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Sermons and notes, 1985.

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Rosh Hashanah Eve  
1st Tishri, 5746

### INSIDE-OUTSIDE

By Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman  
Washington Hebrew Congregation  
Sunday, September 15, 1985

Tonight, I stand in this pulpit very much aware that this will be the last High Holy Day season which I shall be privileged to conduct as your Senior Rabbi. I am full of mixed emotions. Yes, on the one hand, there is great reluctance to change a relationship so fulfilling and it makes me sad to think that this, too, must end. On the other hand, I am happy that I reached my decision in the best possible frame of mind. I am grateful to God that it was not because of ill-health or ill-will or, God forbid a Congregational crisis. But, quite to the contrary things have gone so well that, having reached most of the goals I set for myself sixteen years ago, I now feel free to turn to new goals, to new and, to me, irresistible challenges for which I must free myself from all present duties.

I look forward to sitting in your midst, next to Maxine and my family, at future High Holy Days and many a Sabbath. Until then, however, there is still much preaching and teaching for me to do this year -- and I shall do it with undiminished enthusiasm.

### Your Annual Check Up

The story is told about a teenager who rather nervously entered a drug store, asked the proprietor to change a quarter, hurried into a telephone booth and dialed a number. He left the door of the booth opened a little and, as a result, the druggist couldn't help overhearing the conversation:

"Hello, is this 362-3344?. . . It is?. . . May I talk to the boss?. . . Oh, you are the boss! Well, then can you tell me, do you need a good office boy?. . . You say you have a good one?. . . Well, wouldn't you like to make a change?. . . You say you don't care to make a change?. . . I see, that's alright, thank you!"

The young fellow was about to walk out when the druggist stopped him:

"I'm really sorry you didn't get that job -- better luck next time!"

"Thank you for your interest," said the young man, "but I've got the job, anyhow."

"What do you mean?" -- asked the druggist.

"You see," said the boy, "that was my own boss I was talking to. I was only checking up on myself."

Every person wants to find out where he stands. We all need a mental and moral check up no less than a physical checkup. The High Holy Days meet this need for inventory, for stock-taking, for an inner check up. And for those who come only this one time a year, I say: this is your annual check up!

It is known as Cheshbon Ha-Nefesh, the accounting of the soul or self-judgment. How can you get the greatest possible benefit from such a check up?

In the first place, you must be convinced that you really need this exercise for your own inner well being. Look at it this way: our souls get adulterated, cluttered with the debris of unrealized plans and intentions, broken resolutions, betrayals and infidelities. Face the fact that each of us has to clean up his act. But, bear in mind: we are often the poorest judges of our own life, and we do worse in trying to judge others.

### Appearance and Reality

In this connection, the Bible brings us valuable insight. The prophet Samuel was told to choose, as King over Israel, the best qualified of the son's of Jesse. So, Samuel lined up seven young brothers, all sons of Jesse, to make his choice. His eye fell on Eliab, and he liked what he saw. Eliab was the oldest, the tallest and the most impressive one in the family. He was about to say, this is our man, when God put Samuel straight:

"Look not on his face or height. . . people look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

(1 Sam. 16.7)

We must not be deceived by appearances. A person inside may be very different from what he appears on the outside.

We are trained at an early age to make impressions. My mother, God bless her soul, when presenting her darling son and daughter to friends, always whispered to us below her breath: SMILE -- even when we had nothing to smile about. Later I learned, as everyone else, to bow to social etiquette, which makes us look interested in company, when actually bored, and to

say "I am sorry" - even when we feel no regret or, "thank you" even when feeling no gratitude, just for the sake of a courteous appearance.

Tonight friends, we must wipe off the veneer of our pretenses and face ourselves the way we are. Tonight we must become aware of the gap between outward appearance and inner reality.

It is not easy to face oneself in the mirror of absolute truth. Rare is a person like Cromwell who ordered the artist to paint his portrait "with warts" and all.

The Cheshbon Ha-Nefesh, is a painful process. In the search light of uncompromising truth, many a giant shrinks into a dwarf. Many who maintain an outward appearance of such poise, confidence and success, in their own heart know wherein they have failed and how full of fears they are. This is your opportunity to reassess your position, your occupation, your ambition. This is your chance to have a look at yourself in relationship to your family and co-workers. Reaching inward, you will come in touch with the real being that is you. If you make that silent confessional review of your life, you might emerge

liberated from the heavy burden of pretending. You will then have reached the first major goal of this sacred day which is also known as Yom Ha-din, the day of judgment.

### **T'Shuvah -- Recovery of Your Better Self**

What is the second major goal? It is making good on the decisions that are shaping up in our minds. It is going through with real changes in our behavior, in our treatment of others. This process is known as T'shuvah, return to something good and noble within, the recovery of our better self.

Our youngest grandson, Jonathan is wild about a toy which has flooded the market. It is called a transformer. The thing may at first look like a miniature car, but if you move this or that part one way or the other, presto, the car is transformed into a robot.

It is all so quick and easy. But, a character transformation, my friends, is a very difficult process. Yet it is possible. We believe in the possibility of self-transcendence. We believe in the power of any person to be virtually reborn.

We Jews are optimists. That is why we change the Torah covers to white on the High Holy Days in keeping with Isaiah's sentence:

"Though your sins be red as scarlet, they shall be as 'white as snow.'" (Is. 1.18)

Never say it is too late.

If you consider any change in your life or character, what counts is the first step. A traveler once asked a townsman in a strange and isolated little town:

"What is this place famous for?" The native thought and then answered: "Well Mr., this is a good starting point for any other place in the world."

So is this hour. This is a good starting point for a new beginning. It is a time for decision, a time to boost your will to make changes with confidence that change is always possible.

The German romantic poet, Novalis, once said, "character is a perfectly educated will."



Judaism, addresses itself to the will. It is an education in moral discipline. It is not just a collection of concepts or beliefs. It is a tradition of values, a way of life, a moral system built on deep foundations of belief. But, it is nothing, it is less than useless, if it is not internalized and integrated into our thinking and feeling

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES  
**Inside-Outside**

This summer I read Herman Wouk's latest novel, "Inside-Outside." It portrays several models of Jews who are trying to balance their public identity as Jews with their private and personal feelings and practices. The hero of the novel, David Goodkind, is the most complete portrait in the English language of an American who is also a total Jew. David Goodkind, a successful tax attorney, is finishing off his duties as a special adviser to President Nixon in the closing days of Watergate. The White House is in a state of paralysis, and so, Goodkind has time to write his memoirs. What we now read is a typical American success story, that is, on the outside, the witty, sophisticated David Goodkind, graduate of Columbia University, fits perfectly well into the executive chamber of the corporate world. He is perfectly at ease with the high and the mighty. Yet, inside,

David Goodkind is Jewish to the core. He has internalized and integrated his heritage. It is part of his character and personality. Wouk's anecdotal description of family occasions is a minor encyclopedia of Judaism; he takes us into the Yeshiva world where young David soaked up a solid Jewish education including fluency in Talmud which, incidentally, arouses the intense curiosity and respect of the President. Once, walking into Goodkind's office, the President finds his able assistant poring over a folio page of the Talmud with his head properly bedecked with a yarmulke. Goodkind explains the Talmud and the reader is likely to be fascinated.

I was intrigued by a report in the New York Times that this highly amusing and informative portrayal of a full-blooded, one hundred percent Jew was the reading choice of Frank Borman, president and chief executive of Eastern Airlines and Donald E. Petersen, chairman and chief executive of the Ford Motor Company, not to mention other non-Jewish celebrities and countless readers who have kept the book on the national best sellers list for months. What does this say to us?

It says that the public is not interested in the Jew who is like everybody else, but in the Jewish Jew who is

distinctive and different in his beliefs, culture and mentality; who reflects the thoughts and values of a 4,000 year old tradition; who has something to say to people in search of a purpose; who has something to say to a world in chaos, looking for order and security, to a world that is morally decadent and wondering how to be rehabilitated. Only a Jew who knows his heritage might be able to contribute something special, something that is sorely missing in our civilization.

I want to challenge you tonight to become Jews inside as surely as you are Jews outside.

### **The New Jewish Assertiveness**

In the nearly forty years of my life as an American rabbi, I have seen a significant change in the attitude of American Jews to their Jewishness and especially so in response to anti-semitism.

Before World War II, our instinctive reaction under attack was to become inconspicuous and, if possible, invisible. Those were the days when Jews suffered humiliating restrictions in

universities, housing, resorts, and the professions. Some of our leaders in their dubious wisdom, saw to it that Fortune Magazine, in the late 30's, published a lengthy article about American Jews in refutation of the anti-Semitic charge that Jews dominated American life. The point of the article which was loaded with statistics was one prolonged orgy of self-deprecation:

No, no, -- we don't dominate society . . .

No, no, we don't dominate any major trade or industry.

No, no, we aren't as important as you make us out to be. . . , and so forth.

In my opinion, that article was a low point, perhaps the most shameful point in American Jewish history -- a lapse of self-esteem, a gratuitous self-debasement, as though anti-Semites would like us better if we were less capable and less successful.

Those were the days when Jews tried to hide their Jewishness like the plague. It was a rich topic for humor such as Goldberg running into his old buddy, Cohen, many years after graduation from college:

"Goldberg, am I glad to see you!" shouted Cohen.  
"Tell me, what have you been doing?"

"Oh, I'm married and have two children."

"You don't say?" said Cohen. "What kind of a living do you make?"

"I'm a lawyer and doing very well. I'm a partner in the firm of O'Brian and Sullivan on Wall Street."

"What a surprise!" said Cohen.

"I've got a bigger surprise," said Goldberg, "I am O'Brian!"

Those were the days when our people were looking for cover. Some of our own people even capitulated to the quota system and its implied second class citizenship. The highly esteemed Walter Lippmann, in a memorandum to Harvard University's admissions office in 1922 agreed that it would be undesirable to allow (I quote) "a concentration of Jews in excess of 15%." I, myself, heard the Dean of the Cincinnati University Medical School, himself a Jew, defend the medical school's anti-Jewish admissions policy because, as he said: "on the basis of academic scores alone, Jews would outnumber all other students."

Today, Jews are proud and affirmative. The post-war generation will not accept religious or ethnic restrictions. If we predominate in any field, we don't apologize. It's to our credit and surely not our problem.

Today, Jews don't mind being visible. Ethnicity,

distinctiveness is in. America has moved far away from the melting pot ideal of the 1920's to appreciation of religious and cultural diversity, which we call "pluralism." The popular author, Irving Wallace, grew up in the melting pot period and so he changed his original family name, Wallechinsky, to Wallace. His son, David, co-author with his father of the enormously successful "Book of Lists" and "The People's Almanac," recently discarded his Americanized name, Wallace, and took back the original family name, Wallechinsky.

Countless of our young people, in contrast with their parents and grandparents, like to visibly identify themselves as Jews, often with a star of David or mezuzah or even with a yarmulka, for all to see.

### **The Inner Void**

Yes, they are proud and assertive, but I'm troubled by a question: What are they asserting? What are they proud of? What do they know? How much Judaism is **inside** the person who presents himself so affirmatively as a Jew **outside**?

I often see a woeful emptiness.

Most of our adults have graduate degrees from universities, but only a smattering of Jewish knowledge -- disjointed memories of holiday celebrations and a few trivia of Jewish history -- hardly enough to keep up with a fourth grader in our Sunday School. The vast majority of our adults are Jewish illiterates. To most of us the Bible, the Talmud, the law codes and commentaries and the works of our philosophers are as remote as Egyptian hieroglyphics. Uncertain of your beliefs, many of you here tonight have no coherent world-view, no spiritual anchor.

I wonder how many parents who let their children make their own decisions in religious and moral matters, are merely rationalizing their abdication of authority as "tolerance". Are you so tolerant and permissive because of your high respect for the moral and intellectual caliber of your children? Or, are you tolerant and permissive as parents because you lack moral convictions of your own, and so cannot but maintain a neutrality of values?

### **Surrender to the "New Morality"**

It is now well over twenty years that the new morality began to permeate the middle and upper-middle classes and no one took to it more rapidly than our super-liberal Jews.

We swallowed all the cliches of the era and offered no resistance when some of our sons and daughters began to drop out of higher education; when they asserted the right to "hang loose" for indefinite periods; when they stretched out the allowance into full maintenance in apartments of their own; when they boldly asserted their new sexual freedom. Many parents, despite misgivings, provided contraceptive counsel and abortion assistance but kept silent on the moral issues of sex; when their sons and daughters took to living together with lovers, even those parents who knew in their hearts that it was not right, looked the other way. Many said they didn't want a confrontation with their children. The truth is that they had nothing to confront them with. They had no convictions. They had no moral position of their own. They had no authority to stand on.

Where has this new morality gotten us? The statistics are very grim. In the D.C. school system, the girls dropping out



because of pregnancy outnumber the graduates from high school. In New York City, 37% of all babies born are illegitimate. (1983)

In 1984, one out of four American households was victimized by violent crime. Jews have been swept along by the general moral decadence. To mention but one recent nationwide survey: 27% of all Jewish college-age youth are heavy drug or alcohol users.

Is it not time to develop some doubts about the wisdom of the new morality? What is it other than moral anarchy?

Must we wait for venereal diseases, including the dreaded AIDS disease, to terrorize our youth into a new respect for the old values? can we not motivate our children positively, as parents should, with well founded moral convictions which are part of a total system of beliefs, within a distinctly Jewish philosophy of life?

Why can't you give this to your children? The answer is because you haven't got it yourself, because you have lost touch with it. The truth is, you don't know your tradition.

### "Fingertip Jews"

Moses Maimonides says:

"There are two kinds of Jew. Those who hold on to their religion, grasping it firmly, like a person will hold on to a rope to keep from drowning. And then, there are those Jews who cling to the Torah only with the tips of their fingers, not enough to be guided and helped by it, just barely enough to keep in touch with their faith." (From his "Letter of Consolation")

We've got a lot of fingertip Jews. But must I say it? More than "fingertip Judaism" is needed to grab us and lead us out of chaos and direct us on a morally sound pathway in life.

In some of our larger cities, developers are getting around the historic building preservation codes by buying out old buildings and gutting them except for the facade -- and then they build the high rises right behind the old buildings. Washington has a few of those facade buildings downtown along Pennsylvania Avenue.

A huge number of our people are, what I would like to call, "Facade Jews." The old historic culture with its moral grandeur has been knocked out. There is nothing left inside. They are Jews on the **outside**, they've got a Jewish facade. But they are empty **inside**.

You may have heard the news that your Board of Directors has decided to redecorate this sanctuary in 1987. Yes, we can build a more beautiful sanctuary for our assemblies and celebrations. But only you can refurbish the sanctuary within your heart. Only you can develop the Jew inside, luminous with knowledge and resonant with the values of our people. Only you can close the gap between what you are, and what you know you should be. Only you can transform the veneer of Judaism into its substance; only you can change from the Judaism that is pretended to one that is practiced.

Four thousand years of history have called us to be God's witness, as the people of the Bible, and to be messengers of His law, the foundation of our security, dignity and freedom. Let us make sure that we Jews know the message and let our lives witness to our beliefs. Amen.

As delivered

Rosh Hashanah Eve  
1st Tishri, 5746

Corrected  
on Word Processor

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I look forward to ~~the time when I shall be a fellow~~ congregant, sitting in your midst, next to Maxine and my family, <sup>future</sup> on ~~the~~ High Holy Days and many a Sabbath. Until then, however, there is still much preaching and teaching for me to do <sup>this year</sup> -- and I shall do it with undiminished enthusiasm.

### Your Annual Checkup

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The young fellow ~~hung up and~~ was about to walk out when the druggist stopped him:

~~"I couldn't help overhearing that conversation."~~ "I'm really sorry you didn't get that job -- better luck next time!"

"Thank you for your interest," said the young man, "but I've got the job, <sup>anyhow</sup> ~~anyway~~."

"What do you mean?" -- asked the druggist.

"You see," said the boy, "that was my own boss I was talking to. I was only checking up on myself."

Every person wants to find out where he stands. We all need *a mental and moral check up no less than a physical check up,* ~~a personal inventory from time to time.~~ The High Holy Days meet this need *for inventory, for stock taking, for an inner check up.* And for those who come only this one time a year, I say: this is your annual checkup!

It is known as Cheshbon Ha-Nefesh, the accounting of the soul or self-judgment. ~~How should one take a measure of one's self?~~ How can you get the greatest possible ~~personal~~ benefit from such a check up?

In the first place, you must be convinced that you really need this exercise for your own inner well being. Look at it this way: our souls get adulterated, cluttered with the debris of unrealized plans and intentions, broken resolutions, betrayals and infidelities. Face the fact that ~~with the passage of a certain amount of time,~~ each of us has to clean up his act. But, bear in mind: we are often the poorest judges of our own life, and we do worse in trying to judge others.

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"Look not on his face or height. . . ~~for~~ people look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." (I Sam. 16.7)

We must not be deceived by appearances. A person inside maybe very different from the ~~impression he makes~~ <sup>what he appears on the</sup> outside.

~~In our society,~~ We are trained at an early age to make impressions. My mother, God bless her soul, when presenting her darling son and daughter to friends, always whispered to us below her breath: SMILE -- even when we had nothing to smile about. Later I learned, as everyone else, to bow to social etiquette, which makes us look interested in company, when actually bored, and to say "I am sorry" <sup>even when we feel no regret</sup> or, "thank you" <sup>even when feeling no gratitude,</sup> ~~regardless of true feelings,~~ just for the sake of a courteous appearance.

