

The Individual and the Collective

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Things that we do as individuals and things that we do as parts of a whole

משנה מסכת סוטה פרק ז - Mishnah Sotah Chapter 7

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| <p>(א) אֵלוֹ נֶאֱמָרִין בְּכָל לָשׁוֹן : ♦ פְּרִשְׁת סוֹטָה, ♦ וְדוּי מַעֲשֵׂר, ♦ קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע, ♦ וּתְפִלָּה, ♦ וּבְרַכַּת הַמִּזוֹן, ♦ וּשְׁבוּעַת הָעֵדוּת, ♦ וּשְׁבוּעַת הַפְּקָדוֹן :</p> | <p>(1) The following are recited in any language: ♦ The section concerning the suspected woman (Bemidbar 5: 19-22), ♦ The tithe confession (Devarim 26: 12-15), ♦ Reciting the Shema (Devarim 6: 4), ♦ And prayer, ♦ And blessing after meals (Devarim 8: 10), ♦ And the oath concerning testimony (Vayikra 5: 1-13), ♦ And the oath concerning a deposit. (Vayikra 5: 21-25)</p> |
| <p>(ב) וְאֵלוֹ נֶאֱמָרִין בְּלָשׁוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ : ♦ מְקַרָּא בְּכוּרִים, ♦ וְחִלְצָה, ♦ בְּרָכוֹת וּקְלוֹת, ♦ בְּרַכַּת כֹּהֲנִים, ♦ וּבְרַכַּת כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל, ♦ וּפְרִשְׁת הַמֶּלֶךְ, ♦ וּפְרִשְׁת עֵגְלָה עֲרוּפָה, ♦ וּמְשׁוּחַ מִלְחָמָה בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁהוּא מְדַבֵּר אֶל הָעָם :</p> | <p>(2.) The following are recited in the holy tongue: ♦ The declaration of the first fruits (Devarim 26: 1-11, Sotah 7: 3), ♦ And the formula of halitsah (Devarim 25: 7-9, Sotah 7: 4), ♦ The blessings and curses (Dev' 11: 29-30, 27: 8, 27: 12-26, Sotah 7: 5), ♦ The priestly blessing (Bemidbar 6: 22-26, Sotah 7: 6), ♦ And the high priest's blessing (Lev. 16: 1-34, 23: 26-32, Sotah 7: 7), ♦ And the parasha of the king (Devarim 31: 10-13, Sotah 7: 8), ♦ And the parasha of the broken-necked calf (Dev' 21: 7-8, Sotah 9), ♦ And the anointed one of battle When he speaks to the nation (Devarim 20: 2-4, Sotah 8).</p> |
| <p>(ג) מְקַרָּא בְּכוּרִים כִּיצַד, (דברים כו) וְעֲנִית וְאָמַרְתָּ לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ, וְלִהְלֹךְ הוּא אוֹמֵר (שם כז) וְעֲנוּ הַלְוִיִּם וְאָמְרוּ, מָה עֲנִיָּה הָאֲמוּרָה לְהֵלֵךְ בְּלָשׁוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ, אִף כָּאֵן בְּלָשׁוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ :</p> | <p>(3.) How is it that the declaration made at the offering of the first-fruits [is stated in Hebrew]? [it is stated] (Devarim 26: 5) “<i>And you shall answer and say before the lord your God</i>” and elsewhere it is stated, (Devarim 27: 14). “<i>and the Levites shall answer and say</i>” Just as the latter answering must be in the holy tongue, so here in the holy tongue.</p> |
| <p>(ד) חִלְצָה כִּיצַד, (שם כה) וְעֲנָתָה וְאָמְרָה, וְלִהְלֹךְ הוּא אוֹמֵר וְעֲנוּ הַלְוִיִּם וְאָמְרוּ, מָה עֲנִיָּה הָאֲמוּרָה לְהֵלֵךְ בְּלָשׁוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ, אִף כָּאֵן בְּלָשׁוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר, וְעֲנִתָּה וְאָמַרְתָּ כִּכֹּה, עַד שֶׁתֹּאמַר בְּלָשׁוֹן הַזֶּה :</p> | <p>(4.) How is it that the formula of halitsah [is stated in Hebrew]? [it is stated] (Devarim 25: 9) “<i>And she shall answer and say</i>” and elsewhere it is stated, (Devarim 27: 14) “<i>and the Levites shall answer and say</i>” Just as the latter answering must be in the holy tongue – so here in the holy tongue. Rabbi Judah says: [it is derived from the text], “<i>and she shall answer and say thus כִּכֹּה</i>” - i.e., she must say it in this [exact] language.</p> |

1. והיה כִּי־תבוא אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ נַחֲלָה וַיִּשְׁבַּתְּ בָּהּ :
 2. וְלָקַחְתָּ מִרְאֵשִׁית אֶל־כָּל־פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּבְיֵא מֵאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ וְשָׂמְתָּ בַסֵּבֶל וְהֵלַכְתָּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשָׂכֵן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם :
 3. וּבָאתָ אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה בְּיָמֵינוּ הָיָה וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו הַגִּדְתִּי הַיּוֹם לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי־בָאתִי אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לְאֲבֹתֵינוּ לָתֵת לָנוּ :
 4. וְלָקַח הַכֹּהֵן הַסֵּבֶל מִיָּדְךָ וְהֵנִיחוֹ לִפְנֵי מִזְבֵּחַ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ :
 5. וְעָלִיתָ וְאָמַרְתָּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲרָמִי אֲבִד אֲבִי וַיֵּרַד מִצְרַיִם וַיִּגַּר שָׁם בְּמִתֵּי מֵעֵט וַיְהִי־שָׁם לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל עָצוּם וְרָב :
 6. וַיִּרְעוּ אֶת־נוֹסְמֵינוּ וַיַּעֲבֹדוּנוּ וַיִּתְּנוּ עָלֵינוּ עֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה :
 7. וַנִּצְעַק אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֶת־קוֹלֵנוּ וַיִּרְא אֶת־עַנְיָנוּ וְאֶת־עֲמַלְנוּ וְאֶת־לַחֲצֵנוּ :
 8. וַיּוֹצֵאֵנוּ יְהוָה מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּיַד חֲזָקָה וּבְיָרֵךְ נְטוּיָה וּבְמַרְא גָּדֹל וּבְאֹתוֹת וּבְמוֹפְתִים :
 9. וַיָּבֵאֵנוּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה וַיִּתֵּן לָנוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת אֲרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וּדְבָשׁ :
 10. וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה הֵבֵאתִי אֶת־רְאִישֵׁי פְרִי הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתָּה לִּי יְהוָה וְהִנְחִיתָ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ :
 11. וְשָׂמַחְתָּ בְּכָל־הַטּוֹב אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּבְיָמֶיךָ אַתָּה וְהַלְוִי וְהַגֵּר אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבְּךָ :
 12. כִּי תִכְלֶה לְעֵשֶׂר אֶת־כָּל־מַעֲשֶׂיךָ תְּבוּאוֹתַי בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁלִישִׁת שָׁנַת הַמַּעֲשֶׂר וְנָתַתָּה לְלוֹי לַגֵּר לַיְתוֹם וְלָאִלְמָנָה וְאָכְלוּ בְשַׂעֲרֶיךָ וְשָׂבְעוּ :
 13. וְאָמַרְתָּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּעִרְתִּי הַקֹּדֶשׁ מִן־הַבַּיִת וְגַם נָתַתִּיו לְלוֹי וְלַגֵּר לַיְתוֹם וְלָאִלְמָנָה כְּכָל־מִצְוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִנִּי לֹא־עֲבַרְתִּי מִמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ וְלֹא שָׁכַחְתִּי :
 14. לֹא־אָכַלְתִּי בְּאֵנִי מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא־בִעַרְתִּי מִמֶּנּוּ בְּטָמֵא וְלֹא־נָתַתִּי מִמֶּנּוּ לְמוֹת שְׂמֵעַתִּי בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי עֲשִׂיתִי כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִנִּי :
 15. הִשְׁקִיפָה מִמַּעַן קֹדֶשׁךָ מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבִרְךָ אֶת־עַמְּךָ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה לָנוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְאֲבֹתֵינוּ אֲרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וּדְבָשׁ :
 16. הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִצְוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־הַחֻקִּים הָאֵלֶּה וְאֶת־הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים וְשָׂמַרְתָּ וְעָשִׂיתָ אוֹתָם כְּכֹל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכֹל־נַפְשְׁךָ :
 17. אֶת־יְהוָה הָאֱמַרְתָּ הַיּוֹם לְהִיּוֹת לָךְ לֵאלֹהִים וְלָלַכְתָּ בְּדַרְכָּיו וּלְשַׁמֵּר חֻקָּיו וּמִצְוֹתָיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו וּלְשַׁמֵּעַ בְּקוֹלוֹ :
 18. וַיְהִי־הָיָה הָאֱמַרְךָ הַיּוֹם לְהִיּוֹת לֹ לְעַם סִגְלָה כַּאֲשֶׁר דָּבַרְתָּ וּלְשַׁמֵּר כְּלִמְצוֹתָיו :
 19. וְלִתְתָּךְ עֲלִיוֹן עַל כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְתַהֲלָה וְלִשְׂמֹנֶה וְלִתְפָּאָרַת וְלִהְיוֹתָ עִם־קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר דָּבַר : } פ }

1. When you enter the land that the LORD your God is giving you as a heritage, and you possess it and settle in it,
 2. you shall take some of every first fruit of the soil, which you harvest from the land that the LORD your God is giving you, put it in a basket and go to the place where the LORD your God will choose to establish His name.
 3. You shall go to the priest in charge at that time and say to him, "I acknowledge this day before the LORD your God that I have entered the land that the LORD swore to our fathers to assign us."
 4. The priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down in front of the altar of the LORD your God.
 5. You shall then recite as follows before the LORD your God: "My father was a fugitive Aramean. He went down to Egypt with meagre numbers and sojourned there; but there he became a great and very populous nation.
 6. The Egyptians dealt harshly with us and oppressed us; they imposed heavy labour upon us.
 7. We cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our plea and saw our plight, our misery, and our oppression.
 8. The LORD freed us from Egypt by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm and awesome power, and by signs and portents.
 9. He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.
 10. Wherefore I now bring the first fruits of the soil which You, O LORD, have given me." You shall leave it before the LORD your God and bow low before the LORD your God.
 11. And you shall enjoy, together with the Levite and the stranger in your midst, all the bounty that the LORD your God has bestowed upon you and your household.
 12. When you have set aside in full the tenth part of your yield—in the third year, the year of the tithe—and have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat their fill in your settlements,
 13. you shall declare before the LORD your God: "I have cleared out the consecrated portion from the house; and I have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, just as You commanded me; I have neither transgressed nor neglected any of Your commandments:
 14. I have not eaten of it while in mourning, I have not cleared out any of it while I was unclean, and I have not deposited any of it with the dead. I have obeyed the LORD my God; I have done just as You commanded me.
 15. Look down from Your holy abode, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel and the soil You have given us, a land flowing with milk and honey, as You swore to our fathers."
 16. The LORD your God commands you this day to observe these laws and rules; observe them faithfully with all your heart and soul.
 17. You have affirmed this day that the LORD is your God, that you will walk in His ways, that you will observe His laws and commandments and rules, and that you will obey Him.
 18. And the LORD has affirmed this day that you are, as He promised you, His treasured people who shall observe all His commandments, and that He will set you, in fame and renown and glory, high above all the nations that He has made; and that you shall be, as He promised, a holy people to the LORD your God.

