



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.

Series IV: Sermons, 1914-1963, undated.

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Rosh Hashonah Sermon, 1953.

Celebrate New Year 5714. Beginning of the world--tradition. Actually it is much older since the beginning of civilization- It is from the beginning of momentous inventions, domestication of plants and animals, the invention of the plough and the wheel, the sickle, pottery, the sailing ship and architecture, arts and crafts generally, which in man's dim recollection took place about five to six thousand years ago.

The purpose of New Years is to teach us to count time, to evaluate Time, to teach us what to do with Time.

In Time there is Past Present and Future. We must live at one and the same time in all three tenses. That is the paradox of life and its challenge. The Past is gone, and yet we must not let go of it. The Future is not here, and yet we must reach for it. The Present is all we have and yet it is not enough.

Of Time itself, which is the accepted measure of human life, Rosh ha Shonah tells us, it is brief, and cannot be lengthened. It is transient and cannot be retarded, it is irreplaceable and cannot be replenished, and it is later than you think. The wise man must plan his life accordingly and use his Time which is brief, transient and irreplaceable to his fullest advantage. The wise man lives in the Past, the Present and the Future, in three dimensions. Recall the Past, steady, inspiring, therapeutic. Our memories are the deep nourishing roots of our lives. A man who has lost his memory is no longer normal. He is unanchored, adrift, unrelated to life which is a continuing process- experience. A society or a people which breaks completely with its past is abnormal and is headed for anarchy and chaos.

Even the great revolutions of history turned to the past for their inspiration. Renaissance-French Revolution and American Revolution.

It is good for a man to recall his past, his beginnings, his struggles, the dreams of his youth, even his mistakes. With their recollection comes humility as well as pride, a sense of accomplishment as well as a sobering stock-taking, an encouragement as well as an admonition. They

may help us to avoid similar mistakes in the future. Blessed is the man or woman who has a treasure-chest of proud memories of Family, of Trials, of service faced in courage, of golden hours of precious companionship with those they loved.

A man should live in the Past, but only to the extent of drawing wisdom and inspiration for the Present ~~and~~ the Future. We should not permit the Past to absorb us or to victimize us. We should not try to escape from the exigencies of the Present, by crawling back into the womb of the Past. Many people seek this kind of escape. In extreme cases it becomes pathological. We should not try to live in the Past permanently this is to live among ghosts, in a world of shadows. Those who are always looking back to " what might have been " to past regrets, to past sorrows, are like Lot's wife-----Eurydices...

The Past must not be allowed to become a millstone around us. If a man has sinned let him repent, proffer restitution and start all over again.

"Wide are the gates of

Here then is the first great paradox " A man should live, and yet not live in the Past."

In the same way, " A man should live and yet not live in the Future" A man must think of his Future and plan for his Future and build for his Future and the Future of those whom he loves.

A man without a Future is a doomed and defeated man. We cannot live in the present moment only, for we are not so constituted as to be entirely satisfied with today, however bright the day.

Always something is beckoning us, the adventure, the Golden Fleece, the dream, the Odyssey----always the stars.

There is the sound of the bugle, the call to battle, the unconquered worlds, and who could resist it?

Ambitions, ideals, hopes aspirations, these are all by way of living in the Future.

When society dreams of a better world, a warless world, a world free

of Poverty, Hate, a united and Free World
and working for the Future.

it is living in

And it is good to live ~~an~~ the Future- but only to the extent of giving direction and inspiration to the Present. There are people who live almost entirely for the Future and sacrifice the Present. They allow their ambitions for the Future to consume their present serenity and peace of mind. They consume themselves for some distant goal. They sacrifice health, family friends in their head-long rush to some future success. All their time is mortgaged to the Future. They have no time today for self-improvement, to read a book, to cultivate a friend, to interest themselves in the life of their community to get acquainted with their children, even to rest, ~~or~~ get to know this wonderful world, wherein they have but a few years to live.

They are chasing the future, and when they arrive there, spent and weary and empty man, they discover that their Future was really all in their Past, which is now forever gone, beyond recall.

There are those who worry so much about the Future that their days are drained of all sweetness, of all zest and savor. They do not take to heart: "Let us be of good cheer, remembering that the misfortunes hardest to bear are those which never Happen".

Future world---This world is nothing... Should not enjoy it.. care about improving it. The load of tomorrow, added to that of yesterday carried today makes the strongest falter.... Waste of energy, mental distress, nervous worries dog the steps of a man who is anxious about the future. Shut close, then, the great fore and aft bulkheads, and prepare to cultivate the habit of a life in "day-tight compartments"..... A few months ago I stood on the bridge of a great liner, plowing the ocean at twenty-five knots. "She is alive in every plate", said the captain, "a huge monster with brain and nerves, an immense stomach, a wonderful heart and lungs, and a splendid system of locomotion". Just at that moment a

signal sounded, and all over the ship the water-tight compartments were closed. "Our chief factor of safety," said the Captain.

