



## 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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Day of Atonement, 1961.

Yom Kippur - 1961

YK-61

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In one of his Essays, Francis Bacon wrote:

"It is a reverent thing to see an ancient castle or building not in decay; or to see a fair timber tree sound and perfect. How much more to behold an ancient and noble family which hath stood against the waves and weather of time."

This is true also of an ancient and noble people, like ours, a people which has stood against the waves and weather of the ages, and all the fury and persecutions of men, but which, nevertheless, still assembles each year in its places of worship throughout the world to re-assert its allegiance and to proclaim anew the slogan of its un-defeated faith: "Here, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One."

The sense and pride of heritage are very strong among our people. The Psalmist well reflects them -- *הַזֵּכֶר נָפַל אֵלַי בְּמָקוֹם טוֹב וְיָדָעְתִּי שֶׁאֵלֹהֵינוּ יֶחֱזַק לָנוּ*  
"The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage."

It is rather strange that this should be so. The religion of our people is decidedly a forward-looking one. It is a Messianic faith whose Golden Age lies not in the beginnings of history, but in *אֵלֶּיךָ יְיָ רֹחֵם* -- *to come*  
in the distant day <sup>^</sup> when the hopes of man will be fulfilled and all his aspirations consummated. Nevertheless, in our prayers we nearly always speak of <sup>God as</sup> "Our God and the God of our fathers" -- *אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ*  
The covenant which binds us to our God <sup>we assert,</sup> was made with our forefathers.  
It is the *דְּבוּר אֱזָרָה*. "Remember the days of old," we are admonished; "consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you; your elders, and they will tell you." We seem to draw strength from looking back, and we take heart from the recollections of long ago.



Our people frequently spoke of *חבלי חיים*-- the Merit of the *old which it* Fathers, ~~and~~ regarded ~~it~~ as an inexhaustible store of grace and benediction.

It is also strange that our people should think with such pride of its past, considering that its past was not filled with triumphs and trophies, with glorious victories and with *a history of* mastery and conquests, the things which normally feed a people's pride in its past. Our people's past was marked by much suffering and hardships, by homelessness and wanderings. Men, as a rule, do not boast of such things. They are not proud of such an heritage. Nevertheless, throughout its long, dark centuries of exile, outrage and indignity, our people proudly proclaimed to the world: "Happy are we. How goodly is our fortune, how pleasant our lot, how beautiful our heritage!

(אליהו מהטוב חקנו, מה נעים זמירותינו, מה נדב והטוב.)

But upon further reflection, Israel's pride of heritage is not so strange. What filled our people with pride was not their own achievements and accomplishments, *They did not think of us as better than other people,* their noble birth or their racial purity. They were never boastful racists or arrogant nationalists. Their leaders never encouraged them to entertain notions of superiority or any thought of *being masters* ~~mastery~~ over other peoples.

It was the unique mandate which destiny assigned to them which made them proud. Their ancestors had been the first to become cognizant of God as the One Spiritual Creator and Ruler of the universe, who must *not be* ~~remain un-~~represented in any form or manner of likeness, and who can be worshiped only through righteousness and loving-kindness. This was new and revolutionary in the religious thought of mankind. It sounded the death-knell of idolatry and polytheism, and all the gross rituals and superstitions of the ancient world. It ushered in a new era in the religious evolution of man.



*Israel's*  
~~Their~~ ancestors had also entered into a covenant with God to remain forever loyal to Him and to bring His light and His law to all the peoples of the earth. God was not exclusively their God. He was the God of the whole earth. He was the Father of all men, and loved them all alike. But in His unfathomable wisdom, He had chosen Israel to receive the revelation of His Torah -- His law of life -- and Israel was charged to bring *that law, that code of ethics* ~~it~~ to all men. Because of this, Israel conceived of itself as having been chosen ~~and selected~~ by God as His special servant and they experienced a rare exaltation in this assignment. They had been given a holy role which made <sup>of</sup> them a holy people. "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom He has chosen for His heritage."

This is what gave our people, throughout the ages, their sustaining pride, this and the knowledge also that in spite of every form of persecution which was visited upon them, they had remained loyal to their vision and had borne steadfastly the heavy yoke of their selection and mission.

It was a fearless pride, too. Their mission gave them the confidence of indestructibility. They knew themselves to be *עליון* -- an eternal people. This is true of all great ideals. Great ideals give their devotees a sense of deathlessness. Thus the prophet Isaiah declared long ago: "No weapon that is fashioned against you shall prosper and you shall confute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord and their vindication from me, says the Lord."

