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THE
MORNING & THE EVENING SACRIFICE

HOW TO BE REPRESENTED IN THESE DAYS

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE CLAIMS OF DEAF MUTES
IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY.

A S E R M O N

DELIVERED IN THE

GREAT SYNAGOGUE, DUKE'S PLACE,

ON

ש"ק פ וארא ר"ח שנט תרכ"ה לפ"ק

JANUARY 28TH, 5625. - 1864

BY THE

REV. DR. ADLER, CHIEF RABBI.

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THE MORNING & THE EVENING SACRIFICE.

EVERY science has a general principle, a fundamental truth, from which all its special rules are deduced and derived, and to which they can again be traced, even as a river to its source. Every code of laws has some basis and foundation, upon which all the different enactments which it contains are grounded, and in which all its statutes are involved. It requires but a gifted mind to discover the general leading principle, and to reduce all the conclusions to order and harmony.

Now, what is the general principle, the fundamental maxim of our holy law, the greatest, the most important of all codes ?

This question has engaged the attention of many theologians, both ancient and modern. Some thought that holiness was the purple thread that runs through all our precepts; others believe obedience to be the centre of all our duties.—Come, my friends, let us listen to what our sages have said on this subject.

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We read in the Midrash:—

בן זומא אומר מצינו פסוק אחד שהוא כלל גדול בתורה והוא שמע ישראל ה' אלהינו ה' אחד : בן ננס אומר מצינו פסוק כולל יותר והוא ואהבת לרעך כמוך : שמעון בן פוי אומר מצינו צסוק אחד כולל יותר את הכבש אחד תעשה בבקר ואת הכבש השני תעשה בין הערבים . עמד רבי על רגליו ואמר הלכה כבן פוי :

“ Ben Soma thought that the *Schema Israel* was the leading principle of our faith. Ben Nanos thought that the principle of loving our neighbour as ourselves was a more comprehensive maxim. ‘No,’ said Simeon ben Pasi; ‘The most comprehensive principle is the precept concerning the sacrifices, to bring a lamb in the morning and a lamb in the evening.’ On hearing this, their teacher arose, exclaiming, ‘Ben Pasi is right!’ ”

Let us proceed to examine these several opinions.

I.

According to the opinion of Ben Soma, the שמע ישראל is the leading principle of our law. “Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is the only one God.” The ineffable name (the הויה) is twice mentioned in this brief but all-important verse. What is the difference between this name, the Tetragrammaton, and the other divine names? Each of the others expresses only one attribute of God—that He is Almighty, All-merciful, Omniscient, Full of Compassion; but the הויה שם comprises all the attributes

of the Divine Being within itself. Principally, it conveys the idea that God is the Lord of the universe, that he has dominion and sovereignty over all creation, that it is in His power to work wonders and to alter the laws of nature whenever He thinks it necessary. And therefore saith the Lord, in this day's portion, to Moses, * **וַאֲרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶל יִצְחָק**, "I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name of the Lord was I not known unto them." The name itself is not meant here, for many times did the Lord appear unto our ancestors under that name; but the manifestation of God's omnipotence, that He rules the universe, that He rewards the virtuous and punishes the wicked, ideas expressed by the **שֵׁם הַוּוּיָהּ**, was first made to Moses in the gracious promise (ver.6), "I am the Eternal, and will bring you out from the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rescue you out of their bondage."

But further knowledge about the Lord is conveyed to us in the **שְׁמַע**. He is **אֱלֹהֵינוּ** our God. The Omnipotent Being who created the world in a manner that baffles all our wisdom, is also our God, ever near and present unto us. He has a father's desire for our well-being, a father's concern for our wrong-doing, a father's delight in our improvement. Although we are but an atom in His

* Exodus vi. 3.

creation, inhabiting a world which, after all, is but another atom in creation, still He is *our* God, who searcheth and knoweth us, who understandeth every thought of our minds, every feeling of our hearts, who is acquainted with all our ways. "There is not a word on our tongue but He knoweth it altogether." And still He is *one* God, one Being, *one* Mind, to whom undivided and infinite perfection appertains, and to whom nothing that is limited or imperfect can be ascribed.