Tonight friends, we must wipe off the veneer of our pretenses and face ourselves the way we are. Tonight we must become aware of the gap between <sup>outward</sup> appearance and <sup>inner</sup> reality.

It is not easy to face oneself in the mirror of absolute truth. Rare is a person like Cromwell who ordered the artist to paint his portrait "with warts" and all.

Yet, the work of moral and spiritual rehabilitation, must be based on foundations of truth, we must take stock of the person we are, not of the idealized image we would like to project.

The Cheshbon Ha-Nefesh, ~~without which these High Holy Days are meaningless,~~ is a painful process. In the search light of uncompromising truth, many a giant shrinks into a dwarf. Many who maintain an outward appearance of <sup>such poise, confidence and</sup> success and confidence, in their <sup>own</sup> heart know wherein they have failed and how full of fears they are. This is your opportunity to reassess your position, your occupation, your ambition. This is your chance to have a look at yourself in relationship to your family and co-workers.

~~This is the time to make personal decisions, even changes in your life.~~ ~~When~~ Reaching inward, you <sup>will</sup> come in touch with the real being that is you. If you make that silent, confessional review of your life ~~by way of introspection,~~ you <sup>might</sup> ~~will~~ emerge liberated from



the heavy burden of pretending. You will <sup>then</sup> have reached the first major goal of this sacred day which is also known as Yom Ha-din, the day of judgment.

### T'Shuvah -- Recovery of Your Better Self

What is the second major goal? It is making good on the decisions that are shaping up in your mind<sup>s</sup>. It is going through with real changes in your behavior, in your treatment of others, ~~in your character.~~ This process is known as T'shuvah, return to <sup>something</sup> ~~the better self you either were or hoped to be.~~ *good and noble within, the recovery of our*

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"What is this place famous for?" The native thought and then answered: "Well Mr., this is a good starting point for any <sup>other</sup> place in the world."

So is this hour. <sup>This is a good starting point</sup> ~~It's a great time~~ for a new beginning.

This is the time for bridging the gap between the real and pretended self; a time to stop fooling ourselves and come to grips with the reality of our limitations and shortcomings; this is also the time to close the gap between what we are and what we hope to be. It is a time for decision, a time to boost your will to make changes with confidence that change is always possible.

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"I am O'Brian!"

*one people were looking for cover. Some of)*

Those were the days when quite a few of our own people ~~even~~ *even* ~~meekly~~ capitulated to the quota system and its implied second class citizenship. The highly esteemed Walter Lippmann, in a memorandum to Harvard University's admissions office in 1922 agreed that it would be undesirable to allow (I quote) "a concentration of Jews in excess of 15%." ~~As late as 1939, I,~~ myself, heard the Dean of the Cincinnati University Medical School, himself a Jew, defend the medical school's ~~restrictive~~ *anti-Jewish* admissions policy because, as he said: "on the basis of academic scores alone, Jews would outnumber all other students."

Today, Jews are proud and affirmative. The post-war generation will not accept religious or ethnic restrictions. If we predominate in any field, we don't apologize. It's to our credit and surely not our problem.

Today, Jews don't mind being visible. Ethnicity, distinctiveness is in. America has moved <sup>far away</sup> from the melting pot ideal of the 1920's to appreciation of religious and cultural diversity, which we call "pluralism." The popular author, Irving Wallace, grew up in the melting pot period and so he changed his original family name, Wallechinsky, to Wallace. His ~~gifted~~ son, David, co-author with his father of the enormously successful "Book of Lists" and "The People's Almanac," recently discarded his Americanized name, Wallace, and took back the original family name, Wallechinsky.

Countless of our young people, in contrast with their parents and grandparents, like to visibly identify themselves as Jews, often with a star of David or mezuzah or even with a yarmulka, for all to see.

### The Inner Void

Yes, they are proud and assertive, but I'm troubled by a question: What are they asserting? What are they proud of? What do they know? How much Judaism is inside the person who presents himself so affirmatively as a Jew outside? P I often see a woeful emptiness. P Most of our adults have graduate degrees from universities, but only a smattering of Jewish knowledge -- disjointed memories of holiday celebrations and a few trivia of Jewish history -- hardly enough to keep up with a fourth grader in our Sunday School. The vast majority of our adults are Jewish illiterates. To most of us the Bible, the Talmud, the law codes and commentaries and the works of our philosophers are as remote as Egyptian hieroglyphics. Uncertain of your beliefs, many of you here tonight have no coherent world-view, no spiritual anchor.

I wonder how many parents who let their children make their own decisions in religious and moral matters, are merely



rationalizing their abdication of authority as ~~a benevolent kind~~  
~~of~~ tolerance. Are you so tolerant and permissive because of your  
high respect for the <sup>moral</sup> ~~integrity~~ and intellectual <sup>caliber</sup> ~~competence~~ of  
your children? Or, are you tolerant and permissive as parents  
because you lack moral convictions of your own, and so cannot but  
maintain a neutrality of values?

### Surrender to the "New Morality"

It is now well over twenty years that the new morality began  
to permeate the middle and upper-middle classes and no one took  
to it more rapidly than our super-liberal Jews.

We swallowed all the cliches of the era and offered no  
resistance when some of our sons and daughters began to drop out  
of higher education; when they asserted the right to "hang loose"  
for indefinite periods; when they stretched out the allowance  
into full maintenance in apartments of their own; when they  
boldly asserted their new sexual freedom. Many parents, despite  
misgivings, provided contraceptive counsel and abortion  
assistance but kept silent on the moral issues of sex; when their  
sons and daughters took to living together with lovers, even  
those parents who knew in their hearts that it was <sup>not right</sup> ~~wrong~~, looked  
the other way.

Many said they didn't want a confrontation  
with their children. The truth is that they had ~~nothing to say~~  
to confront them with. They had no authority to stand on.  
They had no convictions. They had no moral position of their own.

Where has the<sup>s</sup> new morality gotten us? The statistics are very grim. In the D.C. school system, ~~more~~<sup>the</sup> girls drop<sup>ping</sup> out because of pregnancy ~~than~~<sup>out number the</sup> graduates from high school. In New York City, 37% of all babies born are illegitimate. (1983)

In 1984, one out of four American households was victimized by violent crime. Jews have been swept along by the general moral decadence. To mention but one recent nationwide survey: 27% of all <sup>Jewish</sup> college-age ~~Jews~~<sup>youth</sup> are heavy drug or alcohol users.

Is it not time to develop some doubts about the wisdom of the new morality? What is it other than moral anarchy?

Must we wait for venereal diseases, including the dreaded AIDS disease, to terrorize our youth into a new respect for the old values? Can we not motivate our children positively, as parents should, with well founded moral convictions which are part of a total system of beliefs, within a distinctly Jewish philosophy of life?

Why can't you give <sup>this</sup> ~~it~~ to your children? The answer is ~~you haven't got it yourself; because~~ because you don't know what it is! because you have lost touch with it, ~~yourself~~. The truth is, you don't know your tradition.

### "Fingertip Jews"

Moses Maimonides says:

"There are two kinds of Jews, Those who hold on to their religion, grasping it firmly, like a person will hold on to a rope to keep from drowning. And then, there are those Jews who cling to the Torah only with the tips of their fingers, not enough to be guided and helped by it, just barely enough to keep in touch with their faith." (From his "Letter of Consolation")

*We've got a lot of fingertip Jews. But must I say it?  
More than "fingertip Judaism" is needed to grab us and lead us  
out of chaos and direct us on a morally sound pathway in life.*

In some of our larger cities, developers are getting around the historic building preservation codes by buying out old buildings and gutting them except for the facade -- and then they build the high-rises right behind the ~~facades~~ of the old buildings. *Washington has* We too have a few of those facade buildings downtown along Pennsylvania Avenue.

A huge number of our people are, what I would like to call, "Facade Jews." The old historic culture with its beliefs and

*moral grandeur*

There is nothing left inside.  
~~morality~~ has been knocked out. They are Jews <sup>on the</sup> outside, but not ~~inside.~~ they've got a Jewish facade. But they are empty inside.

You may have heard the news that your Board of Directors ~~has~~ decided to red<sup>e</sup>corate this sanctuary ~~lavishly~~ in 1987. Yes, we can build a more beautiful sanctuary for ~~you to assemble in.~~ <sup>our assemblies and celebrations,</sup> But only you can refurnish the sanctuary within <sup>your hearts.</sup> Only you can develop the Jew inside, luminous with knowledge and resonant with the values of our people. Only you can close the gap between what you are, and what you know you should be. Only you can transform the veneer of Judaism into its substance; only you can change from the Judaism that is pretended, to one that is practiced. ~~Only you can be true communicants of our faith who, when praying, speak to God and, when studying Torah, hear God speak to them.~~

4000 years of history have called us to be God's witnesses, as the people of the Bible, and <sup>to be</sup> messengers of His Law, the foundation of our security, dignity and freedom.  
Let us make sure <sup>that we</sup> Jews know the message and let our lives witness to our beliefs.

Amen

DRAFT OF ROSH HASHONAH SERMON

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who kept us alive, sustained us and brought us unto this day.

I ought to add to this beautiful, traditional blessing which we recite upon celebrating a major festivity, a special, private blessing.

~~On a strictly personal level~~ This Rosh Hashonah marks a minor anniversary in my relationship with you. It is the fifth time that I have ~~had~~ the privilege of ushering in the New Year with you. There is a prayer in my heart for all of you, for your health and well being. As I look around I am conscious of the presence in this Congregation of many young people at whose Bar Mitzvah or Confirmation I officiated, ~~of many young~~ couples whom I ~~have~~ united in marriage or whose marriage I blessed from this pulpit, ~~of~~ ~~many~~ new members who ~~have~~ joined our Congregation in recent years and ~~of~~ many families of long standing membership whom I ~~have come to~~ know better <sup>now</sup> ~~as I came to share~~ <sup>after sharing</sup> their joys and sorrows in the course of these years. I take pleasure in the thought that I am no longer a newcomer in your midst. As I look around, I see ever so many whose faces are familiar as regular participants in our weekly Sabbath services--and <sup>at last, I am also aware of those</sup> ~~I also see those many~~ <sup>of</sup> others/whom I can say that I have seen them here at least five times since my arrival in 1969.

Tonight I'm struck by the contrast between the predominant mood of this year and that of previous years. During the last several years, a whole cluster of problems clamored for our attention: the youth revolt, the drug scene, the crisis-torn Middle East, the endless fighting in Southeast Asia, the pathetic struggle of Soviet Jewry for basic human rights.

This year, one single issue dominates our thinking, our conversation, our concern.

Watergate monopolizes our attention and not merely because the mass media have featured it so prominently. Like Adam and Eve after eating the forbidden fruit suddenly realized that they were naked, so Americans, all of a sudden, find themselves exposed, shamed and humiliated. Down at the pit of our stomachs is a terrible feeling of letdown. A system of government, deeply believed by us <sup>to</sup> be the finest ever conceived by the mind of man, has been shaken to its foundation.

Do you remember the medieval Jewish legend of the golem? The golem was a robot, created out of clay, giant size, and brought to life through the great and saintly, miracle-working Rabbi Loew of Prague. God revealed to Rabbi Loew the secret of animating the robot as well as putting an end to him if that was necessary. After inscribing, with certain blessings, upon the robot's forehead the Hebrew word  $\aleph \ mem \ tav$  which means "truth" and consists of three letters, aleph, mem and tav, the golem would spring into life and do the rabbi's bidding. After performing numerous tasks for the benefit of the hard pressed Jewish community of Prague, the golem one day got out of hand and Rabbi Loew was forced to destroy him. He did it by erasing from his forehead the first letter, aleph, which turned the word "truth" into the word "death." Instantly, the golem disintegrated.

*Strip away its mythological features*  
and there is a profound message in the ancient legend: ~~Take away truth or integrity from the head of the giant, whom we may name America, and the colossus collapses.~~ *The giant's strength depends on truth. Take truth away and the power is gone, the giant is dead. It is that way with some of the great movements and institutions in history. They grow and grow as long <sup>as</sup> truth is in them. Without it, they are doomed.*

Although the courts have not yet rendered the verdict, it appears to many Americans as though the marks of truth had vanished from the *Presidency* ~~countenance of the President~~ and the highest officials of the land.

We are deeply apprehensive that this great nation might <sup>begin to</sup> disintegrate with the general loss of trust and confidence between the different levels of authority and then, between the people at large. What would happen to a world whose peace and stability rest upon the precarious balance of power, if one of the principal nations, namely ours, can no longer be counted upon to hold up its share of responsibility? And what may we expect internally when patriotism and a sense of all embracing national unity and purpose, already in perilous decline, must suffer the

*was prepared for* shock of seeing <sup>simply</sup> the highest national leadership, bound by solemn oath to maintain law and order, ~~the~~ plotters of sordid crimes, conspirators in burglaries, architects of deceit! How will all this affect John Doe's resolve to live as a law abiding citizen, <sup>2</sup> ~~and to file an honest income tax return?~~ What happens to the moral will of little people when their leaders exhibit contempt for law? How long will the arms and legs stay clean when the head is filthy? *none of us*

Now, you don't have to be the world's greatest psychologist to recognize that there is another side to the Watergate scandal. If candor be the rule of the day, as it must at this time of soul searching, we might detect within ourselves a trace of glee at this whole ugly affair. It is difficult to deny that the invisible "imposter" within us, namely the shady side of our own character, is simply delighted that the labels

of delinquency and corruption can be pinned prominently upon people other than ourselves. In fact, the wicked heart ~~within is full of~~

<sup>within</sup> smiles that the glaring searchlight of moral scrutiny has been turned away from us and now focuses upon those higher-ups who <sup>have acted so scandalously,</sup> ~~guilty as they~~

~~may be of the specific malfeasance with which they are charged,~~ might now, in addition, be blamed for everything else that's wrong with the country, with our way of life, even with ourselves.

Some months ago in mid-year <sup>it was reported that a</sup> ~~a cartoon appeared depicting a~~ bearded man, <sup>had placed himself in front of a Synagogue, holding up</sup> ~~holding up~~ a large placard, on which were inscribed the words:

"Repent now; avoid the Yom Kippur rush!"

There isn't a rabbi in the country who wouldn't welcome a more even distribution throughout the rest of the year of the massive patronage the synagogue experiences <sup>once a</sup> ~~that one day of the~~ year. In fact, it has often been suggested that if confession and repentance have such drawing power, why not offer it to individual Jews on a daily personal basis, just like the confessional of the Catholic church?

There is no use trying. We know it wouldn't work with us. When it comes to repentance, we do not seek it on an individual basis. We prefer to take our repentance together, collectively. It accords with one of the deepest insights of Judaism, namely that, morally speaking, we are all involved and implicated ~~xx~~ one with the other. The Talmud states it in the often-quoted principle <sup>אדם אדם אחיו</sup>

"All of Israel are responsible, one for the other."



Let us apply this principle now to the nation and say: All Americans, Jews, Christians and those of no faith, share responsibility for the moral climate of our land. I should like to suggest to you how certain character failings in the principle figures of the Watergate scandal, far from being exceptions in an ethically pure nation, are actually representative of a widespread, sub-surface, moral corruption which may be even more destructive than the well publicized delinquencies among our higher ups.



---hope! It comes from "kav" which means line, cord. Tikvah describes that mental process by which we recognize continuity, a line, between past, present and future. Or, if you will, a connection between ourselves and powers outside. The sin of despair is that it refuses to recognize <sup>the</sup> continuity and connection ~~with~~ <sup>of</sup> our personal existence with other powers and developments which may greatly change things

for us. ~~The pessimist is a self centered egotist who sees himself in isolation and a man alone makes a mighty small package.~~

We may define

Hope as the ability to see oneself within a larger context. ~~It is the~~

state of mind that sees ~~a~~ a connection between yesterday, today and tomorrow. A path into a meaningful future is possible only for those who have had a meaningful past.

What is the difference between hope and wishful thinking? Wishful thinking is the baseless assumption, unjustified by previous experience, <sup>wonderful will happen</sup> that something, for example, a street cleaner who keeps looking for a million dollars in the garbage. There's really nothing in his previous experience to give rise to such hopes. But hope, real hope, is an act of faith rooted in a knowledge of the past, a line that evolves from one reality and stretches to another. For example, the hope of the ill for recovery is not ~~these~~ wishful thinking, but an expectation justified by some previous experience of health regained. ~~There is no illness from which recovery has never been reported.~~ Our hope for universal love, for brotherhood, for peace -- these hopes are not items of wishful thinking, but hopes grounded in some experience, however, limited, in which we tasted love, felt the strength of brotherhood and witnessed the beauty of reconciliation and the joy of peace. Do not mix up hope with wishful thinking. Hope is not fanciful imagination. Hope is the

realism of faith. Hope belongs to the man who knows that there is a line of meaningful development from the past through the present into the future.

### 3. Mutual Encouragement

I wonder if you can see in this light the high therapeutic value

~~of cultivating the practice of thanksgiving in~~  
of ~~the religious association~~ I mean worship. People banding together  
*are collectively remembering redemptive experiences in the past as the basis of their*  
in congregational prayer ~~are sharing~~ confidence and hope. ~~I wonder if~~  
*for the future.*

*Because of your reliance on God*  
~~you realize that~~ the characteristic mental climate of a religious service

*is joyfully expectant attitude*  
is ~~direction~~ toward the future. Are not most of our prayers stimulants

to resolution, articulation of great hopes, the voicing of beautiful visions? Is not every worship assembly a pooling of hopes, a time to reconfirm our belief that strife will not forever divide mankind, that justice will rule in the end, that integrity and goodness are not in vain, that a spirit of reason will lead us into a brighter future, that the world will not end with an explosion but rise to a higher order of relations among men?

