



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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Yom Kippur; also Principles of Judaism, CCAR, 1937.

YK-37
Yom Kippur 1937

In a book I chanced upon the following sentence: "I don't mind about the dead, once they are dead. The worst of it is that they cling on to the living and won't let go".

Clearly the sentiment of an embittered man or a cynic. But there is an element of truth of which the writer himself may have been unconscious. There are two classes of the dead who cling on to the living and won't let go. The dear, unforgettable dead whose greatest gift to the living is that they do live on with them after death, neither forsaking them nor leaving them utterly bereft; and the dead whome the living would most quickly forget, and to whom the dead ever after cling by virtue of a legacy of humiliation and abasement which they have bequeathed to them.

There are those precious dead who abide with us like a benediction long after their physical presence has passed beyond the barrier of time and space. We think of them in quiet hours. In all the great moments of our lives, on occasions of joy and sorrow, they come to us like welcomed and expected guests, without whom the high experience of our great hours would be incomplete. They are always within the silent communion of our days - parents who have died, or children, or brothers or sisters or friends - within call of our hearts' yearning. A stray note, the echo of a voice, a reminiscent feature, a familiar corner, a souvenir suddenly ~~chanced~~ upon - and like a flash these beloved stand before us; like stars in daylight they were always there, but invisible.

Of course they cling to us, these precious dead. They won't let go of us and we won't let go of them. They have their immortality in us, and we, our deathless past in them. What would our life's pilgrimage be without their stately company - the love ^{with} which they loved us - the faith with which they inspired us - the thousand recollections of days and

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years suffused with pride and beauty, and filled with life and work and struggle!

It is with them and in their unseen but present company that we move forward in a stately rhythm of uninterrupted life to our own destiny. They do not arise from their graves to cling to us. They have never descended to the grave. They are not restless, unlaied ghosts, which, unreconciled to dust and oblivion, haunt the habitation of the living. They are of us inseparable, in the very stream of our being, in our thoughts, our hopes, our plans, our joys, our tears. No stately tomb ~~XXXXX~~ of kings sheathed in marble can more regally enshrine its precious dead, than the living heart of a man or woman, the life of one beloved. And the memory of them, of their beautiful, meaningful lives, of what they meant to us and to others, of their services and their sacrifices, their courage and their integrity, fills us with pride, and gives us "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness".

But there are dead who are unwanted* among the living, and they are the unutterably sad among the dead, and there are those to whom their dead bequeathed no overshadowing grace and no fond remembrances, and they are the unutt~~x~~erably sad among the living. The unwanted* dead are the twice dead: dead to life and dead to influence. They have left no heritage for themselves among the living, and no one inherits their lives. Of such the Scriptures say: "His remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name among the living".

Among these are the men who lived selfish lives, centered on themselves. (They lived in and for themselves.) Remembering no one in their lives, no one remembers them in death. Those who never realized that to gain life one must lose it - that one receives in life only what one gives and that there are times when it is better to lose than to win.

Those who never understood the cooperative character of human society, the interlaced destiny of all men, the obligations of human fellowship. The exploiting, the uncharitable, the grasping, the vindictive, the bitter-tongued, the dishonorable, those who leave a bad name and an ill repute to shame their families and their survivors - these are the unwanted* dead.

** word not clear in mss.*



1/ Y.N. - What a great outpouring - betokeners! VK-1937
How mag. it symbolizes the 3000 yrs. + more of Jud.
with what eloquence and eloquency - loyalty.
Here we are, a faithful community - spell
There is hardly a country - to listen, to hear
to hear witnesses

3/ What is the Magic -
For which so many died -
" " an entire people rejected peace -
finding sufficient compensation
What is Judaism?

4/ It has been frequently defined - made quite
Erasmus - "Omnis definitio periculosa est"
concise formulation - meaning
L.C.C.R. - 50 years - Pgh
Preamble

4) 3 Parts. (a) J. + Its Foundations (b) Ethics (c) Rel. Practice

Nature of J - Brief Intro - (Read)

(a) Universal - The born - not partic., tribal,
Message Universal, recog. all men, regardless, Age,

(b) Progressive - Revel. not static of final.

Advances with

Welcomes all k. truth as aids

Sheds all antiquated concepts, practices

Remains unwaveringly loyal - basic concepts

5) 4 fundamental teachings in J. and they concern (a) God
(b) Man (c) Torah (d) Israel.

