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Are you reasonable?, 1955.

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ARE YOU REASONABLE?

May 1, 1955

The teachers of Judaism, my dear friends, constantly stressed the fact that Judaism is a livable faith, not too difficult for man, not beyond his reach. Our religion did not demand of man the impossible. The good life acceptable to God, our religion maintained, is within the reach of all men. The standard of conduct demanded of man was not inordinately difficult of attainment. So we read in the book of Deuteronomy, "For the commandment which I command you this day is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it."

Judaism does not attempt to alter human nature, or to suppress human instincts. Its aim is to guide them. It is deeply perceptive of man's capacities but also of his limitations. Thus, for example, Judaism teaches man to love his neighbor as himself, to love the stranger as himself, not to hate his brother in his heart, not to take vengeance or bear any grudge. Judaism teaches man to help his enemy; "If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink." These are all ordinances in the Bible, basic teachings of our religion. But nowhere in the Bible is the command given to love one's enemy, because that is contrary to human nature and as such it is impossible of fulfillment. What is impossible of fulfillment finds no permanent lodgement in Jewish ethics. To charge men with the duty of doing that which, by its very nature, is impossible of fulfillment, is to bring confusion and frustration into their spiritual and possibly to cause them to recoil in despair even from those duties which are capable of fulfillment. Thus one of the great Jewish philosophers of the early Middle Ages, Saadia,

who wrote that important philosophic treatise on "The Book of Beliefs and Opinions" wrote, "As far as reason is concerned, it demands that the All-Wise (the Almighty God) does not charge anyone with aught that does not lie within his competence or which he is unable to do."

Judaism does not regard with favor extremes in piety. "Be not righteous overmuch," we read in the book of Prophets. It characterizes the man who is excessively pious as a "hasid shoteh," a pious fool. Rabbi Joshua, a famous rabbi of the second century, was wont to say: "A foolish pietist brings destruction upon the world." He really gets in the way of people who are trying to do the right thing. In the Talmud there is reference to seven types of Pharisees, whom the rabbis called "the plague among the Pharisees," and they are disclosed in the Talmud to be men who in one way or another are addicted to exaggerated piety, whether real or affected. Our religion was suspicious of all that was florid and grotesque, all that was overstrained and exaggerated in the realms of spiritual thought and exercise. Judaism mistrusted the mystic intoxication, all the agitated and hysterical religiosity. It held its ethical demands in the firm grasp of human competence and experience. It didn't want any hermits, any monks, any men who sacrificed this world and its duties and privileges for the next world. It didn't want extremes... a religion of reasonableness.

Thus, for example, no one was permitted to be so altruistic as to devote all of his possessions to the Lord. A man should give of all that he has, not all that he has. Judaism urged a proper measure - generous but not to the point of impoverishing oneself. Thus we read in the Talmud in Usha, where there was an important rabbinic academy, in the city of Usha, in Babylon "they ordained that one who wishes to distribute his possessions must not go beyond one-fifth of them. It happened that one wanted to distribute more than one-fifth, and his colleagues would not permit him to do so." By giving more than a man can afford, that man might himself come to be dependent upon the charity of others. Exceptions may be made, of course, in

cases of extreme urgency. Thus we read in rabbinic literature of King Monobaz, who was King of Adiabene, who became a convert of Judaism, and Monobaz, this king, was praised because in a year of great drought and great scarcity, he distributed all the accumulated treasures of himself and of his forebears among the people. And when confronted by members of his household with the charge that he had squandered the wealth that his ancestors had accumulated, he replied: "My fathers stored up treasures below and I am storing up treasures above; my fathers gathered treasures of money, but I have gathered treasures of souls..." In a case of a great public emergency, of course it is praiseworthy to go beyond the measure indicated, but only in such cases. In all other cases one's altruism should be defined in terms of one's capacity to give without actually impoverishing himself.

The "Tzadik," the righteous man, the altogether righteous man, according to Judaism was not the perfect man, because no man is or can be perfect. There is no man who sinneth not.

