

Plan of Discussion for the Hebraic Society.

Introduction, written out on Israel
as the "self-chosen" people; & the
problem of its mission of today.

Answer to the problem:—

1. Loyalty is the solution for all men.
2. Israel's foundation for loyalty, also
its hindrance in loyalty, is the
strong individuality of its notable
men who by nature, as soon as they
break with tradition, tend to
Detachment.
3. Types of the Detached:—
 1. The Prophet
 2. The Cynic and Destructive Critic
 3. The Nietzschean Individualist,
 4. The Detached Man of the World
 5. The Invalid.

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3. The forms of Social Control in the Judaism. (a) Solidarity of Israel, contrasted with caste system of India. (b) Formalism, as opposed to the Japanese civility. (c) Use of the schematizing Understanding; fondness for abstractions. Resulting defects of Judaism.

4. Motives of a more positive sort: -
Brotherhood; charity towards one's own people; sense of justice; essentially liberality as to varieties of conviction.

5. Problem how to weave these tendencies into a new loyalty.

a. Universalism and brotherhood not opposed.

b. What are we as brethren contributing to the universal human end?

c. Fable of the three rings.

{Address before the
Hebraic Society.}

A good many years ago,
~~and~~ I remember, I had just
been reading the opening volume
of Stade's Geschichte des Volkes Israel,
— a book which was then new. ~~It~~
was natural to me, I brought
my decidedly lively interest in this
volume to William James, to hear
what he would say about the
matter. As we talked together, I recall
mentally winning the "Mosaic stone" (which
Stade ^{occasionally} incidentally discusses); and I
uttered ^{ed} a ^{keeping fanciful thoughts} ~~thought~~ which the

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mention of that famous fragment
still of ten brings to my mind. The
Mozabit stone, as you remember,
contains a record, prepared from
the Mozabit point of view, and dealing
with an ancient campaign which
is also mentioned in a well known

passage of the Hebrew narrative.
There was war between the peoples in question.
The comparison of the two ~~stories~~ ^{records}
of the same contest ~~records~~ led me to note how strange

are the fortunes which in history
have ^{often} brought so far apart the
later ^{fates} ~~lives~~ of peoples who, in earlier
ages, were close together in ~~condition~~ ^{their social}

types, and in their grades of civilization.
I said to James: - How ~~curious~~ ^{nearly}

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alike, to us, as ^{merely foreign} distant observers, ^{the tribes of} Israel
on the one hand, the little kingdom
of Moab upon the other, would have
seemed to us if we could have looked
down upon them as at that time
they were, ^{or} if we could have witnessed
^{from our distance} the petty local feuds that made
them war together, ^{or} if we could have
heard, merely as news of the day,
that in those remote provinces
some disturbances ^{were taking} place between
two groups of Oriental tribesmen of whom
one called upon the name of a god
called Yahve, while the other trusted
in a certain divinity named Kemosh.
Wherein, should we have said,

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is one of these two petty nationalities better than the other? as for Jahweh and Kernosh, why choose between them!

And as for the great world, what does it care ^{tribe or whose god} who turns such a skirmish?

But history, as we know, later distinguished vastly and fatally between these two petty rivals. Moab has vanished,

Israel ^{is not only} remains, but it has ^{with its religion} transformed ^{itself} into a world power. ^{to say} Given its God to the world of all Christendom,

~~as well~~ How little, ^{to say} I said, might have changed the fortunes that have ^{thus} determined

the whole story of all later religious civilization. But a little, and Moab might have

survived, when Israel ^{had} vanished. And

then if Moab, ^{surviving} ^{later} had only developed some prophets, as devoted to righteousness

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as was Amos or, Isaiah, and if these prophets had ^{in time} duly aroused, and ~~then~~ ^{had} posterity, continued a faith in a righteous world ruler, - well, then we might all of us be calling our God Kemosh, instead of by some name due to Israel; and instead of our Christianity we should perhaps be enjoying a faith whose theology would also have been diversified by the presence in heaven of a female as well as a male deity. ~~Research~~

To my idle fancy James ^{responded} with a characteristic comment of his own. "The lesson", he said, is this, "that the faith had won ~~which~~ whose adherents stuck to it fast, believing ~~it~~ ^{it} ~~to~~ ^{to} be ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~most~~ ^{most} unconquerable

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in clinging to their own. If you want to mould the world's religion you must first be the most stubborn and unyielding in your conviction that you have a right to mould the world's religion. In this field it is the obstinately steadfast in faith who win!