~~When did the concept of Israel as a holy people originate?~~ <sup>??</sup> What did our people mean when they spoke of themselves as a holy people *קדוש* -- and of their God as *קדוש* -- the Holy God? What is meant by holiness?



The term "Kadosh" basically has the meaning of something separated or withdrawn, something inviolate. The shrines of the gods of all the peoples of antiquity, their precincts and furnishings, their altars and the sacrifices which were offered upon them, and whatever else was consecrated to their use, the priests who ministered there and their apparel were all "Kadosh".

Such a concept of the holy was nigh universal in the ancient world. It carried no ethical implications. Separateness and exclusiveness were its sole designations.

But when the prophets of Israel spoke of God as holy, they had in mind not His unapproachability, His awesome removedness, but His nature as a God of <sup>perfect</sup> justice, of absolute moral law.

The gods of the ancients disported themselves wilfully, often quite immorally, each an autocrat within his or her domain. The sole duty of the worshiper, who belonged to them as a slave belongs to his master, was to anticipate and satisfy their wants. This was why the gods created man in the first place, not for man's sake but for their own.

The prophets of Israel completely rejected this <sup>crude, amoral</sup> conception of deity. God is the source of all moral law, even as He is the source of all physical <sup>they maintained,</sup> law, and He does not act contrary to the laws which He Himself has set. He is a holy God.

The prophet Isaiah defines the nature of this holiness: "The God of hosts is exalted through justice, and the Holy One is sanctified (made Kadosh) through righteousness."

» פסל 2 ל3 קדש ל14 קדש 1/17



This holy God revealed Himself to the people of Israel and summoned it to become a holy people by observing His law of righteousness and by teaching it to mankind. *אני ה' קראתיך עבד* "I, the Lord, summoned you to serve the cause of righteousness... -- to be a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness."

This idea of a holy God choosing a whole people to be His priests, not in a physical sanctuary but in His world -- "a kingdom of priests and a holy people" -- was and remains a novel, revolutionary, and un-precedented religious idea. Who was the father of it?

I believe that it originated with Moses. It was he who first thought of Israel, whom he had led out of bondage and formed into a nation, as a different kind of people -- an 'Am Segulah, whose way of life would be completely different from the way of life of Egypt and of all the heathen peoples of his day. At Sinai, he gave them God's Torah which would make of them an 'Am Kadosh, a holy people.

By the very act of not making images of God and by denying the existence of all other gods, they became a unique people in the ancient world. By the Covenant into which they entered to worship God in a way which differed sharply from the manner of worship of all the peoples about them, they became KADOSH. Egypt had its professional priests. Moses wanted no hierarchy of priests. The entire people of Israel would function as a priesthood to God and would serve Him, not with animal sacrifices, but with the faithful observance of the moral <sup>and the widest dissemination</sup> ~~laws~~ <sup>instructions</sup> of the Torah. They were thus dedicated to a different kind of faith, a new mode of worship, and a new way of life. This became their proud destiny and heritage.



It should be noted that while Israel was taught ~~by Moses~~ to regard itself as a people chosen by God, it was not to think of itself as being descended from God. Many peoples in ancient times claimed direct descent from their gods. Israel was taught always to remember that it was a small and lowly people of humble origin -- "a wandering Aramean was my father" -- and that it was <sup>chosen by God</sup> ~~God who chose them~~ "not because you were more in number than any other people that God set His love upon you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples". ~~(Deut 8:7)~~.

The nature of holiness as applied to man is fully defined in our Torah. It <sup>does</sup> ~~not~~ call upon men to escape from the world and <sup>to turn</sup> ~~become~~ hermits and ascetics in order to become holy, ~~and~~ to afflict the body in order to purify the soul. This type of saintliness is alien to the spirit of our people. <sup>But</sup> To live in the world and work to improve it, to discipline ourselves against all forms of excess, to respect all men and not to exploit them, to share our strength with the weak, <sup>and</sup> our bread with the hungry -- this is the true road to holiness.

The Haftarah which we read on the morning of Yom Kippur is very clear on this point. Fasting and spreading sackcloth and ashes under us are not in themselves acceptable to the Lord. *They are not the ways of atonement.*

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen?

To loose the fetters of wickedness,

To undo the bands of the yoke,

~~And~~ to let the oppressed go free,

And that ye break every hoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry,

And that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?

When thou seests the naked, that thou cover him,

And thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?"



