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The World rests upon three things: Ancient wisdom for Modern
Man, 1956.

"THE WORLD RESTS UPON THREE THINGS"

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Man

April 15, 1956

I read you this morning the first Chapter of the "The Sayings of the Fathers". It is the custom in our Synagogues to read these Chapters of The Fathers, or The Sayings of the Fathers during the weeks between Passover and Shawuos. There were places and times when these Chapters were read every Saturday afternoon in the Synagogues. The is a tractate of the Mishna. It is found in our Mishna and it is a collection of the ethical sayings which are attributed to famous rabbis from the time of the assembly - the Great Assembly - until the time of - a period of some five hundred years. Its a compendium of the great principals of Judaism as expressed in characteristic ways - maxim - dicta - by one or another of these great luminaries among the sages of our people. In the Talmud we come across a saying of Rabba that he who wishes to become a truly pious man - a true Chassid - should study the . These Chapters were so popular among our people that they became incorporated in our Prayer Book - in our liturgy. And they helped to mold and fashion the ethical thinking and conduct of our poeple through the ages. Of one of these sayings I wish to speak this morning. It is included in this first Chapter which we read this morning - "Simon the Just" was one of the last survivors of the men of the Great Assembly, and he used to say, "Upon three things the world rests: upon Torah - upon Avodah (worship) - and upon (acts of loving kindness). Now the Great Assembly, of which "Simon the Just" was one of the last survivors, was the legislative body which was brought into existence after the return from the Babylonian captivity by Ezra and . The men of the Great Assembly, the continued the tradition of the great Prophets

who preceded them. "Simon the Just" was a High Priest who lived around the year 300 Before the Common Era. Quite a number of interesting legends connected with his life. Alexander the Great, in his conquest of the Orient, also came to Palestine and he was on his way to Jerusalem and was determined to destroy the Temple in Jerusalem, having been incited to do so by the or the Samaritans. Whereupon "Simon the Just" who was the High Priest at the time, according to this legend, put on his priestly garments; and some of the noble men of Israel went with him, carrying fiery torches in their hands; and they walked all through the night until the dawn, and came to the camp of Alexander the Great. And when Alexander saw the High Priest, "Simon the Just", legend has it that he bowed down before him and the men standing around Alexander said to him, "A great King, like yourself, should bow down before this Jew?" Whereupon Alexander answered, "His image it is which wins for me in all my battles." Whatever of the truth of this legend is Alexander did conquer Palestine and Jerusalem, but did not destroy the Temple. A contemporary of "Simon the Just", an eminent physician by the name of Jesus Ben Sirach, whose Memoirs and wise sayings are contained in that noted Book of Ecclesiasticus which is found in our Apocrypha, describes "Simon the Just" — his appearance as he officiated in The Temple, and I read from the Book of Ecclesiasticus — 50th Chapter:

"Simon the high priest, the son of Onias, who in his life repaired the house again, and in his days fortified the temple:
And by him was built from the foundation the double height, the high fortress of the wall about the temple:
In his days the cistern to receive water, being in compass as the sea, was covered with plates of brass:
He took care of the temple that it should not fall, and fortified the city against besieging:

(that sentence that he took care of the Temple that it should not fall was probably responsible for this legend which I just recounted to you)

"How was he honoured in the midst of the people in his coming out of the sanctuary!
He was as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, and as the moon at the full:
As the sun shining upon the temple of the most High, and as the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds:

And as the flower of roses in the spring of the year,
as lilies by the rivers of waters, and as the branches of
the frankincense tree in the time of summer:

As fire and incense in the censer, and as a vessel
of beaten gold set with all manner of precious stones;

And as a fair olive tree budding forth fruit, and
as a cypress tree which groweth up to the clouds.

When he put on the robe of honour, and was clothed
with the perfection of glory, when he went up to the holy
altar, he made the garment of holiness honourable.

When he took the portions out of the priests' hands,
he himself stood by the hearth of the altar, compassed with his
brethren round about, as a young cedar in Libanus; and as palm
trees compassed they him round about."

and so on. A hymn of praise to this great high priest who must have made a
tremendous impression upon this physician who saw him in the Temple officiating
at the high altars. It is said that when "Simon the Just" died, the ineffable
name of God - the four-letter word of God, the Tetragramaton, which was pronounced
only once by the high priest, on the Day of Atonement, as he entered the Holy of
Holies; when "Simon the Just" died, after his death this ineffable name was never
again pronounced in the Temple.

He represented what might be said to be the soundness ^{the} -/sobriety of Jewish
ethical ideals. He was opposed to the - he was opposed to the man who
made vows as an expression of excessive religiosity. Men who vowed to abstain
from food for a certain number of days or drink or from cutting their hair -- who
submitted themselves to other forms of self-denial or asceticism. "Simon the Just"
was vehemently opposed to all these practices, and discouraged them as he discouraged
all forms of excessive piety. There are enough laws in the Torah he said for men
to observe and in the observing of them they can obtain fullest merit -- there is
no need for men to take on additional self-denials for the sake of worshipping their
God.

Well it was this "Simon the Just" who is reported in this
to have said, "The world rests upon three things" - upon the Torah - upon Avodah -
upon G Chassadim. Now Torah is an interesting term. It doesn't mean Law
although the basic laws of Judaism are found in the Torah. It doesn't mean merely

study or instruction, although the root meaning of the word Torah is 'to teach and to instruct'. And it doesn't mean merely the five books of Moses, although the term technically applies to the five books which are written on parchment and which are enclosed in the in every synagogue throughout the world. Torah means all of things -- it means much more. It has come to mean much more in Jewish religious life. It means the spiritual and the ethical development of man according to the rules and the teachings laid down in the Torah. Torah is spiritual and ethical self-culture, according to definite laws of conduct and attitude prescribed in the Torah. And unless men and nations regulate their lives according to these laws and follow their teachings, their worlds cannot endure.

I said that Torah means spiritual and ethical self-culture - but it means even more than that - because mere self-culture is not enough. It must be expressed in action, in conduct, in a way of life. All Torah/^{said the rabbis,} which is not bound up with work is in the end vain and futile. And one rabbi went even further, when he said

(he who engages exclusively in Torah)

(is likened unto one who has no God). He is just studying in order to increase his own intellectualism - to perfect himself - as though there ^{were} ~~is~~ no God whom he is to serve, and as though there were no creatures of God whom he is to help. Mere intellectualism, self-perfectionism may lead to spiritual sterility, to unctious pride and self-sufficiency and to self-righteousness and social isolationism. Judaism had no use for that sort of thing. Judaism had no use for the aloof, spiritual exquisite - the saint in the hermitage. The world needs workers. The world needs builders of the good society -- men who are inspired by the ideals and the principals of the Torah and go out into the world struggling to bring that world into existence.

