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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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Sermons and notes, 1980.

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

Introductory Comment at Selichet

Our Selichet service of penitential prayers is timed to bring us to the midnight hour — to a moment which is in between yesterday and tomorrow —

even as each of us ethically speaking stands between good and evil.

^{We begin with} The Hardsalah ritual, which separates the Sabbath from the new week & challenges us to apply a sharply discriminating judgement to all situations.

— As clearly as we see the difference between light and darkness, so obvious should be the distinction in our minds between right and wrong.

Upon the functioning of this moral discernment rest all our hopes for self-improvement.

So let tonight's Hardsalah — the separation between 2 points in time — be a token of the moral separation we mean to carry out on the forthcoming days of Penitence.

Possible of the Wall

"You must slow down... and prepare for the High Holy Days.
How does one prepare?"

By redirecting attention from the external to the internal world
from external circumstances to the problematic inner
Self which is in need of change.

We think of the New Year — but how new, how different will
it be?

Is every new day of our life really different?

Will tomorrow really be completely different from today?

As a matter of fact much of what we do each day is
a repeat performance:

We follow a similar schedule, repeat our chores,
recreations, — a pattern which is only slightly
varied from day to day

Of course each day offers us a chance of a fresh start,
of radical change — but should we?

It is time to think about it — mostly about
our true desire — what we really want and then
ask should we want it — Is it right? Is it good?

This process is called: תשובה / תשובה
The accounting of one's soul
A self Assessment

If it is to produce significant change, we must proceed in 3 steps

1. Heavenly Confession '171

Rising self criticism to full consciousness & articulation
ie. saying out loud what we do & appear of ourselves
Listing the wrongs & evils we must grapple with
~~Public & Private Confessions~~

2. Next step is the emotional charge of regret תשובה
& pleas for forgiveness תשובה
apologies to God & fellowmen תשובה
ie apologies

But apology does not settle the matter

Greek root of apo - logia

Away from speech ie speech that turns you away from - what?

the accuser the guilt Self-Defence

Designed to reestablish good feeling, ~~the~~ good relationships but ~~that~~ not necessarily involving a change of yourself

Hebrew root of word תשובה brings out more strongly the superficial character of apology תשובה comes from sprinkling - ie perfume or deodorant. Words of תשובה ~~seek to make~~ one

a quick & easy ~~way of trying to make~~ a foul condition, made
 now tolerable ^{deeply regret} by sprinkling of pleasant words
 "Borden me - I'm sorry... - Such words of apology or
~~regret~~ seek Conciliation without reparation

Poet Edwin Arlington Robinson referred to it with his line

Familiar as an old mistake
 And futile as regret.

The trouble with apologies is that they come too cheap
 and are futile without inner change.

(3) The 3^d and truly decisive step to be inspired by our
 עוֹנֵן is תְּשׁוּבָה - true turning

Whereas the English word Penance or Penitence suggests
 guilt, remorse & liability to penalty - but describes primarily a feeling
 תְּשׁוּבָה is action from Latin POENA

Undoing the wrong done - by correction
 & Purging the evil urge or character within so that wrong -
 thing will not be repeated.

Lev: Y-Hash of Berdchev would make confession every night upon retiring
 "I shall not do so again"

But then, he would argue with himself: But so you promised last night & the
 night before

Ah yes, Leu Y-Hash, would say with a sigh:

But tonight I am in earnest

Our persistent moral failure is no reason to cease the effort to overcome it
 We do not scrap an ideal because they are hard to alter
 In spite of our many ^{self} betrayals & defects we try again - and so this night
 marks our re-entry into the arena for moral struggle to make our ^{self} better & ^{self} victorious!

Tonight let us be in earnest

So that our better self

be victorious.



CHOOSE LIFE

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation

Rosh Hashanah Eve
Wednesday, Sep. 10, 1980

The magic spell of this night cannot be explained in prosaic words. Only the poet's sensitivity can suggest it, such as the Psalmist who remembered with nostalgia:

"My companion and my familiar friend --
How pleasant it was to be together
In the house of God, we walked with the crowd."
(Psalm 55.14)

אני וידידי
אשר נחמתי
בבית ה' אלהינו
לשבת יחד

The key word is ^{יחד} "together." This night brings us together with family, with friends, with our people, even the invisible myriads of past generations. We feel the spiritual presence of all of Israel. A contemporary writer shares with us the inspirational excitement of togetherness on this night:

"This is the great warmth, the great at-homeness;
This is the knowledge of belonging."

Thanks to the generosity of our Congregation, Maxine and I spent the greater part of this past year on a Sabbatical journey, travelling around the world. To us, this night of Rosh Hashanah, more than ever, has the impact of homecoming and reunion.

We experienced many surprises in our encounter with strange people and places, but nothing was as much a surprise, even shock, as was the mood in which we found our country upon our return. We were not prepared for the loss of confidence and sense of dejection that had spread like the plague over our fair land. *It is incomprehensible.*

In all of our travels we saw no place on earth where life is better and more secure, no place where life is as free and promising.

We should be singing daily with the Psalmist
חַבְדֵיךְ נִפְלְאוּ בְּטוֹב הָאָרֶץ
"Our lot has fallen in a good place."
(Psam 16.6)

In this election year, we are free not only to vote for a President but free to elect each his own way of life.

- Free to read, listen and speak up
- Free to express our anger
- Free to buy whatever our heart desires
- Free to choose any career
- Free to move and to travel

Literally billions of mankind cannot imagine such freedom, such opportunity and such plenty.

When the Torah speaks to us during these High Holy Days in these challenging words:

חַיִּים וְמוֹת רַחֲמֵיךָ נִתְּנָה לְפָנֵינוּ
וְהָיָה לְפָנֵינוּ וְהָיָה לְפָנֵינוּ
"Life and death are before you -- now, choose life." (Dt 30.19)

We are truly free to respond and to make the choice of the kind of life we would live.

I. AMERICA'S CHOICE

When shall Americans stop downgrading themselves? How much longer shall we hide out in that psychological hole of self contempt into which we have crawled ever since Vietnam? I don't share the view of those who call Vietnam a "noble war." Rather it was of all wars one of the most tragic because, for us, it was an unnecessary war, and a civil war into which we blundered, at a stupendous price. But, blundering wars are not an American exclusive. Since our withdrawal from Vietnam, China has blundered into an attack on Vietnam. Vietnam has blundered into an occupation of Cambodia and the Soviet Union has blundered into an invasion of Afghanistan.

What Maxine and I saw and heard in Indo-China made us realize that, in spite of our bloody blunders, America is still the most compassionate nation in the world. Without American pressure and financial aid, Thailand would have closed her borders to the thousands of starving Cambodians. In Bangkok we met the fabulous Sheppy Abramowitz, wife of the U. S. Ambassador, a Jewish couple we should be proud of, who organized the entire foreign colony into an army of volunteers for the feeding and medical emergency care of Cambodian refugees. It was the Western world under American leadership -- and little Israel -- that gave shelter and a new life to the Vietnamese boat people. In Tokyo, an engaging young man, Masatoshi Kohno, took us to the world center of a progressive Buddhist sect, Risho-Kosei Kai, alleged to be the fastest growing religion in the world. We were impressed by the way members were helping one another with counselling and financial aid.

"Do you engage in any overseas philanthropies? I asked.

"Yes," said Mr. Kohno. "We raised over \$300,000 for 550 Vietnamese boat people."

"Where ^{in Japan} have you settled these people?"

"We did not settle them in Japan, but helped them get settled elsewhere, in Belgium and Holland," was Mr. Kohno's answer.

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How proud we were to find on our return to Washington that the little Jewish-Catholic dialogue group of WHC and Our Lady of Victory Parish had adopted two Vietnamese families totalling 16 persons and

had found for them decent homes and furniture and every possible form of assistance -- and so it is being done in hundreds of American communities.

The power of life and death was given to our people and they chose life for their suffering fellow human beings.

The presidential election campaign has brought home to us a problem seldom before encountered ^{x x x} with such seriousness in all of our history: a paralyzing national leadership crisis!

Unfortunately, the problem is not only ours - it is global. Virtually every country in the world today has inadequate, incompetent, inferior or corrupt leaders. In India, we were told by a well educated gentleman that he had voted for Indira Gandhi despite her many faults because, the way he put it, "A known devil is better than an unknown one."

In Israel, the story tells of a patriot who is leaving Israel for two reasons -- first, because of the Begin government and second, because of whatever other government will come after Begin.

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I have heard people say the choice is so poor they will not vote. Under no circumstances must we absent ourselves from the election. This is a cop-out, a blow at democracy. You cannot improve the system by desertion. On the contrary, we should go out and urge others to vote. Not only the presidency, but the future of democracy is at stake, and with it our freedom and survival as Jews.

Let us now consider the charge that the presidential candidates are inferior. If that is true, who is to be blamed - but ourselves? The leadership crisis is largely of our own making:

What has each of us done in past years to find and encourage better qualified persons for public office? How involved are we in the total political process? Are we ourselves volunteering for public service? Do we educate our children for community leadership beyond a self-serving point in their college resume?

Our party system is wide open to anyone who wants to play a role in local, state and national affairs. Have you ever accepted a party responsibility or a financially unrewarding public office? If your honest answer is that politics is time-consuming and time is money -- you are making a confession of your own liability for the present state of affairs.

The life and death of our democracy is in your hands --
choose *that it may live.*

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But, after all these necessary criticisms have been voiced, American Jews must stand up and help carry the crushing burden that has fallen on our people in their much promised land. Israel has never been more isolated. She is vilified at every international gathering. What the Arabs lack in reason or justice, they win by clout.

Political friendship follows the flow of oil, not that of milk and honey.

On this eve of the New Year, we sit here and wonder, will the Arabs re-impose the oil embargo? Will long gas lines form again? Will our economy be choked to the point of suffocation? Will the President and Congress stand by Israel after the election under such pressure? Will public opinion swing around and abandon Israel?

The Islamic world is flushed with incredible wealth and a new sense of power. The Arabs know that they have us over a barrel.

It is not enough for us to feel anguish and worry. This must be a year of action. There should not be a single Jew in this country who does not contribute to the United Jewish Appeal or buy Israel bonds. There's still time for members of our Congregation to respond.

Carter and Reagan are ^{now} making reassuring statements ^{to Jewish voters} about Israel. How will they deal with Israel after the election?

After November, Jewish political action may be more critical than financial help. Every Jew of influence, every non-Jewish friend could be decisive in the months to come. This is a time when every one of us should become active in his own party on every level. Each must come to know his Congressman and Senator and play a role in political decision-making. The survival of Israel will not be decided on the battlefield and at the oil wells but in thousands of smoke filled party headquarters and parlor meetings throughout the land and by the rising tide of public opinion which shapes the decisions of Congress and the White House.

Israel's life and death are before us. Let us choose life!

3. The Citizen's Choice

In a little restaurant in Rome, one evening, ~~we~~ were seated with a minister of the Tunisian embassy of Washington. We got into an animated discussion in which he said something that has given me sleepless nights. He said,

"The world has only three more years to settle the Middle Eastern conflict. Within these three years Libya and Iraq will each have nuclear weapons and both are mad enough to use them."

A nuclear exchange in the Middle East would almost certainly ignite World War III. The unthinkable becomes more and more a possibility to be reckoned with. What we need in this grave situation is not hysteria but cool intelligence and unceasing effort to prevent the catastrophe. Unfortunately, we witness now a rash of panic-peddlers

who shamelessly exploit the public's anxiety. Newspapers reported a few weeks ago the promotion of survivalist communities along Maryland's Eastern Shore. A real estate developer is putting up homes with atomic bomb shelters with huge storage facilities, weapons and propane generators to produce their own electricity. ~~In other parts of the country, survival kits are being marketed with basic equipment in case of atomic attack.~~

Last Sunday's paper carried a full page advertisement of a book entitled "Crisis Investing," based on the assumption that we're facing the total destruction of the U.S. dollar, a collapse of our economy, runaway inflation and a stock market crash that will surpass anything we've ever had in the past. The book also has a chapter on various ^{foreign} countries in which land may still be purchased at a good price.

It is vain to seek security in escape.

If we cannot survive in America, we cannot survive anywhere else. If there is insufficient protection in the organized community, I see none at all in isolation.

This is not a time to follow the counsel of desperados.

Conclusion

We Jews are an old and experienced people. We are the world's champion of survival.

In the huge, cavernous Museum of Antiquity next to the Hilton Hotel in Cairo, we went to see the famous dark gray block of granite on which Pharaoh Menepthah, 3,500 years ago, inscribed the first reference to Israel in history. Listing the people of Israel among the nations he had defeated, the proud Pharaoh wrote:

"Israel is crushed; it has no more seed."

We stood there in wonder and silence. Of the Egyptian conquerer and his ancient people there's only a memory. But the seed of conquered Israel is alive in victory after victory over modern Egypt.

The Pharaohs of old and their civilization are gone forever -- the Jewish people still lives.

How can we forget the British decision in the 1930's to stop Jewish immigration to Palestine because, as Lord Passfield said, "...there was no longer room in it to swing a cat by its tail." In those days, Jews had neither the minimal numbers, nor sufficient land, not even a common Jewish language for a state. Yet, only 18 years later, the state was a reality.

In World War II, we lost six million, but lived to see the destroyer dead and his corpse incinerated - exactly as he had done to his victims in the furnace of Europe. Hitler perished, but the Jews survived.

America's foremost military expert, General George C. Marshall pressed President Truman not to recognize the State of Israel since it could not last but a few days once all the Arab armies marched into it. Four victorious wars later, Israel has increased her population six-fold.

For generations, the Soviet Union's two and a half million Jews were considered dead to Judaism and lost forever. Today, because of ceaseless effort and undying hope, 250,000 found their way to Israel and the Free World and more are being recovered day by day.

In India, we met and embraced as brothers and sisters a tiny remnant who had been cut off from our people over half a millenium -- yet survived -- a few thousand surrounded by hundreds of millions of alien culture -- and still the most loyal of Jews.

Jewish history is a continuous contradiction of doomsday. Our experience confounds the pessimist. In today's world, we are the answer to prophets of chaos and catastrophe.

What are our secret weapons? They are loyalty, sacrifice and faith!

Salvation is not in running away, but in rallying together for action and mutual help.

We must take our destiny in our hands. We must redouble our community service. We must get into the political process and look for the best brains, the coolest heads and the staunchest hearts to give the city and nation leadership which is committed to life and not a living death. We must not give up on America, on Israel, on the Free World.