Such in substance was James's reply, as far as I recall it. And of course this reply was sound. Whether you choose the people of Israel is a matter which I am not ^{at all adequately} ~~to~~ ~~decide~~. But certain it is that the seeming miracle of their history, whereby they, of all the tribes of the Semites, were singled out for their marvelous mission, with ~~all~~

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glory ~~its agony~~ its worldly defeat, and
its world wide influence, ^{its agony and its glory} was due at least
in an important measure to one fact,
which nobody can question. Israel chose
itself. It chose itself not merely in the
sense in which every tribe of mankind
has at sometime said: "We are the people;
there is no one like us." Israel's self choice,
its decision to be ~~the~~ the chosen people
of its God, was a decision that has always
asserted itself, for ~~centuries~~ religious
Israel at least, in the form of a practically
efficient stubbornness, creating through
defeat and persecution and change and
change, after a fashion which certainly
has few parallels in human history,
and which I need not attempt further
to characterize in your presence.

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Israel chose itself, - chose itself ^{not only} with the ordinary blind vanity of the tribesman, - although this vanity Israel also had, - but also (and here lay the decisive matter), Israel chose itself with a certain steadfast power of self idealization, with a strange union of ^{and of steadfastness} piety, of blind stubbornness and of prophetic vision, of stubbornness and devotion, - a paradoxical union of traits which still makes whatever is most characteristic about the Jewish people a mystery to all who observe, - a mystery which I for one do not for a moment pretend to fathom.

I suppose, merely upon an inductive basis, - merely as a result of the lesson of history, that Israel is today engaged

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in the old process of making itself, under
wholly new, ^{and modern} conditions, some sort of
chosen people. I suppose that, despite
all change and chance, something
of the old unconquerable will still re-
main, and that, unless the Jewish
people ^{decides in time} gradually to pass away by
amalgamation with others, the old
power to adapt itself to new world con-
ditions ~~will~~ ^{will still be} represented in the
mental ~~power~~ equipments and in
the traditions of the ^{Judaism} ~~Jewish people~~ of the
future.

I am asked this evening to say
something to you as representatives
of the Judaism of today, regarding the
ideals in terms of which you may

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think it worth while to repeat the process whereby ancient Judaism differentiated itself from the life of other petty tribes of Western Asia, - the process whereby Yahweh, and not Kemosh or some other local deity became a nucleus about which the faith of universal ethical monotheism was to grow. The process of history are long and weary. But something of the quality that made Israel win ~~it~~ long after Moab was swept away, - win even through loss, and hold ~~it~~ its own even after dispersion, is still represented in your views of life, however divergent these may now be. I make no attempt to understand the Israel of the past. I cannot comprehend the seeming miracle of your faith, of your stub:

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hardness, of your ~~perseverance~~ ^{steadfastness through} defeat,
of your spiritual triumphs despite worldly
disaster. But looking at your strange
heritage of faith, of wisdom, and of
natural and social tasks and burdens
from without, I can perhaps say a
very little to help some few of you
to face for yourselves problems which
you of course understand as I can
never hope to do.

The problems of the
Judaism of today, the choices that
still lie before you if, in any sense
whatever, you are to make yourselves
a chosen people in the future seem
to me to be definable in terms which
I shall try to sketch for you.

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from the point of view of a relatively neutral, but certainly not unsympathetic outsider. If I judge these problems ill, refer that to my ignorance. If by any words of mine help you, who know better, to judge any of these problems for yourselves more wisely for the stimulation that my comments, however imperfect may certainly, that is all that I can hope to accomplish.

The Justusian of today, as I suppose, stands in presence of a simply inevitable problem of change. The old faith that your fathers held cannot remain, in its earlier forms, permanently authoritative

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for any of those amongst you who are willing to come into close touch with the modern movements of ~~the world~~ ^{thought} and civilization in general. The reasons why this is true are well known to you. I need hardly insist upon them. Let me enumerate a few of the best known.

First: The God whom your fathers helped the world to conceive as the God of righteousness, has become, for those who still in any sense believe in him, the world's God, in a sense which even the beautifully universal vision of the prophets of Israel never ~~adequately revealed~~ ^{adequately revealed}, and which the ritual observance of the Law never sufficiently either illustrated or symbolized. Your fathers called you

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his chosen people. But, at ~~best~~, those who have any even symbolical sense in which they can, ^{still} speak of the Divine and righteous government of the world, can now indeed assert only that God, if righteous, chooses those who, as I have just said, choose themselves for the service of a righteous cause. Such choice is open to anybody amongst men who is strong enough. Herein, in so far as this is indeed a righteous world, you have no supernatural advantage of position. This fact, I suppose, you all recognize. The question of the mission of Israel in future is therefore simply the question of the mission that you may be men strong

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enough to choose for yourselves. Your history, your traditions, ^{the memory of} your fathers, give you a right to assert that you can make for yourselves a world-mission. In so far as there is, in any sense a righteous Divine government of the world, you can be, in this sense and to this degree a peculiar people, with a worthy divine mission, but only in case your own will continues to give you, under the coming conditions that worth. You have the right to will to make yourselves God's servants in a peculiar sense, if you are strong enough. Only in this sense can you claim any peculiar place in the

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world order.

Secondly, the ritual, the ceremonial practices of your fathers, can mean at best, for the enlightened, only a