

RADIO PROGRAM  
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

"With great love Thou hast loved us, Lord our G-d. Great and abundant mercy hast Thou bestowed upon us. Our Father, our King, for the sake of our forefathers who have trusted in Thee whom Thou doest keep the law of life be gracious to us and teach us likewise. Our Father, Merciful Father, Thou Who art ever compassionate, have pity on us and inspire us to understand and discern, to perceive, learn, and teach, to observe, do and fulfill gladly all the teachings of Thy Torah. Enlighten our eyes in Thy Torah, attach our heart to Thy commandments, unite our heart to love and reverence Thy name so that we may never be put to shame, and Thy holy, great and revered name we trust. May we thrill with joy over Thy salvation."

This prayer is one of the main prayers in the Sabbath service in the synagogue. In this prayer are stated many of the principles of Judaism: the joy in life, the joy in following G-d's teachings, in observing the laws of the Torah. This prayer immediately precedes the Shma. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our G-d. The Lord is one." This verse is taken, of course, from Deuteronomy 6, and the verse is the cornerstone of Judaism, because in it we declare that G-d is one.

"You shall love the Lord your G-d with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and you shall speak of them when you are sitting at home and when you go on a journey, when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them for a sign on your hand and shall be for frontness between your eyes. You shall inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

In these few passages, then, are many of the essentials of Judaism. I know that many people are confused about what Judaism actually believes. I know many groups come to me from various sections of the community very puzzled and concerned, because they cannot seem to understand why the Jews do not accept Jesus. This is not really a problem for Jews, mainly because they do not feel any need to accept Jesus. Judaism and Christianity are similar in many respects, but they do not share certain basic theorems, and, because of this fact, Jews many times do not understand Christians and Christians do not understand Jews, just as in geometry where if one or two of the theorems then, of course, your results will differ markedly. Judaism does not accept the doctrine of original sin, and because it does not accept the doctrine of original sin it does not feel that it needs to give to its adherents any extra power in order to overcome evil. Of course, you are all familiar with the doctrine of original sin, that doctrine which says that since the time of Adam man suffers from a moral taint, that since Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden this taint is passed on from generation to generation. This is a moral taint which means that if man is given a choice, six times out of ten he will choose the evil path instead of the good path, that man, so to speak, is naturally evil. Judaism does not agree with this doctrine. Judaism says that man is neutral, that it is all up to him, that he is 50/50. He has the power to be good if he wants to be good, and he has also has the power to be bad if he wants to be bad, and G-d will help him. If he wants to be bad G-d will help him by giving him the opportunity to be bad. If he wants to be good G-d will give him the opportunity to be good. It is all up to the individual man.

The reason the Jews never accepted Jesus as the messiah was because Jesus

did not do what the Jews said the messiah should do. According to Judaism, there are two different types of evil in the world. When the messiah comes he is to rid the world of all evil. There is moral evil, the evil that one man does to another when we cheat our neighbor, when we oppress other people, when we steal, when we commit all those offenses which we recognize as man-made, we are committing moral evil. But even if all of us would be perfect, even if all of us had halos on our heads and no man would cheat his neighbor, no man would oppress his fellow human being and the world had perfect peace and harmony, there would still be evil in the world. What is the basis of animal life? The basis of animal life is violence. One animal eats another. We also have tornadoes, storms, and the ravages of time. As people get older they get weaker and eventually even lose their minds at advanced ages. This, of course, is an evil which is not the product of man's own moral evil. Besides that, there is frustration. If a man marries one woman he cannot marry another. If you choose to be a doctor you cannot be a lawyer. If you choose to live in one area you cannot live in another area. All these things produce frustration, so even if the world was perfect, even if peace and harmony reigned among mankind, the world would still have evil built within it.

According to the Jewish view, man's job in this world is to end as much evil as possible, and then as soon as he has ended as much moral evil as possible, then G-d will do His job by sending the Messiah Who will then complete the job of ridding the world of moral evil and also end all physical evil as well. That is why, according to the Jewish interpretation of Isaiah, when the Messiah comes the lamb will lay down by the world, the little boy will be able to stick his hand in the

viper's nest. In other words, even physical nature, itself, will be changed. The animal kingdom will no longer be built upon violence, because nature is a very, very cruel and vicious, at times, keeper of itself. Nature is not easy to get along with. But when the Messiah comes this will be changed, and all parts of nature will live in harmony one with the other.

