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Men's Club, Oberlin retreat, correspondence and speeches,
1963-1966.

*T.M.C. Oberlin Weekend
Oct. 18-20, 1963
Rabbi Daniel Silver*

According to the Biblical Book of Numbers the Moabite King Balak hired the professional prophet Balaam to curse the Children of Israel who were camping near his pastureland. Though paid richly in the coin of the realm, Balaam could not bring himself to imprecate and denounce. Instead, looking down on Israel's encampment from a nearby mountain height, he was moved to say, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, thy dwellings, O Israel."

Whenever the non-Jew has observed Jewish family life he has been moved to acclamation. Protestant minister friends ask me all the time how we build-in family loyalties. Israel is known for its home life. The modern Jew, living in a non-Jewish world and largely by non-Jewish standards, looks back nostalgically to the warmth and dignity of his grandfather's poverty. If you did not, you would not have suggested our topic for the weekend.

Tonight our perspective is that of history. We will review certain historical details of the sociology of the Jewish family, seeking insight into one question -- What made the Jewish home precious and praiseworthy?

I shall attempt several answers. I will skip about the centuries and avoid many areas which are obviously related. But we have an hour, and this is not a purely academic weekend. We seek to know in order to judge. I propose to explore those values which seem most relevant.

I would begin with the elemental statement that the Jews looked on the home as a first priority. I speak of home, not house. It mattered not whether the people were nomadic, agricultural, or urban -- living inside shepherd tents, thatched wattle or Village plaster -- the family was seen as the bedrock unit of society. The first census was taken by family units: "Take ye the sum of all the congregations by their families, by their father's house." There was a sanctity to the home as to the synagogue, in each man served God in an acceptable fashion.

It is a common fallacy of modern thought that all the great religions are foursquare for family and mother-love. Not so. In both Buddhism and Christianity the highest religious aspirations of man lie outside the home and can be achieved only in renouncing the home. Judaism alone lacks this ^{element of} individualistic salvation seeking.

The key life in Buddhism was that of the Gautama. The key moment of that life was the Gautama's renunciation of the bonds of routine. As a rather young and spiritually troubled nobleman, the Gautama could find no peace of mind, in business or office of state. Reflecting on life's enigmas, it came to him that before man can be at peace with himself, he must renounce the flesh and desire. A man of conviction, Gautama renounced rank and title and family. One night he crept into his son's bedroom, kissed the infant on the cheek, kissed his wife in her sleep, and turned his back on these forever for the beggar's bowl and a wandering ascetic search. A Jew reacts to this story with amazement. If poetically praiseworthy, it seems to us at its best face highly selfish. Our reaction is a measure of our faith's age old insistence that there is no salvation or holiness for a man in the renunciation of life ^{and} of love ^{and} of responsibility. "Sanctify yourself in the areas which are permitted to you." A key phrase in Jewish thought in this respect is Psalms 101:2, "I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart." Man's integrity is to be found within the web of family, not in aloneness. "If a man sin against those of his own household, he will inevitably come to sin against his neighbor and against his God."

In Judaism, then -- and this is a crucial point -- there is no ^{assumption of} a religious virtue ~~taught~~ which gives man a rationalization to scissor the ties of family. These are elemental and permanent.

In Christianity the search for holiness -- salvation -- took on a no less individualistic and anti-family bias. Monasticism became and remained an ideal. Unlike Moses, Jesus never married. Unlike Israel's law which insists on marriage, Christianity commends celibacy and accepts sex only as a condescension to the flesh. Compare, for instance, Paul's backhanded: "It is better to marry than to burn," with the rabbinic law which makes marriage mandatory and which makes intercourse a necessary act of marriage even after menopause or an operation ^{which} ~~as~~ has removed the possibility of child bearing. The Hebrew title for marriage sums it up: Kiddushin -- from Kadosh (holy). To Jews marriage is a sound and pure thing -- a fulfilling of God's will and not at all a sign of weakness. Furthermore, marriage ^{AND SEX ARE} ~~is~~ not just a genetic necessity ^{to} to be indulged in as infrequently as possible and only to recreate the race -- rather ^{they ARE} ~~it is~~ ~~the~~ keys to happiness. Yebamot says it: "He who has no wife misses everything and has no joy and no happiness." Typical of the rabbinic attitude towards this subject is the Midrashic explanation why Nadab and Abihu, the sons of ~~ARON~~ ^{ARON}, died young -- because they chose to remain celibate.

Marriage and family represented ultimate responsibilities and ultimate opportunities. As Talmud Kiddushin 29b put it: "God waits impatiently for man to marry." Nor was it simply a desire for more little Jews which led to this divine eagerness. Life was meant to be enjoyed. There was nothing filthy or ignoble about the human body or sexual attraction.

Return, return, O Shulammitte;
Return, return, that we may look upon thee.

What will ye see in the Shulammitte?
As it were a dance of two companies.

How beautiful are thy steps in sandals,
O prince's daughter!
The roundings of thy thighs are like the links of a chain,

The work of the hands of a skilled workman.
Thy navel is like a round goblet,
Wherein no mingled wine is wanting;
Thy belly is like a heap of wheat
Set about with lilies.
Thy two breasts are like two fawns
That are twins of a gazelle.
Thy neck is as a tower of ivory;
Thine eyes as the pools in Heshbon,
By the gate of Bath-rabbim;
Thy nose is like the tower of Lebanon
Which looketh toward Damascus.
Thy head upon thee is like Carmel,
And the hair of thy head like purple;
The king is held captive in the tresses thereof.

How fair and how pleasant art thou,
O love, for delights!
This thy stature is like to a palm-tree,
And thy breasts to clusters of grapes.
(Song of Songs 7:1-8)

There was nothing unseemly or vulgar in courting. The Jew rejoiced and
was encouraged to rejoice in physical attraction.

There are three things which are too wonderful for me,
Yea, four which I know not:
The way of an eagle in the air;
The way of a serpent upon a rock;
The way of a ship in the midst of the sea;
And the way of a man with a young woman.

Within the bonds of honorable love and loyal marriage sex was a good and
God-ordained passion.

Drink waters out of thine own cistern,
And running waters out of thine own well.
Let thy springs be dispersed abroad,
And courses of water in the streets.
Let them be only thine own,
And not strangers' with thee.
Let thy fountain be blessed;
And have joy of the wife of thy youth.
A lovely hind and a graceful doe,
Let her breasts satisfy thee at all times;
With her love be thou ravished always.
Why then wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman,
And embrace the bosom of an alien?

