



Daniel Jeremy Silver Collection Digitization Project

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Reel
45

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718

Money, 1959.

MONEY

Fortune Hunters, Penny Pinchers,
and Man's Real Needs

The Temple
December 13, 1959

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver

As you know, we post weekly our lecture topic on a bulletin board opposite The Temple office. One morning this week, as I was coming to my desk, I passed this bulletin board and I saw standing before it one of our Temple janitors. He looked at me and said, "Rabbi, I see that you are going to talk about money. Don't knock it. It has its uses."

Money has its uses. It is their inheritance which permits a Rockefeller or a Kennedy to spend a lifetime free of the responsibilities of vocation in public service. Ask any of the three and a half million currently unemployed in America as to the value of money and they will give you a succinct, direct answer. How shabby life is, how frustrating life is without the essentials that money alone can buy -- food, and clothing, and shelter, and medical care.

~~Judaism is not a philosophy or a religion which agrees with the principle~~
~~that the love of money is the root of all evil.~~ ^{my 1-18-62} Judaism has always respected
 business as a profession and has refused to look upon the market place as a
 compromising area of activity. Indeed, before the rabbinate became a separate
 profession many of the scholars and the sages of ~~our people~~ engaged in trade
 and commerce in order to make a living. ~~Early Christianity made an ideal of~~
~~poverty and valued highly the renunciation of worldly possessions.~~ Jesus
~~looked forward to the immediate coming of an end, of a millennium, and he was~~

~~worried lest the cares of family and farm and factory should preclude any~~
~~man's soul discipline which alone could prepare him spiritually for life in the~~
~~messianic age. Judaism did not agree with this hope. Judaism has always~~
~~looked to an on-going, a flowing-on, a continuity of life, and, recognizing~~
~~this, Judaism has always insisted that the production of goods, and the~~
~~exchange of goods, and the distribution of goods is an essential, human~~
activity, and ^{is and ought to} ~~that~~ the man who carries on this activity honorably should be a
respected man, and ~~that every man has a responsibility to gain and to earn~~
~~sufficient to provide for his needs and those of his family and if possible,~~
~~for as many of the opportunities in life as it is within his power to earn.~~
Too much ~~has been a rotten thing since~~
~~Judaism does not denigrate this age because it is a materialistic age. For,~~
^{yet we must} ~~after all, it is the materialistic quality of this age which has permitted us~~
~~to destroy poverty, to destroy that hopeless kind of existence which was~~
^{be it - and answer to us -}
suffered by ninety percent of previous generations where they knew only
exertion, only insecurity, only an early death -- none of the beauty, none of
the color, none of the leisure, none of the recreation, none of the opportunity
of life.

I speak for a tradition whose Bible says, with all candor, "The feast is
made for laughter, wine makes glad the life of man, and money answers many
things." ~~And as an individual, I share your bewilderment and Ogden Nash's:~~

~~"Oh, money, money, money,
Though I am not one who thinks thee holy,
How I stop to wonder
Thou canst go out so fast,
When thou comest in so slowly."~~

It is precisely because money is such a useful commodity that it is such a
temptation to ~~man~~. The Bible has ^{at} as one of its ~~repeating~~ ^{utter} and repetitive
~~orders~~, that man should avoid all greed, all money-addiction, all over emphasis
on money which might cause him to seek to achieve it by other than honest
labor. When Joshua led the troops of Israel into Canaan he ordered that, when

