Section III. The Western Experience of NV

ROOTS OF JEWISH NONVIOLENCE

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NONVIOLENCE IN THE TALMUD

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THE DOCTRINE of non-violence affirms that our humanity unites us more than our conflicts divide us. It seeks a unique mode of response to conflict, realizing that not by force shall man prevail. To find such a mode of response we will investigate, in the main, the Palestinian Talmudic sources from the middle third through the early fourth century. The key figures in our discussion will be the Aggadists of the second, third, and fourth generation of Amoraim. This period is particularly suited for our purpose, for while religious persecution was on the wane political oppression was gaining ascendancy.[1] We should thus find most helpful the approach of those teachers who looked askance at violent resolution of conflict.[2] Our investigation will be in three parts: I) Response to enmity; II) Response to intent to inflict injury; III) Response to persecution.

I

ONE OF THE SERIOUS ISSUES of our time is how man should respond to conflict. We are told to love our neighbor (*Lev.* 19:18), but how are we to react to our enemy? May we individually return evil for evil, or is that beyond human calculation? The *Book of Proverbs* warns against saying, "I will do so to him as he has done to me; I will pay the man back for what he has done" (24:29). If tit for tat is discouraged, then what is the alternative? The Midrash offers an approach:[3]

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"If a man returns evil for good, evil will not depart from his house" (Prov. *17:13). R. Simeon b. Abba said: Not only he who returns evil for good, but even he who returns evil for evil, "evil will not depart from his house." R. Alexandri commented on the verse, "He who returns evil for good": Now the Torah said: "If you see the ass of one who hates you lying under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it, you shall lift it up"* (Ex. *23:5); of such Scripture says, "He who returns evil for good, evil shall not depart."*

According to these two second-generation Palestinian Amoraim, one may not only not return evil for good, as the verse says, but one may not even return evil for evil. And according to R. Alexandri,[4] one must even repay good for evil, as the verse states, "If you see the ass of one who hates you lying under his burden. . .help him to lift it up" *(ibid.).*[5] Now, why should a man be commanded to help one who has harmed him?[6] In order to clarify the background of such a charge we will present the earlier pertinent Tannaitic sources first.

In a *baraita*[7] the issue is posed more poignantly. Who has a prior claim to help, a friend or an enemy? This early Talmudic source claims that assisting an enemy is preferable "in order to curb his drive."[8] *Sifre*[9] also concurs that the reason for assisting one's enemy is to "oppose one's drive," for the natural impulse would be to say, "He is my enemy, I won't help him." Accordingly, the verse in *Deuteronomy* (22:4), referring to a similar situation, says, instead of "enemy," "brother" – to teach that the former should be considered a brother, thus making a claim to assistance.[10] The assumption here is ethical, that brotherhood absorbs and dissolves hate.[11] The *Tosefta*[12] also confirms that it is preferable to help the enemy, in order to "break his heart." One commentator explains that "his" refers to the enemy, "for by seeing that the other man is trying to please him, his heart will change and he will repress his hate."[13] This explanation seems to alter the precise intent, but it does fit in with another Tannaitic comment: "If you have suppressed your drive in order to make your enemy your friend, I promise you that I will make your enemy your friend."[14] Throughout this Tannaitic discus-

sion the emphasis is that the person control his hate. The goal is not to save face, but to "save heart." The prime imperative is a character directive: man has to be trained to curb his natural response to return in kind. Once he has mastered his automatic reaction, he may direct his feelings to the reflective level and seek a means of amelioration.

Once the response has reached this deliberative plane, a man may consider two other factors stressed in two other *midrashim.* Both of these provide a rationale to channel the initial feelings of enmity. The first asks how it is permissible that one hate at all. After all, the Torah explicitly prohibits it: "You shall not hate your brother in your heart" (*Lev.* 19:17). The answer is that one may hate one who has sinned. Still, this hatred of the wrong that he has committed should not blind us to the fact that he remains a brother in need of help, as it is stated: "I [God] have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (*Ezek.* 33:11).[15] Here the principle of *imitatio Dei* becomes a norm for treating the wicked:[16] since God distinguishes between the person and the deed and is thus able to seek the person's return, so should man. The second *midrash* brings to the fore another factor: as God Himself neither rejoices at the downfall of the enemy nor allows others to do so, for even they are His own, neither shall we (cf. *Prov.* 24:17).[17]

It is in the third century that we find this approach supplemented with concrete illustrations which dramatize the inner workings of a method. The author is the same Palestinian Rabbi who declared above that to avoid evil one must return good.

> *R. Alexandri said: Two donkey-drivers who were walking by the way hated each other. One of their donkeys sat down. His companion saw it, and passed on. When he had passed, he thought: It is written in the Torah, "If you see the ass of one who hates you. . .you shall surely help him to lift it up." Immediately he returned and loaded with him. He [the former] began to say to himself: So-and-so is thus my friend and I did not know. Both entered an inn and ate and drank. Who is responsible for their making peace? The fact that the latter had looked into the Torah. Accordingly, it is written: "Thou hast established righteousness" (Psa. 99:4).*[18]

The inner dynamics are produced here by responding in such a manner as to unleash the flow of good will which has been damned by blocks of hate. (This thought has been well expressed in a contemporary book on non-violence:[19] "If through love of your enemy you can create in him respect or admiration for you, this provides the best possible means by which your new idea or suggestion to him will become an auto-suggestion within him, and it will also help to nourish that auto-suggestion.")

Another *midrash*[20] explains this interaction even more explicitly:

> *When your enemy sees that you came and you helped him, he will say to himself, "I thought that he is my enemy. God forbid! If he was my enemy he would not have helped me, but if he is my friend, then I am his enemy in vain. I will go and pacify him." He went to him and made peace. Accordingly, it says, "And all her paths are peace" (Prov. 3:17).*

The two operative insights here are that human responses are results of the situation, and that hate must not be allowed to remain and grow.[21] Instead, it must be transmuted by a constructive act channeling that energy into promoting positive human relations. This *midrash* underscores the fact that it is insufficient to have been freed from hate; one must seek to free one's opponent from it. Otherwise, if one "hates another the other will hate him. As the *Book of Proverbs* points out, 'As in water face answers face, so the heart of man to man' (27:19). It follows that the hate will grow, and hence it is appropriate to curb the initial response."[22]

This insight is caught by another *midrash*[23] through a play on the wording of the verse in *Exodus* (23:5), Instead of reading *azov ta'azov* as "you shall surely help," it exploits the more common understanding of the root-verb *azv* which is "discard" and thereby renders it as "you shall surely discard" – and then adds the implied object, "the hate." Only by such discarding can anger, resentment, hatred, and revenge be diverted from entering "the process of reciprocal imitative

violence mount[ing] higher and enter[ing] into more and more of the personalities of the combatants."[24]

So far the Midrash offers a two-point program for reconciliation. First, control your urge to hate. Second, act in such a manner that your enemy will become your friend. The *Mishna Avot*[25] captures this program in capsule form, claiming, "Who is a hero? He who controls his urge." And the Talmudic commentary adds, "Who is a hero among heroes? He who controls his urge, and he who makes of his enemy his friend."[26]

The underlying perspective is one that refuses to identify the wickedness of the deed with the personality of the doer and therefore seeks the rehabilitation of the person. The following incident (second-century Palestine) illustrates the principle:[27]

> *There were once some highwaymen in the neighborhood of R. Meir who caused him a great deal of trouble. R. Meir accordingly prayed that they should die. His wife, Beruriah, said to him: "How do you make [such a prayer to be permitted]? It is written: 'Let sins* (hata'im) *cease.' Is it written, 'sinners'* (hot'im)*? [No!] It is written, 'sins'* (hata'im)*! Further, look at the end of the verse* (Psa. *104:35), 'and let the wicked men be no more.' Since the sins will cease, there will be no more wicked men! Rather, pray for them that they repent, and there will be no more wicked." He did pray for them, and they repented.*

This incident brings into sharp contrast our second principle, that one should act toward one's adversary in such a manner that he will no longer be an adversary.

The following episode (third-century Palestine) deals with the first principle, the propriety of desiring to mete out punishment at all:[28]

> *In the neighborhood of R. Joshua b. Levi there was a Sadducee [or sectarian] who used to annoy him much with [his interpretation of] texts. One day the Rabbi took a cock, placed it between the legs of his bed and watched it. He thought: "When the [propitious] moment arrives I shall curse him." When the moment arrived he was dozing. [On waking up] he said: "We learn from this that it is not proper to act in such a way. It is written, 'And His tender mercies are over all His works'* (Psa. *145:9). And it is further written, 'Neither is it good for the righteous to punish'* (Prov. *17:26)."*

Here are two motives for not seeking retribution to a fellow-man. The first is that which we met before, *imitatio Dei*. There the derived norm was that one should not seek the death of the wicked but his return, as did R. Meir above. For God seeks the defeat of the evil, not the persons victimized by evil. Here, too, such seeking is considered inappropriate, for as "His tender mercies are over all His works," so should man's be.

The second principle is that though one may be within his legal rights, it is not proper for the righteous to punish his fellow-man.[29] The reason for this is suggested by a third-generation Palestinian Amora, R. Jacob b. Bat Jacob:[30]

> *He through whom his neighbor is punished is not permitted to enter the precincts of the Holy One. . .[The Talmud explains that it follows] that it is not good for the righteous to punish, that is, it is evil for the righteous to be a vehicle of punishment, as it is written, "For Thou art a God that has no pleasure in wickedness, evil shall not sojourn with thee," [which means] Thou art righteous; therefore, evil shall not sojourn in thy habitation* (Psa. *5:5).*

Again *imitatio Dei* provides the norm, the principle being that one should not be even the means for evil. Interestingly enough, the two Rabbis in the above incidents also made statements that articulate the conclusions they came to as a result of the episodes. R. Meir said, "God feels pain when the blood of the wicked is spilt"[31]; and R. Joshua b. Levi said, "Happy is he who overcomes his urge."[32] Accordingly, R. Meir sought the return of the wicked while R. Joshua b. Levi realized that he should not have desired to inflict injury.