What I have described so far agrees with the temper of the post-

Victorian age: but the agreement ends here for Judaism lacked our tolerance of promiscuity and lust.

Adultery was according to Biblical law a capital crime. There is no known instance of ^{The death} ~~such~~ penalty being exacted, but Talmud and Midrash tell us of the flagellation of the guilty couple and of their heads being ^{SHAVED AND THEIR PERSONS BEING} ~~stoned before they were~~ publicly exposed to shame. Jewish law gave the husband little choice in the matter -- an adulterous woman must be divorced and she may not be remarried by her first husband.

Without discipline and loyalty the family cannot survive. Joseph, who fled the attentions of Potiphar's wife, became symbol of the way Jewish men must flee the ^{ABASED} ~~much lower~~ sexual standards of the communities about. The Book of Proverbs is filled with warnings to the young bucks of the day that Jewish fraternities must have stricter standards of self control than the ^{REST OF THE GENTILES} ~~collegiate average~~.

For the commandment is a lamp,
and the teaching is light,
And reproofs of instruction are the
way of life;
To keep thee from the evil woman,
From the smoothness of the alien tongue.

He that committeth adultery with a woman
lacketh understanding;
He doeth it that would destroy his
own soul.

(Proverbs 6:23-24 and 32)

My son, keep my words,
And lay up my commandments with thee.
Keep my commandments and live,
And my teaching as the apple of thine eye.
Bind them upon thy fingers,
Write them upon the table of thy heart.
Say unto wisdom: 'Thou art my sister',
And call understanding thy kinswoman;
That they may keep thee from the strange woman,
From the alien woman that maketh smooth her words.

For at the window of my house
I looked forth through my lattice;

And I beheld among the thoughtless ones,
I discerned among the youths,
A young man void of understanding,
Passing through the street near her corner,
And he went the way to her house;
In the twilight, in the evening of the day,
In the blackness of night and the darkness.
And, behold, there met him a woman
With the attire of a harlot, and wily of heart.
She is riotous and rebellious,
Her feet abide not in her house;
Now she is in the streets, now in the broad places,
And lieth in wait at every corner.
So she caught him, and kissed him,
And with an impudent face she said unto him:
'Sacrifices of peace-offerings were due from me;
This day have I paid my vows.
Therefore came I forth to meet thee,
To seek thy face, and I have found thee.
I have decked my couch with coverlets,
With striped cloths of the yarn of Egypt.
I have perfumed my bed
With myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.
Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning;
Let us solace ourselves with loves.
For my husband is not at home,
He is gone a long journey;
He hath taken the bag of money with him;
He will come home at the full moon.'

With her much fair speech she causeth him to yield,
With the blandishment of her lips she enticeth
him away.
He goeth after her straightway,
As an ox that goeth to the slaughter,
Or as one in fetters to the correction of the fool;
Till an arrow strike through his liver;
As a bird hasteneth to the snare --
And knoweth not that it is at the cost of his life.

Now therefore, O ye children, hearken unto me
And attend to the words of my mouth.
Let not thy heart decline to her ways,
Go not astray in her paths.
For she hath cast down many wounded;
Yea, a mighty host are all her slain.
Her house is the way to the netherworld,
Going down to the chambers of death. (Proverbs 7)

The passion for loyalty to marriage vows was so strong that the laws
often imposed what seems to us undue hardship. There is a principle in

Jewish law known as defilement. A woman who has had intercourse with a man besides her husband, even if she were forceably raped, was considered defiled and was unclean to her first husband. Even a legitimate second marriage rendered a woman unfit to her first husband. There was to be no playing around with the marriage pledge. Rape was rare, ~~but~~ in early times ^{and} the cases of hardship few; but as Jewish history became more turbulent and the plague of war, seizure, ^{piracy} ~~plunder~~, pillage and forceable conversion spread over the communities -- the danger became more pronounced. Indeed, one can know the cruelty of these days from the assumption in Talmudic law that a woman had been raped unless she could prove the contrary ^{if she} ~~if she~~ had been captured in war, or held for ransom by pirates, or abducted by missionaries or caught in a city overrun by enemy troops. For a long time despite the manifest hardship, concern for the marriage purity led the rabbis to be cautious in any exclusion from the law of defilement. Finally, they made a condition that if ^{the wife} ~~she~~ could prove that the submission was forced she could return to her husband.

Judaism set great store by the marriage bonds. Family life is impossible without respect ^{loyalty} and good faith. Interestingly, Judaism never made the marriage bonds indissoluble. As long as you were married you might not break your vows ~~for reasons of indulgence or lust~~; but if the marriage simply couldn't be carried off -- there were rather simple legal ways to dissolve it. Indeed, unlike modern laws, Judaism ^{never} required ~~that~~ ^{that} no public grounds for divorce be stated. The rabbis would have contemned the English practice which is also that of New York State, where an incompatible couple must fake adultery in order to ^{gain divorce} ~~establish~~ ~~grounds.~~

A marriage must be satisfying and it must be disciplined. There was no moral stigma to divorce, although it, of course, was anything but encouraged. "He who puts away the wife of his youth, for him God's very altar weeps." A divorced woman was free to remarry anyone except a priest, where considerations of ancient ecclesiastical purity supervened and anachronistically remain in force until our day causing occasional hardship. ^{IN ISRAEL WHERE THEY ARE STILL ENFORCED.} As a measure of the unique Jewish attitude, compare that of the Gospel of Matthew in the New Testament: "Whosoever shall put away his wife... causeth her to commit adultery and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

Before moving on to ^{other} a general consideration of ~~the parent-child relationship~~, let me list briefly a few identifiable Biblical and rabbinic statements on marriage ^{OR} WHICH WE MAY KEY IN OUR DISCUSSION.

1) Talmud Yebamot

"An unmarried man is not a complete man and a woman is an unfinished vessel until she marries."

2) On young marriages -- Proverbs 24:27

"Prepare thy work without and afterwards build thy house."
First earn a living then think of marriage.

3) Talmud Kiddushin -- another side of the same coin.

"He who does not marry by the age of twenty spends his days in sin -- either by deed or by thought."

4) Talmud Sotah 2a

"Every man gets the wife he deserves."

5) To the overcautious who settled for prolonged engagements, the rabbis were fond of quoting Proverbs 13:12: "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick, but when desire cometh it is a tree of life."

6) "It is forbidden to marry a woman without seeing her."