Things that need to be done in a group

| משנה ברכות, פרק ד | Mishna B'rachot, Chapter 4 |
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| <p>(א) תפלת השחר עד חצות רבי יהודה אומר עד ארבע שעות תפלת המנחה עד הערב רבי יהודה אומר עד פלג המנחה תפלת הערב אין לה קבע ושל מוספין כל היום רבי יהודה אומר עד שבע שעות:</p> <p>(ב) רבי נחוניא בן הקנה היה מתפלל בכניסתו לבית המדרש וביציאתו תפלה קצרה אמרו לו מה מקום לתפלה זו אמר להם בכניסתי אני מתפלל שלא תארע תקלה על ידי וביציאתי אני נותן הודיה על חלקי:</p> <p>(ג) רבן גמליאל אומר בכל יום מתפלל אדם שמונה עשרה רבי יהושע אומר מעין שמונה עשרה רבי עקיבא אומר אם שגורה תפלתו בפיו יתפלל שמונה עשרה ואם לאו מעין שמונה עשרה:</p> <p>(ד) רבי אליעזר אומר העושה תפלתו קבע אין תפלתו תחנונים רבי יהושע אומר המהלך במקום סכנה מתפלל תפלה קצרה אומר הושע השם את עמך את שארית ישראל בכל פרשת העבור יהיו צרכיהם לפניך ברוך אתה ה' שומע תפלה:</p> <p>(ה) היה רוכב על החמור ירד ואם אינו יכול לירד יחזיר את פניו ואם אינו יכול להחזיר את פניו יכון את לבו כנגד בית קודש הקדשים:</p> <p>(ו) היה יושב בספינה או בקרון או באסדה יכון את לבו כנגד בית קודש הקדשים:</p> <p>(ז) רבי אלעזר בן עזריה אומר אין תפלת המוספין אלא בחבר עיר וחכמים אומרים בחבר עיר ושלא בחבר עיר רבי יהודה אומר משמו כל מקום שיש חבר עיר היחיד פטור מתפלת המוספין:</p> | <p>1. The morning prayer until midday; Rabbi Yehuda says until four hours. The afternoon prayer until the evening; Rabbi Yehuda says until the middle of the afternoon. The evening prayer does not have fixed. And of Mussafs (additional) all the day. Rabbi Yehuda says until seven hours.</p> <p>2. Rabbi Nehunia ben Hakaneh used to pray as he entered the beit midrash and as he left it a short prayer. They said to him: What is the place of this prayer? He said to them: When I enter I pray that no mistake should occur through me and when I leave I give thanks for my portion.</p> <p>3. Rabban Gamliel says: Every day a person should pray the eighteen. Rabbi Yehoshua says: like eighteen. Rabbi Akiva says: If his prayer is fluent in his mouth, he should pray eighteen, and if not, like eighteen.</p> <p>4. Rabbi Eliezer says: One who makes his prayer fixed, his prayer is not supplication. Rabbi Yehoshua says: One who is traveling in a dangerous place should pray a short prayer, saying: God, save your people, the remnant of Israel; in every time of crisis may their needs be before You. Blessed are you, God, who listens to prayer.</p> <p>5. If he were riding on a donkey he should dismount and if he cannot dismount he should turn his face and if he cannot turn his face he should direct his heart כנגד the house of the holy of holies.</p> <p>6. If he were sitting on a ship or on a cart or on a raft, he should direct his heart כנגד the house of the holy of holies.</p> <p>7. Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria says: There is no additional prayer except in a community of a city And the rabbis say, Either in the community of a city or not in a community of a city. Rabbi Yehuda says in his (Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria's) name: Every place that has a community of a city the individual is exempt from the additional prayer.</p> |

| משנה מגילה ד:ג | Mishnah Megillah 4:3 |
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| <p>אין פּוֹרְסִין אֶת שְׁמַע, אין עוֹבְרִין לְפָנֵי הַתְּבָה, אין נוֹשְׂאִין אֶת כַּפֵּיהֶם, אין קוֹרִין בַּתּוֹרָה, אין מַפְטִירִין בְּנְבִיא, אין עוֹשִׂין מַעֲמָד וּמוֹשָׁב, אין אוֹמְרִים בְּרִכַּת אֲבָלִים וְתַחֲנוּמֵי אֲבָלִים וּבְרִכַּת חַתָּנִים, אין מְזַמְּנִין בְּשֵׁם, פְּחוֹת מִעֲשָׂרָה. וּבְקַרְקָעוֹת, תְּשֻׁעָה וְלַחֵן. וְאֲדָם, פְּיוֹצָא בְּהֵן:</p> | <p>They do not recite the Shema responsively, And they do not pass before the ark; And they [the priests] do not lift up their hands; And they do not read the Torah [publicly]; And they do not conclude with a haftarah from the prophets; And they do not make stops [at funeral] processions; And they do not say the blessing for mourners, nor the consolations of mourners, nor the blessing of bridegrooms; And they do not invite (to say grace) mentioning God's name (with) Less than ten. And for [redeeming sanctified] land nine and a priest and similarly with [redeeming the value of] a human being.</p> |

| תלמוד מגילה כג: | Talmud, Megilah 23b |
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| גמ' מנא הני מיילי אמר רבי חייא בר אבא אמר רבי יוחנן דאמר קרא ונקדשתי בתוך בני ישראל כל דבר שבקדושה לא יהא פחות מעשרה | GEMARA: From where are these matters? Rabbi Chiyya bar Abba said that Rabbi Yochanan said: As the verse states (Leviticus 22: 32) “ <i>And I shall be sanctified among the Israelites</i> ” any expression of sanctity may not be fewer than ten. What is the logical inference? As Rabbi Chiyya taught: It comes (by means of a verbal analogy called a <i>gezera shava</i>) “among,” “among.” Here it is written: “ <i>And I shall be sanctified among the Israelites</i> ” and there it is written: “ <i>Separate yourselves from among this congregation</i> ” (Numbers 16: 21). And it comes (by means of another verbal analogy) “congregation” “congregation” as it is written there: “ <i>How long shall I bear with this evil congregation?</i> ” (Numbers 14: 27). just as there (it was a congregation of) ten so too here (is to a congregation of) ten |
| מאי משמע דתני רבי חייא אתיא תוך תוך כתיב הכא ונקדשתי בתוך בני ישראל יכתיב התם הבדלו מתוך העדה (במדבר טו: כא) ואתיא עדה עדה דכתיב התם עד מתי לעדה הרעה הזאת (במדבר יד: כז) מה להלן עשרה אף כאן עשרה: | |

Numbers 14:27 – Context: the 12 spies sent to spy out the land!

- כו** וידבר יהוה, אל-משה ואל-אהרן לאמר. **26** And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying:
- כז** עד-מתי, לעדה הרעה הזאת, אשר המה מלינים, עלי; את-תלונות בני ישראל, אשר המה מלינים עלי--שמעתי. **27** 'How long shall I bear with this evil **congregation**, that they keep murmuring against Me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they keep murmuring against Me.
- כח** אמר אלהים, חי-אני נאם-יהוה, אם-לא, כאשר דברתם באזני: כן, אעשה לכם. **28** Say to them: As I live, says the LORD, surely as you have spoken in My ears, so will I do to you:

Numbers 16:21 – Context: Korach's rebellion against Moses' rule

- כ** וידבר יהוה, אל-משה ואל-אהרן לאמר. **20** And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying:
- כא** הבדלו, מתוך העדה הזאת; ואכלה אתם, כרגע. **21** 'Separate yourselves from **among** this **congregation**, that I may consume them in a moment.'
- כב** ויפלו על-פניהם, ויאמרו, אל, אלהי הרוחות לכל-בשר: האיש אחד יחטא, ועל כל-העדה תקצף. {ס} **22** And they fell upon their faces, and said: 'O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and will You be angry with all the congregation?' {S}

Leviticus 22:32

- לא** ושמרתם, מצותי, ועשיתם, אתם: אני, יהוה. **31** And you shall keep My commandments, and do them: I am the LORD.
- לב** ולא תחללו, את-שם קדשי, ונקדשתי, בתוך בני ישראל: אני יהוה, מקדשכם. **32** And you shall not profane My holy name; but I will be sanctified **among** the children of Israel: I am the LORD who sanctifies you,
- לג** המוציא אתכם מארץ מצרים, להיות לכם לאלהים: אני, יהוה. {פ} **33** that brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD. {P}

PsyArXiv: Minding your own business? Mindfulness decreases prosocial behaviour for those with independent self-construals

Michael Poulin, Lauren Ministero, Shira Gabriel, Carrie Morrison, Esha Naidu

Mindfulness appears to promote individual well-being, but its interpersonal effects are less clear. Two studies in adult populations tested whether the effects of mindfulness on prosocial behaviour differ by self-construals. In Study 1 (N = 366), a brief mindfulness induction, compared to a meditation control, led to decreased prosocial behaviour among people with relatively independent self-construals, but had the opposite effect among those with relatively interdependent self-construals. In Study 2 (N = 325), a mindfulness induction led to decreased prosocial behaviour among those primed with independence, but had the opposite effect among those primed with interdependence. The effects of mindfulness on prosocial behaviour appear to depend on individuals' broader social goals. This may have implications for the increasing popularity of mindfulness training around the world.