II

UP TO NOW WE HAVE SEEN that one is not to do violence to one's fellow-man, but rather

respond in such a way that will bring about his conversion. The real question, however, is whether this position can be upheld when our opponent is actively seeking to do violence to us. After all, the Torah was not given to angels, and there can be no doubt that one would be within one's legal right to defend oneself by inflicting harm upon one's attacker. The question, however, that we are after is whether this is a concession to the human condition or a *desideratum* in itself. If it is only a concession then we would expect to find a special category as the "law of the pious" for those who are able to master their desires.

THE QUESTION IS: IS IT desirable for a man to attribute his success to his might?[33] Jeremiah answers unwaveringly: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his arm, whose heart turns away from the Lord" (17:5). When man learns to trust in his might his heart turns away from God. As Gandhi claimed, "In *ahimsa* [the principle of non-violence] it is not the votary who acts in his own strength. Strength comes from God. . . Never have I attributed any independent strength to myself."[34] This prohibition to trust in one's might is reflected also in the Midrash: "Thus taught the sages: On three issues God made mention of His name although it was for evil. . .on him who relies on flesh and blood, as it is said: 'Cursed is the man who trusts in man. . .' "[35] What alternative does Jeremiah offer? Surrendering the forces of self to the might of God: "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord" (17:7). If physical force is proscribed, what avenues are open for one who trusts in God to fend off his would-be assailant? Rashi, summarizing a body of opinion which we will present, says "Repentance, prayer, and fasting."[36] These tactics are adopted for they represent the way of Jacob as opposed to the way of Esau. As the Talmud says: " 'The voice is the voice of Jacob' (*Gen.* 27:22); no prayer is effective unless the seed of Jacob has a part in it. 'The hands are the hands of Esau' (*ibid.*); no war is successful unless the seed of Esau has a share in it."[37] While two efficacious modes are available, one belongs to the realm of Jacob and the other to Esau. It is this dichotomy which explains why Jacob's alleged action in regard to the land he took was so problematical. In

coming to grips with this dilemma, we may discern the various approaches different sages had toward the use of violence.

The verse in *Genesis* records Jacob as saying: "And now, I give you [Joseph] one portion more than to your brothers, which I wrested from the Amorites with my sword (*harbi*) and bow (*b'kashti*)" (48:22). According to the plain meaning of the text, Jacob violently secured the land. R. Nehemiah, a fourth generation Palestinian Amora[38], justifies only the threat of violence in this case, as a deterrent to ward off the Amorites from attacking Jacob's sons. Thus, what seemed a violent conquest of territory becomes at most, for R. Nehemiah, the defense of life. R. Judah, however, refuses to countenance any resort to force at all and explains the bow and the sword as "*mitzvot* and good deeds."[39] Two of the classical commentators expand upon the spirit of R. Judah's explanation. The first[40] says: "For these are the sword and the bow of the righteous, as the Psalmist declares, 'Not by their own sword did they win the land, nor did their own arm give them victory!' " (44:3). The second[41] claims that *mitzvot* and good deeds are the real defenses as "they protect man more than any weapon." Another *midrash*, aware that Scripture says, "For not in my bow do I trust, nor can the sword save me" (*Psa.* 44:7) asks: "Is it so that with his sword and his bow he wrested [it]? Rather [explain] *harbi* (my sword) as prayer and *b'kashti* (my bow) as beseeching (*bakasha*)."[42] Thus, Jacob's mode of warfare is good deeds and prayer, while his true warriors are the righteous.[43] Therefore he opposes evil decrees with prayer,[44] for his mouth is his sword.[45] Accordingly, it is written: 'Some boast of chariots, and some of horses; but we boast of the name of the Lord of God!' (*Psa.* 20:8). And so said David to Goliath: 'You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts' " (*I Sam.* 17:45).[46] Why is this so? Answers the prophet: "Not by might, nor by power, but My spirit, says the Lord of hosts" (*Zech.* 4:6).

According to the previous *midrash*, R. Nehemiah allows for violence in self-defense; but what about R. Judah? Is his disagreement with R. Nehemiah based on a position which refuses to condone violence even in such an extreme

situation? In order to answer this question we will investigate the sources, to see whether such a position of total non-violence can be defended. Beforehand, let us make clear that there seems no doubt that the normative Talmudic position is reflected in the dictum, "If a man comes to kill you, rise early and kill him first."[47] Still, there may be room for a "standard of the pious." This standard may be the basis of the following *midrash*, on the verse "Forgive, O Lord, Thy people Israel, whom Thou hast redeemed. . ." (*Deut.* 21:8): "By virtue of the fact that no shedders of blood have been among us, Thou hast redeemed us."[48] "For that is the reason that God redeemed them from Egypt, so that among them and their descendents there should be no shedders of blood."[49]

HOW FAR DOES the prohibition to kill extent? The following *midrashim* illustrate incidents where the right to kill in self-defense gave little comfort.

> *"Then Jacob was greatly afraid and was distressed"* (Gen. *32:8). R. Judah b. R. Ilai said: Are not fear and distress identical? The meaning, however, is that "he was afraid" lest he should be slain, "and was distressed" lest he should slay. For he thought: If he prevails against me, will he not slay me, while if I am stronger than he, will I not slay him? That is the meaning of "He was afraid" – lest he should be slain; "And was distressed" – lest he should slay.*[50]

According to one commentator the reason is as follows: "Since it is not good for the righteous to punish (*Prov.* 17:26), and as the proverb of the ancients says, 'Out of the wicked comes forth wickedness (but my hand shall not be against you)' *(I Sam.* 24:13), accordingly it is not right for Jacob to spill blood, even of the wicked."[51] The author of this alleged response of Jacob's is R. Judah b. R. Ilai, who may be identified with the R. Judah in the previous *midrash,* and thus his horror at violence remains constant. Moreover, he was well-known as a *hasid*[52] (pious one) and naturally attributed the standard of the pious to the patriarch. The other possibility is that the R. Judah of the previous *midrash* is matched with a different R. Nehemiah. Thus, both would

turn out to be fourth-generation Palestinian Amoraim, confirming the position that it was the second- to fourth-generation Palestinian Aggadists who most fully developed a theory of non-violence. (The above *midrash* is also quoted by R. Pinchas HaCohen b. Hama, a fourth-generation Palestinian Amora.[53])

The following *midrash* follows the path of non-violence one step further.

> *"Then Jacob was greatly afraid"* (ibid.). *Do you think that Jacob really feared Esau, that he could not overcome him? It is not so. Rather, why did he fear him? That he would not stumble into the shedding of blood. Jacob thought, "Anyway you want, if I kill him I will transgress [the command] 'Thou shalt not murder.' "*[54]

This is the ultimate, that killing in self-defense is called murder.

The second incident where violence as an alternative was transcended is the encounter between Saul and David. Saul had been pursuing David in an effort to kill this rival. David was hiding in a cave. The story continues:

> *And Saul went in [the cave] to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the innermost parts of the cave. And the men of David said to him, "Here is the day of which the Lord said to you, 'Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you.' " Then David arose and stealthily cut off the skirt of Saul's robe. And afterward David's heart smote him. . .*(1. Sam. *24:3-5).*

What happened at that moment when David could have prevailed over his mortal enemy? What does it mean that "his heart smote him"? Answers a third-generation Palestinian Amora:

> *R. Samuel b. Nahmani said: His urge appeared and said, "If you fell into his hand he would have no mercy for you and would kill you. And from the Torah it is permissible to kill him, for he is a pursuer." Accordingly, he [David] leaped and swore twice, "By God, I won't kill him!"*[55]

According to another Amora, not only did David not want to kill, he dreaded being faced with the possibility. "R. Isaac said: 'Just as David prayed that he not fall in the hand of Saul, so did he pray that Saul would not fall into his hand.' "[56]

The decisive element is not only that David does not respond with violence, but the fact that he had the means of solving the crisis violently and refuses to use them. This point is underscored by Gandhi: "Non-violence is not a cover for cowardice, but it is the supreme virtue of the brave. . . Cowardice is wholly inconsistent with non-violence. . . Non-violence presupposes the ability to strike."[57]

Nevertheless, how does one react to a potential murderer when one is not in a superior position? The real issue is how to act to insure that nobody is killed. We will present three possible approaches that the *midrash* has Jacob take.

> *The sages taught:*[58] *For five reasons Jacob sent messengers to Esau. . .to determine whether or not his anger had subsided. . .and to remove his envy and enmity with soft-spoken words, as it says, "A soft answer turns away wrath"* (Prov. *15:1).*

The second approach[59] also has Jacob refuse to rely on might.

> *Why did he send messengers to him?. . .He [Jacob] informed him [Esau], "If you are prepared for peace, I am with you; and if for war, I am ready for you. I have stalwarts and strong men, for I make a request of the Holy One. . .and He fulfills it," as it says, "He will fulfill the desires of them that fear him"* (Psa. *145:19). For that reason David came to utter praise and glory to God who helped him when he fled from Saul. . .In reference to that incident was it said, "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will make mention of the name of the Lord our God"* (Psa. *20:8).*

According to a contemporary commentator, the difference between Jacob and David was that "David fought his enemies with the same means that they fought him, i.e. with chariots and horses. With Jacob, however, the verse was fulfilled. Esau confronted him with four hundred men, yet Jacob mentioned the name of God: 'And Jacob said, O God of my

father Abraham and God of my father Isaac. . .' And with that the matter was closed; Esau yielded and made peace with Jacob."[60]

While the first approach has Jacob strive to remove the cause of aggression to prevent any conflict, the second has him operating from a position of relative strength. But what was the purpose of such might? On this there is disagreement between two third-century Palestinian Amoraim, one condoning violence and one not. R. Judah b. Simon said: [Jacob declared] "I have the strength to engage him in prayer." R. Levi said: [He declared] "I have the strength to engage him in battle."[61]

A third approach suggests how to treat an aggressor whose enmity is still burning as he advances. This idea first appears in the first generation of Amoraim in the words of R. Hunia and receives its more developed form from the great fourth-generation Aggadist, R. Berahia, both Palestinians.

