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Series IV: Sermons, 1914-1963, undated.

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How to Live, 1917.

How to live

Dec. 2, 1917

In discussing the problem of assimilation last week I endeavored to bring home to you this thought which to me is ~~XXX~~ basic, ~~XXXXXXX~~ that assimilation can profit ~~XXX~~ neither the Jew himself nor humanity. I believe that I have ~~XXXXXXXX~~ impressed upon your minds, with some degree of persuasiveness, the thought that the Jew can contribute nothing culturally or religiously by destroying his identity and by merging with the peoples about him. I said that the Jew can ⁿbenefit humanity most by retaining his own personality, by enriching and beautifying the content of his own life.

If this contention is true, the problem then arises~~M~~, how best can the Jew enrich and intensify the content of his ~~XXX~~ life? The problem then arises, how to live so that his life may be resplendent with beautiful motives and noble aspirations. For you will agree with me, my friends, that it is worth while to live only in so far as we live mightily and beautifully, that life is worthless ~~XX~~ if it is flat, if it is conventional in the narrowest sense, if it is merely formal, if it has no noble aspirations to redeem its monotony, if it is nothing but merely acceptance. That type of life, even I would ~~XXX~~ not advocate for the Jew. Unless the Jew can live a life that is full and glorious, he had better cease to live. How to live, and more particularly how the American Jew should live, for our interests are mainly centered upon our own immediate problems, first of all we need an American Judaism. We have not, as yet, evolved an American Judaism. We have two types of Judaism in America, both in a sense foreign to the spirit, to the soil of America, both transplanted here, both, not as yet, adjusted to the life and needs of America. We have a Judaism which is a product of Eastern Europe and we have a ~~XXX~~ Judaism which is a product of western

Europe. We call the one Orthodox Judaism and the other Reformed Judaism, both are the precipitates of conditions and influences peculiar to those sections of Europe, and both are not congenial in a large measure, to the spirit and life of America. In a sense Judaism is universal. The fundamental principles of Judaism are subject neither to time nor place, they are eternal. But principles must have a habitation and a name, principles must embody themselves in some concrete expression. I would say some corporeality, before the eyes of man can see and it is in this corporeal expression of these principles that localities and times impress themselves. The principles of Judaism receive a peculiar imprint, a stamp, a mark, a mold, as they pass from one land to another and from one age to another so that those of you who have traced the history of Judaism for 2,000 years will see how, in Babylonia, for ~~XXXXXXX~~ example, a peculiar stress was laid on one phase of Judaism, the legalistic phase; in Alexandria, the great cauldron of the Mediterranean -----

Whenever philosophical movements, whenever cultural movements ~~XXX~~ met and clashed, a peculiar type of Judaism was evolved, under the ----- in Germany ----- under the influence of the Emancipation, a peculiarly broad universal humanitarian Judaism was evolved and in Poland and Galicia under the force of unfavorable circumstances a peculiarly legalistic Judaism, straight-laced in a resistless discipline was evolved. Judaism, my friends, always ----- to environment, it always adapted itself to existing circumstances, and that perhaps is the secret of its vitality.

Judaism was never afraid to assimilate part of the cultures and ideas of the people about them, but in so assimilating, they ----- to its own peculiar interpretation. It re-evaluated the culture and civilization about it. Now I say that Orthodox Judaism as it is today, is a product of the life of the Jew in Eastern Europe during the last two or three hundred years, and Reformed Judaism as it is today is the

