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Rosh Hashonah, 1932.

THE OLD AND THE NEWROSH HASHANAH - 1932

A New Year, my friends, spells new hope and new expectancy. It is like turning into a new and untrod road where the eye expects to come upon a new vista and a fresh scene.

And, O, how eager we all are this new year for a new vista and a fresh scene! How wearily has the last year dragged! How overcast ~~were~~ the skies, *have been*, how thorny the road! Men walked without hope. Men succumbed under the load of their heavy burdens. Men saw their ambitions beaten down and their dreams come to naught. Want and destitution, like gaunt, grim spectres, came to haunt the habitations of our people.

Most assuredly we all wish for a New Year, for a different kind of year. Our souls yearn for those days of prosperity and well-being which were ours just a short while ago but which now seem so far distant, so strangely remote, like an insubstantial dream which swiftly dissolved into nothingness.

Our sages have always admonished us to remember the uncertainty and impermanence of worldly ~~goods~~, station and success. "All flesh is grass, and all the *goodliness* thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, when the breath of the ^{Lord} wind bloweth upon it." But we never imagined that their universal admonition had any direct and personal application to us. Our optimism, which derived from our mounting prosperity, deluded us into a sense of personal immunity. We could not be touched. Our Rabbis had declared:

הלא נבטל כחבית מים / הלא נבטל כחבית מים / הלא נבטל כחבית מים

הלא נבטל כחבית מים / הלא נבטל כחבית מים

"This world is likened to a ^{water} wheel, ~~used to draw water~~. The full buckets as they come up are emptied. The empty buckets are filled." The wheel of fortune, we knew, would continue to turn as it has turned silently and implacably

through all the ages but our buckets would always be filled! We were secure! But, behold, to our utter confusion, the hand of destiny reached out and took hold even of us in our impregnable security, and shook us with such a violence and fury as to leave us crushed and desolate among the ruins of our erstwhile fortunes. The small and the great alike went down to defeat and even the mighty men were set at naught.

No wonder then that we stretch forth prayerful hands ^{To} the dawn of this New Year and that we fervently pray as did our fathers of old,

וְיָבֹא שָׁנָא דְּחַיִּים וְשָׁלוֹם וְכָל חַיִּים וְשָׁלוֹם

"May the old year with its evils end. May the new year with its blessing come."

At no time were people so dissatisfied with the old as today. We look back now on the manner and the tempo of our life during the decade which preceded the debacle of 1929 - the fat luxuries, the unrestrained license, the feverish gambling, the vulgarities of both young and old,-and we feel ashamed.

We look back today upon the economic order under which we lived, in which we placed our trust so completely and which promised such a glamorous millenium for everybody, and we feel betrayed. We turn from our immediate past with such little regret because it was so unsatisfying and disappointing. ~~Everyone speaks today of "reconstruction."~~ Why? ~~Because the old order of things had broken down completely or stands in dire need of thoroughgoing repair.~~

~~We want a New Year, a fresh start, a new chance.~~

But What is it then that we want the future to give us which the past had not? Is it just that we are hankering after the flesh-pots of twenty-eight and twenty-nine? Would we really be content if they would be returned to us?

There are many thoughtful men and women who pray that those days may never come back again. ~~Many people have expressed the strong conviction that in spite of the present depression and all the suffering which it entails they would not, even if they could, bring back that cheap, vulgar, hectic decade which followed the war.~~ Why? Surely not because they enjoy the depression and look with equanimity upon the misery which has engulfed millions of our people. Why do we shrink from a return of that era which reached its inevitable denouement in 1929? What was missing in that gilded ^{age} ~~era~~ which made life, in spite of its mounting affluence and swollen wealth, ignoble, inferior, ^{shoddy} ~~shabby~~ and unsatisfying?

Well, in the first place, it was a spurious age. Its prosperity was artificial and manipulated. To the undiscerning eye it may have appeared ^{undoubtedly} and ~~did~~ appear a very prosperous age but it was only a surface prosperity covering up very effectively an internal decay. It was not a healthy and vigorous prosperity but a feverish and enervating one during which both public morality and private virtue were relaxed and declined. It was built, not upon labor, but upon speculation and the insatiable appetites of socially irresponsible people. Men ^{did not} ~~devoted~~ themselves ~~not~~ to the normal processes and enterprises of economic life, ^{on} ~~not~~ to the satisfaction of the legitimate and normal needs of our nation. ^{but,} In reckless avarice, they reached their grasping hands into the future and attempted to ^{discount it to} turn into present gain the unborn wealth of tomorrow. Financial juggling and manipulation were resorted to on a scale unknown in the entire history of mankind. The investigations which have taken place in the last few years into the methods and practices of American business since the war have revealed such an appalling record of financial dishonesty, avarice, greed, and betrayal on the part of business leaders, bankers, and heads of corporations, such a violation of the ^{elementary} ~~ethics~~ of business and the standards of commercial integrity as to cause us to hang