### Conclusion

I believe it was Napoleon who once said: "There are no hopeless situations; there are only men who have grown hopeless about them."

The first step in seeking release from the choking grip of hopelessness is to realize that the unwelcome circumstances surrounding us are not permanent. Nothing in life is permanent. If you have only one more tomorrow, you have hope.

The second step is to see the larger picture. During the Battle of Waterloo in which Napoleon's army was decisively defeated, a British officer stormed into the tent of the Duke of Wellington and exclaimed with terror in his voice:

"Sir, we have been beaten. Napoleon's forces are upon us."

The Duke ~~calmly~~ turned to the officer and said: ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

"Young man, get yourself a bigger map, and you will see that we have won the battle."

Get yourself a bigger map in life. Look beyond the present moment. See things in the larger context and some of your momentary difficulties may turn out to be stepping stones toward future victories.

The third step in the recovery of hope is to surround yourself with people whose hopes you can share. *whose memory of salvation in the past and for the future* Hopefulness, my friends, is, if I may say so, a mutual fund. *Every worship assembly is a ballot cast for an improved future*

We're not the first generation to believe that there has never been a time more difficult than ours. There's never been a finer response to despair and hopelessness than that of Isaiah whose days were full of calamity:  
  
"If ye will not confide, ye shall not abide. Hope is life and life is hope.  
  
AMEN

Omit

Hope is the indispensable fuel of life. It generates the inner light, warmth and power.

Earlier, we quoted the adage: As long as there is life, there is hope. It is equally true in reverse:

As long as there is hope, there is life —

For man's a dreamer ever,  
He plimpses the hills afar  
And plans for the things out yonder  
Where all his tomorrows are.

Amen

*Marked*

Yom Kippur  
9 Tishri, 5746

*Connected on Word Process*

**WHY I AM A JEW**

By Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman  
Washington Hebrew Congregation  
September 24, 1985

~~If the human conscience could break forth in song, the Kol Nidre would be its ideal melody. It is a creation of genius, an unsurpassed expression of the soul's yearning for rehabilitation, and restoration of all our relationships with beloved ones, with our people and with God. The text of the Kol Nidre is a confession. Collectively, as a people, and individually we confess that we have fallen short of many promises and broken many resolutions.~~ It is in the confessional spirit of this sacred night that I wish to speak on a most personal topic, one I have never dealt with before but whose time has surely come. In this, my last year as a congregational rabbi, I believe I owe my people a kind of spiritual summing up and tonight's topic will be the first in a series of deeply personal statements of faith which I have planned for this year.

*tonight*  
My topic is:

Why I am a Jew.

*Since time immemorial, the kol nidre chant of confession has set the mood of this sacred night.*

Jewishness is Destiny

In my childhood, I would have answered simply: I am a Jew because I was born so. My Jewish birth was a primary facet of my existence, ~~as obvious and beyond question as the fact that I was born into the Caucasian race and male, rather than female.~~ My parents, my whole family, were Jewish, and therefore I, too, was Jewish -- and that was that!

This fact has remained the foundation of my Jewish consciousness. Jewishness is destiny, ~~or chosenness.~~ My Jewish identity was pre-determined for me, ~~by all my ancestors going back to the creation of the people of Israel.~~ I was present in the genes of those Israelites who stood at Mount Sinai to confirm their covenant with God. ~~Even~~ Centuries earlier, I must have been encompassed among the descendants of Abraham who was told by God: "I will make of thee a great nation. . ." At that time, nearly 4,000 years ago, you and I <sup>all of us who were born Jews, we</sup> were all pre-destined for our identity, chosen, or if you will, drafted for a special role in history.

Now, there are some deeply troubled Jews who, <sup>given</sup> ~~under the~~ ~~influence of parents with~~ negative attitudes toward their own <sup>by their parents,</sup> identity, think of Jewishness as a birth defect, as a stigma. I was most fortunate. Somehow, my parents succeeded in conveying to me ~~at a very early point in life,~~ the feeling that being

Jewish was the best thing that could have happened to me. They marked our home with a big mezuzah, which taught me to acknowledge my Jewishness publicly. Our table conversation often touched on great Jewish artists, scientists, writers or other Jewish celebrities who made the news. ~~They~~ <sup>our parents</sup> spoke of the heroic achievements of ~~Jewish~~ <sup>our</sup> pioneers in Palestine. They gave ~~me~~ <sup>us</sup> a strong sense of pride of being part of a wonderful, ~~highly~~ gifted, supremely successful people of superior character.

### The Challenge of Anti-semitism

Soon, events proved how much I needed this inoculation of self-esteem. Within the first few years of elementary school, I must have been seven or eight years old, I experienced my first daily barrage of anti-Semitic ~~taunts.~~ <sup>abuse.</sup> Several classmates made it a practice to shout after me such endearing terms as "dirty Jew, Jewish pig, and Christ-killer." Had I been less fortified from within, these abuses would have had a shattering effect. In my case, I looked upon my persecutors as fools and the scum of the earth. My reaction was not "What's wrong with me?" but "What's wrong with them?" -- very much like any healthy-minded young American today would react if a gang of aliens called him "dirty American" or "American pig." ~~I~~ I would, however, be a liar if I <sup>told you</sup> ~~denied the anger and the distress with which~~ I ran my daily gauntlet of anti-Semitic name calling. Having been told by my

This is the test of a healthy response to bigotry. When attacked, don't question yourself: What's wrong with me? But ask, what's wrong with them? ~~I~~

parents that Christ was a Jew, I thought I ought to tell this news to the priest of the large Roman Catholic Church opposite our school where all my Christian classmates went to worship.

The priest, in his clerical collar and long black cassock coat, was good enough to listen, shook his head and mumbled something. ~~The next day, I went to school with high hopes~~ ~~I remember my great hope the next day that, now, his young parishioners would be duly enlightened and cured of their hostility. But, when instead, one of my tormentors picked up some rocks to hurl at me together with all the usual exclamations, I was filled with rage, fell upon him and administered to him a ferocious beating.~~ ~~This violent response ended the name-calling for the rest of my elementary school days, even as it made me forfeit any possible claim to saintliness.~~ Ever since, I have been unable to repudiate Jewish militancy in absolute terms, ~~believing, in fact,~~ <sup>in order</sup> that to survive, we need to use our fists as well as our brain.

I reject their Kahane's chauvinism. But, I believe that we must have strength and the will to use it. We must resist our enemies.

I never again had an encounter with anti-Semitism on a physical level, but, every day of my life in Vienna, I experienced this hatred, in one form or the other, as graffiti, or, in ~~or printed insults, threats, and street demonstrations.~~ Many ~~counties, leaflets filled with antisemitic pornography and~~ times I heard Nazi youths chant the Horst Wessel song, Germany's second national anthem, with the spine-chilling line about the German people's joy when seeing Jewish blood spurting from their knives.

\* inset: At that very moment, I must confess, I lost all possible claim to being a saint. However, ....



How did all this affect my Jewishness? I believe very much like Edmond Fleg, the French playwright and author of many books, who told us in his autobiography "Why I am a Jew," how the anti-Semitic storm that raged over France in the wake of the Dreyfus Affair at the turn of the century, challenged him to explore his own Jewish roots.

I, too, had only a few flimsy notions of what Judaism and Jewish history were all about. Anti-Semitism made me curious, ~~about my heritage~~. My teenage Jewish mind ~~cried out for~~ <sup>crawled to</sup> knowledge ~~to~~ <sup>to this</sup> the answer ~~to~~ question:

What inspired Jews to cling to their Jewishness in spite of ceaseless persecution? After all, <sup>we Jews</sup> ~~they~~ were far from fools. What were those great values ~~for which~~ previous generations were willing to die? <sup>for?</sup>

Thus, the question "Why am I a Jew?" became, for me, a still more <sup>personal</sup> ~~challenging~~ question: "Why remain a Jew?"

*New heading*  
~~The Recovery of Self-Esteem Through Jewish Learning~~

Edmond Fleg was married, had a son, one year-old, and a successful play to his credit, ~~when~~ He dropped everything and took three years off to study Judaism. Answers to "Why should I remain a Jew?" could not be invented. These had to be searched

out throughout ~~our~~ history and literature, from the Bible to the present. Edmond Fleg knew that it would take years, and perhaps, a lifetime.

I made a similar commitment at the age of sixteen, when it was, of course, much easier to ~~undertake~~ <sup>engage in concentrated study,</sup> such a search.

*for me*

Providentially, a brilliant scholar of Judaism dropped, so to speak, from heaven, to be my private tutor. My uncle, Arje, a reform rabbi with a Ph.D. degree in Philosophy, was driven out of Berlin by Adolf Hitler ~~in the mid-30's~~ <sup>He</sup> and came to live in our

home for a <sup>whole</sup> year. He introduced me into a study of the Bible in the original Hebrew and showed me the Biblical roots of Western civilization: the sanctity of life, the ideal of one mankind,

the idea that all human beings have God-given rights, especially the birthright of freedom. He showed me <sup>how all these ideas are related to the</sup> ~~with many examples from~~ Bible and ~~our history~~ <sup>prew out of our historic experience and</sup> how Jews have been among the foremost partisans of

freedom, <sup>as</sup> bearing out Heinrich Heine's ~~remark that~~ <sup>said:</sup>

*We never forget our bondage in Egypt and the experience of liberation which has been an inspiration to all freedom fighters in Western history,*

"Ever since the Exodus, freedom has spoken with a Hebrew accent."

With his encyclopedic knowledge, Uncle Arje could <sup>pik-</sup> point ~~to~~ the enormous Jewish role in all of the cultural breakthroughs of Western civilization -- in medicine, in

navigation, in the transmission of ancient philosophy, and in the development of all the sciences. What I learned gave me reasons for pride -- and so,

*So often despised by our enemies*

I am a Jew because my studies convinced me that Judaism, the stone so often rejected<sup>"</sup> by our ~~enemies~~<sup>in fact</sup>, is the chief cornerstone of our civilization.

### The Jew Is His Own Priest

Is there a Jew who grew up in the Christian world who has not asked himself: Why are they so many, and we so few?

Why remain part of a people which, except for the state of Israel, is a minority everywhere? Even in lands where we are most populous, we number no more than three per cent of the total population. <sup>I asked myself:</sup> Could one billion Christians be wrong? Why belong to a tiny minority, ~~religion which numbers~~ no more than 15 million, about <sup>one third</sup> ~~one half~~ of one percent of the world's population?

One can make a good case for the argument that the majority is not necessarily superior to the minority. After all, there are tons of <sup>black</sup> coal for every <sup>sparkling</sup> karat of diamonds. Philosophers are vastly outnumbered by street cleaners. In the field of religion, the Jews are God's officers' corps.

This became clear to me after a memorable visit to the St. Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna's majestic landmark. I believe, it

was a public organ recital that first drew me into this massive shrine of Christendom which took nearly one thousand years to build.

~~complete, and~~ Once inside, I stayed for the service. It was very dark. ~~Mighty~~ <sup>Huge</sup> columns raised the ceiling sky-high. Large crowds

of worshippers walked ~~quietly~~ in and out. Those who sat down or kneeled, hardly spoke a word. They listened ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> the clergy <sup>who</sup> prayed

for them. <sup>had begun</sup> I was then nearly 18 years old and thinking about becoming a rabbi. <sup>so I was very interested in</sup> The splendidly attired priests and the many

acolytes, walking in measured steps, were impressive. Everywhere I looked, I saw different altars, sculptures, paintings of the

madonna and saints, <sup>in</sup> ~~reflecting~~ the glow of countless candles. What got across to me was the splendour, the opulence and the

power of the church which made the individual worshipper feel <sup>so small,</sup> so insignificant, <sup>so</sup> and totally dependent. It was as though the church

said to its people: You are too small, too weak and too insignificant to be heard. <sup>by God.</sup> You need the mighty Church to speak

for you. <sup>We shall</sup> ~~Come, and we shall~~ mediate between you and ~~Mighty~~ God. <sup>you must pray through us to the Almighty,</sup>

The next day, I went to the synagogue. It was far from awesome. Only occasional moments of solemnity would break the

prevailing mood of informality. Here, my fellow Jews, wrapped in their tallism, <sup>swaying and</sup> ~~were saying~~ and singing their prayers. Among the

crowd ~~of men standing together,~~ it was difficult to single out the rabbi or cantor. I noticed an inscription above the ark:

⊗ What an honor and what a responsibility it is. How it hurts, how ashamed I am that so few of our Jews qualify.

"Know before Whom thou standest."

This dramatically underscored ~~for me~~ the difference between the Synagogue and the Church, between Judaism and Christianity. Every Jew stands directly before God. <sup>There is no barrier.</sup> There is no need for mediating institutions. We can pray without clergy. The synagogue is not designed to overpower the individual with the feeling that he must depend on the institution or the rabbi to represent him before the Almighty. The Jew must be his own priest, <sup>⊗</sup> which makes being Jewish <sup>is</sup> ~~very~~ difficult. To be halfway competent and knowledgeable as a Jew, takes years of concentrated learning. . . . and that makes us an elitist religion.

What a privilege I thought it would be to spend my life helping fellow Jews realize the ancient vision: "You shall be unto me a kingdom of priest and a holy nation." And so I decided, not ~~merely~~ <sup>only</sup> to be a Jew myself, but also help others realize their full Jewish potential.

I am a Jew because we would not lower our standards low enough to become a religion of the masses. <sup>✓</sup> ~~Instead,~~ We raised our requirements to make Judaism the faith of an enlightened minority.

I grant that there is need for a simple religion, or several such religions, to prob the masses. Judaism with its rejection of all imposter graphic representations of God is for the intellectually more sophisticated.

It is more than being comfortable with my fellow Jews. I admire my people. Some of my colleagues tell me that they love Judaism, but hate Jews. I am amazed that they chose to be rabbis. *J*

### In Love With My People

My forty years in the rabbinate have given me another reason for wanting to be a Jew. <sup>I hope you won't think of it as maudlin. But the truth is:</sup> I am a Jew because I love Jews! So many of the most admirable people in the world are Jews. Some are people I have met, others are historical personalities I have encountered in my studies.

Among the Jews I came to love was a 92 year-old little lady in my first congregation, Aunt Minnie Brown, of the Gates of Heaven Temple in Mobile, Alabama. She prayed with a smile. To her, the words of Torah or of the prayerbook, were precious gems. ~~She was all kindness and generosity.~~ She embodied our ideal of tzedakah. For example, she would walk several miles to Temple so that she might save <sup>the bus fare</sup> ~~a few coins~~ and then put <sup>a few coins</sup> ~~this money~~ into a special little <sup>purse</sup> ~~wallet~~ as ~~additional~~ charity money for the next distribution.

I am a Jew because I love charitable Jews like Minnie Brown.

I am thinking of an 18 year-old refugee, Egon Loebner, whom I helped bring to this country at the end of the war. Egon, a native of Czechoslovakia, survived a dozen concentration camps and a death march during which tens of thousands of Jewish children perished. Egon, though deprived of all formal education for five years, managed to study secretly ~~by~~

~~candlelight~~ from scraps of printed material and learned from older inmates enough science and philosophy so that, upon arrival in the U.S.A., he could go straight on to college.

He earned his doctorate in Physics and after a spectacular career in industry, became the science adviser to our U.S. Embassy in Moscow with ambassadorial rank. In order to repay his debt to the Jewish people, he taught Sunday school wherever he lived, <sup>He</sup> even organized a religious school ~~for Jewish personnel~~ at the embassy in Moscow.

I am a Jew because I love valiant Jews, as brilliant and loyal as Egon Loebner.

The historian Cecil Roth tells of a luminous incident in one of the darkest moments of our history. It was the year 1492, King Ferdinand of Aragon expelled the Jews from his subject kingdom of Sicily, as he had done earlier in Spain. Before they left, the local Jewish communities of Sicily, presented a petition to the government, asking for certain concessions, some of them pitifully small. They asked, for example, to be allowed to take with them, the tallith used in prayer. This was refused. Then they asked, -- and this request was granted, -- that those of their slaves whom they have set free in happier days, should be allowed to retain their liberty.

At the culmination of their own agony, they thought of the misery of others.

And this is only one of many great moments in Jewish history which should make us glow with pride and admiration.

*I am a Jew because we are a compassionate people of noble lineage, a people who having experienced slavery came to prize freedom for itself and for all humanity.*  
*(center heading) → A MORAL AND SPIRITUAL ELITE*  
Professor William Foxwell Albright of Johns Hopkins

University who did not know a Jew until he was 21 (but *changed quickly* ~~made up~~ *he moved* ~~coming~~ to Baltimore) said:

"Jews tend to have a more intelligent attitude toward education and culture and also to have a keener feeling for moral and social problems."

*And don't we know that!*

The statistical evidence is so overwhelming that the novelist-scientist, C.P. Snow, was driven to the conclusion that Jews are a racially superior people. Whatever the explanation, be it the genius of our culture or the Jewish genes, Jews are a unique people.

*If somehow, all Jews disappeared except for a few individuals, every major museum would want to exhibit a Jew for all the world to gaze at.*

We are an ~~elitist~~ *extraordinary* people, intellectually and morally.

I am a Jew because the more I learned the more I came to admire my people.



I am a Jew because I discovered Judaism as the most direct channel to God.

I am a Jew because I love Jews.