product of the life of the Jew in western Europe, and that both of these are, in a sense, foreign to the spirit, life and needs of America, that you and I must evolve an American Judaism, something to respond to our own immediate needs. Our Judaism must no longer be an echo of life abroad, it must be ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ something which springs from the very soil of American life. I hold that both Western and Eastern Judaism, so called Orthodox and Reformed Judaism, are products of the golus and the exile and therefore foreign to the spirit of America. Now I shall speak frankly and honestly about what to me appears the truth, because I believe that Judaism is strong enough to face the truth. I believe that Orthodox Judaism and Reformed Judaism as we have it today, are both products of the golus, of the exile. Now the Jew has contributed the word "golus" to the vocabulary of the world. Literally it means exile, spiritually it means more than that. When people speak of ~~XXX~~ it they ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ have in mind persecution, exile, etc. When people speak of it they think of the expulsion of the Jews from France ~~X~~ect -- 1496 -- expulsion of the Jews from Portugal. When people speak of Golus they have in mind the inquisition, etc. When people speak of the golus, they ~~XXXX~~ have in mind riots, bloodshed, ghetto walls. ~~X~~ That is true. All these are harrowing experiences of the physical golus but to ~~XXXX~~ me they do not represent the ghastliness, the tragedy of the golus. The great tragedy of the golus is not found in the physical persecutions, but rather in their spiritual and physical reactions upon the life and the soul and the outlook of the Jews. The greatest tragedy of the golus, as I see it, may be found first of all, in incarcerating the great wide changing world, the sweeping of the spirit of Judaism into the bed of formalism and realism. It is in confining the great spirit of the Jew, in dampening it, in stifling it. The great tragedy of the golus is in this apothe^esis of the letter over the spirit, the law over life in the attitude of-----

to look upon ----- . The tragedy of the golus is in breaking, in a sense, the fine spirit of prophetic Judaism, and then again another phase of the great tragedy of the golus may be found in this frenzied, feverish, uncouth ----- of the Jew, this abnormal life of him, this removing him from the real actualities of----- . All this intense, unreal mysticism that sweeps over factions of our people at various times ----- yea the greatest tragedy of the golus may be found in the breaking of the backbone of the Jew, in the loss of self respect, and self dignity, the real tragedy of the golus, perhaps may be found in this attitude of cringing, fawning, and currying favor in the descendants of Maccabeus. The greatest tragedy of the golus, men and women, is not the yellow badge ~~XXX~~ but the yellow streak. Sit behind one of those ----- who cringe before the powers that be----- strip his hide and you will find in his soul ----- a yellow badge which neither time nor tide can ~~XXXXX~~ wash clean. The tragedy of the golus is found in the intellectual and spiritual make-up of the Jew. Now I hold that both Western ~~XXX~~ Judaism and Eastern Judaism are in a sense products of this golus spirit and because of th~~at~~ that they cannot help us much in our problems here in America. Eastern Judaism, through hundreds of years of persecution, has become narrowed, has lost its vision. It has lost contact with th big movements and great ideals of the world, its soul is stepped deep in ceremonial, irreligious discipline. Its interests are solely the interests of the Jewish group which has lost the outlook and vision of prophetic Judaism and reformed Judaism has lost in a large measure the sense of group loyalty, the sense of self identity. One hundred years ago, ~~XX~~ the Jews in Germany were compelled to purchase their Emancipation. People said unto them, "you want to be like us, why don't you give up you peculiar manners and customs and be like unto us in everything". And the Jews proceeded to give up everything until Judaism

was stripped, stripped, stripped --- and nothing was left, but a group of religious abstractions, of moral platitudes which can never satisfy the higher soul of man or woman. Now I am not criticizing them. It is not of ----- cavil, I am interested in the perpetuation of Judaism. I dare face the truth as I see it. The people 100 years ago were brave courageous souls, who sensed the spirit of the time and responded to it. They spoke as it was given in them to speak, and they thought that they would save and perpetuate Judaism by the means they adopted but other times have come and a new spirit is abroad in the world. In America today, neither the narrow, confined Judaism ----- pale, flat, diluted type of Judaism is possible. Because in America, in this land of democracy, nothing that hinders the development of each individual can remain, nothing but what is purely ~~XXX~~ and essentially humanitarian can remain, and orthodox Judaism that preaches ----- has no place in American life. Judaism must regain its vision. Judaism must (appreciate) the great spirit of Israel. It must not be narrow, it must not remain oriental, it must be big, with the bigness of American life, it must be broad with the broad vision of American life. I am not advocating a ----- of everything that can help us toward a better, a finer, a more effective life. All institutions ----- etc. are not by themselves valueless, they are valuable to us only in so far as they can help us so that we must subject them all to the acid test of usefulness but not to the stupid tests of rationalism. You must not approach with the ----- mind and gauge it accordingly. You must ask of these institutions "Can you help me, can you make of my home a finer place?" Can you make of my services in the synagogue something better, can you help me? If so I I will hug them close to my bosom." An institution must be an echo of social life, for it otherwise is dead and must be thrown off-- so that American Judaism, I say, must first of all be broad in its scope,