Commenting on the statement of the Mishna, "If a man performs but a single commandment, it shall be well with him," Rab Judah declared: "This is its meaning: He who performs a single commandment in addition to his equally balanced merits, it shall be well with him, and he is as though he had fulfilled the entire Torah." This was not a mechanical way of determining one's ethical status or of arriving at an evaluation of virtue by a process of simple measurements. It was a profound way of indicating that perfection is not within the reach of man and that very few indeed in their lifetime fulfill the Torah from Alef to Tav; but when the balance is struck, if a man's good deeds preponderate, even by so much as a single deed, he is accounted as altogether righteous.

It is to Hebrew ethical thought rather than to the Greek that one must go for a sound concept of what we call the golden mean. Now Judaism did not recommend as the ethical goal a mathematically calculated counterbalance between the undesirable extremes, one of excess and one of defect, but Judaism advocated a movement, a driving

forward towards holiness and self perfection, along the temperate ways of personal conduct and progress.

Virtue, according to our religion, is not the middle course between opposing vices but the determined climb or ascent of man along moderately graded levels of self-improvement towards a fully sufficient moral life which is accessible to everybody and not too steep. Seek perfection, climb upward, but do so along moderately graded levels. Don't try to get out of your skin. Don't attempt to do what is not required of man to do, the impossible.

But while Judaism is pre-eminently a practical and useable and livable religion, a constructive idealism, it is not an "easy" religion. Nor is its code of conduct reduced to calculated prudence - it is not a self-complacent morality at all.

Judaism is an ethics of quest and fervour. Its reasonable, practical idealism is of a revolutionary quality, you might call it an explosive common sense. It is a religious humanism which is actively and passionately intolerant of all forms of moral deception and self-deception and of all forms of injustice and human exploitation. And Judaism is especially intolerant of them because its demands and expectations are not excessive. The oppressors of mankind can get along much more easily with mystics and other-worldly visionaries, with dreamers and perfectionists, than with determined people who are possessed of an obdurate morality of common sense and know what they want and who are convinced that it can be had.

The moral life of Judaism involves struggle against forces within and without. It is, as I said, an earnest and arduous quest. One must "press on to know God," as we read in the Bible. One must seek Him "with all your heart and with all your soul." It is not enough to know what justice is. The Greeks knew what justice is - Plato defined what justice is, but according to Judaism it is not enough to know what justice is, but one must seek justice. "Justice, justice, you shall pursue!" One must be swift to do righteousness." One must pursue righteousness. It is not

enough to know truth; one must seek truth, we read in our Bible - "seek and pursue."

Sacrifices are often involved in the pursuit of the good life. Occasionally it calls for martyrdom because the moral commitments of the faithful are not of a limited liability. The Jewish people gave the first religious martyrs to mankind, and through many dark and weary centuries of exile and persecution, its noblest sons and daughters never denied God the supreme tribute of martyrdom. True love of God is to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. The famous Rabbi Akiba, perhaps next to Hillel the foremost of the rabbis of the Talmud, Rabbi Akiba defined the term "with all your heart, with all your might, and with all your soul," to mean "even if He takes away your life." And he attested it with his own martyrdom. "When Rabbi Akiba was taken out for execution, it was the hour for the recitation of the "Shema." When they combed his flesh with iron combs, he accepted the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, he recited the "Shema," and his disciples standing about him said to him, "Our teacher, even to this point?" And he said to them, "All my days I have been troubled by this verse "with all your soul" which I interpreted to mean "even if He takes your life," and I asked myself: "When shall I have the opportunity of fulfilling this commandment?" Now that I have the opportunity, shall I not fulfill it?"

Yes, sometimes martyrdom is part of a reasonable religion.

To the persecuted Jews of Yemen of Southern Arabia in the twelfth century, who were confronted with the choice of apostasy, martyrdom, or exile, they turned to Moses Maimonides, the light of the exiled, and asked him what they should do, and Maimonides, the rationalist, level-headed, reasonable teacher of Judaism, replied: "My Brethren! Hold fast to the covenant, be immovable in your convictions, fulfill the statutes of your religion... Rejoice ye that suffer trials, confiscations, contumely, all for the love of God, all to magnify His glorious name. It is the

sweetest offering you can make...Should ever the necessity of fleeing for your lives to a wilderness or inhospitable regions arise...painful as it may be to sever oneself from dear associations, or to relinquish one's property, you should still endure all..."