When Jesus came around, the Jews looked and said, "You can't be the messiah because you do not do what we Jews say the messiah must do. The messiah must end evil. This is the proof he is the messiah." When they looked around they saw the Roman were still persecuting the Jews. There was still moral evil in the world. What's more, there was still physical evil in the world. A man could not take his sheep and have it lay down with the wolf. A boy could not stick his hand in the viper's nest. Therefore, Jesus could not be the messiah. The Christians, on the other hand, said, "Oh, yes, he is because he has done something very important. He has come to save us from evil, to remove this moral taint that has been upon us since the time of Adam." The Jews said, "This is very fine for your Christians. Go right ahead, but for us, who do not believe that man is under a moral taint, he serves not function." Jews do not hate Jesus. They would never say a bad thing against him. In fact, many people think he said very many good things. He was a rabbi who lived 2,000 years ago. Many of those things he said were already incorporated into the Jewish tradition, and many of these things we believe had already been said actually before him, but certainly there is no hatred to him in any sense. The Jews reject Jesus not because of what he is or was, but because he did not fulfill the role of the messiah, which according to the Jewish religion a messiah must fill. The Jews are sort of in the same place that the Christians are after they accept Jesus.

The Jews, though, believe that it is not important that everyone be a Jew, that any reward that is given to a Jew is also given to anybody else in the world if they are a moral person, if they observe the 7 commandments of Noah. That is why Jews have no missionaries. You will never find a mission Sunday or mission Saturday in a synagogue, because Jews have no missionaries whatsoever. We Jews believe it is not our function to make other people Jews but just to make them moral. There are many Jews in do-good organizations. In fact, many of the leading do-good organizations in this country were actually founded by Jews. In fact, even the labor unions under Samuel Gompers, who was their first president, was a Jew. Many of the humane societies were founded by Jews. The American Red Cross, itself, was founded by a Jew. Jews have always been prominent in all sorts of do-good organizations, because they feel they have a responsibility to their fellow human beings, but this responsibility does not mean they have to force their ideas upon others as far as religion is concerned. As long as everyone obeys the 7 commandments of Noah, which we believe is a covenant which G-d made with Noah and which is mentioned in the Bible in Genesis 9, that in these verses are set out the basic moral law of the universe. If anybody fulfills them, and, of course, every good Christian would fulfill them if he observes the tenet of his religion, therefore he would get every reward that a Jew gets. These seven commandments of Noah are: the establishment of courts of justice; the prohibition of blasphemy; idolatry; incest; bloodshed; robbery; and eating flesh cut from a living animal, in effect, being cruel. If a person observes the basic laws of humanity, the seven commandments of civilization, morality, he gets every reward a Jew gets.

In fact, there has been much misunderstanding about the concept, too, of the Chosen People. The Jewish people, when they refer to themselves as the chosen people and when the Bible refers to them, means they are chosen for service. What do we mean chosen for service? We mean that the Jews are actually judged harder not easier. Jews are not a race. There are black Jews and Chinese Jews and Japanese Jews and Jews of every color and race. Some of you should go to Israel and you will see Jews of all sorts of shapes and colors and all sorts of ethnic origins. Judaism is not a race. Jews are not members of a special race. They are a community of belief. Jews have no missionaries, but if someone wants to join the Jewish people, he may by going to a rabbi and asking that he be allowed to join similar to how America has no missionaries to go overseas to make Americans. If someone wants to become an American they come to America and study for 5 years and pass a test before a group of judges or a judge, then they become an America citizen. It is very similar when one comes before a rabbi. The rabbi will first ask, "Why do you want to become a Jew? There is no theological advantage to becoming a Jew. If you live a moral life you get every reward a Jew gets. Don't you realize you will be judged harsher not easier?" If a person persists then the rabbi will give him some books to read and usually at the end of a year the person will appear before a board of rabbis, if he still wants to, and if he passes a test he will become a Jew. This test, of course, means, too, that he will have to live a moral and decent life as well as being knowledgeable of Jewish tenets. This is what we mean by the concept of Chosen People, chosen for service, that people are willing to take on themselves extra obligations for which they are given no reward. They are just judged harder. In the same way that it is not the obligation of an American citizen to be a member of the House of