> *"And Jacob settled down"* (Gen. *37:1). R. Hunia said: This may be compared to a man who saw a pack of dogs and being afraid of them he sat down among them. Similarly, when Jacob saw Esau and his chiefs he was afraid of them and so he settled [sat] down among them.*[62]

This is explained as follows:[63] Jacob "feared his enemies that encircled him. In order that they not strive with him, Jacob sat down there, so that they would say that he considers them friends who would not struggle with him." This reasoning, that by an act of non-violence one shows that one is not a threat to the well-being of the assailant, thereby allowing his aggression to subside, is made even more explicit in the later version:[64]

> *R. Berahia said. . .[A man] saw dogs holding him. He thought: Who would be able to withstand all these? What did he do? He sat before them and soothed their anger. . .Thus Jacob sat before them [Esau and his chiefs], and they did not harm him.*

"Such are the tactics of the subtle, that they appear as trusting the amity of the wicked, so they should not be

harmed: which would not be if they fled. And one should be careful that he does not appear as lacking trust, for he is his opponent."[65]

THE UNDERLYING assumption of these "sit-ins" was expressed by Isaiah: "In sitting still and rest shall you be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength" (30:15 ff.). It is this attitude which will allow a man to "take more care that he not injure others than that he not be injured."[66] The hope is that such a show of faith-force, which demonstrates also concern for the welfare of the opponent, will so stir him that non-injury will result.

To what lengths this method goes and what a potential victim can do actively is dealt with in the following *midrash*[67] on two verses in *Proverbs* by a second-generation Palestinian Amora. The verses are: "If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to ear; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; for you will heap coals of fire on his head, and the Lord will reward you" (25:21-22):

> *"If your enemy is hungry," R. Hama b. Hanina says: Even though he rose early* (hishkeem) *to kill you and came hungry and thirsty to your home, feed him and give him to drink. Why? "For you will heap coals of fire on his head, and the Lord will reward* (yeshalem) *you." Do not read "reward"* (yeshalem) *but "he will cause him to be at peace"* (yashlemeno) *with you.*

"Thus non-violent resistance acts as a sort of moral jiu-jitsu. The non-violence and good will of the victim act like the lack of physical opposition by the user of physical jiu-jitsu, to cause the attacker to lose his moral balance. He suddenly and unexpectedly loses the moral support which the usual violent resistance of most victims would render him."[68] The best way to take this radical non-violent position is to quote the response of another radical of non-violence.[69] "When asked if it was lawful to overcome force with force, Erasmus answered. . .'If your enemy is hungry, give him to eat. . .In so doing, you will heap coals of fire upon his head, that is to say, you will kindle the fire of love in him.' "

This tactic, that mutual regard and acts of love can have a transforming effect, was an old tradition in Israel.

> *Our Rabbis taught: What was Esther's reason for inviting Haman?. . .R. Joshua said: She learned to do so from her father's house, as it says, "If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, etc."* (ibid.).[70]

The insight again is that the means one chooses to respond to an assailant will largely determine his reaction. Thus, "non-violent resistance is a sort of moral manipulative activity in which the factors used and operated upon are largely psychological."[71] "When a man's ways please the Lord he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him" *(Prov.* 16:7).[72]

It would be wrong to think that this method is soft on evil. It is rather a strategem that so abhors evil that it refuses to use evil to attain anything. This is based on the profound insight that the means employed determine the end achieved, for means are actually ends *in potentia.* Accordingly, the good can only be achieved through the good. Or poetically put:

> *Point not the goal until you plot the course*
> *For ends and means to man are entangled so*
> *That different means quite different aims enforce.*
> *Conceive the means as end in embryo.*[73]

III

ESSENTIAL TO ANY ETHIC of non-violence is the idea of self-suffering. This does not automatically imply any asceticism nor any search for suffering; rather, it is a conviction of the practitioner of non-violence that if physical suffering is to be inflicted he would rather be the inflicted rather than the inflicter. Similarly, he holds that he can retain his humanity better in being persecuted than by being persecutor. Accordingly, he is faced with a real challenge when he chooses to oppose an oppressive regime. What avenues are open, and what can be considered proper means? The issue became glaringly real when Talmudic Palestine had to deal with the frequent outbreak of rebellion throughout almost all of Roman rule.

The following *midrash*[74] dealing with this problem is attached to the Priestly Blessing for peace. It grapples with the issue of how to promote ultimate peace:

"Thus you shall bless the people of Israel [so that]. . . The Lord will grant peace" (Num. *6:22 ff.*). *This bears on what is written in Scripture, "Do not envy a man of violence and do not choose any of his ways."* (Prov. *3:31*). *The "man of violence" refers to the wicked Esau . . .And the reason why it says, "do not envy" is because it is manifest to the Holy One. . .that Israel are destined to be enslaved beneath the power of Edom [Rome] and will be oppressed and crushed in their midst, and that Israel will at some time raise angry protest against this, as Malachi asserts, "You have said, 'It is vain to serve God. What is the good of our keeping his charge, etc.* (Mal. *3:14*); *henceforth we deem the arrogant blessed; evildoers not only prosper, but when they put God to the test they escape.'"* (ibid. *15*). *Accordingly the Holy Spirit, speaking through Solomon, said, "Do not envy a man of violence!" Envy not the peace enjoyed by the wicked Esau! "And do not choose any of his ways," i.e., you must not do according to their deeds.*

What is the blessing of peace worthy of Israel? That he not choose the way of violence even to overthrow his oppressors. Moreover, it is prohibited "to desire to be like him, to do violence to men; [accordingly] do not choose any of his ways, for that will bring you to sin as he does."[75] There can be no violence without sin. The *midrash* continues:

. . .Moreover, it says, "Then once more you shall distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him" (Mal. *3:18*). *. . .The wicked — Esau; the righteous — Israel, about whom it is written, "Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land forever"* (Isa. *60:21*).

IT FOLLOWS THAT THE SIGN that Israel is righteous and worships God is that it rejects the use of violence. And it is through such virtue that it will be found worthy to possess the land.

This seems also the import of another *midrash*:[76]

"And Jacob said, 'O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac. . .'" (Gen. *32:10*). *But was not he so to Esau too (i.e., the God of his father)? He, however, who chooses their ways* (sc. *of the Patriarchs) and acts as they (says God), I afford him my protection (alternative translation: I can be upheld by him);*[77] *but to one who does not choose their ways and emulate their acts, I do not afford protection (I cannot be upheld by him).*

Thus, it becomes imperative that Israel choose not the violent way of Esau. As the Psalmist saw, "The Lord tests the righteous and the wicked, and His soul hates him that loves violence" (11:5). In fact, it would not be too extreme to claim that the presence of God and that of violence are antithetical. "For neither God nor His throne is complete until the descendants of Esau are wiped away."[78] (As Gandhi also felt, "When the practice of *ahimsa* becomes universal, God will reign on earth as He does in heaven.")[79]

Is it then preferable to be persecuted than to be a persecutor? A major figure in third-century Palestine politics, R. Abbahu,[80] answers: "A man should always strive to be rather of the persecuted than the persecutors, as there is none among the birds more persecuted than the doves and pigeons, and yet Scripture made them [alone among the birds] eligible for the altar" (see *Lev.* 1:14).[81] The advantage of being hunted over being hunter is that one is thus not a hunter. To what lengths is this extended? In the opinion of one commentator:[82]

Even concerning a man who is not persecuted, he should take sides with the persecuted to save them from the persecutors. This applies even if he could save himself and stand off the persecutor until the persecutor becomes the persecuted; he should not do so, but rather be of the persecuted.

That is to say, a follower of non-violence offers resistance "only in moral terms. He states his readiness to prove his sincerity by his own suffering rather than by imposing suffer-

ing on the assailant through violence."[83]

Such a posture prevents entirely the frequent outbreaks which are justified by accusing the opponent of taking the first step.[84] In choosing to be among the persecuted, non-violence testifies that it is not the weapon of the weak, but rather an awareness that one's fellow-man stands in relationship to God, for His image is ineffably etched in the human being. Hence, he who strikes his fellow-man "is as though he has assaulted the Divine Presence." Indeed, as R. Hanina goes on to say, "He who lifts up his hand against his neighbor, even if he did not smite him, is called a sinner."[85] In no manner does this position condone passivity toward evil; rather, it opposes it with all its might but refuses to give it an opening. In fact, it is the same R. Hanina who claimed that "Jerusalem was destroyed only because they did not rebuke each other. . .[i.e.] that generation hid their faces in the earth, and did not protest. . ."[86] This horror of violence is also based on the realization that one becomes what one does. As Heschel perceived:[87]

> *It is in deeds that man becomes aware of what his life really is, of his power to harm and to hurt, to wreck and to ruin. . .Even a single deed generates an endless set of effects, initiating more than the most powerful man is able to master or to predict. A single deed may place the lives of countless men in the chains of its unpredictable effects.*

THUS, ONE CHOOSES to suffer rather than react violently. The suffering, however, is not conceived as a good; rather it is a means, along with the good he is willing to repay, to affect the inner life of his assaulter. Such is the path of a man of love, that he is among "those who are reproached but do not reproach, hear themselves reviled without answering, act through love and rejoice in suffering. . ."[88] This, as the above source goes on to explain, is the way of those who love God. The love of God leads to following in His ways, and "as God is called loving *(hasid)*, be thou also loving *(hasid)*."[89] And who is worthy of being called a *hasid*? Says R. Alexandri: "A man who remains silent even when hearing himself reviled is called *hasid*."[90]

The *hasid* rejects the way of the offenders, knowing full well that their way is not his way, nor are their intentions his intentions. For, as R. Ila'a said:[91] "The world exists only on account of him who restrains himself in strife."

If this demands suffering, then suffering it shall be, for only he who has the capacity to suffer has the capacity for change.[92] This type of suffering is by choice, not by default.