Martyrdom was mandatory in cases where a man is ordered to transgress the laws of idolatry, incest, and murder, but only in such cases. In all other instances, a man must transgress the law to save his life. Otherwise his blood is upon his own head. That is the law of Judaism. The general principle was laid down: "All the commandments were given in order that men might live by them, not die because of them." This is the religion of Judaism, a religion of reasonableness, of sobriety of measure, and of order.

And it is against this reasonable religion that we ought to ask ourselves whether we ourselves in our day-by-day life - in our relationship to our families, to our friends, and to our community, whether we are reasonable. A good question to ask yourself, a good way of checking up on yourself. Not against the standards of absolute perfection, but against the reasonable standards demanded of us by our religion. In your relationship to those about you are you reasonable? To wife, or husband, or children? Do you give too much of yourself to them, or too little? Do you demand too much of them, or not enough? Are you over-indulgent or too niggardly? Or too indifferent? Are you too long-suffering or are you too impatient? Every form of excess is a form of unreasonableness and harmful. Do you wish to live the lives of your dear ones, or are you content to share with them common interests and common loyalties? Do you wish to impose your will upon them, or win ~~xxx~~ through cooperation in agreement and in love? Our sages urged a reasonable course for women, men, and children in the home. "A man should never cast excessive fear or dread or intimidation or domination in his home." Another Rabbi declared: "Even when the left hand thrusts away in anger, the right hand should draw back in love."

I came across an interesting sermon written some time ago by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick called "On Being Fit to Live With," and this paragraph struck me: "Of course," he writes, "being fit to live with is the secret of a good home. Many associate broken homes primarily with outright infidelity, but any personal counselor sees homes where even adultery has been forgiven but where some other things can no longer be endured, and other homes too he sees where infidelity did not come first, but last, after a long, long series of other troubles had paved the way. It is what many people call little things that commonly break up homes - sullenness, moodiness, hypersensitiveness, irritability, petty jealousy, quarreling, nagging, bad temper - that is to say, the things that make folk unfit to live with. As one wife said about her husband who was an actor, "He was a comedian on the stage, but he was a tragedian at home."

There are many people who are open and friendly and "hale fellow well met," away from home, just as lovely a kind of person to be with, and just as sour and as sullen and as impossible as they possibly can be in the home. Are you reasonable?

You would be surprised how much sweetness and felicity this quality of reasonableness brings into the home. Are you reasonable with yourself? Do you demand too much of yourself or too little? Do you overtax your energies or permit them to lie fallow un- or explored? Do you over-estimate or under-estimate your powers or your ability? Are you content with a reasonable measure of material success in life, or do you insist on grabbing up the whole world? Do you give each one of your many faculties a chance to play, to develop, to unfold all the potentialities of your being? Your mind, for example - do you feed it with more than mere business knowledge? "He who engages too much in business will not grow wise." There is a business wisdom, and a very important business wisdom, but it is not the whole wisdom of life or of living. Man is made in the image of God. How much of your life's interests reflect this fact, that you are made in the image of God? Are you reasonable with yourself? Are you reasonable with your fellow men, with your employer, your employees, with the

business associates. Are you fair in your judgment of them? Are you fair in sharing with them all that they help you to acquire, or are you an exploiter, intent only on climbing on the backs of others to attain what you wish to attain and then spurning the base degrees by which you rose.

Are you reasonable with other men? Are you a reasonably good citizen? Are you carrying your fair share of the load of community life? Do you accept your share of the responsibilities for keeping the community in which you live a good community to live. We read this morning the famous saying of Hillel, "Do not separate yourself from the community." No man is an island all to himself. Are you not only community-minded, but are you community attitudinized, if I may use the expression. Are you the kind of a person that can live with other people? Or are you too sharp of your judgments, and too bitter-tongued, unmindful of the honor which is due to all other human beings because they are human beings? "Let the honor of your neighbor be as dear to you as your own." Are you a reasonable citizen? Are you reasonable with your God, your religion? How much of your time and thought do you devote to the things of God? That's a good stock-taking. And I think if we take stock of ourselves and not ask ourselves "Are we perfect? Are we matchless?" "Are we without sins or shortcomings?" We're all men and women of sin and of shortcomings. But against this more modest estimate, against the capacities of which the average human being is possessed, against the things which we can do if we wish to do them, we can ask ourselves "Are we living up to that requirement of reasonableness in our day by day life? There are, of course, as I have indicated before, occasions when extreme measures are demanded of us, uncompromising devotion to certain principles are indicated, bold, forthright action, when a man must stand like an iron pillar, like bronze walls. There are such moments - there are rare moments in life, but not many such occasions. What I am thinking about at the moment is of the quieter, the more frequent day-by-day situations in our lives when the exercise of reasonable^{ness} compromise, give and take, can sweeten our lives and the lives