Before we move on to parent-child relationships one thing ought to be made clear touching husband and wife. The Jewish family was father centered. The Biblical wife called her husband Baal -- lord, and the major decisions were his. Till this day Jewish law retains many provisions which favor the male. Thus he may divorce his wife at will, by presenting her the prescribed get ^{with it} ~~which~~ she must subscribe to the court to coerce the husband into granting her a divorce -- all this because the Biblical law is masculine, "He shall write against her a bill of divorcement."

In the ancient Near East the wife became property of her husband, and there are relics of this practice in the Mohar, the marriage portion ^{to} ~~the~~ groom's family paid the bride's -- but the spirit of Jewish life operated against the masculine ~~narrowness~~ of the early Bible law. Despite the universality of polygamy, the degrading harem never got a broad foothold in Jewish life and the Deuteronomic law specifically forbade the King from multiplying wives.

Judaism knew a Miriam as psalmist and leader, a Deborah as judge and general, an Ata as queen regent, a Michal who could argue with a David as equal. Far from being an ignorant slavey, the Biblical woman approached ^{the} ~~this~~ rather modern ideal of Proverbs 31:10-31:

A woman of valour who can find?
For her price is far above rubies.
The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her,
And he hath no lack of gain.
She doeth him good and not evil
All the days of her life.
She seeketh wool and flax,
And worketh willingly with her hands.
She is like the merchant-ships;
She bringeth her food from afar.
She riseth also while it is yet night,
And giveth food to her household,
And a portion to her maidens.
She considereth a field, and buyeth it;
With the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.
She girdeth her loins with strength,
And maketh strong her arms.

She perceiveth that her merchandise is good;
Her lamp goeth not out by night.
She layeth her hands to the distaff,
And her hands hold the spindle.
She stretcheth out her hand to the poor;
Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
She is not afraid of the snow for her household;
For all her household are clothed with scarlet.
She maketh for herself coverlets;
Her clothing is fine linen and purple.
Her husband is known in the gates,
When he sitteth among the elders of the land.
She maketh linen garments and selleth them;
And delivereth girdles unto the merchant.
Strength and dignity are her clothing;
And she laugheth at the time to come.
She openeth her mouth with wisdom;
And the law of kindness is on her tongue.
She looketh well to the ways of her household,
And eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children rise up, and call her blessed;
Her husband also, and he praiseth her;
'Many daughters have done valiantly,
But thou excellest them all.'
Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain;
But a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands;
And let her works praise her in the gates.

Rabbinic law tried to build-in as best it could safeguards for the woman and guarantees of her independence. The Ketubah was created to prevent a husband from frittering away his wife's dowry and by its terms her ~~AMERICAN JEWISH~~ remained inalienably hers. According to the law, a husband is obligated to provide for his wife's sustenance and thus has a claim on her earnings. ^{et} She may if she chooses claim the right of self support and retain her income. The husband is not granted this alternative. If a husband deserted his wife without making provision for her support, the court is empowered to grant her alimony from his property and she is given monthly allotments in order to save her the embarrassment of appearing before the authorities more often than necessary. The choice of a new home or a new business venture is subject to the consent of both husband and wife. I have already mentioned that rabbinic law empowered

the courts to intervene against a wilful husband and compel him to grant his wife a get. Marriages were in those days a family arrangement and the father was supreme, but the rabbis gave the girl the final say. "It is forbidden for a man to betroth his minor daughter until she attains her majority and says, 'I love this man.'" Nor may a young bride be forced sexually. "The groom may not enter the nuptial chamber without the bride's permission." Maimonides enlarged these restrictions still further. "One may not have sexual intercourse while either is intoxicated, or sluggish, or in mourning, nor when she be asleep, nor by overpowering her, but with the consent and happy mood of both." Let an ideal apostrophe sum it up. "He who loves his wife as himself and honors her more than himself, who leads his sons and daughters in the straight paths, and marries them near their time of maturity, to his house the words of Job apply, 'Thou shalt know that thy test is peace.'" Indeed, such were the rights of women that the rabbis counseled, "Go up in rank to choose a friend, go down a rank to choose a wife." An imperious woman could even in a society of male dominance make her husband's life miserable.

The Jewish home was adult centered. According to the earliest ~~status~~ ^{STATUS} of the Biblical law the father had the right of life and death over his children -- a contumacious boy could be done away with. There is no case recorded where ^A ~~the~~ rebellious son was, ~~executed~~, so punished, but the spirit of the Jewish home remained patriarchal and matriarchal. Typically, these lines from the wisdom of Ben Sirah:

Listen to me, your father, children,
And act in such a way that you may be preserved.
For the Lord has glorified the father above his children
And He has established the right of a mother over her sons.

In the matter of honor due to parents, the father is mentioned first, in the matter of reverence due to them, the mother is mentioned first. From this we infer that both are to be equally honored and revered.

He who provides for his father atones for his sins,
And he who shows his mother honor is like a man who lays up treasure.
He who provides for his father will be gladdened by his children,
And will be heard on the day that he prays.
He who shows his father honor will have a long life,
And he who listens to the Lord will refresh his mother,
And will serve his parents as his masters.
Honor your father in word and deed,
So that his blessing may attend you.
For a father's blessing establishes the houses of his children,
But a mother's curse uproots their foundations.
Do not glorify yourself by dishonoring your father,
For your father's disgrace is no glory to you.
For a man's glory arises from honoring his father,
And a neglected mother is a reproach to her children.
My child, help your father in his old age,
And do not grieve him, as long as he lives.
If his understanding fails, be considerate,
And do not humiliate him, when you are in all your strength.
Charity given to a father will not be forgotten,
And will build you up a further atonement for your sins.
When you are in trouble, you will be remembered;
Like frost in sunshine your sins will melt away.
He who deserts his father is like a blasphemer,
And he who angers his mother is cursed by the Lord.

(Apocrypha pp. 228-229)

There was a strictness of discipline to the Jewish home:

He who hates his child, spares the rod
He who loves his child, reproves him often.

Let the left hand box the child's ear, and the
right hand embrace him.

M. ...
1. The honoring of father and mother is a weighty positive command; so too, is reverence for them. The Bible attaches to the duty of honoring and revering parents an importance equal to that which it attaches to the duty of honoring and revering God. It is said: Honor thy father and thy mother (Exod. 20:12); and it is also written: Honor the Lord with thy substance (Prov. 3:9). Concerning the duty due to parents, it is said: Ye shall fear every man his mother and his father (Lev. 19:3); and concerning duty to God, it is said: Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God (Deut. 6:13). We are enjoined to honor and revere them in the manner that we are enjoined to honor and revere His great Name.