in its vision, but it must be Jewish. Last week I spoke ---- with a view of retainign a specifically Jewish culture as a help --- to American liffe. That thought to me is a guiding one. We must not be afraid that our Americanism will decrease as our Judaism increases. That was a groundless fear that time has dissolved. Our American citizenship will increase and grow in usefulness as our American Judaism becomes more real, more telling in our lives. We must have a Judaism galvanized, real, powerful, not something pale, colorless, dry, formal. American Judaism will be wide in its scope but intense and rich in its content. It will be a type all of its own having the ^{best} of Western Europe and the best of Eastern Europe but having something which is peculiarly its own. Now then if such a Judaism is desirable, what are the means to be used in attaining it? We have four agencies in our life that may become operative. We have the synagogue, we have the school, we have the home, and we have the community. These four agencies will make or break American Judaism, because American Judaism, remember friends, is an experiment and nothing else. It is not a certainty. We are not sure that we will succeed. You and I will make of the experiment either a failure or a success. The synagogue must be a galvanized, vitalized ----- . The synagogue must ~~XXX~~ in reality become a unifying force in the community of Israel. It must not be exclusive, no, it must stand for some peculiar thing solely. It must be a great storehouse ~~XXX~~ of spiritual energy. The synagogue must ~~XXX~~ throw-----over every movement in Jewish life. It must be in the solid mass of gold of the meⁿora out of which will reach the branches----- The synagogue must in very truth become----- . it must broaden its scope and include every phase of Jewish life. Perhaps at some future time I shall speak of that more in detail. But the vision of the synagogue as a house of gathering appeals to me most. It

is the great wonders of Israel that the synagogue stands for --- first (then)- the house of gathering that our synagogue must become and then the schools~~XXX~~ ----- . Why, did you ever stop to think, my friends, how appalling the ignorance of the Jewish laity had become? Of old, the Jews were people ----- of the book, of old the Jewish laymen was intellectually the equal of the Jewish minister, the rabbi was only the first among equals, the entire community was in close touch with the law, learning and literature of the Jew, but we have somehow through neglect perhaps, brought about a generation that is tragically uninformed, ignorant of things Jewish, of actual information, of knowledge. It is appalling. Now, of course, a man can be a good Jew without being an enlightened Jew just as much as an American can be a good American without knowing the life, language, literature and history of America but how much can he contribute to the growth of American institutions and how much can the Jew, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ who does not know the history of his people, who does not know its life, its -----, its movements, how much can he contribute to the future growth and ~~XXXX~~ development of Judaism. Ignorance must be ----- from Jewish ranks. Reform Judaism does not spell unlettered Judaism. Reform Judaism does not spell ignorant Judaism. The founders of Reform Judaism were men of learning, who appreciated so thoroughly ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ the Jewish life that they saw in Reform Judaism an absolute need and necessity for the preservation of the future faith of the people. Education of the children. In the city of New York today, there are 150,000 Jewish children who receive actually no Jewish education. 150,000 of them and we have not ----- we have not ----- . I suppose in this city today, from my first hasty ----- of things, there are 5,000 to 6,000, who receive absolutely no Jewish education. Now if you want to raise a generation ----- and ignorant Jew will be a

Jew, perhaps out of habit or tradition, or no Jew at all. No man can become enthusiastic over it, unless he knows the soul of it. Education, the school (that fact) must be revitalized and perhaps the home ^{me} somewhat too, ---- the home ~~XXXX~~ ^{which} was the citadel of Judaism in the past, a home where the child received those influences which remained with him throughout his life. When a child is in that plastic ~~XXX~~ stage ----- ----. our homes have become so terribly prosaic. We teach our children in the schools to pay deference to the sabbath or holy day and when they come home they find no such deference paid. The home does not co-operate with the school. You do not help us in the work ----- a little more Jewish life, a little ^t more of the aroma and poetry of Jewish life in the home and lastly, the community ----- we have ----- the sense of ~~XXXX~~ community life. Religion, morality ----- is an outgrowth of group life. ----- down which the mighty waters pour and to turn the wheels -- ---- but the mighty waters come from the great ocean of social experience of communal life, we must preserve our community life through newspapers, magazines, literature, clubs, etc., so that the young man will find that he is identified with the great group, a vast number of -----

