



## Daniel Jeremy Silver Collection Digitization Project

Featuring collections from the Western Reserve Historical Society and  
The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives

### **MS-4850: Daniel Jeremy Silver Papers, 1972-1993.**

Series III: The Temple Tifereth-Israel, 1946-1993, undated.

Sub-series B: Sermons, 1950-1989, undated.

---

Reel  
47

Box  
15

Folder  
790

Yom Kippur sermon, 1964.

## YOM KIPPUR SERMON

The Temple  
September 15, 1964

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver

Yom Kippur, my friends, compels honesty. So let's be honest about it. The Kol Nidre is a most improbable beginning to our holiest day. It is not a prayer. In thought it is neither philosophic nor profound. It cannot even claim that its language has the grace of poetry. How is it, then, that a people whose genius runs to the spiritual <sup>is</sup> was content with a rather flat legal form as the inaugural theme of this worship.

The answer lies in the meanings within meanings of which language is capable. Take Lincoln's Gettysburgh Address. It is something far more than a succinct and well-written graveyard dedicatory. It is the testament of a man, of a leader, who anguished to see his nation divided against itself, who refused to triumph in victory, and who asked only that his people be reunited in a common dedication to liberty, to the highest aspirations of brotherhood. It is the man and the occasion, especially the quality of the man, which establishes the immortality of language. So it is with the Kol Nidre. The Kol Nidre reaches us back a thousand years into the tears of our people. The Kol Nidre was written by an unknown sage, a member of <sup>ix</sup>the Spanish community which was given the outrageous choice, apostasy or death. They chose to dissemble. They chose to dress as did the majority and to attend year long the worship of the majority. But once a year, furtively, they climbed down the cellar stairs. They rapped with a secret password at the door, and they entered into the prayers of their people. The Kol Nidre was a sort of accrediting credential.

It was spoken before the service began, and it said, Our conversion was wrung from us. In our hearts we have remained of Israel. Let us this night, then, be numbered again in Israel.

And over the long centuries, other communities, adrift and alone, were forced to speak the Kol Nidre, and in time the whole people adopted the Kol Nidre to our worship, for really they were one. One in the yellow badge. One in the Inquisition. One in the pogrom. One at Dachau. Their courage encouraged. And if we were of those/fortunate enough<sup>A</sup> not to be put to the supreme test, their courage demanded of us the higher quality of faith.

The Kol Nidre speaks the language of the heart. Kol Nidre demands of us this night that we knit close the ties of faith, the ties which bind us to our God and to our people. And the Kol Nidre stands as a symbol that the worship of Yom Kippur is written in the language of the heart. In feeling, and in memory, in music and in fast, in discipline and in chant, the Kol Nidre demands that we become part of the worship, that we cease to be an audience and become a congregation caught up in the spirit, in the grip of this day.

Have you ever tried to describe Yom Kippur to a stranger? I have spent time outlining the basic elements of ~~the~~<sup>a</sup> service, explaining the history of the grand hymns, the Kol Nidre and of the ASSANA TOKEN, speaking of the whitened, unadorned altar, of the fast and of its meaning. When I am done I have the feeling that though I have described Yom Kippur fully, I have failed to describe Yom Kippur as it really is. For Yom Kippur is something more than a dusk to dusk fast, something more than a dusk to dusk worship. Yom Kippur is the Sabbath of Sabbaths. Yom Kippur is the sum of all of its rituals and of all of its prayers or, better yet, Yom Kippur is the impress of this day upon us.

What makes the fast of Yom Kippur out of the ordinary? Those who are strangers to the fast think of it as an ordinary, rather prosaic denial. And indeed, logically, we do not need a fast to remind us that on this day our thoughts are on matters spiritual and not worldly. But the fast unites us with thirty centuries of devotion, and how shall we explain this to a stranger. Why could not the basic themes of Yom Kippur be set out in one evening's service? Why do we need a day long liturgy. Logically, we do not. Indeed, logically Yom Kippur can be set down in a few brief sentences. Here is its program: in the bustle of life often we become confused. We lose sight of our goals and sometimes we lose sight even of ourselves. It is a matter of prudence, therefore, and of wisdom periodically to stop, to take stock, to ask ourselves if we are truly advancing in the directions which we desire. ~~The~~ Yom Kippur reminds us that our failings not only dismay God, but they are a source of dismay to us. Let us therefore remark our sins, rectify them as far as is humanly possible. Let us be the better and the purer for this occasion.