(To perfect the world according to the pattern of the Kingdom of God.) Of course the

study of the Torah is essential. "Thou shall meditate it day and night" we read in the Bible. One must first know what to do - but fulfilling the Laws of the Torah - that is the heart of the battle - and that is what the world rests upon. I am afraid there is not enough Torah in our lives. We do not consciously devote enough time to the study of the Torah - and it is a lifetime study - to the basic, ethical and religious principals which should determine our life's conduct, nor do we check back on ourselves often enough to see whether in our human relationships we are really following some firm Torah, some strong mandate of the spirit. Whether we are really true to some unwavering commitments in life - to basic convictions - that is Torah. Be strong. To keep all the words of this Torah do not depart from it to the right or to the left in order that thou mayest succeed in all that thou doest. That was the command that was given to Joshua when he took over the charge from Moses. A Torah from which one does not depart either to the right or to the left. What is your Torah from which you will not deviate. Have you in your lives certain compelling, certain coercive, certain inexorable, unyielding principals, loyalties, dedications, from which you simply will not depart under any circumstances. Its the world that rests upon these things. Torah!

And, said "Simon the Just", the world rests also upon Avodah. Avodah means worship. It means worship in the Temple - in the ancient Temple of Jerusalem - but it also means all worship -- all prayer -- all devotion. And at the heart of all worship, dear friends, is the humble and the grateful heart of man. Not fear, but a sense of dependence upon a power greater than ourselves and on a need for communion with that power. Thats worship. A recognition that man needs the everlasting arms of God to uphold him in ^{all} the uncertain vicissitudes and predicaments of his life. A ^{and the hand} lifting up of the heart and the mind/ of man, to something higher than himself. It is upon such an attitude of humility, of trust, of seeking God through the only way that God can be sought, through justice and love and walking humbly with him, that alone the world of man and the world of nations can rest secure. The world of the man that regards himself as self-sufficient - who needs nobody else - ^{who} arrogantly

believes that 'my hands' and 'the power of mine arms that got me all this' -- the world of the man who is aware of no sin within him -- calling for atonement, for forgiveness; - no shortcoming - no weakness in need of help from a higher source - the world of such a man is an imperiled world that will crumble into unrelieved tragedy and disaster as soon as the first storm of adversity sweeps over it.

"For the Lord of Hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty - against all that is lifted up and high, and the haughtiness of man shall be humbled and the pride of man shall be brought low".

Avodah - worship.

Our world today is full of places of worship -- churches, mosques - synagogues, shrines by the tens of thousands - by the hundreds of thousands -- but the spirit of worship is not in all of them, nor in the hearts of those who worship in them. That spiritual dependency - that need for real communion with God through the ways which lead to God - justice, love, humility - they do not exist in them. Nations are proud of their achievements today. Our age boasts of its scientific progress - and it is an amazing progress - our age is proud of its power and its speed, its mastery - but because our age is not walking humbly with God, because there is no Avodah in the spirit of nations, this road upon which they are walking is leading swiftly to horrible prospects of universal destruction. Our proud civilization is building underground shelters, civilian defenses, to protect men from the wrath and the terror that they sense is on the way. The world rests upon three things -- Torah, Avodah, and lastly (acts of loving kindness.)

This term or represents the genius of Judaism at its highest. It is really a unique concept. Judaism's high regard for human life and human dignity -- its remarkable sensitiveness to the needs of the spirit of man -- its boundless compassion -- its sympathy -- are best expressed in this concept of -. Its more than 'charity'.

Charity is called . is that which is right.

That which a man ought to do as a member of society. The minimum! To help the

poor and feed the hungry and clothe the naked. That's a basic social responsibility without which society cannot really exist. The minimum required of every citizen in a cooperative society, for all men, in the last analysis, are dependent one upon another. There is a limit to . There is a limit to charity that a man need do. The rabbis define that limit. Man should not give of his substance beyond a certain percentage - ten or twenty percent., lest he impoverish himself, and thus himself become dependent upon society. There is a limit to

, but there is no limit whatsoever to ,

(to acts of loving kindness.) A man can give charity as a matter of routine - as one pays his taxes. A man can give charity grudgingly. Men may give charity in order to be praised for it - giving in a way that his soul is not at all involved - not at all touched by the act - by what he is doing - or by the needs of the man to whom he is rendering his charity. is a complete self-identification - is a complete self-involvement with all of life -- in sympathy, in concern, in helpfulness. The man who practices is no longer a stranger to others and no one is a stranger to him. One practices towards the rich as well as towards the poor. Towards the dead as well as towards the living, with one's substance, but also with one's entire self. One seldom thinks of practicing but towards the rich, for the rich are just as much in need, really, of our understanding, of our friendliness, of our neighborliness, of our counsel, of our comfort, of our forgiveness, as well as the poor.

(rich and poor meet together on the basis of common human needs.) (God created them all.) All men,

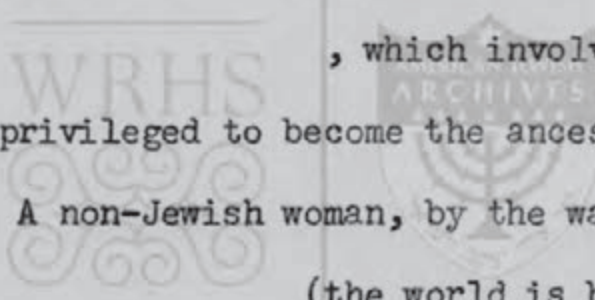
regardless of their possessions or their lack of possessions are in need of fellow feeling at one time or another in their lives and the man who practices

, who is identified emotionally with all the living, never withholds acts of loving kindness for rich or for poor. We practice loving kindness towards the dead as well as towards the living, when we show respect to the dead and refrain from speaking harshly about the dead, when we refrain from judging those who have

passed away, or when we cherish their memory, or when we emulate their example if when their example was worthy of emulation — we practice (acts of loving kindness.) The greatest scholar, engaged in his great study of the Torah, must close his book and rise and accompany the funeral procession of the humblest and the least, in a community. To show respect not only to that one individual who is entitled to respect — but respect to life itself — the sanctity — the dignity of human life — whether it is the life of the greatest scholar or the life of the humblest worker.

One must serve, if one practices , with one's entire self, not only with one's money. With one's experience which we share with others. With one's knowledge. With the giving of self to others. It is recorded ~~that~~ of Eliezer ben Jackov, the Rabbi, who saw a poor, blind beggar come into the synagogue, from whom men turned away, through thoughtlessness, that he took this poor blind beggar — led him to the very front of the synagogue, sat him down, then took his seat behind him — not in front of him — not alongside of him — but behind him to indicate the honor that he was paying this man. Whereupon his disciples and pupils at the close of the service came around to this poor, blind man, spoke honorably to him, invited him to come to their homes and partake of the meal, and the poor, blind man/^{turned to them and}said, "who was it took me by the hand and placed me here?". They said that it was Eliezer the Rabbi — Eliezer ben Jackov. Whereupon the blind man uttered a prayer. Because he took care of one who has seen, but cannot see, may he who sees but cannot be seen, bestow upon him blessings abundantly. It was an act of . He didn't have to do it. It wasn't indicated in the law. No one would have blamed him if he hadn't done what he did — this famous rabbi, but there was a heart that was involved in all the sorrow and the tragedy of the world. There was a spirit which was sensitive to other lives.

