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The importance of being human, 1953.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING HUMAN

March 8, 1953

My dear friends, in the section of the Torah which is read in our synagogues this week, in the 34th chapter of the Book of Exodus, there are found prescriptions for bringing offerings and sacrifices on the occasion of the three annual pilgrimages, and among these prescriptions there is a very interesting one which reads:

"Thou shalt not boil a kid in its mother's milk." The later Rabbis traced the injunction against eating meat and milk together at the same time to this verse of the Bible which is repeated three times. "Thou shalt not sieve a kid in its mother's milk."

Recently, there were discovered seem very interesting archaeological finds which indicate that this form of sacrifice - namely, that of a kid boiled in its mother's milk - was common among the people's of antiquity. And so the Jewish law prohibited it because it was regarded as excessively cruel and was repugnant to the higher sense of humaneness among the people of Israel.

The famous commentator, Ibn Ezra, who lived in the middle ages, commenting on this very law says that it is very difficult to find a real explanation for it, for the real explanation is hidden from the eyes even of the intelligent.

"Perhaps the reason for it is that it is an act of cruelty to boil a kid in its mother's milk." And even Ezra draws attention to similar Biblical prohibitions which are dictated by a certain human sympathy, a certain sensitiveness even for animals which was known to the Hebrews of the ancient days, but to none other of the peoples of antiquity.

And so, we read in the Book of Leviticus, "And whether it be a cow or a ewe, you shall not kill it and its young both on the same day." And similarly, in the Book of Deuteronomy there is an injunction, "If you chance to come upon a bird's nest in any tree or on the ground with young ones or eggs, and the mother is sitting upon the young or

upon the eggs, you shall not take the mother with tye young. You shall let the mother go, but the young you may take to yourself."

In the same way there is another law in the Book of Deuteronomy:

"You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain." Needless pain is inflicted on the animal. It is what later times came to call a "a pity for living creatures" to be subjected to needless suffering. Our religion prohibited cruelty to animals. It is forbidden for a man, said the Rabbis, to eat anything in the morning before he has first fed his cattle. And man is commanded to rest on the Sabbath day, in the 4th of the Ten Commandments, it was also commanded that not only shall the man rest, the master of the house, but his family, also his servants and the cattle.

"A good man understands the soul of his beasts", and is humane.

Now, with this injunction against inflicting needless suffering as applied by our religion to animals, how much more so to human beings. In our religion this quality of character, this humaneness, this being human, is known as "showing acts of loving kindness" - showing acts of loving kindness. And that is the epitome of Judaism, the alpha and the omega. said the Rabbis. "He who denies the quality of lovingkindness" "is as if he denied God Himself".

Now, what is . Wherein does it, this lovingkindness, differ from charity? It is far more than charity. It differs, said the Rabbis, in three ways. Charity is with money, with things. Lovingkindness is both with money and with service and self, even when it involves self-sacrifice. Charity is for the poor. is for the poor and the rich, for the rich stand in need of lovingkindness in many situations in their lives quite as much as the poor. And Charity is for the living. is for the living and the dead, to respect the dead, to revere their memory - that is

You see readily that it is not a single act; it is a basic attitude; it is a way of life which dictates every situation. It is a humaneness which permeates the whole of a human being's attitudes towards his fellowmen, which is nothing more or less than love for one's fellowmen and respect for them. I'd like to emphasize these two words - love and respect.

"Thus, said God to Israel," said the Rabbis, "my children, what is it that I ask of you. Is it not that I ask of you nothing more than to love one another and that you respect one another." Love and respect for all human beings, regardless who they are, what their status in life may be - regardless of their color, race, regardless of whether they are native-born or strangers or aliens. Our religion is summed up, according to the great Hillel in the one law, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." The great Akiba, who lived a hundred years later, said this verse: "Love thy neighbor as thyself" is the most important principle in the whole law.

But the Bible says not only "Love thy neighbor as thyself," it also says, "Love the stranger."

To be humane and friendly in our relationship to all men, not to despise any man who is not willfully vicious or cruel, but to respect every man - for every man is made in the image of God - that is the very foundation of our entire moral life.