The blessing and the curse, life and death, are still for us to choose.

Never underestimate the importance of your influence, however small, in the recovery of this land and in the preservation of Israel.

A mischievous young boy wanted to tease his wise old grandfather. He hid a bird in his hand, behind his back, and said:

"Grandpa, I bet you, you don't know if the bird I have in my hand is alive or dead."

If the old man answered "dead," the boy would let the bird fly away. If he answered "alive," he would twist its neck and show him the dead bird.

The old man looked at the boy, thought for a moment and answered: "My son, the bird's life, or death, is in your hands."

So it is with us. We are free to choose.

The issues of life and death are in our hands. Choose life.

AMEN



It is a wonderful comforting feeling to be with dear ones on this night. But, whether you came with family - or alone by yourself, - tonight all of us reach out to one another CHOOSE LIFE as brothers and Sisters of one people.

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation

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עידו' ה' א' א' א'
א' א' א' א' א'
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out

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After November, Jewish political action may be more critical than financial help. Every Jew of influence, every non-Jewish friend could be decisive in the months to come. This is a time when every one of us should become active in his own party on every level. Each must come to know his Congressman and Senator and play a role in political decision-making. The survival of Israel will not be decided on the battlefield and at the oil wells but in thousands of smoke filled party headquarters and parlor meetings throughout the land and by the rising tide of public opinion which shapes the decisions of Congress and the White House.

Israel's life and death are before us. Let us choose life!

3. The Citizen's Choice

In a little restaurant in Rome, one evening, we were seated with a minister of the Tunisian embassy of Washington. We got into an animated discussion in which he said something that has given me sleepless nights. He said,

"The world has only three more years to settle the Middle Eastern conflict. Within these three years Libya and Iraq will each have nuclear weapons and both are mad enough to use them."

A nuclear exchange in the Middle East would almost certainly ignite World War III. The unthinkable becomes more and more a possibility to be reckoned with. What we need in this grave situation is not hysteria but cool intelligence and unceasing effort to prevent the catastrophe. Unfortunately, we witness now a rash of panic-peddlers

who shamelessly exploit the public's anxiety. Newspapers reported a few weeks ago the promotion of survivalist communities along Maryland's Eastern Shore. A real estate developer is putting up homes with atomic bomb shelters, with huge storage facilities, weapons and propane generators to produce their own electricity. ~~In other parts of the country, survival kits are being marketed with basic equipment in case of atomic attack.~~

Last Sunday's paper carried a full page advertisement of a book entitled "Crisis Investing," based on the assumption that we're facing the total destruction of the U.S. dollar, a collapse of our economy, runaway inflation and a stock market crash that will surpass anything we've ever had in the past. The book also has a chapter on various ^{foreign} countries in which land may still be purchased at a good price.

It is vain to seek security in escape.

If we cannot survive in America, we cannot survive anywhere else. If there is insufficient protection in the organized community, I see none at all in isolation.

This is not a time to follow the counsel of desperados.

Conclusion

We Jews have something to say to the world.

We ~~Jews~~ are an old and experienced people. We are the world's champion of survival. *We were reminded of this in Cairo.*

In the huge, cavernous Museum of Antiquity next to the Hilton Hotel in Cairo, we went to see the famous dark gray block of granite on which Pharaoh Menepthah, 3,500 years ago, inscribed the first reference to Israel in history. Listing the people of Israel among the nations he had defeated, the proud Pharaoh wrote:

"Israel is crushed; it has no more seed."

We stood there in wonder and silence. Of the Egyptian conqueror and his ancient people there's only a memory. But the seed of conquered Israel is alive, in victory after victory, over modern Egypt.

The Pharaohs of old and their civilization are gone forever -- the Jewish people still lives.

How can we forget the British decision in the 1930's to stop Jewish immigration to Palestine because, as Lord Passfield said, "... there was no longer room in it to swing a cat by its tail." In those days, Jews had neither the minimal numbers, nor sufficient land, not even a common Jewish language for a state. Yet, only 18 years later, the state was a reality.

out

It is true In World War II we lost six million, but ^{we} lived to see the destroyer dead and his corpse incinerated - exactly as he had done to his victims in the furnace of Europe. Hitler perished, but the Jews survived.

^{expert,} America's foremost military ^{expert,} General George C. Marshall, pressed President Truman not to recognize the State of Israel since it could not last but a few days, once all the Arab armies marched into it. Four victorious wars later, Israel has increased her population six-fold.

The Soviet Union's two and a half million Jews were considered dead to Judaism and lost forever. ^{But as of} Today, because of ^{our} ceaseless effort and undying hope, 250,000 ^{have} found their way to Israel and the Free World, and ~~more are being recovered day by day.~~ Some are worshipping with us tonight.

In India, we met and embraced as brothers and sisters a tiny remnant who had been cut off from our people over half a millenium -- yet survived -- a few thousand surrounded by hundreds of millions of alien culture -- and still the most loyal of Jews.

Jewish history is a continuous contradiction of doomsday. Our experience confounds the pessimist. In today's world, we are the answer to prophets of chaos and catastrophe.

What are our secret weapons? They are loyalty, sacrifice and faith!

Salvation is not in running away, but in rallying together for action and mutual help.

We must take our destiny in our hands. We must redouble our community service. We must get into the political process and look for the best brains, the coolest heads and the staunchest hearts to give the city and nation leadership which is committed to life and not a living death. We must not give up on America, on Israel, on the World.

The blessing and the curse, life and death, are still for us to choose.

Never underestimate the importance of your influence, however small, in the recovery of this land and in the preservation of Israel.

A mischievous young boy wanted to tease his wise old grandfather. He hid a bird in his hand, behind his back, and said:

"Grandpa, I bet you, you don't know if the bird I have in my hand is alive or dead."

If the old man answered "dead," the boy would let the bird fly away. If he answered "alive," he would twist its neck and show him the dead bird.

The old man looked at the boy, thought for a moment and answered: "My son, the bird's life, or death, is in your hands."

So it is with us. We are free to choose.

The issues of life and death are in our hands. Choose life.

AMEN



CHOOSE LIFE

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation

Rosh Hashanah Eve
Wednesday, September 10, 1980

It is a wonderful, comforting feeling to be with dear ones on this night. Whether you came with family, with friends or alone by yourself, tonight all of us renew our bonds as brothers and sisters of one people. Tonight we are all relatives, one historic family.

A contemporary writer shares with us the inspiration of togetherness this night:

"This is the great warmth, the great at-homeness;

This is the knowledge of belonging."

Thanks to the generosity of our Congregation, Maxine and I spent the greater part of this past year on a Sabbatical journey, travelling around the world. To us, this night of Rosh Hashanah, more than ever, has the impact of homecoming and reunion.

We experienced many surprises in our encounter with strange people and places, but nothing was as much a surprise, even shock, as was the mood in which we found our country upon our return. We were not prepared for the loss of confidence and sense of dejection that had spread like the plague over our fair land. It is incomprehensible.

In all of our travels we saw no place on earth where life is better and more secure, no place where life is as free and promising.

We should be singing daily with the Psalmist

"Our lot has fallen in a good place." ^{חַיֵּנוּ נָפְלוּ בְּטוֹבָה}
(Psam 16.6)

In this election year, we are free, not only to vote for a President, but free to elect each his own way of life.

Free to read, listen and speak up

Free to express our anger

Free to buy whatever our heart desires

Free to choose any career

Free to move and to travel

Literally billions of mankind cannot imagine such freedom, such opportunity and such plenty.

When the Torah speaks to us during these High Holy Days in these challenging words:

^{חַיִּים וְמוֹת נִתְּנָה לְפָנֶיךָ}
"Life and death are before you -- now, choose life." (Dt. 30.19)

We are truly free to respond and to make the choice of the kind of life we would live.

I. AMERICA'S CHOICE

When shall Americans stop downgrading themselves? How much longer shall we hide out in that psychological hole of self contempt into which we have crawled ever since Vietnam? I don't share the view of those who call Vietnam a "noble war." Rather it was of all wars one of the most tragic because for us it was an unnecessary war, an ^{אז} civil war into which we blundered at a stupendous price. But, blundering wars are not an American exclusive. Since our withdrawal from Vietnam, China has blundered into an attack on Vietnam. Vietnam has blundered into an occupation of Cambodia and the Soviet Union has blundered into an invasion of Afghanistan.

What Maxine and I saw and heard in Indo-China made us realize that, in spite of our bloody blunders, America is still the most compassionate nation in the world. Without American pressure and financial aid, Thailand would have closed her borders to the thousands of starving Cambodians. In Bangkok we met the fabulous Sheppy Abramowitz, wife of the U. S. Ambassador, -a Jewish couple we should be proud of, -who organized the entire foreign colony into an army of volunteers for the feeding and medical emergency care of Cambodian refugees. It was the Western world under American leadership -- and little Israel -- that gave shelter and a new life to the Vietnamese boat people. In Tokyo, an engaging young man, Masatoshi Kohno, took us to the world center of a progressive Buddhist sect, Risho-Kosei Kai, alleged to be the fastest growing religion in the world. We were impressed by the way members were helping one another with counselling and financial aid.

"Do you engage in any overseas philanthropies? I asked.

"Yes," said Mr. Kohno. "We raised over \$300,000 for 550 Vietnamese boat people."

"Where ^{in Japan} have you settled these people?"

"We did not settle them in Japan, but helped them get settled elsewhere, in Belgium and Holland," was Mr. Kohno's answer.

No one in Japan could even think of admitting alien refugees and certainly not such vast numbers as the Vietnamese and Cubans who were welcomed to our shores.

How proud we were to find on our return to Washington that the little Jewish-Catholic dialogue group of WHC and Our Lady of Victory Parish had adopted two Vietnamese families totalling 16 persons and

had found for them decent homes and furniture and every possible form of assistance -- and so it is being done in hundreds of American communities.

The power of life and death was given to our people and they chose life for their suffering fellow human beings.

The presidential election campaign has brought home to us a problem seldom before encountered with such seriousness in all of our history: a paralyzing national leadership crisis!

Unfortunately, the problem is not only ours - it is global. Virtually every country in the world today has inadequate, incompetent, inferior or corrupt leaders. In India, we were told by a well educated gentleman that he had voted for Indira Gandhi despite her many faults because, the way he put it, "A known devil is better than an unknown one."

In Israel, the story tells of a patriot who is leaving Israel for two reasons -- first, because of the Begin government and second, because of whatever other government will come after Begin.

A large proportion of the American electorate is unimpressed by all candidates. Are Carter, Reagan and Anderson as inexperienced and incompetent as portrayed by their critics?

I find myself bound by the Talmudic rule:

"Judge everyone on the scale of merit." (Joshua ben Perachia, Abot 1.6)

Every person is entitled to be judged by his achievements, not only by his failures.

We must not accept the rhetoric of an election campaign as fair judgment. The unflattering descriptions of Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan may be no closer to the truth than the image of Abraham Lincoln, drawn by his opponents, when they referred to him as "that baboon in the White House."

I have heard people say the choice is so poor they will not vote. Under no circumstances must we absent ourselves from the election. This is a cop-out, a blow at democracy. You cannot improve the system by desertion. On the contrary, we should go out and urge others to vote. Not only the presidency, but the future of democracy is at stake, and with it our freedom and survival as Jews.

Let us now consider the charge that the presidential candidates are inferior. If that is true, who is to be blamed - but ourselves? The leadership crisis is largely of our own making:

What has each of us done in past years to find and encourage better qualified persons for public office? How involved are we in the total political process? Are we ourselves volunteering for public service? Do we educate our children for community leadership beyond a self-serving point in their college resumé?

Our party system is wide open to anyone who wants to play a role in local, state and national affairs. Have you ever accepted a party responsibility or a financially unrewarding public office? If you ^{say} that politics is time-consuming and time is money -- you are making a confession of your own liability for the present state of affairs.

The life and death of our democracy is in your hands --
choose ~~that it may live.~~

2. Israel's Choice

On this Rosh Hashanah, our fears for Israel are very real. We tremble for her security and survival. This is perhaps the most critical year since the creation of the State.

Israel's own mistakes have made matters worse. The Begin government has been clumsy in public relations. **Precipitous**, ill-timed action has often made certain decisions look spiteful and provocative. A heavy handed settlement policy has contributed to the escalation of violence in the West Bank.

The booby-trapping of private Arab automobiles which crippled two Arab mayors ^{of Nablus and Ramallah} was a horrible act of terrorism. Looking at the photograph of the bandaged leg-stumps of Nablus Mayor **Bassam Shaka**,^{*} I am sick at heart. (There have ^{even} been allegations that the Israeli police or military authorities have dragged their feet in the investigation of this crime.)

It was this atrocity, committed by fellow Jews, that prompted me to join 56 prominent American Jewish leaders in a statement entitled "Our Way is Not Their Way." It was a brief statement calling on Israel to pursue her just cause with just means, in the spirit of co-existence and wise compromise. It condemned the escalation of violence and asked self-restraint on both sides. As many of you know, our protest was sharply attacked in some of the Jewish press. The local "Jewish Week" denounced the signers of the statement as gullible leaders who were giving comfort to the

* The other was Ramallah mayor Karim Khalaf

enemies of Israel. This is sheer nonsense. The enemies of Israel will not be swayed whether Israel's case is good or bad.

Our concern is with Israel itself. We cannot endorse an Israel that would fight terror with terror and sink to the moral level of the PLO. Bad enough that our Israeli youth must fight wars -- God forbid that they be guilty of murdering civilians in cold blood. As American Jews we shall stand by Israel, ^{- who else will? -} come what may, but we Jews must be on a higher moral level than those who wish to destroy us.

But, after all these necessary criticisms have been voiced, American Jews must stand up and help carry the crushing burden that has fallen on our people in their much promised land. Israel has never been more isolated. She is vilified at every international gathering. What the Arabs lack in reason or justice, they win by clout.

Political friendship follows the flow of oil, not milk and honey.

On this eve of the New Year, we sit here and wonder, will the Arabs re-impose the oil embargo? Will long gas-lines form again? Will our economy be choked to the point of suffocation? Will the President and Congress stand by Israel after the election?

Will public opinion swing around and abandon Israel?

The Islamic world is flushed with incredible wealth and a new sense of power. ^{not only BILLY CARTER BUT} They are financing entire University depts. in the USA. Their influence is on the rise. The Arabs know that they have us over a barrel.

It is not enough for us to feel anguish and worry. This must be a year of action. There should not be a single Jew in this ~~congreg.~~ who does not contribute to the United Jewish Appeal or buy Israel bonds. There's still time for members of our Congregation to respond.