It is easily said, but as we set these thoughts down on paper we might as well be writing them in invisible ink. For what separates, what distinguishes these lines from any of those periodic moments of self awareness in which we resolve we will take ourselves finally in hand, improve the quality of our living, become the kind of person we always dreamed of.

Where is the power of Yom Kippur? Where in these lines is the spiritual magnetism of the day which draws the household of Israel, the pious and the uncertain, to worship? Where is the confidence which we brought tonight to this sanctuary that we could leave it tomorrow evening the cleaner and the better for this experience.

The close things of life are best left undescribed. How would you describe love? How would you describe the touching of hands, the warming glance, the confidence of respect, the joy that wells up within, the pleasures shared which can never be explained to another. How would you explain love?

Yom Kippur is of the near things of our faith, intimate to us, and perhaps we were better left <sup>hkd</sup> it without description. But let me touch Yom Kippur -- this spirit, this mood, this power -- from another angle. Let me ask why it was that our fathers architected and sculpted this worship as they did, in the language of the heart. Why were they not satisfied with a single evening of worship? Why were they not satisfied to set out the imperatives of our moral improvement simply and succinctly? You know, by nature we are not a long winded people. Our Psalms are a triumph of succinct piety. The Bible is a careful distillate of a thousand years of religious creativity. We are not a squirrel people. We are not afraid and have never been afraid of tossing aside the chaff. Why, then, the prolonged, day long worship? Because an evening's worship is not enough. Because this day we must listen with the heart to a service which speaks in the language of the heart. For Yom Kippur is not only a favorite annual devotion. It is a spiritual exercise of the highest order. Yom Kippur insists on a reorientation of our lives. Yom Kippur calls upon us to confront our persistent failings, our bleakest of habits, and somehow to rechannel these into more wholesome directions. And our habits, our persistent failings, simply do not give in to the commands of reason and logic. We have a trigger temper. We know what it means to blow up. Having vented our spleen, we know the meaning of remorse, the full ugliness of our anger. We counsel ourselves that we will <sup>DR:IE</sup> our irascibility, and we do -- for a day, or two -- and

then some stupidity, some carelessness brings the flush of blood again to our cheeks, and we erupt. Our habits simply do not surrender to reason.

Here is an easy-going, lackadaisical fellow. He promises himself tonight that he will finally make something of his life, he will be up and at it. How many times did he promise this to himself before? How many times has he settled back into the old comfortable habits?

Need I remind you that Americans smoke more today than they did before the Surgeon General's report? We simply do not listen, even to our own best advice. Our habits are in the power of our will, of our heart, and we change our habit only when we have a change of heart. What moves the heart? What causes us finally to take ourselves in hand and to say, "I will change," and to mean it? Tragedy. Tragedy touches the heart. Many of those who were soldiers at Dachau opened the gates and saw the horror within became, in that instant, finer men. Their lives took on new direction. Volunteers suddenly confronted with raw pain or empty loneliness know in that instant a new dimension of responsibility. The Yiskor service, the memorial service of Yom Kippur, is not an unwarranted intrusion on this day of stock taking. Rather it is carefully placed. For memory compels. A life left incomplete, and what life is not left incomplete, demands that we continue, make our own, the responsibility. How many children have suddenly matured when the yoke was placed upon their shoulders. They become different people, themselves, but older. Themselves, but wiser. Themselves, but more dedicate.

Tragedy touches the heart. So does love. Love suddenly alerts us to the world without. We are no longer aliens. We are part of the passion of living, of family, of civilization, the gentler and the more generous of spirit, more sympathetic, more aware, and feeling. Love touches the heart. Love changes our ways of life. Tragedy and love, courage and sacrifice, ~~and~~

awe and reverence, yes, even fear -- these touch, move the heart, and these are all elements in this service on Yom Kippur.