WHAT KIND OF JEW WILL YOU BE?

Justice Louis Brandeis said that his only regret about having been born Jewish was that, as a result, he never had the honor ~~opportunity~~ of choosing to be a Jew.

For you who are Jews by birth, the choice is not, ~~to~~ to be a Jew, but what kind of Jew to be. What kind of Jew do you choose to be?

Will you be empty and alienated from our heritage, or be part of it and filled with it?

When a Torah scribe finishes the writing of a new Torah scroll, he does not write out the last column, but merely traces with an extra fine pen the outlines of each letter. At the dedication celebration of the scroll, members of the Congregation are called to the Torah and each fills in with black ink the inside of his letter.

Will  
This is what I pray you ~~would~~ do with your own Jewish identity. Your Jewishness was conferred upon you as a mere outline, <sup>as</sup> a form of belonging. <sup>That's what you received at birth.</sup> Now, each of you must fill in ~~this form~~ with the rich content of Jewish learning and living. I call your spiritual inside -- Jewish knowledge, feeling, learning and living. That is not given to us at birth. That we must build up for ourselves. P

I know why I am a Jew, but will you know why? P

I call on you to give meaning to your own Jewishness.

Begin ~~fill your mind~~ with Jewish knowledge, and keep increasing it day by day.

A revival of Jewish learning and spirituality is now happening throughout the world.

Join the ~~thousands~~ hundreds of our own members who have made Jewish study commitments in recent years.

Come to know your heritage, and already privileged to be if you are a Jew by birth, become also a Jew by choice, on the strength of informed convictions.

Amen

(A)

(3)

& also the unique benefit

This point brings out the core difference of

It is precisely on this point that the traditional marriage ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> all other relationships. The long term relationship or as long as we both shall live. It is like a health insurance policy that is automatically cancelled in case of illness. What makes marriage great is that it is <sup>you need marriage most when you are</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>in trouble, in</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>defeat, feel</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>generally abandoned.</sup>

Its basis is much broader than mutual enjoyment.

Its greatest benefit is the help and care & love you can still count on <sup>when everything goes wrong</sup> when you aren't so lovable, <sup>and</sup> when you cannot give you <sup>mutual</sup> ~~mutual~~ enjoyment.

The key word in ~~is~~ reciprocal willingness - no, that's too weak a word, determination to give & to sacrifice which makes it the most demanding but also most rewarding relationship.

The June 1955 issue of Psychology Today magazine featured an article "Marriage Made to Last" based on a survey of couples who have stayed married 15 years or more. <sup>According to several respondents</sup> A major factor in the durability of a ~~solid~~ marriage is ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> persistence the determination to work thru difficult times. Said a man, married over 20 years "Commitment means a willingness to be unhappy for a while"

Rosh Hash. 1985

ON BEING A FULL<sup>2</sup>-JEW INSIDE

Joshua O. Heberman

**Your Annual Check Up**

The story is told about a teenager who rather nervously entered a drug store, asked the proprietor to change a quarter, hurried into a telephone booth and dialed a number. He left the door of the booth opened a little and, as a result, the druggist couldn't help overhearing the conversation:

"Hello, is this 362-3344? . . . It is? . . . May I talk to the boss? . . . Oh, you are the boss! Well, then can you tell me, do you need a good office boy? . . . You say you have a good one? . . . Well, wouldn't you like to make a change? . . . You say you don't care to make a change? . . . I see, that's alright, thank you!"

The young fellow was about to walk out when the druggist stopped him:

"I'm really sorry you didn't get that job -- better luck next time!"

"Thank you for your interest," said the young man, "but I've got the job, anyhow."

Rosh Hashanah Eve  
1st Tishri, 5746

### INSIDE-OUTSIDE

By Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman  
Washington Hebrew Congregation  
Sunday, September 15, 1985

Tonight, I stand in this pulpit very much aware that this will be the last High Holy Day season which I shall be privileged to conduct as your Senior Rabbi. I am full of mixed emotions. Yes, on the one hand, there is great reluctance to change a relationship so fulfilling and it makes me sad to think that this, too, must end. On the other hand, I am happy that I reached my decision in the best possible frame of mind. I am grateful to God that it was not because of ill-health or ill-will or, God forbid a Congregational crisis. But, quite to the contrary things have gone so well that, having reached most of the goals I set for myself sixteen years ago, I now feel free to turn to new goals, to new and, to me, irresistible challenges for which I must free myself from all present duties.

I look forward to sitting in your midst, next to Maxine and my family, at future High Holy Days and many a Sabbath. Until then, however, there is still much preaching and teaching for me to do this year -- and I shall do it with undiminished enthusiasm.

"What do you mean?" -- asked the druggist.

"You see," said the boy, "that was my own boss I was talking to. I was only checking up on myself."

Every person wants to find out where he stands. We all need a mental and moral check up no less than a physical checkup. The High Holy Days meet this need for inventory, for stock-taking, for an inner check up. And for those who come only this one time a year, I say: this is your annual check up!

It is known as Cheshbon Ha-Nefesh, the accounting of the soul or self-judgment. How can you get the greatest possible benefit from such a check up?

In the first place, you must be convinced that you really need this exercise for your own inner well being. Look at it this way: our souls get adulterated, cluttered with the debris of unrealized plans and intentions, broken resolutions, betrayals and infidelities. Face the fact that each of us has to clean up his act. But, bear in mind: we are often the poorest judges of our own life, and we do worse in trying to judge others.

### Appearance and Reality

In this connection, the Bible brings us valuable insight. The prophet Samuel was told to choose, as King over Israel, the best qualified of the son's of Jesse. So, Samuel lined up seven young brothers, all sons of Jesse, to make his choice. His eye fell on Eliab, and he liked what he saw. Eliab was the oldest, the tallest and the most impressive one in the family. He was about to say, this is our man, when God put Samuel straight:

"Look not on his face or height. . . people look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."  
(I Sam. 16.7)

We must not be deceived by appearances. A person inside may be very different from what he appears on the outside.

We are trained at an early age to make impressions. My mother, God bless her soul, when presenting her darling son and daughter to friends, always whispered to us below her breath: SMILE -- even when we had nothing to smile about. Later I learned, as everyone else, to bow to social etiquette, which makes us look interested in company, when actually bored, and to

say "I am sorry" - even when we feel no regret or, "thank you" even when feeling no gratitude, just for the sake of a courteous appearance.

~~Tonight friends,~~ we must wipe off the veneer of our pretenses and face ourselves the way we are. ~~Tonight~~ we must become aware of the gap between outward appearance and inner reality.

It is not easy to face oneself in the mirror of absolute truth. Rare is a person like Cromwell who ordered the artist to paint his portrait "with warts" and all.

The Cheshbon Ha-Nefesh, is a painful process. In the search light of uncompromising truth, many a giant shrinks into a dwarf. Many who maintain an outward appearance of such poise, confidence and success, in their own heart know wherein they have failed and how full of fears they are. This is your opportunity to reassess your position, your occupation, your ambition. This is your chance to have a look at yourself in relationship to your family and co-workers. Reaching inward, you will come in touch with the real being that is you. If you make that silent confessional review of your life, you might emerge



liberated from the heavy burden of pretending. You will then have reached the first major goal of this sacred day which is also known as Yom Ha-din, the day of judgment.

### **T'Shuvah -- Recovery of Your Better Self**

What is the second major goal? It is making good on the decisions that are shaping up in our minds. It is going through with real changes in our behavior, in our treatment of others. This process is known as T'shuvah, return to something good and noble within, the recovery of our better self.

Our youngest grandson, Jonathan is wild about a toy which has flooded the market. It is called a transformer. The thing may at first look like a miniature car, but if you move this or that part one way or the other, presto, the car is transformed into a robot.

It is all so quick and easy. But, a character transformation, my friends, is a very difficult process. Yet it is possible. We believe in the possibility of self-transcendence. We believe in the power of any person to be virtually reborn.

We Jews are optimists. That is why we change the Torah covers to white on the High Holy Days in keeping with Isaiah's sentence:

"Though your sins be red as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." (Is. 1.18)

Never say it is too late.

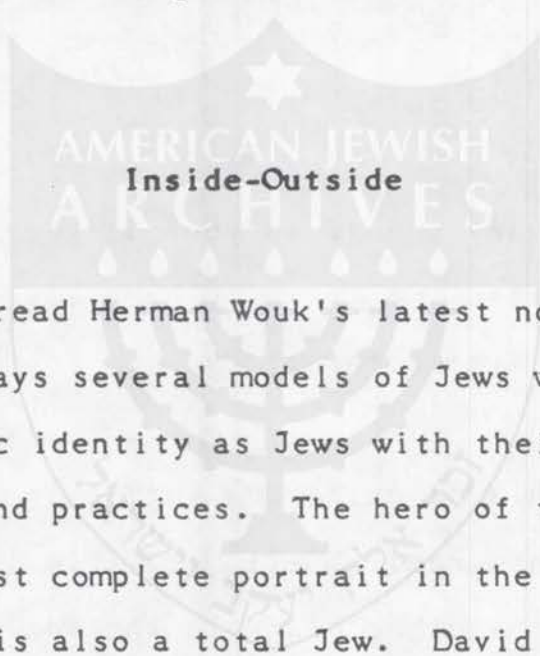
If you consider any change in your life or character, what counts is the first step. A traveler once asked a townsman in a strange and isolated little town:

"What is this place famous for?" The native thought and then answered: "Well Mr., this is a good starting point for any other place in the world."

So is this hour. This is a good starting point for a new beginning. It is a time for decision, a time to boost your will to make changes with confidence that change is always possible.

The German romantic poet, Novalis, once said, "character is a perfectly educated will."

Judaism, addresses itself to the will. It is an education in moral discipline. It is not just a collection of concepts or beliefs. It is a tradition of values, a way of life, a moral system built on deep foundations of belief. But, it is nothing, it is less than useless, if it is not internalized and integrated into our thinking and feeling



AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES  
Inside-Outside

This summer I read Herman Wouk's latest novel, "Inside-Outside." It portrays several models of Jews who are trying to balance their public identity as Jews with their private and personal feelings and practices. The hero of the novel, David Goodkind, is the most complete portrait in the English language of an American who is also a total Jew. David Goodkind, a successful tax attorney, is finishing off his duties as a special adviser to President Nixon in the closing days of Watergate. The White House is in a state of paralysis, and so, Goodkind has time to write his memoirs. What we now read is a typical American success story, that is, on the outside, the witty, sophisticated David Goodkind, graduate of Columbia University, fits perfectly well into the executive chamber of the corporate world. He is perfectly at ease with the high and the mighty. Yet, inside,

David Goodkind is Jewish to the core. He has internalized and integrated his heritage. It is part of his character and personality. Wouk's anecdotal description of family occasions is a minor encyclopedia of Judaism; he takes us into the Yeshiva world where young David soaked up a solid Jewish education including fluency in Talmud which, incidentally, arouses the intense curiosity and respect of the President. Once, walking into Goodkind's office, the President finds his able assistant poring over a folio page of the Talmud with his head properly bedecked with a yarmulke. Goodkind explains the Talmud and the reader is likely to be fascinated.

I was intrigued by a report in the New York Times that this highly amusing and informative portrayal of a full-blooded, one hundred percent Jew was the reading choice of Frank Borman, president and chief executive of Eastern Airlines and Donald E. Petersen, chairman and chief executive of the Ford Motor Company, not to mention other non-Jewish celebrities and countless readers who have kept the book on the national best sellers list for months. What does this say to us?

It says that the public is not interested in the Jew who is like everybody else, but in the Jewish Jew who is

distinctive and different in his beliefs, culture and mentality; who reflects the thoughts and values of a 4,000 year old tradition; who has something to say to people in search of a purpose; who has something to say to a world in chaos, looking for order and security, to a world that is morally decadent and wondering how to be rehabilitated. Only a Jew who knows his heritage might be able to contribute something special, something that is sorely missing in our civilization.

I want to challenge you tonight to become Jews inside as surely as you are Jews outside.

### **The New Jewish Assertiveness**

In the nearly forty years of my life as an American rabbi, I have seen a significant change in the attitude of American Jews to their Jewishness and especially so in response to anti-semitism.

Before World War II, our instinctive reaction under attack was to become inconspicuous and, if possible, invisible. Those were the days when Jews suffered humiliating restrictions in

universities, housing, resorts, and the professions. Some of our leaders in their dubious wisdom, saw to it that Fortune Magazine, in the late 30's, published a lengthy article about American Jews in refutation of the anti-Semitic charge that Jews dominated American life. The point of the article which was loaded with statistics was one prolonged orgy of self-deprecation:

No, no, -- we don't dominate society . . .

No, no, we don't dominate any major trade or industry.

No, no, we aren't as important as you make us out to be. . . , and so forth.

In my opinion, that article was a low point, perhaps the most shameful point in American Jewish history -- a lapse of self-esteem, a gratuitous self-debasement, as though anti-Semites would like us better if we were less capable and less successful.

Those were the days when Jews tried to hide their Jewishness like the plague. It was a rich topic for humor such as Goldberg running into his old buddy, Cohen, many years after graduation from college:

"Goldberg, am I glad to see you!" shouted Cohen.  
"Tell me, what have you been doing?"

"Oh, I'm married and have two children."

"You don't say?" said Cohen. "What kind of a living do you make?"

"I'm a lawyer and doing very well. I'm a partner in the firm of O'Brian and Sullivan on Wall Street."

"What a surprise!" said Cohen.

"I've got a bigger surprise," said Goldberg,  
"I am O'Brian!"

Those were the days when our people were looking for cover. Some of our own people even capitulated to the quota system and its implied second class citizenship. The highly esteemed Walter Lippmann, in a memorandum to Harvard University's admissions office in 1922 agreed that it would be undesirable to allow (I quote) "a concentration of Jews in excess of 15%." I, myself, heard the Dean of the Cincinnati University Medical School, himself a Jew, defend the medical school's anti-Jewish admissions policy because, as he said: "on the basis of academic scores alone, Jews would outnumber all other students."

Today, Jews are proud and affirmative. The post-war generation will not accept religious or ethnic restrictions. If we predominate in any field, we don't apologize. It's to our credit and surely not our problem.

Today, Jews don't mind being visible. Ethnicity,

distinctiveness is in. America has moved far away from the melting pot ideal of the 1920's to appreciation of religious and cultural diversity, which we call "pluralism." The popular author, Irving Wallace, grew up in the melting pot period and so he changed his original family name, Wallechinsky, to Wallace. His son, David, co-author with his father of the enormously successful "Book of Lists" and "The People's Almanac," recently discarded his Americanized name, Wallace, and took back the original family name, Wallechinsky.

Countless of our young people, in contrast with their parents and grandparents, like to visibly identify themselves as Jews, often with a star of David or mezuzah or even with a yarmulka, for all to see.

### **The Inner Void**

Yes, they are proud and assertive, but I'm troubled by a question: What are they asserting? What are they proud of? What do they know? How much Judaism is **inside** the person who presents himself so affirmatively as a Jew **outside**?



I often see a woeful emptiness.

Most of our adults have graduate degrees from universities, but only a smattering of Jewish knowledge -- disjointed memories of holiday celebrations and a few trivia of Jewish history -- hardly enough to keep up with a fourth grader in our Sunday School. The vast majority of our adults are Jewish illiterates. To most of us the Bible, the Talmud, the law codes and commentaries and the works of our philosophers are as remote as Egyptian hieroglyphics. Uncertain of your beliefs, many of you here tonight have no coherent world-view, no spiritual anchor.

I wonder how many parents who let their children make their own decisions in religious and moral matters, are merely rationalizing their abdication of authority as "tolerance". Are you so tolerant and permissive because of your high respect for the moral and intellectual caliber of your children? Or, are you tolerant and permissive as parents because you lack moral convictions of your own, and so cannot but maintain a neutrality of values?

### **Surrender to the "New Morality"**

It is now well over twenty years that the new morality began to permeate the middle and upper-middle classes and no one took to it more rapidly than our super-liberal Jews.

We swallowed all the cliches of the era and offered no resistance when some of our sons and daughters began to drop out of higher education; when they asserted the right to "hang loose" for indefinite periods; when they stretched out the allowance into full maintenance in apartments of their own; when they boldly asserted their new sexual freedom. Many parents, despite misgivings, provided contraceptive counsel and abortion assistance but kept silent on the moral issues of sex; when their sons and daughters took to living together with lovers, even those parents who knew in their hearts that it was not right, looked the other way. Many said they didn't want a confrontation with their children. The truth is that they had nothing to confront them with. They had no convictions. They had no moral position of their own. They had no authority to stand on.

Where has this new morality gotten us? The statistics are very grim. In the D.C. school system, the girls dropping out

because of pregnancy outnumber the graduates from high school. In New York City, 37% of all babies born are illegitimate. (1983)

In 1984, one out of four American households was victimized by violent crime. Jews have been swept along by the general moral decadence. To mention but one recent nationwide survey: 27% of all Jewish college-age youth are heavy drug or alcohol users.

Is it not time to develop some doubts about the wisdom of the new morality? What is it other than moral anarchy?

Must we wait for venereal diseases, including the dreaded AIDS disease, to terrorize our youth into a new respect for the old values? can we not motivate our children positively, as parents should, with well founded moral convictions which are part of a total system of beliefs, within a distinctly Jewish philosophy of life?

Why can't you give this to your children? The answer is because you haven't got it yourself, because you have lost touch with it. The truth is, you don't know your tradition.