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AMEN

FORWARD INTO UNCERTAINTY

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation

ROSH HASHANAH 1980
Wednesday, September 10

The curtain has risen for the opening night of another year. The stage of history is still dark. What will it be? High drama? Tragedy? A plot of violence and terror? We are spectators, actors, heroes, culprits or victims -- all at once. What is opening tonight is another year of our life -- maybe our best, maybe our last. Optimism is hard to come by.

Maxine and I, thanks to your generosity, spent a major part of the past year on a Sabbatical. We travelled around the world, always looking back to see America in the perspective of other continents. The one overwhelming impression is a world bursting with unsolved problems. A cruel, global inflation, the oil crunch, the poor getting poorer and the rich richer, -- it's the same story all over! The days of vast reconstruction schemes like the Marshall Plan are over. There are no projects to excite the hopes of many millions who face daily hunger and unemployment. Terrorism is spreading everywhere and the world is steadily pushing closer and closer to the brink of nuclear war -- a world that pays 60 times more to equip a soldier than to educate a child!

The caliber of political leadership throughout the globe is the lowest in this century. In India, whose 700 million people are still torn apart by the caste system, with smouldering religious

strife between Hindus and Muslims, progress is hard to imagine. Who will stamp out India's higher than 50% illiteracy? Who will pull back the vast majority of her people from the brink of starvation?

A guide told us how Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had abused her office and almost destroyed India's democracy.

"Who then will you vote for in the next election?" I asked.

"Indira Gandhi," was his reply.

"But you just told us what a terrible Prime Minister she has been."

"Yes," said the guide, "but a known devil is always better than the unknown devils."

Stagnation and corruption are accepted with a cynical shrug of the shoulder. The failure of politics is worldwide. We were in Asia in November and could see the catastrophic decline of American prestige following our impotent response to the seizure of our hostages. It broke the myth of American power. The United States is now perceived as a tin horn few pay attention to.

What hope or challenge do people get from the great religions of the world? We met with leading spokesmen of the various faiths and this is what we learned. Buddhism, with several hundred million devotees in Far Eastern Asia, still idealizes the life of renunciation. Its solution for all forms of suffering is the eradication of every desire. It adjusts the hopeless to their hopelessness. It offers, at best, an escape not a solution to social problems.

Hinduism's glittering ritual is a welcome distraction for its six hundred million followers. It provides not motivation for the improvement of society. Its only hope is in future transformations of life, ending with salvation in the nothingness of Nirvana.

The 500 million people of Islam, emboldened by a new sense of power, are tempted to seek a showdown in blood to drive out every vestige of Western civilization.

Having seen what we did, we are now more certain than ever that none of these Oriental faiths share Judaism's concern for the rights of man. None of them inspire our compelling urge for moral or social perfection. It is no accident that democracy functions only in those parts of the world that are shaped by the Biblical heritage and the Judeo-Christian tradition.

The staggering chaos of much of Asia makes Israel look great by comparison. But, during the three and a half months we lived there, we found an unprecedented lack of confidence in political leadership. The story that is going around tells of the Israeli patriot who fought in all four wars, the War of Independence, the Sinai Campaign, the Six-Day War of '67 and the Yom Kippur War of '73 and now suddenly confides to his best friend that he's leaving Israel for two reasons.

"What is your reason," asked the astonished friend.

"My first reason is the Begin government."

"And which is your second reason?"

His answer: "Any government that will follow Begin!"

The same story could be applied to our own election campaign here in America. The principal issue seems to be which of the candidates is the least of all evils.

As Jews we tremble for Israel. Deserted by former friends who prefer oil to friendship, Israel has never stood more alone. I cannot forget a frightening dinner conversation in Rome with an elderly Counsellor at the Tunisian Embassy of Washington. We shared a table in a restaurant in Rome and had become rather friendly. Suddenly he said to me, "I am a Christian Arab. I neither hate Israel nor the Palestinians. Mark my words, the world has only three years to settle the Middle East conflicts. In three years, Iraq and Libya will have the atom bomb and both are mad enough to use it. That will be the beginning of World War III and the end of our world."

The year we are ushering in tonight will be a year of the utmost uncertainty and anxiety:

My apprehensions come in crowds
I dread the rustling of the grass
The very shadows of the clouds
Have power to shake me as they pass.

(William Wordsworth, "The Afflictions of Margaret," 1804)

So what are we to do about the world? I have no usable prescription for the nuclear armament race.

I don't know how to stop the Russians in Afghanistan.

I don't know how to free the hostages.

I don't know how to end the recession -- and, worst of all, I don't see anyone in power who knows the answer to any of these questions.

But, we cannot just sit around and wait for doomsday. So what is there to do?

I hear a word from one of the Biblical readings of these High Holy Days which, I believe, speaks to this moment of anxiety:

The commandment for this day is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven...neither is it beyond the sea...but the word is very close to you, in your mouth, and in your heart, that you may do it.

Stand together with your elders...

Stand together with your children, your wives and your families...

(Deit. 30.11 ff and Deut. 29.9-10)

1. Do Your Own Mental Retooling

Let's not look for solutions in far and remote places, up there in outer space or beyond the sea. Whatever may be the trouble with the world and with our country, it is pointless for any one of us as a single individual to search for solutions in far and difficult to reach places. None of us is capable of remodeling the United Nations, Congress or the U.S. presidency. The one thing we can do is to work on ourselves. This should be for each of us a year of mental retooling.

Hans Morgenthau, one of our wisest political scientists, died six weeks ago. His conclusion from a lifetime of study of political history was:

"..That the world, imperfect as it is, from the rational point of view, is the result of forces inherent in human nature."

In other words, the key to the solution of the world's problem is in the makeup and character of human personality. It is precisely what a poet, born in 1616, said:

Why slander we the times?

What crimes

Have days and years that we

Thus charge them with iniquity?

If we could rightly scan,

It's not the times are bad,

But man.

(Joseph Beaumont, 1616-1699)

There is one man I can certainly improve upon -- and that is me. This should be a year of disciplined new learning. We Jews are the world's champions of survival. How did we do it? What is our secret? What can we learn from our history?

We are appalled by the failure of politics here and abroad. Even though you, as an individual, cannot shape world events, you must not stagnate. Learn whatever expands your mind -- a new language, the new sciences, the great books.

Said one of our sages:

"When I was young, I dreamt of perfecting the world, and I failed.

Later in life, I hoped to perfect my community, and I failed.

In full maturity, I tried to perfect the members of my family, and I failed.

Now that I am old and near death, I realize that if I had only tried to perfect myself -- I might have succeeded.

2. Learn From Your Elders

This is a year of special anxiety for our youth. Once again, young men are being registered for the military draft. Will they have to fight in another war?

Most young people think that no one has ever faced problems such as they must face. It is a pity that there is so little communication between youth and their elders who lived through wars and depressions and many a political crisis. "Stand together with your elders," says our Biblical text. When today is so full of difficulties, it is good to look back and learn from former generations. What examples might we follow?

I think of my own family and their stamina and strength of character so often put to the test in time of peril. What gave my grandfather, Kiva Melech, the power to stand his ground without flinching, refusing to open his flour mill in violation of the Sabbath even at the point of a bayonet? How deep must have been the faith which enabled my grandmother, Deborah, to live through widowhood,

the loss of 15 out of 17 children, full of vitality and humor to her dying day?

I wish my mother and father were still alive to tell my grandchildren how they managed to live through two world wars, occupation by different armies and bombarding of their native towns. I wish they could hear my mother tell how she, as a seven year old orphan, was sent out alone on a purchasing mission to Hamburg, a train trip of a half day's journey, to order various pieces of cloth for the family textile shop in her village, which was run by her widowed mother. Or, how my father had been wiped out financially several times in the chronic depressions of Vienna, how he was tortured by the Nazis and then fled to America, arriving in New York at the age of 50, with ten dollars in his pocket and not knowing a single word of English. I can't remember how many jobs and businesses my parents got into during those first few years -- for a while my father even ran an elevator in a fourth class Broadway hotel. But, only ten years later, they were able to retire in dignity, independent and owners of valuable property.

Jewish history is a documentary of millions of similar stories. As the Bible says:

"Consider the years of many generations;

Ask your father and he will declare unto you

Your elders, and they will tell you."

(Deut. 32.7)

Never let anything stand in the way of a family celebration. Jewish tradition is unusually rich in occasions that bring us together. Go whenever invited, even when it is inconvenient or expensive. Family reunions are the life blood of family feeling. Reach out and keep in touch.

My second suggestion is not to wait for rare events such as weddings or funerals but to contrive regular occasions, birthdays, anniversaries or a big family Seder to bring them all together. If you take the initiative, other family members will follow suit and your calendar will fill up with celebrations which will reconstitute the extended family.

My third suggestions for the strengthening of the family is to pool some of your family resources for mutual help. I know of one family whose members contribute to a family scholarship fund so that a gifted young relative might be assured the best possible education. Another family collects a travel and vacation fund from its members so that some less fortunate relatives might also, on occasions, enjoy the trip or vacation they have been dreaming of.

In bewildering and threatening times, ongoing contact with the family is your best support system. It is worth every sacrifice.

Summary and Conclusion

We are venturing forth into the new year as a man going out into the dark night, holding a little lamp. Our forward vision is extremely limited. We cannot see the landscape all the way to

the horizon. What light we have illuminates only enough space for us to make the next step safely.

In the conduct of our life in these days of uncertainty must likewise be step by step, concentrating on the immediate task that lies ahead. There are a few things which we can do safely:

To develop our own mental and spiritual resources.

To look for guidance and models of conduct in the history of our people.

To hold on and strengthen whatever family bonds remain.

Most of all, we must maintain our moral standards no matter how much of the world falls apart.

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Some day, we firmly believe, the long awaited Repairer of human defects will come. Until then, we must keep going by whatever sense of right we have -- and as best we can.

AMEN

FORWARD INTO UNCERTAINTY

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation

ROSH HASHANAH 1980
Wednesday, September 10

The curtain has risen for the opening night of another year.

The stage of history is still dark. What will it be? High drama?
Tragedy? A plot of violence ^{crime} and ~~terror~~? We are spectators, actors,
heroes, culprits ~~and~~ victims -- all at once. (What is opening tonight

is another year of our life -- maybe our best, maybe our last. Opti-
mism is hard to come by.) ~~Yet unlike a time is a d~~ here the analogy between

Maxine and I, thanks to your generosity, spent a major part ^{of}
of the past year on a Sabbatical. We travelled around the world,

always looking back to see America in the perspective of other conti-
nents. The one overwhelming impression is a world bursting with

unsolved problems. A cruel, global inflation, the oil crunch, the
poor getting poorer and the rich richer, -- it's the same story all

over! The days of vast reconstruction schemes like the Marshall Plan
are over. There are no projects to excite the hopes of many millions

who face daily hunger and unemployment. Terrorism is spreading
everywhere and the world is steadily pushing closer and closer to

the brink of nuclear war -- a world that pays 60 times more to equip
a soldier than to educate a child!

The caliber of political leadership throughout the globe is
the lowest in this century. In India, whose 700 million people are
still torn apart by the caste system, with smouldering religious

ending?
or will it be a comedy with a happy ending?
What is opening tonight
Optimism is hard to come by.
here the analogy between
In a play you are given a fixed script a you
must play it as written - you
cannot change a word
In life, you
can change your
role and the
script
Nothing is
absolutely
determined on
the future
There is
hope.

2 steps
part of the
play and
you have
to play

strife between Hindus and Muslims, progress is hard to imagine. Who will stamp out India's higher than 50% illiteracy? Who will pull back the vast majority of her people from the brink of starvation?

A guide told us how Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had abused her office and almost destroyed India's democracy.

"Who then will you vote for in the next election?" I asked.

"Indira Gandhi," was his reply.

"But you just told us what a terrible Prime Minister she has been."

"Yes," said the guide, "but a known devil is ^{preferable} ~~always better~~ than the unknown devils." *to an unknown one.*

Stagnation and corruption are accepted with a cynical shrug of the shoulder. The failure of politics is worldwide. We were in Asia in November and could see the catastrophic decline of American prestige following our impotent response to the seizure of our hostages. It broke the myth of American power. The United States is now perceived as a tin horn few pay attention to.

What hope or challenge do people get from the great religions of the world? We met with leading spokesmen of the various faiths and this is what we learned. Buddhism, with several hundred million devotees in Far Eastern Asia, still idealizes the life of renunciation. Its solution for all forms of suffering is the eradication of every desire. It adjusts the hopeless to their hopelessness. It offers, at best, an escape not a solution to social problems.

Hinduism's glittering ritual is a welcome distraction for its six hundred million followers. It provides not motivation for the improvement of society. Its only hope is in future ^{reincarnations} ~~transformations~~ of life, ~~ending with salvation in the nothingness of Nirvana.~~

The 500 million people of Islam, emboldened by a new sense of power, are tempted to seek a showdown in blood to drive out every vestige of Western civilization.

Having seen what we did, we are now more certain than ever that none of these Oriental faiths share Judaism's concern for the rights of man. None of them inspire our compelling urge for moral or social perfection. It is no accident that democracy functions only in those parts of the world that are shaped by the Biblical heritage and the Judeo-Christian tradition.

The staggering chaos of much of Asia makes Israel look great by comparison. But, during the three and a half months we lived there, we found an unprecedented lack of confidence in political leadership. The story that is going around tells of the Israeli patriot who fought in all four wars, the War of Independence, the Sinai Campaign, the Six-Day War of '67 and the Yom Kippur War of '73 and now suddenly confides to his best friend that he's leaving Israel for two reasons.

"What is your reason," asked the astonished friend.

"My first reason is the Begin government."

"And which is your second reason?"

His answer: "Any government that will follow Begin!"

The same story could be applied to our own election campaign here in America. The principal issue seems to be which of the candidates is the least of all evils.

As Jews we tremble for Israel. Deserted by former friends who prefer oil to friendship, Israel has never stood more alone. I cannot forget a frightening dinner conversation in Rome with an elderly Counsellor at the Tunisian Embassy of Washington. We shared a table in a restaurant in Rome and had become rather friendly. Suddenly he said to me, "I am a Christian Arab. I neither hate Israel nor the Palestinians. Mark my words, the world has only three years to settle the Middle East conflicts. In three years, Iraq and Libya will have the atom bomb and both are mad enough to use it. That will be the beginning of World War III and the end of our world."