our heads in shame. And ^{along} with this appalling mendacity went such an appalling stupidity, such amazing economic naïveté. Our great captains of industry in their shining, invincible armor who were to lead us to the Kingdom of Plenty, with two cars in every workingman's garage, were found to be Don Quixotes astride their lame and halt Rosinantes, tilting with broken lances ^{against} the wind-mills of delusion. No normal people could look with ^{unconcern} ~~equanimity~~ upon such an age and its ^{pernicious} ~~tragic~~ aberrations. It was a sick age, sick with the consuming fever of acquisitiveness. It was a dangerous age ^{for it} ~~which~~ consigned millions of people to cold, poverty and hunger in the midst of overflowing abundance. It was a tragic age.

In the second place, our prosperous era was isolated. Ours was an isle of abundance in a sea of universal destitution. This fact alone lent a bitter taste to our prosperity and actually decreed its swift collapse. The world was poor and we were rich. In the twentieth century such a condition cannot long endure.

"That old dream has fled forever, that we dwell serene and far
With God's special smile to light us on some steady separate star."

The spreading gangrene of economic degeneration which had attacked the countries of Europe, Asia and South America was certain to reach us too. Our prosperity could not endure, because, among other things, it was not part and parcel of a world prosperity. ~~Again and again the events of the last few years have brought sharply to our attention the fact that we are~~ inextricably part of the world. We are entangled in the skein of international economic life. ~~The perception of another truth has now dawned upon us.~~ Just as in modern warfare there can be no victor and no vanquished, but victor and vanquished alike come down to utter defeat. So in ^{world economy} ~~periods~~ of ~~economic decline~~ there can be no prosperous nation and no depressed

nation but all alike, sooner or later, suffer the common fate of economic decline. No nation today can build an oasis of economic security for itself and hope to ward off indefinitely the encroaching desert of world-wide economic disaster.

Again, the past era was filled with hate. ^{The world's} ~~Our~~ collective life was dictated by suspicion and hate. Our huge competitive armaments were the offspring of hate. Both Europe and America, ~~though bled white by war,~~ with twenty-five millions of men stalking like ghosts through the streets of their great industrial cities unable to find work, are spending ~~vastly~~ larger sums on their armies and navies today than before the war - peace conferences, disarmament conferences, outlawry of war pacts notwithstanding. Even Germany, proclaiming to the world her inability to pay reparations and ~~her~~ public and private debts, is nevertheless clamoring for the right to build up her war machine to the level of the strongest military power in Europe. Hate today is writing its testament of blood across the face of China and India. Across the ten million graves of the slain in the World War, mankind has marched not to peace, as it fondly hoped, but to intensified animosities and to a new Pentecost of calamity. Hate and mutual distrust wrecked the last disarmament conference in Geneva. The War was dictated by hate. ~~The peace was dictated by hate. And all post-war international relations have been determined not by mutual sympathy, understanding, tolerance or vision, but by narrow, hurtful, self-interest and blind hate.~~ Racial conflicts and competitive, chauvinistic nationalism, with ^{and Hitlerism in} ~~the~~ hatred of the stranger and the immigrant, have everywhere increased. Hate built our barbed-wired tariff fences across the face of Europe and America and launched a disastrous economic trench-warfare all over the world.

Everywhere hate, nowhere love. Never since the fall of the Roman

Empire and the world confusion which followed it has the Western world been so disrupted culturally, and spiritually so shattered as it is today.

No wonder that we long for a new start, a new world, a new era.

But where shall we find it? Or how shall we fashion it?

Clearly we need not a restoration, ^{not a return} but a reconstruction. The new world must be free from those elements of gross inequality, insecurity, isolation and hate which brought the old world to this sorry pass. It must be an orderly world in which man will not be victimized by organized greed or by the unintelligent distribution of the wealth which he himself helps to produce. It must be a just world in which non-productive financial juggling and greed will be met not with rewards but with punishment. It must be a secure world in which man will be protected against the encroachment of labor-displacing machinery. It must be a world in which man will dominate the machine and exploit it for the benefit of all and not the profit of the few. It must be a world in which the disabled, the old, the unemployed will be adequately protected.