I don't want to leave the thought with you that Judaism in America has been heedlessly negligent of the people. We have done much when you stop to consider that in the space of fifty years ----- I believe that the things which we have achieved are wonderful beyond compare, but they are not enough. We ^{ha} ~~have~~ a wonderful program of work ahead of us. We ^{have} ~~are~~ a wonderful ----- We need every loyal Jew and Jew^ess to help us. We need you all, men and women, young and old. The promise is wonderful. American Judaism faces the most wonderful phase of its history. I believe that within 100 years ----- that American Judaism will be the finest type of Judaism. ----- are making for the golden type of Judaism. The promises are wonderful. The --- are great. Men and women let us get to work.

In discussing the problem of assimilation last week, I endeavored to bring home to you this that which to me is basic, that assimilation can profit neither the Jew himself, nor humanity x I believe that I have impressed upon your minds, with some degree of persuasiveness, that the Jew can contribute nothing culturally or religiously by destroying his identity and by merging with the people about him x I said that the Jew can benefit humanity most by retaining his own personality, by enriching and beautifying the content of his own life x If this contention is true, the problem then arises, how

best can the Jew enrich and intensify the content of his life? The problem then arises, how to live so that his life may be resplendent with beautiful motives and noble aspirations.

For you will agree with me, my friends, that it is worth while to live only in so far as we live mightily and beautifully, that life is worthless if it is flat, if it is conventional in the narrowest sense, if it is merely formal, if it has no noble aspirations to redeem its monotony, if it is nothing but merely acceptance, ~~that~~ ^{that} type of life, even I would

(3)

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 The fundamental principles
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(6)
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Whenever philosophical movements, whenever cultural movements met and clashed, a peculiar type of Judaism was evolved, under the influence of the Emancipation, in Germany under a peculiarly broad universal humanitarian Judaism was evolved and in Poland and Galicia under the force of unfavorable circumstance a peculiarly legalistic Judaism, straight-laced in a resistless discipline was evolved. Judaism, my friends, always adapted itself to existing circumstances, and that, perhaps is the secret of it.

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 Our Judaism must no longer
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~~appears~~ to me appears.
 the truth because I believe
 that Judaism is strong

enough to face the truth x
 I believe that orthodox Judaism
 and Reformed Judaism as we
 have it today, are both in
 a sense, products of the gospels,
 of the exile x. Now the Jew
 has contributed the word
 "gospel" to the vocabulary
 of the world. Literally it means
 exile, spiritually it means more
 than that x. When people speak of
 it they have in mind persecution,
 exile etc. When people speak of it
 they think of the expulsion of the
 Jews from France etc - 1496
 expulsion of the Jews from
 Portugal x. When people speak
 of gospels, they have in mind
 the Inquisition, etc. When

110
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of prophetic Judaism into the
bed of formalism, and
realism x It is in

(11)
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the Jew, in dampening it,
in stifling it x the great
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 strip his hide and you
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their Emancipation x People
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 Now I am not criticising
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 caviel, I am interested

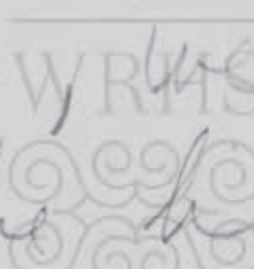
in the perpetuation of
 Judaism x I ~~then~~ dare
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 ago, were brave, courageous
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 You must not approach
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(20)
We must not be afraid that our
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thing has dissolved x Our
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our American Judaism becomes
more real, more telling in our
lives x We must have a
Judaism, ~~not~~ ^{WRHS}  real,
powerful, not something
pale, colorless, dry, formal x
American Judaism will be
wide in its scope but intense
and rich in its content x
It will be a type all of its
own ~~and~~ having the best
of Western Europe and the
best of Eastern Europe

but having something which
 is peculiarly its own x
 Now then if such a Judaism
 is desirable, what are the
 means to be used, in attaining
 it x We have four agencies
 in our life that may become
 operative x We have the
 synagogue  we have the school,
 we have the home  and we
 have the community x
 These four agencies will
 make or break American
 Judaism, because American
 Judaism, remember
 friends is an experiment
 and nothing else x It is
 not a certainty x We are

not sure that we shall succeed
 You and I will make of
 the experiment either a
 failure or a success x
 The synagogue must be a
 galvanized, vitalized

