saving force in the world, while our unwillingness to take religion seriously, will betray it as an impotent relic of the past.

The theme I have chosen is actually the central theme of Yom Kippur. The whole ritual of Yom Kippur amounts to a supreme battle against hypocrisy. The Kol Nidre tells of our remorse and shame at the hypocrisy of our broken pledges. The fast serves to underscore the sincerity of our repentance, and almost every page of our prayerbook has sincere admission of guilt and confession and promises to do what Habakkuk demanded: namely to live more sincerely by what we believe.

There are 3 basic tests of sincerity and the first is the test of sacrifice:

The Bible tells us that when David picked out the site of an altar, a wealthy land-owner, Araunah offered him the land free of charge, but King David refused the generous offer:

NO, I SHALL PAY FOR IT, GOD FORBID THAT
I OFFER HIM SOMETHING WHICH COST ME NOTHING

II Sam.24.24

No Temple, no institution of value, no ideal is ever established without sacrifice. There is no success in life, there can be no achievement without giving up something for it.

When Charles Lindbergh first crossed the Atlantic in his single engine plane, he received fabulous offers for taking various items along. Someone said: I'll give you \$1000 for taking this 1 lb parcel to Paris. But Lindbergh refused. He took no parachute, not even a radio, and he went so far as to shave close the margin of the paper in his notebook.

Instead of excess baggage , he wanted more gasoline for extra mileage. His aim was Paris.

Whatever your aim is in this new year, if you really want to reach the goal of your resolution or ambition, keep asking yourself, is this or that activity going to be excess baggage or is it likely to get me there?

Assuming that you have some worthwhile goal, this is a good time to decide which activity is essential and which is expendable .

A man in Buffalo once explained to me: The only reason you don't see me in Temple more often is because I've got to watch the fights on Friday nights.

The day is short, and we can't pursue all our interests. We must make a selection of one interest above the others. It always means a sacrifice of something.

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY HIS BELIEF

That will cost you something --maybe changing your office hours or your TV tastes in order to practice your faith on the Sabbath, or reading less of the popular magazines to gain time for Bible reading, or staying home from your business to honor a holiday, or buying a cheaper fur to increase your charities.

You'll have to choose and may it be a supreme value

A few years ago, the Associated Press carried a dispatch from Denver , Col. :

"A 15 year old dog, named Pal, went to his grave with a funeral his master estimated cost \$1000.

Mourners, friends of Mr. and Mrs. Schmitt filed by the mahogany casket to look at pal for the last time. The basket was banked with flowers. Mr. Schmitt said:

THAT DOG WAS MY WHOLE LIFE

Whenever a person says about anything material "That was my whole life" he proclaims himself an idol worshipper. He has put other gods between himself and the Lord. A man's pet, or his business, or his hobby, even his home and family are not big enough for him to say to them:

"That is my whole life"

AMERICAN JEWISH

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY HIS BELIEF

Proove to God that your love is real. Spare Him an hour a week. The Bible calls the Sabbath a perpetual sign between Me and the children of Israel. Your sacrifice to keep your weekly rendez-vous with your maker also is a sign - a sign of sincerity.

The second test of our sincerity is a look at our habits.

No matter what you say you honor, love and cherish, your habits betray your true love.

There is no mastery of anything without constant devotion, without the discipline of habit.

When Edward Steichen, one of the department heads of the N.Y. Museum of Modern Art, switched from painting to photography, he gave it a year of concentrated study, in the course of which he took more than 1000 photographs of a cup and saucer, until he learned every detail of how to compose a picture. Repetition, habit is the road to the perfection of understanding.

There are some people whom I would like to call the inspirationalists. They say they are waiting for a more inspiring prayerbook or more inspiring service before they'll pray more regularly. They'll be waiting for a long time, because inspiration does not come to such sporadic visitors at worship.

A truly sincere interest expresses itself through persistence and habit.

A Rabbi once told a doubter to learn from an infant. No matter how often he falls he gets up again and tries to walk. No matter how often prayer seems futile and God far away, we must keep trying and with the habit we achieve the art of prayer and the gift of inspiration.