2. Whoever curses his father or his mother suffers death by stoning, and whoever blasphemes God suffers death by stoning. The penalty prescribed in both instances is the same.

In the matter of honor due to parents, the father is mentioned first, in the matter of reverence due to them, the mother is mentioned first. From this we infer that both are to be equally honored and revered.

3. What does reverence imply? What does honor imply? Reverence requires that the son should not stand in the place in which his father usually stands, or sit in his place, or contradict his words, or decide against his opinion, or call him, living or dead, by his name. When referring to his father, he should say, "My father, my teacher." If others bear the same name as his father or his teacher, he should designate them by another name. It appears to me, however, that this stricture applies only to a name that is not common. But in case of names that are in use in all languages and at all times, such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and the like, he may in the absence of his father call those who bear them by their names and have no scruples about it.

What does honoring parents imply? It means providing them with food and drink, clothing and covering, the expense ~~to be~~^{usually} borne by the father. If the father is poor and the son is in a position to take care of his parents, he is compelled to do so. He must support his parents in accordance with his means, conduct his father in and out, and perform for him such personal services as disciples perform for their teacher. He rises before him, as he rises before his teacher.

4. If his father is his disciple, the father does not rise before him, but he is bound to rise before his father. It is his duty to honor him in other ways, too, as when he is attending to business or personal matters. Thus if courtesy is shown to him in any place on account of his father, he should not say, "Speed me, for my own sake," or "Let me depart for my own sake," but he should say, "Speed me, for my father's sake," or "Let me depart for my father's sake," or use a similar expression. He should make it clear, in his dealings with others, that he is zealous for the honor of his father and that his attitude toward him is one of reverence.

5. It is the duty of the son to honor his father, even after the latter's death. Thus if he reports a law he heard from his father, he should not say, "Thus said my father." He should say, "Thus said my father, my teacher, may I be an atonement for his resting place." He should refer to him in these reverential terms only within twelve months of his death; but after twelve months, he should say, "May his memory be (for a blessing) for the life of the world to come."

6. Both man and woman are enjoined to revere and honor parents. A man, however, is in a position to supply them with their needs, while a woman is not, inasmuch as she is dependent on others. Therefore, if she has been divorced or widowed, she and the son share the duty equally.

7. To what lengths should the duty of honoring parents go? Even were they to take a purse of his, full of gold, and cast it in his presence into the sea, he must not shame them, manifest grief in their presence, or display any anger, but accept the divine decree without demur.

To what lengths should the duty of revering them go? Even if he is attired in costly garments, presiding over the congregation, and his parents come and rend his garments, strike him on the head, and spit in his face, he must not shame them. It behooves him to remain silent, to

fear and revere the King, King of kings, who has thus decreed. For if a mortal king were to issue against him a decree, even more exasperating in character, he would be powerless to rebel against it, all the more so if the author of the decree is He who spoke and the world came into being in accordance with His will.

8. Although children are commanded to go the above-mentioned lengths, the father is forbidden to impose too heavy a yoke upon them, to be too exacting with them in matters pertaining to his honor, lest he cause them to stumble. He should forgive them and shut his eyes; for a father has the right to forego the honor due him.

9. If a man beats a grown-up son, he is placed under the ban, because he transgresses the negative command Nor put a stumbling block before the blind (Lev. 19:14).

10. If the mind of his father or his mother is affected, the son should make every effort to indulge the vagaries of the stricken parent until God will have mercy on the afflicted. But if the condition of the parent has grown worse, and the son is no longer able to endure the strain, he may leave the father or the mother, go elsewhere and delegate others to give the parent proper care.

11. A bastard is bound to honor and reverence his father, although he is not culpable if he strikes or curses him, unless the latter has repented. Even if one's father is a wicked man, a habitual transgressor, it is the duty of the son to honor and reverence him.

If the son sees his father violate a commandment, he should not say to him, "Father, you have disregarded a precept of the Torah." He should say to him, "Thus and thus is written in the Torah," speaking to him as though he were consulting him, instead of admonishing him.

12. If his father orders him to transgress a positive or a negative command set forth in the Bible or even a command which is of rabbinical origin, the son must disregard the ~~order~~^{order}, for it is said: Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father; and ye shall keep my Sabbaths (Lev. 19:3), that is, all of you are bound to honor Me.

13. In the event the father says to his son, "Give me a drink of water," while the son has a commandment to perform, if the commandment can be performed by others, let him delegate it to others and attend to the duty of honoring his father, for one commandment is not to be neglected in order to fulfill another. But if there are no others to perform the commandment, he must perform it himself, and disregard the honor due to his father, because both he and his father are in duty bound to fulfill the commandment.

The duty of studying the Torah is greater than that of honoring parents.

14. If both his father and his mother ask him (at the same time) for a drink of water, he disregards the duty of honoring his mother and attends to the duty of honoring his father, for both he and his mother are bound to honor the father.

15. It is the duty of a man to honor his stepmother as long as his father is living. This is included in the command to honor one's father. Likewise, a man is bound to honor his stepfather as long as the mother is living. But after her death he is released from the obligation. By an ordinance of the Scribes one is bound to honor one's older brother, even as one is bound to honor one's father.

(Maimonides, The Book of Judges, pp. 154-157)

Rabbinic law was fully conscious of the danger of parental tyranny. The Biblical law giving the father absolute authority over a child was so surrounded by technicalities as to become a dead letter. A father might not disinherit a son arbitrarily, or deprive the first born of his birthright without the son having recourse to the courts. Support, education, the basics of survival were legally required. "The father is duty bound in respect to his son to ^{circumcise} him, redeem him if captured, teach him Torah, provide him with a wife, and teach him a craft. Some say he must also teach him to swim." Not to teach a son a trade was to teach him to steal and rendered a father liable to criminal action.

Children are the gift of God and must be handled with the care and love of any divine blessing. "He who begets a child," however, "is not called father, only he who trains and raises the child." It is as moral preceptor and as moral example that the father, the parent ~~Assumes~~ ^{Assumes} on his ultimate responsibility. A favorite text of the rabbis was Genesis 25:5, "And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac." What was Isaac's inheritance, then? Firstly, the Promised Land, symbol of a home and security. Secondly, a blessing -- spiritual enlightenment. It is in the home that conscience is formed and the possibilities of love and sympathy nurtured. Finally, ambition -- that Isaac should live up to himself -- a reason for living. In some measure these were the hallmarks of the Jewish home which made us what we are.