> *For he who lacks the ability to avenge and suffers is not called a self-sufferer, for against his will he suffers. However, he who has such ability and suffers is called a self-sufferer. And let him learn from the King of Kings, the Holy One blessed be He, who suffers and overlooks His adversaries, though he has the power [to do otherwise].*[93]

This approach was passionately explicated by Gandhi:[94]

> *Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the pitting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. . .Non-violence is a weapon of the strong. With the weak it might easily be hypocrisy.*[95]

In order constantly to endure suffering without retaliation one must have a strong trust in a God who cares and will help in the ultimate victory.[96] As Martin Luther King, Jr. confessed: "Perhaps the suffering, frustration and agonizing moments which I have had to undergo occasionally as a result of my involvement in a difficult struggle have drawn me closer to God. . .I am convinced that the universe is under the control of a loving purpose and that in the struggle for righteousness man has cosmic companionship."[97] And as Gandhi testified: "Truth and non-violence are not possible without a living belief in God. . .I am unable to account for my life without belief in this all-embracing living light. . .[Thus] my greatest weapon is mute prayer."[98]

This theory rests also on the faith that God is always on the side of the persecuted even though he be pursued for his wickedness. As the *midrash* says:[99]

> *"And God seeks that which is pursued"* (Ecc. *3:15). R.*

Huna in the name of R. Joseph explained: Always "God seeks that which is pursued." You find a righteous man pursues a righteous man, "and God seeks that which is pursued"; where a wicked man pursues a righteous man, "and God seeks that which is pursued"; where a wicked man pursues a wicked man, "and God seeks that which is pursued"; where a righteous man pursues a wicked man, "and God seeks that which is pursued." Whatever the case, "God seeks that which is pursued." R. Judah b. Simon in the name of R. Jose b. R. Nehorai said: The Holy One . . demands satisfaction for the pursued at the hands of the pursuers. . .Therefore God chose Abel. . . Noah. . .Abraham. . .Isaac. . .Jacob. . .Joseph. . .Moses. . David. . .Saul. . .and Israel.

ONCE IT IS REALIZED THAT God sides always with the persecuted, it becomes impossible for even righteous indignation to be a motive for inflicting suffering. In fact, by virtue of persecuting, one removes himself from God. "As it is written, 'God befriends the persecuted and repudiates the persecutors.' "[100] Furthermore, if a man once persecuted his fellow-man he loses all prerogatives of special pleading if he should in the future be persecuted. Only he whose hands are clean may request that another be handed over.

R. Samuel b. Nahmani said: We possess an Aggadic tradition that Esau will not fall except into the hands of the children of Rachel. Why? For if the tribes come to try Esau saying, "Why did you persecute your brother?" – he will say to them, "Why did you persecute Joseph, your brother? You are no better than me." But when he comes to Joseph, he [Joseph] says to him, "Why did you persecute your brother?" And he [Esau] will not be able to answer him. "If you will say [continues Joseph] that he did you evil, also my brothers paid me evil, and I repaid them with good." Immediately, he quiets.[101]

In these last two third-century *midrashim*, it could never be claimed that the end justifies the means. As long as there is no distinction in the means there is no distinction in the

moral right to victory. One can claim no moral superiority as long as the same tactics are employed, even though there be two disparate goals. By their means shall you judge them.

* * *

We have seen that alongside the normative legal tradition there existed, in this period, a concommitant undercurrent which may be considered the standard of the *hasid*. The *hasid* was not one who stood on his legal rights, but always sought a solution which would find favor in the eyes of God. He was a self-sufferer[102] who avoided the remotest possibility of doing harm.[103] He sought good and shunned evil.[104] Quick to forgive,[105] he was pacific in human relationships,[106] basing his life on what he had learned.[107] Valuing life above possessions, he never arrogated anything to himself.[108] Above all he sought to prevent injury[109] and acted lovingly to his fellowman.[110]

The prototype of the *hasid* was David. According to R. Judah, "He was benevolent to all, saying: 'Even to a murderer as well as to the slain, to a pursuer as well as to the pursued, I show kindness as to a righteous man.' That is what is written: 'But as for me, in Thy mercy do I trust; my heart shall rejoice in Thy salvation. I will sing unto the Lord because He has dealt bountifully with me!' (*Psa.* 13:6)."[111] This sentiment is ascribed to David in light of his cry, "How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?" (*ibid.* 13:3). Unless one can truly say, "In Thy mercy do I trust," it would seem an almost insuperable task to maintain one's composure consistently against one's enemies. This relationship is implicit in the famous lines from *Lamentations:* "Let him give his cheek to the smiter, and be filled with insults. For the Lord will not cast off forever" (3:30-31).

We conclude with a story that derives from the second-century period of martyrdom, which illustrates the incompatibility of the sword with the People of the Book.[112]

The Talmud records that R. Eleazar b. Perata was charged with the studying of the Law and committing theft. He was asked by the judge: Why have you been studying [the Law] and why have you been stealing? Our sage pleaded innocent, saying:

אי סייפא לא ספרא ואי ספרא לא סייפא

(He who is a warrior is not a scholar; and if he is a scholar, he is not a warrior). Since the text is not vocalized, it can also be translated, "If the sword, then not the book; and if the book, then not the sword."

" . . . SHE DOTH HIM GOOD AND NOT EVIL ALL THE DAYS OF HER LIFE."

1. See Saul Lieberman, "Palestine in the Third and Fourth Centuries," *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 36, No. 4, esp. p. 370.
2. Earlier and later sources will be used to support the thesis in so far as the former foreshadow it and the latter expand upon it.
3. *Bereshith Rabbah* 38, 3 (henceforth *B. R.*); *Yalkut Shimoni II*, No. 956 (henceforth *Y. S.*).
4. See *Maharzu, ad loc.*
5. See *Deuteronomy* 22:4.
6. See M. Kasher, *Torah Shelemah* (henceforth *T. S.*), *Exodus* 23, No. 65.
7. *Baba Metzia* 32b; cf. *Tosafot ad loc.* s. v. *le'kof* for a different approach and *Pesahim* 113b; and see the comment quoted by Epstein, *Torah Temimah* (henceforth *T. T.*), *Exodus* 23, No. 37; cf. *Tosafot ad loc.* s. v. *V'ee B'sifre* who says, based on *Sifre*, "your enemy, even *akum.*" This is not in our edition.
8. *Lekof et yitzro.* The plain-sense medieval Biblical exegete, Bechor Shor, agrees (on *Exodus* 23:5); see Maimonides, *Hilkhot rozeah* 13, 3 for its codification.
9. *Sifre* (ed. Finkelstein), *Tatsat* 222, 225.
10. *T.S. Exodus* 23, No. 47.
11. Ramban, *Deuteronomy* 22:2.
12. *Baba Metzia II*, 26.
13. *Minhat Bekurim;* cf. *T. S., op. cit.* No. 68, who quotes this in the name of Hasdai David.
14. *Mekhilta de Rashi*, p. 215, 5-6; cf. Bach, *Hoshen Mishpat* 13.
15. *Midrash Hagadol, Exodus* 23:5; cf. *Ezekiel* 18:21, 32; 33:19, *Isaiah* 55:7; *Amos* 4:14; *Pesikta De Rav Kahana* (Ed. Mandelbaum), p. 355 and parallels, *Y. S. II*, No. 358; *Hilkhot Rozeah* (13, 14).
16. See David Shapiro, "The Doctrine of the Image of God and *Imitatio Dei*," *Judaism*, Winter 1963; *Midrash Tehilim* 37, 3.
17. *Ginze Schecter I*, p. 39; *Y. S. II*, No. 960; *Sanhedrin* 39b; *Megillah* 10b; see *Avot* 4, 19.
18. *Tanhuma Yashan, Mishpatim I; T. S., Exodus* 23, No. 68; *Exodus Rabbah* 30, 1.
19. Richard Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence* (New York 1966), p. 50.
20. *Midrash Aggadah, Exodus* 23:5; see *Shnei Luhot Habrit, Sha'ar Ha'otiot, Beth; Midrash Tehilim* 99, 3, slight variants; cf. discussion between R. Joseph and Abbaye that the whole Torah is to promote peace, *Gittin* 59b.
21. "If you would conquer another man do it not by outside resistance but by creating inside his own personality an impulse too strong for his previous tendency. Reinforce your suggestion by making it auto-suggestion in him, so that it lives by his energy instead of yours. And yet that new impulse is not to conflict directly with his former urge, but to divert and blend within it and absorb it, so as to use the full psychological energy of both impulses. That is the wisest psychological dynamics and strategy." Gregg, *op. cit.*, p. 53, cf. *Berakhot* 54a on "with all your heart."
22. *Tosafot Pesahim* 113b, s. v. *Sherah;* Bach, *Hoshen Mishpat* 272, 10; see *Makhasit Hashekel, Orah Hayim* 156, 102 for how hate engenders hate; cf. Rama, *Hoshen Mishpat* 272, 69. An interesting distinction is made by the Nimukei Yosef *(Baba Metzia* 32b) between specific and general enmity. See also *She'elot, Vayeshev* 27, who claims that in any case one must render assistance; *T. S., op. cit.*, pp. 202-204.
23. *Midrash Lekah Tov, Exodus* 23:5, see *Targum Onkelos, ad loc.*
24. Gregg, *op. cit.*, p. 54; see *Menorat Hama'or* (ed. Enelow), Vol. 4, p. 320.
25. *Avot* 4, 1.
26. *Avot de Rabbi Natan* 23.