### "Fingertip Jews"

Moses Maimonides says:

"There are two kinds of Jew. Those who hold on to their religion, grasping it firmly, like a person will hold on to a rope to keep from drowning. And then, there are those Jews who cling to the Torah only with the tips of their fingers, not enough to be guided and helped by it, just barely enough to keep in touch with their faith." (From his "Letter of Consolation")

We've got a lot of fingertip Jews. But must I say it? More than "fingertip Judaism" is needed to grab us and lead us out of chaos and direct us on a morally sound pathway in life.

In some of our larger cities, developers are getting around the historic building preservation codes by buying out old buildings and gutting them except for the facade -- and then they build the high rises right behind the old buildings. Washington has a few of those facade buildings downtown along Pennsylvania Avenue.

A huge number of our people are, what I would like to call, "Facade Jews." The old historic culture with its moral grandeur has been knocked out. There is nothing left inside. They are Jews on the **outside**, they've got a Jewish facade. But they are empty **inside**.

You may have heard the news that your Board of Directors has decided to redecorate this sanctuary in 1987. Yes, we can build a more beautiful sanctuary for our assemblies and celebrations. But only you can refurbish the sanctuary within your heart. Only you can develop the Jew inside, luminous with knowledge and resonant with the values of our people. Only you can close the gap between what you are, and what you know you should be. Only you can transform the veneer of Judaism into its substance; only you can change from the Judaism that is pretended to one that is practiced.

Four thousand years of history have called us to be God's witness, as the people of the Bible, and to be messengers of His law, the foundation of our security, dignity and freedom. Let us make sure that we Jews know the message and let our lives witness to our beliefs. Amen.

Yom Kippur  
9 Tishri, 5746

### **WHY I AM A JEW**

By Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman  
Washington Hebrew Congregation  
September 24, 1985

Since time immemorial the Kol Nidre chant of confession has set the mood of this sacred night. It is in the confessional spirit of this sacred night that I wish to speak on a most personal topic, one I have never dealt with before but whose time has surely come. In this, my last year as a congregational rabbi, I believe I owe my people a kind of spiritual summing up and tonight's topic will be the first in a series of deeply personal statements of faith which I have planned for this year.

My topic tonight is:

Why I am a Jew.

### **Jewishness is Destiny**

In my childhood, I would have answered simply: I am a Jew because I was born so. My Jewish birth was a primary facet of my

existence. My parents, my whole family, were Jewish, and therefore I, too, was Jewish -- and that was that!

This fact has remained the foundation of my Jewish consciousness. Jewishness is destiny. My Jewish identity was pre-determined for me. I was present in the genes of those Israelites who stood at Mount Sinai to confirm their covenant with God. Centuries earlier, I must have been encompassed among the descendants of Abraham who was told by God: "I will make of thee a great nation. . ." At that time, nearly 4,000 years ago, you and I, all of us who were born Jews, we were all pre-destined for our identity, chosen, or if you will, drafted for a special role in history.

Now, there are some deeply troubled Jews who, given negative attitudes toward their own identity by their parents, think of Jewishness as a birth defect, as a stigma. I was most fortunate. Somehow, my parents succeeded in conveying to me the feeling that being Jewish was the best thing that could have happened to me. They marked our home with a big mezuzah, which taught me to acknowledge my Jewishness publicly. Our table conversation often touched on great Jewish artists, scientists, writers or other Jewish celebrities who made the news. Our

parents spoke of the heroic achievements of our pioneers in Palestine. They gave us a strong sense of pride of being part of a wonderful, gifted, supremely successful people of superior character.

### **The Challenge of Anti-Semitism**

Soon, events proved how much I needed this inoculation of self-esteem. Within the first few years of elementary school, I must have been seven or eight years old, I experienced my first daily barrage of anti-Semitic abuse. Several classmates made it a practice to shout after me such endearing terms as "dirty Jew, Jewish pig, and Christ-killer." Had I been less fortified from within, these abuses would have had a shattering effect. In my case, I looked upon my persecutors as fools and the scum of the earth. My reaction was not "What's wrong with me?" but "What's wrong with them?" -- very much like any healthy-minded young American today would react if a gang of aliens called him "dirty American" or "American pig."

This is the test of a healthy response to bigotry. When attacked, don't question yourself: What's wrong with me? But ask, what's wrong with them?



I would, however, be a liar if I told you that I wasn't angry or distressed when I ran my daily gauntlet of anti-Semitic name calling. Having been told by my parents that Christ was a Jew, I thought I ought to tell this news to the priest of the large Roman Catholic Church opposite our school where all my Christian classmates went to worship.

The priest, in his clerical collar and long black cassock coat, was good enough to listen, shook his head and mumbled something. The next day I went to school with high hopes that, now, his young parishioners would be duly enlightened and cured of their hostility. But, when instead, one of my tormentors picked up some rocks to hurl at me together with all the usual exclamations, I was filled with rage, fell upon him and gave him a ferocious beating. At that very moment, I must confess, I lost all possible claim to being a saint. However, this violent response ended the name-calling for the rest of my elementary school days. Ever since, I have been unable to repudiate Jewish militancy in absolute terms. I regret Meir Kahane's chauvinism. But, I believe that we must have strength and the will to use it. We must resist our enemies in order to survive; we need to use our fists as well as our brain.

I never again had an encounter with anti-Semitism on a physical level, but, every day of my life in Vienna, I experienced this hatred, in one form or the other, as graffiti or, countless leaflets filled with anti-Semitic pornography and threats. Many times I heard Nazi youths chant the Horst Wessel song, Germany's second national anthem, with the spine-chilling line about the German people's joy when seeing Jewish blood spurting from their knives.

How did all this affect my Jewishness? I believe very much like Edmond Fleg, the French playwright and author of many books, who told us in his autobiography "Why I am a Jew," how the anti-Semitic storm that raged over France in the wake of the Dreyfus Affair at the turn of the century, challenged him to explore his own Jewish roots.

I, too, had only a few flimsy notions of what Judaism and Jewish history were all about. Anti-Semitism made me curious. My teenage Jewish mind craved to know the answer to this question:

What inspired Jews to cling to their Jewishness in spite of ceaseless persecution? After all, we Jews were far from fools. What were those great values for which previous generations were willing to die for?

Thus, the question "Why am I a Jew?" became, for me, a still more personal question: "Why remain a Jew?"

### **The Recovery of Self-Esteem Through Jewish Learning**

Edmond Fleg was married, had a son, one year-old, and a successful play to his credit. He dropped everything and took three years off to study Judaism. Answers to "Why should I remain a Jew?" could not be invented. These had to be searched out throughout history and literature, from the Bible to the present. Edmond Fleg knew that it would take years, and perhaps, a lifetime.

I made a similar commitment at the age of sixteen, when it was, of course, much easier for me to engage in concentrated study.

Providentially, a brilliant scholar of Judaism dropped, so to speak, from heaven, to be my private tutor. My uncle, Arje, a reform rabbi with a Ph.D. degree in Philosophy, was driven out of Berlin by Adolf Hitler. He came to live in our home for a whole year. He introduced me into a study of the Bible in the original Hebrew and showed me the Biblical roots of Western

civilization: the sanctity of life, the ideal of one mankind, the idea that all human beings have God-given rights, especially the birthright of freedom. He showed me, how all these ideas are related to the Bible and grew out of our historic experience and how Jews have been among the foremost partisans of freedom. We never forgot our bondage in Egypt and the experience of liberation which has been an inspiration to all freedom fighters in Western history. As Heinrich Heine said:

"Ever since the Exodus, freedom has spoken with a Hebrew accent."

With his encyclopedic knowledge, Uncle Arje could pinpoint the enormous Jewish role in all of the cultural breakthroughs of Western civilization -- in medicine, in navigation, in the transmission of ancient philosophy, and in the development of all the sciences. What I learned gave me reasons for pride -- and so,

**I am a Jew** because my studies convinced me that Judaism, so often despised by our enemies as "the stone rejected" is, in fact, the chief cornerstone of our civilization.

### The Jew Is His Own Priest

Is there a Jew who grew up in the Christian world who has not asked himself: Why are they so many, and we so few?

Why remain part of a people which, except for the state of Israel, is a minority everywhere? Even in lands where we are most populous, we number no more than three per cent of the total population. I asked myself: could one billion Christians be wrong? Why belong to a tiny minority, no more than 15 million, about one-third of one percent of the world's population?

One can make a good case for the argument that the majority is not necessarily superior to the minority. After all, there are tons of black coal for every sparkling karat of diamonds. Philosophers are vastly outnumbered by street cleaners. In the field of religion, the Jews are God's officers' corps.

This became clear to me after a memorable visit to the St. Stephan's Cathedral, Vienna's majestic landmark. I believe, it was a public organ recital that first drew me into this massive shrine of Christendom which took nearly one thousand years to build. Once inside, I stayed for the service. It was very

dark. Huge columns raised the ceiling sky-high. Large crowds of worshippers walked in and out. Those who sat down or kneeled, hardly spoke a word. They listened to the clergy who prayed for them.

I was then nearly 18 years old and had begun thinking about becoming a rabbi. So I was very interested in the splendidly attired priests; and the many acolytes, walking in measured steps, were impressive. Everywhere I looked, I saw different altars, sculptures, paintings of the madonna and saints in the glow of countless candles. What got across to me was the splendour, the opulence and the power of the church which made the individual worshipper feel so small, so insignificant, and so totally dependent. It was as though the church said to its people: You are too small, too weak and too insignificant to be heard by God. You need the mighty Church to speak for you. We shall mediate between you and God. You must pray through us to the Almighty.

The next day, I went to the synagogue. It was far from awesome. Only occasional moments of solemnity would break the prevailing mood of informality. Here, my fellow Jews, wrapped in

their tallisim, were swaying and singing their prayers. Among the crowd it was difficult to single out the rabbi or cantor. I noticed an inscription above the ark:

"Know before Whom thou standest."

This dramatically underscored the difference between the Synagogue and the Church, between Judaism and Christianity. Every Jew stands directly before God. There is no barrier. There is no need for mediating institutions. We can pray without clergy. The synagogue is not designed to overpower the individual with the feeling that he must depend on the institution or the rabbi to represent him before the Almighty. The Jew must be his own priest. What an honor and what a responsibility it is. How it hurts, how ashamed I am that so few of our Jews qualify. Being Jewish is very difficult. To be halfway competent and knowledgeable as a Jew, takes years of concentrated learning. . . . and that makes us an elitist religion.

What a privilege I thought it would be to spend my life helping fellow Jews realize the ancient vision: "You shall be

unto me a kingdom of priest and a holy nation." And so I decided, not only to be a Jew myself, but also help others realize their full Jewish potential.

**I am a Jew** because we would not lower our standards low enough to become a religion of the masses. I grant that there is need for a simple religion, or several such religions, to grab the masses. Judaism with its rejection of all images or graphic representations of God is for the intellectually more sophisticated. We raised our requirements to make Judaism the faith of an enlightened minority.

**In Love With My People**

My forty years in the rabbinate have given me another reason for wanting to be a Jew. I hope you won't think of it as maudlin. But the truth is: I am a Jew because I love Jews!

It is more than being comfortable with my fellow Jews. I admire my people. Some of my colleagues tell me that they love Judaism, but hate Jews. I am amazed that they chose to be rabbis.



So many of the most admirable people in the world are Jews. Some are people I have met, others are historical personalities I have encountered in my studies.

Among the Jews I came to love was a 92 year-old little lady in my first congregation, Aunt Minnie Brown, of the Gates of Heaven Temple in Mobile, Alabama. She prayed with a smile. To her, the words of Torah or of the prayerbook, were precious gems. She embodied our ideal of tzedakah. For example, she would walk several miles to Temple so that she might save the bus fare and then put a few coins into a special purse as charity money for the next distribution.

**I am a Jew** because I love charitable Jews like Minnie Brown.

I am thinking of an 18 year-old refugee, Egon Loebner, whom I helped bring to this country at the end of the war. Egon, a native of Czechoslovakia, survived a dozen concentration camps and a death march during which, tens of thousands of Jewish children, perished. Egon, though deprived of all formal education for five years, managed to study secretly from scraps of printed material and learned from older inmates enough science and philosophy so that, upon arrival in the U.S.A., he could go straight on to college.

He earned his doctorate in Physics and after a spectacular career in industry, became the science adviser to our U.S. Embassy in Moscow with ambassadorial rank. In order to repay his debt to the Jewish people, he taught Sunday school wherever he lived. He even organized a religious school at the embassy in Moscow.

**I am a Jew** because I love valiant Jews, as brilliant and loyal as Egon Loebner.

The historian Cecil Roth tells of a luminous incident in one of the darkest moments of our history. It was the year 1492, King Ferdinand of Aragon expelled the Jews from his subject kingdom of Sicily, as he had done earlier in Spain. Before they left, the local Jewish communities of Sicily, presented a petition to the government, asking for certain concessions, some of them pitifully small. They asked, for example, to be allowed to take with them, the tallith used in prayer. This was refused. Then they asked, -- and this request was granted, -- that those of their slaves whom they have set free in happier days, should be allowed to retain their liberty.

At the culmination of their own agony, they thought of the misery of others.

And this is only one of many great moments in Jewish history which should make us glow with pride and admiration.

I am a Jew because we are a compassionate people of noble lineage, a people who having experienced slavery came to prize freedom for itself and for all humanity.

AMERICAN JEWISH  
**A Moral and Spiritual Elite**

Professor William Foxwell Albright of Johns Hopkins University who did not know a Jew until he was 21 (but that changed quickly after he moved to Baltimore) said:

"Jews tend to have a more intelligent attitude toward education and culture and also to have a keener feeling for moral and social problems."

And don't we know that!

The statistical evidence is so overwhelming that the novelist-scientist, C.P. Snow, was driven to the conclusion that

Jews are a racially superior people. Whatever the explanation, be it the genius of our culture or the Jewish genes, Jews are a unique people.

If somehow, all Jews disappeared except for a few individuals, every major museum would want to exhibit a Jew for all the world to gaze at.

We are an extraordinary people, intellectually and morally.

**I am a Jew** because the more I learned the more I came to admire my people.

**I am a Jew** because I discovered Judaism as the most direct channel to God.

**I am a Jew** because I love Jews.

### **What Kind of Jew Will You Be?**

Justice Louis Brandeis said that his only regret about having been born Jewish was that, as a result, he never had the honor of choosing to be a Jew.

For you who are Jews by birth, the choice is not to be a Jew, but what kind of Jew to be. Will you be empty and alienated from our heritage, or be part of it and filled with it? What kind of Jew do you choose to be?

When a Torah scribe finishes the writing of a new Torah scroll, he does not write out the last column, but merely traces with an extra fine pen the outline of each letter. At the dedication celebration of the scroll, members of the Congregation are called to the Torah and each fills in with black ink the inside of his letter.

This is what I pray you will do with your own Jewish identity. Your Jewishness was conferred upon you as a mere outline, as a form of belonging. That's what you received at birth. Now, each of you must fill in your spiritual inside -- Jewish knowledge, feeling, learning and living. That is not given to us at birth. That we must build up for ourselves.

I know why I am a Jew, but will you know why?

I call on you to give meaning to your own Jewishness.

Begin with Jewish knowledge, and keep increasing it day by day. A revival of Jewish learning and spirituality is now happening throughout the world.

Join the hundreds of our own members who have made Jewish study commitments in recent years.

Come to know your heritage, and if you are already privileged to be a Jew by birth, become also a Jew by choice on the strength of informed conviction. Amen.



**THE MAGIC MASK**  
Sermonette at Yom Kippur Family Service  
By Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman  
Washington Hebrew Congregation  
September 25, 1985

A powerful King who had conquered many countries was respected and feared by his people but he was not loved. Everyone admired him as a brave leader and clever King, but people did not like him. He always looked angry. He never smiled. His face was full of frowns.

Year after year he became more strict, more lonely and bitter. His face showed it too -- deep lines extended from the end of his lips downward toward his chin. It was an unfriendly ugly face.

Once he visited a city and saw a beautiful girl. He watched her and then very much wanted her to be his wife. He decided to talk to her. He put on his best royal suit, looked into the mirror and growled: "My clothes are beautiful, but my face -- how ugly! No girl will want me as a husband."

He called his chief Magician and said: "I have a very special job, the most important job I ever gave you."

The Magician bowed and said: "Majesty, I shall do whatever you ask me to do."

The King said: "I want you to make me a new face!" -- the Magician almost fainted when he heard these words. He stared at the King and said, "what, a new face?"

The King said: "Yes. I want you to make me the thinnest possible mask, a mask so fine that no one will notice it. It must follow every feature of my face. Just take out those ugly lines and wrinkles. Paint my mask with your magic paint so that my face will look kind, pleasant and gentle. Yes, handsome and likable! I'll never take it off -- I swear." And, said the King, as he gave the magician his meanest look: "you better hurry up and make the mask I want, or else your head will come off."

The Magician trembled in fear and said: "Yes, my majesty, I can make you such a mask. But, there's one condition: you must keep your face exactly the way I paint it on the mask. One single frown and your mask will crack in a thousand places."

The King said: "But how can I keep my face always kind and gentle?"

The Magician replied: "Think kindly thoughts. Do what will make the people happy. Try to be more patient. Please, don't ever get angry. Make the people smile with happiness and you, too, will be happy."



When the mask was finished and put on the King's face, he had a very difficult time getting used to it. Everytime he became angry at one of his subjects, he remembered the mask and instead of shouting as he wanted to, he remained calm, even tried to smile.