Let me close this section as I did the first, with a few revealing aphorisms.

- 1) Who is a pious fool? He who sees a baby struggling in the water and says, "I shall take off my phylacteries and then try to save it."
- 2) A father with an eye to business opened for his son a shop for perfume in a street where prostitutes lived. One day the father caught his son in the company of one of these women and flew into a rage and wanted to beat him up. A friend who happened by reprimanded the father, "The fault is yours and you take it out on the boy. Could you find no other business for him than that of a scent dealer and no other street for your business save such a one as this?"
- 3) A parent is obligated to clothe his daughter as befits her position and to give her a suitable dowry, but he may not sell his house or his business for this purpose.
- 4) Do not send a child to school under the age of six, but after that age stuff him like an ox.



OBERLIN
WEEK-END
OCT 15-17

July 16, 1965

Rabbi Levi Olan
Temple Emanu-El
8500 Hillcrest
Dallas 25, Texas

Dear Levi:

I am writing this separate letter simply so as not to mix business and pleasure. Each year some 50 men take a week-end off in October for a study institute in lovely surroundings at Oberlin, Ohio. It is our pleasure to invite one of the thoughtful leaders of our faith to join in these discussions. In the past, Freehof, Mihaly, Marcus, Vorspan and Sandmel have been our guests. It would be a privilege to have you join us this year.

We should like to deal with the theme of "Contemporary Faith" - especially the current trends and thinking in Jewish life. I would open the session Friday evening with a paper on "Prayer and Worship in the Twentieth Century Synagogue." I would ask my associates here to take over the morning and afternoon sessions on Saturday and to deal with the themes of "The Place of the Synagogue in the Modern Community" and "The Changing Role of the Rabbi." Yours would be the major paper that Saturday night. I would hope that you would think through with us the assumptions of modern Jewish belief and suggest the validity and the meaning of our faith in a contemporary setting. On Sunday morning you would be responsible for a brief summary paper and the handling of a question and answer session.

The group that comes to Oberlin is exceptionally alert and an interesting one. This will be our ninth such institute and many of these men have been to each one. Of course, it would be a source of great pleasure to me to introduce you to the men.

July 16, 1965

- 2 -

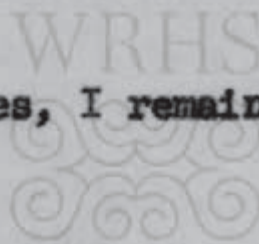
There is an honorarium of \$200 attached to this lecture and we will, of course, defray all other expenses. Oberlin is a little more than ten minutes from Cleveland airport, so that transportation is easily managed. We hope that you could be with us for the entire week-end, but knowing the exigencies of a rabbinic schedule it would be sufficient for you to arrive early Saturday afternoon. You could plan to plane out of Cleveland at noon on Sunday.

I notice that I neglected to mention the dates. They are October 15, 16 and 17. I know that you would find this experience personally satisfying.

With all good wishes, I remain,

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

DJS:mgm



TEMPLE EMANU-EL

8500 Hillcrest
Dallas 25, Texas

LEVI A. OLAN
RABBI

July 19, 1965

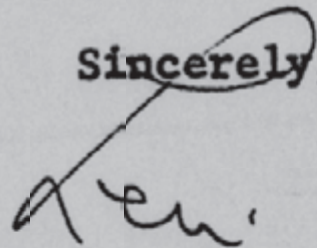
Rabbi Daniel J. Silver
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Daniel:

I believe now that the publication of Polish's paper in the CCAR Journal can take place and if the conference decides to publish a volume on the Kallah, it will not hurt to have it included there too.

I shall be happy to be with your group at Oberlin on Saturday and Sunday, October 16 and 17. I look forward, not only to the sessions, but a good visit with you.

Sincerely,



LAO/fd

OBERLIN
OCT 15-17

July 23, 1965

Rabbi Levi Olan
Temple Emamu-El
8500 Hillcrest
Dallas 25, Texas

Dear Levi:

I am delighted that you will be with us on October 16 and 17. You will find it a most pleasant two days. Please have your secretary send on a glossy print and your biography so that we can arrange the proper publicity.

With all good wishes for a most pleasant summer, I remain,

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

DJS:mga

May 28, 1965

Rabbi David Polish
Beth Emet Free Synagogue
1246 Ridge
Evanston, Illinois

Dear Dave:

This is just to acknowledge receipt of your article. I am in the middle of proofs for the June issue and I will get down to the actual reading in about a week. More then.

May I include in this letter an invitation. The Temple Men's Club holds late in August of each year, what is labeled as Oberlin in Cleveland. We hold an annual retreat at Oberlin College in the late fall. Our Oberlin and Cleveland program is a shabbos meal with a serious lecture and discussion. It is held at a nearby town motel and attracts an audience of 150-175 alert men and women. Jack Weinstein spoke at this program last year. I should like to invite you to be our speaker this year on Friday, August 27. The men would like to have an overall view of the trend of Jewish theological thought--the whys and the wherefors. You cannot presume any theological training but you can presume a great deal of interest in the direction of Jewish life and of Jewish thinking. There is an honorarium of \$150 attached to this lecture and of course we will defray all expenses. I would deem it a great privilege to present you to this congregation. I think you will find it a stimulating experience.

With all good wishes I remain as always,

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

DJS:mgn

RABBI DAVID POLISH, D.H.L., D.D.
BETH EMET THE FREE SYNAGOGUE

1200 LEE STREET
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS

June 7, 1965

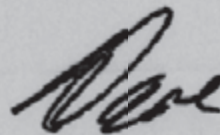
Rabbi Daniel Silver
The Temple
University Circle & Silver Park
Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear Dan:

I am happy to accept your invitation to speak to your group on August 27th, and will plan accordingly. I will be glad to discuss this further with you in Cincinnati.

With all good wishes, I am

Cordially yours,



RABBI DAVID POLISH

P.S. My book, "The Higher Freedom" has very recently been published by Quadrangle Books, Inc. and deals, in part, with my topic. Can we have copies of the book available at Oberlin?

June 9, 1965

Rabbi David Polish
Beth Emet Synagogue
1200 Lee Street
Evanston, Illinois

Dear Dave:

I am delighted you can be with us on the 27th of August. We, of course, will have your book for sale.

I wonder if you could send us a glossy and your biography for publicity purposes.

See you in Cincinnati.