Now our laws, from the first, which ordains that "God has not created the earth for desolation, but formed it to be inhabited" * *לֹא תהו בראה לְשֵׁבֶת* * down to the very last precept of all, *וְעַתָּה כָּתְבוּ לָכֶם אֶת הַשְּׁרִירָה הַזֹּאת יִצְרָה* that the Israelite should commit the words of the Law to writing, † all have the one object to efface every idolatrous idea, and to induce us to acknowledge God and His infinite goodness to banish polytheism, and to strengthen our allegiance and thankfulness to Him. All our commandments have the one object, to imbue our souls with these hallowing thoughts, and to preserve them unstained and unsullied within us. For this reason the *Schema* must be recited when we arise and lie down; it must be lisped by the babe, and uttered by the dying man with his last breath. This *Schema* proceeded from the mouths of our ancestors when they heroically ascended the scaffold, or were being bound to the stake that had

* Is. xlv. 18.

† Deut. xxxi. 19.

been kindled by fanaticism, or when the Jewish soldier of our days laid down his life on the field of battle in defence of his country, for it contains the glorious fundamental truth of our faith.

II.

Ben Nanos is of opinion that love towards our neighbour is the universal principle which forms the basis of our religion.

When the heathen came to Hillel, and requested to be taught the whole Jewish law whilst standing on one foot—by which is meant, that he desired to be shown the basis on which the law rests—Hillel answered him in the memorable words: **מה דעלך כני להברך לא תעביד זו כל התורה כולה ואירך פירושא זיל גמור*** "What thou desirest not to be done unto thee, do not unto thy neighbour. This is the kernel of the whole law; the rest is but the commentary. Go and learn!"

Now, my dear friends, do not think that Hillel meant hereby, that if we love our neighbour we are dispensed from the fulfilment of all other duties. If so, he would not have said to the heathen, "Go and learn." He meant, as our text expresses it, that the love towards our neighbour is the fundamental principle, the other precepts being but deductions and inferences from this one proposition. And in reality all our laws—love towards God, towards ourselves, our parents, our children, towards the poor, the orphan, the

* Tract Sab. 31.

widow, the stranger, the afflicted, love towards our enemies, towards men of all creeds and of every colour—is involved in this little verse. The love towards God is contained in it, for He is our nearest, our best friend. He is that friend of whom King Solomon has said,* רַעַךְ וְרַע אָבִיךָ אַל תַּעֲזֹב “Thy friend and thy father’s friend, forsake not.” He is our Guide and Councillor, a Staff and Support unto us, even as He has been to our fathers. Love towards men of other creeds is also inculcated in this precept; for we have read in to-day’s portion, how the Egyptian is called רַע a neighbour and friend;† thus we find, וַיִּשְׂאֲלוּ אִישׁ מֵאֵת רֵעֵהוּ וְאִשָּׁה מֵאֵת רֵעוּתָהּ “Let every man ask of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour.”

But you inquire, how is it possible that I could love that man who is in the street, who is an utter stranger to me? How can I feel any affection for one with whom I have not the slightest connection in ideas, associations, or feelings? It is for this very reason that Hillel has explained the biblical precept, which is given in a positive, affirmative form, by expressing the same idea in a *negative* form. “Do not do unto others aught different from that which thou desirest to be done unto thyself.” This precept rebukes every feeling and action indicative of hostility or malignity towards any one; it forbids the indulging of a cold, selfish, unloving disposition.

* Prov. xxvii. 10.

† Exod. xi. 2.

And this duty we are all able to fulfil towards everyone, of whatever creed, nationality, rank, or colour he be. We can be kind and forgiving, even towards the sinner; we can avoid cruelty, tyranny, persecution, and stifle all the baneful passions which sometimes rage in man. We can be careful that no expression of wrath, no slander and evil speaking sully our lips, that no injury be inflicted upon our neighbour. In one word, to deal with others as we are anxious that they should act towards us, is a great and glorious principle of our holy Torah.

III.

