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As between parents and children - Is love enough?, 1954.

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AS BETWEEN PARENTS AND CHILDREN -

IS LOVE ENOUGH?

February 7, 1954

As between parents and children - is love enough? To this question I would be inclined to give a negative answer. It is not enough. Love is, generally speaking, not enough as a guiding principle in any human situation, in any human relationship. Love is too vague a concept, too unrestrained and undisciplined, and too emotional. Love is undoubtedly the most important element in human relationships, and without it society could not exist. But it is not enough.

In the First Letter of John in the New Testament, where so many beautiful things are said about the concept of love, it is stated that God is love. Judaism never said that God is love. Judaism never said that God is justice. Judaism declared that God created the world by his attributes both of love and of justice.

The Rabbis illustrate this profound thought of theirs by bringing the parable of the King who had a beautiful glass which he wished to fill. He wanted to fill it with oil and hot water, but he was afraid that his glass would crack. Then he wanted to fill it with cold ice water, and again he was afraid lest the glass would contract and break. So he mixed the boiling hot water with the cold icy water first and then poured it into the glass and the glass did not break. God wanted to create the world, his world, on the principle of love, alone, but he realized that the world could not exist on the principle of love alone because men would sin and be indefinitely forgiven so that violence, crime, wickedness would fill the earth. He could not build the world on the principle of love alone nor on the principle of justice alone, for if men were always recompensed strictly on the principle of their deserts, justice, humanity couldn't exist. And so God merged the principle of justice with the principle of love and created a world, and his world endured.

We have the same thought expressed in the Bible. (Hebrew...), "Righteousness and justice are the foundations of thy throne." (Hebrew...), "Steadfast love and faithfulness go before thee."

Love alone is not enough. The foundations in life must be laid in justice and righteousness. Social order, all the institutions of society, its law must be established on well-defined principles of equity, of responsibility, and of enforcement.

Because of our mutual interdependence as human beings and the requirements of social stability and security, there are certain things in life which we must do or abstain from doing whether we like it or not, regardless of whether we love to do it or not. There are duties and obligations which society demands of us, without which society simply could not exist, which we must perform regardless of our devotion or love to them or not. We must perform them even when our hearts are not in it, because the promptings of our hearts are not always the sure and dependable guides of what needs to be done for the good of all or even for our own good. The head must guide the heart. Intelligence must control our instincts. I read you that beautiful chapter this morning, chapter 4 of the Book of Proverbs, where so much emphasis is placed upon wisdom, upon understanding. The beginning of wisdom is get wisdom, get understanding. You need intelligence for mature living, for satisfactory living.

Society frequently must compell conformity to its standards until the individual is mature enough to adjust his personal preferences to the indispensable and to the coercive demands of social existence, social life.

If you look closer into the subject, you realize that love itself, precious as it is and exalted as it undoubtedly is is almost great enough "to cover up all transgressions," as the Bible says, and in its purest form, the noblest quality of life. But love itself can be very destructive, both of the subject as well as of the object of that love, unless it is coupled with wisdom, with understanding, insight. Love without judgment, without reason, without measure and discrimination is just unbridled sentimentalism, just turgid emotionalism, which can be ruinous because of its very impetuosity, because of its unchannelled purpose and direction. That is why we often speak of love as "blind." Such love is blind, and blindness in love can be as hurtful, as harmful as blindness in hate.

Excessive love, for example, has often made a parent in the home partial, or has caused him or her to display favoritism to one or another child in the family, which favoritism brings about the poison of envy, hate, strife, and disrupts a family. It is a misdirected and unintelligent love. We have that illustrated time and again in the Bible. Jacob had many children but loved Joseph most of all, says the Bible. (Hebrew) - Israel, Jacob, loved Joseph more than any of his other children. (Hebrew) - he was the child of his old age - the youngest, and he loved him the most. He naturally indulged him more than he did his other children, gave him a coat of many colors and made this young lad proud and boastful in the presence of his brothers, and his brothers hated him because of it. They sought to do him harm. You know the story - how they first threw him into a pit to kill him and finally decided not to kill him but to sell him as a slave to a band of traveling Ishmaelites on the way to Egypt. And Joseph became a slave in Egypt. And, said the Rabbi, not only did Joseph become a slave in Egypt because of this unwise favoritism shown by this excessive love of the old Jacob, his father, but it caused, in the course of time, all his other brothers to come down to Egypt and in the course of time their descendants were all enslaved and for 400 years the whole people of Israel were slaves in Egypt because of this unwise love of a doting father.