27. *Berakhot* 10a; see *Sotah* 14a: "Moses prayed for compassion that the sinners repent." See *Zohar (Midrash Hane'elam) Veyara* 105b.
28. *Ibid.*, 7a; *Avodah Zarah* 4b.
29. This follows the *Etz Yosef* in the *Ein Ya'akov, ad loc.*; cf. *Yad Eliahu* (Mosad Harav Kook) to *Sotah* 21b, who argues that *urah ar'a*, lit. "the way of the land," implies a prohibition; see *Margoliot Hayam* to *Sanhedrin* 100b, No. 6. "It is a Mitzvah for a man to pray for the wicked that they repent."
30. *Shabbat* 149b, adapted from the Soncino translation and the notes; see Rashi *ad loc.* See the prayer of Mar Zutra, *Megillah* 28a; *Menorat Hama'or*, Vol. 4, pp. 264, 297 and *Ozar Hatefilot (Sefarad)*, I, p. 562: "Let no man be punished on my account." This may explain Elijah's response to R. Joshua b. Levi; see *B.R.* 94, 9. Cf. Saul Lieberman, *Tosefta Kifshutah I*, p. 422, n. 141; *Taz, Yoreh Deah* 127, 7.
31. *Sanhedrin* 46a; see *ibid.* 39b; *Megillah* 10b.
32. *Avodah Zarah* 19a.
33. See *Deuteronomy* 18:17.
34. Thomas Merton (ed.), *Gandhi on Non-Violence* (New York 1965), p. 38.
35. *Tanhuma* (Buber), *Tazria* 12; *Y. S. I*, No. 556; cf. *Tanhuma, Tazria* 9 and *Y. S. II*, No. 231. Instead of *pitrono* (solution), *bithono* (trust); see Buber's notes. Still, *bithono* matches the verse in *Jeremiah* 17:5; cf. Ramban, *Genesis* 19:8, where he explains that Israel's crime *(Judges* 19-20) was reliance on their own might.
36. Rashi, *Proverbs* 20:18; see *Ezra* 8:21-23.
37. *Gittin* 57b.
38. Others explain that the R. Nehemiah and R. Judah referred to here are Tannaim. See *Encyclopedia of Talmudic and Geonic Literature* (ed. M. Margolioth), II, s. v. R. Nehemiah, pp. 666-667.
39. *B. R.* 97, 6 (Theodore-Albeck, ed., p. 1249).
40. *Ibid., Yefeh Toar.*
41. *Ibid., Matnoth Kehunah.*
42. *Tanhuma, B'shalah* 9; see *Mekhilta de Rashbi* 14, No. 10, which connects this issue with the verse in *Jeremiah* 17:5.
43. *Y. S. II*, No. 141.
44. *Rashi*, Nos. 31, 9; see *Bamidbar Rabbah* 20:13: "The mouth was given to Jacob."
45. *Ibid.*, 149, 5; *Berakhot* 53b; see *Shabbat* 49a: "Israel is not saved except through *mitzvot.*" See *Bamidbar Rabbah* 20, 21, and then *Berakhot* 7b: "If a man has a fixed place for his prayer his enemies succumb to him." This gives a perspective to the *mishnah* in *Shabbat* (63b) as to why it is inappropriate to wear arms even as ornaments.
46. *Mekhilta B'shalah* (ed. Horowitz), p. 131. The literature is replete with examples which explain away Biblical terms of violence as meaning prayer, good deeds and studying Torah: *et al. Megillah* 15b; *Hagigah* 14a; *Sanhedrin* 93b; *Seder Eliahu Rabbah* (ed. Friedman), p. 89; *Y. S. II*, No. 986; see *Psalms* 145:10-11, *Hosea* 1:7.
47. *Berakhot* 58a; *Yoma* 85b; *Sanhedrin* 72a; *Bamidbar Rabbah* 21, 5, etc.; see *B. R.* 75, 1: "Confront the wicked before he confronts thee." Or, "Kill first before he kills you." *Y. S. II*, No. 134, esp. R. Yudan's statement.
48. *Sifrei, Shoftim* end. See *Tanhuma* (Buber), *Lekh Lekha* 19, for Abraham's response to murder in war.
49. *T. T. ad loc.*
50. *B. R.* 76, 2; for slight variant see *Tanhuma, Vayishlah* 4, which is quoted in *Ginze Schecter I*, p. 60 in the name of R. Pinhas HaCohen b. Hama, a fourth-generation Palestinian Amora; see Theodore *ad loc.* for significant variant.

51. *Yefeh Toar*, quoted by the *Etz Yosef* on *Tanhuma, Vayishlah* 4; see *Hilkhot Teshuvah* 2, 10.
52. *Baba Kamma* 103b.
53. Cf. n. 38 and n. 50.
54. *Ginze Schecter*, p. 60; see *T. S., Genesis* 32, No. 94. See *Sifrei Hachamim, Genesis* 32, 8.
55. *Tanhuma, B'ha'alotkha* 10; see *Berakhot* 62b: "Rabbi Eleazar says. . ."
56. *Y. S. II*, No. 888; see *Midrash Tehilim* 7, 13: "Rabbi Tarfon said: David said at that moment, 'Although Saul pursues me, my song shall not leave my lips (lit. mouth).' "
57. Merton, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
58. *Midrash Ha'beur* (manuscript) in *T. S., Genesis* 32, No. 11; see *Midrash Lekah Tov ad loc.* See also *Berakhot* 17a: "a pearl in the mouth of Abbaye. . ." With J. Schecter's explanation in *Sefer Mishle with Rabbinic Comments*, p. 94, showing how Abbaye's changes in the proverb increase its efficiency. Cf. *B. R.* 75, 11: Jacob sent messengers to see whether Esau would repent.
59. *B. R.* 75, 11.
60. *Ibid.*, ed. Mirkin, p. 174. See *Midrash Hagadol, Bereshith*, p. 550.
61. *B. R.* 78, 7; see *Koheleth Rabbah* 9, 18: "Better is wisdom than weapons," i.e., the wisdom of Jacob our father is better than the weapons of the wicked Esau; see *B. R.* 75, 7, that regardless of how Esau acts, Jacob must respond as a brother.
62. *Ibid.*, 84, 5. Instead of translating *vayeshev* as "dwelt" (Soncino and R. S. V.), it is rendered as "settled down," for the *midrash* is playing on the primary meaning of the word, which is "sit down."
63. *Ibid., Yefeh Toar.*
64. *Midrash Hagadol, Bereshith*, p. 621.
65. *T. S., Genesis* 37, No. 3.
66. *Tosefot, Baba Kama*, s. v. *Velehayev*, p. 232.
67. *Midrash Mishle* 25, 21; see *Yalkut Hamehere, ad loc.* for slight variant; cf. *Menorat Hama'or* (ed. Enelow), Vol. 4, p. 543: "One should render kindness to all, even to one who has greatly harmed one."
68. Gregg, *op. cit.*, p. 44.
69. Merton, *op. cit.* 9, 15.
70. *Megillah* 15b; in *Ein Yaakov; Midrash Lekah Tov* to *Esther* 5:4.
71. Gregg, *op. cit.*, p. 57.
72. For examples see *Pesikta B'shalah*, p. 80; *Y. S. II*, No. 954.
73. J. V. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence* (Los Angeles 1967), p. xiii, quoted from Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*, p. 31. Similarly, Gandhi claimed: "In *Satyagraha* the cause has to be just and clear as well as the means." *(Satyagraha*, truth-force or soul-force, is the technique for effecting social and political change based on truth, non-violence and self-suffering; cf. Merton, *op. cit.*, p. 28.)
74. *Bamidbar Rabbah* 11, 1; see *Y. S. I*, No. 227; cf. end of *Shmoth Rabbah* 30, 1, for God's concern for legality.
75. Ralbag, *Proverbs* 3:31; see *T. S., Exodus* 2, No. 112; 102; 120.
76. *B. R.* 76, 4; *Midrash Hagadol, Bereshith*, p. 566 and notes. This idea is transmitted by R. Huna. See note 90.
77. See *ibid.* 69, 3, where the distinction between the wicked and the righteous is that the former rely *(mitkaymim)* on their gods, while with the latter God relies *(mitkaymim)* on them. Thus, here the same word, *mitkaymim*, is better rendered "be upheld" than "afford protection." For the theological framework, see A. J. Heschel, *Theology of Ancient Judaism* (Hebrew) (New York 1962). Vol. I, p. 77 ff.
78. *Y. S. II*, No. 549. This was also said about Amalek, a descendant of Esau, by a second-generation Palestinian Amora, R. Hama b. Hanina, *Pesikta Rabbati*,

ch. 12, p. 51a; cf. *Tanhuma* (Buber), *Tetsa* 18, and *Pesikta de Rav Kahana* (ed. Mandelbaum) I, p. 208, where it is expressed that God's presence in the world is dependent upon Israel's witness, based on *Isaiah* 43:12.

79. Merton, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

80. See Saul Lieberman, "Martyrs of Caesarea," *Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire Orientales et Slaves*, Vol. V, No. 7, p. 402.

81. *Baba Kama* 93a; see *Vayikra Rabbah* 27, 5; "Said R. Eliezer b. R. Jose: 'Do not offer unto Me from those that pursue, but from those that are pursued.'" Another reason is that rebellion was considered a breach of divine trust. See *Ketubot* 111a; *Shir Hashirim Rabbah* 2, 7 for third-century discussion of rebellion.

82. Maharsha. See *Sefer Hasidim* (ed. Margolioth), No. 163: "If you defeated your friend, do not rejoice, for it is better that you be vanquished than be a victor. Since he who vanquished his friend in this world is handed over to the vanquished in the next." See I. Davidson, *Thesaurus of Proverbs and Parables* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem 1957), No. 351, No. 352.

83. Gregg, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

84. *Iyun Ya'akov, Ein Yaakov, Baba Kama* 93a; see *Yad Eliahu, op. cit., ad loc.*

85. *Sanhedrin* 58b, based on version in *Menorat Hama'or* (ed. Enelow), Vol. 4, p. 332; see *Sefer Hasidim* (ed. Margolioth), No. 49, where striking the cheek of man is comparable to knifing divinity.

86. *Sabbath* 119b.

87. A. J. Heschel, *God in Search of Man* (New York 1959), p. 284. See *Berakhot* 7b.

88. It continues: "Of them Scripture says: 'But they that love Him be as the sun when he goes forth in his might' *(Judges* 5:31)." *Shabbat* 88a; *Derekh Eretz Rabbah* 2; for slight variant, *Yoma* 32a and *Gittin* 36b. See also *Sanhedrin* 76b; *Yebamoth* 62b.