Charles Taylor – Philosophical arguments – 1995 – Chapter 7 - “Irreducibly social goods”

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...Naturally every school of thought recognizes public goods. There clearly are measures or institutions or states of affairs which offer satisfactions to more than one individual. And in some cases these can't in the nature of things be brought about in such a way as to benefit a single individual, but must benefit many or none. National defence is often cited as an example. Or we might think of a dam on a stream designed to stop flooding in springtime. This saves my cottage, but can't be so designed as to save my without also saving yours...

But in all these cases, it can be argued, the good is a good only because it benefits individuals. In some cases, there may be many such, indeed, the benefits may encompass all the individuals of a given collectivity (say all citizens who are defended from the enemy, or all dwellers beside the stream that is dammed). In other cases it may not be possible to say exactly who benefits. But in the end, the measure or state of affairs is only good because it delivers satisfaction to individuals.

This last sentence catches the crucial thesis, that public and social goods are necessarily “decomposable.”... All wholes have to be understood in terms of the parts that compose them—but societies are made up of individuals. The events and states which are the subject of study in society are ultimately made up of the events and states of component individuals. In the end, only individuals choose and act. To think that society consists of something else, over and above these individual choices and actions, is to invoke some strange, mystical entity, a ghostly spirit of the collectivity, which no sober or respectable science can have any truck with....

Happiness, and thus the good, is measured in terms of what makes people feel happy. We are ultimately referred to subjective feelings, or satisfactions; in terms of a more up-to-date version of utilitarianism, to preferences. The good, or the objects of value, is ultimately determined by what goes on in people's minds or feelings. But then the atomist understanding seems all the more appropriate, since no one supposes that there is a locus of thought or feeling other than the minds of individuals... We can recognize the influence of a nonsense brand of naturalism in our scientific culture. But plausible as this reasoning is, it is dead wrong... Thoughts exist as it were in the dimension of meaning and require a background of available meanings in order to be the thoughts that they are... Bad historical novels remind us of this all the time. If a character in a novel set in the middle ages rejects a course of action because it is not “fulfilling,” or a man who figures in a story about a Neolithic village thinks of his lover as “sophisticated,” our sensibility is jarred by the incongruity. It is similar, but also importantly different, to the incongruity of their using twentieth-century technology. In both cases we know they “couldn't” be saying/thinking/doing what is described... The impossibility... consists in that this whole gamut of meanings didn't exist for them; the whole way of classifying things as “fulfilling” or “sophisticated,” and their various opposites and alternatives, wasn't part of the background of possible descriptions for them. Their language lacked these resources.

This illustrates what is in some respects a truism of human existence, the way in which thoughts presuppose and require a background of meanings to be the particular kind of thoughts they are... Nothing that these people could say could ever count as describing something as “fulfilling” or “sophisticated,” as long as they had their particular linguistic background... This was...the basis for Wittgenstein’s celebrated use of the game image in his discussions of language and thinking. Whatever the weaknesses that may arise when this image is over-applied, it has this kernel of justification: we are in the domain of validity.

But then we can readily see why in a strong sense certain thoughts are impossible in certain circumstances. Nothing could count as making the claim “she’s sophisticated” among Neolithic farmers in upper Syria (if our surmises are right about their culture), in somewhat the same way as nothing could count as making the queen’s gambit in a checkers game. The move presupposes a background of rules or, in the case of language, conditions of possible validity; and in both these cases the background is missing.

I invoked the name of Wittgenstein, and he is undoubtedly the most celebrated among those who have forced on contemporary philosophy this crucial feature of thought and language. A given linguistic item only has the meaning it has against the background of a whole language. The use of a single term, separated from that background, is unthinkable. The supposition that one might, through the invention of learning, think of such a single term makes no sense. Wittgenstein uses this point to great effect in arguing against the possibility of a private language, as when he asks us to imagine the case of someone who wants to give a name to an inner sensation without reference to the rest of language. In order to know what I myself am saying, I would have to place this entity somewhere, would have to say at least that what I’m naming is a sensation...

...culture... is not a mere instrument of the individual goods. It can’t be distinguished from them as their merely contingent condition, something they could in principle exist without. That makes no sense. It is essentially linked to what we have identified as good. Consequently, it is hard to see how we could deny it the title of good, not just in some weakened, instrumental sense, like the dam, but as intrinsically good. To say that a certain kind of self-giving heroism is good, or a certain quality of aesthetic experience, must be to judge the cultures in which this kind of heroism and that kind of experience are conceivable options as good cultures. If such virtue and experience are worth cultivating, then the cultures have to be worth fostering, not as contingent instruments, but for themselves...

Here is another way, then, that a good can be social in an irreducible fashion: where it is essential to its being a good that its goodness be the object of a common understanding. We don’t find such goods only in intimate life, such as love and friendship. My social example of frank and equal relations is also of this type. We don’t in fact stand on such a footing with each other unless there is some common understanding of this. And we can’t maintain the footing unless the common understanding englobes the rightness of this footing. The footing doesn’t exist unless there is some common sense that we are equal, that we command equal treatment, that this is the appropriate way to deal with each other. Essential to this set of relations as a good is something that is un-decomposable.

So we see two ways of defining irreducibly common goods: (1) the goods of a culture that makes conceivable actions, feelings, valued ways of life, and (2) goods that essentially incorporate common understandings of their value. There is obviously a substantial overlap between the two, in that a cultural good may also exist only to the extent that it is commonly prized.

Is this just an academic dispute? The answer ought to be already showing through. It can be gleaned from the examples I used that the conception of irreducibly social goods is bound up with some important strands of modern politics. So in articulating this kind of good I am spelling out the philosophical presuppositions of some political positions that are widely held... In response to pleas for freedom of parents’ choice as a right, nationalist theorists have developed theories of “collective” rights, which are alleged to take precedence in certain cases over individual rights. I’m not making a judgment here, just reporting a bit of contemporary politics based on concepts that would have to be philosophically explicated in something like the manner I have just outlined.

**New Perspectives that emerge when the individual is dis-oriented from their community
What happens to us when we are radically detached?**

| בבלי ברכות דף ל/א | Talmud – B'rachot 30a |
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| <p>תנו רבנן סומא ומי שאינו יכול לכוין את הרוחות יכוין לבו כנגד אביו שבשמים שנאמר והתפללו אל ה' היה עומד בחוץ לארץ יכוין את לבו כנגד ארץ ישראל שנאמר והתפללו אליך דרך ארצם היה עומד בארץ ישראל יכוין את לבו כנגד ירושלים שנאמר והתפללו אל ה' דרך העיר אשר בחרת היה עומד בירושלים יכוין את לבו כנגד בית המקדש שנאמר והתפללו אל הבית הזה היה עומד בבית המקדש יכוין את לבו כנגד בית קדשי הקדשים שנאמר והתפללו אל המקום הזה היה עומד בבית קדשי הקדשים יכוין את לבו כנגד בית הכפורת היה עומד אחורי בית הכפורת יראה עצמו כאילו לפני הכפורת נמצא עומד במזרח מחזיר פניו למערב במערב מחזיר פניו למזרח בדרום מחזיר פניו לצפון בצפון מחזיר פניו לדרום נמצאו כל ישראל מכוונים את לבם למקום אחד</p> <p>אמר רבי אבין ואיתימא רבי אבינא מאי קראה כמגדל דוד צוארך בנוי לתלפיות תל שכל פיות פונים בו :</p> | <p>Our Rabbis taught: A blind man or one who cannot tell the cardinal points should direct his heart towards his Father in Heaven, as it says, "<i>And they pray to the Lord.</i>" (I Kings VIII, 44) If he is standing outside Palestine, he should turn his heart towards Eretz Israel, as it says, "<i>And pray to You towards their land.</i>" (Ibid. 48) If he stands in Eretz Israel he should turn his heart towards Jerusalem, as it says, "<i>And they pray unto the Lord towards the city which You have chosen.</i>" (Ibid. 44.) If he is standing in Jerusalem he should turn his heart towards the Sanctuary, as it says, "<i>If they pray toward this house.</i>" (II Chron. VI, 26.) If he is standing in the Sanctuary, he should turn his heart towards the Holy of Holies, as it says, "<i>If they pray toward this place.</i>" (I Kings VIII, 35) If he was standing in the Holy of Holies he should turn his heart towards the mercy-seat. (See Ex. XXV, 17) If he was standing behind the mercy-seat he should imagine himself to be in front of the mercy-seat. Consequently, if he is in the East he should turn his face to the West; if in the West he should turn his face to the East; if in the South he should turn his face to the North; if in the North he should turn his face to the South. In this way all Israel will be turning their hearts towards one place.</p> <p>Rabbi Abin or as some say Rabbi Abina said: What text confirms this? "<i>Your neck is like the tower of David builded with turrets [talpiof]</i>", (Cant. IV, 4) - The hill [tel] towards which all mouths (piyyot) turn.</p> |

| תלמוד בבלי שבת דף סט/ב | Talmud – Bavli Masechet Shabbat 69b |
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| <p>אמר רב הונא היה מהלך (בדרך או) במדבר ואינו יודע אימתי שבת מונה ששה ימים ומשמר יום אחד</p> <p>חייא בר רב אומר משמר יום אחד ומונה ששה</p> <p>במאי קמיפלגי</p> <p>מר סבר כברייתו של עולם ומר סבר כאדם הראשון</p> <p>מיתיבי היה מהלך בדרך ואינו יודע אימתי שבת משמר יום אחד לששה מאי לאו מונה ששה ומשמר יום אחד לא משמר יום אחד ומונה ששה אי הכי משמר יום אחד לששה משמר יום אחד ומונה ששה מיבעי ליה ועוד תניא היה מהלך בדרך או במדבר ואינו יודע אימתי שבת מונה ששה ומשמר יום אחד תיובתא (דרבי חייא) [דחייא] בר רב תיובתא אמר רבא בכל יום ויום עושה לו כדי פרנסתו (בר מהוהא יומא) וההוא יומא לימות דעביד מאתמול שתי פרנסות ודילמא מאתמול שבת הואי אלא כל יום ויום עושה לו פרנסתו אפילו ההוא יומא וההוא יומא במאי מיכר ליה בקידושא ואבדלתא</p> | <p>Rav Huna said: If one is travelling on a road or in the wilderness and does not know when it is the Shabbat, he must count six days and observe one.</p> <p>Hiyya bar Rav said: He must observe one and count six [weekdays].</p> <p>In what do they differ?</p> <p>One Master holds that it is like the world's Creation; the other Master holds that it is like the first Adam.</p> <p>An objection is raised: If one is travelling on a road and does not know when it is the Shabbat he must observe one day to six. — Surely that means that he counts six days and observes one? No: he keeps one day and counts six. If so, [instead of] "he must observe one day to six" it should state, "he must observe one day and count six" Moreover, it was taught: If one is travelling on a road or in a wilderness and does not know when it is the Shabbat, he must count six and observe one day. This refutation of Hiyya bar Rav is indeed a refutation. Rava said: Every day he only does sufficient for his requirements [except on that day] And on that day he is to die? — He prepared double his requirements on the previous day. But perhaps the previous day was shabbat? But every day he does sufficient for his requirements, and even on that day. Then wherein may that day be recognized? By kiddush and havdalah.</p> |