The year we are ushering in tonight will be a year of the utmost uncertainty and anxiety:

My apprehensions come in crowds
I dread the rustling of the grass
The very shadows of the clouds
Have power to shake me as they pass.

(William Wordsworth, "The Afflictions of Margaret," 1804)

So what are we to do about the world? I have no usable prescription for the nuclear armament race.

I don't know how to stop the Russians in Afghanistan.

I don't know how to free the hostages.

I don't know how to end the recession -- and, worst of all, I don't see anyone in power who knows the answer to any of these questions.

But, we cannot just sit around and wait for doomsday. So what is there to do?

I hear a word from one of the Biblical readings of these High Holy Days which, I believe, speaks to this moment of anxiety:

The commandment for this day is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven...neither is it beyond the sea...but the word is very close to you, in your mouth, and in your heart, that you may do it.

Stand together with your leaders
Stand together with your elders...

Stand together with your children, your wives and your families... (Deit. 30.11 ff and Deut. 29.9-10)

1. Do Your Own Mental Retooling

The range of our personal effectiveness is not up in heaven or beyond the sea
~~Let's not look for solutions in far and remote places, up there in outer space or beyond the sea. Whatever may be the trouble~~

~~with the world and with our country, it is pointless for any one of us as a single individual to search for solutions in far and difficult~~

~~to reach places. None of us is capable of remodeling the United Nations, Congress or the U.S. presidency.~~ *The word is very close to you - in your mouth, and in your heart!!*
The one thing we can do is to work on ourselves. This should be for each of us a year of mental retooling

Hans Morgenthau, one of our wisest political scientists, died six weeks ago. His conclusion from a lifetime of study of political history was:

"..That the world, imperfect as it is, from the rational point of view, is the result of forces inherent in human nature."

In other words, the key to the solution of the world's problem is in the makeup and character of human personality. It is precisely what a poet, born in 1616, said:

Why slander we the times?

What crimes

Have days and years that we

Thus charge them with iniquity?

If we could rightly scan,

It's not the times are bad,

But man.

(Joseph Beaumont, 1616-1699)

There is one man I can certainly improve upon -- and that is me. This should be a year of disciplined new learning. We Jews are the world's champions of survival. How did we do it? What is our secret? What can we learn from our history?

We are appalled by the failure of politics here and abroad. Even though you, as an individual, cannot shape world events, you must not stagnate. Learn whatever expands your mind -- a new language, the new sciences, the great books.

3. Stand Together With Your Families

Who would have dreamt twenty years ago that a disturbance in the Middle East could stop the wheels from turning and bankrupt nations throughout the world? Who would have foreseen the day when every airline passenger would be frisked for weapons? We are heading into a decade of unknown risks with the possibility that much more of our order and way of life may unravel in the days and months to come. In dark and troubled times, family is our last resort. In every land, wherever we travelled, we found people on the margin of existence, empowered by family loyalty to carry on and persevere. A driver in Sri Lanka, barely able to feed himself, told me that what kept him going was his mother's daily morning blessing. "I have never left my house without her blessing."

Whether you are single, married, divorced or widowed, whether yours is a single or dual parent home, in the uncertain days of the future, every one of us may need the moral, psychological and perhaps even material help of the extended family. Scattered, as family members now tend to be, it is still possible to maintain and even strengthen a sense of family unity, -- but we must work at it. Please consider with me three simple suggestions:

My first suggestion is the obvious: maintain contact. Bell Telephone has an advertisement slogan, "Reach Out and Touch Someone." Every sign of concern, every greeting card, every telephone call adds a link to the chain of family loyalty.

But you may object. The family spread out & constantly on the move & are strangers to each other.

Never let anything stand in the way of a family celebration. Jewish tradition is unusually rich in occasions that bring us together. Go whenever invited, even when it is inconvenient or expensive. Family reunions are the life blood of family feeling. Reach out and keep in touch.

My second suggestion is not to wait for rare events such as weddings or funerals but to contrive regular occasions, birthdays, anniversaries or a big family Seder to bring them all together. If you take the initiative, other family members will follow suit and your calendar will fill up with celebrations which will reconstitute the extended family.

My third suggestions for the strengthening of the family is to pool some of your family resources for mutual help. I know of one family whose members contribute to a family scholarship fund so that a gifted young relative might be assured the best possible education. Another family collects a travel and vacation fund from its members so that some less fortunate relatives might also, on occasions, enjoy the trip or vacation they have been dreaming of.

In bewildering and threatening times, ongoing contact with the family is your best support system. It is worth every sacrifice.

Summary and Conclusion

We are venturing forth into the new year as a man going out into the dark night, holding a little lamp. Our forward vision is extremely limited. We cannot see the landscape all the way to

the horizon. What light we have illuminates only enough space for ^{≈ few steps at a time.}
~~us to make the next step safely.~~

~~In~~ The conduct of our life, in these days of uncertainty, must likewise be step by step, concentrating on the immediate task that lies ahead. There are a few things which we can do safely:

To develop our own mental and spiritual resources.

To look for guidance and models of conduct in the history of our people.

To hold on and strengthen whatever family bonds remain.

Most of all, we must maintain our moral standards no matter how much of the world falls apart.

One of our sages tells of a remote little town that depended on an itinerant watchmaker to keep their clocks in good repair. When after many years the watchmaker failed to visit, all the clocks in that village either gained or lost time. None was accurate. Most people stopped winding up their clocks.

One day, suddenly, the watchmaker reappeared and then it was found that the clocks that had not been wound up were beyond repair. Only those clocks that had been wound up daily and had been kept going, however inaccurately, could be fixed.

Some day, we firmly believe, the long awaited Repairer of human defects will come. Until then, we must keep going by whatever sense of right we have -- and as best we can.

AMEN

Not Good if Detached

Draft 1

THE CULT OF ME-ISM

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation

KoI Nidre Night
Friday, Sept. 19, 1980

KoI Nidre night -- a night of reckoning and judgment! In the secret witness chamber of our memory and conscience, we pass in review the events of former years and our involvement and responsibility. We re-assess our successes and failures; we re-define our goals; we re-examine the values we live by.

We are free agents, but we are also deeply influenced by our environment. No one is unaffected by the great movements of the times.

The last two decades, and 60's and the 70's, will be remembered in history as the decades of liberation movements. Many were political, but the one that most likely had the greatest personal impact upon us was a movement of psychological and inter-personal liberation. It began with the quest for identity in the 60's. Many shared the assumption that people are imprisoned by unwanted roles in life and need to re-define themselves. To men and women of all ages, this psychological liberation movement of the 60's was a challenge to explore their self deceptions, the hypocrisy of their lives, the tyranny of conformity and their confused sense of identity.

In those years, young and old talked a great deal about "finding themselves." Many tried to do so with the help of encounter groups which promised to raise our consciousness and put us in touch with

our more real self. There are people who have gone through an impressive number of these encounter groups like the famous Yippie hero, Jerry Rubin, a real hard core case of the identity crisis. In five years time, he directly experienced EST, Gestalt therapy, bio-energetics, Rolfing, Tai-Chai, Esalen meditation, Silva mind control, Arica, sex therapy, Reichian therapy and Morehouse -- and for good measure, also acupuncture, hypnotism, massage, jogging and health foods.

He has got to have one of the most elusive identities ever created -- but at last Jerry Rubin has found himself, -- he's now a stockbroker making money on Wall Street!

In the 70's, the quest for identity turned into the cult of ME. What are some of the rituals and dogmas of Me-ism?

Its most popular plank is the feel-good doctrine. Life should be an unending chain of feel-good experiences. Television has lapped it up and magnified it. Feel-good commercials run from cheeseburger jingles like:

"Feelin' good, feelin' good, feelin' good at Gino's...."

to the man in the crowded elevator who tells everybody about his underwear:

"Hanes makes me feel good all under!"

The new health care and physical fitness craze is a major out-growth of the feel good cult:

Vitamins have taken the place of prayer.

Jogging, -- a daily ritual discipline.

Tennis, -- a collective physio-therapy.

For many months, the best-seller list included titles such as "Running" and "How to Flatten Your Stomach."

People want to fall in love with their own bodies, their tans, their muscles, their flat tummies, and -- feel good.

So what? Isn't it natural to be concerned with oneself? Why not make your own well being the number one priority? What's wrong with being self centered as long as you don't harm anyone else? The answer is that the one who gets hurt the most is the egotist himself.

The first lesson the Bible teaches us about human nature is:

"It is not good for man to be alone."
(Genesis 2.18)

Therefore, God gave Adam a suitable mate, a companion, a person to share his life with.

The unattached life denies us three basic needs, each of which is as indispensable as the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat.

1. Love

First and foremost is love. What is love? No human being has ever been able to define love in its multi-faceted meaning and after all definitions are put together there still remains something of a mystery. An Oriental poet said

"Words have no language which can utter the secrets of love."

At best, we can try to describe the effect love has upon us.

The Bible stresses its immeasurable power:

"Love is strong as death."

It has the consuming force of a raging fire:

"Its flashes are flashes of fire."

Love will empower a person to surmount all obstacles and make supreme sacrifices.

The philosopher, Nietzsche, believed love to be a form of madness:

"There's always madness in love. But there is always some reason in madness."

The brilliant Frenchwoman, Madame De Stael, gained profound rational insight into our need for love. She said:

"We cease loving ourselves, if no one loves us."

That is, we cannot maintain our self-love without being confirmed by the love of someone else. We lose interest in ourselves; we become indifferent, apathetic, ^{neglect our appearance} and deteriorate emotionally, if love-starved.

This gives us the first reason why the cult of me-ism is doomed to collapse. The biggest egotist cannot go on loving himself, if no one else does. Our ineradicable need of love reveals to us our utter dependence upon others.

On the one hand, the denial of love makes us miserable. On the other hand, it propels us, it drives us, it motivates us to search for companions, to seek relationship with others. The inadequacy of egotism as a way of life makes possible, in fact, makes necessary, the growth of altruism.

Jewish Kabbalah mysticism points to a transcendent reason for the dependence of the individual on others. When God releases a soul, he divides it in two parts and houses each in a different body.

The meeting of these two persons here on earth, possessed by parts of the same soul, is experienced by both as true love. In their union, the divided parts of the one soul are re-united and then each person feels more complete. It is a beautiful, poetic image of the human condition and of our deepest need. The unloved person or the one who does not love is an incomplete person, a person with only half his soul power.

This, then, is our first basic refutation of the cult of me-ism: man has a universal need for love in order to achieve fulfillment. Alone, you cannot be your full self. Each person is totally dependent upon another in this respect.

But, what is a person to do if he never found one to love or be loved by? The consolation of the unloved is the Soul of all souls, the eternal Lover of all creatures, -- God. The basic prayer of the Jew, the Shema, is a call to respond to God's love with our own love:

"Thou shall love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart,
with all thy soul, with all thy might."

In a very real sense, God is our personal savior through the eternal bond of love that binds us to him.

2. Self Respect

The psychiatrist, Bruno Bettelheim, said:

"Self respect and being well integrated are the only psychological buttresses which can prop us up and give us the strength to keep going in a world that threatens us at all times with destruction."

Self respect is as essential as love to our normal functioning as human beings. Now, the egotist will at last perk up and ask, "Who has got more self respect than the self-centered person, who has put himself above all other values?"

On the contrary, all psychological studies prove that self respect is the mirror image of the respect you get from others. No one generates his own sense of worth. That is why commendation and acceptance by one's parents and peer group are so essential to the building up of a wholesome, positive self-image that makes for self respect. The respect we receive from others is the foundation of our self respect.

A newly published biography of Walter Lippman by Ronald Steel has won exceptional praise for its keen insight into the character and personality of that giant in the world of journalism whose syndicated column, "Today and Tomorrow," shaped much of the political thinking of America in the 20th century.

Lippman, who at the age of 25 was called by President Theodore Roosevelt, the "most brilliant young man of his age in the United States," who later in life received accolades from the world's greatest statesmen, suffered from a terrible inferiority feeling. He viewed his Judaism as though it were a birth defect.

He was raised by assimilated German Jews in the gilded ghetto of New York. Virtually all his acquaintances were wealthy, Jewish and of German background. Most of their Judaism had evaporated. What remained was not a religion they practiced but one they least

objected to. Lacking Jewish knowledge and religious models worthy of respect, Lippman never associated anything positive or inspiring with his Jewish heritage either in his family or in his social setting. However, what did sink in were the negative images projected upon his mind by anti-Semites and the real or imagined handicaps of being Jewish. Lippman uncritically, for example, repeated the threadbare slander that "the bad economic habits of the Jews" were one of the causes of antisemitism. In 1933, he described Hitler as "the authentic voice of a civilized people" -- and remained silent all through the Holocaust years about the greatest international crime of the century.

Ironically, this least Jewish of all our celebrities was never allowed to forget that he was a Jew. Teddy Roosevelt reacted to a criticism in the New Republic by dismissing the editors, Lippman among them, as "three circumcized Jews and three anemic Christians." Under ^{President} Woodrow Wilson, whom Lippman had helped draft the famous 14 points as basis for the 1918 armistice, Col. House ^{Wilson's closest aid} let it be known that "The objection to Lippman is that he is a Jew but unlike other Jews, he is a silent one."

Col. House got his number all right: Lippman remained a silent Jew all his life! But he was inwardly tormented, feeling his Jewishness in the biographer's words, "...as an infirmity."

The case of Walter Lippman illustrates how greatly our self-respect depends on the respect we get from others. If we perceive the attitude of others to be persistently contemptuous, we are

likely to end up with self contempt.

This has been the tragedy of the marginal Jew all along.

There is an immediate relevance of all this to the education of our children. A Jewish child, in a coldly indifferent or hostile school environment, will very likely grow up with a psychological malignancy of self contempt. If you want the Jewish child to develop pride and self respect, you've got to give him a family and school environment in which being Jewish is seen, felt and expressed as a mark of nobility, as something highly to be respected.

All this should give pause ^{to think} to parents who minimize their children's Jewish education, who let them drop out of religious school, fail to provide warm, positive Jewish experiences in their home -- and then put them into a private school under Christian auspices where they are not always welcomed, -- and where Judaism is ignored or portrayed as second best.

3. Meaning

Tradition tells us that King Solomon wrote the three biblical books that bear his name in various stages of life. The lyrical "Song of Songs" that speaks of love, Solomon wrote in his youth when love dominated his thinking.

The Book of Proverbs, full of rules for effective and successful living, King Solomon wrote in his manhood when he was most concerned with winning the world's honor and respect.