Excessive love frequently brings about excessive indulgence. There are parents who cannot deny their children anything. They cannot stand to see their children wimper or pout or cry because they have been denied something. Their children have to have everything that other children have - and more, and they thereby set false standards for their children, and unworthy ambitions, because the emphasis here is placed not upon being more but upon having more. That is ruinous of character. There are parents who would like to shelter their children indefinitely from the exigencies, the demands, the hardness, the harshness of real life, of want, of need, from struggle, effort. They want to give them all the time. Give them things,

failing to understand that earning a thing is worth ten times getting a thing. There are parents who simply cannot rebuke their children, a child who is lazy or slovenly or sluggardly. The Book of Proverbs says, "Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Better by far." There are parents who cannot say no to a child who insists upon spending hours at the television, ruining his eyes, ruining his nerves, filling his mind or her mind with stories of murder and gangsters and shooting and killing and horrors of all sorts, and then carrying out this mind filled with all this out into the world. There are parents who cannot say no, because of love, of course, to their children on staying out late at night in non-descript company, unchaperoned, drinking, engaged in wild pranks and escapades, until they wake up one day to find that their children have been caught in juvenile delinquency and wonder how could it happen to me? This nice home which I have given to my boy or girl, and all the love I've given him or her, and all the things I've given him or her. There are parents, on seeing or hearing their child disrespectful and insolent in speech and in attitude to an elder, to a teacher, are afraid to slap that child down - discipline him or her - out of excessive love, of course - afraid to suppress that child's individuality or that child's precious personality, failing to realize that personality is not a static thing but a development, an achievement, which grows in value and in importance as it is socialized, as it finds its opportunities in the social order in which it lives, as it conforms to the expectations of the world, as it participates in the life of the world as a cooperative member of society. That's what develops character and personality. You do not destroy a garden when you weed it; you destroy a garden when you fail to weed it. "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child," says the Bible, "but the rod of discipline drives it far from him."

The Bible is full of instances of this excessive love which leads to excessive indulgence, which is an unwise love and a destructive love. David, the great King David, loved Absalom his son with a boundless and an unintelligent love. Absalom was a beautiful boy (Hebrew...), "As Absalom there was no one as handsome in the whole of Israel." David loved Absalom, forgave him for all his mischief in his

youth and in his later life and for all the evil which he wrought and crimes which he committed; indulged him, until Absalom rebelled against his father, inspired a revolution against his own father, disgraced him in his old age, forced him to flee into exile, and even then poor old David loved his Absalom, and when the last final battle took place and the forces of David marched against the forces of Absalom, the old king said to the general of his forces, (Hebrew...), "Please deal gently, for my sake, with the young man Absalom." Absalom was killed; the heart of his father was broken, and there is a story of a case where love is not enough between parent and child. (Hebrew...), "Is there a father who hates a son?" said the rabbi. There is none, unless the father is an abnormal person. Every father, every mother, loves his or her child.

But there are parents whose love is unwise; there are parents who give their children everything, everything but themselves; everything but the best that is in them; everything but their time and their attention and their participation in the lives of the children, continuously and helpfully. They are too busy for that. They haven't the time. They leave the raising of their children mostly to others - nurses, maids, schoolteachers; they expect the Sunday School to raise their children. They give their children only as much time as they can spare from their business or from their pleasures, and they thereby deny the child the security, the warmth, the undergirding spiritually which comes from a continuous comradeship and companionship of parents.

The rabbis were very wise, our rabbis of old, in their understanding of life. They said (Hebrew...), "He who raises the child, who rears him, is really the father, not he who gives him birth." It is not an easy matter to raise children. It is extremely difficult. Our people spoke of the (Hebrew...), "The pain which goes in the raising of children." There is pain; there is tremendous effort, tremendous alertness, tremendous sacrifices, which must be made. For there is no pleasure in life without pain, and there is no reward without labor; and sometimes there is no reward

even with labor, because life is not as simple as all that. Parents cannot always be blamed for the failure and the delinquencies of their children. The same parents can raise a Cain and an Abel. The same parents, in the same home, can raise a Jacob and an Esau. There is much which is unaccountable, which is unpredictable because there are many forces which play upon the young life and mold it. But certainly there is no reward without labor; there can be no expectation of reward, and there seldom is any reward without the labor invested by parents in the raising of children.