The Rabbis ask, "Why was the Book of Ruth included in the Bible?" There are no laws in the Book of Ruth. Nothing about what is permitted and what is prohibited and what is clean and unclean. Why was that simple story of Ruth included at all,

in the Cannon of the Bible? And the answer, because it teaches one to do acts of loving kindness. Here was Naomi, who had left her home and had gone to the land of Moab. Her husband died and her two sons died and she was now on her way back to the land of Judea - alone, bereft. And of her two daughter-in-laws, Ruth, whom she asked to return to the land of Moab, and to live with her own kin-folk, Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, for wither thou goest I will go. Thy people will be my people and thy God will be my God. Whether thou diest will I die and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." Ruth gave of herself completely, to another human being, because she saw and understood the loneliness, the emptiness of that life without some love, some affection. Ruth did not have to do it. The law did not call for it. No one would have blamed her if she had returned to her kinfolk. But Ruth practiced an act of  , which involved her entire being - herself. So the Rabbi said Ruth was privileged to become the ancestress of King David and the ancestress of the Messiah. A non-Jewish woman, by the way, a Moabite.

(the world is built upon loving kindness.)

And until men and women realize this, they will, in the first place never realize their own capacity for living, their own inner spiritual greatness, their own ability to rise to high levels of existence, to taste the richness of real living in the world and never reach a condition of brotherliness, cooperativeness and peace. It is not by laws that men are made good, but by that which goes beyond the measure of the laws --

It is not what is mine is mine and what is thine is thine -- that's a simple matter of legal justice -- it is when a man says what is mine is also thine. I will share what I have, not merely of substance, but all that I have -- out of love, sympathy, fellow feeling with you in your need, hoping that you will do the same with me, with others. It is when this spirit begins to move through life, motivate men, that we are approaching

(the Kingdom of God on earth.)

And so "Simon the Just" was a wise man when he said the world was built upon three things -- Torah - spiritual idealism -- Avodah - a sense of humility, and devotion to one greater than ourselves -- , voluntary acts of loving kindness.

Amen.



"In great many things, myself should have done better than you" (2)
 He answered: "His message it is which wins for me in all my battles".

(3) Ben Hur - described him the first appearance
 when he appeared - (first) after he died the

(3) infallible name, but (testimonies) was never again
 pronounced in the Temple.

(3) He reformed - the worldwide, sanctity, rebirth (J.
others. (255.) - (Vans) - debated - discussed it - grass on
rocky -

3/ 22/12 L - (1) Do not mean Law only - altru - basic laws
 (2) Do not mean that or instruction only - altru
not meaning and is to have and construct (3) It do not
mean just the 5 Books, Moses - altru the same traditionally
is applied to them.

It means the sp. ethical, education & development, man
according to the rules and teaching but does is the 22/12
they to have follow its teachings

Unless man & nation regulate their lives
their rules cannot long endure.

(A) 22/12 is thus sp. ethical self-culture - but it
is more than that - more self-culture is not enough! - It
must be expressed in action and conduct -
all 22/12 which is not tried up with work -
with doing in the end proved vain. 22/12 22/12 22/12 22/12 22/12

There intellectualism - self-perfectionism may lead to sp.
intensity - to vicious ^{pride} self-sufficiency - and self-sufficiency
- to isolationism.

Judaism has no use for the aloof sp. ingenuity -
the semit in the hermitage -

The world needs workers - builders of the good society -
inspired by the ideals and principles, the will prepared
to struggle for their realization - is the will for the will

Studying the will is essential to the most first
know what to do - but fulfilling the law, the will
is the heart, the math - is what the world needs
on.

WRHS



4/ There is not enough will in our lives. We do not
consciously devote enough time to a study - and it is a life.
time study - the love ethical + religious principles which should
guide us conduct. - (not only in check books as answers)
given enough to see whether in our human relationships we
are following (some will) - some from many mandates
for the first time to uncovering commitment to the values
For that is the meaning of it -
UNN will for it - is the will for it is the will for it is the will for it

5/ What is your will - from which you will not deviate?
Have you any such compelling - convictions -
unexpiring - unyielding principles - loyalties - devotions.
The world rests upon them!

if: 3188 - worship - in the Temple - all worship (4)

- all prayers - all devotion -

- all prayers - all devotion.
At the heart of all worship - is the humble and the
grateful heart! -

Rate of heart! - ^{upon a Power growth & awake}
not Fear - but a severe / dependable and a
need for communion! - the man needs the overlarity

need for communion!

A recognition that man needs the overlarity
arm, food to uphold his ^{at the} uncertain
necessities and predicaments, life -
+ not mind and hand

resurrection and predestination / up -
 a lifting up, the heart and mind and hand
 man - to some very higher than himself. - ~~an~~
 WEISER AMERICAN BOOK CO. NEW YORK

It is upon such an altar of trust, ~~of hope~~ ^{of trust} that alone the world, man can rest secure -

rest secure -

(A) The world of him who regards himself all self
sufficient, who arrogantly believes that his hands and
the strength of his own arms has gotten me all
this - who ~~feels no need for~~ is arrogant, no sin
in ~~his~~ his ~~mind~~ mind ~~of~~ of ~~no~~ no ~~need~~ need ~~for~~ for ~~protection~~ protection
~~for help~~ for help ~~from a higher source~~ from a higher source - that world ~~is~~ is
an imperfect world - that will crumble into ~~downfall~~
unheard tragedy - ~~within~~ as soon as the first storm of adversity
meets it -

It is a law against all that is proud

"For the Lord hath a day against all that is proud
and lofty, against all that is lifted up and high — and the
haughty men shall be humbled and the pride of men

shall be brought low."

6/ Our world ^{to let} is full of places, workshops - churches - mosques - synagogues -

But the spirit of workshops - ~~humble dependence~~ ^{spiritual efficiency} - and the need for real communion with God for ~~the~~ ^{though perhaps - here} not fill our world

Nations are proud, their achievement - our age boasts its progress - its power - its speed - its mastery

But here the walking humbly with God - the 231st is not there - the road is leading surely to the horrible

percepts, universal destruction -

Our proud civilization is ~~to~~ building underground shelters - and ~~leaving~~ ^{defence} ~~civilization~~ ^{from before the wrath} of God and the ~~ferocious~~ ^{that is} ~~the~~ ^{the only} -

2/ 301st ^{all classic subjects} Here is the Unique concept best expressed -

Jeremy of J. others human life and human dignity - Isidore's high regard to needs of the spirit, man its remarkable sensibility and generosity - are best expressed in the concept 301st 111st -

① More than charity - Charity is 303rd - What is right that a man should do - as a member of society - help the poor - feed the hungry - clothe the naked - basic social responsibility - the minimum that is expected of any man living in a cooperative society - where, all men, in final analysis depend upon each other - There is a limit to 303rd - 1/10 - 1/5 no man No limit to 181

... (2) n' 8 - is more than charity - On the rich charity - as a
matter / routine as one pays his taxes - judiciously - or
to be praised for it - His soul untouched, uninvolved -

(3) n' 2 is complete identification, self ^{involvement} with all, life - in
sympathy - in concern - in helpfulness - no longer a stranger to others?
no one a stranger to him

(4) n' 7 no frontier towards the rich as well as the poor -
the dead as well as the living! with one entire self set out alone
with one's way.

(5) Counsel - comfort - Forgiveness - friends rich poor all men in need of
spoke kindly, the dead 71 cheer their way emulate
their example.