There are other denominations that offer salvation on a cash-and-carry basis. Just come in and you are saved. Not in Judaism. You must first make a substantial investment of time and study before you get benefits. A couple of days ago newspapers reported that finally after 5 years of trying they struck oil in Israel. Seeking religious truth is like prospecting for oil. You've got to keep digging for quite a while until you strike the gusher/ of a moment of true inspiration.

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY HIS BELIEF

We cannot live by something we don't know. Study is a necessity for intelligent belief. We offer you Adult Sunday School.

Will you get into the habit of studying religion?

Confucius used to say: Men's natures are alike; it is their habits that carry them far apart.

We all have about the same capacity for belief -- it is your habit of prayer and study which will make the difference as to whether you become a doubter or a believer.

The third test of your sincerity is the simplest and quickest.

IF YOU SINCERELY WANT SOMETHING, HOW SOON WILL YOU GO AFTER IT?

Will you delay, procrastinate and postpone a spiritual program for yourself ---or can you decide now in your heart, and start living by it?

St. Augustine the sinner who turned into a saint of the Christian Church, for a long time could not rid himself of lust, and so he hesitated on the borderline of Christianity.

For example he prayed for chastity, but quickly interrupted:

NOT YET, LORD, NOT YET and hurried back to his mistress

R. Hillel challenged his disciples TO PASS THE TEST OF A PROMPT START:

IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

The Righteous shall live by his belief

Your sincerity in wanting to live as a Jew will be tested

1. by your sacrifice of convenience, time, hobbies and less important interests for sacred religious values.
2. by your habits of study and Sabbath worship
3. But most important is the test: HOW SOON?

Open your Bible tonight --- and keep your dates at the Temple

SINCERITY IN RELIGION

7122 1011 778
1955

"Which sentence is the best expression of the whole Bible ? "

This question was once asked of R. Simlai.

He answered: There are two such sentences --each contains all of the commandments , and one of these two sentences ^{has only 3 Hebrew words} is from the prophet Habakkuk 2.4:

אֵלֹהִים יְהוָה אֵלֹהִים
וְיִשְׁמַע ה' בְּקוֹל
וְיִשְׁמַע ה' בְּקוֹל
וְיִשְׁמַע ה' בְּקוֹל

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY HIS BELIEF

Apply your belief to life. Be sincere.

My friends, I could share with you tonight my anxiety over our country's role in world affairs, or my grave concern over our brethren in Morocco, or the hopes every Jew has for our people in Israel in their brave struggle against

hostile neighbors, but ~~our foremost concern tonight is with~~ ^{there is one problem still more important for a religious community such as we}

What is the good religion can do ---- ^{What can it contribute to conduct of life, both public & private life?} ~~and~~ It seems to me that religion will have ^{any} absolutely no influence on these or other international issues if the principles of religion do not even operate in our private, personal life.

We shall never ~~gain~~ ^{a world of justice and peace} confidence in the larger vision of religion for the world, if we do not first experience religion as a real power shaping our individual life.

I therefore have only one theme this year for ~~everyone~~ ^{all} of ~~these~~ ^{our} high holiday services, namely, HOW CAN YOU MAKE RELIGION A REAL FORCE and Habakkuk gives the answer:

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY HIS BELIEF

Our Sincerity , our willingness to live by what we profess, could make religion a saving force in the world, while our unwillingness to take religion seriously, ^{our betrayals, treason, violation of every pledge} ~~will betray it~~ as an impotent relic of the past. ^{makes it appear}

The theme I have chosen is **actually** the central theme of Yom Kippur. The whole ritual of Yom Kippur amounts to a supreme battle against hypocrisy. The Kol Nidre tells of our remorse and shame at the hypocrisy of our broken pledges. The fast ~~serves to~~ underscores the sincerity of our repentance, and almost every page of our prayerbook has ~~sincere~~ admission of guilt and confession and promises to do what Habakkuk demanded: namely, to live more sincerely by what we believe.