The mask worked like a charm. Seeing himself in the mirror, the King now liked what he saw and asked the young woman with whom he had fallen in love to be his wife. As soon as she saw the King, she liked him very much and thought he was very handsome. She agreed to be his wife. But, little did she know how ugly he really was underneath his mask.

Soon the people in the kingdom noticed the change and gave credit to the new Queen: "She has made our King happy, kind, and pleasant."

A year passed and the King was very much in love with his wife. But, he was sorry in his heart that he had fooled her with his mask. One day he called the Magician and said: "take off the mask!"

The Magician answered: "I shall do as you wish, but remember if I remove your mask, I shall never again be able to make you another just like it. You will have to wear your own face until you die."

The King could not bring himself to try to live without the mask and so he let days pass. He could not sleep. He kept thinking about the words of the Magician. One morning as he saw his beautiful Queen smile so gently at him, he decided that this was the moment. He went into his dressing room, looked into the mirror and said to himself: "Better she should turn away from me in disgust than be fooled the rest of her life. I can no longer ~~de~~ceive her."

And with these words he dug his nails into the thin mask and tore it off and closed his eyes, afraid to look into the mirror. Then, as he opened his eyes to see his own face, -- he could not believe what he saw. His face had changed. There was not a single frown. It was a gentle, lovely face, exactly like the mask had been. His face had become what he had tried to be all year long -- gentle, friendly and kind~~ly~~. He came out of his dressing room, turned to his Queen and she kissed him as usual and did not even notice any difference now that the mask was off.

You see, the King had learned how to be pleasant, friendly and kind because he practiced being so all the time. He formed good habits and turned goodness inside. Soon that goodness showed on his face.

If you are patient and kind, there will be kindness on your face. But if you're mean and do ugly things, your ugliness will show. If you think beautiful thoughts and do beautiful things, you will look more beautiful.

Remember the proverb:

"Handsome is as handsome does."

You will become as beautiful outside as you are inside.

Amen.



Memorial Sermon  
Yom Kippur, 1985

**"THOU ART THERE"**

By Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman  
Washington Hebrew Congregation

This is more than an hour of memory. It is an hour of reflection on life and the end of life. As our thoughts focus on our mortality, this hour turns into a deeply personal and private confrontation with that awesome fate which hangs over all of us, our own death.

Why are we afraid of death?

Because nothing is as lonely as dying. The dying cannot share their experience. We shall never be able to tell our dear ones how it was to die. Death is the ultimate alienation, the ultimate severance of all communication and relationship.

And yet, for those who survive, death is also the most unifying of all experiences. In the contemplation of death, we realize our essential equality. Death is the leveler of all distinctions: rank, class, wealth, titles and degrees -- all these differences vanish. In death we are all equal, - creatures of dust.

There is a special bond between mourners. We can feel it even now in this hour of memorial. More than any other part of Yom Kippur, this memorial hour draws us closely together because we all share the same mood. It is a mingled mood of apprehension - and of longing as we remember beloved ones. Our hearts yearn for those we miss:

Miss you, miss you, miss you;  
Everything I do  
Echoes with the laughter  
And the voice of you.

You're on every corner,  
Every turn and twist,  
Every old familiar spot  
Whispers how you're missed.

Oh, I miss you, miss you!  
How I miss you!  
There 's a strange, sad silence  
'Mid the busy whirl,

Miss you, oh, I miss you.  
Nothing now seems true,  
Only that 'twas Heaven  
Just to be with you.

Why is it that we so crave the company of others when we are in mourning? Why do we find comfort in our togetherness during this very hour of memorial?

Is it the openness of our hearts to the expression of love? Are we perhaps tempted to give each other a portion of that affection which can no longer be given to our departed? Or, do we feel a special sense of kinship with one another because we face together the ultimate mystery?

The strongest is humbled by death, not only because death overpowers us, not only because it shows up our utter weakness as children of dust, but also because death is incomprehensible. In our bafflement, the wisest and the simplest, the most learned and the most ignorant is equally unable to explain the meaning of death.

A year ago, following the death of Maxine's older sister, our grandson, Benjamin, then 9 years old, wrote us a little sympathy note in the form of an original simple poem:

She comes,  
She goes,  
She was here,  
She is there,  
But we can barely understand  
That it happened so fast,  
We loved her very dearly.

Even as a proud grandfather, I'll have to admit that this is not a great poem, nor is it profound. But my point is that even if he were a poetic genius and twenty, forty, or sixty years older, he could not say much more than he did in his few simple words about the passing of a dear one. Maturity and age would not help us understand death any better.

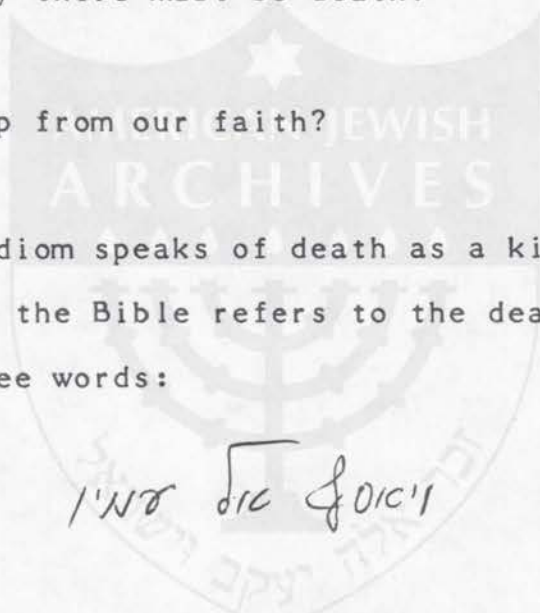
It is touching to observe how sympathetic people often try

so hard as they search for the right words when expressing condolences to a mourner. When words fail, we express ourselves in a gesture of affection, a gift, a handclasp, an embrace.

It is as though love would be an answer. Is it? Yes and no. The love of others helps us endure our loss. But, not even love can explain why there must be death.

Can we get help from our faith?

The Biblical idiom speaks of death as a kind of reunion. Over and over again the Bible refers to the death of patriarchs and others with three words:



וַיִּקָּבֵץ אֶל עַמּוּוֹ

"He was gathered to his people."

The phrase suggests that death is not only a departure but an arrival. It is joining up with all of the many, many generations of the past, a reassembly in a different place or realm of existence. A poet put it this way:



"Then say not, he has gone,  
Nor think of him as dead;  
But say, "in the Father's House,  
He has arrived" -- instead.

I know that there are many who find comfort in certain passages of our prayer book such as "by love are they remembered and in memory they live." It is a beautiful statement and yet, for me, it does not go far enough. I would like to think that those beloved ones whom I remember have a more real existence than in memory. Some day, I shall be gone and all others who remember them. Their existence should be independent of the memory of survivors.

What about the hereafter?

The much celebrated author Pearl S. Buck, at the age of 79, wrote an essay in which she contemplated the meaning of death:

"I do not know where life begins, if indeed there is a beginning, and I do not know where it ends, if indeed there is an end. I know that I am in a stage, a phase,

a period of life. I entered this stage at birth, I shall end this stage with death. . . For me death is merely the entrance into further existence. . ."

She acknowledged an idea which she received in a letter from an unknown woman who told her how she explained death to her very young children:

"When my small children could not understand the silence between their recently dead father and us, who loved him so dearly, I explained by describing to them the life cycle of the dragonfly. It begins as a grub in water. Then at the proper moment it surfaces, finds it has wings, and flys away. I told them that the ones left in the water wonder where he went and why he doesn't come back. But he can't, because he has wings. Nor can they go to him, because they don't have their wings yet."

As within physical nature there are different stages of existence, with various species being transformed at each stage, -- so there may be entirely different realms of existence for intelligent life, each somehow being connected with the other. This is how I try to understand the connection between this world and the hereafter.

Might not death be an upgrading, an elevation to a higher level of evolution?

Is it conceivable that there might be a continuation of existence without a body? Can we imagine the spiritual to survive without a brain? Could mind and personality continue without the sustaining physical body?

Rabbi Louis Jacobs of England suggested an analogy from space exploration. When we send an astronaut into space and want him to land on the moon, we must encase him in a space suit. If this space suit is damaged out there in space, he will die. But once he returns to earth, he can dispense with his space suit and throw off this restricting equipment to move about as he pleases. Could it be that when a soul is sent down to earth, it must be equipped with the physical body, comparable to a space suit; and when the soul returns to its place of origin, it can dispense with its physical equipment and surrender the body?

We should be grateful that Judaism did not fix belief in the hereafter in an official doctrine to which we must swear allegiance. As Jews we are free to let our thoughts roam. We are free to speculate. We are free to give our imagination full scope.

I, for one, am with those countless brothers and sisters of our faith and with the many hundreds of millions of people of our great sister religion, Christianity, who draw inspiration, courage and reassurance from that magnificent line in our 23rd Psalm:

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me."

Come what may, we shall not be alone; God is with us; there is no place where God is not; even as Edwin Markham said in his beautiful rhyme:

"No soul can be forever banned,  
Eternally bereft;  
Who ever falls from God's right hand  
Is caught into His left."

For me and countless others who draw their inspiration from the Bible, the last word is Psalm 139.7-12:

"Whither shall I go from Thy spirit?  
Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?  
If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there:

If I make my bed in the netherworld, behold, Thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning,  
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;  
Even there would Thy hand lead me,  
And Thy right hand would hold me.

And if I say: 'Surely the darkness shall envelop me,  
And the light about me shall be night;  
Even the darkness is not too dark for Thee,  
But the night shineth as the day;  
The darkness is even as the light.'" Amen.



Barbara

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"Thou Art There"

~~First Draft 9/23/85~~

MEMORIAL SERMON - YOM KIPPUR 1985  
By Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman

This is more than an hour of memory. It is an hour of reflection on life and the end of life. <sup>As</sup> ~~once~~ our thoughts focus on our mortality, this hour turns into a deeply personal and private confrontation with ~~death~~ that awesome fate which hangs over all of us, *our own death.*

Why are we afraid of death?

Because nothing is as lonely as <sup>dying.</sup> ~~dying.~~ ~~Each dies alone.~~  
The <sup>dying</sup> ~~dying~~ cannot share their experience. We shall never be able to tell our dear ones how it was to die. Death is the ultimate alienation, the <sup>ultimate</sup> ~~irreparable~~ severance of all communication and relationship.

And yet, for those who survive, death is also the most unifying of all experiences. In the contemplation of death, we realize our essential equality, ~~as creatures of dust.~~ Death is the leveler of all distinctions: rank, class, wealth, titles and degrees -- all these differences vanish. In death we are all equal, *— creatures of dust.*

~~Because we each must die alone, we reach out so much the more eagerly to each other in time of bereavement.~~ There is a special bond between mourners. We can feel <sup>it</sup> even now in this hour of memorial. More than any other part of ~~our~~ Yom Kippur, ~~observance~~, this memorial hour draws us closely together because we all share the same mood, <sup>It is a mingled mood of apprehension - and</sup> of longing as we remember beloved ones. Our hearts yearn for those we miss:

Miss you, miss you, miss you;  
Everything I do  
Echoes with the laughter  
And the voice of you.

You're on every corner,  
Every turn and twist,  
Every old familiar spot  
Whispers how you're missed.

~~Miss you . . .  
Everywhere I go  
There are poignant memories  
Dancing in a row,  
Silhouette and shadow  
Of your form and face  
Substance and reality  
Everywhere in place.~~

Oh, I miss you, miss you!  
How I miss you!  
There 's a strange, sad silence  
'Mid the busy whirl,  
Just as the ordinary  
Daily things I do  
Wait with me expectant  
For a word from you.

Miss you, *Oh, I miss you.*  
Nothing now seems true,  
Only that 'twas Heaven  
Just to be with you.

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A year ago, following the death of Maxine's older sister, our grandson, Benjamin, then **9** years old, wrote us a little sympathy note in the form of an original simple poem:

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She was here,  
She is there,  
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~~It occurs to me that~~ <sup>were</sup> If a person ~~with~~ twenty, forty, or sixty years older, he could not say much more <sup>than did this 9 year old, about</sup> the passing of a dear one. ~~We might, at a more mature age, use more sophisticated language, but~~ <sup>M</sup>aturity and age would not help us understand death any better.

It is touching to observe how sympathetic people ~~are~~ often <sup>try</sup> ~~trying~~ so hard <sup>as they</sup> ~~and~~ search ~~for~~ for the right words when expressing condolences to a mourner. When words fail ~~we~~, we express ourselves in a gesture of affection, a gift, a handclasp, an embrace. **P** It is as though love would be an answer. Is it? Yes and no. The love of others helps us endure our loss. But, not even love can explain why there must be death.

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The **B**iblical idiom speaks of death as a kind of reunion. Over and over the Bible refers to the death of patriarchs and other men and women whose life we admire, as: **P** "He was gathered to his people," or "she was gathered to her people." **P**

The phrase suggests that death is not only a departure but an arrival. It is joining up with all of the many, many generations of the past, a reassembly ~~of all who lived~~, in a different place or realm of existence. A poet put it this way:

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move to top of page 6

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"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for ~~Thou~~ art with me."

What matters is not that we know exactly the road we shall travel after death; <sup>P</sup> what matters is not that we know our future destination; <sup>P</sup> what really matters is only that we shall not be alone, <sup>t</sup> that God is with us, <sup>t</sup> that there is no place where God is not, <sup>e</sup> even as Edwin Markham said in his beautiful rhyme:

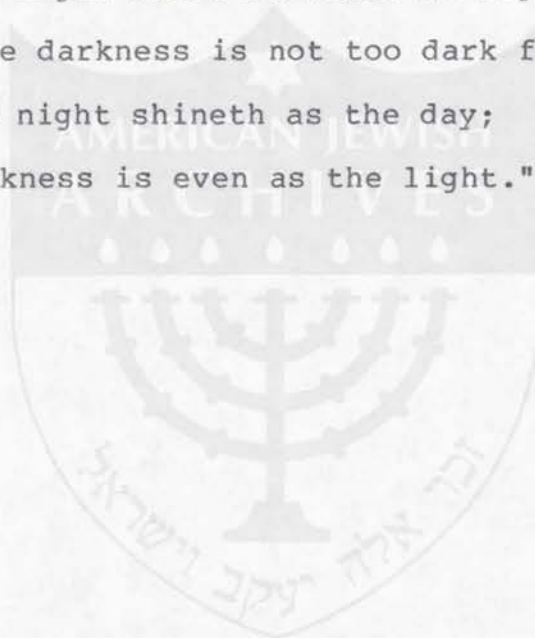
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And the light about me shall be night;  
Even the darkness is not too dark for Thee,  
But the night shineth as the day;  
The darkness is even as the light." Amen.



File in Funeral Sermons

First Draft - 9/20/85

**MEMORIAL SERMON - YOM KIPPUR 1985**  
By Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman

This is more than an hour of memory. It is an hour of reflection on life and the end of life. Once our thoughts focus on our mortality, this hour turns into a deeply personal and private confrontation with death, that awesome fate which hangs over all of us.

Why are we afraid of death?

Because nothing is as lonely as ~~dying~~. Each dies alone. The ~~dying~~ cannot share their experience. We shall never be able to tell our dear ones how it was to die. Death is the ultimate alienation, the irreparable severance of all communication and relationship.

And yet, for those who survive, death is also the most unifying of all experiences. In the contemplation of death, we realize our essential equality as creatures of dust. Death is the leveler of all distinctions: rank, class, wealth, titles and degrees -- all these differences vanish. In death we are all equal.



Because we each must die alone, we reach out so much the more eagerly to each other in time of bereavement. There is a special bond between mourners. We can feel even now in this hour of memorial. More than any other part of our Yom Kippur observance, this memorial hour draws us closely together because we all share the same mood of longing as we remember beloved ones. Our hearts yearn for those we miss:

Miss you, miss you, miss you;  
Everything I do  
Echoes with the laughter  
And the voice of you.

You're on every corner,  
Every turn and twist,  
Every old familiar spot  
Whispers how you're missed.

Miss you . . .  
Everywhere I go  
There are poignant memories  
Dancing in a row,  
Silhouette and shadow  
Of your form and face  
Substance and reality  
Everywhere in place.

Oh, I miss you, miss you!  
How I miss you!  
There 's a strange, sad silence  
'Mid the busy whirl,  
Just as the ordinary  
Daily things I do  
Wait with me expectant  
For a word from you.

Miss you. . .  
Nothing now seems true,  
Only that 'twas Heaven  
Just to be with you.

Why is it that we so crave the company of others and find it so consoling when we are in mourning? Why do we find comfort in our togetherness during this very hour of memorial?

Is it the openness of our hearts to the expression of love? Are we perhaps tempted to give each other a portion of that affection which can no longer be given to our departed? Or, do we feel a special sense of kinship with one another because we face together the ultimate mystery?

The strongest and most superior of persons is humbled by death not only because death overpowers everyone of us, not only because it shows up our utter weakness as children of dust, but also because death is so incomprehensible. In our bafflement, the wisest and the simplest, the most learned and the most ignorant is equally unable to explain the meaning of death.

A year ago following the death of Maxine's older sister, our grandson, Benjamin, then 10 years old, wrote us a little sympathy not in the form of an original simple poem:

She comes,  
She goes,  
She was here,  
She is there,  
But we can barely understand  
That it happened so fast,  
We loved her very dearly.

It occurs to me that if a person with twenty, forty, or sixty years older, he could not say much more on the passing of a dear one. We might, at a more mature age, use more sophisticated language, but maturity and age would not help us understand death any better.