| תלמוד ירושלמי מסכת שבת דף מא/א | Jerusalem Talmud, Shabbat, Chapter Seven, 41a |
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| גדול שנשבה בין העכו"ם | An adult who is taken captive by non-Jews |
| רב ושמואל | Rav and Shmuel disagreed. |
| חד אמר מונה ששה ועושה שבת. | One said he should count six and do Shabbat. |
| וחרנה אמר עושה שבת ומונה ששה. | The other said he should do Shabbat and count six |
| רבי יצחק בר אלעזר בשם רב נחמן בר יעקב מונה ששה ועושה שבת. חמשה ועושה שבת ארבעה ועושה שבת ג' ועושה שבת שנים ועושה שבת. אחד ועושה שבת. | Rabbi Yitzhak bar Elazar said in the name of Rav Nachman bar Ya'akov: He should count six and do Shabbat; count five and do Shabbat; count four and do Shabbat; count three and do Shabbat; count two and do Shabbat; count one and do Shabbat. |
| אמר ר' מנא אין אישתבאי בתלתא הוא עבד בשובתא. | Rabbi Mana said: If the person is taken captive on Tuesday, he ends up working on the actual Shabbat. |
| רב הוה חייליה לתרין מחזירין הוא עבד שובתא. | Great was the power of his approach: after repeating it twice, he observes the real Shabbat. |
| ואין לא לתמוה ויחוש לכל הימים כהדא קידש אשה בעולם? | But should he not be concerned every day, like a man who married a woman in the world. |
| רבי יעקב בר אחא איתפלגון ר' יוחנן ור' שמעון בן לקיש. | Rabbi Ya'akov bar Acha stated: On the latter matter, there is a disagreement between Rabbi Yochanan and Reish Lakish. |
| ר' יוחנן אמר חושש לכל הנשים. | Rabbi Yochanan says that the man must be fearful of every woman in the world. |
| ריש לקיש אמר אינו חושש לכל הנשים. | Reish Lakish says he need not be fearful of every woman in the world |
| תמן יש לו תקנה יכול הוא לישא גיורת. יכול הוא לישא משוחררת. | (But the cases are not analogous.) There (in the case of marrying a woman) the man has recourse: he can either marry a convert or a freed slave (for he knows that both of these women are not relatives of his wife). (In the case of Shabbat) |
| הכא מה אית לן. | Here what (recourse) does he have!!! |
| תמן אמרין חושש לכל הימים ועושה כדי קיום הנפש. | There [in Babylonia], they [the sages] say, he fearful of every day and therefore does the minimum amount of work possible to ensure his continued existence. |

The Post-Chorban move toward individual spirituality

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| <p>משנה אבות ג:ו רבי חלפתא בן דוסא איש כפר חנניה אומר, עשרה שיושבין ועוסקין בתורה, שכניה שרויה ביניהם, שנאמר (תהלים פב) אלהים נצב בעדת אל. ומנין אפלו חמשה, שנאמר (עמוס ט) ואגדתו על ארץ יסדה. ומנין אפלו שלשה שנאמר (תהלים פב) בקרב אלהים ישפט. ומנין אפלו שנים, שנאמר (מלאכי ג) אז נדברו יראי ה' איש אל רעהו ויקשב ה' וישמע וגו'. ומנין אפלו אחד שנאמר (שמות כ) בכל המקום אשר אזכיר את שמי אבא אליך וברכתיך:</p> | <p>Mishnah Avot 3:6 Rabbi Halafta Ben Dosa, a man of the village of Hanania says ten who sit and occupy themselves in Torah, the Shechinah abides amongst them, as it is said: (Psalm 82: 1). “<i>God stands in the congregation of God</i>” And from where do we know that even five? As it is said: (Amos 9: 6). “<i>This band of His He has established on earth</i>” And from where do we know that even three? As it is said: (Psalm 82: 1) “<i>In the midst of the judges He judges</i>” And from where do we know that even two? As it is said: (Malachi 3: 16). “<i>Then they that fear the Lord spoke one with another, and the Lord hearkened, and heard</i>” And from where do we know that even one? As it is said: (Exodus 20:20) “<i>In every place where I cause my name to be mentioned I will come to you and bless you</i>”</p> |
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Exodus 20:20

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| <p>יח ויאמר יהוה אל-משה, כה תאמר אל-בני ישראל: אתם ראיתם--כי מן-השמים, דברתי עמכם.</p> <p>יט לא תעשו, אתי: אלהי כסף ואלהי זהב, לא תעשו לכם.</p> <p>כ מזבח אדמה, תעשה-לי, וזבחת עליו עליו את-עלתיד ואת-שלמיד, את-צאנך ואת-בקרך; בכל-המקום אשר אזכיר את-שמי, אבוא אליך וברכתיך.</p> <p>כא ואם-מזבח אבנים תעשה-לי, לא-תבנה אותהו גזית: כי חרבך הנפת עליה, ותחללה.</p> <p>כב ולא-תעלה במעלות, על-מזבחי: אשר לא-תגלה ערותך, עליו. {פ}</p> | <p>18 And the LORD said to Moses: Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: You yourselves have seen that I have talked with you from heaven.</p> <p>19 You shall not make with Me gods of silver, or gods of gold, you shall not make to you.</p> <p>20 An altar of earth you shall make to Me, and shall sacrifice on it your burnt-offerings, and your peace-offerings, your sheep, and your oxen; in every place where I cause My name to be mentioned I will come to you and bless you.</p> <p>21 And if you make Me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stones; for if you lift up your tool upon it, you have profaned it.</p> <p>22 Neither shall you go up by steps to My altar, that your nakedness be not uncovered thereon. {P}</p> |
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| <p>תוספתא ברכות פרק ו' הלכה כ הפותח ביו"ד היי וחותם ביו"ד היי הרי זה חכם ביו"ד היי וחותם באל"ף למ"ד הרי זה בור באל"ף למ"ד וחותם ביו"ד היי הרי זה דרך בינוני באל"ף למ"ד וחותם באל"ף למ"ד הרי זה דרך אחרת</p> | <p>Tosephta B'rachot chapter 6 Halacha 20 One who opens with Yud Hey And closes with Yud Hey That is wise (One who opens) with Yud Hey And closes with Aleph Lamed That is a fool (One who opens) with Aleph Lamed And closes with Yud Hey That is average (One who opens) with Aleph Lamed And closes with Aleph Lamed That is a different way (i.e. heresy!)</p> |
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Psalm 82:1

- א מְזֹמֹר, לְאַסָּף : 1 A Psalm of Asaph. {N}
אֱלֹהִים נֹצֵב בְּעֵדֹת-אֵל
בְּקֶרֶב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט. **God stands in the congregation of God;
in the midst of the judges/Gods He judges:**
- ב עַד-מָתִי תִשְׁפֹּטוּ-עוֹל וּפְנֵי רְשָׁעִים, תִּשְׁאוּ-
סֵלָה. 2 'How long will you judge unjustly, and respect the persons of the
wicked? Selah
- ג שְׁפֹטוּ-דַל וְיָתוֹם עֲנֵי וְרֵשׁ הַצְּדִיקוֹ. 3 Judge the poor and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and
destitute.
- ד פִּלְטוּ-דַל וְאֶבְיוֹן ; מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים הַצִּילוּ. 4 Rescue the poor and needy; deliver them out of the hand of
the wicked.
- ה לֹא יָדְעוּ, וְלֹא יִבְיִנוּ בַחֲשָׁכָה יִתְהַלְכוּ ;
מִמוֹטוֹ כָּל-מוֹסְדֵי אָרֶץ. 5 They know not, neither do they understand; they go about in
darkness; {N} all the foundations of the earth are moved.
- ו אֲנִי-אָמַרְתִּי, אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם וּבְנֵי עֲלִיוֹן
כְּלַכְּם. 6 I said: You are gods (God-like?), and all of you sons of the
Most High.
- ז אַכּוּ, כְּאָדָם תָּמוּתוּן וּכְאֶחָד הַשָּׂרִים תִּפְלוּ. 7 Nevertheless you shall die like men, and fall like one of the
princes.'
- ח קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים, שִׁפְטָה הָאָרֶץ כִּי-אַתָּה
תִּנְחַל, בְּכָל-הַגּוֹיִם. 8 Arise, O God, judge the earth; for You shall possess all the
nations. {P}

Amos 9:6

- ו הַבּוֹנֶה בַשָּׁמַיִם מַעְלוֹתָיו, וְאֶגְדָּתוֹ עַל-אָרֶץ
יִסְדָּה ; הַקּוֹרֵא לַמַּי-הַיָּם, וַיִּשְׁפֹּכֶם עַל-פְּנֵי
הָאָרֶץ--יִהְיֶה שְׁמוֹ. 6 It is He that builds His upper chambers in the heaven, **and has
founded His band upon the earth**; He that calls for the waters of
the sea, and pours them out upon the face of the earth; The LORD is
His name.
- ז הֲלוֹא כְּבָנֵי כֶּשְׂתִיִּים אַתֶּם לִי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל,
נְאֻם-יְהוָה : הֲלוֹא אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל, הֶעֱלִיתִי
מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, וּפְלִשְׁתִּיִּים מִכַּפְתּוֹר, וְאַרְם
מִקִּיר. 7 Are you not as the children of the Ethiopians to Me, O children of
Israel? Says the LORD. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land
of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and Aram from Kir?

Malachi 3:16

- טז אִזּוֹ נִדְבְּרוּ יִרְאֵי יְהוָה, אִישׁ אֶל-רֵעֵהוּ ;
וַיִּקְשֹׁב יְהוָה, וַיִּשְׁמָע, וַיִּכְתֹּב סֵפֶר זִכְרוֹן לְפָנָיו
לְיִרְאֵי יְהוָה, וּלְחֹשְׁבֵי שְׁמוֹ. 16 Then they that feared the LORD spoke **one with another**; and
the LORD hearkened, and heard, and a book of remembrance was
written before Him, for them that feared the LORD, and that thought
upon His name.