Our fathers called this day " " --  
the day of fear and trembling. They felt themselves this day under a divine judgment, for life, for death. We sense this day's holiness. We know it to be a day set apart. We know that it speaks to us in the language of the heart, that our hearts can be crushed, can be bruised, and that we can be improved. Yom Kippur speaks with the language of the heart. Let me, then, rather than speak to you in a thematic, skeletal form of the basic themes of Yom Kippur, speak to you rather from the heart. Let me tell you what Yom Kippur means to me, the feelings that it evokes within. Perhaps you will catch an echo of your own reaction.

I cannot come to Yom Kippur except to know its uniqueness. The Bible calls this day the Sabbath of Sabbaths. We call it the High Holiday. The words matter not. It is a day apart. What makes it so? I do not know. Perhaps it is the thronging of the congregation. Perhaps it is the reverence of <sup>THE</sup> centuries. Perhaps it is the force of the truly majestic liturgy. Perhaps it is the simple fact of denial implied in the fast. Perhaps it is these, one or all. But Yom Kippur bespeaks its own holiness, and I do not seek to separate out the parts. I am only grateful for its significance. For Yom Kippur says to me, I know that you do not set great store by changes of personality, that you have resolved and seen your resolution slip away, but this night, somehow, you will be buoyed up, encouraged, the spirit of Yom Kippur is with you. It will bind to you the more firmly your promises and your pledges. And is it not true that that which we believe to be significant becomes significant? On Yom Kippur in the days of the ancient Temple the High Priest had two ordinary goats

brought before him. One he set aside as a sacrifice to God. On the head of the other he put his hand, and symbolically placed upon the head of that goat the guilt of the people. The goat was then driven out of the confines of the Temple, out of the gates of Jerusalem and into the howling wilderness. Now, our fathers were not naive nor simple men. They did not really believe that the goat carried out with it the sins of the people. But they did know that on Yom Kippur they felt cleansed and purified, renewed. Here was the symbolic expression of this renewal, this freedom, this breaking of the chains. That which is believed to be significant is significant, and I am grateful for the otherness, the holiness, of this day.

And as I feel the special quality of Yom Kippur, so on Yom Kippur I feel a special calm. In some ways this is passing strange. Yom Kippur is the night of the whole congregation. The temples are thronged. Yet tonight in the temple I am alone. I often feel when I walk into the congregation on Yom Kippur night that I am walking into myself. I do not know, really, why. Perhaps it is the calm, introspective, minor keyed music which accompanies our worship. Perhaps it is that I know that as the day draws on my mind will cease to wander back to my desk and to my calendar. The walls will shut out the noise and distraction of my daily life, and I will be alone -- alone with myself. Perhaps it is that on Yom Kippur I am with those whom I know and respect, and I lose a sense of being up for show, singled out. Those whom I respect stand with me and speak the words of confession. They, too, feel themselves awkward before the standard of God's measurement. They, too, know the meaning of stumbling and of failure. And as they are busy with their thoughts, so I am busy with mine. I am no longer ashamed. I am no longer alone, set apart. And not being alone, I find that I can shrug off, on Yom Kippur, all pride.

You know it is our way, the year long, to put our best foot forward, to put a bold face on it, and it is wise and it is prudent that we do so. Otherwise we could not go it in life. But sometimes our confidence and our pride encases us, envelops us, so that we do not hear the promptings of the conscience. It blinds us to the inner light within. On Yom Kippur I find that I can shrug off of my shoulders the mantle of pride. On Yom Kippur I find that I can come to myself without stumbling over a thousand invented excuses and rationalizations. I am alone with myself and my God. There is no shame in confession. God knows my sins before I utter them, and all who are with me this night share the imperfections of mortality.