Now each of you is a much more marvelous organization than the great liner, and bound on a longer voyage. What I urge is that you so learn to control the machinery as to live with "day-tight compartments" as the most certain to insure safety on the voyage. Get on the bridge, and see that at least the great bulkheads are in working order. Touch a button and hear at every level of your life, the iron doors shutting out the Past- the dead yesterdays. Touch another and shut off, with a metal curtain, the Future, the unborn tomorrows. Then you are safe, safe for today.

And here is the third paradox "A man should live and yet not live in the Present".

Yesterday is only a memory.
Tomorrow is only a dream.
Today is really all we have.

"Our main business, said Thomas Carlyle, is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand."

Sir William Osler: the eminent medical scientist- addressing a group of young students at Yale shared with them his philosophy of life.

(QUOTE)

There is much wisdom here, if not taken too literally. It is quite impossible to live in "day tight compartments" Human beings are simply not constituted that way. We are not psychological ephemerals. Nor is life lived in water-tight compartments. We live organically in a time continuum.

It is important to concentrate on the work at hand. To make the most of the present moment, to crowd it with purpose and meaning and achievement. But to live only for the moment, is a wastrel philosophy.. There is no fore-sight in it- and no intelligence.

"Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die", is an attractive philosophy. The trouble with that philosophy is that tomorrow we may not die, and we might wake up with a terrible head-ache.

"AH my Beloved, fill the Cup that cheers
Today of past regrets and Future Fears".

But the Cup will never clear away any regrets or fears. The Cup only makes one drunk...

Regrets are banished by the atonement of a better life. And fears disappear in faith in God.

To live only in and for the Present is to betray the Past and to throw away the Future.

The good prayer Lenght of Days, the full span
of human life, embracing Past Present and Future amd Years of "LiFe"...eaaah
year, as we live it, crowded with life, eager activity, whole-hearted de-
votion to the task at hand. Doing well what we are called upon to do,
unhindered but instructed by the Past, unafraid but inspired by the Future
and in full reliance and Trust in God whose hands are all our Times and all
our being.

WRHS
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AMERICAN HISTORY
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1. Celebrate N.Y. = 5714. - ~~Tradition~~^{Beg. of world} = Tradition = Actually much older (1)
Since Beg. of Civilization - ~~Dim recollection~~ of beg. of numerous
inventions - domestication of plants and animals, Plough-wheel -
the sickle, pottery, the sailing ship and architecture - arts
and crafts generally, which in man's dim recollection took
place some 5-6000 yrs. ago.

2. Purpose, N.Y. - is to ^{teach us to} count Time, evaluate T., to teach us what
to do with our T. - XLVI.

- In T. there is a Past - Present - Future.
- We must live at one and the same time in all 3 senses.
- That is the paradox of life, and its challenge:

The Past is gone - ~~WRITING~~

The Future is not here - ~~WRITING~~

The Present is all we have - ~~WRITING~~



we must not let go of it.
must reach for it.
it is not enough.

3. Of T. itself - which is the accepted measure of human life - R. H.
tells us - Brief - cannot be lengthened -

Transient - cannot be retarded.

Irreversible - cannot be replenished.

- And that it is ^{always more} ~~later~~ than you think -

The wise man must plan his life accordingly and
use his T. which is Brief, Transient and irreversible to his
greatest advantage.

4). The wise man lives in the Past, the Present, and the ^{3 dimensions} future: X (2)

- 10050 p 11 - Recall the past, Steadying, Inspiring, Therapeutic.
- Our memories are ~~our~~ deep, nourishing roots of our lives.
- A man who has lost his memory is no longer normal.
- He is un-anchored, a-drift, un-related to life which

is a continuing process - experience.

+ A society or a people which breaks completely with its past - abnormal - ^{headed} anarchy and chaos.

- Even the great revolutions of history turned to the past for their inspiration. ^{Revolutions} Fr. Rev. - Amer. Rev.

5). It is good for a man to recall his past, his beginnings, his struggles, the dreams of his youth, even his mistakes. With their recollection ~~of them~~ comes humility, as well as pride, a sense of accomplishment as well as a sobering ~~stroke-taking~~ - an encouragement as well as an admonition.

They may help us to avoid similar mistakes in the future.

Blessed is the man or woman who has a treasure-chest of proud memories of Family, of Service, of Trials faced in courage, of golden hours of precious companionship with those whom they loved.

6). A man should live in the Past - but only to the extent of drawing wisdom and inspiration for the Present and the Future.

We should not permit the Past to absorb us, or victimize us - (3)
We should not try to escape from the exigencies of the

Present, by "crawling ^{back} into the womb of the Past".
Many people seek this kind of escape. In extreme ^{cases} ~~forms~~
it becomes pathological.

We should not try to live in the Past permanently - This
is to live ~~in~~ among ghosts, in a world of shadows.