All humanity passes before You like “Bnei Maron”

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| <p align="center">וּנְתַנֵּה תִקְוָה</p> <p>וּנְתַנֵּה תִקְוָה קְדוּשַׁת הַיּוֹם. כִּי הוּא נוֹרָא וְאִיּוֹם. וְבוֹ תִנְשֵׂא מְלֻכּוֹתֶיךָ. וְיִכּוֹן בְּחֶסֶד כְּסֵאֲךָ. וְתִשָּׁב עָלָיו בְּאַמֶּת. אֱמֶת כִּי אַתָּה הוּא דִין וּמוֹכִיחַ וְיֹדֵעַ וְעֹד. וְכוֹתֵב וְחוֹתֵם וְסוֹפֵר וּמוֹנֵה. וְתִזְכֹּר כָּל הַנְּשָׁכָחוֹת. וְתִפְתַּח אֶת סֵפֶר הַזְּכוֹרוֹנוֹת. וּמֵאֲלֵיו יִקְרָא. וְחוֹתֵם יָד כָּל אָדָם בּוֹ. וּבְשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל יִתְקַע. וְקוֹל דְּמָמָה דְקָה יִשְׁמַע. וּמַלְאָכִים יַחְפְּזוּן. וְחִיל וְרַעְדָה יֵאָחֲזוּן. וְיֵאָמְרוּ הִנֵּה יוֹם הַדֵּין. לִפְקֹד עַל צְבָא מְרוֹם בְּדִין. כִּי לֹא יִזְכוּ בְעֵינֶיךָ בְּדִין.</p> <p>וְכָל בָּאֵי עוֹלָם יַעֲבְרוּן לְפָנֶיךָ כְּבָנֵי מָרוֹן. כְּבִקְרַת רוּעָה עֹדוֹר. מַעֲבִיר צֹאנוּ תַחַת שֶׁבֶטוֹ. כֵּן תַעֲבִיר וְתִסְפֹּר וְתִמְנֶה. וְתִפְקֹד נַפְשׁ כָּל חַי. וְתַחֲתֶיךָ קֹצֵבָה לְכָל בְּרִיּוֹתֶיךָ. וְתִכְתֹּב אֶת גְּזֵר דֵינֵם:</p> | <p>U’Netaneh Tokef</p> <p>Let us give it up for the shock of the holiness of this day, for it is awesome and frightening. On this day, Your Kingship is uplifted, and Your throne is established with kindness, and You sit upon it in truth. True that You are judge, admonisher, knower and witness; and You inscribe, seal, record and count, and recall all forgotten things. You open the book of records and it reads of itself; and the signature of every man is in it.</p> <p>A great shofar is sounded, and a silent, gentle voice is heard; and the angels are alarmed, pangs of fear and trembling seize them, and they declare, “behold the Day of Judgment.” The heavenly host is arraigned in judgment, for they are not guiltless in Your eyes in judgment.</p> <p>All humanity passes before You like “B’nei Maron”. As a shepherd inspects his flock, making his sheep pass under his rod, so do You cause to pass, count, number, and review the soul of every living being, determining the life-span of every creature; and You record the decree of their judgment.</p> |
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| <p>משנה מסכת ראש השנה פרק א</p> <p>(ב) בְּאַרְבַּעַה פְּרָקִים הָעוֹלָם נִדוּן, בְּפֶסַח עַל הַתְּבוּאָה, בְּעֶצְרַת עַל פְּרוֹת הָאֵילָן, בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה</p> <p>כָּל בָּאֵי הָעוֹלָם עוֹבְרִין לְפָנֶיךָ כְּבָנֵי מָרוֹן,</p> <p>שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (תהלים לג: טו) הַיּוֹצֵר יַחַד לִבָּם, הַמְּבִין אֶל כָּל מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם. וְיַחַג נְדוּנִין עַל הַמַּיִם:</p> | <p>Mishnah Rosh HaShanah 1:2</p> <p>(2) At four set times the world is judged: On Pesach with respect to the produce. On Closure (i.e. Shavuot) with respect to the fruit of the tree. On Rosh HaShanah</p> <p>All the people of the world pass before Him like B’nei Maron</p> <p>as it says (Psalms 33: 15) <i>“He who fashions together their hearts, who understands all their deeds”</i></p> <p>And on The Festival (i.e. Sukkot) they are judged with respect to water.</p> |
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| <p>תלמוד ראש השנה יח.</p> <p>בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה כָּל בָּאֵי הָעוֹלָם עוֹבְרִין לְפָנֶיךָ כְּבָנֵי מָרוֹן</p> <p>מֵאֵי כְּבָנֵי מָרוֹן</p> <p>הֲכֵא תַרְגִּימוּ כְּבָנֵי אֲמֶרְנָא</p> <p>רִישׁ לְקִישׁ אָמַר כְּמַעְלוֹת בֵּית מָרוֹן</p> <p>אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל כְּחַיִּילוֹת שֶׁל בֵּית דָּוִד</p> <p>אָמַר רַבָּה בַר בַּר חֲנָה אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן וְכוּלָן נִסְקָרִין בְּסִקְרִיהַ אַחַת</p> <p>אָמַר רַב נַחֲמָן בַּר יִצְחָק אֵף אֲנִי נִמִּי תִנְיָנָא</p> <p>הַיּוֹצֵר יַחַד לִבָּם הַמְּבִין אֶל כָּל מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם (תהלים לג: טו)</p> <p>מֵאֵי קָאָמַר אֵילִימָא הֲכִי קָאָמַר דְּבַרְנְהוּ לְכוּלֵי עֲלָמָא וּמִיַּיְחִיד לְבִיּהוּ כְּהַדְדִּי</p> <p>וְהָא קָא חֲזִינוּ דְלָאו הֲכִי הוּא אֵלָא לָאו הֲכִי קָאָמַר הַיּוֹצֵר רוּאָה יַחַד לִבָּם וּמְבִין אֶל כָּל מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם:</p> | <p>Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 18a</p> <p>On Rosh HaShana all creatures pass before Him like B’nei Maron</p> <p>What is “like B’nei Maron?”</p> <p>Here (in Babylonia) they translated “Like sheep” (or maybe rebels!)</p> <p>Reish Lakish said: Like the ascent of Beit Maron,</p> <p>Rav Yehuda said that Shmuel said Like the soldiers of the house of King David</p> <p>Rabba bar bar Hana said that Rabbi Yochanan said: And they are all scanned in a single scan.</p> <p>Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: We, too, learn (this in a <i>baraita</i>): <i>“He who fashions together their hearts, who understands all their deeds”</i> (Psalms 33: 15).</p> <p>What is this verse saying? If we should say this is what it is saying: That He created everyone and unites all their hearts together, But look, we see that that is not actually so! Rather, isn’t this what it is saying: The Creator sees their hearts altogether and considers all their deeds?</p> |
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| <p>רש"י לתלמוד ראש השנה יח.</p> <p>בר"ה כל באי עולם כו' כבני אמרנא – ככבשים שמונין אותן לעשרן ויוצאין זה אחר זה בפתח קטן שאין יכולין לצאת כאחד:</p> <p>כמעלות בית מרון – הדרך קצר ואין שנים יכולין לילך זה בצד זה שהעמק עמוק משני צידי הדרך...</p> <p>כחיילות של בית דוד – וכבני מרון כבני חיילות של מלך מרון לשון מרות ואדנות וכך היו מונין אותם יוצאים זה אחר זה בצאתם למלחמה:</p> | <p>Rashi on Rosh HaShanah 18a</p> <p>On Rosh HaShana all creatures etc... ...Like sheep Sheep that they count them to tithe them And they go out one after the other Through a narrow doorway that only one can pass through</p> <p>On the slopes of Beit Maron The way is narrow And two cannot go along one beside the other For the valley is deep on both sides of the path...</p> <p>Like the soldiers of the house of David And "like B'nei Maron" is "like the soldiers of the king" Maron is the language of "marut" – mastery and lordship And that's how they would count them Departing one after the other As they went out to war</p> |
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Psalms 33:15

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| <p>יב אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ; הָעַם, בָּחַר לְנַחֲלָה לּוֹ.</p> <p>יג מִשָּׁמַיִם, הִבִּיט יְהוָה רָאָה אֶת-כָּל-בְּנֵי הָאָדָם.</p> <p>יד מִמְּכוּן-שְׁבֹתוֹ הִשְׁגִּיחַ אֶל כָּל-יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ.</p> <p>טו הַיֵּצֵר יַחַד לִבָּם; הַמְבִּין אֶל-כָּל-מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם.</p> <p>טז אִין-הַמְלִיךְ, נוֹשָׁע בְּרֵב-חַיִל; גִּבּוֹר, לֹא-יִנְצַל בְּרֵב-כֹּחַ.</p> <p>יז שֶׁקֶר הַסּוֹס, לְתִשׁוּעָה; וּבְרֵב חַיִּלוֹ, לֹא יִמָּלֵט.</p> <p>יח הִנֵּה עֵין יְהוָה, אֶל-יִרְאָיו; לְמַיְחָלִים לְחַסְדּוֹ.</p> | <p>12 Happy is the nation whose God is the LORD; the people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance.</p> <p>13 The LORD looks from heaven; He beholds all the sons of men;</p> <p>14 From the place of His habitation He looks intently upon all the inhabitants of the earth;</p> <p>15 He that fashions together their hearts, that understands all their deeds.</p> <p>16 A king is not saved by the multitude of a host; a mighty man is not delivered by great strength.</p> <p>17 A horse is a vain thing for safety; neither does it afford escape by its great strength.</p> <p>18 Behold, the eye of the LORD is toward them that fear Him, toward them that wait for His mercy;</p> |
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| <p>במדבר רבה יט: לג</p> <p>זה אחד משלושה דברים שאמר משה לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא ואמר לו "לימדתני... השניה: כשאמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא: "פוקד עוון אבות על בנים", אמר משה: "ריבונו של עולם! כמה רשעים הולידו צדיקים, יהיו נוטלים מעוונות אביהם! תרח עובד צלמים, ואברהם בנו צדיק, וכן חזקיהו צדיק, ואחז אביו רשע. וכן יאשיהו – צדיק, ואמון אביו רשע. וכך נאה – שיהיו הצדיקים לוקין בעוון אביהם! אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא: "לימדתני! חייד שאני מבטל דברי ומקיים דבריך, שנאמר (דברים כ"ד) "לא יומתו אבות על בנים ובנים לא יומתו על אבות", וחייד שאני כותבן לשמך, שנאמר (מלכים ב', י"ד ו) "ככתוב בספר תורת משה אשר ציוה ה"</p> | <p>Bemidbar Rabbah 19: 33</p> <p>This is one of the three things that Moses said before the Holy One, blessed be He, and He said [back] to him, "You (Moses) have taught me." ... The second one is when the Holy One, blessed be He, said, "<i>visiting the iniquity of the parents upon the children</i>": Moses said, "Master of the Universe, how many evildoers begat righteous ones; should they be removed by the iniquities of their parents? Terach worshiped images, but his son, Abraham, was righteous; so too Hezekiah was righteous, but Ahaz, his father was an evildoer; Josiah was righteous, but Amon, his father, was an evildoer. Is this proper, that the righteous be struck for the iniquities of their parents?"</p> <p>The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, "Behold, you have taught Me! By your life, I will nullify My words and preserve your words, as it is stated (Deuteronomy 24: 15), '<i>The parents shall not die for the children, and the children shall not die for the parents</i>'; and it is by your life that I shall write [these things] in your name, as it is stated (II Kings 14: 6), '<i>as it is written in the Torah of Moses, which God commanded.</i>'"</p> |
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Ellis Rivkin - Pharisaism and the crisis of the Individual in the Greco-Roman world
Jewish Quarterly review – July 1970 – Vol 61 Number 1 pp 27-53