But Simeon ben Pasi goes further, and says, that the highest principle in our law is the precept to offer sacrifices in the morning and evening of every day. For what is the utility of acknowledging and taking to heart the unity of God in the שמע, or to love our neighbour according to the injunction ואהבת לרעך כמוך, if the idea of God's unity remains dormant and lifeless in our heart, if the love of our neighbour remains latent and hidden within us. Our religion is the religion of action, of good works. Without good works, the best intentions, the most exalted sentiments, are of secondary value. Works are the proofs of faith, they are the guarantees of good thoughts and affections within us. As the fountain will not keep its waters to itself, but will sooner or later gush forth in a pure and limpid

stream, refreshing man and fertilising nature ; as a tree which has vitality in it does not remain sterile and barren, but as soon as the spring approaches it puts forth its leaves, blossoms, and fruit, so must man evince that he is penetrated with the love of God and man, that divine feelings and godlike thoughts are implanted within him, he must manifest and give utterance to them in the course of his daily life. A continual burnt offering (עולת תמיד) that sacrifice was called which the priest brought every morning and evening, and which the community accompanied with their devout prayers and sincere repentance.

אמר ר' יהודה ברבי סימון מעומם לא לן אדם בירושלם
ובירו עון • כיצד תמיד שלשחר מכפר על עבירות הלילה
ושל בין הערבים מכפר על עבירות של-היום שנאמר צדק
ילין בה : *

“ R. Judah said, there was none in Jerusalem who was laden with sin ; for the lamb in the morning atoned for the iniquities that had been committed during the night, and the lamb in the evening for the sins committed during the daytime.” Our sages would in these words impress the lesson upon us, how the daily sacrifice was calculated to bring before the mind of every Israelite the beauty of a godly life, and the necessity of immediate repentance for every wrong that had been committed. And so, my friends, *we* can improve our ways by

* ילקוט ישעי רנז

good works performed in the morning and in the evening. Holy Writ does not say תְּקַרִיב, “thou shalt offer,” but תַּעֲשֶׂה, “thou shalt do, act, fulfil, perform.”

Even as the flame ever burnt upon the altar, and was never to go out,* so must man ever show his devotion to his God, his submission, his willingness and readiness to bring upon the altar of God the oblation of good deeds every morning and every evening. A lamp was also to burn within the sanctuary *perpetually*, not by fits and starts; it was to burn with the genial light produced by pure beaten olive oil,† without either smoke or sparks. Thus must our life be one of constant purity, of perpetual worth, shedding the pleasing light and genial warmth of true beneficence.

The wise preacher has said,‡ “In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that.” This our sages comment upon, saying: “If a poor man come to thee in the morning to ask thy assistance, render it to him; and if he come again in the evening, do so again; withhold not thy hand.” If you engage in any new charitable object, do not on that account refrain from lending thy helping hand to the old charities. God has a right to demand from us that we should do as much good as we are able to do. כְּשֵׁאֲנִי מִבְּקֵשׁ : אֲנִי מִבְּקֵשׁ לְפִי כְּחוֹ וְכִשְׂאֲנִי נוֹתֵן אֲנִי נוֹתֵן לְפִי כְּחֵי :

* Levit vi. 13.

† Exod. xxvii. 20.

‡ Eccles. xi. 6.

“When I demand any sacrifice from man, I only ask him to do so according to his power and ability ; but when I give, I give abundantly, according to my power.”

I am addressing you this day, my brethren, having a special purpose in view. You are aware that the deaf and dumb children of our poor have to be brought up in an asylum, where they have not the slightest opportunity of being trained in our faith, and of becoming acquainted with the holy precepts of our religion. On the contrary (without herein imputing any wrong intention to the managers of that institution), the children must naturally be taught in such a manner that, in after life, they become indifferent to, nay, even estranged from, our faith.

There is much and just indignation excited by the cruel injustice that is done towards our nation, when a child belonging to us is kidnapped from us and reared in a strange creed ; is it not worse if we, with open eyes, suffer our afflicted children to be torn from allegiance to our Law ? Is it not worse if we allow them to be instructed in another religion, and to be turned aside from the faith of their fathers with the first gleam of intelligence that beams upon them ? Surely, all our feelings of piety and humanity must revolt against our calmly allowing these poor children to be lost to Judaism. We do not so much blame the poor parents who are so unfortunate as to have children thus grievously afflicted.