But not until the King had aged, did he deal with the philosophical questions raised in Kohelle† (also known as Ecclesiastes).

The question of what is the meaning of my life can be put off -- but not forever. As we grow older and have tasted a large variety of life's basic experiences and thrills, we wonder what human existence is all about. Does it make sense to be born and die? To leave this world naked as we entered it?

Animals are not troubled by such questions. Only humans, with minds to think, have the insatiable hunger for meaning. Childhood and youth may do without purpose, but manhood cannot.

Woe to the egotist when he begins to wrestle with the question of purpose because one thing is absolutely clear: by himself, as one person, unrelated to others, uninvolved in family, friendship or community, the individual does not make sense.

Isolated from others, a person has no more meaning than an amputated finger or foot preserved in a jar.

It has been wisely said that "a person has made at least a start on discovering the meaning of human life when he plants shade-trees under which he knows full well, he will never sit." (Elton Trueblood)

The meaning of our life is in relationship, in the larger context of society, in connection with all living things. It is the whole of life that gives meaning to the parts.

Do we know the purpose of the whole of life?

It is not a matter of knowing ^{of believing,} but of faith -- as Sigmund Freud said in his essay on "Civilization and its Discontent":

"The idea of life having a purpose, stands and falls with the religious system."

CONCLUSION

A favored wish for your favored person is to wish him "fulfillment."
This can never be achieved by an individual all by and for himself.
We're utterly interdependent for our most essential psychic and
emotional needs: love, self respect and meaning.

Tickets of admission usually have a line imprinted "not good if
detached." So is each of us, -- not good if detached. That is why
Yom Kippur's concentration upon the quality of our personal relation-
ships must be our greatest concern, not only today but every day of
our life. We must earn the love, respect and ^{a mutually supportive} relationship with others;
we must recover it by reconciliation if we have lost some of it, because
we cannot be complete human beings without it.

What is the most striking biblical image of the righteous and the
wicked?

Psalms 1 compares the righteous to the tree planted in the soil near
streams of water -- completely integrated with the whole of nature!

And what is the wicked like? He is like the chaff that the wind
blows away, the perfect symbol of severance and failed self sufficiency.

In her first public appearance, Wilhelmina, the queen of Holland,
then still a very young girl, stood on the balcony of the palace in
Amsterdam and stared with wonder at her cheering subjects.

"Mother," she asked, "do all these people belong to me?"

"No, my child," replied the queen-regent. "It is you who belong
to all these people."

So you may say as you look over all ^{that} you are ^{and have}, your family, your
people, mankind -- they do not belong to you. You belong to them.

AMEN

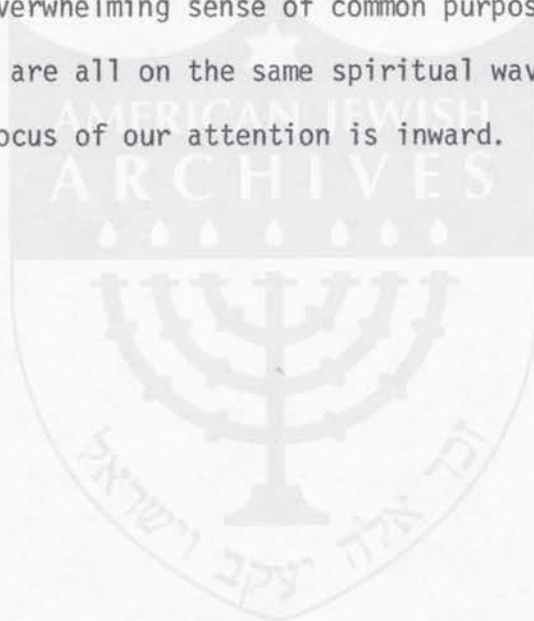
INTRODUCTORY REMARKS FOR
1980 YOM KIPPUR SERMON
"NOT GOOD IF DETACHED"

Kol Nidre Night - September 18, 1980

Whenever I gaze at this Kol Nidre night congregation, I feel uplifted by a thousand wings, but also pressed down by a thousand burdens. Each of us brings to this night the hope of a new vision, the expectation of new courage and new purpose as we unburden ourselves in prayer and take stock of our lives.

There is an overwhelming sense of common purpose which we share tonight. We are all on the same spiritual wave length.

Tonight the focus of our attention is inward.



Draft 2

NOT GOOD IF DETACHED

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation

Kol Nidre Night
Friday, September 19, 1980

Yom Kippur, -- a time when it is right to think about yourself.
How do you feel about yourself? Are you meeting your own expectations?
What's right and what's wrong with the life you live?

The introspective thrust of Yom Kippur is more in keeping with the
temper of the times than at any previous point in history. During the
last two decades, in particular, egocentricity has lost its stigma.
People have, in fact, become excessively concerned with their
mental, emotional and physical body functions.

It began in the 60's with the search for one's identity. Lots
of people suddenly became aware that they had an identity problem.
Many felt imprisoned by unwanted roles in life. They saw a need to
re-define themselves. All sorts of personal liberation movements
helped demolish roles people were playing and hastened their
adjustment to a newly found identity.

The new vocabulary of stock phrases included expressions such
as:

- Consciousness raising
- Sensitivity training
- Getting in touch with yourself
- Finding yourself

Within a few years hundreds, then thousands, of encounter groups
sprang up for the purpose of helping folks to find themselves. Some

became nearly obsessed with the idea that their true self must be a hidden treasure and enlisted the aid of one or several encounter groups. For example, the Yippie leader, Jerry Rubin, a real hard core^{case} of the identity crisis, in five years time went through: EST, Gestalt therapy, bioenergetics, Rolfing, Tai-Chai, Esalen, Meditation, Arica, Silva Mind Control, sex therapy, Reichian therapy, Morehouse -- and, for good measure, acupuncture, hypnotism, massage, jogging and health foods.

What an elusive ego Jerry Rubin^{must have} had -- but he found it -- and now he's a stockbroker on Wall Street making money.

It's predictable that when you look so hard to find yourself, and finally you do, and now you know who you are and what you want -- you'd be paying more and more attention to your own self. And so, the era of self discovery of the 60's in 1970's led us into the era of self pampering - the cult of Me.

What do you do when you have a love affair with yourself? . . . You want to give your ego all the pleasure you can! You want to be feeling good!

"Feeling good" became the first commandment of the cult of Me, -- and nobody liked it better than the TV and advertising industry, because "feeling good" is something that's easy to sell. And so, from the end of the decade down to the present moment, feeling good commercials have filled the air waves from cheeseburgers jingles,

"Feelin' good, feelin' good, feelin' good at Gino's"
to Hanes underwear,

"Hanes makes me feel good all under."

Another part of the feeling good religion that caters to the idolized Me is the physical fitness craze. Its temples are the health clubs; its ritual, jogging; its new commandments are the "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not" of dieting.

Its sacred literature includes best sellers such as "The Scarsdale Diet," "The Pitkin Diet," "The Atkin Diet," "Running" and "How to Flatten Your Stomach."

So what? Isn't it natural to be concerned with oneself? Why not make your own well being the number one priority? What's wrong with self centeredness and self pampering as long as you don't harm anyone else?

The answer is that the one who gets hurt the most is the egotist himself. What a person needs for maximizing his capacities and for fulfillment and happiness, is not self-hypnosis in front of a mirror but relationship that takes you out of yourself and integrates you into something bigger than yourself.

Relationship. . . .integration. . . .belonging!

Tickets of admission usually have a line imprinted on the attached coupon: "Not good if detached."

You are not good if detached. Life is not good in isolation and detachment. The emotionally unattached life, frustrates the three most basic needs of every healthy personality.

1. Love

First is love. Everybody thinks he knows what love is but nobody has yet been able to define it. If you don't believe me, just try to write out your own definition of love or dig up your own old love letters and read again those lines in which you tried to express your feelings about love: how trite; how corny! Only poets of the greatest magnitude have been able to say things about love that's worth remembering.

Whatever love may be, few would challenge our assertion that love is one of man's primary needs. Why? Why does every person need to be loved by someone? Why can't we get along with just loving ourselves?

I found the answer in a statement by the brilliant Frenchwoman, Mme. de Stael:

"We cease loving ourselves, if no one loves us."

We lose interest in ourselves; we neglect our appearance; we become indifferent, apathetic and deteriorate emotionally -- if we think that no one cares for us. We are "not good if detached."

It is at this point that the cult of Me collapses. The biggest egotist cannot go on loving himself if no one else does. To be fully human I must feel that I am important to someone else and someone else must be important to me. We are emotionally interdependent.

But what is a person to do if, through no fault of his own, love has been denied to him?

What about those who never encountered a loving partner or,

were jilted or robbed by death of their lover?

At the turn of this century, there grew into radiant womanhood a young lady of brilliant mind and generous soul, a native of nearby Baltimore and the eldest of eight daughters. She was a talented linguist and scholar and became editor and translator for a publishing company. She came to know one of the leading young Jewish professors in America whose books she helped edit -- and she fell madly in love with him. She saw him almost daily, going over the text of his monumental work, which she helped him organize and correct for publication.

One day, the young man, flushed with excitement, told her, "I have important personal news to share with you."

Her heart almost burst with joy and she expected to hear his proposal for marriage. Indeed he talked about marriage, -- but the bride was someone else. She was shattered. Her heart was broken. It had been the great love of her life, a love that was lost. She never married.

She fell into a deep depression from which she recovered only through a total change of scenery, a trip to Palestine, rather, a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. What happened after her return to the USA is history. The name of the woman was Henrietta Szold, founder of Hadassah. She saved herself and tens of thousands of people by turning her unspent capacity for love toward her people, the ill and destitute for whom she built hospitals and the many, many children she saved from the Holocaust through Youth Aliyah.

I can think of any number of people in our own Congregation who feel that they are wasting away, not only the unattached and lonely ones, but also married men and women, who have time on their hands and the ache of futility in their hearts. They should form an army of community service volunteers and find salvation, as did Henrietta Szold, in turning their love to the poor, the suffering and the needy.

You are not good, if detached.

2. Self Respect

The psychiatrist, Bruno Bettelheim, said,

"Self respect and being well integrated are the only psychological buttresses which can prop us up and give us the strength to keep going."

Self respect is as essential as love to our normal functioning as human beings.

Now, in the contemporary cult of Me, self-respect is a hot item for promotion. You'll recognize this promotional campaign by the name of self-assertiveness.

Let me say, to begin with, that I see much good in it. You can't do anybody else any good if you won't speak up and act for yourself. Your own life and welfare should not be subordinated to your neighbors!. You are as deserving of sacrifice as as your spouse, parent and child for whom you may be pressed to make sacrifices day by day. We Jews have always rejected the extreme

of altruism. We do not hold with our Christian friends that, if smitten on one cheek, you should turn the other cheek. Self abnegation, in Jewish ethics, is a perversion.

Long before self-assertiveness training came into vogue, our people were taught by Hillel:

אני לא אעשה לך טוב
אלא אתה עושה לי טוב

"If I am not for myself, who will be?" (Abot 1.14)

So, where do we Jews differ from the modern school of self-assertiveness?

In one crucial respect: The so-called method of self-assertiveness assumes that self respect comes all from within yourself. Persuade yourself that you are as good and worthy as the next fellow. Tell it to yourself over and over again.

Well, it doesn't work that way. You cannot entirely create your own self esteem. Any self respecting opinion which you have must be confirmed sooner or later by other people, not just anybody, -- but people whom you respect in turn: You must feel accepted by family and peer groups.

That is why Hillel's statement, "...if I am not for myself, who will be?" is followed immediately by Hillel's second statement:

אני לא אעשה לך טוב
אלא אתה עושה לי טוב
אבל אם אני לא אעשה לעצמי טוב
מי יעשה לי טוב?

By yourself, unrelated to others, you are nothing. Without being needed and esteemed by others, your self-esteem collapses. Whether or not you take the self-assertiveness training, your self-image will be largely shaped by your relationship with other people, by what they think of you and by what you think of them.

A newly published biography of Walter Lippmann, by Ronald Steel, has created quite a stir. This was one of the giants in the world of journalism. He invented the syndicated political column. What he wrote in his famous column, "Today and Tomorrow," shaped much of the political thinking of America in the 20th century on every international issue except one -- which leads us to the personal tragedy of Lippmann.

This man, who at the age of 25 was called by President Theodore Roosevelt the "most brilliant young man of his age in the USA," suffered from a terrible inferiority feeling. It was not that he doubted his own genius. His feelings of inferiority resulted from a faulty relationship with an inseparable part of his identity -- the people from whom he descended and to whom he belonged. He viewed his Judaism as though it were a birth defect.

Raised by assimilated German Jews in the gilded ghetto of New York, he was surrounded in his formative years by wealthy Jews of German background whose Judaism had evaporated. It was an empty shell, a bad joke and, in fact, the frequent object of self-deprecating ^{so-called "Jewish stories,"} an aberration of Jewish humor. Lacking religious models worthy of respect in his own family and social setting and being grossly under-educated as a Jew, Lippmann never associated anything positive or inspiring with his Jewish heritage. However, what did sink in were the negative images projected upon his mind by antisemites. For example, Lippmann uncritically repeated the slanderous charge that "the bad economic habits of the Jews" were one of the causes of antisemitism.

In 1933, he described Hitler as "...the authentic voice of a civilized people."

Throughout all the years of World War II, he remained silent about the greatest international crime of the century, the Holocaust. Not once did he touch, in his column, upon the Jewish problem.

Ironically, this least Jewish of all our celebrities was never allowed to forget that he was a Jew. Teddy Roosevelt angrily dismissed criticism in the New Republic by referring to its editors, Lippmann among them, as those "three circumcized Jews and three anemic Christians."

President Wilson's most famous statement, the fourteen points which became the basis for the 1918 Armistice, was drafted by Lippmann. But, Wilson's closest aide, Col. House, let it be known that:

"The objection to Lippmann is that he's a Jew but unlike other Jews he's a silent one."

Lippmann remained a silent Jew all his life! But, inwardly, he was tormented, feeling his Jewishness, in the biographer's words, "as an infirmity."

The case of Walter Lippmann illustrates how greatly our self-respect depends upon the respect we get from others. You cannot build self-esteem only on your own personal ability and achievements. It is not enough that you know that you are smart, brilliant, great, good and glamorous. You must respect all the dimensions of your identity, including your ancestry and your people. The dirt thrown at your group penetrates and soils your private soul.