89. *Sifre, Deuteronomy, Eikev* 11, 49. Translation follows Buechler, *Studies in Atonement in the Rabbinic Literature of the First Century* (London 1928), p. 35 ff. The conventional translation is "pious." See *Hullin* 63a: "A *hasid* is one who acts lovingly to his fellow-man." "As is the God so is the votary."

90. The *midrash* continues: "And because David heard himself reviled and remained silent he was right in calling himself *hasid*" (see *Psalms* 86:2); *Midrash Tehillim* 16, 11. This statement is transmitted by R. Huna, a fourth-generation Palestinian Amora; another version has it transmitted by R. Abbahu. See *Berakhot* 17a: "And in the face of those who curse me let my soul be silent." See referent to notes 4, 18, and 80.

91. *Hullin* 89a; also a third-generation Palestinian Amora; see R. Abbahu here.

92. See Erich Fromm, *You Shall Be as Gods* (New York 1966), ch. 4; esp. p. 92. This is an excellent analysis "on the possibility of revolution" in such a theoretical framework, using the Exodus.

93. *Shnei Luhot Habrit, Sha'ar Ha'otiot, Ayin;* see *Seder Eliahu Zuta* 4 (ed. Friedman), p. 178, that accepting reproach is the way of God; see *Devarim Rabbah* 5, 50, that God does not return evil for evil; see *Kuzari I*, 115 and *IV*, 22 on the goal of proper suffering.

94. Bondurant, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

95. Lila and Arthur Weinberg (ed.), *Instead of Violence* (Boston 1963), p. 212.

96. See Gregg, *op. cit.*, p. 42, for a long list of non-violent resisters who affirmed Transcendence. To that list could be appended an equally long one from the Jewish tradition.

97. Weinberg, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

98. Merton, *op. cit.*, pp. 45, 49; see also p. 28: "Prayer from the heart can achieve what nothing else can in the world."

99. *Vayikra Rabbah* 27, 5; for slight variants, see *Pesikta de Rav Kahana* (ed. Mandelbaum), p. 153; cf. n. 82. For Israel's response while pursued by the Egyptians, see *Y. S. I*, No. 230, and then compare with n. 56. The transmitters in both parts of this *midrash* are a third-generation Palestinian Amora, R. Judah b. Simon, and a fourth-generation one, R. Huna; see referent to n. 61; see n. 76 and n. 90.

100. *Pesikta Rabati* 193b; *Vayikra Rabbah* 27, 5; variants line 5 (ed. Margoloth), p. 631. See *Sefer Hahinukh, Mitzvah* No. 600; cf. *Bamidbar Rabbah* 14, 4, for illustrations that God saves the weak from the strong.

101. *Y. S. II*, No. 51. The same R. Samuel b. Nahmani transmitted the tradition that God resisted the angels' jubilant cries at the crossing of the Red Sea, exclaiming, "My creatures are drowning, and you utter song" *(Sanhedrin* 39b). See referent to n. 55. This same Aggadic tradition was transmitted one generation later by R. Pinhas, a fourth generation Palestinian Amora, *B. R.* 75, 4; see *B. R.* 73, 7; 99, 2; *Babba Batra* 123b; and R. Hanan's statement, *Baba Kama* 93a. See *Teshuvot Maharit* to *Even Haezer* 2, 43.

102. *Seder Eliahu Zuta* 3 (ed. Friedman, p. 176).

103. *Baba Kama* 30a; *Mo'ed Katan* 18a.

104. *Avot* 2, 9; the way recommended by R. Jose, a *Hasid.*

105. *Rosh Hashanah* 17b; see Rashi *ad loc.*, s. v. *Hasid.*

106. *Avot* 5, 11.

107. *Ibid.*, 5, 14.

108. *Ibid.*, 5, 10.

109. *Baba Kama* 30a, R. Judah's opinion.

110. *Hullin* 63a.

111. *Koheleth Rabbah* 7, 1.

112. Saul Lieberman, "Martyrs of Caesarea," *op. cit.*, based on *Avodah Zarah* 17b.

Chapter 5

So much for the philosophers' 'happy life.' What we Christians like better is their teaching that the life of virtue should be a social life. For, if the life of the saints had not been social, how could the City of God (which we have been discussing in all these nineteen Books) have a beginning, make progress, and reach its appointed goal? Yet, social living, given the misery of our mortality, has enormous drawbacks—more than can be easily counted, or known for what they really are. Just recall the words of a character in one of the pagan comedies who is applauded for expressing everyone's feeling:

A wife I wed. What a worry, the shrew!
The babies were born, and the worries grew.[1]

And remember the troubles of lovers listed by the same Terence:

Slights and fights and spirits vexed,
War today and peace the next.[2]

All human relationships are fraught with such misunderstandings. Not even the pure-hearted affection of friends is free from them. All history is a tale of 'slights and fights and spirits vexed,' and we must expect such unpleasantness as an assured thing, whereas peace is a good unguaranteed—dependent upon the unknowable interior dispositions of our friends. Even if we could read their hearts today, anything might happen tomorrow. Take the members of a single family. Who are as fond of one another as, in general, they are or, at least, are expected to be? Yet, who can rely utterly even on family affection? How much unhappiness has sprung from the ambush

[1] Terence, *Adelphi* 5.4.13,14. [2] *Eunuchus* 1.1.14,15.

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of domestic disloyalties! And how galling the disillusionment after peace had been so sweet—or seemed to be, though in fact it was nothing but a clever counterfeit. That is why no one can read, without a sigh, those touching words of Cicero: 'No snares are ever so insidious as those lurking as dutiful devotion or labeled as family affection. You can easily escape from an open foe, but when hatred lurks in the bosom of a family it has taken a position and has pounced upon you before it can be spied out or recognized for what it is.'[3]

Even divine Revelation reminds us: 'And a man's enemies will be those of his own household.'[4] It breaks the heart of any good man to hear this, for, even if he be brave enough to bear, or vigilant enough to beware of, the ruses of faithless friends, he must suffer greatly just the same when he discovers how treacherous they are. And it makes no difference whether they were genuine friends who have turned traitors, or traitorous men who had been trading on pretended affection all along.

If, then, the home, every man's haven in the storms of life, affords no solid security, what shall one say of the civic community? The bigger a city is, the fuller it is of legal battles, civil and criminal, and the more frequent are wild and bloody seditions or civil wars. Even when the frays are over, there is never any freedom from fear.

Chapter 6

Even when a city is enjoying the profoundest peace, some men must be sitting in judgment on their fellow men. Even at their best, what misery and grief they cause! No human judge can read the conscience of the man before him. That is why so many innocent witnesses are tortured to find what truth there is in the alleged guilt of other men. It is even worse when the accused man himself is tortured to find out if he be guilty. Here a man still unconvicted must undergo certain suffering for an uncertain crime—not because his guilt is known, but because his innocence is unproved. Thus it often happens that the ignorance of the judge turns into tragedy for the innocent party. There is something still more insufferable—deplorable beyond all cleansing with our tears.[1] Often enough, when a judge tries to avoid putting a man to death whose innocence is not manifest, he has him put to torture, and so it happens, because of woeful lack of evidence, that he both tortures and kills the blameless man whom he tortured lest he kill him without cause. And if, on Stoic principles, the innocent man chooses to escape from life rather than endure such torture any longer, he will confess to a crime he never committed. And when it is all over, the judge will still be in the dark whether the man he put to death was guilty or not guilty, even though he tortured him to save his innocent life, and then condemned him to death. Thus, to gather evidence, he tortures an innocent man and, lacking evidence, kills him.

Such being the effect of human ignorance even in judicial procedure, will any philosopher-judge dare to take his place on the bench? You may be sure, he will. He would think it very wrong indeed to withdraw from his bounden duty to society. But that innocent men should be tortured as witnesses in trials not their own; that accused men should be so overcome by pain as falsely to plead guilty and then die, as they were tortured, in innocence; that many men should die as a result of or during their torturings, prior to any verdict at all—in all this our philosopher-judge sees nothing wrong. So, too, a judge in his ignorance will condemn to death, as sometimes happens, men who had nothing but the good of society at heart. To prevent crimes from going unpunished, such men go to court; but the witnesses lie and the guilty party holds out inhumanly under the torture and makes no confession; the accusation, in spite of the facts, is not sustained and it is the accuser who is condemned. No, our philosopher-judge does not reckon such abuses as burdens on his conscience because he has no intention of doing harm. Often, he would say, he cannot get at the truth, yet the good of society demands that he hand down decisions. My only point is that, as a man, surely his cannot be the 'happy life' even though his philosophy may save him from a sense of wrongdoing. Granted that his ig-

[3] *In Verrem* 2.1.15.

[4] Matt. 10.36.

[1] . . . *intolerabilius magisque plangendum rigandumque, si fieri possit, fontibus lacrimarum.*

norance and his office are to blame for the torture and death of innocent men, is it any consolation to feel free of responsibility unless he is also happy? Surely there is something finer and more humane in seeing and detesting his wretchedness in this necessity and, if he is a Christian, in crying out to God: 'Deliver me from my necessities.'[2]

Chapter 7

After the city comes the world community. This is the third stage in the hierarchy of human associations. First, we have the home; then the city; finally, the globe. And, of course, as with the perils of the ocean, the bigger the community, the fuller it is of misfortunes.

The first misfortune is the lack of communication resulting from language differences. Take two men who meet and find that some common need calls on them to remain together rather than to part company. Neither knows the language of the other. As far as intercommunication goes, these two, both men, are worse off than two dumb animals, even of different kinds. For all its identity in both, their human nature is of no social help, so long as the language barrier makes it impossible for them to tell each other what they are thinking about. That is why a man is more at home with his dog than with a foreigner.

It will be answered that the Roman Empire, in the interests of peaceful collaboration, imposes on nations it has conquered the yoke of both law and language, and thus has an adequate, or even an overflowing, abundance of interpreters. True enough. But at what cost! There is one war after another, havoc everywhere, tremendous slaughterings of men.