It is touching to observe how sympathetic people are often trying so hard and searching for the right words when expressing condolences to a mourner. When words fail us, we express ourselves in a gesture of affection, a gift, a handclasp, an embrace. It is as though love would be an answer. Is it? Yes and no. The love of others helps us endure our loss. But, not even love can explain why there must be death.

Can we get help from our faith.

The biblical idiom speaks of death as a kind of reunion. Over and over the Bible refers to the death of patriarchs and other men and women whose life we admire as: "He was gathered to his people," or "she was gathered to her people."

The phrase suggests that death is not only a departure but an arrival. It is joining up with all of the many, many generations of the past, a reassembly of all who lived in a different place or realm of existence. A poet put it this way:

"Then say not, he has gone,  
Nor think of him as dead;  
But say, "in the Father's House,  
He has arrived" -- instead.

The much celebrated author Pearl S. Buck, at the age of 79, wrote an essay in which she contemplated the meaning of death, she said:

"I do not know, because I do not know where life begins, if indeed there is a beginning, and I do not know where it ends, if indeed there is an end. I know that I am in a stage, a phase, a period of life. I entered this stage at birth, I shall end this stage with death. . . For me death is merely the entrance into further existence. . . I did not ask to be, but I have been and I am. My reason tells me I shall continue to be. I am on my way somewhere, just as I was on the day of my birth."

She acknowledged an idea which she received in a letter from an unknown woman who told her how she explained death to her very young children:

"When my small children could not understand the silence between their recently dead father and us, who loved him so dearly, I explained by describing to them the life cycle of the dragonfly. It begins as a grub in water. Then at the proper moment it surfaces, finds it has wings, and flies away. I told them that the ones

left in the water wonder where he went and why he doesn't come back. But he can't, because he has wings. Nor can they go to him, because they don't have their wings yet."

As within physical nature there are different realms of being and some creatures move from one to the other, being transformed in each stage, -- so there may be entirely different realms of existence and yet, somehow, one connected with the other. This is how I try to understand the connection between this world and the hereafter.

Might not death be an upgrading, an elevation to a higher level of evolution?

I know that there are many who find comfort in certain phrases in our prayer book such as "by love are they remembered and in memory they live." It is a beautiful statement and yet, for me it does not go far enough. I would like to think that those beloved ones whom I remember have a more real existence than in my memory. Some day I shall be gone and all others who remember those whom I loved so dearly. Their existence should be independent of the memory of survivors.

It is at all conceivable that there can be some continuation of existence without a body? Can we imagine the spiritual to survive without a brain? Could mind and personality continue without the sustaining physical body?

Rabbi Louis Jacobs of England suggested an analogy from our space exploration. When we send an astronaut into space and want him to land on the moon, we must encase him in a space suit. If this space suit is damaged, he will die. But once he returns to earth, he can dispense with his space suit and throw off his restrictions to move about as he pleases. Could it be that when a soul is sent down to earth, it must be equipped with the physical body, comparable to a space suit; and when the soul returns to its place of origin, it can dispense with its physical equipment and surrender the body?

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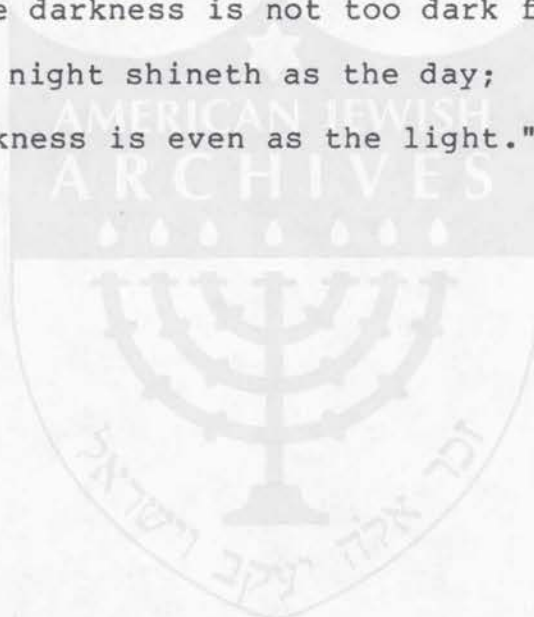
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And the light about me shall be night;

Even the darkness is not too dark for Thee,

But the night shineth as the day;

The darkness is even as the light." Amen.



Ritual - You know  
Semen

There will be no lessening  
of ritual (as some of  
our shallow septs/strats  
predicted - on the  
assumption that the  
need decreases, the  
less ritual) -

The need for ritual  
increases in the  
mass-society in which  
there is a thinning out  
of community.  
In the future when

people will be  
less needed in  
strictly national or  
racial community,  
the growing for  
spiritual community  
will increase.

Y. Kippur Sermonette

Each poured water  
into the barrel  
containing on others  
to give wine

Your little cup of life  
goodness or badness  
determine <sup>helps</sup> the whole  
quality of life.

"My little glass of water  
won't really matter."  
Liquor collect a  
little [they won't miss  
my drink]  
killing the lawn  
Go to Temple  
Get voting  
My little piece of candy wrapped  
won't matter...

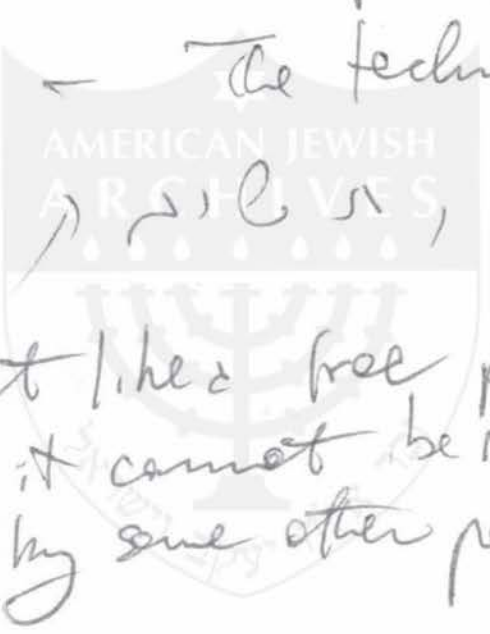
To get  
If you want to wine  
out of the barrel  
at the end of barrel  
you must put  
wine into it  
each day...  
You cannot get  
out of a barrel  
giving

It won't make a difference  
if I stay out

practice your piety...  
or do it here week...  
It won't matter  
if I skip  
a lesson

SLICHTOT: Yes, Human Nature  
Does Change

Essential)

Part of human nature is the ability  
of self transformation, self renewal, self  
reversal. Call it Repent, Conversion,  
Repentance — the technical Hebrew  
term is  תשובה, ie "turning".

Man is not like a tree planted  
so that it cannot be moved  
except by some other power

Man is not like a beast — a prisoner  
of (bound by) its instincts — spring of  
Turtle bearing a rabbit & scorpion  
across the water

Man is capable of rebirth in a new  
image

ISRAEL DISCOUNT BANK LTD.-

for better service.

JEWISH OPTIMISM

Story of British Govt. going out for bids job of digging  
tunnel between England & France  
Various bids were received 500 million 700 million 600 million  
& one bid from Goldberg & Cohen \$75,000. Govt. asked Goldberg &  
Cohen how they could do it?

"Simple" - We buy 2 shovels. Goldberg starts in England -  
start in France & we dig. When we meet somewhere in the  
middle - we've got a tunnel.

And what if you don't meet?

In that case Sir, said Cohen, you have 2 tunnels!

# G W Hillel High Holy Day Sermons

## Where Are You?

Finding yourself "not a uniquely modern problem"

Shneur Zalman of Lodi - story of Warden in St Petersburg

Where are you?

This is a time to assess one's goals

one's relationships

one's achievements

Also One's Jewishness

Why are we here? A mixture of motivations

Most would agree to at least one: Wish to identify as a Jew

But, having done so - where do you go from here?

What is there in your Jewishness that gives you life a certain orientation, direction or special spiritual dimension or ethical force?

Is R.H. just an annual parade, or is it the climax of a daily religious experience?

How can it be a relig experience -  
encounter with the Sacred

if not, what are obstacles to identify & remove?

(This was the alternate sermon for Kol Nidre)

1985

"TO LOVE, HONOR AND CHERISH"

By Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman  
Washington Hebrew Congregation

One of the most brilliant and successful novelists of the 19th century, Ivan Turgenev, answered the question as to how much happiness his success had brought him with the following comment,

"I would give up all my genius, and all my books if there were only some woman, somewhere, who cared whether or not I came home late for dinner."

If you can name one person who loves you, one person who really cares, one person whom you can count on to sacrifice for you, to rejoice in your success, to console you in defeat ... if you have one such person to whom you can tell all and fear nothing, do you realize how fortunate you are? Do you know what a great treasure you have?

You expected all this when you entered marriage. Most likely your wedding service included the exchange of a vow to "love, honor and cherish" each other throughout life.

Why is it that a relationship which begins with such a lofty aim so often and so badly misses the mark?

Tonight, Kol Nidre, the night when we recall the vows and promises we have made, and how short we have fallen of fulfilling them, we shall consider this most important of all vows a person can ever make, the vow to be a partner for life. Whatever is excellent about



the Jewish people is rooted in the strength of the Jewish marriage. In the quality of the Jewish home, in the fulfillment of the promise "to love, honor and cherish" one another throughout life.

Roy Wilkins, president of the NAACP, in the most courageous speech of his life, once challenged the black community to match its fight against discrimination with an equally great effort for self improvement. He pointed to the example of a high school in the Bronx and said,

"Look at the names of the top graduates of that school. You will see the Feinbergs and the Goldsteins. Why? Because their mothers sat down with those boys and told them to go to school and to learn...."

The astonishing success of the American Jew cannot be explained apart from the strength of the Jewish home. Each of our children, with rare exceptions, has had the advantage of a set of parents who stayed together, whose love for each other and for their offspring filled the child with security and self confidence which made possible high achievement. The Jewish home fostered pride of heritage and self respect which no amount of anti-Semitic abuse could ever destroy. Our poet, Heinrich Heine, saw in the Jewish family

"A haven of rest from the storms that rage around the very gates of the ghettos, nay, a fairy palace in which the bespattered objects of the mob's derision threw off their garb of shame and resumed the loyal attire of freedom. The home was the place where the Jew was at his best."

Later, Heine wrote a poem about the Jew's struggle to make a living in the non-Jewish world in which he referred to the fable of the charmed prince who changes from human being into a monster and vice versa. Outside his home the Jew, struggling for a living in a dog eat dog world, becomes like a dog. On the Sabbath, however, when he returns to his family, he undergoes a magic transformation:

But on every Friday evening  
On a sudden, in the twilight,  
The enchantment weakens, ceases,  
And the dog once more is human.  
(Ausubel, page 334)

Heinrich Heine, through poetic intuition, caught a basic truth which is now well documented by research in human behavior, psychology and sociology. A good home is the central factor in allaying and humanizing the demonic, beastly element of human nature. A competitive public life brutalizes men and women. Precious few are those who would play the part of the good Samaritan toward strangers. It is different at home. Within our family circle we want to be open to each other; we want to share; we are ready to help and sacrifice; we suffer and rejoice with those we love. It is possible to replace the home as a physical shelter for bed and board but there is absolutely no substitute for the home as a school of mutual love and trust, as the place in which to develop the tender qualities which make us truly human.

How sure are we now that the Jewish home and family still measure up to such standards? How sure are we that Jewish parents are still worthy of reverence? How sure are we that our people still maintain

that purity of family life which guaranteed the stability of the home?

There is alarming evidence that the Jewish home is undergoing change, mostly for the worse. A permissive attitude toward infidelity makes a mockery of the solemn commitment of husband wife to be life partners. Members of the household, each going his own way, drive off in different directions, growing ever more alienated. They live as transients in their own home, sharing less and less with one another. Is there something inevitable about the growing rate of disintegration and divorce? Or, can the trend be reversed?

"To love, honor and cherish" -- what does each promise mean?

#### 1. Love

One of the finest moments of the modern theater is a scene of tenderness and warm humor in that extraordinary musical play, "Fiddler on the Roof." Tevya has just explained to his wife, Golda, that one of their daughters has decided to marry a young man with whom she is in love. Suddenly, Tevya turns to his wife of many years and asks, "Do you love me?"

What a foolish question; she's embarrassed: "Do I what?" He repeats, "Do you love me?"

"Do I love you? For 25 years I've washed your clothes, cooked your meals, cleaned your house, given you children..."

Tevya insists: "But do you love me?"

Again she won't answer directly but the conclusion is obvious.

For 25 years I've lived with him  
Fought with him, starved with him.  
25 years my bed is his  
If that's not love, what is?

In the end, she playfully concedes, "I suppose I do."

Golda's reply reminds us that love in marriage is a many splendored thing and the splendor is not only in the foam of pleasure but also in the strong drink of hardship which the couple drains from the cup of life. The splendor is in the loving dedication of endless chores for the welfare of the family. Inseparable from love is that ethical quality which we describe with the words duty, responsibility, sacrifice, giving the family priority over personal convenience and desire.

A good marriage is one which is strengthened by obstacles faced together by the partners.

True love is fired more on the altar of sacrifice than on the altar of incense. Beautiful moments are like a rare fragrance whose time is brief. But, the fire of sacrifice is a perpetual flame. It must never go out.

What is the difference between free love and love in marriage? Free love is free insofar as it makes no sacrifices and no commitments. It is essentially the shared egotism of two persons. After slaking your thirst for love you can run. The love consecrated in marriage seeks more to give than to take from each other. It is the acceptance of full and unconditional responsibility for each other.

A woman once came to a marriage counsellor and complained of her discontent in the marriage.

"What is the matter with your marriage" asked the counsellor.

"Does your husband drink too much? Beat you? Is he unfaithful?"

"No,"she said,"He just does not make me happy."

The counsellor turned to the woman and asked,

"What are you contributing to his life? The purpose of marriage is to be partner, not just a consumer."

The unethical marriage partner takes the consumer attitude to life. To him people are just like lemons to be squeezed. Why? Their approach is "what can I get out of this?"

The ethical partner knows that no one has the right to consume happiness without producing it.

There may be some here tonight who blame themselves for not achieving their ambitions, for falling short of potential success, for not living up to their promise. Have another look at yourself under the measuring yard of William Lyon Phelps who said,

"Every person who is happily married is a successful person even if he has failed in everything else."

You are rich in the immeasurable wealth of the heart if you share in unconditional love with your spouse, a love that is inexhaustible because neither side measures what it is getting but rather each gives his all to the other. As the Bible put it so simply and ever-lastingly:

"I belong to my beloved and my beloved belongs to me."

This is the promise you made when you vowed to love. In the ethical sense it means to give. You cannot separate love from ethics.

## 2. Honor

Of all the promises we make, the most difficult to keep is the promise to honor one's spouse. Love in a good marriage grows as the partners become more and more dependent upon each other. But, mutual respect has a tendency of declining, even in the better marriages. As the proverb goes, "familiarity breeds contempt."

In the day by day contact of home life, it is impossible not to expose one's weaknesses, faults and failings. The masks of refinement which we wear on the outside, comes off in the intimacy of the home. Tensions and frustrations accumulated elsewhere often explode at the dinner table. When a bad day brings out the worst in us, we abuse our partner with spitefulness. Even the little irritations do major damage. It was a wise father who warned his daughter on her wedding day that "the grave of love is excavated with little digs."

Arnold Bennett said, "Ninety percent of the friction of daily life is caused by your tone of voice."

This leads us to a truth of special relevance for us this day. You cannot maintain a lasting relationship without the repair work of forgiveness. The art of forgiveness is not for saints, but is a necessity for people who want to save their marriage.

Among the wisest rules for married couples are the following two:

1. Don't taunt one another with past mistakes. Don't keep saying, "I told you so." As Benjamin Franklin said, "Before marriage keep both your eyes open; after marriage, keep them half shut."

2. The second point is " don't let the sun go down upon a quarrel. Settle it, one way or the other the same day."

It is the mark of the unforgiving person that he cannot stop reminding his spouse of past mistakes. He cannot forget the hurts and insults of a quarrel.

We should all learn the art of forgiveness suggested by the word "kippur." Kippur means covering up, putting a cover on something so that you can no longer see it.

In our relationship with God, we think of divine love and compassion as the covering of His love over our sins. The sin will not go away but it may be covered up by God's mercy.

In regard to our neighbor, humility must do the covering up over our disturbed relationship. It is easier to forgive someone else if you believe that all of us are at fault at various times.

We confess our sins collectively so as to express the idea that we are all involved in each other's wrongdoing. We don't just forget the evil done to us by our neighbor, but we learn to tolerate it as we become conscious of our own guilt.

Is there a covering up of the contempt which familiarity may breed between husband and wife? What could renew and strengthen respect between husband and wife?

At the deepest level a husband and wife will respect each other not merely for the qualities each possesses but because of what each represents.

Why do we feel such respect for bride and groom as they stand together at the wedding altar?

It is because they are about to "inaugurate something really novel in the world; their particular home and their union is likely to result in the birth of new human beings who would never have been born, in all eternity, apart from the particular decision" of this couple to love, honor and cherish each other. In their decision, they offer themselves as the quarry from which God will hew new life. Their children, nurtured with love and patiently shaped and squared will be the building blocks of God's temple on earth. As long as husband and wife can see each other in this light, their mutual respect will be based upon a sanctity that transcends them both.

### 3. Cherish

The third promise made at marriage, "to cherish" means to "hold dear," to "value highly." It is the least understood promise of them all.