The noble chapter 19 of the Book of Leviticus, which begins with the ringing command: "Ye shall be holy for I the Lord your God am holy" <sup>in detail</sup> proceeds to enumerate what a man must do, or must avoid doing, in order to become holy. Not to oppress one's neighbor, not to stand idly by when the life of one's neighbor is in danger, not to judge one's neighbor unjustly; to take care of the poor, not to reap a field to its very border or strip a vineyard bare, but to leave a portion for the poor and the stranger; not to hate one's brother, not to take vengeance or bear a grudge, to love our neighbor as ourself; to be especially mindful of the aged, the weak, the orphan, the widow; never to wrong a stranger, the stranger should be treated as a native, and one should love him as oneself.

which we shall read at the afternoon service to-morrow

This is the road to the holy life. This is how Israel, the holy people, must serve the God of Holiness.

And this is the proud heritage of our people --

נאמר בליל קריאת התורה. "This is the Torah which Moses commanded us. It is the heritage of the community of Jacob."

Yom Kippur reminds us of this heritage. It also reminds us that an heritage is an obligation, a responsibility and a challenge as well as a privilege, and that no one has the right to be proud of his heritage who does not honor it in observance and in practice.

It is not good enough to be able to say: "look at <sup>my peoples'</sup> great past, look at the Bible which we gave to the world, look at our prophets, sages, philosophers and teachers who so profoundly influenced <sup>civilization</sup> mankind."

We must also be able to say, not in words but by our way of life: "look at us Jews today and see how we live. Look at the dignity and



*look at the purity and loyalty of*  
sobriety of our lives, *life, look at* our family ~~loyalty~~, our generosity, our professional  
and business integrity, our love of freedom and peace, our tolerance and  
our rediness to defend not only our own rights, but the rights of all men."

*TP* To be sure, our great men of the past were fully matched with their hour. *But*

*A* are we matched with ours? Are we responding to the call of duty, discipline  
and sacrifice as they did? Are we emulating them? *TP* When men think and  
speak of Jews today they are not thinking of the illustrious Jews of the  
past, of Moses, Isaiah or Hillel, of Philo, Maimonides or Spinoza. They  
are thinking of Jews whom they see every day on the street, in business,  
at work or at play. It is the living, every-day Jew, next door to them, as  
it were, who exemplifies for them the heritage of Judaism.

It is, therefore, far more important, as far as our position in the  
world is concerned, to practice Judaism than to defend it. I know Jews  
who become outraged when somebody attacks their people or their religion,  
who themselves, by their own total neglect of Judaism, *or* ~~and~~ by the unworthy  
conduct of their own lives, undermine their faith and dishonor their people.  
Having abandoned their heritage -- why do they become so incensed when  
base men traduce it?

We owe it to our noble past to live nobly in the present. Else we  
dishonor our heritage and put to shame our heroes and martyrs who suffered  
and died in the constancy of their faith -- *also look to* -- for the  
sanctification of God -- in the confident *hope* ~~trust~~ that future generations  
of Jews will hold aloft the torch which fell from their own hands.



Included in the ritual for Yom Kippur is the tragic story of  
 עשרה בטלות, the illustrious Rabbis like Akiba, Ishmael and

Hananiah ben Tradion, who were put to death in gruesome torture

by the cruel government of ancient Rome. <sup>of the past</sup> ~~Their story is re-told~~ in order to

remind all generations of Jews, especially those ~~generations who~~

live in more favored times, of the price which was paid for their

noble heritage.

On Yom Kippur we accept anew and commit ourselves anew to the  
 burden of <sup>this</sup> heritage. We are summoned to think of our past, but

also to remember that memories, however exalted, are only stars to

guide us. We alone must walk the way, often the hard and perilous

way, to the good and holy life. On Yom Kippur we are asked to think

not only of those who have gone before us, but also of those who will

come after us, to realize that we are links in a timeless chain which

must never be broken.

We shall be blessed, indeed, if this holy day will move us to say:

עשרה בטלות, עשרה בטלות, עשרה בטלות, עשרה בטלות, עשרה בטלות

"Thy testimonies are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart.

I shall incline my heart to perform Thy statutes -- forever, to the end."

ABRA HILLEL SILVER

YOM KIPPUR  
 September, 1961



In one of his Essays, Francis Bacon wrote:

" It is a reverent thing to see an ancient castle or building not in decay; or to see a fair timber tree sound and perfect. How much more to behold an ancient and noble family which hath stood against the waves and weather of time."