And as the confession is repeated once, twice, then thrice, I find that I can easily read myself into each of its terms. Each of us has a favorite sin -- some terrible whopping lie from our childhood, some evil from our distant past -- which whenever we become awkward at a moment of confession we trot out, we repeat it. We have repeated it a dozen years and more, but it blinds us to the near reality, it blinds us to an awareness of the sins of the moment, of last year and of last month and of yesterday. I forget this favorite sin of mine on Yom Kippur, and I come to see the gray spots of my life as I now lead it, the compromises which need not have been made, the confidences that need not have been exchanged, the friendships offered which could not be cultivated, the carelessness which need not have been practiced. I see my life as it truly is. I find, on Yom Kippur, that confession comes easily. I often ask myself why. Yearlong I am tied up, within myself. I see myself only in the best of possible lights. "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of them all?" We are. But tonight I see myself, at least partially, as God must see me. I do not find the

words of admission difficult. Is it that I know that I will not be bogged down, becalmed in a sea of remorse? Perhaps. True, it is welcome at the very beginning of our worship, before a single act of contrition has been asked of us, God's promise is written large, "

-- And God said, I have forgiven you according to your request." God desires not the death of the sinner, but that he repent of the evil of his ways, and that he live. And what is our Torah portion of tomorrow morning? "See, I have set before thee this day the blessing and the curse, life and death. Choose ye life." The Shofar, I know, will sound tomorrow dusk. I will be reunited with God, reunited with my life, renewed. I know that if I take the returning road God will meet me more than half way. "

" "And as I went out to meet thee, I found thee coming my way."

The way back is a long way. We shy from the moments of apology and of admission, from the hard truths kept secret which must now be revealed. Yearlong we are afraid to reveal ourselves. Tonight we find that strength.

" "The way back is a long way. Yearlong we put off, we procrastinate, we say there will yet be time for the visit I propose, for the service I will tender. Yearlong we live with the illusion of our immortality. We deny to ourselves that we cannot even assure us of tomorrow. Tonight I can face my mortality. I know that the time for change is now. "

The way back is a long way. New disciplines must be found. Pleasures and indulgences must be set aside. I must find somehow within me a continuing strength, so that when the petty word, the feeble gesture comes to mind I put it aside, so that I can bridle my anger and my excess. Tonight I know that somehow I will find the strength. "

The way back is a long way, but tonight my heart has been tender and open. I hear the language of Yom Kippur. I feel a new freedom, a strengthening of new confidence. I feel the cleaner. The New Year dawns. I feel that I will somehow within it find a new life.

"

."

"When I went out to meet Thee, I found Thee coming my way." So this night what more can I say or do but to bless God for the power, for the thrust, of Yom Kippur.

"Praised art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who hast given us this Day of Atonement, a day of fear and of trembling, yet with it all a day of richest blessing. Amen.



Announcements

YOM KIPPUR EVENING

The Temple

MORNING SERVICES for the Day of Atonement - Wednesday, September 16 - 9:30 a.m.

A CHILDREN'S SERVICE will be held in The Temple at 1:30 p.m., Wednesday,

September 16. Children under school age should not be brought to these services. Parents are invited to accompany their children and to sit with them during the services.

AFTERNOON SERVICE - 2:45 p.m.

MEMORIAL SERVICE - 4:00 p.m. The doors of The Temple will be closed at the start of the service at 4:00 o'clock and will remain closed until the end of the Concluding Service.

Those members who are parked in the aisles of the parking lot are requested to leave promptly after services and remove their cars from the aisles as quickly as possible so that the parking lot may be ~~clear~~ cleared with the least amount of confusion.

identity - night - is an unrepentant winter, - so let's be honest about it,  
the KN is a most unrepentant operation to see behind my, it is  
not a prayer, it is rather prejudiced and placarded, the language is  
not even close to the goal of peace.

How is it that a people, whose genius remains so spiritual  
remains without until the flat and repetitive legal formulas  
which express no more than the spoken beliefs of the people  
and not of any religion at all and never fulfilled  
The assault, of course, is not done in the language of  
the surface formal meaning of the words, the real meaning  
address is for the secret and unspoken meanings  
bedeviling - Others equally well could have been spoken - but  
not by these of stupid and insensitive people and not by  
and his mission to make any thing clear or simple  
pleasure in riding - He is not only that all others can  
the vision of a man concerned in seeing a dedication to the  
highest hope of human brotherhood.