(6) With entire self - share of power - knowledge - thoughtfulness
Eliza H. Foster - Blind man (Proph)

(7) (2) 21 300 p 186 (2) Rest - nothing about laws - penalties -
prohibited - nothing - 2000 1812
Nature's -

Sunday Morning Service

10:30 o'clock

For the Reading of Hallel
The 2nd in the series
Ancient
wisdom for
modern

RABBI SILVER



will speak on



"The World Rests Upon Three Things"

Ancient Wisdom For Modern Man

Friday Evening Services
5:30 to 6:10

Saturday Morning Services
11:15 to 12:00

MIRIAM LEIKIND

Organist and Choir Director
A. R. WILLARD

Editor
SOPHIA LEVINE

A. M. Luntz President
L. W. Neumark Vice-President
A. J. Kane Treasurer

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SWeetbriar 1-7755

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE

At the regular Sunday morning service, Rabbi Silver will speak on the subject "The World Rests Upon Three Things"—Ancient Wisdom for Modern Man.

Preceding the Service, there will be a fifteen minute organ recital of sacred music by Mr. A. R. Willard, organist and choir director, the program for which is printed below. Members are urged to come early to enjoy this beautiful recital of music.

MUSIC FOR SUNDAY

Organ	
Third Chorale	Franck
Spring Song—From the South	Lemare
Opening Psalm—Tov l'hodos	Dunkley
Bor'chu (Congregational)	Sulzer
Sh'ma - Boruch (Congregational)	Traditional
Mi Chomocho (Congregational)	Sulzer
Kedusha	Federlein
Silent Devotion—May the Words	Federlein
Before the Address	
Toras Adonoy—etz Chayim	Federlein
Mr. Hakola and Choir	
Olenu—Va-anachnu	Goldstein

torium, 13263 Lee Road.

Collaborating in the writing of the show were Dr. Jerome and Esther Litt; Morton and Natalie Epstein; Sam and Mitzi Federman; Arthur Friedman; Lee Friedman; Ernest Joseph; Harrison and Adele Fuerst; Dr. Julian Lewis; Herbert Schechter; Morton Smith; Stanley Morgenstern and Dr. Morton and Claire Shaw.

The talented cast of forty is comprised of members Hinda Apple; Edwin and Adele Arsham; Michael Art; Rita Blumenthal; Marilyn Caplane; Sanford Curtiss; Harold Dembe; Robert and Sandra Deutsch; Morton Epstein; Jerome and Helen Friedman; Allyn Gottlieb; Marvin and Barbara Grand; Judy Jacobson; Leonard and Beverly Kahn; Flo Koslen; Dr. Jerome and Esther Litt; Stanley Meisel; Irene Miller; Marvin and Mickie Orchen; Arnold and Harriet Ribet; Evie Rosenbaum; Mimi Sanders; Herbert Schechter; Kenneth and Sue Schlessel; Rita Schoebel; Gene Shipley; Lou and Cindy Shore; Marlene Siegel and Morton and Gerta Smith.

Participating in the production are Producers, Lionel and Dorothy Greenbaum; Director, Dr. Morton Shaw; Assistant Director, Natalie Epstein; Business Managers, Stanley and Marilyn Lowitt; and a wonderful crew of 'behind the scenes' artisans without whom the 'show could not go on'.

You are urged to make your reservations early. Tickets are \$1.75 and can be secured from Stanley and Marilyn Lowitt, 2936 South Moreland, Cleveland 20, Ohio.

contributed in memory of the birthday of mother, Sadye K. Felber, by her children, Mrs. Harold M. Chattman, Harry Felber, Jr., Mrs. William L. Braverman, and Richard D. Felber.

THE TEMPLE HIGH SCHOOL

Election of officers for next year's Temple High School Student Council was held on Sunday, April 1st in the Chapel.

Congratulations to the new President, Joyce Hurwitz; Vice-President, Adrienne Arnoff; Secretary, Jane Rose and Treasurer, Hedy Rogan.

NELFTY SPRING MEETING

The NELFTY Spring Board meeting will be held on April 20th, 21st and 22nd in Erie, Pennsylvania. On the agenda is the election of NELFTY Regional Officers for 1956-57.

Board members for this year, Michael Neben and Connie Lurie, and the new board members for next year, Alice Rogan and Jane Rose, will attend the meeting.

See you in

MAHLER HALL

Sunday, April 15 8:00 P.M.

"April on the Continent"

The Temple Alumni Association

HAVE YOU TURNED IN YOUR TAX STAMPS ???

CONTEST CLOSING APRIL 30th.

THE WORLD RESTS UPON THREE THINGS

At The Temple April 15, 1956, ~~Where?~~ *At Temple*

I read you this morning the first Chapter of the *Shema* 773
"The Sayings of the fathers". It is the custom in our Synagogues to read
these Chapters of The Fathers, or The Sayings of the Fathers during the
weeks between Passover and Shavuot. There were places and times when these
Chapters were read every Saturday afternoon in the Synagogues. The
Shema 773 is a tractate of the Mishna. It is found in our Mishna and
it is a collection of the ethical sayings which are attributed to famous
rabbis from the time of the assembly - the Great Assembly - until the time
of *(Judah Ha Nasi?)* - a period of some five hundred years. Its a
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and he used to say, "Upon three things the world rests: upon Torah - upon
Avodah (worship) - and upon *Shema* 773 (acts of loving kindness).
Now the Great Assembly, of which "Simon the Just" was one of the last sur-
vivors, was the legislative body which was brought into existence after the
return from the Babylonian captivity by Ezra and *(Nehemiah?)*. The men of
the Great Assembly, the *Shema* 773 continued the tradition of the
great Prophets

who preceded them. "Simon the Just" was a High Priest who lived around the year 300 Before the Common Era. Quite a number of interesting legends ^{are} connected with his life. Alexander the Great, in his conquest of the Orient, also came to Palestine and he was on his way to Jerusalem and was determined to destroy the Temple in Jerusalem, having been incited to do so by the _____ or the Samaritans. Whereupon "Simon the Just" who was the High Priest at the time, according to this legend, put on his priestly garments; and some of the noble men of Israel went with him, carrying fiery torches in their hands; and they walked all through the night until the dawn, and came to the camp of Alexander the Great. And when Alexander saw the High Priest, "Simon the Just", legend has it that he bowed down before him and the men standing around Alexander said to him, "A great King, like yourself, should bow down before this Jew?" Whereupon Alexander answered, "His image it is which wins for me in all my battles." Whatever ~~of~~ the truth of this legend is Alexander did conquer Palestine and Jerusalem, but did not destroy the Temple. A contemporary of "Simon the Just", an eminent physician by the name of Jesus Ben Sirach, whose Memoirs and wise sayings are contained in that noted Book of Ecclesiasticus which is found in our Apocrypha, describes "Simon the Just" — his appearance as he officiated in The Temple, and I read from the Book of Ecclesiasticus — 50th Chapter:

"Simon the high priest, the son of Onias, who in his life repaired the house again, and in his days fortified the temple:
And by him was built from the foundation the double height,
the high fortress of the wall about the temple:
In his days the cistern to receive water, being in compass
as the sea, was covered with plates of brass:
He took care of the temple that it should not fall, and
fortified the city against besieging:

(that sentence that he took care of the Temple that it should not fall was probably responsible for this legend which I just recounted to you)

"How was he honoured in the midst of the people in his
coming out of the sanctuary!
He was as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, and as the
moon at the full:
As the sun shining upon the temple of the most High, and as
the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds:

And as the flower of roses in the spring of the year,
as lilies by the rivers of waters, and as the branches of
the frankincense tree in the time of summer:

As fire and incense in the censer, and as a vessel
of beaten gold set with all manner of precious stones;

And as a fair olive tree budding forth fruit, and
as a cypress tree which groweth up to the clouds.