This is true also of an ancient and noble people like ours, a people which has stood against the waves and weather of the ages, and all the fury and persecutions of men, but which, nevertheless, still assembles each year in its places of worship throughout the world to re-assert its allegiance and to proclaim anew the slogan of its un-defeated faith: "Here, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One."

The sense and pride of heritage are very strong among our people. The Psalmist well reflects them -- *למנוח לנו ירשנו* *למנוח לנו ירשנו*  
"The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage."

It is rather strange that this should be so. The religion of our people is decidedly a forward-looking one. It is a Messianic faith whose Golden Age lies not in the beginning of history, but in *היום הזה* --  
in the distant day when the hopes of man will be fulfilled and all his aspirations consummated. Nevertheless, in our prayers we nearly always speak of "Our God and the God of our fathers" -- *אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו*.  
The covenant which binds us to our God was made with our forefathers. It is the *ברית* *העתיקה*, "Remember the days of old, we are admonished; consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you; your elders, and they will tell you." We seem to draw strength from looking back, and we take heart from the recollections of long ago. *Our people*

*frequently spoke of Nitzavim - the Merit of the Fathers, and regarded it as an inexhaustible store of peace and benediction.*



It is also strange that our people should think <sup>with such pride</sup> so proudly of its past, considering that its past <sup>was</sup> has not been filled with triumphs and trophies, with glorious victories, <sup>and</sup> with mastery and conquests, the things which normally feed <sup>a</sup> people's pride in <sup>the</sup> past. Our people's past was marked by much suffering and hardships, by homelessness and wanderings. Men, as a rule, do not boast of such things. They are not proud of such an heritage. Nevertheless, throughout its long, dark centuries of exile, outrage and indignity, our people proudly proclaimed to the world: "Happy are we. How goodly is our fortune, how pleasant our lot, how beautiful our heritage!"

למה נאמר, כי אנו מאושרים, כי אנו מאושרים.  
למה נאמר, כי אנו מאושרים.

But upon further reflection, Israel's strong sense and pride of heritage is not so strange. What filled our people with pride was not their own achievements and accomplishments, their noble birth or their racial purity. They were <sup>never</sup> not boastful racists or arrogant nationalists. Their leaders never encouraged them to entertain any notions of superiority or any thought of mastery over other peoples. <sup>It</sup> It was the unique mandate which destiny assigned to them which made them proud. Their ancestors had been the first to become cognizant of God as the One Spiritual Creator and Ruler of the universe, who must remain un-represented in any form or manner of likeness, and who can be worshiped only through righteousness and loving-kindness. This was new and revolutionary in the <sup>li</sup> religious thought of mankind. It sounded the death-knell of ~~all~~ idolatry and polytheism, and all the gross rituals and superstitions of the ancient world. It ushered in a new era in the religious evolution of man. <sup>It</sup> Their ancestors had also entered into a covenant with God to remain forever loyal to Him and to bring His light and His law to all the peoples of the earth.



Their God was not exclusively their God. He was the God of the whole earth.

He was the Father of all men, and loved them all alike. But in His unfathomable wisdom, He had chosen Israel to receive the revelation of His Torah -- His law of life -- <sup>and</sup> ~~which~~ Israel was <sup>it</sup> ~~then~~ charged to bring to all men. Because of this, Israel conceived of itself as having been chosen and selected by God as His

~~special servant~~ <sup>because of it</sup> and they experienced a rare exaltation in this assignment. <sup>They had been given a holy God which made them a holy people.</sup>

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom He has chosen for His heritage."

This is what gave our people, throughout the ages, their sustaining pride, this and the knowledge <sup>also</sup> that in spite of every form of persecution which was visited upon them, they had remained loyal to their vision. <sup>and had</sup> They bore <sup>borne</sup> ~~steadfastly~~ proudly the heavy yoke of their selection and mission.

It was a fearless pride, too. Their mission gave them the confidence of indestructibility. <sup>They knew themselves to be an eternal people.</sup> This is true of all great ideals. Great ideals give their devotees a sense of deathlessness. Thus the prophet Isaiah <sup>long ago</sup> declared: No weapon that is fashioned against you shall prosper and you shall confute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord and their vindication from me, says the Lord".

When did the concept of Israel as a holy people originate? What did our people mean when they spoke of themselves as a holy people <sup>1377 BC</sup> -- and of their God as <sup>1377 BC</sup> -- the Holy God? What is meant by holiness? The term "Kadosh" basically has the meaning of something separated or withdrawn, something inviolate. The shrines of the gods of all the peoples of antiquity, their precincts and furnishings, their altars and the sacrifices <sup>which</sup> offered upon them, and whatever else was consecrated to their use, the priests who ministered there and their apparel were all "Kadosh".