of all those about us. This is what our religion asks of us. For the commandment which I command you this day is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in the heaven that you should say, "Who will go up to the heaven and bring it to us that we may hear it and do it. Neither is it beyond the sea that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us that we may hear and do it.' Nay but the word is very near to you. It is in your mouth and in your heart so that you can do it."



VII. REASONABLENESS

add for p. 145

The teachers of Judaism constantly stressed the fact that Judaism is a livable faith, not too difficult for man, not beyond his reach. It did not demand of man the impossible. The good life acceptable to God is within the reach of all. The standard of conduct demanded of man was not inordinately difficult of attainment. "For the commandment which I command you this day is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up get it to heaven, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us, and bring it to us, that we may hear and do it?' But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it." (Dt. 30.11-14)

The task of building the good society is difficult but, no one man is called upon to bear the entire burden himself. Each man is required to do what he can to the best of his abilities. R. Tarfon (c.130) said: "It is not your responsibility to complete the work, but neither are you free to desist from it." (Abot. 2.16) *from p. 154*

In contrast may be put the severe requirements which Jesus exacted from those who would enter eternal life. "For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life and those who find it are few." (Matt. 7.14; Luke 13.24) *The same thought is expressed*

In Hindu thought the single span of a human life was not regarded as enough for "the attainment of that perfection which fits a man to become one with the Universal Soul--so difficult that for the ordinary man it necessitates many incarnations." (Stanley Rice, "Hindu Customs and Their Origins" (1937) p. 204) The ideal figure of the Stoics, the

is II Esdras, an eschatological work of the first century C.E. "There be many more of these which perish, than them which shall be saved" (II Esdras 9.15)

Wise Man, was an impossible ideal. "The Stoics admitted that he was as rare in the real world as the phoenix". (Edwyn Bevan "Stoics and Sceptics" (1913), p. 71)

Judaism

Judaism does not ask for the impossible. ~~It~~ does not attempt to alter human nature, or to suppress human instincts. Its aim is *It is deeply perceptive of man's capacities but also of their limitations.* to guide them. ^A Judaism teaches man to love his neighbor as himself (Lev. 19.18) to love the stranger as himself (19.33), not to hate his brother in his heart (19.17) not to take vengeance or bear any grudge. (19.18) It teaches man to help his enemy (Ex. 23.4). "If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink" (Pr. 25.21) ~~Judaism could endorse every magnificent word on love which Paul wrote to the Corinthians (I Cor. chap. 13) They are a superb epitome of Biblical and Pharisaic teachings. But nowhere is the command given in ~~Judaism~~ ^{the Bible} to love one's enemy! This is contrary to human nature and as such it is impossible of fulfillment. What is impossible of fulfillment finds no permanent lodgement in Jewish ethics. To charge men with the duty of doing that which, by its very nature, is impossible of fulfillment, is to bring confusion and frustration into their spiritual life and possibly to cause them to recoil in despair even from those duties which are capable of fulfillment. Judaism followed a sounder principle which is succinctly phrased by Akiba: "If you grasp too much you cannot hold it, if you grasp a little you can hold it." (R.H. 4b) "As far as reason is concerned," declared Saadia, "it demands that the All-Wise do^{es} not charge anyone with aught that does not lie within his competence or which he is unable to do." ("The Book of Beliefs and Opinions" IV, 3)~~

Jesus himself demonstrated how impossible of fulfillment was his mandate to love one's enemy when, time and again, turning upon the