Parents have three duties in relation to their children, and the rabbis defined these duties quite accurately. In the first place, a parent is charged with the responsibility of teaching the child Torah, an ethical way of life, to teach by precept and by example. Parents are instructors (Hebrew...), "thou shall teach diligently to thy children." (Hebrew...), "thou shall teach it, repeat it to thy son. Hear, my son, the instruction of your father and reject not the teaching of your mother." The father is an instructor and the mother is a teacher. Parents frequently have forgotten that rule. They are not only providers, protectors, they are teachers, and in the home they are to teach by precept and example the real values of life. Not the sham, not the fame, not the show; children will get plenty of that outside the home, but what is real, what is true worth, what is character, what is integrity, what is honesty, reverence, for the real values, for learning, for ~~real~~ achievement, for real effort, things that make up manhood, womanhood. The parent owes a child a religious home, a home where there is prayer, where there is observance, the example of parental piety. The parent cannot teach the child the way he should go if the parent does not go that way himself. That is the first duty of a parent, to be the teacher of the good life to the child, by precept and by example. Precept is not enough.

And the second duty, according to our rabbis, is to teach the child, help a child acquire a means of livelihood, teach the child a trade, a profession, so that he or she can earn an honorable living, help a child to acquire a good education in accordance with his native abilities and equip him to earn a livelihood.

And finally, they said, it is the duty of a parent to help a son or a daughter to marry early in life and set up a home of their own, not to compell them to wait if they can, by their financial assistance, help them to marry early in life, and to help them as far as possible during the early years of their married life so that their new standard of living is not too sharply differentiated from that which they enjoyed in their parental home before their marriage.

There are parents who leave their children on death rich legacies. They might have helped their children more when they were alive, and added much more to their children's happiness in the early of their married lives. That which we leave our children when we die is really no gift at all. What else can we do? But give away what we have at death to them or to others.

These are the duties of parents to children. There are duties of children to parents. The Bible, interestingly enough, does not command children to love their parents, but to honor them. Love cannot be commanded. All normal children love their parents, but even normal children can be and frequently are thoughtless, self-centered, inconsiderate, opinionated, demanding. Their love, too, lacks understanding and maturity, an absence of insight and wisdom. "A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother." Now what makes a wise son and a wise daughter? A wise son hearkens to his father's instruction and the teaching of his mother. A wise son credits them with an understanding of life greater than his own, for they have lived longer, experienced more, seen more, and he credits them with a selfless devotion to him or her. (Hebrew...), "love which is not dependent upon any selfish motive. An intelligent son does not resent, he does not always welcome, but he does not resent guidance or criticism or rebuke, whether in conduct or as far as good manners are concerned or correct speech or attitude. He realizes that he is being trained, and this is part of the training. Honor thy father and thy mother. There are so many beautiful stories told in our rabbinic literature illustrating the importance of honoring parents. Time is too short to refer even to a fragment. Our people placed tremendous moral and spiritual importance upon honoring the parents.

There is a beautiful story told of Rabbi Tarphon, one of the great rabbis of the Talmud. It was a Sabbath day. His mother was to walk across the courtyard to another house, over the hard stones of the courtyard. Her sandals were torn, and it was Sabbath, and they could not be mended. So this Rabbi Tarphon took his - stretched his hands on the pavement and enabled his mother to walk across the courtyard on the palms of his hands. Strange to associate such an act of - I don't know what to call it - spiritual chivalry with one of these hard legalistic rabbis of the Talmud, but there it is. And the rabbis are delighted to tell that story. They tell the story of a son who dealt in precious stones and one day merchants came to buy treasures from him, but he would not sell them the treasures, the jewels which they wanted because the key to the treasure chest is under the pillow of his father who was sleeping, and he would not disturb his father. And he rather lost 600,000 gold denarii rather than to disturb the slumber of his father and be disrespectful to his father. These are extreme stories, but their very character illustrates the tremendous value, the tremendous regard for parents which our great religious tradition emphasized. Children too, like parents have their duties and their obligations, even as they have their privileges. There is a duty of appreciation in the home of what is being done for them. The duty of loyalty, of cooperation, of sharing burdens, not being mere takers, as though they were entitled to everything. A home is a cooperative effort, and everyone must contribute something to share in the burdens and responsibilities of a home. Especially the children owe their parents the duty of making the most of themselves, of becoming the best kind of men and the best kind of women they possibly can be, because this is what gives a parent the deepest satisfaction. Parents don't expect rewards from children. But blessed is the child or the son or the daughter who lives in such a way in this² community that it brings a glow to the heart of the parent, a song to their hearts. Nothing so enheartens and inspirits and elevates the spirit of a parent to know that their son or their daughter is well spoken of in the community, is highly regarded, has made a fine contribution to the life of the community. This is their greatest reward. The pride of fulfillment. And this is what parents are

entitled to, to receive from children.