The man, the time, the spirit of the people will con style you  
under their spirituality, So it is not the KN which is speaking  
now and 1000 years and now into the time of our people's  
history, It is by an unknowing act of a committee of 5 people  
from the history of our country where "the people is  
Do not think of the people is not by perhaps the  
new light will shine. You say they have to do and  
attend the members of the majority - but in a year they  
should also step, knocked into a secret set of your spirit

at a certain point, the Jewish Agency in the program of the Jewish Agency

with the K.N. as an early activity, including the Jewish Agency

of the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency

of the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency

of the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency

of the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency

of the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency

of the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency

of the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency

of the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Agency







~~can not be a... of Y. K. - a... of...~~  
 Y.K. at rest of a... - but a...  
 address - a... of... of...  
 annual... of... of a... we  
by day... - because we...  
 our... simply because we...  
 need for us to do so

need a remedy...  
 18-ly...  
 persistent... - it is...  
 simply do not yield to... -



READER:

Ayn kay-lo-hay-nu,  
 Ayn ka-do-nay-nu,  
 Ayn k'-mal-kay-nu  
 Ayn k'mo-shee-aynu

Mee chay-lo-hay-nu  
 Mee cha-do-nay-nu  
 Mee ch'-mal-kay-nu  
 Mee ch'mo-shee-ay-nu

No-de lay-lo-hay-nu  
 No-de la-do-nay-nu  
 No-de l'-mal-kay-nu  
 No-de l'mo-shee-ay-nu

Bo-ruch E-lo-hay-nu  
 Bo-ruch A-do-nay-nu  
 Bo-ruch Mal-kay-nu  
 Bo-ruch Mo-shee-ay-nu

At-to hu E-lo hay-nu  
 At-to hu A-do-nay-nu  
 At-to hu Mal-kay-nu  
 At-to hu Mo-shee-ay-nu

אין פאלקווי.

Congregation:

There is none like our God;  
 There is none like our Lord;  
 There is none like our King;  
 There is none like our Savior.

Who is like our God?  
 Who is like our Lord?  
 Who is like our King?  
 Who is like our Savior?

We will give thanks to our God;  
 We will give thanks to our Lord;  
 We will give thanks to our King;  
 We will give thanks to our Savior.

Blessed be our God;  
 Blessed be our Lord;  
 Blessed be our King;  
 Blessed be our Savior.

Thou art our God;  
 Thou art our Lord;  
 Thou art our King;  
 Thou art our Savior.

(All rise and repeat singing.)

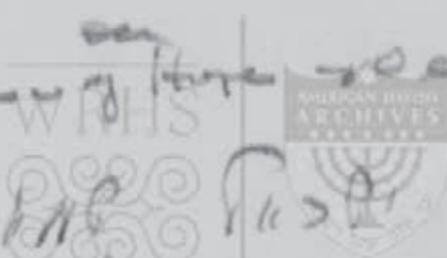
— BLESSING —

We walk out quietly, and do not speak until we are outside.  
 (Please leave your book on the table near the door.)

This is the hour of renewal - my the  
promises of this hour become ~~the~~ ~~part~~  
of your way of life - my the spirit of this hour  
~~begin~~  
~~is~~ in our heart encouraging us always  
to a fine service - my the faith of our  
hour ~~sustaining~~ us as we ~~are~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~NY~~ ~~and~~  
~~not~~ ~~of~~ ~~our~~ ~~to~~ ~~fulfill~~  
~~the~~ ~~of~~ ~~our~~ ~~to~~ ~~keep~~ ~~us~~ ~~close~~ ~~to~~

These - The ~~renewal~~ ~~of~~ ~~our~~ ~~hour~~ - ~~our~~  ~~Blessings~~

St. P. 1761  
Council of Renewal - Support us  
hundreds of Renewal ~~in~~  
~~the~~ ~~of~~ ~~our~~ ~~to~~  
~~the~~ ~~of~~ ~~our~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~of~~ ~~our~~ ~~to~~  
joined this night in  
prayer -









Tragedy, Love, ~~was~~, ~~subject~~ ~~was~~ ~~large~~ ~~on~~ ~~heart~~ - ~~then~~  
change ~~been~~ ~~any~~ ~~of~~ ~~left~~, ~~when~~ ~~been~~ ~~head~~ ~~have~~ ~~been~~ ~~moved~~ - ~~these~~ ~~words~~  
can ~~be~~ ~~used~~ ~~subject~~ ~~Y.K.~~ ~~But~~ ~~by~~ ~~means~~ ~~of~~ ~~some~~ ~~in~~ ~~major~~  
in money, in rate, in money, in circulation language, in  
correlly written - Rules been by bone to philosophy of Y.K., but  
we rules to right respond to it completely been - allowing  
to be used also by the read style examples - per case is  
unknown you my of you can sharpened