If we perceive the attitude of others to be contemptuous, we are likely to end up with self contempt. If I, mentally and psychologically, reject the group with which I am identified, I reject myself. There is no salvation in my pathetic exclamation: "But I am different."

There is relevance of all this to the education of our children. A Jewish child, growing up in an environment that is either indifferent or hostile to his Jewishness, will very likely grow up with self-contempt, even self-hatred. If you want him to develop pride and self-respect, you have got to give him a family and school environment in which being Jewish is seen, felt and expressed as a mark of distinction, as something to be highly respected. Only a closer attachment, knowledge and appreciation of the Jewish people with whom the child feels identified can immunize him against the poisonous impact of an antisemitic experience.

If you think that your child is under too much pressure, find relief for him in any number of ways but -- never minimize his Jewish education. It is his lifeline to self-respect.

However beautiful, comfortable and loving your home may be, *it is not enough --* such warmth and love must be extended to Jewish experience and to the round of sacred celebrations in your home.

Do you really want your child to love his Jewish identity? Involve him in the heroic aspects of the Jewish struggle in Israel and in the Soviet Union. Teach him to admire the great sons and daughters of our people who crowd the Hall of Fame of every great nation in the Western world.

Heroism
- mof
support
S.D.L.
But
Education

You may say of the Jew who grows up a non-participant, uninformed and emotionally uninvolved: not good if detached.

3. Meaning

Our basic needs confront us with different urgency at various points in life. Our need for love is most overpowering in childhood.

Our need for self respect becomes crucial in adolescence and grows with the years.

The third need, the need for meaning, is hardly felt at all until we reach full maturity.

We have children and lay to rest dear ones -- and then, suddenly we know what Robert Ingersoll meant when he said:

"Every cradle asks us 'whence?' and every coffin 'whither?'"

We are astonished by life's journey whose starting point is as mysterious as its destination.

What is it all about?

We grow older; the question continues to haunt us: What is the meaning of my life?

One thing is absolutely clear. Isolated from others, uninvolved in family, friendship or community, a person has no more meaning than an amputated finger in a jar.

Each of us is the biological extension of his parents, of his people and ultimately of the first form of created life -- and the Creator himself.

Richard Beer-Hofmann expressed for us our absolute connectedness:

"We are but river beds. Through you and me
Runs the blood of the past to those who shall be
Blood of our fathers restless and proud.

They're all in us. Who feels alone?

You are their life -- their life is your own. . ."

The meaning of our life is somewhere in the connection which we have with all living things. The meaning of our personal existence must be derived from the meaning of the entire universe. It is the whole of life that gives meaning to all its parts. Sigmund Freud relegated the question of meaning to the realm of religion:

"The idea of life having a purpose stands and falls
with the religious system."

Here, too, on the deepest and most personal level of your consciousness as a thinking human being, you must acknowledge:

Not good, if detached.

Conclusion

The Lebanese poet, Kahlil Gibran, once asked which are the three most important words? He answered his question: "You and I."

If the poet were here, I would now ask him which of these three words is the most mysterious. I believe it is the little conjunctive "and."

All the mystery of the world is concentrated in what connects us with one another. Our deepest needs, love, respect, meaning -- compel us to turn to one another for satisfaction. Neither you nor I alone, -- but all of us together -- have meaning.

We are interdependent and therefore morally responsible for each other.

The true observance of Yom Kippur, this holiest day of conciliation, is to ask yourself: What do I owe to my family, to my people, to humanity, -- to God?

And the answer is: all of you!

* * *

When Queen Wilhelmina of Holland was still a very young girl, she stared with wonder at a vast procession of cheering subjects who marched through the street below the balcony of the palace in Amsterdam.

"Mother," she asked, "do all of these people belong to me?"

"No, my child," replied the queen-regent. "It is you who belong to all these people."

So you may say of yourself, your family, your people, mankind -- they do not belong to you. You belong to them.

AMEN

Not Good if Debauched

~~THE CULT OF ME-ISM~~

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation

~~Kol Nidre Night~~
Friday, Sept. 19, 1980

Kol Nidre night -- a night of reckoning and judgment! In the secret witness chamber of our memory and conscience, we pass in review the events of former years and our involvement and responsibility. We re-assess our successes and failures; we re-define our goals; we re-examine the values we live by.

We are free agents, but we are also deeply influenced by our environment. No one is unaffected by the great movements of the times.

The last two decades, ~~the~~ 60's and the 70's, will be remembered in history as the decades of liberation movements. Many were political, but the one that most likely had the greatest personal impact upon us was a movement of psychological and inter-personal liberation. It began with the quest for identity in the 60's. Many shared the assumption that people are imprisoned by unwanted roles in life and need to re-define themselves. To men and women of all ages, this psychological liberation movement of the 60's was a challenge to explore their self deceptions, the hypocrisy of their lives, the tyranny of conformity and their confused sense of identity.

In those years, young and old ^{began to} talked a great deal about "finding themselves." Many tried to do so with the help of encounter groups which promised to raise ~~their~~ ^{their} consciousness and put ~~them~~ ^{them} in touch with

to a more real self. There are people who have gone through an impressive number of these encounter groups, like the famous Yippie hero, Jerry Rubin, a real hard core case of the identity crisis. In five years time, he directly experienced EST, Gestalt therapy, bio-energetics, Rolfing, Tai-Chai, Esalen, Meditation, Silva mind control, Arica, sex therapy, Reichian therapy and Morehouse -- and for good measure, also acupuncture, hypnotism, massage, jogging and health foods.

He has got to have one of the most elusive identities ever created -- but at last Jerry Rubin has found himself, -- he's now a stockbroker making money on Wall Street!

When you keep looking for your true identity as though it were a hidden treasure -- you will soon enough become a full time epotist

And so, indeed, In the 70's, the quest for identity turned into the cult of ME. What are some of the rituals and dogmas of Me-ism?

Its most popular plank is the feel-good doctrine. Life should be an unending chain of feel-good experiences. Television has lapped it up and magnified it. Feel-good commercials run from cheeseburger jingles like:

"Feelin' good, feelin' good, feelin' good at Gino's...."

to the man in the crowded elevator who tells everybody about his underwear:

"Hanes makes me feel good all under!"

The new health care and physical fitness craze is a major outgrowth of the feel good cult:

Vitamins have taken the place of prayer.

Jogging, -- a daily ritual discipline.

Tennis, -- a collective physio-therapy.

For many months, the best-seller list included titles such as "Running" and "How to Flatten Your Stomach."

People want to fall in love with their own bodies, their tans, their muscles, their flat tummies, and -- feel good.

So what? Isn't it natural to be concerned with oneself? Why not make your own well being the number one priority? What's wrong with being self-centered ^{self pompous} as long as you don't harm anyone else? The answer is that the one who gets hurt the most is the egotist himself.

The first lesson the Bible teaches us about human nature is:

"It is not good for man to be alone."
(Genesis 2.18)

Therefore, God gave Adam a suitable mate, a companion, a person to share his life with.

The unattached life denies us three basic needs, each of which is as indispensable as the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat.

1. Love

First and foremost is love. What is love? No human being has ever been able to define love in its multi-faceted meaning and after all definitions are put together there still remains something of a mystery. An Oriental poet said

"Words have no language which can utter the secrets of love."

At best, we can try to describe the effect love has upon us.

The Bible stresses its immeasurable power:

"Love is strong as death."

It has the consuming force of a raging fire:

"Its flashes are flashes of fire."

Love will empower a person to surmount all obstacles and make supreme sacrifices.

The philosopher, Nietzsche, believed love to be a form of madness:

"There's always madness in love. But there is always some reason in madness."

The brilliant Frenchwoman, Madame De Staël, gained profound rational insight into our need for love. She said:

"We cease loving ourselves, if no one loves us."

That is, we cannot maintain our self-love without being confirmed by the love of someone else. We lose interest in ourselves; we become indifferent, apathetic, ^{neglect our appearance} and deteriorate emotionally, if love-starved.

This gives us the first reason why the cult of me-ism is doomed to collapse. The biggest egotist cannot go on loving himself, if no one else does. Our ineradicable need of love reveals to us our utter dependence upon others.

On the one hand, the denial of love makes us miserable. On the other hand, it propels us, it drives us, it motivates us to search for companions, to seek relationship with others. The inadequacy of egotism as a way of life makes possible, in fact, makes necessary, the growth of altruism.

Jewish Kabbalah mysticism points to a transcendent reason for the dependence of the individual on others. When God releases a soul, he divides it in two parts and houses each in a different body.

The meeting of these two persons here on earth, possessed by parts of the same soul, is experienced by both as true love. In their union, the divided parts of the one soul are re-united and then each person feels more complete. It is a beautiful, poetic image of the human condition and of our deepest need. The unloved person or the one who does not love is an incomplete person, a person with only half his soul power.

This, then, is our first basic refutation of the cult of me-ism: man has a universal need for love in order to achieve fulfillment. Alone, you cannot be your full self. Each person is totally dependent upon another in this respect.

But, what is a person to do if he never found one ^{can} to love or be loved by? The consolation of the unloved is the Soul of all souls, the eternal Lover of all creatures, -- God. The basic prayer of the Jew, the Shema, is a call to respond to God's love with our own love:

"Thou shall love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy might."

In a very real sense, God is our personal savior through the eternal bond of love that binds us to him.

2. Self Respect

The psychiatrist, Bruno Bettelheim, said:

"Self respect and being well integrated are the only psychological buttresses which can prop us up and give us the strength to keep going ^{//} in a world that threatens us at all times with destruction."

Self respect is as essential as love to our normal functioning as human beings. Now, the egotist will at least perk up and ask, "Who has got more self respect than the self-centered person, who has put himself above all other values?"

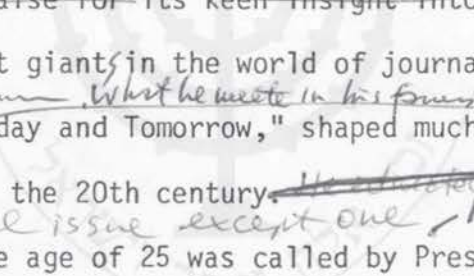
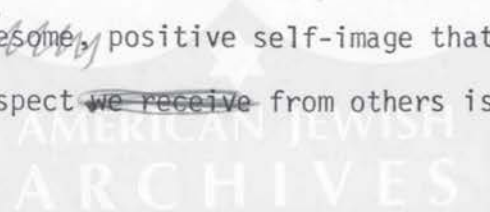
On the contrary, All psychological studies prove that self respect is the mirror image of the respect you get from others. No one generates his own sense of worth. That is why commendation and acceptance by one's parents and peer group, are so essential to the building up of a wholesome, positive self-image that makes for self respect. The respect we receive from others is the foundation of our self respect.

A newly published biography of Walter Lippman by Ronald Steel has won exceptional praise for its keen insight into the character and personality of that giant in the world of journalism, whose syndicated column, "Today and Tomorrow," shaped much of the political thinking of America in the 20th century.

Lippman, who at the age of 25 was called by President Theodore Roosevelt, the "most brilliant young man of his age in the United States," who later in life received accolades from the world's greatest statesmen, suffered from a terrible inferiority feeling. He viewed his Judaism as though it were a birth defect.

He was raised by assimilated German Jews in the gilded ghetto of New York, virtually all his acquaintances were wealthy, Jewish and of German background. Most of their Judaism had evaporated. What remained was not a religion they practiced but one they least

It was an empty shell ~~with~~ a bad joke and, in fact, the ~~slight~~ faintest object of self-deprecating humor - jokes - in secret of Jewish humor.



I who says loud & clear "I'm No 1" one like myself

you must feel or you can't

he invented the

political column. What he wrote in his famous

He edited the American Jewish Archives

this man

Lippman

It was not that he doubted his own genius, but his feelings of inferiority resulted from a faulty self-analysis with an inescapable part of his identity - the people from whom he descended a to whom he belonged.

~~objected to.~~ ^{(in his family & social setting) and grossly under-educated as a Jew} Lacking Jewish knowledge and religious models worthy of respect, Lippman never associated anything positive or inspiring with his Jewish heritage, ~~either in his family or in his social~~

~~setting.~~ However, what did sink in were the negative images projected upon his mind by anti-Semites ~~and the real or imagined~~

~~handicaps of being Jewish.~~ Lippman uncritically, for example, ~~Lippman uncritically~~ repeated the threadbare slander ^(in charge) that "the bad economic habits of the Jews" were one of the causes of antisemitism. In 1933, he

described Hitler as "the authentic voice of a civilized people" -- ~~and remained silent all through the Holocaust years about the~~

~~greatest international crime of the century.~~ ^{then the first all the years of WWII he} ~~and remained silent all through the Holocaust years about the~~ ^{Not once did he touch on his column} ~~greatest international crime of the century.~~ ^{The Holocaust} ~~greatest international crime of the century.~~ ^{Not once did he touch on his column} ~~greatest international crime of the century.~~ ^{He deliberately applied a black out to} ~~greatest international crime of the century.~~ ^{The Jewish problem}

Ironically, this least Jewish of all our celebrities was never

~~allowed to forget that he was a Jew.~~ Teddy Roosevelt reacted to a ^{supplied dismissal (of criticism in)} ~~criticism in the New Republic~~ by dismissing the editors, Lippman

among them, as ^{rose} "three circumcized Jews and three anemic Christians."

~~Under~~ ^{President} Woodrow Wilson, whom Lippman had helped draft the famous 14 ^{most famous statement, the} ~~points as basis for the 1918 armistice.~~ ^{Wilson's closest aid} Col. House let it be known

that "The objection to Lippman is that he is a Jew but unlike other Jews, he is a silent one."

Col. House ^{had} ~~got~~ his number all right: Lippman remained a silent Jew, all his life! But ^{one always} ~~he was~~ inwardly tormented, feeling his Jewishness, in the biographer's words, "..as an infirmity."

The case of Walter Lippman illustrates how greatly our self-respect depends on the respect we get from others. ^{was drafted by Lippman but} If we perceive the attitude of others to be ~~persistently~~ contemptuous, we are

You cannot build self-respect ~~esteem~~ ^{esteem} only on your own personal ability and achievements. You must respect all dimensions of your identity - including your ancestry & your people. The dirt thrown at you ^{permeates} ~~permeates~~ & soaks your ~~soul~~ ^{soul}.

Longhene

It is not enough if you
that ^{as with a} love is not extended to the

Jewish tradition, its practices & festivities which

~~create our~~ build up a positive feeling
about being Jewish

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES



If ^I mentally & spiritually reject the group with which ~~we are~~ I am identified - ~~I do not reject myself~~ myself.