There are 3 basic tests of sincerity and the first is the test of sacrifice:

The Bible tells us that when David picked out the site of an altar, a wealthy land-owner, Araunah offered him the land free of charge, but King David refused the generous offer:

NO, I SHALL PAY FOR IT, GOD FORBID THAT

I OFFER HIM SOMETHING WHICH COST ME NOTHING

II Sam.24.24

without sacrifice. There is no success in life, there can be no achievement without giving up something for it.

When Charles Lindbergh first ~~crossed~~ the Atlantic in his single engine plane, he received fabulous offers for taking various items along. Someone said: I'll give you \$1000 for taking this 1 lb parcel to Paris. But Lindbergh refused. He took no parachute, not even a radio, and he went so far as to shave close the margin of the paper in his notebook.

This morning I suggested children might fast a little & 5 yr old girl said to me I am fast. Rabbi: I asked and what do you give up. She replied "I won't eat the spinach"
We are all very liberal with sacrifices that cost us nothing. I think of those who reject every suggestion to observe anything on the grounds that they have Religion of heart. That is a religion that costs nothing and without exception those who do it, are the worst hypocrites.

Instead of excess baggage , he wanted more gasoline for extra mileage. His aim was Paris.

Whatever your aim is in this new year, if you really want to reach the goal of your resolution or ambition, keep asking yourself, is this or that activity going to be excess baggage or is it likely to get me there? *extra mileage ?*

Assuming that you have some worthwhile goal, this is a good time to decide which activity is essential and which is expendable .

A man in Buffalo once explained to me: The only reason you don't see me in Temple more often is because I've got to watch the fights on Friday nights.

The day is short, and we can't pursue all our interests. We must make a selection of one interest above the others. It always means a sacrifice of something.

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY HIS BELIEF

That will cost you something --maybe changing your office hours or your TV tastes in order to practice your faith on the Sabbath, or reading less of the popular magazines to gain time for Bible reading, or staying home from your business to honor a holiday, or buying a cheaper fur ^{in favor of a more expensive gift to} ~~to increase your~~ charities.

You'll have to choose and may it be a supreme value !

A few years ago, the Associated Press carried a dispatch from Denver , Col. :

"A 15 year old dog, named Pal, went to his grave with a funeral his master estimated cost \$1000.

Mourners, friends of Mr. and Mrs. Schmitt filed by the mahogany casket to look at pal for the last time. The basket was banked with flowers. Mr. Schmitt said:

THAT DOG WAS MY WHOLE LIFE

Whenever a person says about anything material "That was my whole life" he proclaims himself an idol worshipper.

He has put other gods between himself and the Lord.

A man's pet, or his business, ^{his job} or his hobby, even his home and family are not big enough for him to say to them:

"That is my whole life"

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY HIS BELIEF

Prove to God that your love is real. Spare Him an hour a week. The Bible calls the Sabbath a perpetual sign between Me and the children of Israel.

Do you keep your sacrifice to keep your weekly rendez-vous with God? ^{moving prayer: We are pretty people - don't see God. We are thy beloved - Thou art God of truth - we are a people of Hypocrisy and falsehood}

~~Your sacrifice~~ also is a sign - a sign of sincerity.

The second test of our sincerity is a look at our habits.

No matter what you say you honor, love and cherish, your habits betray your true love.

There is no mastery of anything without constant devotion, without the discipline of habit.

When Edward Steichen, one of the department heads of the N.Y. Museum of Modern Art, switched from painting to photography, he gave it a year of concentrated study, in the course of which he took more than 1000 photographs of a cup and saucer, until he learned every detail of how to compose a picture. Repetition, habit is the road to the perfection of understanding.

Job

Where is the sign?

We read the sacrifice for the Sabbath this

Thou art God of truth - we are a people of Hypocrisy and falsehood

There are some people ^{in every community} whom I would like to call the inspirationalists. They say they are waiting for a more inspiring prayerbook or more ^{or more inspiring (CANTON, RABBI), B/d/f} inspiring service before they'll pray more regularly. They'll be waiting for a long time, because inspiration does not come to such sporadic visitors.
~~at a ship.~~

A truly sincere interest expresses itself through persistence and habit.