Such a new social order is not the work of a year or a generation - unless it comes about through bloody revolution. But revolution is always the ^{complete} ~~most damning~~ proof that the leaders of the old regime lacked the gift of statesmanship and the vision to adjust old institutions to new conditions. The seeds of a new social order need not always be sown in the soil of terror and nurtured by the blood of civil war. ^{A new order of things} ~~It~~ can be resolutely willed by a people if that people is unafraid to experiment, unenthralled by old slogans and catch phrases, pragmatic, realistic, neither enamored of the old just because it is old or afraid of the new just because it is new. But the new social order must be willed! The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation! It must be planned and carried through by the best minds and the stoutest hearts of ^a ~~the~~ people.

We shall have such a new world as soon as we make up our minds that we really want it and are ready to pay the price for it. Some things we shall have to sacrifice for it and some very desirable things. Perhaps some of our freedom, our individualism and our private initiative. Perhaps, ^{compensating} ways will be found ^{whereby} ~~of directing~~ these desirable values of life ^{will be directed} into other satisfying channels. The new order may place limitations upon the wealth which an individual may possess. This may ~~not~~ prove a spiritual and moral, ^{gain rather than} ~~or even~~ ^{a loss,} ~~a physical disadvantage.~~ But surely we shall ^{not} ~~not be able to~~ achieve anything of the new, in terms of stability, security and the greater good for the greater number, unless we are willing to surrender something of the old.

This will be our searching test in the ~~rather~~ near future. In the hot fires of the new age our spiritual metal will either prove malleable enough to make the necessary adjustments or inflexible and indurate to a point where it will break utterly.

Another requirement for ~~the fashioning~~ of the new age ~~and of making it more desirable than the old is~~ to rediscover the totality of the race of mankind. Since the war the peoples of Europe have been terribly provincialized in their outlook and have been driven back, spiritually speaking, ~~to~~ within their narrow national boundaries. The nations of the world today are like the jumbled fragments of a scattered picture puzzle. Somewhere there is a pattern into which they all can fit. But men have forgotten the pattern. Each fragment is sharp-edged, biting and piercing its neighbor. The concept of universalism, of internationalism, of humanity has suffered an almost total eclipse in our day. Even within a single country the factions have multiplied to such a degree and have become so hostile and bent upon each others destruction that the concept of country, of that integrated unity which we call a people, has declined. A menacing fragmentation has

set in the world. In the eighteenth century the leaders of thought spoke hopefully and enthusiastically of ~~the~~ ^a Republic of Europe, of a united and universal empire of all peoples. Even during the nineteenth century, the era of evolving nationalism, men spoke eagerly of a United States of the World, a "Parliament of Man, ~~the~~ ^a Federation of the World." A William Lloyd Garrison was able to voice a sentiment undoubtedly shared by millions in his day: "Our country is the world, our countrymen are all mankind." Today "all think their little set, mankind." Today we are passionate and excited only about our own little exclusive fatherlands. We have far less sympathy for peoples near and far than at any time in the past, although physically peoples have been brought ~~so~~ ^{much} closer to one another by the progress of science. A French ~~savant~~ ^{man} once wisely observed that "it is easier to know mankind in general than man individually." Today we neither know man individually nor mankind in general - only groups, parties, races and nationalities. The golden chalice of Human Brotherhood has been broken into a thousand fragments of international and interracial rivalry.

If the new age cannot restore the ideal of a united mankind to a place of centrality and paramountcy in human thought, it will go down to utter defeat as the last age has.

And finally, there is another ~~requirement~~ ^{condition} for the new ~~age~~ ^{and better} ~~which we are~~ ^{hoping to fashion}. We must rediscover the Inner Life. Disasters have always driven peoples inwardly. Perhaps the distraught and unsettled conditions of our own times will also turn this generation inwardly. (Man may have the roots of his life outside of himself or within himself. The difference consists in that the roots outside may be cut away by an axe wielded by stranger's hands, while the roots within are secure from such destruction.)

p. 10.