The Jewish home, my friends, throughout the ages has been exemplary. All peoples have spoken about the dignity and the nobility of Jewish family life in the past, because the Jewish home has been built on love and on more than love - it was built on God - built on a code of moral duties and responsibilities. Because of that it was secure, able to endure the storms which swept over it through all the centuries of persecution. We have come into an age which frighteningly resembles the kind of an age of the Roman society in its days of decadence and corruption, the kind of society described in the writings of Seneca and Juvenal and Martial, when marriage was held in contempt, when divorce was a commonplace, every-day experience - nothing thought of it. Divorces in our day, in our society have reached that point. One out of every four marriages ends in a divorce court. Juvenile delinquency has been increasing at a frightening degree. This is all so foreign to the spirit of the Jewish home and the Jewish life, and unfortunately that spirit is beginning to infiltrate and undermine the Jewish home which was unique in the world for its integrity, maturity, and its sense of moral responsibility.

Professor Lazarus in his work on Jewish Ethics has this to say of the Jewish home and of the Jewish woman in the home: "In the days of horror of the later Roman empire throughout the time of the migration of nations, it was not war alone that destroyed and annihilated all those people of which despite their former world dominating greatness nothing remains but their name. It was rather the ensuing demoralization of home life. This is proved. It cannot be repeated too often by the Jews, for they suffered more severely and more cruelly by wars than any other nation, but among them the inmost living germ of morality, strict discipline and family devotion was at all times preserved. This wonderful and mysterious preservation of the Jewish people is due to the Jewish woman. This is her glory, not alone in the history of her own people, but in the history of the world. It is true, of course, that it is the mother in the home who sets the tone, the spirit, the mood of the home. But mother alone cannot do it, nor mother and father alone. Mother,

father, son, daughter together can cooperate in love, in justice, in mutual responsibility, in wisdom, in intelligence to preserve, to maintain that social unit which not alone makes all who live within it if it is the right kind of a home content, proud, but it becomes a citadel of strength for the community and for society as a whole. It is well that members of the household of Israel should think clearly should consider thoughtfully the problems which the present age presents to the Jewish home in terms of the relationship of parents and children.



1/ As let - is love enough? Am inclined to answer, No!
Love is not enough as a guiding principle in any ~~in any~~ human situation or relationship

Too vague a concept - too unrestrained and undisciplined - too

emotional
It is undoubtedly the most important element in human relationships. Without it society could not exist. But it is not enough.

In the First Letter, John, in N.T. - "God is love".

Jed. never said that "God is love". It never said that "God is justice".

It declared that God created the world with both - by His attributes both Love and Justice.

Rabbi - ~~2 classes~~ A precious class -

(Ps. 89.15/7ND 123, 1 - 121/1 300 - 2100 / 101 Col 1 735)

"Righteousness and justice are the foundations, they there.

"Steadfast love and faithfulness so high there"

Love alone is not enough - The foundations of what must be laid in justice and righteousness - Social order, ^{its institution} and law must be established ^{with} on defined principles of equity, responsibility and enforcement.

Because, in mutual independence and the region - wants of social stability and security there are certain things which we must do, or abstain from doing - whether we like it or not - regardless, whether we love

to do it or not - there are duties and obligations which
society demands of us - without which ^{with} society ^{could} exist
which we must perform - regardless of our loving devotion
to them or not - We must perform them - even when
our hearts are not in it - b.c. the promptings of our
hearts are not always the same and dependable guides to
what needs to be done for the good of all - not even
for our own good -

- The head must guide the heart!
- Intelligence must control our instincts -
- And society must compel conformity with the unloved
is matters enough to adjust his personal preferences
to the ^{unjustifiable & excessive} demands of social life states and social control
- Love itself, precious and ^{exalted} ~~something~~ tho it undoubtedly is
- almost great enough to cover up all transgressions -
and in its purest form the noblest quality of life -
- can be destructive both to the subject and the object, ^{as love} tho

Love -
Love without judgment and wisdom, without measure
and discrimination - is ~~a~~ unfettered sentimentality -
a lurid emotionalism - which can be misused ^{harm},
in very important, and ~~the~~ unchanneled
purposes and direction

Such - Love is blind! And blindness in love is as

harmful as blindness in hotel

4. Excessive love - often ~~leads~~ ^{a parent} to make ~~one~~ ^{cause him to} partial - and ~~display~~ ^{display} ~~of~~ ^{of} favoritism to one or another child in the family.
- which causes envy - hate - and strife.