There was a great Rabbi who forgot it once, Elazar ben Simeon. He was a very brilliant young man, very proud of his attainments and of his scholarship. And one day he was riding to a neighboring town, all puffed up with pride and self-importance and very happy with himself, when he passed by a very poor and a very ugly looking man. And this poor man greeted him and said, "Shalom . . . Peace be unto thee, my master. And Rabbi Elazar did not answer him, did not deign to answer him, and after a while he turned to him in contempt and said to him, "Are there many as ugly as you are in the town from which you come?" Whereupon this poor man said to him, "Go tell my master who made me and ask him why he made me as ugly as I am?" Whereupon Rabbi Elazar realized that he

had sinned grievously. He descended from his donkey and knelt before this poor ugly man and asked for forgiveness, and the man refused. And the sage followed this poor man until they came to the neighboring town and all the townsmen came up and hailed the scholar, this young brilliant scholar, and called him, "Rabbi, Rabenu, " - our master - and this poor man turned to them and said, "Is he a Rabbi in Israel?" And they said yes, and he said, "If he is a Rabbi, may there never be again any Rabbi in Israel." And they were told the story, and they asked this poor man to forgive the Rabbi for the sake of the community, and he said that he would forgive him, provided that never again in his lifetime would he be so arrogant as to refuse to answer a greeting, and would he be so cruel as to comment on an unfortunate man's appearance. And for the rest of his life, says the Talmud, Elazar ben Simeon taught one maxim to all of his pupils and disciples,

"Always a man should be as pliant as a reed,"

"and should never be as stiff as a cedar."

Love and respect for man as such - he who welcomes a human being, a fellow human being, with a happy countenance, said one of the sages, even if he gave them nothing - God credits him with having given that man the most magnificent gifts, for the greatest gift that you can give a human being is the gift of respecting him, of treating him in dignity as a fellow human being.

One's love must well up from the heart. "Thou shalt not hate your brother in your heart," says the Bible. It doesn't mean that thou shalt not smite him - of course, not, or that thou shalt not strike him or that thou shalt not curse him, or that thou shalt not hurt him - that goes without saying. It means much more than that. It means that thou shalt not have hate for him in your heart. One's respect must be extended not alone to the brilliant, to the righteous, to the scholar - but to all men.

One who is human, my friends, one who has what we call "the good heart", one who practices is always short on criticism of his fellowmen and long on forgiveness, because he knows, for his heart has been educated to know, that all men, including himself, are weak and frequently sinners, often fallen into mistakes and errors. A man

who has , a man who is human in the profoundest sense of the word, is not harsh and unsparing in his judgment of other people; in fact, he prefers to leave judgment to God Who knows everything where we can know only a fragment of the truth. He is not as severe or relentless in his appraisal of men. He leans always towards mildness and tolerance, forbearance.

There is a gentleness of the heart, and the human being has it for all men, for he knows the "still, sad music of humanity"; he knows how much of tragedy there is in the world, how much of sorrow and tears, and how desperately hard a man must struggle to find a little bit of happiness in the world, and how often they fail even after they try. Why add one single drop to the human cup of bitterness? Why not rather try to sweeten the bitter cup?

Even in righteous condemnation, when one is warranted in condemning and in criticizing and in denouncing, one should not deny the claim of compassion. Our sages say that Elijah and Moses and Isaiah were reproved by God for having berated too harshly and denounced their people too severely, for not having sought some extenuating circumstances for their misdeeds. Only Gideon, the judge who dared to speak up in defense of his people, knowing at the same time their shortcomings and their failings - only he was praised by God.

One who is human, my dear friends, is never cruel in act, in word, in look, in attitude. There is an interesting command found in the Book of Leviticus. "Thou shalt not curse the deaf, even when the deaf man can't hear you."

To wrong a man in words is worse than in money; to slander a man, to defame him or his family or his people or his race, is blasphemy against God. "He who steals my purse steals trash. 'Tis something, nothing. 'Twas mine, 'tis his and has been slave to thousands. But he that filches from me my good name robs me of that which not enriches him, but makes me poor indeed."

One must not say to a man, declared the Rabbis, who has repented his sin, however black his sin was - one must not say to him at any time, remember your former deeds. One must not say to a proselyte, a pagan who abandoned his paganism and accepted the spiritual faith of Judaism - one must not say to him, remember the deeds of your ancestors. And if suffering or sickness befalls anyone, or if his children die, one must not say to him, as Job's friends said to Job, whoever perishes, being innocent. Kindness, gentleness of heart - that is the universal language, the language that even the deaf can hear and the dumb can understand.

And my good friends, he who is human is humble. "Make very sure to be humble at all times." "It is better to be of a lowly spirit with the poor than to divide the spoil with the proud," says the Book of Proverbs. "He who is haughty denies God because he thinks of himself as of a God."

The greatest figure in Jewish history, Moses, a titanic figure, the redeemer of the people which has survived for 4,000 years, the revealer of the law which has become the moral law for mankind - this great emancipator and lawgiver - when he died, the Bible could find no profounder and lovelier tribute to pay him than to say, "This man Moses" "was the most humble of all men who lived upon the face of the earth." The humble shall inherit the earth, never the proud, never the arrogant.