Scribes and Pharisees, he, who was otherwise so tender and forgiving called them "a brood of vipers", (Matt. 12.34) "blind fools" (Matt. 23.17) "hypocrites and serpents" (Matt. 23.13.15.23.33) and consigned them to damnation, woe and hell. (Matt. 23.33; Luke 10 passim) ~~His~~ ~~dudgeon~~ was vented even upon a fig tree which could not provide him with fruit when he was hungry and he cursed it, (Matt. 21.18-19). He used a whip of cords to drive the money-changers out of the Temple, pouring out their coins on the ground and overturning their tables. (Matt. 21.12-13; Mark 11.15-17; John 2.15)

The most eloquent exponent in modern times of Jesus' doctrine of love for one's enemies Tolstoi, was interestingly enough, also violent and denunciatory of people, religions and institutions ^{who were} opposed to his views. He lashed out against "the deceit and hypocrisy" of the priests and scientists of his day with the same vehemence as Jesus did against the Scribes and Pharisees of his. If ~~ideological~~ ^{conscience} antagonism can arouse such bitterness in the most idealistic of men how can one expect ordinary mortals who are tangled and tossed about in the fierce conflicts and rivalries of daily existence to love their enemies? The Torah, according to Judaism, was not given to ministering angels (Ber. 25b), but to men, mortal, fallible men.

Judaism does not regard with favor extremes in piety. "Be not righteous over-much". (Pr. 7.16) It characterizes the man who is excessively pious as a "hasid shoteh"--a pious fool. R. Joshua (2c) was wont to say: "A foolish pietist brings destruction upon the world." (Sotah 3.4). The seven types of Pharisees, "the plague of Pharisees", are disclosed in the Talmud, (Sotah 22b) to be men who in one way or another are addicted to exaggerated piety, real or affected. Judaism was suspicious of all that was florid and ~~bareque~~, ^{noted}

overstrained and exaggerated in the realms of spiritual thought and exercise. It mistrusted mystic ^{intoxication} inebriation, agitated, hysterical religiosity. It held its ethical demands in the firm grasp of human competence and experience.

No one was permitted to be so altruistic as to devote all of his possessions to the Lord. (Arak 8.4) A man should give of all that he has (Lev. 27.28), not all that he has. Judaism urged a proper measure,--generous but not to the point of impoverishing oneself. "In Usha they ordained that one who wishes to distribute (his possessions) must not go beyond one-fifth (of them). It happened that one wanted to distribute more than one-fifth, and his colleagues would not permit him to do so." (Ket. 50a) By giving more than he can afford a man might himself come to be dependent upon the charity of others. (Ket. 50a) Exceptions may be made in cases of extreme urgency. Monobaz, King of Adiabene (1c), who embraced Judaism, was praised because in a year of great drought and scarcity, he distributed all the accumulated treasures of himself and of his fathers among the people. When confronted by the members of his household with the charge that he had squandered the wealth which his ancestors had accumulated, he replied: "My fathers stored up treasure below and I am storing up above...my fathers gathered treasures of money, but I have gathered treasures of souls..." (E.B. 11a) (Add for p. 2056)

The "Tzadik"--the righteous man--was not the perfect man. No man is or can be perfect: "Every man in the world," declared Maimonides, "has merits and sins. He whose merits exceed his sins is a Tzadik, he whose sins exceed his merits is a "Rasha"--a wicked man. He whose iniquities and good deeds are equally balanced is average." (Hilh. Teshubah 3.1). Maimonides based himself on Talmudic authority.

Commenting on the statement of the Mishna, "If a man performs but a single commandment, it shall be well with him", Rab Judah declared: "This is its meaning; He who performs a single commandment in addition to his (equally balanced) merits, it shall be well with him and he is as though he had fulfilled the entire Torah" (Kid. 39b) This was not a mechanical way of determining ethical status or arriving at an evaluation of virtue by a process of simple measurements. It was a profound way of indicating that perfection is not within the reach of man. "There is no man who sinneth not"--and very few indeed in their lifetime fulfill the Torah from Alef to ^Vtaf--but when the balance is struck, if a man's good deeds preponderate, even by so much as a single deed, he is accounted as altogether righteous.