(a) God - (Read)

One - 8th - Startled ancient -

One in the Mystery of Creator + Created.

Living God - Not Force - Personality - Ruler of
Physical

(b) Man (Read)

Man's high estate

Earthly creature stamped -

In his body - mortal - In his Spirit -

In his efforts - Co-worker - Significant

Personality - inviolate, sacred

No Puppet - Fate - Should not be made

Responsible - Should be allowed Freedom

Noblest

6) E. Thies -

② E. Thies Religion (Read)

It's orig. center taken - identified - In older days -
Spurred - Prophets centered - situations - (Read)
Rel. is doing justice - 1250 M.H. 1/1/50

③ Social Justice (Read)

Here are the issues which divide the world to day

J. has always faced them -

No. rel. evolved a higher code -

Whichever best. world -

Always champion -

Committed to no spe - Commerce Prim. 1/1/50
Man must be protected explains - difference
little inequalities - in security.

And then are social laws obligat. binding
upon man : "Thou shalt not respect the person"

(c) Reace (Read)

Not Pacifist - as Buddhism is - Prim. Church

But just to preach Intern. Peace - Disarmament

will - will - will -

Establish such relat.

Organize for collective action -

7. Rel. Practis - (Read)

6 Rel. Embodies - Evokes charit. Institutions

Essential - Disembodied spirit.

Made vivid - Transmit - Remind -

Our citadels and our refuges -

8. This is our Rel! Exal Rel, noble, wise!

So I come - 2 other Rel. - 1/2 of mankind.

Our people beheld in it so sincerely - thus

Fire and Water. Let the antidote Fire run

Martyrologis to the people!

It gave meaning, beauty & courage to their lives

It will to us -

The World will come to accept it - When it

does - then will be Peace -

Until then - with let us carry on as it

messengers and servants - and, supported

by its exalted truth, let us work

forward unafraid upon the road of our

destiny.

(c) וְיָדָא - (Read)

How do we know God? Will?

Then Nature -

But also - outreachings - inspired insight -

Israel has been unusually blessed - ~~the~~ rose

higher - clearer vision - voiced - will, God

and principles of moral living -

Enshrined in וְיָדָא - Both - Talmud - authentic truth

code of conduct - I have the

(d) Israel (Read)

Is a People - whose claim - but a People,
not a rel. sect

We do not exclude - estranged from faith

Not rel. Jews - but Jews notwithstanding

There are Racial and hist. ties - beside

Not Racialists - in Nazi sense - Never brooked

Biological enumeration of our Blood Stream

Prized - not - Test -

We live to-day everywhere - Loyal - Sharing ^{how else}

No divided pol. allegiances -

We never voluntarily isolate -

We work to conserve - faith - cult. heritage

In a liberal world - easy -

Rebuilding of Nat. Homeland in Pal. - part

Normalise - Refuge - Sharp distinction

IF WE HAD BUT A DAY

We should fill the hours with the sweetest
things,
If we had but a day;
We should drink alone at the purest springs
In our upward way;
We should love with a lifetime's love in an hour
If the hours were few;
We should rest, not for dreams, but for
fresher power
To be and to do.
We should waste no moments in weak regret
If the day were but one;
If what we remember and what we forget
Went out with the sun;
We should be from our clamorous selves set free
To work or to pray,
And to be what the Father would have us be,
If we had but one day.

- Mary Lowe Dickinson.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF REFORM JUDAISM



(Adopted by the Central Conference of American Rabbis, at
Columbus, O., May 27, 1937)

In view of the changes that have taken place in the modern world and the consequent need of stating anew the teachings of Reform Judaism, the Central Conference of American Rabbis makes the following declaration of principles. It presents them not as a fixed creed but as a guide for the progressive elements of Jewry.

1. Judaism and Its Foundations

1. **Nature of Judaism.** Judaism is the historical religious experience of the Jewish people. Though growing out of Jewish life, its message is universal, aiming at the union and perfection of mankind under the sovereignty of God. Reform Judaism recognizes the principle of progressive development in religion and consciously applies this principle to spiritual as well as to cultural and social life.