the first city was conquered, all the booty of that city was to be consecrated to the Lord, taboo to the people. It was to be used for the sanctuary for the worship of God. One of his generals, a man named Achan, saw, ~~according to our Bible~~, a wedge of gold, and a mantle of silver, and many shekels of treasure, and he coveted this booty and he violated the taboo, and he took it for his own. ~~And God, to teach Israel a lesson~~, not only destroyed Achan but his whole family and they are buried in a valley which became known as the Valley of Troubles, that all who passed this valley might know that God condemns the man who is greedy, the man who is so involved with money that he does not question the means by which he makes his ~~livelihood and earns his living~~. ~~And even the~~ king of Israel was not above castigation when he violated the law of God, for God had said, "Thou shalt not take unto thee idols of gold and idols of silver", and Ahab, king of Israel, forgot this. Ahab had all the land and all the treasure and all the wealth that any man could want. But near one of his vineyards there was a small vineyard belonging to a farmer, one Naboth, and by some happenstance the vines of Naboth were the most fruitful of all the vines in the valley. And Ahab coveted these vines. He made an offer of purchase unto Naboth -- a legitimate offer of purchase, but Naboth refused this offer. This land was his patrimony, the inheritance of his father. He expected to pass it on to his sons. He did not want to convert land into money, ~~which he~~ was afraid he might use, and it would disappear. And the king pouted and was sore put by this refusal of a subject to sell to his liege lord, and he reported the incident to his wife, Jezebel, a woman who was not known for her respect for anything but naked power, and Jezebel ordered two of her courtiers to go out and to bring false witness against Naboth, to accuse Naboth of the capital crimes of treason and of blasphemy, for she knew that once he was executed for those crimes his land would revert to the crown. And so it came pass, but as Ahab hastened from his palace in Samaria to take possession of

this vineyard, God ordered Elijah to hasten from the desert to the vineyard and there to say to Ahab, "Wilt thou kill and also take possession?" In the very place where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth, there will they lick the blood of Ahab." No one was above being castigated and condemned when his love for money, his acquisitive instinct became so strong that he violated the law -- that which was just, that which was proper, that which was honorable, and that which was right. This is the law of Israel, and it is the law which the prophets bespeak time and time again when they condemn those whose whole purpose in life is to add house to house and field to field.

There are some who say that this kind of moral castigation is a bit of pomposity on the part of weak men. Nietzsche said it: "Every man has his price. If you put sufficient temptation before any man, his self-discipline will crumble and his avarice, his stupidity, his greed will come to the fore." I think it was Voltaire who said that in matters of money every man has the same religion. And sometimes, as we've read in the past weeks ~~of~~ the confessions of cupidity and weakness in our newspapers, we might be tempted to agree with this low estimate of human nature. Indeed, I have heard the Van Dorens ^{of our day} and the Allen ~~Frieds and the Joe Finans~~ defend ^{ed} it time and time again on the grounds that, after all, anyone placed in the same position would probably have done the same thing. But the point is this -- we would not have done the same thing. You and I would have had too much respect for ~~our character~~, for ourselves, for our own ~~sense of personal worth and dignity~~ long to have continued living and working and taking from the trough of the fraudulent and the "fixed" -- the "payola". All of us know of business men who have thrown out of their offices valued clients when these men insisted that they undertake some illegal ~~form~~ of activity. All of us know of the tens and hundreds of young American boys and girls who every day dedicate their lives to the professions of teaching and social work and nursing and the ministry -- professions in which a man deliberately turns

his back to the values of the market-place, professions in which the dollar is hard to come by, and does not come by often. All of us know of men and women who have been given important positions of financial trust and during a whole lifetime had discharged this trust honorably and well. Every man does not "have his price". There are men of honor, many men, most men. It is up to us not to accept the low esteem which the cynic would impose upon human nature, and to require of ourselves the highest standard. For a society which judges its ~~actions in this tolerant mood which~~ excuses and exculpates all manner of weakness is a society which will not be governed by the law but by greed, ~~not a society at peace~~ but a jungle of men seeking and searching and grasping and clawing all that can be had at the expense of anyone.

The Biblical insistence on rectitude and on rightness is an insistence which we, in our twentieth century, ought not easily to cast over and to cast aside. And we ought not to forget that the headlines may belabor time and again the confession of weakness, for this is perhaps newsworthy. It is not newsworthy when every day or any day a man abides by what is right and what is proper. This we do not read of in our newspapers, but we ~~can~~ see it in our communities and we ought not to forget that we have seen it.