When he put on the robe of honour, and was clothed
with the perfection of glory, when he went up to the holy
altar, he made the garment of holiness honourable.

When he took the portions out of the priests' hands,
he himself stood by the hearth of the altar, compassed with his
brethren round about, as a young cedar in Libanus; and as palm
trees compassed they him round about."

and so on. A hymn of praise to this great high priest who must have made a
tremendous impression upon ^{the} this physician who saw him in the Temple officiating
at the high altars. It is said that when "Simon the Just" died, the ineffable
name of God - the four-letter word of God, the Tetragramaton, which was pronounced
only once by the high priest, on the Day of Atonement, as he entered the Holy of
Holies; when "Simon the Just" died, after his death this ineffable name was never
again pronounced in the Temple.

He represented what might be said to be the ^{the} soundness -/sobriety of Jewish
ethical ideals. He was opposed to the ^{men} he was opposed to the ^{men} who
made vows as an expression of excessive religiosity. Men who vowed to abstain
from food for a certain number of days or drink or from cutting their hair -- who
submitted themselves to other forms of self-denial or asceticism. "Simon the Just"
was vehemently opposed to all these practices, and discouraged them as he discouraged
all forms of excessive piety. There are enough laws in the Torah, he said, for men
to observe and in the observing of them they can obtain fullest merit -- there is
no need for men to take on additional self-denials for the sake of worshipping their
God.

Well it was this "Simon the Just" who ^{said, in} is reported in this ^{tractate}
to have said, "The world rests upon three things" - upon the Torah - upon Avodah -
upon ^{G'mil'005} Chassadim. Now Torah is an interesting term. It doesn't mean Law
although the basic laws of Judaism are found in the Torah. It doesn't mean merely

study or instruction, although the root meaning of the word Torah is 'to teach and to instruct'. And it doesn't mean merely the five books of Moses, although the term technically applies to the five books which are written on parchment and which are enclosed in the ^{these} 03179 1171C in every synagogue throughout the world. Torah means all of things -- it means much more. It has come to mean much more in Jewish religious life. It means the spiritual and the ethical development of man according to the rules and the teachings laid down in the Torah. Torah is spiritual and ethical self-culture, according to definite laws of conduct and attitude prescribed in the Torah. And unless men and nations regulate their lives according to these laws and follow their teachings, their worlds cannot endure.

I said that Torah means spiritual and ethical self-culture - but it means even more than that - because mere self-culture is not enough. It must be expressed in action, in conduct, in a way of life. All Torah/which is not bound up with work is in the end vain and futile. And one rabbi went even further, when he said (he who engages exclusively in Torah)

(is likened unto one who has no God). He is just studying in order to increase his own intellectualism - to perfect himself - as though there ^{were} no God whom he is to serve, and as though there were no creatures of God whom he is to help. Mere intellectualism, self-perfectionism may lead to spiritual sterility, to unctious pride and self-sufficiency and to self-righteousness and social isolationism. Judaism had no use for that sort of thing. Judaism had no use for the aloof, spiritual exquisite - the saint in the hermitage. The world needs workers. The world needs builders of the good society -- men who are inspired by the ideals and the principals of the Torah and go out into the world struggling to bring that world into existence.

(To perfect the world according to the pattern of the Kingdom of God.) Of course the

study of the Torah is essential. "Thou shall meditate it day and night" we read in the Bible. One must first know what to do - but fulfilling the Laws of the Torah - that is the heart of the battle - and that is what the world rests upon. I am afraid there is not enough Torah in our lives. We do not consciously devote enough time to the study of the Torah - and it is a lifetime study - to the basic, ethical and religious principals which should determine our life's conduct, nor do we check back on ourselves often enough to see whether in our human relationships we are really following some firm Torah, some strong mandate of the spirit. Whether we are really true to some unwavering commitments in life - to basic convictions - that is Torah. Be strong. To keep all the words of this Torah do not depart from it to the right or to the left in order that thou mayest succeed in all that thou doest. That was the command that was given to Joshua when he took over the charge from Moses. A Torah from which one does not depart either to the right or to the left. What is your Torah from which you will not deviate? Have you in your lives certain compelling, certain coercive, certain inexorable, unyielding principals, loyalties, dedications, from which you simply will not depart under any circumstances? ^{is} It's the world that rests upon these things. Torah!

And, said "Simon the Just", the world rests also upon Avodah. Avodah means worship. It means worship in the Temple - in the ancient Temple of Jerusalem - but it also means all worship -- all prayer -- all devotion. And at the heart of all worship, dear friends, is the humble and the grateful heart of man. Not fear, but a sense of dependence upon a power greater than ourselves and on a need for communion with that power. ⁽⁵⁾ That's worship. A recognition that man needs the everlasting arms of God to uphold him in ^{all} the uncertain vicissitudes and predicaments of his life. A ^{and the hand} lifting up of the heart and the mind/of man, to something higher than himself. It is upon such an attitude of humility, of trust, of seeking God through the only way that God can be sought, through justice and love and walking humbly with him, that alone the world of man and the world of nations can rest secure. The world of the man that regards himself as self-sufficient - who needs nobody else - ^{who} arrogantly

believes that 'my hands' and 'the power of mine arms that got me all this' -- the world of the man who is aware of no sin within him -- calling for atonement, for forgiveness; - no shortcoming - no weakness in need of help from a higher source - the world of such a man is an imperiled world that will crumble into unrelieved tragedy and disaster as soon as the first storm of adversity sweeps over it.

"For the Lord of Hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty - against all that is lifted up and high, and the haughtiness of man shall be humbled and the pride of man shall be brought low".

Avodah - worship.

Our world today is full of places of worship -- churches, mosques - synagogues, shrines by the tens of thousands - by the hundreds of thousands -- but the spirit of worship is not in all of them, nor in the hearts of those who worship in them. That spiritual dependency - that need for real communion with God through the ways which lead to God - justice, love, humility - they do not exist in them. Nations are proud of their achievements today. Our age boasts of its scientific progress - and it is an amazing progress - our age is proud of its power and its speed, its mastery - but because our age is not walking humbly with God, because there is no Avodah in the spirit of nations, this road upon which they are walking is leading swiftly to horrible prospects of universal destruction. Our proud civilization is building underground shelters, civilian defenses, to protect men from the wrath and the terror that they sense is on the way. The world rests upon three things -- Torah, Avodah, and lastly *פ' 307 מ' 8' נ' (acts of loving kindness.)*

This term *פ' 307 מ' 8' נ'* or *works of loving kindness* represents the genius of Judaism at its highest. It is really a unique concept. Judaism's high regard for human life and human dignity -- its remarkable sensitiveness to the needs of the spirit of man -- its boundless compassion -- its sympathy -- are best expressed in this concept of *307 מ' 8' נ'* -. Its more than 'charity'.