I can not improve Y.K. except to feel it a special quality -  
The P.B. use of "the Subject of Subjects" - no and it has the best quality - There  
are words - which are reflected in the words of Y.K. insert and  
uniqueness - I do not think that make it so, as some and number of an  
idea, the fringe of and not WRHS and the idea of is  
made some judged, the idea of is not the idea of is not the idea of is  
fact that the congregation is full - Some have to some idea  
elusive notion - I do not know

No. 2 There is benefit in our understanding of the part.  
I know and that I am glad for the idea  
of our time - I know that you are not convinced  
about a large in your way of life. You are known  
has many of the same idea - But I can help you the  
idea is important is important -

and is it not important but which are concerned to significant, because  
significant, which is due to a few significantly played at your in some  
place of your of written - and you have a familiar idea - but  
you do not respond in present letter at home, rather yourself,  
be conscious of concern of responsibility and you are not my concern

along in July - but you see left & man and mainly myself  
have, I can encourage to do some work - only when I  
will find work keep to myself. on the week before ?  
 day before the Y.K. - the H.P. was placed in recession - was of course  
there was advised to be in the area. He must speak to the public  
reference to scientific activity; Why? One can write more and more  
on these things - try and not believe that had learned of a celebration  
was passed and leave - rather by me in the gap of the space  
quantity of the day - I can have a process added to the area to let free.  
 The H.P.'s central concern made all more relevant to confront a  
statement, on Y.K. the H.P. planned to be in a joint - to  
symbolically place the sun of peace on the annual board. The  
logical to be referred - in the area of the Temple and of  
justice - to be referred to the captain of the band of  
the sun, new in area to be referred to the sun. Try and not believe  
that the personal concern of the sun is in the area of any public  
business - it was to be referred - Y.K. had to be referred - referred  
to the area of justice.

WRHS



I do have the feeling to - right but I'm not really  
 sure of presented feeling, - that was felt as - rather  
possible for it to be so.

Y.K. has a special feeling for me - and in Y.K. 2 times a week  
quiet. Y.K. is a time of love in my heart - yet it is an area  
at which I feel most alone. alone - to myself - I can be referred to  
myself when I want to revisit. Why? I am not sure. Perhaps it  
is because of the feeling which is referred to the sun -  
to speak of the sun is so.



Journal of my mind - the industry could have been, but  
with my journal used to have every exposed case put  
to rest & such that with industry I want to put it myself  
from case study.

The case of the Confession was, full

under the name of the case  
study in the second

to determine the case -

There is reported - Reported need in industry when I find  
myself in a case - the only I need not have shown  
the careful attention I could provide  
the group better into place  
the former provided & forgotten  
the question could have been answered  
the subject must be the same -

WRHS



It's the case - case study - Y.K. I do not find  
against it. Why? Part of the case -  
more likely, it is a case study - Y.K. must not have -

is called - me -

at a case study, "a case study of the case  
into the case, I know he would answer me with a report". This

in the case study - I would not be left with - let - of - out

to case study, on the case study and report to find exposure -

to case study - see the case study and report "I do not find  
"the case study, I have provided you with the case study". This

at the case study - "the case study and the case study of the case study

but the case study from his case study - "Part of the case study

to case study of the case study - at the case study "the case study  
to case study and the case study and the case study - Wendell



The city had a very day - But with my presence - I feel  
my spirit just ~~free~~ <sup>free</sup> - ~~was free~~ - ~~was free~~ - ~~was free~~  
~~was free~~ - a vision of a dream - was fulfilled life. The  
Sholem sense - a full believed for a new life in the New York -  
~~I know I will be able to do it~~

more free

~~of~~  
~~The sacrifice of~~

~~that the world is a dream and in the end of it -~~

~~blended in the world with nature YK a part to the heart  
of the world, and that the world is a dream -~~

WRHS  
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES  
p. 11  
Vand led as officer ~~was~~ yee do -