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

DJS:mgm

*Oberlin In Case
Aug 27*

July 16, 1965

Rabbi David Polish
Beth Emet The Free Synagogue
1200 Lee Street
Evanston, Illinois

Dear David:

I am going over plans for our August 27th Oberlin in Cleveland evening. We will, of course, have copies of "The Higher Freedom" available and I am sure that a good number will be sold.

It has been our custom to send out some reading material in preparation for the evening, to those who sign up. Have you any suggestions from your own material or others, which might be appropriate. The mimeographing and xeroxing can be done here.

A reservation has been made for you at the Wade Park Manor, a lovely residential hotel just a half block from the Temple. Our service will be held at the Holiday Inn, which is just a few miles down the road and transportation there will be no problem. If you will inform me of your arrival and departure plans I will arrange for you to be met. Needless to say, we are looking forward to your visit.

Sincerely,

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER
DJS:mga

BETH EMET THE FREE SYNAGOGUE
Ridge at Dempster
EVANSTON, ILL. 60202

Rabbi David Polish, founding Rabbi of Beth Emet in Evanston, Illinois, is the author of "The Eternal Dissent", and the recently published "The Higher Freedom". He is co-author of "A Guide For Reform Jews". A graduate of the University of Cincinnati (1931) and the Hebrew Union College (1934), he holds the academic degree of Doctor of Hebrew Letters (1942) and the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity (1959). He is a visiting lecturer at the Garrett Theological Seminary, a college for the training of Methodist Ministers, and he is a frequent contributor to many Jewish and Christian journals. He also lectures in the Religion Department at Northwestern University.

Rabbi Polish is former chairman of the Liturgy Committee of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. He is a past president of the Chicago Association of Reform Rabbis. He organized the Chicago Board of Rabbis, consisting of the entire Rabbinate of the community, and was its first president

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THE ENIGMA OF JOB

Address delivered before the

~~Mt. Zion Hebrew Congregation of St. Paul, Minnesota~~
~~April 24, 1964~~

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver

As I prepared this lecture on the Book of Job, I reminded myself that I had treated this subject three times before. I reread those texts, and I found to my surprise that in each case I had described a different Job. In retrospect, no greater tribute can be paid to a work of literature, for what is the mark of excellence in writing but its ability to ^{REVEAL} refract a new aspect of the human experience at each reading.

I first treated of Job in those difficult years between the end of the Second World War and the establishment of the State of Israel. ⁽¹⁹⁴⁵⁻¹⁹⁴⁸⁾ These were the years in which we became aware of the jugular agony of the Nazi victims, when we did not know where the survivors would be placed, or if Zion would be reborn. I read Job then as an affirmation of the indomitable will of man. Job personified the staunchness of man, our ability to accept the most cruel of fates and to survive, and maintain our sanity, and build again. Job was whipped and scourged, and he did not whine. Job was beaten and bludgeoned, and he did not break. /

You remember the prologue of Job. God is proud of His creation, man. Satan is cynical. "Oh, yes, men appear to be virtuous and good, but their virtue is self serving. If respectable people did not expect a reward, if they did not expect the accolade of their neighbors -- God, you would see quite another kind

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of human being. Job is sacrificed as a test, for he is the paragon among mortals, the best of us. He is generous, great-hearted, of position in his community yet humble and patient, loyal to his family, deeply loving, the ^{synthesis} ~~summation~~ of all that is fine and noble in man. Satan is quite confident that he can break Job's equanimity, break him down, and unmask the less than noble animal within. In startlingly rapid succession Job is stripped bare. His wealth is erased. His home is razed. His servants are taken captive. His children are murdered. Then, the Bible tells us, "Job rose up, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head" -- all signs of traditional mourning -- "and he fell upon the ground and he worshipped, and he said, 'Naked I came out of my mother's womb and naked I shall return there. The Lord has given, the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.'" For all this Job sinned not, neither did he say aught that was unseemly of God." / God believes His point made. Satan insists on a second chance; he has not yet bloodied Job's own person. "And God said, Behold, he is in thy hand. Only spare his life." In quick succession Job is made to suffer boils, shingles, and that ugliest of all diseases, elephantiasis. His wife finally turns to him and says, "Dost thou still hold fast to thine integrity? Blaspheme God, and die." ~~But~~ Job responds, "Thou speakest as one of the irreverent women speaketh. What, shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord and not evil also? For all this, Job sinned not with his lips."

In those days I was reading those scraps of diary and memoirs which somehow had survived the Nazi holocaust, and Job helped me to understand that dignity and strength miraculously latent in us which allows men to

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maintain decency and sanity, even faith, though the fatal knock of the SS is inevitable and it is only a few evenings before the final, eternal midnight. Job became the prototype of human staunchness. He and his modern exemplars spoke to me of a revealing and healing truth: that somehow, despite the most heinous and bitter of cruelties which man can inflict upon his fellow, man can and will survive. The Psalmist said, "We are most wondrously made." We have within us a capacity to surmount the insurmountable, to stand firm beyond the limits of endurance. Somehow, beyond Auschwitz there would be a Zion. Somehow, beyond the eternal cycle of war and ^{COLD WAR} ~~war~~ and war again -- more brutal war -- there would be a larger peace -- hope for man.

^{EVEN IN ADOLESCENCE, JOB DENIED HIMSELF THE INDULGENCE OF COMFORTING} ~~Job had faced his future without illusion.~~ "The grave," Job says, ^{ASSUMPTION} ~~"the grave is open for me."~~ Job had ^{REFUSED} ~~not fallen back on~~ the dream of a blissful paradise beyond the purgatory of life. "Man lieth down and he dieth and until the heavens shall depart he shall not awaken." Job was impatient with all illusions. He looked into the jaws of hell straight on, yet he retained his faith and his courage. ^{TOOK} ~~I find this a healing truth,~~ ^{DISCIPLINE OF COURAGE} although I confess that it puts into a shoddy and shabby relief the ^{MOST OF} ~~measure~~ of our own complaints. How often we, the affluent, we, the peaceful, we who have hardly known suffering, bathe ourselves in self pity. A promotion has been denied us. A club has barred its doors to us. A friend has spoken ill of us, and we ~~liability~~ ^{ABUNDANTLY} make ourselves miserable over such a trifle. Job, ~~who knew true suffering,~~ ^{MAINTAINED HIS INTEGRITY} Job never whimpered, or complained. Job, for all of his pains, ~~friends,~~ never took a tranquillizer.

"DOST THOU STILL HOLD FAST TO THINE INTEGRITY - BLASPHEME GOD AND DIE."