Such a concept of the holy was nigh universal in the ancient world. It carried no ethical implications. Separateness and exclusiveness were its sole designations.

But when the prophets of Israel spoke of God as holy, they had in mind not His unapproachability, His awesome removedness, but His nature as a God of justice, of absolute moral law.

The gods of the ancients disported themselves <sup>willfully</sup> whimsically, often quite immorally, each an autocrat within his or her domain. The sole duty of the worshiper, who belonged to them as a slave belongs to his master, was to anticipate and satisfy their wants. This was why they <sup>the gods</sup> created man in the first place, not for man's sake, but for their own.

The prophets of Israel <sup>completely</sup> rejected this conception of deity. God is the source of all moral law, even as He is the source of all physical law, and He does not act contrary to the laws which He Himself has set. He is a holy God.

The prophet Isaiah defines the nature of this holiness: "The God of hosts is exalted through justice, and the Holy One is sanctified (made KADOSH) through righteousness."

This holy God revealed Himself to the people of Israel and summoned it to become a holy people by observing and <sup>(and by teaching it to)</sup> teaching His law of righteousness.

<sup>אני ה' אלהיך</sup> "I, the Lord, summoned you to serve the cause of righteousness... -- to be a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness".

This idea of a holy God choosing a whole people to be His priests,



not in a physical sanctuary but in His world -- " a kingdom of priests and a holy people" -- was and remains a novel, revolutionary, and un-precedented religious idea. Who was the father of it?

<sup>He</sup> believe that it originated with Moses. It was he who first thought of Israel, whom he <sup>had</sup> led out of bondage and formed into a nation, as a different kind of people -- an 'Am Segulah, whose way of life would be completely different from the way of life of Egypt and of all the heathen people of his day.

At Sinai, he gave them God's Torah. <sup>which would make of them</sup> ~~He was resolved that they should~~ become an 'Am Kadosh, a holy people; ~~"(I) have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine."~~

By the very act of not making images of God and <sup>by</sup> ~~of~~ denying the existence of all other gods, they became a unique people in the ancient world. By the Covenant into which they entered to worship God in a way which differed sharply from the manner of worship of all the peoples about them, they became KADOSH. Egypt had its professional priests, and ~~an elaborate ritual of sacrifices.~~ Moses wanted <sup>no hierarchy</sup> ~~neither~~ priests, nor sacrifices. The entire people of Israel would function as a priesthood to God and would serve Him, not with animal sacrifices, but with the faithful observance of the moral instructions of the Torah. They ~~were not only chosen from among all other people.~~ They <sup>there</sup> were dedicated to a different kind of faith, a new mode of worship, and a new way of life. This became their proud destiny and heritage.

It should be noted that while Israel was taught by Moses to regard itself as a people chosen by God, it was not to think of itself as being descended from God. Many peoples in ancient times claimed direct descent



from their gods. Israel was taught always to remember that it was a small and lowly people of humble origin -- "a wandering Aramean was my father" -- and that it was God who chose them "not because you were more in number than any other people that God set His love upon you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples" (Deut. 8:7).

The nature of holiness as applied to <sup>us</sup> ~~men~~ is fully defined in our Torah. It did not call upon men to escape from the world and become hermits and ascetics in order to become holy and to afflict the body in order to purify the soul. This type of saintliness is alien to the spirit of our people. To live in the world and work to improve it, to discipline ourselves against all forms of excess, to respect all men and <sup>not</sup> ~~to exploit~~ <sup>any one</sup> ~~any one~~ to share our strength with the weak, and our bread with the hungry -- this is the true road to holiness. <sup>P</sup> The Haftarah which we read on the morning of Yom Kippur is very clear on this point. Fasting and spreading sackcloth and ashes under us are not in themselves acceptable to the Lord.

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen?

To loose the fetters of wickedness,

To undo the bands of the yoke,

And to let the oppressed go free,

And that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry,  
~~And that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?~~

And that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?

When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him,

And thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?"



The noble chapter 19 of the Book of Leviticus, which begins with the ringing command: "Ye shall be holy for I the Lord your God am holy" proceeds to enumerate what a man must do, or must avoid doing, in order to become holy. Not to oppress one's neighbor, not to stand idly by when the life of one's neighbor is in danger, not to judge one's neighbor unjustly; to take care of the poor, not to reap a field to its very border or strip a vineyard bare, *but to leave a* portion ~~must be left~~ for the poor and the stranger; not to hate one's brother, not to take vengeance or bear a grudge, to love our neighbor as ourself; to be *especially* mindful of the aged, the weak, the orphan, the widow; never to wrong a stranger, ~~a~~ <sup>the</sup> stranger should be treated as a native, and one should love him as oneself.