A Rabbi once told a doubter to learn from an infant. No matter how often he falls, he gets up again and tries to walk. No matter how often prayer seems futile and God far away, we must keep trying and with the habit we achieve the art of prayer and the gift of inspiration.

There are other denominations that offer salvation on a cash-and carry basis. Just come in and you are saved. ^{is not one of them.}
~~Not in.~~ Judaism. You must first make a substantial investment of time and study before you get benefits.

A couple of days ago newspapers reported that finally after 5 years of trying they struck oil in Israel. Seeking religious truth is like prospecting for oil. You've got to keep digging for quite a while until you strike the gusher ^{of a moment} of true inspiration.

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY HIS BELIEF

We cannot live by something we don't know. Study is a necessity for intelligent belief. ^{But study is not a one-shot affair. It's a habit} We offer you Adult Sunday School!

Will you get into the habit of studying religion?

Confucius used to say: Men's natures are alike; it is their habits that carry them far apart.

Will you become superior by adopting superior habits?

We all have about the same capacity for belief -- it is your habit of prayer and study which will make the difference as to whether you become a doubter or a believer.

The third test of your sincerity is the simplest and quickest.

IF YOU SINCERELY WANT SOMETHING, HOW SOON WILL YOU GO AFTER IT?

Will you delay, procrastinate and postpone a spiritual program for yourself? --- or can you decide now in your heart, and start living by it?

St. Augustine, the sinner who turned into a saint of the Christian Church, for a long time could not rid himself of lust, and so he hesitated on the borderline of Christianity.

For example he prayed for chastity, but quickly interrupted:

NOT YET, LORD, NOT YET and hurried back to his mistress

R. Hillel challenged his disciples TO PASS THE TEST OF A PROMPT START:

IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

UNVIC 1258 red 1010

The Righteous shall live by his belief

Your sincerity in wanting to live as a Jew will be tested

1. by your sacrifice of convenience, time, hobbies and less important interests for sacred religious values.
2. by your habits of study and Sabbath worship
3. But most important is the test: HOW SOON?

Open your Bible tonight --- and keep your dates ^{with} the Temple

This hour, also, can teach us how to put religion into practice,
the guiding theme of all our high holiday services.

Perhaps it is even easier for us to learn the lesson of applying
religion to life when we think of those who are no more --with *whose departure*
also went ~~whom departed~~ our chance to show ^{all} the love and kindness we would
so gladly give them now if only they were alive again.

Once a man went to see a very wise teacher in the Far East.
He said: I have come a very long way to see thee, to ask thee
3 questions:

Which is the most important hour of my life?

Who is the most important person I shall meet?

What is the most important deed I may accomplish?

The wise man answered:

The most important hour in thy life is this hour,
for dost thou know if thou wilt have another hour like this? -

The most important person you will meet is the man approaching

thee in this hour, for dost thou know if thou wilt be approached by a man like this another time?

And the most important deed thou canst accomplish is to stand for this man in this hour, for dost thou know if another time thou wilt be able to help him again?

The point of this story --to be remembered by us always -- is the importance of living by our ideal in the here and now and in relationship to the person who happens to be nearest at the moment.

We are not to think of the good life as a noble dream to become reality in the distant future under ideal circumstances, but we are to get hold of the present circumstances whatever they are and improve the world by improving our little corner of it.

Abraham Lincoln, dressed in his familiar dark suit, stiff collar and black top hat was riding one day to a political meeting of great importance. He was carefully guiding his horse along a muddy trail, when suddenly he heard a pitiful sound. There in front was a pig, stuck in the mud giving forth some anguished squeals. As Lincoln passed the helpless animal, he probably said to himself: "No, I can't stop now. I'm in dress clothes and late for my speech."

But a little further along the trail, the lone rider turned back. It took some hard pulling and with the help of some logs he managed to get the pig free. ...And so, Lincoln, covered with mud and sweat, went on to make his speech. No one remembers the speech he gave that day, but the story of a man who dirtied himself to help a pig in distress will live on through the ages.

How many immediate chances to do some good to someone have we missed because we concentrated on tasks in the more distant future?

We are usually so impatient with interruptions.