RIVKIN, ELLIS (1918–), U.S. historian. Born in Baltimore, Maryland, Rivkin received a doctorate in history from Johns Hopkins University. He taught Jewish history at Gratz College before being appointed professor of Jewish history at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio. He acquired renown as a perceptive analyst of the interrelationships between Jewish life and that of the surrounding culture as well as for his application of new methodologies to the problems of Jewish historiography.

Though the Pharisees were beholden to the Pentateuch for their notion of the one and only God who had given an immutable revelation to Moses, they intensified His relationship to the individual at the expense of cult. They did this by affirming that he was the Father-Creator-Law-giving God of the individual - a real cosmic omnipotent Father who was directly accessible to the individual through mandatory prayer and whose law was to be internalized within the conscience. This internalized law was not the literal Pentateuchal Law, but that twofold Law - oral and written - promulgated by the Pharisees. This twofold Law differed radically from the Pentateuch, not only in acknowledging an authority unknown to the Pentateuch, the Pharisaic scholar class, but in spelling out for the individual a discipline embracing all human activity. No hour of the day or night was beyond its jurisdiction. It was a system of law that shifted the centre of concern from the cult to the conscience, and that focused on social responsibility. One was bound in responsibility to fellow members of the community of those who had also internalized the twofold law and the non-Pentateuchal term *gemilut chasadim*, the doing of kindly acts, was coined to denote this responsibility. The assurance was that the Father-Creator-Law-giving God was accessible. He was called by names unknown to the Pentateuch: Our Father Who art Heaven (Avinu She-Ba-Shamaim), HaMakom (the "All-Present"), Shechinah ('the Divine Presence'), Ha-Kadosh Baruch Hu ('the Holy One blessed be He'). No longer was God to be found in a special place, the Temple, but everywhere where the individual might be, for the heavenly Father, unlike an earthly father is eternal and is indeed everywhere at once.

The individual was His concern, all individuals, not just Jews. He wanted the individual to have the opportunity for an eternal individuation as a reward for keeping the internalized twofold Law. This Law had been made available to Israel by the Father-God through Moses, and its prescriptions were continually being made explicit by the Pharisaic scholar class through the Beit Din ha-Gadol, the "Great Legislature." Although it was given to Israel, it was open, through proselytism, to all mankind. And though Israel was viewed as a holy community, the personal salvation of each individual was independent of the failure of the community to live up to its mandate. The road to salvation was one that was open to any person, even though no other walked with him. And there was only one way to know how far one had to tread: to scrutinize one's loyalty to the internal standard, as did God, the Father in Heaven, himself.

Pharisaism was thus the Judaism of a reality within. It designated this reality as the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, and it confirmed this reality by legislating that in the morning and in the evening the sovereignty of the internal kingdom be affirmed in the saying of the Shema. No such command is to be found in the Pentateuch. The Shema affirms that God is one and that his laws are eternally binding. Along with the Shema, the Pharisees insisted that the Tefillah, a fixed form of blessings and prayer, be uttered daily: and that whenever one partook of God's bounty or was attracted to some extra-ordinary manifestation of God's power, one was to utter a blessing.

Little wonder then that the form of religious expression that emerged out of Pharisaism was the synagogue, a de-centralized institution for the reading of Scripture, and subsequently for the utterance of prayers in the community of fellow believers in the internalized kingdom - an institution that not only solved the problem of diaspora Judaism, but so effectively undercut the cult in Judea that only an appropriate event was required for its complete collapse.

And this is not all. The Pharisees made the Temple irrelevant by shifting the attention of Jews to a scholar class and away from the priesthood. Not only did the Pharisees legislate how the Aaronides were to perform their functions, but by transferring authority from a book, the Pentateuch, to a non-writing scholar class, the Israelite had no alternative but to listen to what this class had to say, for the road to salvation was to be found in their teachings and not in a literal perusal of the Pentateuch...

Reinhold Niebuhr

Moral Man and Immoral society – A study in Ethics and Politics

(Karl Paul Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971) was an American Reformed theologian, ethicist, commentator on politics and public affairs, and professor at Union Theological Seminary for more than 30 years. Niebuhr was one of America's leading public intellectuals for several decades of the 20th century and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1964. A public theologian, he wrote and spoke frequently about the intersection of religion, politics, and public policy, with his most influential books including *Moral Man and Immoral Society* and *The Nature and Destiny of Man*. The latter is ranked number 18 of the top 100 non-fiction books of the twentieth century by Modern Library. Andrew Bacevich labelled Niebuhr's book *The Irony of American History* "the most important book ever written on U.S. foreign policy." The historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. described Niebuhr as "the most influential American theologian of the 20th century" and Time posthumously called Niebuhr "the greatest Protestant theologian in America since Jonathan Edwards." – Wikipedia)

The inevitable hypocrisy, which is associated with all of the collective activities of the human race, springs chiefly from this source: that individuals have a moral code which makes the actions of collective man an outrage to their conscience. They therefore invent romantic and moral interpretations of the real facts, preferring to obscure rather than reveal the true character of their collective behaviour. Sometimes they are as anxious to offer moral justifications for the brutalities from which they suffer as for those which they commit. The fact that the hypocrisy of man's group behaviour, about which we shall have much more to say later, expresses itself not only in terms of self-justification but in terms of moral justification of human behaviour in general, symbolises one of the tragedies of the human spirit: its inability to conform its collective life to its individual ideals. As individuals, men believe that they ought to love and serve each other and establish justice between each other. As racial, economic and national groups they take for themselves, whatever their power can command.

The man of power, though humane impulse may awaken in him, always remains something of the beast of prey. He may be generous within his family, and just within the confines of the group which shares his power and privilege. With only rare exceptions, his highest moral attitude toward members of other groups is one of warlike sportsmanship toward those who equal his power and challenge it, and one of philanthropic generosity toward those who possess less power and privilege. His philanthropy is a perfect illustration of the curious compound of the brutal and the moral which we find in all human behaviour; for his generosity is at once a display of his power and an expression of his pity. His generous impulses freeze within him if his power is challenged or his generousities are accepted without grateful humility. If individual men of power should achieve more ethical attitudes than the one described, it remains nevertheless typical for them as a class; and is their practically unvarying attitude when they express themselves not as individuals but as a group. The rise of modern democracy, beginning with the Eighteenth Century, is sometimes supposed to have substituted the consent of the governed for the power of royal families and aristocratic classes as the cohesive force of national society. This judgment is partly true but not nearly as true as the uncritical devotees of modern democracy assume. The doctrine that government exists by the consent of the governed, and the democratic technique by which the suffrage of the governed determines the policy of the state, may actually reduce the coercive factor in national life, and provide for peaceful and gradual methods of resolving conflicting social interests and changing political institutions. But the creeds and institutions of democracy have never become fully divorced from the special interests of the commercial classes who conceived and developed them. It was their interest to destroy political restraint upon economic activity, and they therefore weakened the authority of the state and made it more pliant to their needs. With the increased centralisation of economic power in the period of modern industrialism, this development merely means that society as such does not control economic power as much as social well-being requires; and that the economic, rather than the political and military, power has become the significant coercive force of modern society.

Nevertheless the whole history of mankind bears testimony to the fact that the power which prevents anarchy in intra-group relations encourages anarchy in intergroup relations. The kings of old claimed the loyalty and the sacrifices of their subjects in conflicts with other tyrants, in which the interests of the state and the welfare of the people were completely subordinated to the capricious purposes of the monarch. No personal whim, which a human being might indulge, is excluded from the motives, which have prompted monarchs to shed the blood of their unhappy subjects. Pride, jealousy, disappointed love, hurt vanity, greed for greater treasures, lust for power over larger dominions, petty animosities between royal brothers or between father

and son, momentary passions and childish whims, these all have been, not the occasional but the perennially recurring, causes and occasions of international conflict. The growing intelligence of mankind and the increased responsibility of monarchs to their people have placed a check upon the caprice, but not upon the self-interest, of the men of power. They may still engage in social conflict for the satisfaction of their pride and vanity provided they can compound their personal ambitions with, and hallow them by, the ambitions of their group, and the pitiful vanities and passions of the individuals who compose the group.

The frustrations of the average man, who can never realise the power and the glory which his imagination sets as the ideal, makes him the more willing tool and victim of the imperial ambitions of his group. His frustrated individual ambitions gain a measure of satisfaction in the power and the aggrandisement of his nation. The will-to-power of competing national groups is the cause of the international anarchy which the moral sense of mankind has thus far vainly striven to overcome. Since some nations are more powerful than others, they will at times prevent anarchy by effective imperialism, which in our industrial period has become more covert than overt. But the peace is gained by force and is always an uneasy and an unjust one. As powerful classes organise a nation, so powerful nations organise a crude society of nations. In each case the peace is a tentative one because it is unjust. It has been achieved only partially by a mutual accommodation of conflicting interests and certainly not by a rational and moral adjustment of rights. It will last only until those, who feel themselves too weak to challenge strength, will become, or will feel themselves, powerful enough to do so. It is not necessary to discount the moral influence of the League of Nations completely or to deny that it represents certain gains in the rational and moral organisation of society, to recognise that the peace of contemporary Europe is maintained by the force of French arms and that it will last only as long as the ingenuities of French statesmanship can maintain the combination of political and military forces which holds the people, who feel themselves defrauded by the Versailles Treaty, in check. Significantly the same power, which prompts the fear that prevents immediate action, also creates the mounting hatred which guarantees ultimate rebellion. Thus society is in a perpetual state of war. Lacking moral and rational resources to organise its life, without resort to coercion, except in the most immediate and intimate social groups, men remain the victims of the individuals, classes and nations by whose force a momentary coerced unity is achieved, and further conflicts are as certainly created. The fact that the coercive factor in society is both necessary and dangerous seriously complicates the whole task of securing both peace and justice. History is a long tale of abortive efforts toward the desired end of social cohesion and justice in which failure was usually due either to the effort to eliminate the factor of force entirely or to an undue reliance upon it.