"THOU SPEAKEST AS ONE OF THE IMPIOUS WOMEN SPEAKETH - WHAT SHALL WE RECEIVE GOOD AT THE HAND OF THE LORD AND NOT EVIL ALSO" - FOR ALL THIS, JOB SINNED NOT WITH HIS LIPS

[Oct 1966]

I came again to Job during the ^{EARLY} ~~first~~ years of my ^{RABBI} ~~ministry~~ when, for the first time, I was spending ^{CONSIDERABLE} ~~much~~ time with the bereaved and the desperately ill. I came to know another Job, the Job who is the prototype of the suffering soul. I was especially struck at that time by the series of dialogues which take place between Job and his three friends who come to console him --

Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. These dialogues occupy the larger part of the book. The friends try to speak words of comfort, and Job, as you know, will not accept their comfort or its premises. As I made my condolence calls and my hospital visits I met Eliphazes and Bildads and Zophars. You have seen them, too. Eliphaz is usually an elderly, worldly wise gentleman or gentle-lady. He has seen the widow and her tears and he has seen the widow and her remarriage. He knows that life goes on and that this living room, bathed in grief, will someday be bathed in flowers at another wedding. He comes in. He pats the bereaved upon the hand, and he counsels her to take faith, to hold fast, 'there will be in not too many moons a new life, new hope, laughter in your eyes, joy in your face, love in your heart.'

Bildad is of another sort. The Bildads of the world ^{PUT EVERY} ~~can put any~~ tragedy into good relief. ^{THE BILDADS OF THE WORLD WILL NOT ADMIT THE} ~~He will not look the tragedy square on, rather he~~ ^{EXISTENCE OF UNABATED CRUELTY -- THEY HAVE A PROPERLY ELEVATING} asks, 'what could have been worse?' and then he seeks to explain away the

^{MORAL FOR OUR EVERY BITTERNESS} bitterness of our suffering. We have lost a loved one early on in life. What does Bildad say? ^{IT'S REALLY FOR THE BEST.} ~~'It could have been worse.'~~ Your beloved was a proud person. He would not have wanted to be an invalid, paralyzed. / If we are seriously ill, Bildad tells us about those who have suffered far worse disabilities, and who managed somehow to build a new life. Bildad is that

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cheery sort who braces us and tells us to go on.

39 E 1 Zophar is a younger person yet. He has really not experienced life but he understands all the jargon of psychiatric therapy. Zophar explains to us what is happening to us. 'Good, express yourself. Cry. Give vent to your anger. It's good for you. You'll feel ~~the~~ better. Try and understand yourself. You'll come to understand what's happened to you. Keep going.

Keep talking. All will work out.' THE ZOPHARS OF THE WORLD ARE THE CLINICIANS OF SYMPATHY,

These friends of Job have their modern stencils, have they not?

They were friends of Job. They meant well. / They are our friends. Their words are kindly meant. / ~~But their words are irrelevant.~~ ^{BUT} Their words are a burden to us. They only sharpen the hurt. "Why," Job says, "why do you vex my soul? Why do you crush me with words?" Job will have none of

these justifications. Despite their wisdom, they are irrelevant. They are irrelevant to our pain. / ^{FRIENDSHIP AND COMFORT} ~~And yet they~~ ^{THESE WORDS} do help. Though ~~they~~ sharpen

the bitterness of the moment, they are not unkind. His friends came and

~~spek~~ ^{spek}, and their ~~listening and their logic~~ ^{COMING GAVE} gives Job the opportunity to ~~spek~~ ^{PHRASE}

^{BY SOME EMOTIONAL MAGIC JOB DOES FIND A NEW PEACE} and to work out some explanation of his fate. So the lesson of the Book of Job

is not not to make a condolence call, rather it is to go, and to offer what

consolation you can but to offer it without insisting upon it. The mourner

will take from your words what he needs. It is your ear and a shoulder to

cry on which he really needs. Job's friends were out of order only when they

insisted that Job must agree with them.

I reread Job some years later, and found another Job, a Job who ~~came~~ ^{UNDERSTOOD}

~~FOR ME THE THE FUNDAMENTAL SOURCE OF FAITH.~~ ^{TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MEANING OF FAITH.} These were years in which religion

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was being huckstered about the ~~United States~~ with great success -- ~~a money~~ back, five year ~~warranty~~ religion. Faith was a guarantee. Faith gave you confidence. Confidence unleashed powers within. Confidence improved your chance of success in life. Faith was a guarantee of a better life. You remember Dr. Norman Vincent Peale and the power of positive thinking. 'If you believe,' he said, 'if you believe deeply enough and pray fervently enough, ^{you UNLEASH THE} ~~the inner power~~ ^{POWERS OF SUCCESS} comes to the fore. You develop the capacity to be a supersalesman. You can join the million dollar round table.' 'If you believe fervently enough, if you pray with enough devotion, if you will overcome your shyness and your diffidence, you will open yourself up to love and to feeling, you will gain social acceptance and even the marriage which is your heart's desire.'

Now, faith can work miracles, except when faith doesn't work miracles. I remember the young lady who sat in my office. Her eyes were dry of tears. She was beyond them. She sat there kneading her handkerchief. "Rabbi," she said, "I believed. I believe. Really I do. I went to my synagogue. I prayed. I was desperately in love. I wanted to be part of this man's life. I felt, if only I could have confidence. And you know, Rabbi, I did gain confidence. He did learn to respect me. But now he has left me, and I am with child." Faith can work miracles, except when faith works tragedy. I used to give the Book of Job to those who had been misled by the hucksters of faith. Job believed and suffered. Job was a man of faith and of virtue, a man who had every reason to be confident of his future. Yet Job's world disintegrated under him. ^{AND HE} ~~Job~~ had to confront the devastatingly simple question, "Can I still have faith if God man-handles me?" Can I still have faith if my God does not return kindness for devotion, reward

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for service?" When the three friends come to pay their condolence calls, they are afraid that Job's faith will be washed away with his tears. They seek to explain God's ways to Job. One of them ^{SAID} ~~says~~ to him, "Job, understand why God has put suffering into the world. Suffering teaches sympathy. Through our hurt we come to understand another's need and loneliness. We are better people for it. Suffering is not evil. Suffering is ^{EDUCATIVE AND HELPFUL} ~~purposeful~~." Another friend ^{SAID} ~~says~~ to him, "Job, have patience. The world has a way of balancing out. Hitler may stand tall for a decade, but he will fall defeated in his own air raid bunker. Have patience, and you will see your reward." His third friend says to him, "Job, have a little more perspective on yourself. Each of us, being mortal, has an ego, and our ego blinds us to our own nature. We think we are good and responsible. We deny most evidence of irresponsibility." ^{Admit that you have done some of the things}

Job rejects these explanations. Nothing that he has done merits the sentence that has been placed upon him. Then a strange and marvelous turn occurs in the story of Job. These conversations between Job and his friends are abruptly and without explanation cut off, and God enters the picture. God speaks to Job out of a whirlwind. God offers no excuses for what has happened. He does not say, "Satan and I were arguing and yours was a test case -- quite out of the ordinary." Rather, God speaks to Job of divine grandeur and of man's finite measure. "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?"

