

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, 1957.

One of the noblest prayers in the service of Yom Kippur is incorporated in the Memorial Service. It is a passage from the 16th Psalm:

I shall not be moved".

"I keep the Lord always before me; He is at my right hand.

"I shall not be moved".

"Who we the true path of life".

The service of Yom Kippur is designed to point out MMMK to us this true path of life, the correct attitude towards life, which will lead us to its deepest satisfactions. And if we listen attentively to the voice of the Holy Day as it speaks to us through its ritual and prayers from eventide to eventide, this is what it will say to us.

Life is too great for us to be little. Cod's world is unutterably wonderful.

. He created a world in which there are "great things beyond understanding and marvelous things NEYWANN without ()" And the most marvelous of all His creations is man, mann and his mind, NMM man and his soaring and undefeated aspirations. man In such a vast and wonderful world how can WE afford to be little? God in tended him to be great. He fashioned him in His image. He blessed him and said: "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over every living thing that moves upon the earth". Fashioned in such a likeness and granted such a mandate how can man afford to be samll and commonplace?

How can man consent to surrender his wings of aspiration and chain his life to the inadequate, the low, the sordid, when he can reach for the stars?

(Mchaca mas pri)

"And crowned him with glory and MKN honor".

Should man not strive for constant self-improvement and for whatever perfection in knowledge and service he is capable of? Should he not try to explore every dark places every hidden continent of his mend and heart? How a can man know what he is capable of uless he has tried? How can a man know his own strength, the greatness of his soul, the high levels of nobility and generosity to which it can attain unless he has first tested them? If a man exercises strenuously, his mind and his soul always, he may come upon unsuspected

resources, undisclosed talents which may thereafter give larger scope XM and vision to his life's purposes and enterprises, as well as greater efficiency to XXNWXWX achieve them.

Having been fashioned for greatness, why should a man dissipate his

NE energies in petty pursuits? Why allow himself to be defeated by petty dis
appointments, or deflected from his true course by petty grievences?

(New Man (1) 2)

. "Show me the true path of life?"

Here is one of its unmistakeable directions! Seek greatness in life! Don't sell yourself cheap! Sin is to be satisfied with less than you are capable of.
"We needs must love the highest when we see it". How do you know that you are on the right path - that you are growing into greatness? One way of knowing is pointed out to us in the Bible:

"It came to pass in those days, that Moses grew up, and he went out to his brethren and looked upon their burdens". Moses had been raised in the palace of Pharoah, RI far away from the slave-pens of his fellow Jews. He could not hear their MXXXXXX groans under the whips of their taskmasters. He could not see their tears. Life was all sweet and pleasant for him. But one day he grew up!

. He grew into maturity and greatness. He went out to his brothers and looked upon thier burdens. He discovered that there were men, brothers, who were carrying XXXXXXXX cruel and crushing burdens in life. And he resolved to share their fate with them and try to ease their burdens. This is to grow into greatness! At that moment, says the Midrash, God said to Moses: "You descended from the palace to be with your people, I will descend from heaven to be with you - and make you XXX leader of my people!"

And our service on this Yom Kippur day gives us a second directive to the true path% of life. Life is too short for us to waste it! Over and over again there sounds this refrain in our pmayers: Man's life upon earth is like a fleeting shadow; like a passing cloud; like a dream that vanishes. We even pray to God: "Lord, let me know my end, and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting my life is". Why this prayer? Is it such a welcome

thought to know XMXX how freeting our life is? No! Not a welcome thought, but a sobering one. It is needed to guide (us) to the true pathX of life.

Many of us wastek even the few short years allotted to us. We waste them in drift and indolence, as if there were no urgency about life, and no peremptory challenge. They allow their talents to wither into disuse, and many of the beckoning ways of mind and heart to remain untrodden. They eat and drink and pray and die, and this is their whole story - the story of a prfligate waste of precious limited years. Many others waste theer years in the fires of their consuming, acquisitive ambition. In a singleminded, relentless pursuit after more and more material possessions. In a competitive drive to outdistance their neighbors, they live poor in order to die rich. The fulless of life escapes them. The real () of living. Under the stresses and strains which they preate for themselves, they become tense, disturbed, unhappy! They look for tranquility finally in chemical tranquilizers. They turn to psychaatrists and psychoanalysts for help, and to the new panaceas of Psycho-chemistry and psycho-pharmacology. Put the cure is not there, the cure is in a new way of life, a new philosophy of living.