A number of people turn to marriage as though it were an answer for all difficulties. In reality it means more difficulties and more burdens than a bachelor's life. The reward of a successful marriage is a fuller and easier life. Whatever the blessing of marriage, it is no bargain. "To cherish," to hold dear -- there is nothing dearer -- nothing more demanding than the commitment required of marriage partners.

Almost every marital problem boils down to the necessity of making sacrifices for one's spouse. It is the refusal of the sacrifice, an ethical failure, which breaks up the home.

The Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, said, "The door to happiness opens outward." It is not waiting to receive, but our eagerness to give, our readiness to sacrifice, our going forth to meet



our partner's need that leads to happiness in marriage.

### Conclusion

On Yom Kippur every Jew makes his "chesbon ha-nefesh," his self assessment, the reckoning of his conscience. Nothing deserves greater attention than the quality of our home and marriage. The united and loving family is the pilot project of the messianic age. It suggests the possibility of perfection within the larger human family that spans the world.

To love, honor and cherish...have you fulfilled these promises?

Is your love the craving of one who consumes, or the gift of one who is dedicated to his partner and accepts responsibility for him?

Has your home the atmosphere of sanctity in which respect between husband and wife may flourish?

Do you bring to the one you cherish the measure of sacrifice that would prove your devotion? No marriage can ever be left as is. It is never final or complete. Rather, as the wise Andre Maurois said, "Marriage is an edifice that needs to be rebuilt every day."

AMEN

(This was the alternate sermon for Kol Nidre)

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By Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman  
Washington Hebrew Congregation

*Revised 1985  
but not delivered*

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Why is it that a relationship <sup>that</sup> which begins with such a lofty <sup>aim so high,</sup>

<sup>So often,</sup> ~~aim so often and so badly misses the mark~~ <sup>More than a million couples a year ~~end~~</sup>  
<sup>their hope for marital happiness by divorce. The average duration of a marriage in the USA is 9.4</sup>

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*One out of 2 years  
who marry in that  
1980's will be  
divorced by 1990*

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"Look at the names of the top graduates of that school. You will see the Feinbergs and the Goldsteins. Why? Because their mothers sat down with those boys and told them to go to school and to learn...."

The astonishing success of the American Jew cannot be explained apart from the strength of the Jewish home. <sup>Most</sup> ~~Each~~ of our children, ~~with rare exceptions,~~ <sup>have</sup> has had the advantage of a set of parents who stayed together, whose love for each other and for their offspring filled the child with security and self confidence which made possible high achievement. ~~The Jewish home fostered pride of heritage and self respect which no amount of anti-Semitic abuse could ever destroy.~~ Our poet, Heinrich Heine, saw in the Jewish family;

"A haven of rest from the storms that rage around the very gates of the ghettos, nay, a fairy palace in which the bespattered objects of the mob's derision threw off their garb of shame and resumed the loyal attire of freedom." The home was the place where the Jew was at his best."

said:

Later, Heine wrote a poem about the Jew's struggle to make a living in the non-Jewish world in which he referred to the fable of the charmed prince who changes from human being into a monster and vice versa. ~~Outside his home the Jew, struggling for a living in a dog-eat-dog world, becomes like a dog. On the Sabbath; however, when he returns to his family, he undergoes a magic transformation:~~

turning into a dog

But on every Friday evening  
 On a sudden, in the twilight,  
 The enchantment weakens, ceases,  
 And the dog once more is human.  
 (Ausubel, page 334)

Heinrich Heine, through poetic intuition, caught a basic truth which is now well documented by research in human behavioral <sup>the</sup> psychology <sup>sciences</sup> and sociology. A good home is the central factor in allaying and humanizing the demonic, beastly element of human nature. A competitive public life brutalizes men and women. Precious few are those who would play the part of the good Samaritan toward strangers. It is different at home. Within our family circle we want to be open to each other, ~~we want to share, we are ready to help and sacrifice,~~ we suffer and rejoice with those we love. It is possible to replace the home as a physical shelter <sup>with</sup> for bed and board <sup>in some institutions</sup> but there is absolutely no substitute for the home as a <sup>the cradle</sup> school of mutual love and trust, as the place in which to develop the tender qualities which make us truly human.

~~How sure are we now that the Jewish home and family still measure up to such standards? How sure are we that Jewish parents are still worthy of reverence? How sure are we that our people still maintain~~

How can we maintain

~~that purity of family life which guaranteed the stability of the home?~~ <sup>our</sup> *For our people's welfare & happiness?*

There is alarming evidence that the Jewish home is undergoing change, mostly for the worse. A permissive attitude toward infidelity makes a mockery of the solemn commitment of husband wife to be life partners. Members of the household, each going his own way, drive off in different directions, growing ever more alienated. They live as transients in their own home, sharing less and less with one another. ~~Is there something inevitable about the growing rate of disintegration and divorce? Or, can the trend be reversed?~~

"To love, honor and cherish" -- what does each promise mean?

*Insert manuscript* (1) (2) (3)

1. Love

One of the finest moments of the modern theater is a scene of ~~tenderness and~~ warm humor in that extraordinary musical play, "Fiddler on the Roof." Tevya has just explained to ~~his wife~~, Golda, that one of their daughters has decided to marry a young man with whom she is in love. Suddenly, Tevya turns to his wife of many years and asks, "Do you love me?"

What a foolish question; she's embarrassed: "Do I what?" He repeats, "Do you love me?"

"Do I love you? For 25 years I've washed your clothes, cooked your meals, cleaned your house, given you children..."

Tevya insists: "But do you love me?"

Again she won't answer directly but the conclusion is obvious.

For 25 years I've lived with him  
Fought with him, starved with him.  
25 years my bed is his  
If that's not love, what is?

In the end, she playfully concedes, "I suppose I do."

Golda's reply reminds us that love in marriage is a many splendored thing ~~and the splendor is not only in the foam of pleasure but also in the strong drink of hardship~~ which the couple drains from the cup of life. 'The splendor is ~~in the loving dedication of endless chores for the welfare of the family.~~ Inseparable from love is that ethical quality which we describe with the words duty, responsibility, <sup>as high</sup> ~~sacrifice,~~ <sup>toward</sup> giving the family priority over personal convenience and desire.

~~A good marriage is one which is strengthened by obstacles faced together by the partners.~~

True love is fired more on the altar of sacrifice than on the altar of incense. Beautiful moments are like a rare fragrance whose time is brief. But, the fire of sacrifice is a perpetual flame. It must never go out.

~~What is the difference between free love and love in marriage?~~

Free love is free insofar as it makes ~~no sacrifices and no commitments.~~

It is ~~essentially~~ the shared egotism of two persons. After slaking your thirst for love you can run.

The love consecrated in marriage seeks more to give than to take from each other. It is the ~~acceptance~~ <sup>accepts</sup>

~~acceptance of full and unconditional responsibility for each other,~~ <sup>for better or worse</sup>

~~A woman once came to a marriage counsellor and complained of her discontent in the marriage.~~

"What is the matter with your marriage" asked the counsellor.

"Does your husband drink too much? Beat you? Is he unfaithful?"

"No," she said, "He just does not make me happy."

The counsellor turned to the woman and asked,

"What are you contributing to his life? The purpose of marriage is to be partner, ~~not just a consumer~~." *Such lovers are*

The unethical marriage partner takes the consumer attitude to life. ~~To him people are just like lemons to be squeezed.~~ *dry. Why?*

Their approach is "what can I get out of this?"

The ethical partner knows that no one has the right to consume happiness without producing it.

There may be some here tonight who blame themselves for not achieving their ambitions, for falling short of potential success, for not living up to their promise. Have another look at yourself under the measuring yard of William Lyon Phelps who said,

"Every person who is happily married is a successful person even if he has failed in everything else."

You are rich in the immeasurable wealth of the heart if you share ~~in~~ unconditional love with your spouse, a love that is ~~inexhaustible~~ because neither side measures what it is getting ~~but~~ rather ~~each~~ gives his all to the other. As the Bible put it so simply and ever-lastingly:

"I belong to my beloved and my beloved belongs to me."

This is the promise you made when you vowed to love. In the ethical sense it means to give. You cannot separate love from ethics.

*Insert  
exps*

*Appeal*

*with neither spouse  
by he or she  
out of it but*

*each giving*

## 2. Honor

Of all the promises we make, the most difficult to keep is the promise to honor one's spouse. ~~Love in a good marriage grows as the partners become more and more dependent upon each other. But, Mutual respect has a tendency of declining, even in the better marriages~~ <sup>because as the</sup> ~~the proverb goes,~~ <sup>As</sup> "familiarity breeds contempt."

In ~~the~~ day by day contact ~~of home life,~~ it is impossible not to expose one's weaknesses, faults and failings. The ~~masks~~ <sup>sk</sup> of refinement which we wear on the outside, comes off in the intimacy of the home. Tensions and frustrations ~~accumulated elsewhere,~~ <sup>brought home from outside</sup> often explode at the dinner table. When a bad day brings out the worst in us, we ~~abuse our partner,~~ <sup>in time</sup> ~~with spitefulness.~~ <sup>may</sup> Even the little irritations do major damage. It was a wise father who warned his daughter on her wedding day that "the grave of love is excavated with little digs."

Arnold Bennett said, "Ninety percent of the friction of daily life is caused by your tone of voice."

This leads us to a truth of special relevance for us this day. You cannot maintain a lasting relationship without the repair work of forgiveness. The art of forgiveness is not for saints, but ~~is a necessity~~ <sup>ordinary</sup> for people who want to save their marriage.

Among the wisest rules for married couples are the following two:

1. Don't taunt one another with past mistakes. Don't keep saying, "I told you so." As Benjamin Franklin said, "Before marriage keep both your eyes open; after marriage, keep them half shut."



2. The second point is " don't let the sun go down upon a quarrel. Settle it, one way or the other the same day."

It is the mark of the unforgiving person that he cannot stop reminding his spouse of past mistakes. He cannot forget the hurts and insults of a quarrel.

We should all learn the art of forgiveness suggested by the word "kippur." Kippur means covering up, putting a cover on something so that you can no longer see it.

In our relationship with God, we think of divine love and compassion as ~~the~~ covering of His love over our sins. The sin will not go away but it may be covered up by God's mercy.

In regard to our neighbor, humility must do the covering up over our disturbed relationship. It is easier to forgive someone else if you believe that all of us are at fault at various times.

We confess our sins collectively so as to express the idea that we are all involved in each other's wrongdoing. We don't just forget the evil done to us by our neighbor, but we learn to tolerate it as we become conscious of our own guilt.

Is there a covering up of the contempt which familiarity may breed between husband and wife? What could renew and strengthen respect between husband and wife?

At the deepest level, a husband and wife will respect each other not merely for the qualities each possesses but because of what each represents. *They are, as parents, God's channel for the preservation of life.*

~~Why do we feel such respect for bride and groom as they stand together at the wedding altar?~~

It is because they are about to "inaugurate something really novel in the world; their particular home and their union is likely to result in the birth of new human beings who would never have been born, in all eternity, apart from the particular decision" of this couple to love, honor and cherish each other. In their decision, they offer themselves as the quarry from which God will hew new life. Their children, nurtured with love and patiently shaped and squared will be the building blocks of God's temple on earth. As long as husband and wife can see each other in this light, their mutual respect will be based upon a sanctity that transcends them both.

### 3. Cherish

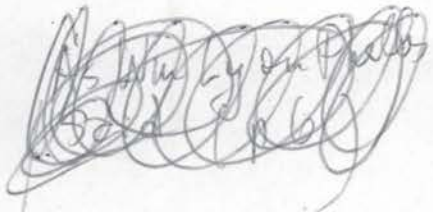
The third promise made at marriage, "to cherish" means to "hold dear," to "value highly." It is the least understood promise of them all.

A number of people turn to marriage as though it were an answer for all difficulties. In reality it means more difficulties and more burdens than a bachelor's life. The reward of a successful marriage is a fuller <sup>not necessarily an</sup> and easier life. Whatever the blessing of marriage, it is not <sup>for free</sup> ~~bargain~~. "To cherish," to hold dear -- there is nothing dearer -- nothing more demanding than the commitment required of marriage partners.

Almost every marital problem boils down to the necessity of making sacrifices for one's spouse. It is the refusal of the sacrifice, an ethical failure, which breaks up the home.

The Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, said, "The door to happiness opens outward." It is not waiting to receive, but our eagerness to give, our readiness to sacrifice, our going forth to meet

our partner's need that leads to happiness in marriage.



Conclusion

On Yom Kippur every Jew makes his "chesbon ha-nefesh," his self assessment, the reckoning of his conscience. Nothing deserves greater attention than the quality of our home and marriage. The united and loving family is the pilot project of the messianic age. It suggests the possibility of perfection within the larger human family that spans the world.

To love, honor and cherish...have you fulfilled these promises?

Is your love the craving of one who consumes, or the gift of one who is dedicated to his partner and accepts responsibility for him?

Has your home the atmosphere of sanctity in which respect between husband and wife may flourish?

Do you bring to the one you cherish the measure of sacrifice that would prove your devotion? No marriage can ever be left as is.

It is never final or complete. Rather, as the wise Andre Maurois said, "Marriage is an edifice that needs to be rebuilt every day."

AMEN

Condemnation p10

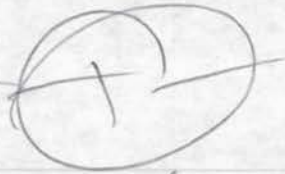
See Malody 2.14  
The Lord has been witness between thee and  
the wife of thy youth  
after 1<sup>st</sup> sentence

~~It is also a time of compassion.~~

This must not be a time for self righteousness.  
Let no one ~~who was~~ fortunate enough to ~~find~~ have found  
a suitable mate ~~with the attempt at~~ thinkless of  
those who found only unhappiness and dissolved  
their marriage in divorce. Neither the Bible  
nor our Sages, speak a single word of  
Condemnation ~~against~~ the divorce.  
~~They say~~ In their view divorce is not a sin  
but a painful injury. The Talmud  
says: The altar of God sheds tears whenever  
a divorce takes place.

Let those who <sup>have</sup> maintained the covenant of marriage  
~~and~~ and those who <sup>have</sup> re-entered marriage  
after divorce renew in their hearts the  
Sacred vow to love, honor and cherish  
their chosen spouse and let  
all know that.

After p4 insert



The Sexual revolution of 2 decades ago sees us,  
as a mass phenomenon, the Living Together arrangement.

~~Its strongest appeal~~ What makes it so appealing  
to many in preference to marriage is its  
~~tentative~~ character, its limited commitment.

Also, it seems entirely based on mutual enjoyment,  
with the door kept open for either party to walk  
out any time.

~~The New York Magazine described~~

When one these live-together couples decide  
to formalize their relationship with a wedding service,  
they changed, the traditional wedding in keeping  
with their idea of having loose and so,  
perfect in the park before the officiating minister  
the bride & groom exchanged vows, not "till  
death do us part" but

"as long as we both shall live it"

This point brings out the crucial difference between  
the traditional marriage & all other relationships.

The Living Together relationship is a marriage  
for as long as we both shall live it - is likely to  
end when you most need a partner - in time of hardship  
~~or~~ trouble, defeat or whatever low point when  
you are frustrated, angry & not very lovable.

(2)

It's like a health insurance <sup>policy</sup> that can be cancelled  
by the company at the onset of an illness.  
What good is it?

Real Marriage, on the other hand is unconditional,  
for better or for worse, in all circumstances.

It is based on something much broader than mutual enjoyment.

It's built on a mutual promise of help and love  
even when every body else gives up.

# High Holy Day Theme

## Hannah's Prayer

Hannah praying for a child voiced her hopes and intentions. No child was more eagerly expected. What did she wish for him? Did she dream of his future with all the benefits <sup>^</sup> imaginable? Did she wish him wealth, success? Did she want him to be a little champion, a good physique, muscles, <sup>to be</sup> tall & strong? None of these blessings. Her thoughts turned to define the purposes to which child would be dedicated.

We - by contrast -



## Sermon theme for Yk

Jonah

In Danger, there are no Jew/ Gentiles

- ① How <sup>common</sup> a threat to life intimately unites all crew & passengers of storm-tossed ship
- ② The <sup>will</sup> capacity for sacrifice by one (Jonah) to lay down his life for sake of survival of all (Jewish unity & love)
- ③ God wants Jonah not to die but live & share his faith with world - including former enemies. (Reconciliation)



Please pre-register me for the Workshop on Politics.

Please Type or Print

Please make check payable to ALPAC

Deal with evasive responses  
to leishness I am a Jew et

Name(s)

Address

City

Phone

(Office)

State

(Home)

Zip

heart  
is not really  
it's a feeling but  
nothing visible on  
concrete

I'm pleased to be  
a Jew. I don't  
do anything myself  
but I'm pleased  
with the company I'm  
in as a Jew

The Holocaust -  
a snapshot &  
reality of Judaism

(3) Jewish sleep - a foul  
weather, not until a  
crisis stirred him did  
he become fully conscious  
of his identity.  
Why do men never meet Jewish with  
such respect? Because he is so candid  
& ready to

2005

Yk WHAT IT MEANS  
TO BE A JEW

Text Jouch

① I Am a Hebrew, Jouch did  
not identify himself with the  
Comment: My parents are  
Hebrews and I belong to the  
Hebrew people — but I am  
a Hebrew — a personal matter  
a personal choice

② Just what did it mean to him?  
It apparently answered  
all questions of the M.D. in  
It said something about his  
Country of origin... (Israel)  
The way he carried on his  
occup. or trade  
ie a way of life