All this for peace. Yet, when the wars are waged, there are new calamities brewing. To begin with, there never has been, nor, is there today, any absence of hostile foreign powers to provoke war. What is worse, the very development of the empire accruing from their incorporation has begotten still worse wars within. I refer to the civil wars and social uprisings that involve even more wretched anxieties for human beings, either

[2] Ps. 24.17.

shaken by their actual impact, or living in fear of their renewal. Massacres, frequent and sweeping, hardships too dire to endure are but a part of the ravages of war. I am utterly unable to describe them as they are, and as they ought to be described; and even if I should try to begin, where could I end?

I know the objection that a good ruler will wage wars only if they are just. But, surely, if he will only remember that he is a man, he will begin by bewailing the necessity he is under of waging even just wars. A good man would be under compulsion to wage no wars at all, if there were not such things as just wars. A just war, moreover, is justified only by the injustice of an aggressor; and that injustice ought to be a source of grief to any good man, because it is human injustice. It would be deplorable in itself, apart from being a source of conflict.

Any man who will consider sorrowfully evils so great, such horrors and such savagery, will admit his human misery. And if there is any man who can endure such calamities, or even contemplate them without feeling grief, his condition is all the more wretched for that. For it is only the loss of all humane feeling that could make him call such a life 'the happy life.'

Chapter 8

Another of the not uncommon miseries of our human life is to mistake, by a misunderstanding close to madness, enemies for friends and friends for enemies. This apart, even granted the ordinary miseries and mistakes, of which all human relationship is full, there is no greater consolation than the unfeigned loyalty and mutual love of good men who are true friends. Yet, the more friends we have, and the more scattered they are locally, the more widely stretched are our heartfelt fears, lest any of the mountainous miseries of life befall them. We become apprehensive not only about possible afflictions of famine, war, sickness, imprisonment, or such unimaginable sufferings as may be their lot in slavery. What is far harder to swallow is our fear that they may fail us in faithfulness, turn to hate us and work us harm. If and when our fear be-

comes a fact, and we find it out (and the more friends we have, the more sources of such heartbreak), the fire of pain is whipped to such a blazing in our heart[1] as none can guess who has not felt the smart. Indeed, we would rather hear that our friends are dead.

Yet here is another source of sadness, for the death of those can never leave us free from grief whose friendship during life was a solace and delight. There are some who say men should not grieve. Then, let them try, if they can, to ban all loving interchange of thoughts, cut off and outlaw all friendly feelings, callously break the bonds of all human fellowship, or claim that such human relationships must be emptied of all tenderness. And if this is utterly impossible, it is no less impossible for us not to taste as bitter the death of those whose life for us was such a source of sweetness. It is, in fact, because such grief, in a broken heart, is like a wound or open sore that men feel it a duty to offer us the balm of their condolences. And if the heart is more easily and quickly healed the more virtuous a man is, that does not mean that there was no wound to heal.

There is no escape, then, from that misery of human life which is caused, in varying degrees, by the deaths of very close friends, especially if they have played some important role in public life. Yet it is easier to watch any of our loved ones die, in this sense, than to learn that they have lost their faith, or have fallen into grievous sin, and thus are spiritually dead. It is because of the immensity of this misery filling the earth that the Scripture asks: 'Is not the life of man upon earth a trial?'[2] No wonder the Lord said: 'Woe to the world because of scandals,'[3] and again: 'Because iniquity hath abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold.'[4]

That is why we Christians can feel a real joy when our friends die a holy death. Their death, of course, afflicts our heart, but faith gives us the surer consolation, that they are now freed from those evils of this present life which threaten

[1] . . . *quibus cor nostrum flagris uratur.*
[2] Job 7.1, reading *tentatio* in place of the Vulgate *militia.*
[3] Matt. 18.7.
[4] Matt. 24.12.

the best of men with either failure or defilement—and sometimes with both.

Chapter 9

In the philosophy of the Platonists, who hold that the gods are our friends, there is place for a fourth kind of society, which is not merely global but, so to speak, cosmic, in the sense that it embraces even heaven; and in this society our friends are such that there can be no fear whatever of their death or moral degradation causing us any sadness. However, partly because we cannot associate with them as familiarly as we do with men—a further affliction of this present life—and partly because Satan sometimes 'transforms himself into an angel of light,'[1] in order to test those who need testing or to deceive those deserving deception, nothing but the great mercy of God can save a man from mistaking bad demons for good angels, and false friends for true ones, and from suffering the full damages of this diabolical deception, all the more deadly in that it is wily beyond words.

Now, for anyone who needs this great mercy of God, what is this need but another of the great miseries of human life—in this instance, the overwhelming ignorance that makes us such easy victims of the devils' deceit? Certainly, in the unholy city, the philosophers who talked of the gods as their friends had fallen victims to those malignant demons who were unchallenged lords of that city which is doomed to share their eternal suffering. If any proof of this were needed, it is provided by the kind of gods who were worshiped by the sacred or, rather, sacrilegious rites with which they were honored, by the indecent plays in which their sins were re-enacted for the imaginary propitiation of the very gods who have conceived and commanded these filthy celebrations.

Chapter 10

Not even the holy and faithful followers of the one true and supreme God are beyond the reach of demonic trickery

[1] 2 Cor. 11.14.

and temptation in its many forms. Yet our anxiety in this matter is good for us, so long as we inhabit this frail body in this evil world, for it sends us seeking more ardently after that heavenly peace which is to be unshakeable and unending. There, all of our natural endowments—all that the Creator of all natures has given to our nature—will be both good and everlasting, where every wound in the soul is to be healed by wisdom and every weakness of body to be removed by resurrection; where our virtues will be no longer at war with passion or opposition of any kind, but are to have, as the prize of victory, an eternally imperturbable peace. This is what is meant by that consummate beatitude, that limitless perfection, that end that never ends.[1]

On earth we are happy, after a fashion, when we enjoy the peace, little as it is, which a good life brings; but such happiness compared with the beatitude which is our end in eternity is, in point of fact, misery. When we mortal men, living amid the realities of earth, enjoy the utmost peace which life can give us, then it is the part of virtue, if we are living rightly, to make a right use of the goods we are enjoying. When, on the other hand, we do not enjoy this temporal peace, then it is the function of virtue to make a right use of the misfortunes which we are suffering. By genuine Christian virtue we mean here that we refer not only all good things which are being rightly used, and all the right use we are making of blessings and misfortunes, but our very virtue itself to that End in which there will be a peace so good that no peace could be better, a peace so great that a greater would be impossible.

Chapter 11

Thus, we may say of peace what we have said of eternal life—that it is our highest good; more particularly because the holy Psalmist was addressing the City of God (the nature of which I am trying, with so much difficulty, to make clear) when he said: 'Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Sion. Because he hath strengthened the bolts of thy gates,

[1] *Ipsa est enim beatitudo finalis, ipse perfectionis finis, qui consumentem non habet finem.*

he hath blessed thy children within thee. He hath placed peace in thy borders.'[1] For, when the bolts of that city's gates will have been strengthened, none will enter in and none will issue forth. Hence, its borders [*fines*] must be taken to mean that peace which I am trying to show is our final good. Note, too, that Jerusalem, the mystical name which symbolizes this City, means, as I have already mentioned, 'the vision of peace.'

However, the word 'peace' is so often applied to conditions here on earth, where life is not eternal, that it is better, I think, to speak of 'eternal life' rather than of 'peace' as the end or supreme good of the City of God. It is in this sense that St. Paul says: 'But now being made free from sin, and become servants of God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end life everlasting.'[2]

It would be simplest for all concerned if we spoke of 'peace in eternal life,' or of 'eternal' or of 'eternal life in peace,' as the end or supreme good of this City. The trouble with the expression 'eternal life' is that those unfamiliar with the Scriptures might take this phrase to apply also to the eternal loss of the wicked, either because, as philosophers, they accept the immortality of the soul, or even because, as Christians, they know by faith that the punishment of the wicked has no end and, therefore, that they could not be punished forever unless their life were eternal.

The trouble with 'peace' is that, even on the level of earthly and temporal values, nothing that we can talk about, long for, or finally get, is so desirable, so welcome, so good as peace. At any rate, I feel sure that if I linger a little longer on this topic of peace I shall tire very few of my readers. After all, peace is the end of this City which is the theme of this work; besides, peace is so universally loved that its very name falls sweetly on the ear.

Chapter 12

Any man who has examined history and human nature will agree with me that there is no such thing as a human heart

[1] Ps. 146.12–14. . . . *qui posuit fines tuos pacem.*
[2] Rom. 6.22.

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that does not crave for joy and peace. One has only to think of men who are bent on war. What they want is to win, that is to say, their battles are but bridges to glory and to peace. The whole point of victory is to bring opponents to their knees —this done, peace ensues. Peace, then, is the purpose of waging war; and this is true even of men who have a passion for the exercise of military prowess as rulers and commanders.

What, then, men want in war is that it should end in peace. Even while waging a war every man wants peace, whereas no one wants war while he is making peace. And even when men are plotting to disturb the peace, it is merely to fashion a new peace nearer to the heart's desire; it is not because they dislike peace as such. It is not that they love peace less, but that they love their kind of peace more. And even when a secession is successful, its purpose is not achieved unless some sort of peace remains among those who plotted and planned the rebellion. Take even a band of highwaymen. The more violence and impunity they want in disturbing the peace of other men, the more they demand peace among themselves. Take even the case of a robber so powerful that he dispenses with partnership, plans alone, and single-handed robs and kills his victims. Even he maintains some kind of peace, however shadowy, with those he cannot kill and whom he wants to keep in the dark with respect to his crimes. Certainly in his own home he wants to be at peace with his wife and children and any other members of his household. Of course, he is delighted when his every nod is obeyed; if it is not obeyed, he rages, and scolds, and demands peace in his own home and, if need be, gets it by sheer brutality. He knows that the price of peace in domestic society is to have everyone subject in the home to some head—in this instance, to himself.