It is possible also for one ~~single~~ ^{out of the ordinary} good deed to raise a man to great heights. "There are such as acquire their world (eternal life in the world to come) in a single hour, while others acquire theirs only after many years". This was a favorite saying of Judah Hanasi (2c) the redactor of the Mishnah. (Ab. Zar. 10b; 17a; 18a) It is possible for a single commandment, properly performed in purity of heart, to cause one to inherit eternal life. It is possible for a single deed to be, in one's life, of such great merit, as to atone for a life-time of sin and to raise a man to the level of a saint. R. Abahu (4c) heard a voice in a dream declare: 'Let Pentakaka (a byword for one who commits many (five) sins daily) pray and the rains will fall and the drought will be ended. Pentakaka prayed and the rains came. R. Abahu summoned the man. "What is your occupation", he asked. "I commit five sins daily", he replied. I hire harlots, I am an attendant at the ~~brothel~~ (theatre), I take their clothes to the bath-house, I dance and caper before them and beat the drum". "And what good deed have you performed." "Once, when I was cleaning

alone, and not to Scriptural. Melanchthon, a leader of the Reformation, was thoroughly disgusted with all moral acts which did not spring from the purest and noblest of motivations. "How stinking are the moral virtues, how bloody are the rags of righteousness of the saints!" The Rabbis were never so severe or contemptuous of good actions even when they were not performed out of the loftiest motives. (cont. 1.203)

It is to Hebrew ethical thought rather than to Greek that one must go for a ^{SOUNDED} true concept of the golden mean. Judaism did not recommend, as the ethical goal, ^amechanical, mathematically calculated counterpoise, between undesirable extremes, one of excess and the other of defect, but a driving forward towards holiness and self perfection, along the temperate ways of personal conduct and progress. The golden mean is not a measure of computation but a wise technique towards a life of continuous and mounting aspiration.

Maimonides stresses the fact that the golden mean, the middle of the road, is the true "way of God" and that we are commanded to follow that road in all matters except as regards humility and anger (^CHilh. De'ot 1.6 and 2.3) For those who are sick of soul, and who require drastic treatment, it is sometimes necessary to prescribe for them an extreme regimen, in order to enable them to return after a time to the normal way of life, which avoids all extremes. The middle of the road is the way of the Ḥacham, the wise man. A slight deviation in the direction of a more rigorous practice of virtue is permitted to the man who wishes to be a 'Ḥassid' -- a very pious man. "But we are commanded to follow the middle ways for they are the good and correct ways concerning which it is said: "and you shall walk in His ways" (1b. 1.5)

Maimonides calls attention to the goal which Judaism sets,

towards which this middle road must lead. The ultimate aim and purpose of human life is to seek and practice loving kindness, judgment and righteousness, in imitation of the moral attributes of God. ("Guide" III.54) Thus man is given a criterion by which he is enabled to determine what is the real mean. Herein, is a sharp distinction, as Ahad Ha-Am correctly points out, between Aristotle's formulation of the doctrine of the mean and Judaism's. "Aristotle did not set up a higher moral criterion by reference to which the mean point could be determined in every case. For him all virtue was really but a code of good manners to which the polite Greek should conform, being enabled by his own good taste to fasten instinctively on the point equidistant from the ugliness of the two extremes. But Maimonides, as a Jew, made this principle the basis of morality in the true sense, because he couples with it a formulation of the supreme moral end. This moral end, for which the virtues are a preparation, compels us and enables us to distinguish between the extremes and the mean." ("Ahad Ha-Am," ed. Leon Simon (1946) p. 148) Virtue is not the middle course between opposing vices but the determined ascent along moderately graded levels of self-improvement towards a fully sufficient moral life which is accessible and none-too-steep.

Jewish ethics is nowhere motivated by the conviction that "this is the last hour" (I John 2.18), that the present order of the world is about to end cataclysmically, that a new order is about to be ushered in by the miraculous intervention of God, and that men should therefore concentrate intensively on extreme acts of self-purification. Many such apocalyptic beliefs, in origin probably Zoroastrian, were current in Judea in the first century before the common era. There were many who believed that "they were at the end of days", that "the times were fulfilled", that the world had run its course and, that a new cycle was about to begin. These beliefs, however, had not become

authoritative doctrine, part of the accredited faith. They were Haggadah. What was marginal was not permitted to become central, and what was mystic ecstasy was not prescribed as norm, or dogma. Judaism does not reflect the ^{anxiously and} pessimistic mood of an age of crisis, even as it does not build its ethical doctrines on a concept of the radical malevolence of human nature, or on man's impotence to "save" himself. The theology of Judaism does not reflect the ferment of an anxiety neurosis.