① Jacob. 1/10 p.m. 12 1/2 to 12 1/4 p.m. 12 1/2 to 12 1/4 p.m. -
coat & many colors - 400 yds. / slavery!

② Excessive love - excessive indulgence - cannot
deny the child any thing - ^{cannot stand to see the child} Whimper, pant, cry -
Has to have everything that every other child has - & more!
- thereby setting up false standards for the child - and
unworthy aims too - # Shelter them from the experiences of life

Have very things
don't put words
on 'em is better
is better than
this

"Better is
open rebellion
than hidden
love"

The emphases should be on being more > having more!
cannot rebuke the child who is - lazy, slowly, shy, stupid & inert
cannot say No - to the child - who insists on spending
hours at television - ruining his eyes - and nerves
and filling his mind with stones, murder, fantasy,
shootings, killings and horror, all sorts.

Or on staying out late at night - in non-descript youthful
company - unchaperoned - drinking & engaging in
wild pranks & escapades - (juvenile delinquency & independent)
Or seeing a young the child disrespectful to elders or
teachers -

and afraid to slap him down ^{and discipline him} out of excessive
love - or afraid to suppress his individuality & personality

There is no pleasure without pain:-
There is no reward without labor-
Some times there is no reward even with labor-
It is not as simple as all that
Parents cannot always be blamed for the failure, ^{then children} ~~can be~~ ^{can be} ~~blamed~~ ^{can be} ~~no~~ ^{no} ~~expectations~~
But surely - without labor - there can be no expectations
reward - and then seldom is

6/ Parents have 3 duties towards the children whom they bring into world. Rabbis defined them

① Teach the child right - the ^{ethical} ~~religious~~ way of life -
by precept and example - Parents are responsible

(a) Book of Proverbs: "Hear, my son, the instruction of your father and reject not the teaching of your mother"

(b) Real Values - not foam - sham - show - revenue -
for its worth, character, integrity, honesty, learning,

(c) A religious home - proper - Sabbath observance
- Example of parental piety -
- You cannot lead a child the way to should go
if you go the way yourself

(d) Sanctity

(2) Teach him a trade or profession - so that he or she can earn an honorable living. Help him to acquire a good education, in accordance with his natural abilities, - and equip him to earn a livelihood

(3) Finally - help him ^{or her} to marry early in life - and set up a home of his or her own. ^{Not careful things to want!} And help them as far as possible during the early years of their married life - so that their transition from ~~the~~ their ~~own~~ ^{own} status ~~new~~ ^{new} standards, living is not too sharply differentiated from what they enjoyed before their marriage -

There are parents who leave their children well equipped when they are gone. They might have helped them more during their lives when they were alive - and added ^{upon} their children's happiness in the early years of their children's married lives. ^{that which we begin with to any help} ~~Things we find at death~~ ^{no} gifts at all - what else can we do? But, it is done, & there is to others!

7/. Bible does not command children to love their parents - but to honor them -

For love cannot be commanded!

Normal children love their parents - but even normal children are frequently thoughtless - self-centered - ^{incom-} moderate - ^{un-} discriminating, demanding -

Their love, too, lacks understanding, ^{is} ~~is~~ at times shallow!

"A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish

son is a son-in-law to his mother"

(2)

What makes a wife son - a daughter?

"The wife son hearken to his father's instruction - teaching of his mother"

He conducts them with an understanding, life, deeper than his own - and with a selfless devotion to them -

He does not resent guidance, or criticism or rebuke -

this is part of his necessary training

in conduct - in good manners - in conversation - in respect

"Honor" - R. Tappan

Heaven's hands under feet

Dana, San 7 the thousands - 600,000 sold - America

Like his parents - he, too, has duties to his, others - to his as family

The duty of affection, of loyalty, of cooperation, of

sharing burdens -

The duty of making the most of himself - home - deepest satisfaction to parents - Pride, & Fulfillment:-

Say to their hearts

8). The Jewish Home - examples - Love + more > love! - God was there! - Code, conduct

- Divorces - from one out of 6 marriages in 1940; one out of 4:-

- Juvenile delinquency - hardly known among our people

- Sinecure, Juvencal + Martial - moral corruption, Roman

Society - of lust, divorce - contempt in what marriage was held

M. Lazarus