Now, why do I at this time speak on the importance of being human? Because our age, good friends, has forgotten humaneness; hence, its torture and its chaos. Our age has forgotten humility and compassion and pity. Our age is bitter in its propaganda hatreds and denunciations. It is unrestrained in its severity of its judgment and criticism, their attacks on others. They are cruel in their acts, in their speech, in their attitudes. Institutions and systems and party programs have become more important than man. People don't speak any more of humanity; they speak of one group of nations arming itself to the teeth to fight another group of nations. The concept of one universal family, of one mankind, the center of which is the individual human being entrenched

in his rights, his dignity, his self-respect, protected as a child of God - that seems to have escaped the perspective of our day and generation. Everybody talks of justice and freedom and human rights, brotherhood and peace between the East and the West - everybody talks about it - but they have forgotten that the mainspring of all these desirable things is the human heart, not constitutions, not institutions, not apparatus - but the human heart. Without love and kindness and mutual respect, these desirable things cannot be achieved, or if achieved, cannot be long secured.

Unless there is fraternity among men, liberty and equality will not long endure. It is well to remember that fraternity, unlike liberty and equality - and these were the three things that were the slogans of the French Revolution - liberty, equality and fraternity - it is well to remember that without fraternity, liberty and equality cannot endure, and that unlike liberty and equality, fraternity cannot be legislated. It does not come by way of a WRHS to the commissar. It must emanate from the human heart. You cannot punish a man for not loving his neighbor as himself. No police power on earth can coerce a man into fraternity. No Gestapo can enter the human heart; only man himself can enter the human heart, and God. Fraternity, humanity, humaneness

love, respect - that must be voluntary. And it is here where our age has failed. The heart of man is not being cultivated sufficiently to keep face with the cultivation of his mind and the skill of his hands.

The duties which are left to the heart, which are the most important in society, have been ignored while all stress has been laid upon the duties which are demanded in a man by the state or by the government or by the party, by the group. And the wellsprings of human love and compassion, reverence and pity, have been depleted and they are not being replenished. Hence, the moral chaos of our day; hence, the menace of our world. Man has forgotten the importance of being human.

It is not yet too late to begin the reeducation of the generation of tomorrow, to begin to speak of and to think of and to teach humanity, humaneness, human sympathy, forgiveness compassion. They may yet save our world, this inner

revolution in the hearts of men. They may yet atone for our collective sins.

It is said of the two great Rabbis, Jochanan ben Zaccai and Rabbi Akiba, who one day passed by the ruins of the Temple in Jerusalem and saw jackals walking among the ruins, and the great Rabbi Joshua broke down and wept, wept over the ruins of the magnificent Temple, and turned to his teacher, Jochanan ben Zaccai, and said, "How can we ever hope that our sins will ever be forgiven, since the Temple is destroyed and its altars are broken and demolished? What will forgive our sins?" And the wise Rabbi Jochanan ben Zaccai said to his disciple, "There is only one thing to atone for the sacrificial altar, and that is acts of lovingkindness." So it is written in the Bible. "I, God, desire

lovingkindness and not sacrifices."

So, there it is - ancient wisdom for our modern world. We have tried almost everything. We have tried to save ourselves with atomic bombs and hydrogen bombs, with military might and with secret intelligence of all kinds, and with propaganda of the most vociferous and unrestrained kind in the East and in the West, and it has availed us not at all. We are moving to the precipice. Perhaps the time has come to go back to the salvation of which the great religions of mankind have spoken, to go back - way back - to all institutions and all outer forms - way back, way inward into the heart of man. Amen.

1). In 5/730 - Ex. 34.26 - prescription for bringing offerings
sacrifices on occasions, 3 annual pilgrimages - 132 lbs for
= 1 r/c 2/1/2. "You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk!"
A first part: "unleavened"

(c) The Rabbinic broad the injunction against taking ^{no gift & meat} 'unsh' and ^{broken} plank tip' to this verse in the Bulb. - which is repeated 3 times -

3. Strain -

(b) Recently there was detected archaeological finds which indicate that the form / open pre. - of a kind, ^{which} in the past was common among people, and present.

(c) few law prohibited it - be. it was excessive and was refugeant to their higher sense of humaneness.

[illegible]

And draws attention to number Radical prohibitions which are dictated by a certain human sympathy and even traces - Known to the Helms - But not taken to the present world.

to the present world -

(a) Gen. 22. 28: "And whether it be cow or ewe, you shall not kill it and its young both in one day!" "I'll be glad to come

kill it and its young both in one day. "If you chance to come upon a bird's nest, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones, or eggs and the mother sitting upon the young or upon the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young — you shall let the mother go, but the young; as man takes his young." "

(c) In the same way - Deut 25.4. - לֹא יִרְדּוּ עִי וְעִבְדֶּךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא
"You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out
the grain" - needless pain - עוֹלָם הֵיאָה

(d) Our religion ~~is ordained~~ prohibited cruelty
to animals - לֹא יִרְדּוּ עִי וְעִבְדֶּךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא

① When man rests his animals too must have rest

② - לֹא יִרְדּוּ עִי וְעִבְדֶּךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא

2/ If this injunction against inflicting needless suffering
is applied by our religion to animals, how much
more so to human beings.