Judaism welcomes all truth, whether written in the pages of scripture or deciphered from the records of nature. The new discoveries of science, while replacing the older scientific views underlying our sacred literature, do not conflict with the essential spirit of religion as manifested in the consecration of man's will, heart and mind to the service of God and of humanity.

2. **God.** The heart of Judaism and its chief contribution to religion is the doctrine of the One, living God, who rules the world through law and love. In Him all existence has its creative source and mankind its ideal of conduct. Though transcending time and space, He is the indwelling Presence of the world. We worship Him as the Lord of the universe and as our merciful Father.

3. **Man.** Judaism affirms that man is created in the Divine image. His spirit is immortal. He is an active co-worker with God. As a child of God, he is endowed with moral freedom and is charged with the responsibility of overcoming evil and striving after ideal ends.

4. **Torah.** God reveals Himself not only in the majesty, beauty and orderliness of nature, but also in the vision and moral striving of the human spirit. Revelation is a continuous process, confined to no one group and to no one age. Yet the people of Israel, through its prophets and sages, achieved unique insight in the realm of religious truth. The **Torah**, both written and oral, enshrines Israel's ever-growing consciousness of God and of the moral law. It preserves the historical precedents, sanctions and norms of Jewish life, and seeks to mould it in the patterns of goodness and of holiness. Being products of historical processes, certain of its laws have lost their binding force with the passing of the conditions that called them forth. But as a depository of permanent spiritual ideals, the **Torah** remains the dynamic source of the life of Israel. Each age has the obligation to adapt the teachings of the **Torah** to its basic needs in consonance with the genius of Judaism.

5. **Israel.** Judaism is the soul of which Israel is the body. Living in all parts of the world, Israel has been held together by the ties of a common history, and above all, by the heritage of faith. Though we recognize in the group-loyalty of Jews who have become estranged from our religious tradition, a bond which still unites them with us, we maintain that it is by its religion and for its religion that the Jewish people has lived. The non-Jew who accepts our faith is welcomed as a full member of the Jewish community.

In all lands where our people live, they assume and seek to share loyally the full duties and responsibilities of citizenship and to create seats of Jewish knowledge and religion. In the rehabilitation of Palestine, the land hallowed by memories and hopes, we behold the promise of renewed life for many of our brethren. We affirm the obligation of all Jewry to aid in its upbuilding as a Jewish homeland by endeavoring to make it not only a haven of refuge for the oppressed but also a center of Jewish culture and spiritual life.

Throughout the ages it has been Israel's mission to witness to the Divine in the face of every form of paganism and materialism. We regard it as our historic task to co-operate with all men in the establishment of the kingdom of God, of universal brotherhood, justice, truth and peace on earth. This is our Messianic goal.

2. Ethics

6. **Ethics and Religion.** In Judaism religion and morality blend into an indissoluble unity. Seeking God means to strive after holiness, righteousness and goodness. The love of God is incomplete without the love of one's fellowmen. Judaism emphasizes the kinship of the human race, the sanctity and worth of human life and personality and the right of the individual to freedom and to the pursuit of his chosen vocation. Justice to all, irrespective of race, sect or class is the inalienable right and the inescapable obligation of all. The state and organized government exist in order to further these ends.

7. **Social Justice.** Judaism seeks the attainment of a just society by the application of its teachings to the economic order, to industry and commerce, and to national and international affairs. It aims at the elimination of man-made misery and suffering, of poverty and degradation, of tyranny and slavery, of social inequality and prejudice, of ill-will and strife. It advocates the promotion of harmonious relations between warring classes on the basis of equity and justice, and the creation of conditions under which human personality may flourish. It pleads for the safeguarding of childhood against exploitation. It champions the cause of all who work and of their right to an adequate standard of living, as prior to the rights of property. Judaism emphasizes the duty of charity, and strives for a social order

which will protect men against the material disabilities of old age, sickness and unemployment.

8. **Peace.** Judaism, from the days of the prophets, has proclaimed to mankind the ideal of universal peace. The spiritual and physical disarmament of all nations has been one of its essential teachings. It abhors all violence and relies upon moral education, love and sympathy to secure human progress. It regards justice as the foundation of the well-being of nations and the condition of enduring peace. It urges organized international action for disarmament, collective security and world peace.