Recently, I read a learned quarterly which was devoted to the religions of contemporary America. There were four articles. The first article dealt with Protestant Christianity. The second article dealt with Roman Catholicism, the third with Judaism, and the fourth with Mammonism, the worship of money. The point of the article was this: that ^{the western world} ~~America~~ is the first society in the history of the world which has attempted artificially to stimulate the cupidity and the greed of men. We have a multi-billion dollar industry whose sole and single purpose is to convince us that we ought to buy things which we did not know we wanted in the first place. And the article said that there is an inevitable progression or deterioration of values. The more we have, the more

we want; the more we want, the more we must earn; the more we must earn, the more time we spend away from our families, away from our leisure, away from our cultural interests in the pursuit of money. The more we must earn, the more tempted we are to take the easy road, the slightly illegal, ~~the criminal~~ road to the making of money. And there is some merit to the statement made by this article, for we have dinning at us every minute of every day all the media of communication with one purpose -- to convince us that happiness can be bought. Sometimes their activities are laughable. I am told that one dentifrice spent six million dollars to convince young American girls that if they brush their teeth with this particular deodorizing tooth paste they were guaranteed to enjoy and receive love. And I know that there was a particular high priced automobile which devoted many, many millions of dollars to convince the American home owner that if he drove this car he was assured of status in his community and the respect of all the members of that community. Now most of us laugh at these attempts by the merchandizing industries to convince us that happiness can be bought, and yet all of us must agree that there are some striking parallelisms between Mammonism, the love of money -- Mammon was the Phoenician god of money -- and religion as we know it -- theism. The will to provide is as basic as the will to believe, and like the Christian monk, we know of men who have taken vows of abnegation, who have turned away from all the pleasures of life, from leisure, from family, from marriage, and devoted themselves with a single-minded intensity to serve their God. You know, the money life has a calendar, very much like the religious life -- half holidays, Sabbath, and the first and tenth of every month, and on the fifteenth of April one grand Yom Kippur, a day of awesome stock-taking and reckoning. And the orthodox Mammonist, ~~as~~ his messiah ~~he~~ believes in his miracles, the miracle of a windfall profit on the stock market -- ~~and the messiah~~ ^{the} of an infallible financial adviser. We live in a world which is permeated as no world before ours has by financial, materialistic,

mercantile concerns. And though ~~we~~ disbelieve and laugh at a great deal of the advertising tommyrot which is placed before us, all of us have been affected in one way or another by it. Buy a new gadget for your home, a new electrical appliance -- it assures the stability of your marriage. We must move into a certain neighborhood and have a certain number of rooms in our house -- only then will our child grow up into a fine human being, only then will he have the right kind of friends. And we go on a commercial binge every year at this time in which we exculpate all of our guilt feelings, all of our sense of inadequacy in the raising of our children, in our relations with our wives and with our parents, by presenting them with ever more grand presents, as if the presentation of this present, these material things will make up for all of our inadequacies, all the things ~~which~~ we would have liked to have done but had not succeeded in doing.

We ought to remember this, ~~my friends~~ -- that happiness can not be bought, but unhappiness can be bought. Happiness can not be bought -- that is self-evident. We cannot buy self respect, we cannot buy love, we cannot buy happiness. But unhappiness can be bought, and we see it in those about us. A couple comes to my office, happily married for many years. They had children. They decided that they ought to change neighborhoods. They ought to undertake to buy a larger house, to buy a second car, to buy more expensive furniture, richer drapes, better art forms for the house. They over-extend themselves financially, and where they enjoyed love and happiness and family solidarity in the lesser home and the lesser neighborhood, in the bigger home, in the plusher neighborhood there is bickering and there is battling and there is tension because everyone brings the frustrations of financial pressure. Unhappiness can be bought. "I am going to work," the woman told me, "I am going to leave my child with a neighbor because I must work because we have purchased too much. I must leave my child and earn a living." Unhappiness, my friends, can

be bought.