- In our faith this quality is known as חַסְדִּים
"loving-kindness". It is the essence of Judaism -
its alpha and omega הַיְסוּד וְהַסֵּוֹף

- Rabbi Judah said: "The world is established in loving-kindness" הָעוֹלָם נִסְתָּבֵּן בְּחַסְדִּים

- Ps. 83. עָלָה הָאֵלֹהִים בְּחַסְדִּים. "World is established in loving-kindness" - עַל 3 דְּבָרִים - חַסְדִּים - רַחֲמִים - יְרֵמָה

3/ What is it? - Far more > Charity - 3 ways.

① Money - What help ② Poor - Rich ③ Living - Dead

It is a basic attitude - not a single act -

It is a way of life - dictated in every situation

by humaneness which is nothing more & nothing less
than love for our fellowmen - and respect for them.

6/ On who is human - who has the "good heart" n"2 - (4)
as short an entrance of his fellowmen story as joy & trials
- He knows, because his heart is educated to know, that all men
including himself, are weak, are sinner, and frequently
fall into mistakes and errors.

- He is not harsh ^{+ unkind} in his judgments - withholding Colours
- severe and ruthless in his appraisals, men - He bears torments
with moderation and tolerance, and forbearance. ~~and~~

7/ There is gentleness in his heart for all men - for he knows the
"I'll be sad music of humanity" - how much of tragedy there
is in the world - and sorrow and tears - and how desperately
hard men must struggle to find a little happiness in it -
and how often they fail - Why add one single drop to
their cups of bitterness - why not rather try to
weaken their bitter cups?

8/ Even in righteous condemnation - we should not
deny the claim of compassion - Elijah, Moses and
Isaiah were reproved by God for having berated adversaries
their people too severely. They should have at the same time
sought to show extenuating circumstances which would have
softened the severity of their judgment & structures
- only Isaiah - who dared to speak up - & expressed his
people - was praised

9/ One who is human is ~~humble~~ never cruel - is soft (5)
in work, in love, in attitude.

One must not curse even the deaf!

- To wrong a man in words - is worse than in money -
- to slander a man, to defame him ^{on his family} to his people or his
race is blasphemy against God -

"Who steals my purse steals trash - 'tis something, nothing - 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands.
But he that filches from me my good name, robs me that which
no riches can buy - and makes me poor indeed."

① One must not say to a man who has repented - 'Remember your former deeds. -

Not to the proselyte - remember the deeds of your ancestors

If suffering or sickness befall anyone, or if his children die, one must not say to him as Job's friends

and to Job - 'Who ever perishes, being innocent'
Kindness is the Universal Language - the language that even the
deaf can hear and the dumb can understand

10/ One who is Human is humble - "It is better to be
of a lowly spirit with the poor than to divide the spoil
with the proud" n/h 1st 1st 3/4 3/4

① "He who is haughty denies God" - for he thinks himself
as God

② Moses עליו שלום בן 1,500 -

③ 476 1st 1st 3/4 3/4 -

11/ Our age has forgotten humanity - Here its Future & Chaos (6)

① Forgotten humility - compassion - pride -

- Butter in their propaganda hatched & denunciations

- Unrestrained in their judgment & criticism

- Cruel in their acts - speech - attitudes

- Fortitudes & virtues now important than Man

12/ They all talk of justice - freedom - human rights ^{brotherhood}

- but they all seem to have forgotten that the main key
all these desirable things - is in the heart, man

- without love and kindness and mutual respect
they cannot be achieved or long secured.

Unless there is fraternity among men - liberty and
equality will not long endure.

And Fraternity - unlike liberty & equality - cannot
be legislated - it must emanate from the
human heart.

You cannot punish a man for not loving his
neighbor as himself. No police power on earth

can coerce a man into fraternity - No Gestapo
can enter the human heart - Only man himself - God.

It is here where our age has failed - The heart, man
has not been cultivated - sufficiently to keep pace

with the cultivation, his mind - and the state he lived. 17

The crises which are left to the heart - have been
'fused' - ~~while~~ all stress has been laid on the crises demanded
by the state - the government - the party - the press -

The well-things, human love, compassion, pity-
reverses - have been depleted, and are not being
replenished -

Hence the moral character of the masses, as a whole

13/ It is not yet too late to begin to speak, & think, & reach - humanity - humanities - 112 -

they may yet save our world - as mines
revolution in the heart / men -

They may get atone for our collective sins.

They may get alone for our convenience.

① Torhaman b. Zoccai - Joshua - Temple in Ruins

- kept - no place to store for our mus.

- kept - no place to store

לכא כבד ליהוה כח אלהים ואלו הן השמות
כי יתנו שם אלוקים אחרים

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