Those who are always looking back - to "what might
have been" - to past regrets, to past sorrows,

are like Lot's wife - Enigmas -

The Past must not be allowed to become a millstone around
if a man has repented - but repent - proper restitution
and start all over again - 21bn - 21bn 1/10.

"Wide open are the paths of 21bn -

21bn 21bn
7. Here, then, is the first great paradox - "A man should live,
and yet not live in the Past."

In the same way - "A man should live, and yet not live in the Future."

A man must think of his Future and plan for his Future,
and build for his Future and the future of those
whom he loves.

A man without a Future is a doomed and defeated man

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We cannot live in the present moment only - for we are
not so constituted as to be entirely satisfied with
to-day, however bright the day.

Always something is beckoning us - the adventure -
the Golden Fleece - the dream - the Odyssey -
always the stars!

There is the sound of the bugle, the call to battle,
the unconquered world, and who could resist it?
Ambitions, ideals, hopes, aspirations, ^{these} are all by way
of living in the Future.

When Society dreams of a better world - a war-less world -
a world free of Poverty, Hate - a United and Free hand
עולם אחד - it is living ⁱⁿ and working for the Future.

8/. And it is good to live in the Future - but only to the extent
of giving direction and inspiration to the Present
There are people who live almost entirely for the future
and sacrifice the present.

They allow their ambitions for the future to consume
their present serenity and peace of mind.

They consume themselves for some distant goal.
They sacrifice health, family, friends in their

head-long rush to some future success.
All their time is mortgaged to the Future.

They have no time to-day for self-improvement, to read a book, to cultivate a friend, to interest themselves in the life of their community, ~~to~~ to get acquainted with their children, even to rest, or ~~and get acquainted~~ ^{to know} with this wonderful world, wherein they have but a few years to live -

~~They are~~ chasing the Future - and when they arrive there - spent and weary and empty men - the discovery that ^{their} Future was really all in ~~the~~ Past - which is now forever gone - beyond recall.

~~Some men are victimized by their Past - Some by their Future~~

9/ There are those who worry so much about the Future, that their days are drained of all sweetness, of all zest, and savour.

~~Such people are victimized by their Future - men as others~~
~~are victimized by their Past~~

9/ They do not talk to heart: "Let us be of good cheer, remembering that the misfortunes hardest to bear are those which never happen"

Future world - This world is nothing - should not enjoy it - can not improve it - ~~to do so~~

9/ And here is the third paradox. "~~He must live~~ ^{He may should live} and yet
not live in the Present"

Yesterday is only a memory -
Tomorrow is only a dream -
To-day is really all we have.

~~Sir William Osler~~

"Our main business, ~~said~~ ^{said} Thomas Carlyle, is not to see what
lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly
at hand"

Sir William Osler: the eminent medical scientist - addressing
a group of young students at Yale - shared with them his
philosophy of life. (W. Osler)



10/ There is much wisdom here - if not taken too literally.
It is quite ~~im~~ possible to live in "day-tight compartments".
~~Human beings are~~ ^{simply} constituted that way.
We are not psychological ephemerals - Nor is our life
lived in water-tight compartments.
We live ~~in~~ organically in a time continuous

11/ It is important to concentrate on the work at hand -
To make the most of the present moment - to crowd it
with purpose and meaning and achievement -
But to live only for the moment - is a wasteful philosophy

The way of life that I preach is a habit to be acquired gradually by long and steady repetition. It is the practice of living for the day only, and for the day's work, living in "day-tight compartments". . . The chief worries of life arise from the foolish habit of looking before and after.

A few months ago I stood on the bridge of a great liner, plowing the ocean at twenty-five knots. "She is alive in every plate," said the Captain, "a huge monster with brain and nerves, an immense stomach, a wonderful heart and lungs, and a splendid system of locomotion." Just at that moment a signal sounded, and all over the ship the water-tight compartments were closed. "Our chief factor of safety," said the Captain.

Now each one of you is a much more marvelous organization than the great liner, and bound on a longer voyage. What I urge is that you so learn to control the machinery as to live with "day-tight compartments" as the most certain way to insure safety on the voyage. Get on the bridge, and see that at least the great bulkheads are in working order. Touch a button and hear, at every level of your life, the iron doors shutting out the Past - the dead yesterdays. Touch another and shut off, with a metal curtain, the Future - the unborn tomorrows. Then you are safe, safe for today.

The load of tomorrow, added to that of yesterday, carried today makes the strongest falter. . . . Waste of energy, mental distress, nervous worries dog the steps of a man who is anxious about the future. Shut close, then, the great fore and aft bulkheads, and prepare to cultivate the habit of a life in "day-tight compartments"!

I am simply giving you a philosophy of life that I have found helpful in my work. In this philosophy or way of life each of you may learn to drive the straight furrow, and so come to the true measure of a man.