This is the road to the holy life. This is how Israel, the holy people, must serve the God of Holiness.

And this is the proud heritage of our people -- *אנחנו גאים בירושתנו*  
*זאת היא תורה אשר צונו משה*. "This is the Torah which Moses commanded us. It is the heritage of the community of Jacob."

Yom Kippur reminds us of this heritage; ~~but~~ <sup>it</sup> it also reminds us that an heritage is an obligation, a responsibility and a challenge as well as a privilege, and that no one has the right to be proud of his heritage who does not honor it in observance and in practice.

It is not good enough to be able to say: "look at our great past, look at the Bible which we gave to the world, look at our prophets, sages, philosophers and teachers who so profoundly influenced mankind."

*Not in words but by our way of life*  
We must also be able to say: "look at <sup>the</sup> us Jews who ~~practice~~ Judaism today, ~~Jews who are/conscious and proud heirs of a great past,~~ and see how we live -- look at the dignity and sobriety of our lives, our family loyalty, <sup>our</sup> and generosity,



our professional and business integrity, our love of freedom and peace, our tolerance and our readiness to defend not only our own rights, but the rights of all men.<sup>11</sup> To be sure, <sup>our</sup> the great men of ~~our~~ <sup>the</sup> past were fully matched with their <sup>hon</sup> honor. Are we matched with ours? Are we responding to the call of duty, discipline and sacrifice as they did?" <sup>Are we emulating them?</sup>

When men think and speak of Jews today they, ~~as a rule,~~ are not thinking of the illustrious Jews of the past, of Moses, Isaiah or Hillel, of Philo, Maimonides or Spinoza. They are thinking of the Jews whom they know, the men whom they see every day on the street, in business, at work or at play. It is the living, every-day Jew next door to them, as it were, who exemplifies for them the heritage of Judaism. <sup>IP</sup> It is, therefore, far more important, as far as our position in the world is concerned, to practice Judaism than to defend it. I know Jews who become outraged when somebody attacks their people or their religion, who themselves, by their ~~own~~ total neglect of Judaism, and by their ~~unworthy~~ unworthy conduct of their own lives, undermine their ~~own~~ faith and dishonor their people. <sup>Having</sup> They ~~have~~ abandoned their heritage -- why do they become so incensed when base men traduce it? <sup>IP</sup> We owe it to our ~~great and~~ noble past to live ~~greatly and~~ nobly in the present. Else we dishonor our heritage and put to shame <sup>our</sup> the heroes and martyrs of ~~our past~~ who suffered and died in the constancy of their faith -- <sup>for</sup> ~~also~~ <sup>also</sup> ~~but~~ -- for the sanctification of God -- in the confident trust that future generations ~~of~~ of Jews will hold aloft the torch which fell from their <sup>our</sup> hands.



Included in <sup>the</sup> our ritual for Yom Kippur is the tragic story of  
the Ten Martyrs, <sup>the illustrious</sup> former Rabbis and scholars like Akiba, Ishmael and  
Tradion Hananiah ben ~~Tran~~ who were put to death through <sup>in</sup> gruesome torture by  
the cruel government of ancient Rome. <sup>To remind</sup> As if to say to us, who live  
in the <sup>unfavored times</sup> ~~lands of freedom~~, this <sup>is</sup> the price which was paid for the noble  
heritage which is yours.

On Yom Kippur we <sup>accept and commit ourselves anew to</sup> ~~vow to take on again~~ resolutely the  
the burden of our heritage. We think of our past, <sup>are asked to think of the past but to remember</sup> but we know that its  
memories <sup>have existed</sup> are only stars to guide us. We alone must walk the way, often the  
~~axhaxxx~~ a hard and perilous way. On Yom Kippur we <sup>should not only</sup> think of those that have been <sup>gone</sup>  
before us, but also of those that will come after us, <sup>we should</sup> and we realize  
that we are links in a timeless chain which must not be broken.

We shall be blessed, indeed, if this holy day will move us to  
say: <sup>אני אהיה לך עמוך ואתה תהיה לי עמוך --</sup>  
"Thy testimonies are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart.  
I shall incline my heart to perform Thy statutes -- forever, to the end."