Yet, perhaps a friendly word to the boy who delivers my paper that moment when he stands at my door is more important than the book I am in such a hurry to go back to?

Perhaps a cheerful greeting to the elevator operator will produce more good than the conference I am about to attend?

Ecclesiastes sums up this lesson for us:

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might

Ecc 9.10

Don't conserve your talent for kindness for future occasions.

Don't save your brotherly love for distant people.

Do the best you can here, now, and to the next person.

Horace Mann once wrote this advertisement in a Lost and Found Column:

Lost: Somewhere between sunrise and sunset,
two golden hours, each set with
60 diamonds minutes. No reward is
offered, for they are gone forever.

And together with each hour may also be lost forever the chance we had for our deed of goodness which translates belief into life.

Remember Rabbi Hillel whom I quoted last night: If not now, when?

2/1/10 12:00 10/10/10

But what if that chance is really gone? Can I do nothing for the dead?

As Jews we have learned to say Kaddish for our departed.

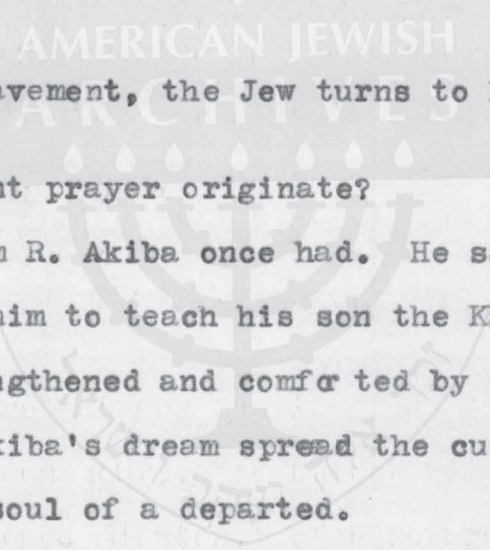
It is one of the most beautiful gems in the crown of Judaism.

אשר יאמר לך ר' אבהו

MAGNIFIED AND SANCTIFIED BE HIS GREAT NAME

אשר יאמר לך ר' אבהו... אלהי אבותינו

PRAISED AND GLORIFIED BE HE THOUGH HE BE FAR ABOVE ALL THE PRAISE
AND EVEN ABOVE ALL THE CONSOLATION WE CAN UTTER....



Though God causes bereavement, the Jew turns to Him with praise.

How did this magnificent prayer originate?

It started with a dream R. Akiba once had. He saw in his dream a dead man who begged him to teach his son the Kaddish so that his soul might be strengthened and comforted by the boy's prayer. With the story of R. Akiba's dream spread the custom of saying Kaddish 12 months to help the soul of a departed.

Though most Jews observe it faithfully, it is sometimes a cause of great amazement to see a person, disconsolate with grief at the passing of a dear one, yet a few weeks later already unwilling to perform even this small service of love for the departed.

Does saying Kaddish really help the souls of our dear ones?

I believe so.

I believe the soul lives on, and wherever that realm is, it cannot be completely cut off from the realm of the living.

Earth and heaven are far apart, yet are within one universe, --and I do not consider it impossible for the souls of our departed to be blessed and aided in some way by the spirits of the living.

After all the sun is far away, but we feel its warm rays.

Why could not our prayers reach our dear departed and comfort them and like rays of our spirit bring them some of the warmth and love that shines in our hearts?

For the living, let us listen to Hillel: IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

Do not put off what you can do for them now.

But in relation to our departed, let us be guided by the wisdom of our custom, which made the Kaddish a bridge between two worlds, this world and the world of eternity. On that bridge of prayer, we meet our departed in spirit and their souls, strengthened and comforted by our spirits soar up to the ONE WHO IS ABOVE DEATH and in whose presence we shall some day be reunited forever and ever with all our beloved.

This hour, also, can teach us how to put religion into practice, the guiding theme of all our high holiday services.

Perhaps it is even easier for us to learn the lesson of applying religion to life when we think of those who are no more --with whom departed our chance to show ^{all} the love and kindness we would so gladly give them now if only they were alive again.

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