-8- His selection is not in the pathetic repetition of "But I am different. I am good. I am great."

likely to end up with self contempt.

^{is essential} This has been the tragedy of the marginal Jew ~~all along~~.
~~the knowledge only knowledge of Judaism is taken for the part which of Judaism~~

There is an immediate relevance of all this to the education of our children. A Jewish child, ^{surrounded constantly by} in a coldly indifferent or hostile school environment, will very likely grow up with a ~~psychological malignancy~~ ^{even self-hatred.} of self contempt. If you want the Jewish child to develop pride and self respect, you've got to give him a family and school environment in which being Jewish is seen, felt and expressed as a mark of nobility, as something highly to be respected.

All this should give pause ^{to think} to parents ^{who} minimize their children's Jewish education, who let them drop out of religious school, fail to provide warm, positive Jewish experiences in their home -- and then, ^{who} put their ^{children} into private schools under Christian auspices where they are not always welcomed, -- ^{and} where Judaism is ignored or portrayed as second best.

We need the knowledge & respect of our tradition to help us appreciate Judaism as a heritage ^{not a handicap}

3. Meaning

Tradition tells us that King Solomon wrote the three biblical books that bear his name in various stages of life. The lyrical "Song of Songs" ^{about} that ~~speaks of~~ love, Solomon wrote in his youth when love dominated his thinking.

The Book of Proverbs, ^{about} full of ~~rules for effective and success- & failure~~ ~~ful living~~, King Solomon wrote in his manhood when he was most concerned with winning the world's honor and respect.

But not until the King had aged, did he deal with the philosophical questions raised in Kohelle~~t~~ (also known as Ecclesiastes).

The only way

If you are in any way the victim of antisemitism & its poisonous
impact on your self-esteem can be neutralized only by your
own closer attachment ~~to~~ ^{to} knowledge & appreciation of the Jewish people
who are part & parcel of your identity.



~~The question of~~ ^{2 The question is} What is the meaning of my life can be put off -- but not forever. ^{The} As we grow older and ^{we get} ^{the more we} have tasted ~~a large variety~~ ^{of} life's basic experiences and thrills, ^{the more} we wonder what human existence is all about. Does it make sense to be born and die? To leave this world naked as we entered it?

Animals are not troubled by such questions. Only humans, with minds to think, have the insatiable hunger for meaning. Childhood and youth may do without purpose, but manhood cannot.

Woe to the egotist when he begins to wrestle with the question of purpose because One thing is absolutely clear: by himself, as one person, unrelated to others, uninvolved in family, friendship or community, the individual does not make sense.

Isolated from others, ^{uninvolved in family, friendship or community} a person has no more meaning than an amputated finger ^{or foot} ~~preserved~~ in a jar. — Adel R. B. Hoffm

It has been wisely said that "a person has made at least a start on discovering the meaning of human life when he plants shade-trees under which he knows full well, he will never sit." (Elton Trueblood) ^{Whatever meaning our life may have - it can only be defined in terms of association with others.}

The meaning of our life is in relationship, in the larger context of society, in connection with all living things. It is the whole of life that gives meaning to ^{all its} ~~the~~ parts.

Do we know the purpose of the whole of life?

It is not a matter of knowing, ^{of believing, and} but of faith -- as Sigmund Freud

said in his essay on "Civilization and its Discontent": Sigmund Freud relegated ^{to great and missing to the realm of belief}

"The idea of life having a purpose, stands and falls with the religious system."

CONCLUSION

A favored wish for your favored person is to wish him "fulfillment."
This can never be achieved by an individual all by and for himself.
We're utterly interdependent for our most essential psychic and
emotional needs: love, self respect and meaning.

Tickets of admission usually have a line imprinted "not good if
detached." So is each of us, -- not good if detached. That is why ^{on} this most holy day of
Yom Kippur ^{This we must reattach ourselves, so there from whom we were severed or severed.} concentration upon the quality of our personal relation-
ships, ^{This} must be our greatest concern, not only today but every day of
our life. We must ^{share} ~~earn~~ the love, respect and ^{mutually supportive} relationship with others; ^{relationship is} if disturbed & injured,
we must recover it by reconciliation, if we have lost ^{we must find others to love, respect & share a} it, because ^{close relationship with}
we cannot be complete human beings without it.

What is the most striking biblical image of the righteous and the
wicked?

Psalms 1 compares the righteous to the tree planted in the soil near
streams of water -- ^{a picture of integration} completely integrated with the whole of nature!

And what is the wicked like? He is like the chaff that the wind
blows away, the perfect symbol of severance and failed self sufficiency.

In her first public appearance, Wilhelmina, the queen of Holland,
then still a very young girl, stood on the balcony of the palace in
Amsterdam and stared with wonder at her cheering subjects.

"Mother," she asked, "do all these people belong to me?"

"No, my child," replied the queen-regent. "It is you who belong
to all these people."

So you may say as you look over all you are, ^{that} ^{and have} your family, your
people, mankind -- they do not belong to you. You belong to them.

AMEN

NOT GOOD IF DETACHED

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation

Kol Nidre Night
Friday, September 19, 1980

Yom Kippur's main concern is the story of your life! How do you feel about yourself? Are you meeting your expectations? What's right and what's wrong with the life you live?

The introspective thrust of Yom Kippur is quite in keeping with the temper of the times. During the last two decades, egocentricity has lost its stigma. It's all right to pay attention to yourself! In fact, people have become excessively concerned with their mental, emotional and physical body condition.

It began in the 60's with the search for one's identity. Lots of people suddenly became aware that they had an identity problem. Many felt imprisoned by unwanted roles in life. They saw a need to re-define themselves, some with the help of personal liberation movements.

The new vocabulary of stock phrases included expressions such as:

- Consciousness raising
- Sensitivity training
- Getting in touch with yourself
- Finding yourself

Some began to think of their true self as a hidden treasure and enlisted the aid of one or several encounter groups. For example,

the Yippie leader, Jerry Rubin, (a real hard core case of the identity crisis,) in five years time went through: EST, Gestalt therapy, bioenergetics, Rolfing, Tai-Chai, Esalen, Meditation, Arica, Silva Mind Control, sex therapy, Reichian therapy, Morehouse -- and, for good measure, acupuncture, hypnotism, massage, jogging and health foods.

What an elusive ego Jerry Rubin had -- but he found it -- and now he's a stockbroker on Wall Street, making money.

It's predictable that when you look so hard to find yourself, you'd be paying more and more attention to your own self. And so, the era of self-discovery of the 60's, in the 1970's led us into the era of self pampering - the cult of Me.

What do you do when you have a love affair with yourself? . . . You want to give your ego all the pleasure you can! You want to be feeling good!

"Feeling good" became the first commandment of the cult of Me. And so, feeling-good commercials have filled the air waves, from cheeseburger jingles,

"Feelin' good, feelin' good, feelin' good at Gino's"
to Hanes underwear,

"Hanes makes me feel good all under."

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It is time for WHC to create a center for volunteer work to recruit the unused power for good that is in our hands, *not only to help our own congreg. but the Jewish community and the whole community - Jew & Gentile, Black & White - all of God's children.*

2. Self Respect

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Lippmann remained a silent Jew all his life! But, inwardly, he was tormented, feeling his Jewishness, in the biographer's words, "as an infirmity."

The case of Walter Lippmann illustrates how greatly our self-respect depends upon the respect we get from others. You cannot build self-esteem only on your own personal ability and achievements. It is not enough that you know that you are smart, brilliant, great, good and glamorous. You must respect all the dimensions of your identity, including your ancestry and your people. The dirt thrown at your group, penetrates and soils your private soul. !!

~~If we perceive the attitude of others to be contemptuous, we are likely to end up with self contempt. If I, mentally and psychologically, reject the group with which I'm identified, I reject myself.~~

There is relevance of all this to the education of our children. If you raise a child in an environment that is either indifferent or hostile to his Jewishness, he will grow up with self contempt, even self hatred.

If you want him to have pride as a Jew -- you must give him a family and school environment in which being Jewish is experienced as a mark of distinction -- and you must be the role model for Jewish experience.

We must involve our children emotionally in the heroic Jewish struggle in Israel and in the Soviet Union. We must teach them to admire the great sons and daughters of our people who crowd the Hall of Fame of every great nation in the Western world. We must join with our children, at home, in the

celebrations in which they will experience their Jewishness -- and these very occasions will, for the rest of their lives, become opportunities for Jewish self identification. Most of all, we must set examples of our own ^{knowledge and} enthusiasm about Judaism. If we do these things, our sons and daughters will be loyal and eager to live as Jews and establish Jewish homes with Jewish partners in marriage.

Jewish education takes time. If you think that your child is under too much pressure, find relief for him in any number of ways, but -- never minimize his Jewish education. It is his life-line to self respect and loyalty.

You may say of the Jew who grows up a non-participant, uninformed and emotionally uninvolved:

Not good if detached.

3. Meaning

Our basic ^{human} needs confront us, with different urgency, at various *stages* in life:

Our need for love is most overpowering in childhood.

Our need for self respect crucial in adolescence,

The third need, the need for meaning, is hardly felt at all until we reach full maturity.

We have children -- and we lay to rest dear ones -- and then, suddenly, we understand Robert Ingersoll's amazement when he said:

"Every cradle asks us 'whence?' and every coffin 'whither?'"

That's a great line: every cradle points to our mysterious origin and every coffin to our unknown destiny.

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We grow older; the question becomes even more insistent: What is the meaning of my life?

One thing is clear. Isolated from others, uninvolved in family, friendship or community, an individual person has no more meaning than an amputated finger in a jar.

Each of us is the biological extension of his parents, of his people and, ultimately, of the first form of created life. The mystics tell us that we are even extensions of the Creator, Himself.

Richard Beer-Hoffmann expressed for us our absolute connectedness:

"We are but river beds. Through you and me

Runs the blood of the past to those who shall be."

Each of us is a channel of Life.

The meaning of our life is somewhere in the connection which we have with all living things. Our purpose is inseparable from the larger purpose of the universe. And so, here too, in our quest for meaning, we discover:

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Conclusion

Which are the three most important words? The Lebanese poet, Kahlil Gibran, answered: "You and I."

My own question now is: Which of these three words "you and I," is the most mysterious? I believe it is the little conjunctive "and."

All the mystery of the world is concentrated in what connects us with one another. Our deepest needs -- love, respect, meaning -- compel us to turn to one another for satisfaction. Neither you nor I alone -- but you and I together -- have meaning.

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Certain Oriental cults have propagated a religion of isolation. The individual is asked to turn away from the world and ^{from} fellow creatures in self-absorbed meditation.

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But God declared: Go down again,
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AMEN

NOT GOOD IF DETACHED

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation

Kol Nidre Night
Friday, September 19, 1980

Yom Kippur's main concern is the story of your life! How do you feel about yourself? Are you meeting your expectations? What's right and what's wrong with the life you live?

The introspective thrust of Yom Kippur is quite in keeping with the temper of the times. Egocentricity
has lost its stigma. It's all right to pay attention to yourself! In fact, people have become excessively concerned with their mental, emotional and physical body condition.

It began in the 60's with the search for one's identity. Lots of people suddenly became aware that they had an identity problem. Many felt imprisoned by unwanted roles in life. They saw a need to re-define themselves, some with the help of personal liberation movements.

The new vocabulary of stock phrases included expressions such as:

- Consciousness raising
- Sensitivity training
- Getting in touch with yourself
- Finding yourself

Some began to think of their true self as a hidden treasure and enlisted the aid of one or several encounter groups. For example,

the Yippie leader, Jerry Rubin, a real hard core case of the identity crisis, in five years time went through: EST, Gestalt therapy, bioenergetics, Rolfing, Tai-Chai, Esalen, Meditation, Arica, Silva Mind Control, sex therapy, Reichian therapy, Morehouse -- and, for good measure, acupuncture, hypnotism, massage, jogging and health foods.

What an elusive ego Jerry Rubin had -- but he found it -- ~~he~~ ~~became~~ a stockbroker on Wall Street, making money.

It's predictable that when you look so hard to find yourself, you'd be paying more and more attention to your own self. And so, the era of self-discovery of the 60's, in the 1970's led us into the era of self pampering - the cult of Me.

What do you do when you have a love affair with yourself? . . . You want to give your ego all the pleasure you can! You want to be feeling good!

"Feeling good" became the first commandment of the cult of Me. And so, feeling good commercials have filled the air waves, from cheeseburger jingles,

"Feelin' good, feelin' good, feelin' good at Gino's"
to Hanes underwear,

"Hanes makes me feel good all under."

Typical of the feeling good religion is the worship of physical fitness. Its temples are the health clubs; its ritual, jogging; its new commandments, the "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not" of dieting,

Its sacred literature includes best sellers such as "The Scarsdale Diet," "The Pitkin Diet," "The Atkin Diet," "Running" and "How to Flatten Your Stomach."

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Yizkor - Yom Kippur
Saturday, September 20, 1980

DEATH, THE REVEALER OF LIFE

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation

This is an hour in which we experience the mystery of time and memory. The past comes alive in our memory. Years of long ago seem like yesterday. People who have gone are here again in spirit. We remember their features, their favorite expressions, their love for us and our love for them. And we wonder how there can be so much tender feeling in our hearts for those who are no longer among the living.

It is humanly impossible to contemplate the subject of death in a general sort of way. Immediately the topic becomes intensely personal and we think about the end of our own life.

As soon as King David had recovered from the first shock of his son's death, he thought of his own inevitable demise:

"I shall go to him but he shall not return to me."
(II Samuel 12.24)

If we are ever to have reunion with our departed, it will not be where we are, but where they are. As we think of them, we also must be thinking about our own future destiny.

Are such thoughts helpful to the living? Whatever the answer, hardly a day passes when the thought of death does not somehow intrude upon our mind. It may be triggered by the news of a fatal accident, the sound of a siren of an ambulance, the sight of a funeral procession, or a look at an obituary notice; it might just

be our life insurance bill.

Some of us are in daily rebellion against death as was that spirited poetess, Edna St. Vincent Millay:

"Withstanding death till life be gone,
I shall treasure my breath, I shall linger on.
I shall bolt my door with a bolt and a cable;
I shall block my door with a bureau and a table;
With all my might my door shall be barred.
I shall put up a fight, I shall take it hard.
With his hand on my mouth he shall drage me forth,
Shrieking to the south and clutching at the north."

Rebellion is the mood of youth -- and Edna St. Vincent Millay was young when she wrote these lines.