They are glad to find an institution where, by the help of able tuition, the spark of heavenly reason may be elicited from the minds of their children, so that the distressing fetters which are placed upon them may be burst asunder. The parents will naturally, like a sinking man, catch at every straw to find help. But is it not, I ask you, the bounden duty of the community to be a foot to the lame, an eye to the blind, a mouth to the dumb, and an ear to the deaf? מי שם פה לאדם או מי ישום אלם או חרש או פקח או * עור הלא אנכי ה' The Lord asked Moses, "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Do not I, the Lord?" Must we not feel that Providence has inflicted that calamity upon some of our fellow creatures in order to rouse within us the holy feeling of sympathy, so that we may stretch forth a friendly hand to save and to heal? Has not the Lord commanded, † לא תקלל חרש ורפני עור לא תתן מכשול, "Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind." Do we not act in violation of this commandment when we allow these poor children to grow up in utter ignorance of their religion? Is it not the duty of the whole community to be moved with compassion, as erst was the daughter of Pharaoh, and to say as she said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." Is it not a duty incumbent upon us all to take these children, and to nurse them for the

* Exod. iv. 11.

† Lev. xix. 14.

Lord, so to educate them that, as the prophet tells us, * ושמעו ביום ההוא ההרשים דברי ספר * “on that day the deaf may hear the words of the book?” Then we may also hope that He will give us our wages, and grant us His heavenly reward.

I deem it a subject worthy of the most earnest and anxious consideration of the community, that an institution be established, be it ever so small, for the training of our poor deaf mutes — either independent of or engrafted as a branch upon one of our existing charities. Say not, there are already so many charities and institutions in our midst, the burden of maintaining which rests upon a few; why add another? I answer, in the words of our sages, כשאני מבקש אני מבקש לפי כחו “God desires each of us to do according to his ability.” What our brethren in Holland and in Austria † can do, we in England, surely, can also do. By accomplishing this we shall especially act in conformity with those three great fundamental precepts of our religion of which I have spoken to you. We shall bring up those poor children in the belief in *one* God; we shall love our neighbours as ourselves, and we shall bring an offering of a sweet savour unto the Lord. There are, I am happy to say, many brothers and sisters in our community whose names are household words in the abodes of woe and wretchedness,

* Isaiah xxix. 18.

† There are excellent Jewish institutions for the deaf and dumb both at Rotterdam and Vienna.

and they will joyfully lend a helping hand. We are not going down to Egypt for assistance; we lean not on a broken reed, but on those who have clear heads to understand, warm hearts to feel, and energetic hands to carry out every object that can conduce to the welfare of their brethren. And I feel persuaded that such an institution as I have described will shed a cheering hopeful light upon the gloomy prospects of some forlorn family, it will make the widow's heart sing for joy, and will raise the bent head of a sorrowing father. Bring, therefore, my dear brethren, your sacrifice in the morning and in the evening, and the Lord will vouchsafe to you His glorious blessings. "Even as the new heaven and the new earth which I will make shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your posterity and your name remain."*

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY GOD! Thou hast vouchsafed unto us understanding to reflect upon Thy Holy Word, so that we might know the great leading principles of our faith—the belief in Thy unity, the love of our neighbour, and submission to Thy will. Grant that we may all take to heart the importance of these doctrines, and of the lessons which they involve. May we never be neglectful of the sacred duties which Thou hast imposed upon us. Grant that we

* Isaiah lxvi. 22.

may faithfully bring the sacrifice we owe to Thee every morning and every evening. Father in heaven! give us strength that from the morning of our life even unto the night thereof, we shall rejoice in doing Thy will, so that at sundown our brow may be crowned with victory. Inspire us with zeal and energy to succour all our afflicted brethren. May our hearts be always moved by the voice of pity, mercifulness, and compassion, earnestly striving herein to approach Thy exalted attributes. May the thoughts and actions of all mankind be guided and swayed by regard for Thy sacred presence, Thy exalted will, so that the time may approach which has been foretold by Thy holy prophet, when "it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Thee." Amen!

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