Since it is impossible to count on enough moral goodwill among those who possess irresponsible power to sacrifice it for the good of the whole, it must be destroyed by coercive methods and these will always run the peril of introducing new forms of injustice in place of those abolished. There is, for instance, as yet no clear proof that the power of economic overlords can be destroyed by means less rigorous than communism has employed; but there is also no proof that communistic oligarchs, once the idealistic passion of a revolutionary period is spent, will be very preferable to the capitalistic oligarchs, whom they are to displace. Since the increasing complexity of society makes it impossible to bring all those who are in charge of its intricate techniques and processes, and who are therefore in possession of social power, under complete control, it will always be necessary to rely partly upon the honesty and self-restraint of those who are not socially restrained.

So difficult is it to avoid the Scylla of despotism and the Charybdis of anarchy that it is safe to hazard the prophecy that the dream of perpetual peace and brotherhood for human society is one which will never be fully realised. It is a vision prompted by the conscience and insight of individual man, but incapable of fulfilment by collective man. It is like all true religious visions, possible of approximation but not of realisation in actual history. The vitality of the vision is the measure of man's rebellion against the fate which binds his collective life to the world of nature from which his soul recoils. The vision can be kept alive only by permitting it to overreach itself. But meanwhile collective man, operating on the historic and mundane scene, must content himself with a more modest goal. His concern for some centuries to come is not the creation of an ideal society in which there will be un-coerced and perfect peace and justice, but a society in which there will be enough justice, and in which coercion will be sufficiently non-violent to prevent his common enterprise from issuing into complete disaster. That goal will seem too modest for the romanticists; but the romanticists have so little understanding for the perils in which modern society lives, and overestimate the moral resources at the disposal of the collective human enterprise so easily, that any goal

regarded as worthy of achievement by them must necessarily be beyond attainment.

Try as he will, man seems incapable of forming an international community, with power and prestige great enough to bring social restraint upon collective egoism. He has not even succeeded in disciplining anti-social group egoism within the nation. The very extension of human sympathies has therefore resulted in the creation of larger units of conflict without abolishing conflict. So civilization has become a device for delegating the vices of individuals to larger and larger communities. The device gives men the illusion that they are moral; but the illusion is not lasting. A technological civilisation has created an international community, so interdependent as to require, even if not powerful or astute enough to achieve, ultimate social harmony. While there are halting efforts to create an international mind and conscience, capable of coping with this social situation, modern man has progressed only a little beyond his fathers in extending his ethical attitudes beyond the group to which he is organic and which possesses symbols, vivid enough to excite his social sympathies. His group is larger than that of his fathers, but whatever moral gain may be ascribed to that development is partially lost by the greater heterogeneity and the diminished mutuality of this larger group. The modern nation is divided into classes and the classes exhibit a greater disproportion of power and privilege than in the primitive community. This social inequality leads not only to internal strife but to conflict between various national communities, by prompting the more privileged and powerful classes to seek advantages at the expense of other nations so that they may consolidate the privileges which they have won at the expense of their own nationals. Thus modern life is involved in both class and international conflict; and it may be that class privileges cannot be abolished or diminished until they have reduced the whole of modern society to international and intra-national chaos. The growing intelligence of mankind seems not to be growing rapidly enough to achieve mastery over the social problems, which the advances of technology create.

The undoubted moral resources of religion seem to justify the religious moralists in their hope for the redemption of society through the increase of religio-moral resources. In their most unqualified form, these hopes are vain. There are constitutional limitations in the genius of religion which will always make it more fruitful in purifying individual life, and adding wholesomeness to the more intimate social relations, such as the family, than in the problems of the more complex and political relations of modern society. The disrepute, in which modern religion is held by large numbers of ethically sensitive individuals, springs much more from its difficulties in dealing with these complex problems than from its tardiness in adjusting itself to the spirit of modern culture. A society which is harassed with the urgent political and economic problems, which confront our contemporary world, is inclined to be scornful of any life-expression, which is not immediately relevant to its most urgent tasks. In that attitude it may be no more justified than are the religious sentimentalists, who insist that they have a panacea for every ill to which the human flesh is heir.

The danger to social life of this impartation of absolute value to human life is most apparent when it expresses itself in the life of national and other groups rather than in individuals. There is a moral and social imagination in religion which invests the life of other nations with a significance as great as that which is claimed for one's own nation. But it is not as powerful and not as frequently expressed as the imagination which makes one's own nation the peculiar instrument of transcendent and divine purposes. The prophet Amos could cry in the name of the Lord, "*Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto me, saith the Lord?*" But his was a voice in the wilderness among the many who regarded Israel as the special servant of God among the nations of the world. It is not only religion which gives a special dignity and worth to the life of the nation to which one belongs. Patriotism is a form of piety which exists partly through the limitation of the imagination, and that limitation may be expressed by savants as well as by saints. The wise men of the nations were just as sedulous in proving, during the late World War, that their particular nation had a peculiar mission to "culture" and to "civilisation" as were the religious leaders in asserting that the will of God was being fulfilled in the policy of their state. But since the claims of religion are more absolute than those of any secular culture the danger of sharpening the self-will of nations through religion is correspondingly greater.

משנה אבות ב:ד Mishnah Avot 2:4

הוא הנה אומר,
עשה רצונו כרצונך,
כדי שיעשה רצונך כרצונו.
בטל רצונך מפני רצונו,
כדי שיבטל רצון אחרים
מפני רצונך.

He used to say
Do/Make his will like your will,
so that he will do/make your will like his will.
Cancel your will in the face of his will,
so that he will cancel the will of others
in the face of your will.

הלל אומר,
אל תפרש מן הצבור
ואל תאמין בעצמך
עד יום מותך,
ואל תדין את חברך
עד שתגיע למקומו,
ואל תאמר דבר
שאי אפשר לשמע,
שסופו להשמע.
ואל תאמר,
לכשאפנה אשנה,
שמה לא תפנה:

Hillel says:
Do not separate from the community
And do not trust in yourself
until the day of your death
And do not judge your fellow
until you will arrive to his place.
And do not say something
that cannot be heard
that in the end it will be heard
And do not say,
'When I will have leisure I will study;'
perhaps you will not have leisure.

**ר' עובדיה מברטנורא Rabbi Ovadia Bartenura,
אבות פרק ב משנה ד Avot Chapter 2, Mishnah 4**

עשה רצונו כרצונך. פי' ממונה בהפצ'י
שמם, כרצונך, כאלו פירת אותם בהפצ'יה.
שאם עשית כן יעשה רצונך כרצונו, כלומר
יתן לך טובה בעין יפה

"Do/Make his will like your will": Spread your money on 'things of Heaven' "like your will," [meaning] as if you were spreading them for your [own] things. As if you will do this, "He will make His will like your will," meaning to say that He will give you the good with 'a generous eye.'

כדי שיבטל רצון אחרים. יפר עצת כל
הקמים עליך לרעה. ואני שמעתי, שאין זה
אלא דרך כבוד כלפי מעלה, והרי הוא כאלו
כתוב כדי שיבטל רצונו מפני רצונך. כאותה
שאמרו בפרק במה אשה (שבת סג.) כל
העושה מצוה בתקנה אפלו גזר דין של
שבעים שנה מתבטל מעליו:

so that he will cancel the will of others": He will undo the counsel of all those that come towards you to [do you] bad. And I have heard that this is only a respectful euphemism towards the Higher One. And behold, it is as if it was written, "so that He nullify His will to your will; like that which they said in the chapter [entitled] "Bemeh Eesha" (Shabbat 63a), "Anyone who does a commandment as it is established (properly), even a decree of seventy years is nullified before him."

אל תפרש מן הצבור. אלא השתתף
בצרתם. שכל הפורש מן הצבור אינו רואה
בנחמת הצבור (תענית יא.)

"Do not separate from the congregation": but rather share in their troubles. As anyone who separates from the congregation will not [live to] see the consolation of the congregation (Ta'anit 11a).

ואל תאמין בעצמך עד יום מותך. שהרי
יוחנן כהן גדול שמם בכהנה גדולה שמנים
שנה ולבסוף נעשה צדוקי (ברכות כט.)

"Do not trust in yourself until the day of your death": As behold, Yonatan the High Priest served in the high priesthood eighty years and in the end he became a Sadducee (B'rachot 29a).

ואל תדין את חברך עד שתגיע למקומו.
אם ראת חברך שבא לידי נסיון ונכשל, אל
תדינהו לחובה עד שתגיע לידי נסיון כמותו
ותצל:

"Do not judge your fellow until you will arrive to his place": If you see your fellow come to a test and fail, do not judge him unfavorably until a test like it comes to you and you overcome [it].

ואל תאמר דבר שאי אפשר לשמע וסופו להשמע. כלומר, לא יהיו דבריך מספקים שאי אפשר להבינם בתחלה ובעיון ראשון, ותסמך שאם יצמיק השומע בהם לבסוף יבינם. כי זה יביא בני אדם לטעות בדבריך, שמא יטעו ויצאו למינות על ידך.

פרוש אחר, לא תגלה סודך אפלו בינך לבין עצמך ותאמר שאין כאן מי שישמעך, לפי שסופו להשמע, כי עוף השמים יוליך את הקול. והגרסא היא לפי פרוש זה, שסופו להשמע.

אבל רש"י גורס, ואל תאמר דבר שאפשר לשמע שסופו להשמע. ובדברי תורה מדבר, אל תאמר על דבר תורה שאתה יכול לשמע עכשיו שתשמע אותו לבסוף, אלא הט אונניך ושמע מיד :

לכשאפנה. מעסקי, אעסק בתורה

"Do not say something that cannot be heard, that in the end it will be heard": That is to say, do not let your words be unclear, such that it is impossible to understand them immediately and at first perusal; and [do not] rely on that if the listener wants to look into them, in the end, he will understand them. As this will bring people to err from your words, lest they err and come to heresy because of you.