3. Religious Practice

9. **The Religious Life.** Jewish life is marked by consecration to these ideals of Judaism. It calls for faithful participation in the life of the Jewish community as it finds expression in home, synagogue and school and in all other agencies that enrich Jewish life and promote its welfare.

The **Home** has been and must continue to be a stronghold of Jewish life, hallowed by the spirit of love and reverence, by moral discipline and religious observance and worship.

The **Synagog** is the oldest and most democratic institution in Jewish life. It is the prime communal agency by which Judaism is fostered and preserved. It links the Jews of each community and unites them with all Israel.

The perpetuation of Judaism as a living force depends upon religious knowledge and upon the **Education** of each new generation in our rich cultural and spiritual heritage.

Prayer is the voice of religion, the language of faith and aspiration. It directs man's heart and mind Godward, voices the needs and hopes of the community, and reaches out after goals which invest life with supreme value. To deepen the spiritual life of our people, we must cultivate the traditional habit of communion with God through prayer in both home and synagogue.

Judaism as a **way of life** requires in addition to its moral and spiritual demands, the preservation of the Sabbath, festivals and Holy Days, the retention and development of such customs, symbols and ceremonies as possess inspirational value, the cultivation of distinctive forms of religious art and music and the use of Hebrew, together with the vernacular, in our worship and instruction.

— These timeless aims and ideals of our faith we present anew to a confused and troubled world. We call upon our fellow Jews to rededicate themselves to them, and, in harmony with all men, hopefully and courageously to continue Israel's eternal quest after God and His kingdom.

And the memory, then - of their beautiful, unassuming lives -
what they meant to us and to others - of their services
and their sacrifices, their courage and their integrity -
fills us with pride - and gives us thanks for
others, the art of joy for mourning, the garment of
praise for the spirit of heaviness!



1/ Yizkor -

In a Book:

"I don't mind about the dead, once they are dead
The worst of it is that they cling on to the living, and won't let go"

Clearly-embittered, Cynic - an element

2 classes of dead,

The dear departed dead - greatest gift - live on - for-saking
And the dead - living most grudgingly forget - cling legacy
abasement and humiliation

2/ There are those precious dead - abide - benediction -
long after their phys. presence has passed

We think of them in hush hours -

In all the great moments - quests -

Without them - our experience

They are always with us the silent communion - Parents -

Within call of our yearning hearts -

A stay note - echo - reminiscent features - familiar
corner - Souvenirs - Flashes

Like stars in Daylight - always there - visible

3/ Of course they cling to us -

They won't let go of us - We won't

They have their immortality - We have -

What would our life's Pilgrimage - without sturdy company

Love - faith - treasured recollections of days - suppressed

and filled with life and work and struggle.

And the Memory of their beautiful - meaningful - what they meant
pride - Beauty for Ashes, the oil of Joy for Mourning

Together arise
Rhythm - Graves.
never descended.
Inseparable - Stream

the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heavenness"

4) But there are those dead - unmounted by living - Sad
And " " " to whom the dead bequeathed - "
The Unmounted dead are (twice) dead -

Left no heritage - no one inherits their lives

"His Remembrance shall perish from the earth, and

"he shall have no name among the living"

3) These are - Selfish -

Remembering no one in their lives, no one remembers

never realized - gain life - lose it

One Receives only - gives
At times better to lose

never understood - Cooperative character

Interlaced destiny of all men

Obligations of human fellowship

→ The Uncharitable, unjust, & plotting, Undeclared -

Bad name & ill repute to shame

These are Unmounted dead - Shamed

which very meaning the living them —

6. This Memorial Service — is known as 21051 —
God Remembers — always — לֹא יִשְׁכַּח לֹא יִשְׁכַּח לֹא יִשְׁכַּח.
It is we mortals, who are admonished to remember — and
to be worthy of remembrance —
Remember — father — struggler — high hopes for us — blessed
mother — sacrificer — gave us life — blood — weariness — heart —
others — just for us —
Sister
brother } fulfil their uncompleted lives.

7. Remember — Presentness, each day (Dante)
לֹא יִשְׁכַּח לֹא יִשְׁכַּח לֹא יִשְׁכַּח. Blessing
comes

8. .. so to live — that men will have to remember
you — and when they meet — some one will say —
He was — the was — and at our every action
eager to bring wreath of tribute.

21051

May we remember! May we be worthy of Rem!