In the last era, men have lived too much externally and sought their satisfactions too frequently in external things. Even the moral emphasis of our time has been on external things, on improving or changing the world and not upon improving or changing ourselves. We talked of perfecting society, politically and economically, but said little of perfecting ourselves. It is, of course, far easier to blame an abstract society or an impersonal institution for the evils which exist and for our own unhappiness than it is to point the accusing finger at ourselves and say "mea culpa," or as our fathers said who were far less guilty of such sins than we are:

- נשלו - נשלו - נשלו

"We have sinned. We have transgressed. We have dealt perversely."

All of us wished for serenity and spiritual tranquility in our lives ~~but~~ ^{and} we sought for it amidst the din of the noisy, clamorous market-places instead of within the quiet precincts of our own minds and souls - in thought, in self-culture, in love of learning and in the quest of beauty. The profound and beautiful thought of Isaiah we had completely forgotten.

זכורו את ה' אלהיכם

"In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." We wanted to find significance and value in our lives, to give them the dignity of enduring things, but we looked for them not in joyous, creative work which is socially useful and in activities which give freedom and range to our highest talents and are ~~socially valuable~~, but ⁱⁿ things and pursuits which are insignificant and ephemeral. We hungered for the zest and romance of life but we looked for it not in self-discipline which heightens the delight of every human experience, but in self-indulgence which really destroys all zest and romance. We had forgotten that,

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control

These three alone lead life to sovereign power."

Continue as
We had forgotten the wisdom of the Rabbi who declared, "He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city."

Those
Men who built for themselves and within themselves an inner life and in their homes an inner sanctuary have not been crushed by the economic reverses which swept over the world in the last few years, and will not be. The economic facts of life have undoubtedly impinged sharply and painfully upon them, *as upon the man* but, swept by storms and buffeted, their lives, nevertheless, have stood and will stand secure. Their roots are deep - deep within themselves, and they are immovable. *A man may have the roots*

Rosh Hashanah is essentially a holiday of the Inner Life. It celebrates no historic event, no season of nature. It is dedicated to a survey and a stock-taking of our inner world - a day of self-judgment, self-criticism, self-analysis. *If we make this survey faithfully - we shall be the better equipped*
~~Let us be honest with ourselves and with the world in~~
to do our share in the task of the new
~~which we live.~~ Candor, courage, character is what ~~our~~ *the new* age needs and what *ourselves*
~~we need for our own well-being.~~ *a new and a happier life.*

- 1/ A New Year, my friends, spells -
- 2/ And, O, how eager - How wearily
- 3/ Most assuredly - for a different - Our souls
~~We were secure - But, behold~~
- 4/ Our sages - All flesh - Our Rabbis - into the
We were secure - But behold
- 5/ No wonder - prayerful. And to
- 6/ At no time - We look back
- 7/ But what is it we want the future -
- 8/ Well, in the first place, it was a spurious - It Prop
To the undisc - Healthy Then devolved - Financial
The investigations - And along with
No normal people - It was a sick age
- 9/ In the second place, our prosperous age was isolated -
isle - This fact alone - "That old dream has
The spreading gangrene - Our pros. could not -
we are inextricably - skewed - Just as in -
No nation can build - basis
- 10/ Again, the past era was filled with hate -
The world's collective life - Our huge competition
Both Europe - Hate is writing - Across the 10 in
Geneva - Racial - barbed-wire
Every where - Hate - Never since fall of Roman
- 11/ No wonder that we long -
But where shall we find -

12/ Clearly we need - The new world must be free -
It must be - orderly united - victimized
Just - Secure - disabled, old -

13/ Such a new social order is not the work of a year -

14/ We shall have such - as soon - Some things -

15/ This will be our searching test -

16/ Another requirement - rediscover - Totality
- provincialized - Jumbled fragment of scattered

- The concept of universalism - Even within
a menacing fragmentation -

In the 18c. Even in 19c.

William Lloyd Garrison -

→ To-day "all think their little set" - Provincial

- Fair less sympathy

→ A French savant -

→ The golden chalice

→ If the new age cannot restore - centrality -

17/ And finally - Inner life.

Disasters -

In last era men have lived - Externally

Even moral enrichment - improving - changing

Far easier - "moral culture" UNCN

18/ All of us wished - serenity - glory -
" wanted significance
" hungered - zest -

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control
These 3 alone lead life to Sovereign power"
- "He that ruleth his spirit - taketh a city"

19/ These men who had built Summer life -
not crumbled - impinged - Roots -

20/ Rosh Hashana - a holiday of Summer life - It celebrates
It is dedicated to a survey - It is a day of
If we make this survey faithfully
Candor, Courage, Character is what the new