Charity is called *ח' 33* . ~~ח' 33~~ *ח' 33* is that which is right. That which a man ought to do as a member of society. The minimum! To help the

poor and feed the hungry and clothe the naked. That's a basic social responsibility without which society cannot really exist. The minimum required of every citizen in a cooperative society, for all men, in the last analysis, are dependent one upon another. There is a limit to *1733*. There is a limit to charity that a man need do. The rabbis define that limit. Man should not give of his substance beyond a certain percentage - ten or twenty percent., lest he impoverish himself, and thus himself become dependent upon society. There is a limit to

1733, but there is no limit whatsoever to *300 DIBNE*, (to acts of loving kindness.) A man can give charity as a matter of routine - as one pays his taxes. A man can give charity grudgingly. Men may give charity in order to be praised for it - giving in a way that his soul is not at all involved - not at all touched by the act - by what he is doing - or by the needs of the man to whom he is rendering his charity.

300 DIBNE is a complete self-identification - is a complete self-involvement with all of life - in sympathy, in concern, in helpfulness. The man who practices *300 DIBNE* is no longer a stranger to others and no one is a stranger to him. One practices *300 DIBNE* towards the rich as well as towards the poor. Towards the dead as well as towards the living, with one's substance, but also with one's entire self. One seldom thinks of practicing *300 DIBNE* towards the rich, ^{but} for the rich are just as much in need, really, of our understanding, of our friendliness, of our neighborliness, of our counsel, of our comfort, of our forgiveness, as well as the poor.

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(rich and poor meet together on the basis of common human needs.) *1092 2171* (God created them all.) All men,

regardless of their possessions or their lack of possessions are in need of fellow feeling at one time or another in their lives and the man who practices *DIBNE*

300, who is identified emotionally with all the living, never withholds acts of loving kindness for rich or for poor. We practice loving kindness towards the dead as well as towards the living, when we show respect to the dead and refrain from speaking harshly about the dead, when we refrain from judging those who have

passed away, or when we cherish their memory, or when we emulate their example if when their example was worthy of emulation -- we practice *300 Mitzvot*, (acts of loving kindness.) The greatest scholar, engaged in his great study of the Torah, must close his book and rise and accompany the funeral procession of the humblest and the least, in a community. To show respect not only to that one individual who is entitled to respect -- but respect to life itself -- the sanctity -- the dignity of human life -- whether it is the life of the greatest scholar or the life of the humblest worker.

One must serve, if one practices *300 Mitzvot*, with one's entire self, not only with one's money. With one's experience which we share with others. With one's knowledge. With the giving of self to others. It is recorded that of Eliezer ben Jackov, the Rabbi, who saw a poor, blind beggar come into the synagogue, from whom men turned away, through thoughtlessness, that he took this poor blind beggar -- led him to the very front of the synagogue, sat him down, then took his seat behind him -- not in front of him -- not alongside of him -- but behind him to indicate the honor that he was paying this man. Whereupon his disciples and pupils at the close of the service came around to this poor, blind man, spoke honorably to him, invited him to come to their homes and partake of the meal, and the poor, blind man ^{turned to them and} said, "who was it took me by the hand and placed me here?". They said that it was Eliezer the Rabbi -- Eliezer ben Jackov. Whereupon the blind man uttered a prayer. Because he took care of one who has seen, but cannot see, may he who sees but cannot be seen, bestow upon him blessings abundantly. It was an act of *300 Mitzvot*. He didn't have to do it. It wasn't indicated in the law. No one would have blamed him if he hadn't done what he did -- this famous rabbi, but there was a heart that was involved in all the sorrow and the tragedy of the world. There was a spirit which was sensitive to other lives.

The Rabbis ask, "Why was the Book of Ruth included in the Bible?" There are no laws in the Book of Ruth. Nothing about what is permitted and what is prohibited and what is clean and unclean. Why was that simple story of Ruth included at all?

in the Canon of the Bible? And the answer, ^BBecause it teaches one to do acts of loving kindness. Here was Naomi, who had left her home and had gone to the land of Moab. Her husband died and her two sons died and she was now on her way back to the land of Judea - alone, bereft. And of her two daughter-in-laws, Ruth, whom she asked to return to the land of Moab, and to live with her own kin-folk, Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, for whither thou goest I will go. Thy people will be my people and thy God will be my God. Whether thou diest will I die and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." Ruth gave of herself completely, to another human being, because she saw and understood the loneliness, the emptiness of that life without some love, some affection. Ruth did not have to do it. The law did not call for it. No one would have blamed her if she had returned to her kinfolk. But Ruth practiced an act of *30N 110ND*, which involved her entire being - herself.

So the Rabbi said Ruth was privileged to become the ancestress of King David and the ancestress of the Messiah. A non-Jewish woman, by the way, a Moabite.

P'30N 110ND *by 30N 110ND* (the world is built upon loving kindness.)

And until men and women realize this, they will, ~~in the first place~~ never realize their own capacity for living, their own inner spiritual greatness, their own ability to rise to high levels of existence, to taste the richness of real living in the world and never reach a condition of brotherliness, cooperativeness and peace. It is not by laws that men are made good, but by that which goes beyond the measure of the laws - *beyond the minimum*.

It is not what is mine is mine and what is thine is thine -- that's a simple matter of legal justice -- it is when a man says what is mine is also thine. I will share what I have, not merely of substance, but all that I have -- out of love, sympathy, fellow feeling with you in your need, hoping that you will do the same with me, with others. It is when this spirit begins to move through life, motivate men, that we are approaching *P'1NO 110ND* *the Kingdom of God on earth.*

And so "Simon the Just" was a wise man when he said the world was built upon three things -- Torah - spiritual idealism -- Avodah - a sense of humility, and devotion to one greater than ourselves -- voluntary acts of loving kindness.

7130 D DINE,

Amen.



"THE WORLD RESTS UPON THREE THINGS"

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Man

April 15, 1956

I read you this morning the first Chapter of the *Pirke AboT* "The Sayings of the Fathers". [It is the custom in our Synagogues to read these Chapters of The Fathers, or ~~The Sayings of the Fathers~~ during the weeks between Passover and Shavuot. There were places and times when these Chapters were read every Saturday afternoon in the Synagogues. The *Pirke AboT* is a tractate of the Mishna. ~~It is found in our Mishna and~~ it is a collection of the ethical sayings which are attributed to famous rabbis from the time of the Assembly - the Great Assembly - until the time of - a period of some five hundred years. Its a compendium of the great principals of Judaism as expressed in characteristic ways - maxim - dicta - by one or another of these great luminaries among the sages of our people. In the Talmud we come across a saying of Rabba that he who wishes to become a truly pious man - a true Chassid - should study the *Pirke AboT*. These Chapters were so popular among our people that they became incorporated in our Prayer Book - ~~in our liturgy~~. And they helped to mold and fashion the ethical thinking and conduct of our people through the ages. Of one of these sayings I wish to speak this morning. It is included in this first Chapter which we read this morning - "Simon the Just" was one of the last survivors of the men of the Great Assembly, and he used to say, "Upon three things the world rests: upon Torah - upon Avodah (worship) - and upon *Gemilut Hasadim* (acts of loving kindness). Now the Great Assembly, of which "Simon the Just" was one of the last survivors, was the legislative body which was brought into existence after the return from the Babylonian captivity by Ezra and Nehemiah. The men of the Great Assembly, the *Sipra* *Sanhedrin* continued the tradition of the great Prophets