Having said this, we recall the Greek legend of King Midas. Midas was promised by the god Bacchus fulfillment of his fondest desire. You remember what he asked for -- the golden touch. He was promised the golden touch. He touched a book, and the book became gold, and Midas was delighted. He touched his cane, his sceptor, and the cane and the sceptor became gold, and Midas was delighted. But then, in his happiness, he touched his son, and his son became gold, and Midas was bereaved. Wealth is not the answer. The acquisition of money is not the answer to the problems of our lives. "Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith than a house full of feasting and strife." Making money, having money, acquiring money sometimes brings a sense of loneliness besides the many worries of managing and maintaining the money. Do you remember the newspaper soubriquet of the so often unhappily married Barbara Hutton -- poor little rich girl? I wonder how much happiness Charles Lindberg received from his fame and from his money when it made him the object of such national attention that someone kidnapped his son. Money is not the solution to the problems which confront us in life, despite the many blessings that money can bring into our lives. What, then, is the key to human happiness? Well, strangely, there is an almost identical parallel to the Midas story in our Bible. The king is named Solomon, not Midas, but in a dream King Solomon is promised by God the fulfillment of any wish which he might care to utter. And what does Solomon ask - the wisest of Israel's kings? He asks God, not for riches, not for wealth, not even for length of life. He asks for a _____, an understanding heart. What is an understanding heart? An understanding heart is a heart which can make us aware that there are things which need to be bought and things which need not to be bought, that human values are more important than material things. There is a beloved legend which comes from our Midrash and was known in every one of the ancient communities of Israel. It

has been recreated for us by the nineteenth century Yiddish writer, Isaac Loeb Peretz. I'd like to read it to you.

"Once upon a time there lived in Turbin a porter named Tevya. The porter was poor beyond description. On a Thursday he was standing in the marketplace, his coat-tails rolled up under the robe about his hips, and he was looking about for a possible turn of fortune that would enable him to earn something for the Sabbath. But the stores all about him were empty, with nobody going in or coming out, with not a single customer in sight who was likely to need help in carrying bundles. Tevya lifted up his eyes to heaven with a prayer that the Sabbath might pass without sadness and that at least on the Sabbath his dear Sarah and the children might be spared the pangs of hunger. In the midst of his prayer Tevya felt someone tugging at his coat-tail, and turning about, he saw a German, dressed like a forester or a hunter, wearing a hat with a feather and a sweater with green trimmings. And the stranger spoke in pure German as follows: 'Listen, Tevya. Seven years of plenty are in store for you, seven years of good fortune, success, and golden treasure. You merely have to choose when you want these years. If you want, fate can smile upon you from this day. You can be in a position to buy up all of Turbin. After seven years, however, you will again become as poor as you are now. But if you prefer, the blessings of good fortune can come at the end of your allotted span of life and you will leave this world as the wealthiest of persons.' The stranger, as later became apparent, was Elijah, the prophet, who always appears incognito and was now disguised as a German. But Tevya thought an ordinary magician was confronting him and he answered, 'Dear sir, just leave me alone, I am the poorest of the poor, I know it. May you be spared such a fate. I haven't anything even for the Sabbath. I can't bother to spend time listening to your drivel.' The German was, however, persistent, and repeated the same words again and again and again, until Tevya began to take the matter seriously.