But while Judaism is pre-eminently a practical and livable religion, a constructive idealism, it is not an "easy" religion. Nor is its code of conduct reduced to calculated prudence or a self-complacent morality. It is an ethics of quest and fervour. Its reasonable, practical idealism is of a revolutionary quality, an explosive common-sense. It ^{is} a religious humanism which is actively and passionately intolerant of all moral deception and self-deception and of all forms of injustice and human exploitation. It is especially intolerant of them because its demands and expectations are not excessive. The oppressors of mankind can get along much more easily with mystics and other-worldly visionaries, with dreamers and perfectionists, than with determined people possessed of an abdurate morality of common-sense, who know what they want and who are convinced that it can be had.

The moral life for Judaism involves struggle against forces within and without. It is an earnest and arduous quest. One must "press on to know God" (Hos. 6.3) One must seek Him "with all your heart and with all your soul" (Dt. 4.29) It is not enough to know what justice is, but one must seek justice. (Is. 1.17) "Justice, justice, you shall pursue!" (Dt. 16.20) One must be "swift to do righteousness" (Is. 16.5) and one must pursue righteousness (Is. 51.1)

It is not enough to know truth; one must "seek truth" (Jer. 5.1)
 One must "seek peace and pursue it". (Ps. 34.14) Judaism is a summons,
 not so much to ethical knowledge as to ethical action and mission.
 Judaism set out to give man, ~~not peace of mind~~, but a career of high
 moral purpose and aspiration. The good life is the dedicated life, not
 to one's self, or one's "salvation", but to humanity, to the social
 good. ^A

The Bible nowhere calls upon men to go out in search of peace of
 mind or forgiveness of sin. It does call upon men to go out in search
 of God and the things of God. It calls upon men to hunger and thirst
 after righteousness, to relieve the oppressed, to proclaim liberty to
 the captives, and to establish peace in the world. ~~Such enterprises~~
~~are seldom attended by peace of mind and tranquility.~~ As often as
 not ^{such enterprises} ~~they~~ are attended by persecution and suffering. Judaism as a
 prophetic religion could not offer the faithful the compensations of
 peace of mind, except as the confidences of faith lessen the tensions
 of doubt and despair; but it did offer them other and more precious
 compensations, the nearness of God, an uplifting interest in life,
 a nourishing pride and dignity, and, on occasions, unbelievable ecstasy.
 There is a lyrical vibrancy to all moments of spiritual daring and
 adventure. At such moments man drinks of the wine of life and partakes
 of the ^{very} manna of heaven.

Sacrifices are often involved in the pursuit of the good life.
 Occasionally it calls for martyrdom. The moral commitments of the
 faithful are not of a limited liability. The Jewish people gave the
 first religious martyrs to mankind, and through many dark and weary
 centuries of exile and persecution, its noblest sons and daughters
 never denied God the supreme tribute of martyrdom. True love of God
 is to serve Him with all your heart, with all your soul and with all

your might." (Dt. 6.5) R. Akiba defined the term "with all your soul" to mean "even if He takes away your life". He attested it with his own martyrdom. "When R. Akiba was taken out for execution, it was the hour for the recitation of the "Shema". When they combed his flesh with iron combs, he accepted the Kingdom of Heaven (i.e. he recited the "Shema"). His disciples said to him: "Our teacher, even to this point? He said to them: "All my days I have been troubled by this verse 'with all your soul' (which I interpreted to mean) 'even if He takes your life". I asked myself: 'When shall I have the opportunity of fulfilling this commandment? Now that I have the opportunity shall I not fulfill it?" (Ber. 61b)

Strange legal formalists these Rabbis who were prepared to underwrite their dry exegesis with their ~~and~~ tortured bodies and their ~~life-blood~~ *martyrdom!*