"Canst thou bind the chains of the Pleiades or loose the bands of Orion?"

"Didst thou give to the horse its strength?" "Is it by thy wisdom that the hawk soars in the heavens?" Then Job, after this magnificent theophony,

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makes a most revealing statement. "I had heard of Thee with the hearing of mine ears. But now I see Thee with mine own eyes."

~~Interpreting passage~~
I have discovered a strange truth about tragedy. Tragedy rarely snuffs out faith. One would expect that a man who has been beaten to his knees would cry out and deny. Sometimes one does hear complaint. But there is a stronger truth which sweeps over us at the moment of death or of fear.

From our knees we look up, and we see, beyond the normal world of our
~~AND FAMILIAR~~
~~SAFE routines and of our ambitions,~~ that larger world, the world of thrust and of
power, of limitless power and of energy. We admit the power which we could not stay, the death we could not avoid, the cycle of life and death, before which we can only bow in submission.

My ears have heard the logic of faith, but now I see the power of God with my own eyes. At the moment of tragedy we come closest to an awareness of the fullness of God's might. We come closest to faith.

Faith is not an axiom of God's goodness but of God's greatness. It comes to us not because we can explain that which happens to us in this life, but because there is life itself, and death. Because there are joys, and tears. Because our eyes begin to see the expanding infinity of which we are only the most infinitesimal of parts.

~~Faith is not an axiom of God's goodness but of God's greatness.~~
There is a professor of philosophy at Princeton University, Dr. Walter Kaufman, who has written a most interesting volume, entitled The Faith of a Heretic. Dr. Kaufman makes much of the Book of Job. He notes how Job rejects the arguments of his friends. He sees how Job confronts the "tragic power," as he calls it, of the world, and he says, 'This is the ultimate truth

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of philosophy. There is a power beyond us, and this power makes no sense
except that it is there, and man must, as best he can and with what composure
and ~~equanimity~~ ^{ON ITS OWN} he can muster, simply accept life ~~in its~~ ^{its} terms. His is a
modern stoicism. The ultimate logic of this position is the logic that Nietzsche
drew a hundred years ago. There is, beyond, an absurd power, a power which
has no purpose and no meaning as far as it affects our lives. Then let us,
each of us, strive to make what provisions we can against it. No more
compunctions about morality. No more sensitivity to another's need. Let us
simply ~~build~~ ^{MAKE} our castle as ~~strong~~ ^{STURDY} as we can and hide behind ~~it~~ ^{THEIR WALL} for as much
protection as ~~it~~ ^{THEY} afford. / If this ~~position~~ ^{ARGUMENT HAS MERIT} has meaning, all the sanctities of
Jewish life have no meaning -- the Mitzvah, the Commandment; the Torah,
the learning; prophecy, the moral passion. Fortunately, Dr. Kaufman, and
Nietzsche before him, and the Stoics long before ~~mis~~ ^{ONLY PARTIALLY} understood Job's ~~meaning~~ ^{IS MEANING}
For the God who reveals Himself in Job reveals not only naked power, but
purposeful power. He speaks always of the wisdom which has been imprinted
onto and into the universe, the order that is there. The world is not an
aimless structure. It has form. It has ~~dimension~~ ^{DIRECTION}. If we cannot comprehend
the totality of that purpose, we can still sense it. / Here, I think, is the ultimate
philosophic implication of the Book of Job. His three friends have multiplied
explanations. They have sought to explain why ~~it is that~~ the righteous sometimes
suffer. Each of these ~~explanations~~ ^{THEIR REASONS} has a certain merit, ~~to it~~. We do become
more sympathetic when we have suffered. / We have seen giddy young folk who,
when first faced by tragedy, mature and become adult. / ~~There is a strange~~ ^{THERE IS A STRANGE}
~~way in the world~~ ^{WAY IN THE WORLD} in which, given enough time, the wicked are brought low. It
way in the world in which given enough time, the wicked are brought low.

What is
wisdom to
be found

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is true that our egos blind us to some of our favorite faults. / But each of

~~these explanations only explains one aspect of the total problem.~~ What Job

does is to reject each as a total explanation, ^{For it has discovered} and he learns what we must all ^{finally and}

^{humbly} admit, that life is ultimately beyond logic. ^{human} Life ^{—YET THAT IT WEARS} can

^{THE SEAL OF A DIVINE LOGIC} simply not be circumscribed neatly within the categories of ~~human~~ thought.

In this truth I ^{FOUND} ~~find~~ the meaning of Job today ^{ON THIS MY LATEST READING} in 1964. I find myself

increasingly surrounded by men and women who insist on thinking in neat and

complete philosophies. They call them "isms." There is an orthodoxy and,

a heresy; truth and a deviation. I care not now what that "ism" is -- socialism,

conservatism, liberalism, communism, constitutionalism. You've heard

these words bandied about and you've seen people who are caught up in these

theories. Ultimately the Book of Job gives the lie to all of them, for life is

^{complete philosophy} ~~beyond theory.~~ ~~We read this morning that magnificent chapter in Job which~~

Job asks, "where is wisdom? Where is the place of understanding?" It is not in

theology. It is not even in the Bible. Where is the place of wisdom?

"Behold, the reverence of the Lord, that is wisdom." And ~~what is the place~~

of understanding? "Behold, to depart from evil, that is understanding."

Life is beyond logic. It is not the ^{building of NO AT} ~~splitting of logical~~ theories but the building

^{wholesome} of cities which teaches truth to men. It is not the precision of one's argument

but the justice of one's law which establishes truth in life.

If we can remember this openness of discussion, this freedom for

experimentation, this willingness to listen to other points of view, Job

continues to have meaning for us.

And here we touch Job's enigma, for ^{As} ~~when~~ we pick up Job ^{at this wayward} next, what

Job will we find?