'Well, my dear sir, if you really mean what you're saying and are not just out of your mind, then I must tell you that whenever I face a problem I am accustomed to ask my wife Sarah for her advice, and so, without consulting her I can not give you a definite answer.' 'All right,' said the German. 'It's good to talk things over with a wife. Go ahead and ask her.' Tevya again looked about on all sides. No prospective customers were in sight, so what could he possibly lose? When Sarah saw him coming - it was summertime - she ran out to meet him. She was overjoyed, for she thought he was coming home early and was bringing her money for the Sabbath. He at once disillusioned her. 'No, dearest. The Lord has not yet bestowed any earnings on me. But there did come to me a German.' And Tevya then told her the entire story, how the German had foretold seven years of plenty, now the German wanted a decision whether they were to begin now or before death. What would she advise?. Without much thought, Sarah replies, 'Go, dear husband, tell the German that we want the seven good years to begin this very second.' 'Why, Sarah,' asked Tevya, astonished, 'after seven years we'll be poor again, and to go down the steps of fortune is much worse than never to have climbed up those steps.' 'Don't worry about the remote future, my dear. Let us meanwhile take what we get and let us thank the Lord for His blessings from day to day. We need the money now to pay for our children's schooling. They have just been sent home. Just look at them, playing over there in the sand.' These last words were sufficient. Tevya ran back to the German, and the seven good years began immediately. Time flies like a winged arrow, and the seven good years sped past. At their end the German reappeared to tell Tevya that in the coming night the gold in the ground would disappear, as well as the gold in the house, and even whatever gold Tevya might have sequestered with other people would disappear. He left Tevya standing in the marketplace, just as seven years earlier, with the same coat-tails tucked up under his hips, still looking about for a possible customer.

'Listen, Tevya. The seven years are over.' Tevya replied, 'Tell it to my wife Sarah, since she was in charge of our wealth throughout the entire seven years.' So both Tevya and the German went to the edge of town and to the same mud hut in the field. They met Sarah in front of the door. She was as poorly dressed as ever, but her face was all smiles. The German repeated his message that the seven years were over, and Sarah replied that they had not even begun to have had seven good years, that they had never regarded the gold as their own, because only what a person earns with his ten fingers was properly his own. The wealth that came unsought and without sweat was merely a pledge from our dear Lord, deposited with people to hold for the poor. From the gold she had taken only the sum necessary to pay for her children's education, to pay the doctor for treating them in their illness, and to give to the poor. The rest was still untouched. If the Lord, blessed be His name, found a better keeper for His gold, let Him take it and turn it over to such a person. Elijah the prophet listened until the end of her tale and then disappeared from sight. He repeated her words before the heavenly seat of justice, and the court of heaven ruled that there was no better keeper here on earth than Sarah, and so seven years never came to an end so long as Tevya and his wife Sarah remained among the living!

That is an understanding heart, a heart that knows what is required of the money that we have and what is not required. A heart that knows what should be spent and what should be saved and what need not be earned. A heart which refuses to pressure a husband to greater exertion than is good for his health. A heart which refuses to be so involved in the needs of earning a living that it forgets ~~the~~ responsibilities as father, as husband, as citizen. I am told that the greatest cause for divorce in American today is the woman who refuses to give up her profession to make a home for the family and the husband who is so involved in the cares of his business that he has no time to

attend to squiring his wife, to raising his children. This is tragic. This is the setting of material need above human need and forgetting that the material is important only as it serves the human, only as it serves man. Would that God might grant to each of us, my friends, that understanding heart. Would that He might enable us to enjoy all that is meant for us to be enjoyed, but would that He help us to spare ourselves the tragedy of over-commitment, the disease of money addiction, the inability to differentiate between what we really need and what is essential to living. Remember the old doggerel from depression days, "Oh, how I sang the blues because I had no shoes, until, walking upon the street, I met a man who had no feet." Oh, that we might be granted insight in our day to what is necessary and required and what is trivial and vain. The understanding heart -- that is the key to successful living in a money age.