To the threatened and persecuted Jews of Yemen (1172), who sought guidance from the "Light of the Exile" ~~in the midst of their~~ great tribulation, when they were confronted with the choice of apostasy, martyrdom or exile, ^{the "Nationalist"} Maimonides replied: "My Brethren! Hold fast to the covenant, be immovable in your convictions, fulfil the statutes of your religion....Rejoice ye that suffer trials, confiscations, contumely, all for the love of God, all to magnify His glorious name. It is the sweetest offering you can make....Should ever the necessity of fleeing for your lives to a wilderness and inhospitable regions arise--painful as it may be to sever oneself from dear associations, or to relinquish one's property--you should still endure all....." (A Treasury of Jewish Letters", edited by Franz Kobler (1952) Vol. I, p. 186)

Martyrdom was mandatory in cases where a man is ordered to transgress the laws of idolatry, incest and murder. But only in such cases. This was the decision reached by the Rabbis at the time of the Hadrianic persecutions (San. 74a). Some Rabbis held that in times of religious persecutions, when the faith is threatened or when the transgression must be performed in public and demonstratively, a man must incur martyrdom even for a minor precept--"even to change one's shoe strap", (from the white worn by Jews to the black worn by heathens. San. 74a,b. See note 6, p. 503 in Soncino ed. also Tosef Sab. 15.17). But in all other instances, a man must transgress the law to save his life. Otherwise his blood is upon his own head.

The Rabbis ~~however~~, warned against an over eagerness for self immolation. The two disciples of R. Joshua are commended for having disguised themselves during the Hadrianic persecutions in order to save their lives. No purpose would have been served by allowing themselves to be detected and killed. (Gen. R. 82.8) Ignatius, (2c) ~~plea and~~ longing for martyrdom--"I no longer wish to live after the manner of men", "Permit me to be an imitator of the passion of Christ" ("To the Romans" Ch. 5-7)--would have been frowned upon by his Rabbinic contemporaries.

In normal times, the gravest of laws must be set aside to save life. Even for a day-old infant all the laws of Sabbath observance must be suspended. (Sab. 151b) The general principle was laid down: "All the commandments were given in order that men might live by them, not die because of them." (Yoma 85b)

The good common sense morality of Judaism stemmed from a very uncommon passionate religious faith. Jews "gave their backs to the smiters", and died as martyrs not so much for their sound practical

Reasonable - a bunch of men - idea

A) Are you reasonable? In your relationship to them about you?
 To wife - husband - children? Do you give too much / money
 to them - or too little? Do you demand too much, thus a bit
 enough? Are you over-indulgent or too rigidly - over-cared
 or too indifferent? Are you too long-suffering or too impatient?

Every family & person - is a form of unreasonableness:

- Do you wish to live their lives or are you content to
 share with them common interests and loyalties?
- Do you wish to impose your will - or ~~though~~ win through
 to cooperation in agreement and in love?

Our sage counselled reasonableness in the home.
 - ~~1/12 1/12 1/12 1/12 1/12 1/12 1/12 1/12 1/12 1/12~~
 - ~~Sullenness - unreason~~

① Even in anger -

(Friedrich - Love)

B) Are you reasonable with yourself? Do you demand too much
 of yourself - or too little? Do you over-tax your energy?
 Do you underestimate your power, a person's ability?

Are you content with a reasonable measure of travelling
measures - or do you insist on pushing the whole world?
 Do you risk losing any your potential and look on / you
 potential as a chance? Your mind, for example? Do you
 feed it with and allow business knowledge? This is to
 much else?

② B2 - How much does your life's interests affect that?
 Are you temperament talent? nothing to you?
 Give to art and work? given to books and papers?
 What is slow to work is better than the work?

c) Are you responsible with your filmmaking? with your suppression -
in your business characteristics -

Fair in your judgment? then? Fair in reminding them?

Fair in sharing with them what they help you achieve?

Or are you an exploiter? climbing on the backs of others
and turning the loss degrees of which you use.

Are you a reasonably paid citizen? sharing anyway your

loss part of the loss? accept responsibility?

Share in your judgment? better target?

d) With you paid? Your rejection?

- How much time? to the things paid?

e) Then an occasion when great firmness is indicated

- vacillating devotion to principles - Shakespeare John Mary dem.

At such a time one should be bold, straight

But how many are such occasions?

Such times frequent - day-by-day - situations

principles not hard

over way in life -