The synagogue must in
 reality become a unifying
 force in the community of
 Israel x It must not be
 exclusive, it must
 stand for some peculiar
 thing solely x It must be
 a great store-house of
 spiritual energy x The
 synagogue must throw
 over every movement
 in Jewish life x It must
 be the solid mass of gold

of the Minorah? out of which
will ~~lead~~ reach the branches

The synagogue
must in very truth become
it must.

broaden its scope and include
every phase of Jewish life &
Perhaps at some future time

I shall ~~say~~ ^{WRHS}  that
more in ~~detail~~ ^{detail} But the
vision of the synagogue
as a house of gathering
appeals to me most.

It is the great wonders of
Israel that the synagogue
stands for — first then —
the house of gathering
that our synagogue
must become, and then
the schools.

(24)
Why, did you ever stop to
think, my friends, how appalling
the ignorance of Jewish laity
has become. Of old, the
Jews were people — of the
book, of old the Jewish
layman was intellectually
the equal of the Jewish
minister. The Rabbi was
only the first among equals,
the entire community was in
close touch with the law,
learning and literature
of the Jew, but we have
somehow, thru neglect
perhaps, bred about a
generation that is tragically
uninformed, ignorant
of things Jewish, of

actual information, of knowledge.
It is appalling x Now, of course,
a man can be a good
Jew without being an
enlightened Jew & just as
much as an American can
be a good American
without knowing the life,
language, literature and
history of America, but how
much can he contribute to
the growth of American
institutions and how much
can the Jew, who does not
know the history of his
people, who does not
know its life, its
its movements, how
much can he contribute

to the future growth and
 development of Judaism x
 Ignorance must be removed from
 Jewish ranks x Reformed Judaism
 does not spell unlettered (2)
 Judaism x Reformed Judaism
 never spell ~~into~~ Ignorant
 Judaism x The founders of
 Reformed Judaism were men of
 learning, who appreciated
 so thoroughly the Jewish life
 that they saw in Reformed
 Judaism an absolute need
 and necessity for the
 preservation of the future
 faith of the people x Education
 of the children x In the
 City of New York, today,
 there are 150,000 Jewish

Children, who receive actually
no Jewish education x &
150,000 of them and we have
not

we have not
I suppose, in this city today,
from my first hasty &
of things, there are 5,000 to
6,000, who receive absolutely
no Jewish education x Now
if you want to raise a
generation



an ignorant Jew
will be a Jew, perhaps out
of habit, tradition, or he
Jew at all x No man can
become enthusiastic over it,
unless he knows the soul of it x
Education, the school
that fact must be ~~recognized~~ ^{re-vitalized}

and perhaps the home somewhat too — the home which was the citadel of Judaism in the past, a home where the child received those influences which remained with him thruout his life x When a child is in that plastic stage

WRHS



our homes have become so terribly prosaic, x We teach our children in the schools to pay deference to the Sabbath or holy-day and when they come home they find no such deference paid x The home does not co-operate with the school x You do not help us in the work

a little more Jewish life, a
 little more of the aroma and
 poetry of Jewish life in
 the home, and, lastly, the
 community ————— we
 have ————— the sense of
 community life, religion
 morality,  is an
 outgrowth of group-life

down which the mighty waters
 pour and to turn the
 wheels.

but the mighty waters
 come from the great ocean
 of social experience, of
 communal life, we must

preserve our community life
 thru newspapers, magazines,
 literature, clubs, etc., so that
 the young man will feel
 that he is identified with a
~~the~~ great group, a vast
 number

I don't want to leave the
 that with you that Judaism
 in America has been
 heedlessly negligent of its
 people x We have done much
 when you stop to consider
 that in the space of fifty
 years

I believe that the things
 which we have achieved
 are wonderful
 beyond compare

but they are not enough
 x We have a wonderful
 program of work ahead
 of us x We have a wonderful

We need every loyal Jew
 and Jewess to help us x We
 need you all, men and
 women, young and old x

The promise of a wonderful
 x American Judaism faces the
 most wonderful phase of
 its history x I believe that
 within 100 years

that American
 Judaism will be the finest
 type of Judaism

are making for the golden

(32)

lyte of Judaism. The
promises are wonderful.
The ——— are great.
Men and women let us
get to work.