Kaddish

Friday DEC. 11

Sunday " 13

Those who passed away this week
JOSEPH A. GUGGENHEIM

Vahrzeits

BERNARD FIELDS
ERNESTINE BLUME DEGROOT
JEROME SANFORD ROSE
LEOPOLD ARNSTEIN
DAVID C. HABER
DR. EDWARD J. GREENE
ROSA KOBLITZ
LESLIE JOYCE HAAS
LINDA JOAN HAAS
FLORA ROSENBERG
SOL R. BING
JOSEPH LEHMAN WITTE
BEN ROSENWATER
IGNATIUS SCHOENBERGER

ADOLPH KOHN
ISADORE D. WERTHEIMER
MINNIE FULDAUER
BENJAMIN MESHORER

Money
Fitting Hunkers -
Peany Pichers -
and Man's Real Needs

im

I have more trouble with the "new" and "old" money.
 The new money is the money that is being
 printed and is the money that is being
 used to buy the goods and services that
 we need. The old money is the money
 that is being used to buy the goods and
 services that we need. The new money
 is the money that is being printed and
 is the money that is being used to buy
 the goods and services that we need.

need of self and; Jas. Bee not love or be much place in an unusually religious
 person however in a comparatively profane person. But love is ~~not~~ no passion
 in itself but is, the honorable passion with a regard to the
 elements - indeed, therefore religious passion a full one passion may
 a leading passion is so as to be in the world in the world.

[illegible]

All is precisely the opposite of what would be expected in a normal population. Far less need for going to more honest money is found because there are no shoddy, 5 cent or 10 cent coins. And most men can and seem to have more in mind in the smaller bills to have

in. Redupella & m. find only one more but suspect find it all the contents of
her & a name of derivation

The 3½ million unemployed unemployed in America demanded food money and kind work for 20 & more been down one paid weekly need subsistence - future.

Mr. Ogden must appreciate feeling of need if we realize the necessity.

to money, money means nothing & can not necessarily show value itself. But I often hope to reason like you have said that we must as fast as we can convert it to reality.

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

corn, 900 mms. - the model of posture - low, rounded breast and the
relax to rest. 3 mm. extendible forward posture.

But a caveat that in connection with the use of any of these most common stills
never put it in the laboratory until it is a little older. The Budek's oil engine does not work
shown before the 3rd of April. We ~~must not~~ ~~any~~ ~~and~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~oil~~ ~~engine~~ ~~is~~
~~done for~~ ~~the~~ ~~oil~~ ~~engine~~ ~~is~~

by the same future history - was - had and the most also good to make a future.
 On. Paddy, was a future master - the railroad land was a future - for
 Cinders die - True the future Sudding + fullness and a very rapid & harmonious - but
 he never found ^{made} the future for the same and the future and is a surprise.

celebrated in our "Portland Institute" - (see record book in the Collection to August and
 September; English - This is a good building & well equipped - a completely finished -
 and superbly equipped - built in our first years before we had the real one - some
 to meet the use of the Institute - more & the Institute & well equipped - we are all prepared
 better and we are all well to make progress - The day - June. John was in
 England - around by the coast - and to see us to see progress - Can we get the
 progress to be completed in our progress - more on our own way from - progress
 from around John at a National Council - well to be done - good progress, find in
 to many, progress - etc.

* Principal part for short term in auditing - expenditure - Expenditure
 a. audits undertaken - Preparation, collation, verification - Funds of assets - Funds of liabilities
Funds of assets - Funds of liabilities

rules of conduct - I want you to know
Hygiene must be observed it is all we have left ^{old} can be
The best way - as I said
I'll give you again

much he needs no more to worry on other
lands ~~hunting~~ - means all a return

(0982) 2nd

Whish and need need of men a stone

~~B. M. - very red inside & blue~~

~~25 September - Collier "Cane"
veg around on under today's
land cast - some grass
between grass & mud~~

What do we really want

also not many alone - under most - quiet - under the red on a map of
blame;

Wanted to be very - narrow - keep

Wanted to be very - safe - open

Wanted to be very - open - to be

Interested in the local Bible - to be in the - promised of the
and of the - to be in the - to be in the

Hand - Keep perspective - people to be

to be in the

to be in the

to be in the