Representatives or Senate to take on himself added responsibilities, but if he wants to he can. He can serve the people in any way he wants, but if he does accept these responsibilities he is judged harder than others. The Jews look upon themselves as the ambassadors of G-d in the world. We all know that if our ambassador in a foreign country would do something wrong that person would be brought home in disgrace and it would be in all the papers, while if an ordinary tourist did something wrong it would not make the papers at all, that a person who has more responsibility is judged harder. When we mean chosen, we mean chosen in the sense of more responsibility.

"G-d has chosen us from all peoples and nations and has truly brought us near to Thy great name forever that we may eagerly praise Thee and acclaim Thy oneness. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Who has graciously chosen Thy people, Israel." Again, this concept means chosen for service. Judaism is a religion that puts a great stress on human behavior. We believe that the way a person behaves will eventually affect the way he believes. It is much easier to create a good society by regulating practice. In Judaism there is no actual formal creed. In Judaism a person is judged by what he does and not by what he says. This, of course, means that there are, so to speak, many rules and regulations that a Jew is supposed to live under, but these rules and regulations are not a hardship on the Jews but a joy. I many times point out to boys and girls, especially, who sometimes think, "How can a Jew believe and do all these things? After all, look at all the rules he has to follow." The Jew never looks at the rules when he does the things he is doing. He looks at only the joy that these experiences bring him. It is similar to a football game, to our youngsters, and to many of our adults as well.

PROGRAM

Joseph Radinsky

anyone knows the game of football they know it is a very complicated game. In order for 22 men to play on the field you need 6 officials, and the rulebooks are many, many pages thick. Yet everyone enjoys football even though there are many types of rules to observe. The rules of football are extremely, yet people enjoy them. Why? Because of the joy that flows from the game, itself. People are not looking at the rules. The rules are only the structure, just like a house. A person wants the warmth and light of the inside of a house and the comfort that it brings him. He is not interested in the walls. If you could build a house without walls, you would probably do so, but the walls are necessary in order to create the warmth and light within the house. This is the same with the rules of Judaism. No one is interested in the rules per se. The rules only create a mood and atmosphere which allow us to enjoy ourselves. It is the same with a party. Anyone who wants to give a party knows they must follow rules, rules who knows who has laid down, but rules they must follow. Amy Vanderbilt has written a book many pages thick. We know there are certain things we can and cannot do. Yet people enjoy parties because parties express something to the human spirit.

The same is true of many of the Jewish beliefs and ideas. The Sabbath is one of them. The Sabbath is a day of great joy in Judaism when people feel closeness to G-d and when people feel the closeness they have to their family and friends, and this is a great day of joy. In Judaism it is not supposed to be a sad day. A person is supposed to eat meat and be friendly with his wife on the Sabbath and feel the special closeness with his family and with G-d.



Judaism believes in one G-d, that G-d is eternal. G-d cares and is concerned with all of us and Who loves us. He is the eternal G-d Who reigned before time was created. At the time when all was made by His will He was at once acknowledged as King, and at the end when all shall cease to be the revered G-d alone shall still be King. He was, He is, and He shall be in glorious eternity. He is one and there is no other to compare to Him, to place beside Him, because without beginning, without end, power and dominion belong to Him. He is my G-d, my living redeemer, my stronghold in times of distress. He is my guide and my refuge. I share a bliss the day I called to Him and I entrust my spirit. When I sleep and when I wake as long as my soul is with my body, the Lord is with me. I am not afraid.

In Judaism the family is something very special. It is something which everyone feels is necessary in order to lead the good life. The family is the center of Judaism and has been in the past and will be in the future to those Jews who still believe in the tenets of their religion. There are those Jews who have fallen away, too, but those Jews who agree with their religion agree the family is the important thing. His wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the interior of your house, your children like olive plants around your table. Behold, that is indeed shall the man be blessed who reveres the Lord. The Lord bless you from Zion. May you see the welfare of Jerusalem all the days of your life. May you live to see your childrens' children. Peace be upon Israel.