People who are older and closer to the inevitable take less offense at death.

George Bernard Shaw, though he promised to live at least one hundred years, became less anxious to reach the goal the closer he got to it. On his 94th birthday, only a few months before his death, he said to a friend: "I'm longing for my eternal rest."

A newspaper reported the reaction of an army chaplain to the news that he had an incurable malignancy and would soon die. The chaplain's response was:

"I consider it a privilege to die of cancer."

The next few days the chaplain received 2,000 telegrams from all over the country. People wanted to know what he meant.

Newspaper reporters interviewed the chaplain and quoted the following statement:

"It isn't the certainty of death that men fear, but the uncertainty of death. Now that I know, I welcome death. It is a privilege to have time to prepare for it. I'm getting ready for my most important journey."

Many people believe that thinking about death makes you morbid and depressed. Sometimes, the opposite is true. Mental preparation for death, living in the knowledge and expectancy of the inevitable could help us get more out of life.

1. Increased Achievements

Moses Montefiore, a deeply religious Jew and a great friend of Queen Victoria, was one of the most energetic men in history. He made his 7th journey to the Orient at the age of 90 and remained active until his death at the age of 101. Once a friend asked, "What keeps you going?" He replied, "I have a man on my staff who knocks on my door every hour and says, 'Moses Montefiore, another hour of your life has passed!'"

Do you fritter time away? There is no better incentive to get your life's work done than the daily contemplation of the inevitable.

2. Less Pettiness

But it does more for us. It mellows us; it makes us kinder. Disraeli, chief architect of the British Empire, had a simple

slogan which helped him over many a bitter controversy. The slogan was:

"Life is too short to be little."

Are you upset by someone who is ungrateful to you? Does it bother you that one you believed to be your friend has been unkind? Are you disappointed because you were not sufficiently rewarded or recognized? Are you resentful of the ingrate who does not remember your generosity or favor? Do these things interfere with your work or sleep? Well, isn't it silly -- how many more years do you think you have? Why lose irreplaceable hours brooding over things which next year will be forgotten by everybody? Life is too short to be little.

3. More Good Works

I once saw Stephen Grellet's famous little poem framed on the desk of a high powered executive with a well deserved reputation for charity and community service:

I shall pass through this world but once.
Any good therefore that I can do
Or any kindness that I can show
To any human being, let me do it now.
Let me not defer or neglect it
For I shall not pass this way again.

We should act on a good impulse or upon a generous intention immediately, -- not only because our enthusiasm may cool off, but

because life is short and there might not be another opportunity.

4. Priorities

Justice Louis D. Brandeis confessed another benefit one may derive from the constant awareness of the approaching end of our life. He said,

"I have only one life and it is short. Why waste it on things I don't want most?"

You cannot do everything. Therefore you must choose what is most important. If the thought of your death helps you frame a priority scale, it hands you the key to great achievement.

5. Appreciation

The late Rabbi Milton Steinberg of the Park Avenue Synagogue, one of the most gifted Jewish thinkers of the century, died at the early age of 46. Before his untimely death, he shared with his congregation the impact which a major coronary had on his thinking and attitude to life. He said,

"After a long illness, I was permitted for the first time to step out of doors. And, as I crossed the threshold, sunlight greeted me. . . everywhere the golden glow of the sunlight.

"In that instant, I looked about me to see if anyone else showed on his face the joy, almost the beatitude, I felt. But no, there they walked, men and women and children, in the glory of a golden flood, and so far

as I could detect, there was none to give it heed. . .
I said to myself - how precious the sunlight but,
alas, how careless of it are men. How precious -
how careless. This has been a refrain sounding in
me ever since."

"I wanted to say to the husbands and wives who love
one another: 'How precious is your lot in that it
is one of love. Do not be, even for a moment, casual
with your good fortune. Love one another while yet
you may.'

"And to parents: 'How precious is the gift of your
children. Never, never be too busy for the wonder and
miracle of them. They will be grown up soon enough
and grown away, too.'"

Conclusion

As we look back in memory to our departed, we may move forward
on the road of life more certain of our purpose and wiser men and
women. From their graves, our elders tell us that man needs so
little -- a little love and a little friendship, health and a home, --
and you're rich:

"Oh that they were wise, that they would consider
their latter end." (Deut. 32.29)

The voices of our departed have been silenced, but their lives speak to us -- their examples are a permanent faculty of teachers:

Parents for whose devotion there is no replacement. A husband or wife whose love and companionship, even in memory, still strengthen us.

Children, whose voices and laughter surpassed all of our pleasures.

A brother or sister in whose death a part of ourselves seemed to have died.

Death is the mysterious revealer of life. It takes away those who are dear to us, but it transforms them in our hearts and in our memories. We see their merits more clearly. We feel their influence more strongly. Because of their death, all that remains to us becomes more precious, more appreciated.

"Oh that they were wise, that they would consider their latter end."

Considering, remembering the end of our dear ones, we consider the end of our life as well and take from this reflection wisdom which we must apply to our remaining years:

1. Every hour that passes reduces the time we have to complete our tasks.
2. Life is too short to be little.
3. Do the good you can, because you shall not pass this way again.

4. Choose what is most important; you have not time for everything.
5. Count your blessings; appreciate every moment while you are
alive.

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Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation

This is an hour in which we experience the mystery of time and memory. The past comes alive in our memory. Years of long ago seem like yesterday. People who have gone are here again in spirit. We remember their features, their favorite expressions, their love for us and our love for them. And we wonder how there can be so much tender feeling in our hearts for those who are no longer among the living.

It is humanly impossible to contemplate the subject of death in a general sort of way. Immediately the topic becomes intensely personal and we think about the end of our own life.

As soon as King David had recovered from the first shock of his son's death, he thought of his own inevitable demise:

"I shall go to him but he shall not return to me."
(II Samuel 12.24)

If we are ever to have reunion with our departed, it will not be where we are, but where they are. As we think of them, we also must be thinking about our own future destiny.

Are such thoughts helpful to the living? Whatever the answer, hardly a day passes when the thought of death does not somehow intrude upon our mind. It may be triggered by the news of a fatal accident, the sound of a siren of an ambulance, the sight of a funeral procession, or a look at an obituary notice; it might just

be our life insurance bill.

Some of us are in daily rebellion against death as was that spirited poetess, Edna St. Vincent Millay:

"Withstanding death till life be gone,
I shall treasure my breath, I shall linger on.
I shall bolt my door with a bolt and a cable;
I shall block my door with a bureau and a table;
With all my might my door shall be barred.
I shall put up a fight, I shall take it hard.
With his hand on my mouth he shall drage me forth,
Shrieking to the south and clutching at the north."

Rebellion is the mood of youth -- and Edna St. Vincent Millay was young when she wrote these lines.

People who are older and closer to the inevitable take less offense at death.

George Bernard Shaw, though he promised to live at least one hundred years, became less anxious to reach the goal the closer he got to it. On his 94th birthday, only a few months before his death, he said to a friend: "I'm longing for my eternal rest."

A newspaper reported the reaction of an army chaplain to the news that he had an incurable malignancy and would soon die. The chaplain's response was:

"I consider it a privilege to die of cancer."

The next few days the chaplain received 2,000 telegrams from all over the country. People wanted to know what he meant.

Newspaper reporters interviewed the chaplain and quoted the following statement:

"It isn't the certainty of death that men fear, but the uncertainty of death. Now that I know, I welcome death. It is a privilege to have time to prepare for it. I'm getting ready for my most important journey."

Many ~~people~~^{mistakenly} believe that thinking about death makes you morbid and depressed. Sometimes, the opposite is true. Mental preparation for death, living in the knowledge and expectancy of the inevitable could help us get more out of life.

1. Increased Achievements

Moses Montefiore, a deeply religious Jew and a great friend of Queen Victoria, was one of the most energetic men in history. He made his 7th journey to the Orient at the age of 90 and remained active until his death at the age of 101. Once a friend asked, "What keeps you going?" He replied, "I have a man on my staff who knocks on my door every hour and says, 'Moses Montefiore, another hour of your life has passed!'"

Do you fritter time away? There is no better incentive to get your life's work done than the daily contemplation of the inevitable.

2. Less Pettiness

But it does more for us. It mellows us; it makes us kinder. Disraeli, chief architect of the British Empire, had a simple

slogan which helped him over many a bitter controversy. The slogan was:

"Life is too short to be little."

Are you upset by someone who is ungrateful to you? Does it bother you that one you believed to be your friend has been unkind? Are you disappointed because you were not sufficiently rewarded or recognized? Are you resentful of the ingrate who does not remember your generosity or favor? Do these things interfere with your work or sleep? Well, isn't it silly -- how many more years do you think you have? Why lose irreplaceable hours brooding over things which next year will be forgotten by everybody? Life is too short to be little.

3. More Good Works

I once saw Stephen Grellet's famous little poem framed on the desk of a high powered executive with a well deserved reputation for charity and community service:

I shall pass through this world but once.
Any good therefore that I can do
Or any kindness that I can show
To any human being, let me do it now.
Let me not defer or neglect it
For I shall not pass this way again.

We should act on a good impulse or upon a generous intention immediately, -- not only because our enthusiasm may cool off, but

because life is short and there might not be another opportunity.

4. Priorities

Justice Louis D. Brandeis confessed another benefit one may derive from the constant awareness of the approaching end of our life. He said,

"I have only one life and it is short. Why waste it on things I don't want most?"

You cannot do everything. Therefore you must choose what is most important. If the thought of your death helps you frame a priority scale, it hands you the key to great achievement.

5. Appreciation

The late Rabbi Milton Steinberg of the Park Avenue Synagogue, one of the most gifted Jewish thinkers of the century, died at the early age of 46. Before his untimely death, he shared with his congregation the impact which a major coronary had on his thinking and attitude to life. He said,

"After a long illness, I was permitted for the first time to step out of doors. And, as I crossed the threshold, sunlight greeted me. . . ~~everywhere the golden glow of the sunlight.~~

"In that instant, I looked about me to see if anyone else showed on his face the joy, almost the beatitude, I felt. But no, there they walked, men and women and children, in the glory of a golden flood, and so far

as I could detect, there was none to give it heed. . .
I said to myself - how precious the sunlight but,
alas, how careless of it are men. How precious -
how careless. This has been a refrain sounding in
me ever since."

"I wanted to say to the husbands and wives who love
one another: 'How precious is your lot in that it
is one of love. Do not be, even for a moment, casual
with your good fortune. Love one another while yet
you may.'

"And to parents: 'How precious is the gift of your
children. Never, never be too busy for the wonder and
miracle of them. They will be grown up soon enough
and grown away, too.'"

Conclusion

As we look back in memory to our departed, we may move forward
on the road of life more certain of our purpose and wiser men and
women. From their graves, our elders tell us that man needs so
little -- a little love and a little friendship, health and a home, --
and you're rich:

"Oh that they were wise, that they would consider
their latter end." (Deut. 32.29)

The voices of our departed have been silenced, but their lives speak to us -- their examples are a permanent faculty of teachers:

Parents for whose devotion there is no replacement. A husband or wife whose love and companionship, even in memory, still strengthen us.

Children, whose voices and laughter surpassed all of our pleasures.

A brother or sister in whose death a part of ourselves seemed to have died.

Death is the mysterious revealer of life. It takes away those who are dear to us, but it transforms them in our hearts and in our memories. We see their merits more clearly. We feel their influence more strongly. Because of their death, all that remains to us becomes more precious, more appreciated.

"Oh that they were wise, that they would consider their latter end."

Considering, Remembering the end of our dear ones, we ^{also} considered the end of our life ^{we now} as well and take from this reflection wisdom which we must apply to our remaining years:

1. Every hour that passes reduces the time we have to complete our tasks.
2. Life is too short to be little.
3. Do the good you can, because you shall not pass this way again.

4. Choose what is most important; you have not time for everything.
5. Count your blessings; appreciate every moment while you are alive.

Oh that ^{we} ~~they~~ were wise, — that ^{we} ~~they~~ would
consider ~~our~~ better end!

AMEN



R. H. Simon next year 1980

The New Jew is better off
but has less commitment

In 1979 I spoke on the New Jew

In 1980 Now I want to talk
about the Good Jew

Models of the Good Jew

① The Philanthropist & Activist the ideal

trap of illustrate his spiritual emptiness - see Rosh H. Simon 1957 "INSPIRATION" p. 48

② The Jew of *the "feel-good" Jew* *"Fingertip-Jews"* *a combination of all 3*

The Jewish liturgy *mus. &*

Hardtsh! - Ritual

③ The (True) Believer (Levinsky Fieff)

Born again Jew of Saul Friedlander

Appeal: *Nachman's empty chair!*

Y Kippur 1980

Proud - Privileged to be a Jew

used to be default statement
now Privilege is a fact

Pride a matter of choice!

How to become religious
- if not yet

How to Overcome grave doubts
& obstacle to faith
if you lost yours

How to Grow in faith if
you are religious

High School 82

The universal fear & insecurity of our times
Even the USA trembles about the future
The Depression — many seek a course
in Survival training etc.

Understandably — our reaction is a craving for
Security

How do we cope with our fears?

How can we raise our sense of security?

(1)

It is sensible to insure against risks — to be cautious but
Total Security — is impossible — no matter how
careful.

We must learn to live with risks & uncertainty

Chin White man story

First you try the proven remedy — then you wait
a seat

When you reach the limit of (negative) defence measures
& precaution — you must rely on your own
skills & resources to meet the new danger

You must meet the danger of a flood not
only by building a dam to restrain water —
but also by learning how to swim

Appeal

in uncertain times

Keep learning, growing — study another language,
learn how to operate a computer etc.

A major reason for increased fears is our way of life - stung & highly indiv. existence - which tears us out of our support system at an early age

- Former generations were part of a highly structured society which required disciplined compliance of individuals to say you & I are free to do our own thing but back the (social) communal support system

So - what do you do? You've got to build your own
Mentor family solidarity
Held on to friends
Bell teleph 6

Reach out and touch someone
Visit at every possible opportunity - Gosh,
Bugs - bloody

Telephone - greeting - responsiveness

We so foolishly neglect our own
We collect funds for the starving Cambodians
but ignore our own loved ones & family

How beautiful are these family projects which build the support system. Lambert's scholarship for Paul Walker
You can register children - really resources to provide dignified old age for Mother Rose Rephin
should be part of your support system -

- 2 -

① Learn from your elders (past)

② Stand with your family

When the outlook is dark —

③ Look inside.