Another explanation: Do not reveal your secret, even [saying it aloud] only to yourself, as in the end it will be heard, "since the birds of the sky make the voice travel." And the [correct] textual variant according to this explanation is, "for in the end it will be heard."

But Rashi had the variant, "Do not say, 'something that can be heard, in the end it will be heard.'" And [according to this,] it is speaking about the words of Torah: Do not say about a Torah teaching that you can hear now, that you will hear it in the end (later), but rather extend your ears and hear it immediately.

"When I will have leisure": from my business, I will involve [myself] in Torah [study].

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| <p>רבינו יונה אבות פרק ב משנה ד</p> | <p>Rabbeinu Yona Avot Chapter 2, Mishnah 4</p> |
| <p>הוא היה אומר עשה רצונו כרצונך. כאשר האדם עושה רצון עצמו בחפץ ובתאוה כן יעשה לו רצון הקב"ה. ולא להפריד רצון הקב"ה ית' ורצונו אך לעשות שניהם דבר אחד. ר"ל שלא יהיה לו רצון כי אם דבר שהוא לרצון לפני ה'. ואמרו באבות דר' נתן וכן בדוד הוא אומר (ד"ה אי כ"ט י"ד) כי ממך הכל ומידך נתנו לך. ונתן עצה לבני אדם להתגבר על טבעם לעשות כחפץ ורצון השם ית' גם בממונם ובקנינם כי ה' נתן הכל ופקדון הוא בידם. ובהעלות אל לבו זה על כל פנים יעשה מהפקדון רצון הבעלים שהוא הקב"ה ובזה לא ידאג בתנו לצדקה ויעשה רצונו כרצון הקב"ה ברצון ובטוב לבב :</p> | <p>He used to say: Do/Make his will like your will [Just] as when a person does his own will with want and desire, so should he do the will of the Holy Blessing One. And [he] should not separate between the will of the Holy blessing One and his [own] will, but rather make both of them [into] one thing. He means to say that he should not will anything that is not the will before God. And they said in the Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan (Midrash Mishlei 9), "<i>And so did David say (I Chronicles 29: 14), 'but all is from You, and it is from Your Hand that we have given to You.'</i>" And he gave a good counsel to people to overcome their nature [and] do the desire and will of God, may He be blessed - also from their money and from the acquisitions: because God gave everything and [what they have] is [only] a deposit in their hands. And when [one] brings this up into his heart, at the very least he will do the will of the owners - which is God - with the deposit. And with this, he will not worry when he gives charity and he will do the will of the Holy Blessing One willingly and with a good heart.</p> |

The historical and philosophical roots of our reluctance to commit fully

Deuteronomy Chapter 31

- ג יהוה אלהיך הוא עבר לפניך, הוא יושעך, הוא הגוים האלה מלפניך--וירשיתם; והושע, הוא עבר לפניך, באשר, דבר יהוה.
- 3 The LORD your God, He will go over before you; He will destroy these nations from before you, and you shalt dispossess them; and Joshua, he shall go over before you, as the LORD has spoken.
- ד ועשה יהוה, להם, באשר עשה לסיחון ולעוג מלכי האמרי, ולארצם--אשר השמיד, אתם.
- 4 And the LORD will do to them as He did to Sichon and to Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land; whom He destroyed.
- ה ונתנם יהוה, לפניכם; ועשיתם להם--ככל-המצוה, אשר צויתי אתכם.
- 5 And the LORD will deliver them up before you, and you shall do to them according to all the commandment which I have commanded you.
- ו חזקו ואמצו, אל-תיראו ואל-תערצו מפניהם: כי יהוה אלהיך, הוא ההלף עמך--לא ירפק, ולא יעזבך. {ס}
- 6 Be strong and of good courage, fear not, nor be affrighted at them; for the LORD your God, He it is that does go with you; He will not fail you, nor forsake you.' {S}

Essays of Michel De Montaigne

Translated by Charles Cotton

Chapter 12 – Apology for Raimond Sebond

Michel Eyquem de Montaigne (February 1533 – 13 September 1592), also known as Lord of Montaigne, was one of the most significant philosophers of the French Renaissance, known for popularizing the essay as a literary genre. His work is noted for its merging of casual anecdotes and autobiography with intellectual insight. His massive volume *Essais* contains some of the most influential essays ever written. Montaigne had a direct influence on Western writers including Francis Bacon, René Descartes, Blaise Pascal, Montesquieu, Edmund Burke, Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, David Hume, Edward Gibbon, Virginia Woolf, Albert Hirschman, William Hazlitt, Ralph Waldo Emerson, John Henry Newman, Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, Alexander Pushkin, Charles Darwin, Friedrich Nietzsche, Stefan Zweig, Eric Hoffer, Isaac Asimov, Fulton Sheen, and possibly, on the later works of William Shakespeare.

All this is a most evident sign that we only receive our religion after our own fashion, by our own hands, and no otherwise than as other religions are received. Either we are happened in the country where it is in practice, or we reverence the antiquity of it, or the authority of the men who have maintained it, or fear the menaces it fulminates against misbelievers, or are allured by its promises. These considerations ought, 'tis true, to be applied to our belief but as subsidiaries only, for they are human obligations. Another religion, other witnesses, the like promises and threats, might, by the same way, imprint a quite contrary belief. We are Christians by the same title that we are Perigordians or Germans...

Can anything be imagined so ridiculous, that this miserable and wretched creature, who is not so much as master of himself, but subject to the injuries of all things, should call himself master and emperor of the world, of which he has not power to know the least part, much less to command the whole?...

Doubtless, we have strangely overpaid this fine reason, upon which we so much glorify ourselves, and this capacity of judging and knowing, if we have bought it at the price of this infinite number of passions to which we are eternally subject...

I have known in my time a hundred artisans, a hundred labourers, wiser and more happy than the rectors of the university, and whom I had much rather have resembled. Learning, methinks, has its place amongst the necessary, things of life, as glory, nobility, dignity, or at the most, as beauty, riches, and such other qualities, which indeed are useful to it, but remotely, and more by opinion than by nature. We stand very little more in need of offices, rules, and laws of living in our society, than cranes and ants do in theirs; and yet we see that these carry themselves very regularly without erudition.

The first law that ever God gave to man was a law of pure obedience; it was a commandment naked and simple, wherein man had nothing to inquire after, nor to dispute; forasmuch as to obey is the proper office of a rational soul, acknowledging a heavenly superior and benefactor. From obedience and submission spring all other virtues, as all sin does from self-opinion. And, on the contrary, the first temptation that by the devil was offered to human nature, its first poison insinuated itself into us by the promise made us of knowledge and wisdom; *Eritis sicut Dii, scientes bonum et malum.* “*Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*” And the sirens, in Homer, to allure Ulysses, and draw him within the danger of their snares, offered to give him

knowledge. The plague of man is the opinion of wisdom; and for this reason it is that ignorance is so recommended to us, by our religion, as proper to faith and obedience; *Cavete ne quis vos decipiat per philosophiam et inanes seductiones, secundum elementa mundi*. “Take heed, lest any man deceive you by philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, and the rudiments of the world.”...

The divine majesty has thus, in some sort, suffered himself to be circumscribed in corporal limits for our advantage. His supernatural and celestial sacraments have signs of our earthly condition; his adoration is by sensible offices and words; for ‘tis man that believes and prays. I shall omit the other arguments upon this subject; but a man would have much ado to make me believe that the sight of our crucifixes, that the picture of our Saviour’s passion, that the ornaments and ceremonious motions of our churches, that the voices accommodated to the devotion of our thoughts, and that emotion of the senses, do not warm the souls of the people with a religious passion of very advantageous effect...

When Mahomet promises his followers a Paradise hung with tapestry, gilded and enamelled with gold and precious stones, furnished with wenches of excelling beauty, rare wines, and delicate dishes; it is easily discerned that these are deceivers that accommodate their promises to our sensuality, to attract and allure us by hopes and opinions suitable to our mortal appetites. And yet some amongst us are fallen into the like error, promising to themselves after the resurrection a terrestrial and temporal life, accompanied with all sorts of worldly conveniences and pleasures...

Man cannot be anything but what he is, nor imagine beyond the reach of his capacity. “Tis a greater presumption,” says Plutarch, “in them who are but men to attempt to speak and discourse of the gods and demi-gods than it is in a man utterly ignorant of music to give an opinion of singing; or in a man who never saw a camp to dispute about arms and martial affairs, presuming by some light conjecture to understand the effects of an art he is totally a stranger to.”...

How can that infinite beauty, power, and goodness, admit of any correspondence or similitude to such abject things as we are, without extreme wrong and manifest dishonour to his divine greatness? *Infirmum dei fortius est hominibus; et stultum dei sapientius est hominibus*. “For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” Stilpo, the philosopher, being asked, “Whether the gods were delighted with our adorations and sacrifices?”—“You are indiscreet,” answered he; “let us withdraw apart, if you would talk of such things.”...

Philosophy; she has so many faces, so much variety, and has said so many things, that all our dreams and ravings are there to be found. Human fancy can conceive nothing good or bad that is not there: *Nihil tam absurde dici potest, quod non dicatur ab aliquo philosophorum*. “Nothing can be said so absurd, that has not been said before by some of the philosophers.”...

At least our frail and defective condition ought to make us behave ourselves with more reservedness and moderation in our innovations and changes; we ought to remember that, whatever we receive into the understanding, we often receive things that are false, and that it is by the same instruments that so often give themselves the lie and are so often deceived..

... There is nothing more subject to perpetual agitation than the laws; since I was born, I have known those of the English, our neighbours, three or four times changed, not only in matters of civil regimen, which is the only thing wherein constancy may be dispensed with, but in the most important subject that can be, namely, religion, at which I am the more troubled and ashamed, because it is a nation with whom those of my province have formerly had so great familiarity and acquaintance, that there yet remains in my house some footsteps of our ancient kindred; and here with us at home, I have known a thing that was capital to become lawful; and we that hold of others are likewise, according to the chance of war, in a possibility of being one day found guilty of high-treason, both divine and human, should the justice of our arms fall into the power of injustice, and, after a few years’ possession, take a quite contrary being. How could that ancient god more clearly accuse the ignorance of human knowledge concerning the divine Being, and give men to understand that their religion was but a thing of their own contrivance...