"Thus said the

Lord, the Holy One of Israel, ... in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength". Religion gives us this sound philosophy of living. It teaches us moderation is all things. It advises us to acquire manifold, balancing and refreshing interests in life, the quest of learning, the joy of helping to the build % good society, the companionship of stimulating friends, fine loyalties and dedications. In this manner we not only do not waste life, we extend, deepen and enrich it.

And there is a third guide-post to the true way of life. Life is

too dependent for us to be self-centered! For all the things which we prize most,
each
we are dependent on others. No one achieves anything by his own strength alone.

No one is happy in loneliness. The selfish man not only does not NAWA love his
and distorts
neighbor, he does not love himself, for he narrows and confines his life.

3

The perfect guide to the good life was summed up by our religion in three (Marco - MSS. p.S)

words: The greatest man in the 20th century, RXRXX Professor Albert

Binstein, declared: "The true value of a human being is determined primarily by the measure and sense KXXXX in which he has attained liberation from the self".

And a fourth guidepost is this: Life is too uncertain for us to be proud! M man's road in life has many turns, and holds many surprises. Over and over again Yom Kippur reminds us:

"What has mortal man to be proud of.

The high priest - gazments of gold - plain white garment - symbol of humility.

Confess first his own sins.

Haughty eyes.

For only with the lowly is there wisdom...the wisdom that opens the mind to truth, and the heart to repentance.

And finally there is this guide-post to the true path of life: Life is too mysterious for us to be irreverant! There is X XXX much that is unknown, and so much that is unknown, and so much that is unknown, in our world, taht man cannot afford to live without a reverant faith that reaches beyond knowledge and experience.

"AS the horizons of science advance; recently declared an eminent scientist, "many of its great leaders become more humble, not less; more reverant, not less; The more deeply we delve into the heart of nature the more WX XXXX awestruck we stand in the face of incluctable mysteries." There was a time, not so long agg, that scientists were confident that they would soon achieve the total solution for the riddle of the universe. Many thinkers, encouraged by the boundless optimism of these scientists, evolved philosophies of nature and being which were based on pure materialism. Then came our nuclear age XXX which was ushered in by the discovery that matter is not really AXX an ultimate reality, that it can be converted into energy. Its seemingly solid structure can be reduced to energy. And what is energy? And what is the mysterious energy

which we call life? And the equally mysterious energy which we call mind?

And can conscious life and active intelligence NEX which we experience be explained NEX without an ultimate source of supreme life and intelligence from which they flow?

It is wise to live by reverant faith. Our religious faith of course cannot answer all our questions about God and God's way with man. Our faith must function within inevitable and acknowledged limitations. But the true man of MR faith will never permit these limitations to force him away from his position towards agnosticism MM or atheism. He will go beyond doubt without NXMXMWM open eyes, and chose the way of complete faith in the face of incomplete knowledge.

So that when we pray on this Holy Day

very
is given in the service of this day. The true path which will lead us to the
deepest satisfaction of life may be found:

In reverant faith,

in humility,

in unselfishness,

in balanced living,

in seeking that greatness of mind and heart which is our birthright as children of God.

in the Memorial Service. It is a passage from the 16th Production of I beef the Lord advoys before are:

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"He is at my right hand. I shall not be moved." and then the proper continues: "2112 prike 1563/in - From with Show me the time proper continues: "2112 prike 1563/in - From with Show me the time the service of y. K. is designed to point out to use this prath the service of y. K. is designed to point out to use this prath the service of y. K. is designed to point out to use this prath the service of y. K. is designed to point out to use this prath the service of y. K. is designed to point out to use this prath which will lead the service of y. K. is designed to point out to use this year. and if we listen attentively to the voice of this Holy Day and if we listen attentively to rutual and prayers from as it speaks to us through its what it is a to us. 2). Tiple is too good for us to be lettle.

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Itheren into protection - I the west out to his brothers.— - He descovered that there were were brothers, who was to share their fate and try to love their burder. This is proving with prestudies!

at that moment, says the Mikrosh, God said to have! "I'm

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for leader of my Light!

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drain him towards agrees to me a thereon. = He will go beyond doubt with four eyes, and chose the way y cruftet farth in the four griscomplete knowledge. 13/. So that when we pray on this Holy Day Polis day the auswer is given in the wisernie of thus day the deepst The Irus path of high process formed his to the deepst me had as to the deepst in Review Faith 500 process formed his. In Humility In Unselfuhren. In Seeking that Swatners of Houd and Heart which is out built-right as children of Isal.