who preceded them. "Simon the Just" was a High Priest who lived around the year 300 Before the Common Era. Quite a number of interesting legends, ^{AR5} connected with his life. Alexander the Great, in his conquest of the Orient, ~~also~~ came to Palestine ~~and he was on his way to Jerusalem~~ and was determined to destroy the Temple in Jerusalem, having been incited to do so by the or the Samaritans. Whereupon "Simon the Just" who was the High Priest at the time, according to this legend, put on his priestly garments; and some of the noble men of Israel went with him, carrying fiery torches in their hands; and they walked all through the night until the dawn, and came to the camp of Alexander the Great. And when Alexander saw the High Priest, "Simon the Just", legend has it that he bowed down before him ~~and the~~ men standing around Alexander said to him, "A great King, like yourself, should bow down before this Jew?" Whereupon Alexander answered, "His image it is which wins for me in all my battles." Whatever ~~of~~ the truth of this legend is Alexander did conquer Palestine and Jerusalem, but did not destroy the Temple. A contemporary of "Simon the Just", an eminent physician by the name of Jesus Ben Sirach, whose ~~Memoirs and wise sayings are contained in that noted Book of Ecclesiasticus which is found in our Apocrypha, describes "Simon the Just" — his appearance as he officiated in The Temple, and I read from the Book of Ecclesiasticus - 50th Chapter:~~

"Simon the high priest, the son of Onias, who in his life repaired the house again, and in his days fortified the temple:
And by him was built from the foundation the double height,
the high fortress of the wall about the temple:

In his days the cistern to receive water, being in compass as the sea, was covered with plates of brass:

He took care of the temple that it should not fall, and fortified the city against besieging:

(that sentence that he took care of the Temple that it should not fall was probably responsible for this legend which I just recounted to you)

"How was he honoured in the midst of the people in his coming out of the sanctuary!

He was as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, and as the moon at the full:

As the sun shining upon the temple of the most High, and as the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds:

And as the flower of roses in the spring of the year,
as lilies by the rivers of waters, and as the branches of
the frankincense tree in the time of summer:

As fire and incense in the censer, and as a vessel
of beaten gold set with all manner of precious stones;

And as a fair olive tree budding forth fruit, and
as a cypress tree which groweth up to the clouds.

When he put on the robe of honour, and was clothed
with the perfection of glory, when he went up to the holy
altar, he made the garment of holiness honourable.

When he took the portions out of the priests' hands,
he himself stood by the hearth of the altar, compassed with his
brethren round about, as a young cedar in Libanus; and as palm
trees compassed they him round about."

and so on. A hymn of praise to this ~~great high priest~~ ^{Simon the Just} who must have made a
tremendous impression upon this physician who saw him in the Temple officiating
at the high altars. It is said that when ~~"Simon the Just"~~ ^{Simon the Just} died, the ineffable
name of God - the four-letter word of God, the Tetragramaton, which was pronounced
only once by the high priest, on the Day of Atonement, as he entered the Holy of
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again pronounced in the Temple - so at least ^{the} ~~the legend.~~

He represented what might be said to be the soundness -/sobriety of Jewish
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made vows as an expression of excessive religiosity. Men who vowed to abstain
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no need for men to take on additional self-denials for the sake of worshipping their
God.

Well it was this "Simon the Just" who is reported in this ^{saying}
to have said, "The world rests upon three things" - upon the Torah - upon Avodah -
upon Gemilut Chassadim. Now Torah is an interesting term. It doesn't ^{NOT} mean Law
although the basic laws of Judaism are found in the Torah. It doesn't ^{NOT} mean merely

study or instruction, although the root meaning of the word Torah is 'to teach and to instruct'. And it does^{not} mean merely the Five Books of Moses, although the term technically applies to the five books which are written on parchment and which are enclosed in the ARON HAKodesh in every synagogue throughout the world. Torah means all of things -- it means much more. It has come to mean much more in Jewish religious life. It means the spiritual and the ethical development of man according to the rules and the teachings laid down in the Torah. Torah is spiritual and ethical self-culture, according to definite laws of conduct and attitude prescribed in the Torah. And unless men and nations regulate their lives according to these laws and follow their teachings, their worlds cannot endure.

I said that Torah means spiritual and ethical self-culture - but it means even more than that - because mere self-culture is not enough. It must be expressed in action, in conduct, in a way of life. All Torah/^{said the rabbis,} which is not bound up with work is in the end vain and futile. And one rabbi went even further, when he said

(he who engages exclusively in Torah)

(is likened unto one who has no God). He is just studying in order to increase his own intellectualism - to perfect himself - as though there^{were} ~~is~~ no God whom he is to serve, and as though there were no creatures of God whom he is to help. Mere intellectualism, self-perfectionism ~~may lead to~~ spiritual sterility, to unctious pride and self-sufficiency and to self-righteousness and social isolationism. Judaism had no use for that sort of thing. Judaism had no use for the aloof, spiritual exquisite - the saint in the hermitage. The world needs workers. The world needs builders of the good society -- men who are inspired by the ideals and the principals of the Torah and go out into the world struggling to bring that world into existence.

(To perfect the world according to the pattern of the Kingdom of God.) Of course the

study of the Torah is essential. "Thou shall meditate it day and night" we read in the Bible. One must first know what to do - but fulfilling the Laws of the Torah - that is the heart of the battle, and that is what the world rests upon. I am afraid there is not enough Torah in our lives. We do not consciously devote enough time to the study of the Torah - and it is a lifetime study - to the basic, ethical and religious principals which should determine our life's conduct, nor do we check back on ourselves often enough to see whether in our human relationships we are really following some firm Torah, some strong mandate of the spirit. Whether we are really true to some unwavering commitments in life - to basic convictions - that is Torah. Be strong. To keep all the words of this Torah do not depart from it to the right or to the left in order that thou mayest succeed in all that thou doest. That was the command that was given to Joshua when he took over the charge from Moses. A Torah from which one does not depart either to the right or to the left. What is your Torah from which you will not deviate. Have you in your lives certain compelling, certain coercive, certain inexorable, unyielding principals, loyalties, dedications, from which you simply will not depart under any circumstances. ~~It~~ Is the world that rests upon these things. Torah!

And, said "Simon the Just", the world rests also upon Avodah. Avodah means worship. It means worship in the Temple - in the ancient Temple of Jerusalem - but it also means all worship -- all prayer -- all devotion. ~~And~~ at the heart of all worship, dear friends, is the humble and the grateful heart of man. Not fear, but a sense of dependence upon a power greater than ourselves and on a need for communion with that power. ^{is} That's worship. A recognition that man needs the everlasting arms ^{all} of God to uphold him in the uncertain vicissitudes and predicaments of his life. ~~And~~ ^{and the hand} lifting up of the heart and the mind of man, to something higher than himself. It is upon such an attitude of humility, of trust, of seeking God through the only way that God can be sought, through justice and love and walking humbly with him, that alone the world of man and the world of nations can rest secure. The world of the man that regards himself as self-sufficient - who needs nobody else - ^{who} arrogantly

believes that 'my hands' and 'the power of mine arms that got me all this' -- the world of the man who is aware of no sin within him -- calling for atonement, for forgiveness; -- no shortcoming -- no weakness in need of help from a higher source -- the world of such a man is an imperiled world that will crumble into unrelieved tragedy and disaster as soon as the first storm of adversity sweeps over it.

"For the Lord of Hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty -- against all that is lifted up and high, and the haughtiness of man shall be humbled and the pride of man shall be brought low".

Avodah -- worship.

Our world today is full of places of worship -- churches, mosques -- synagogues, shrines by the tens of thousands -- by the hundreds of thousands -- but the spirit of worship is not in all of them, nor in the hearts of those who worship in them. That spiritual dependency -- that need for real communion with God through the ways which lead to God -- justice, love, humility -- they do not exist in them. Nations are proud of their achievements today. Our age boasts of its scientific progress -- and it is an amazing progress -- our age is proud of its power and its speed, its mastery -- but because our age is not walking humbly with God, because there is no Avodah in the spirit of nations, this road upon which ^{we} they are walking is leading swiftly to horrible prospects of universal destruction. Our proud civilization is building underground shelters, ~~civilian defenses~~, to protect men from the wrath and the terror that they sense is on the way. The world rests upon three things -- Torah, Avodah, and lastly Gemilut Hassadim (acts of loving kindness.)

This term g'milut hassadim or g'milut represents the genius of Judaism at its highest. It is really a unique concept. Judaism's high regard for human life and human dignity -- its remarkable sensitiveness to the needs of the spirit of man -- its boundless compassion -- its sympathy -- are best expressed in this concept of Gemilut Hassadim --. Its more than 'charity'. Charity is called Zedakah. Zedakah is that which is right, That which a man ought to do as a member of society. The minimum! To help the

poor and feed the hungry and clothe the naked. That's a basic social responsibility without which society cannot really exist. The minimum required of every citizen in a cooperative society, for all men, in the last analysis, are dependent one upon another. There is a limit to *Zedakah*. There is a limit to ^{The} charity that a man need do. The rabbis define that limit. Man should not give of his substance beyond a certain percentage - ten or twenty percent., lest he impoverish himself, and thus himself become dependent upon society. There is a limit to *Zedakah*, but there is no limit whatsoever to *Gemilut Hassadim*,

(to acts of loving kindness.) A man can give charity as a matter of routine - as one pays his taxes. A man can give charity grudgingly. Men may give charity in order to be praised for it - giving in a way that his soul is not at all involved - not at all touched by the act - by what he is doing - or by the needs of the man to whom he is rendering his charity. *Gemilut Hassadim* is a complete self-identification - is a complete self-involvement with all of life - in sympathy, in concern, in helpfulness. The man who practices *Gemilut Hassadim* is no longer a stranger to others and no one is a stranger to him. One practices *Gemilut Hassadim* towards the rich as well as towards the poor, - Towards the dead as well as towards the living, with one's substance, but also with one's entire self. One seldom thinks of practicing *Gemilut Hassadim* towards the rich, ^{but} for the rich are just as much in need, really, of our understanding, of our friendliness, of our neighborliness, of our counsel, of our comfort, of our forgiveness, as well as the poor.

(rich and poor meet together on the basis of common human needs.)

(God created them all.) All men, regardless of their possessions or their lack of possessions are in need of fellow feeling at one time or another in their lives and the man who practices

, who is identified emotionally with all the living, never withholds acts of loving kindness for rich or for poor. We practice loving kindness towards the dead as well as towards the living, when we show respect to the dead and refrain from speaking harshly about the dead, when we refrain from judging those who have

passed away, or when we cherish their memory, or when we emulate their example if when their example was worthy of emulation — we practice *Gemilut Hassadim*, ~~(acts of loving kindness.)~~ The greatest scholar, engaged in his great study of the Torah, must close his book and rise and accompany the funeral procession of the humblest and the least, in a community. To show respect not only to that one individual who is entitled to respect — but respect to life itself — the sanctity — the dignity of human life — whether it is the life of the greatest scholar or the life of the humblest worker.

One must serve, if one practices *Gemilut Hassadim*, with one's entire self, not only with one's money. With one's experience which we share with others. With one's knowledge. With the giving of self to others. It is recorded that of Eliezer ben Jackov, the Rabbi, who saw a poor, blind beggar come into the synagogue, from whom men turned away, through thoughtlessness, that he took this poor blind beggar — led him to the very front of the synagogue, sat him down, then took his seat behind him — not in front of him — not alongside of him — but behind him to indicate the honor that he was paying this man. Whereupon his disciples and pupils at the close of the service came around to this poor, blind man, spoke honorably to him, invited him to come to their homes and partake of the meal, and the poor, blind man ^{turned to them and} said, "who was it took me by the hand and placed me here?". They said that it was Eliezer the Rabbi — Eliezer ben Jackov. Whereupon the blind man uttered a prayer. Because he took care of one who has seen, but cannot see, may he who sees but cannot be seen, bestow upon him blessings abundantly. It was an act of *Gemilut Hassadim*. He ^{NOT} didn't have to do it. It was ^{NOT} indicated in the law. No one would have blamed him if he hadn't done what he did — this famous rabbi, but there was a heart that was involved in all the sorrow and the tragedy of the world. There was a spirit which was sensitive to other lives.

The Rabbis ask, "Why was the Book of Ruth included in the Bible?" There are no laws in the Book of Ruth. Nothing about what is permitted and what is prohibited and what is clean and unclean. Why was that simple story of Ruth included at all,

in the Cannon of the Bible? And the answer, because it teaches one to do acts of loving kindness. Here was Naomi, who had left her home and had gone to the land of Moab. Her husband died and her two sons died and she was now on her way back to the land of Judea - alone, bereft. And of her two daughter-in-laws, Ruth, whom she asked to return to the land of Moab, and to live with her own kin-folk, Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, for wither thou goest I will go. Thy people will be my people and thy God will be my God. Whether thou diest will I die and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." Ruth gave of herself completely, to another human being, because she saw and understood the loneliness, the emptiness of that life without some love, some affection. Ruth did not have to do it. The law did not call for it. No one would have blamed her if she had returned to her kinfolk. But Ruth practiced an act of _____, which involved her entire being - herself.

So the Rabbi said Ruth was privileged to become the ancestress of King David and the ancestress of the Messiah. A non-Jewish woman, by the way, a Moabite.

(the world is built upon loving kindness.)

And until men and women realize this, they will, in the first place never realize their own capacity for living, their own inner spiritual greatness, their own ability to rise to high levels of existence, to taste the richness of real living in the world and never reach a condition of brotherliness, cooperativeness and peace. It is not by laws that men are made good, but by that which goes beyond the measure of the laws —

It is not what is mine is mine and what is thine is thine — that's a simple matter of legal justice -- it is when a man says what is mine is also thine. I will share what I have, not merely of substance, but all that I have -- out of love, sympathy, fellow feeling with you in your need, hoping that you will do the same with me, with others. It is when this spirit begins to move through life, motivate men, that we are approaching

(the Kingdom of God, on earth.)

And so "Simon the Just" was a wise man when he said the world was built upon three things -- Torah - spiritual idealism -- Avodah - a sense of humility, and devotion to one greater than ourselves -- *Gemilat Hasadim*, voluntary acts of loving kindness.

Amen.