Suppose, now, a man of this type were offered the allegiance of a larger society, say of a city or of a nation, with the pledge that he would be obeyed as he looks to be obeyed under his own roof. In this case, he would no longer hide himself away in a darksome robber's den; he would show himself off as a high and mighty king—the same man, however, with all of his old greed and criminality. Thus it is that all men want peace in their own society, and all want it in their own

way. When they go to war what they want is to make, if they can, their enemies their own, and then to impose on them the victor's will and call it peace.

Now let us imagine a man like the one that poetry and mythology tell us about, a being so wild and anti-social that it was better to call him half-human than fully a man. He was called Cacus, which is Greek for 'bad.' His kingdom was the solitude of a dreadful cave and it was his extraordinary wickedness that gave him his name. He had no wife to exchange soft words with him; no tiny children to play with; no bigger ones to keep in order; no friend whose company he could enjoy, not even his father, Vulcan—than whom he was at least this much luckier that he had never begotten a monster like himself! There was no one to whom he would give anything, but whenever and from whomsoever he could he would take whatever he wanted and whenever he wanted it.

Nevertheless, all alone as he was in a cave that was always 'warm with the blood of some recent victim,'[1] his sole longing was for peace in which no force would do him harm and no fear disturb his rest. Even with his own body he wanted to be at peace, and he was at ease only when peace was there. Even when he was bidding his members to obey him and was seizing, killing, and devouring his victims, his purpose was peace—the speediest possible peace with his mortal nature, driven by its needs to rebellion, and with his hunger, in sedition, clamoring for the breakup of the union of body and soul. Brutal and wild as he was and brutal and wild as were his ways, what he wanted was to have his life and limbs in peace. So much so that, had he been as willing to be at peace with his neighbors as he was active in procuring peace within himself and in his cave, no one would have called him wicked, nor a monster, nor even sub-human; or, at least, despite the shape of his body and the smoke and fire that issued from his mouth and kept all neighbors at a distance, people would have said that what looked like injustice, greed, and savagery were merely means to self-preservation. The truth is, of course, that there never existed any such being or, at least, none just like

[1] *Aeneid* 8.195.

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the foil the poets' fancy invented to glorify Hercules at the expense of Cacus. As is the case with most poetic inventions, we need not believe that any such creature, human or sub-human, ever lived.

I turn now to real wild beasts (from which category the animal part of the so-called half-beast,[2] Cacus, was borrowed). They, too, keep their own particular genus in a kind of peace. Their males and females meet and mate, foster and feed their young, even though many of them by nature are more solitary than gregarious, like lions, foxes, eagles, and owls —as contrasted with deer, pigeons, starlings, and bees. Even a tigress purrs over her cubs and curbs all her fierceness when she fondles them. Even a falcon which seems so lonely when hovering above its prey mates and builds a nest, helps to hatch the eggs and feed the young, and makes every effort to maintain with the mother falcon a peaceful domestic society.

It is even more so with man. By the very laws of his nature, he seems, so to speak, forced into fellowship and, as far as in him lies, into peace with every man. At any rate, even when wicked men go to war they want peace for their own society and would like, if possible, to make all men members of that society, so that everyone and everything might be at the service of one head. Of course, the only means such a conqueror knows is to have all men so fear or love him that they will accept the peace which he imposes. For, so does pride perversely copy God.[3] Sinful man hates the equality of all men under God and, as though he were God, loves to impose his sovereignty on his fellow men. He hates the peace of God which is just and prefers his own peace which is unjust. However, he is powerless not to love peace of some sort. For, no man's sin is so unnatural as to wipe out all traces whatsoever of human nature. Anyone, then, who is rational enough to prefer right to wrong and order to disorder can see that the kind of peace that is based on injustice, as compared with that which is based on justice, does not deserve the name of peace.

Of course, even disorder, in whole or in part, must come to some kind of terms either with the situation in which it

2 *Aeneid* 8.267: *semiferus.*

finds itself or with the elements out of which it takes its being —otherwise it would have no being at all.

Take a man hanging upside down. Certainly his members are in disorder and the posture of the body as a whole is unnatural. The parts which nature demands should be above and below have become topsy-turvy. Such a position disturbs the peace of the body and is therefore painful. Nevertheless, the soul remains at peace with the body and continues to work for its welfare. Otherwise, the man would not live to feel the agony. And even if the soul is driven from the body by excess of pain, nevertheless, so long as the limbs hold together, some kind of peace among these parts remains. Otherwise, there would be no corpse to go on dangling there. Further, the fact that by gravity the corpse, made out of earth, tends to fall to the ground and pulls at the noose that holds it up proves that there is some order in which it seeks peace, and that its weight is, as it were, crying out for a place where it can rest. Lifeless and insensible though the body now is, it does not renounce that appropriate peace in the order of nature which it either has or seeks to have.

So, too, when a corpse is treated to embalming, to prevent dissolution and decay, there is a kind of peace which holds the parts together while the whole is committed to the earth, its proper resting place, and, therefore, a place with which the body is at peace. If, on the other hand, embalming is omitted and nature is allowed to take its course, the corpse remains a battleground of warring exhalations (that attack our senses with the stench we smell) only until such time as they finally fall in with the elements of this world and, slowly, bit by bit, become indistinguishable in a common peace.

Even afterward, however, the law and ordering of the Creator who is supreme in the whole cosmos and the regulator of its peace are still in control. Even when tiny bacteria spring from the corpse of a larger animal, it is by the same law of the Creator that all these minute bodies serve in peace the organic wholes of which they are parts. Even when the flesh of dead animals is eaten by other animals, there is no change in the universal laws which are meant for the common good of every kind of life, the common good that is effected by bringing like

into peace with like. It makes no difference what disintegrating forces are at work, or what new combinations are made, or even what changes or transformations are effected.

Chapter 13

The peace, then, of the body lies in the ordered equilibrium of all its parts; the peace of the irrational soul, in the balanced adjustment of its appetites; the peace of the reasoning soul, in the harmonious correspondence of conduct and conviction; the peace of body and soul taken together, in the well-ordered life and health of the living whole. Peace between a mortal man and his Maker consists in ordered obedience, guided by faith, under God's eternal law; peace between man and man consists in regulated fellowship. The peace of a home lies in the ordered harmony of authority and obedience between the members of a family living together. The peace of the political community is an ordered harmony of authority and obedience between citizens. The peace of the heavenly City lies in a perfectly ordered and harmonious communion of those who find their joy in God and in one another in God. Peace, in its final sense, is the calm that comes of order.[1] Order is an arrangement of like and unlike things whereby each of them is disposed in its proper place.

This being so, those who are unhappy, in so far as they are unhappy, are not in peace, since they lack the calm of that Order which is beyond every storm; nevertheless, even in their misery they cannot escape from order, since their very misery is related to responsibility and to justice. They do not share with the blessed in their tranquility, but this very separation is the result of the law of order. Moreover, even the miserable can be momentarily free from anxiety and can reach some measure of adjustment to their surroundings and, hence, some tranquility of order and, therefore, some slender peace. However, the reason why they remain unhappy is that, although they *may* be momentarily free from worry and from pain, they are not in a condition where they *must* be free both from worry

1 . . . *pax omnium rerum tranquillitas ordinis.*

and pain.[2] Their condition of misery is worse when such peace as they have is not in harmony with that law which governs the order of nature. Their peace can also be disturbed by pain and in proportion to their pain; yet, some peace will remain, so long as the pain is not too acute and their organism as a whole does not disintegrate.

Notice that there can be life without pain, but no pain without some kind of life. In the same way, there can be peace without any kind of war, but no war that does not suppose some kind of peace. This does not mean that war as war involves peace; but war, in so far as those who wage it or have it waged upon them are beings with organic natures, involves peace—for the simple reason that to be organic means to be ordered and, therefore, to be, in some sense, at peace.

Similarly, there can be a nature without any defect and, even, a nature in which there can be no kind of evil whatever, but there can be no nature completely devoid of good.[3] Even the nature of the Devil, in so far as it is a nature, is not evil; it was perversity—not being true to itself—that made it bad.[4] The Devil did not 'stand in the truth'[5] and, therefore, did not escape the judgment of truth. He did not stand fast in the tranquility of order—nor did he, for all that, elude the power of the Ordainer. The goodness which God gave to his nature does not withdraw him from the justice of God by which that nature is subject to punishment. Yet, even in that punishment, God does not hound the good which He created, but only the evil which the Devil committed. So it is that God does not take back the whole of His original gift. He takes a part and leaves a part; He leaves a nature that can regret what God has taken back. Indeed, the very pain inflicted is evidence of both the good that is lost and the good that is left. For, if there were no good left, there would be no one to lament the good that has been lost.

A man who sins is just that much worse if he rejoices in

2 . . . *etsi in aliqua securitate non dolent, non tamen ibi sunt, ubi securi esse ac dolere debeant.*

3 Cf. above, 11.22; 12.3.

4 . . . *perversitas eam malam fecit.*

5 John 8.44. Note St. Augustine's play on the words *in veritate* (in truth) and *perversitas* (not being true to itself).

the loss of holiness; but one who suffers pain, and does not benefit by it, laments, at least, the loss of his health. Holiness and health are both good things and, because the loss of any good is more a cause for grief than for gladness (unless there be some higher compensation—the soul's holiness, to be sure, is preferable to the body's health), it is more in accordance with nature that a sinner grieve over his punishment than that he rejoice over his offense. Consequently, just as a man's happiness in abandoning the good of wrongdoing betrays his bad will, so his sorrowing for the good he has lost when in pain bears witness to the good of his nature. For, anyone who grieves over the loss of peace to his nature does so out of some remnant of that peace wherewith his nature loves itself. This is what happens—deservedly, too—in eternal punishment. In the midst of their agonies the evil and the godless weep for the loss of their nature's goods, knowing, meanwhile, that God whose great generosity they contemned was perfectly just when He took these goods away.

God, the wise Creator and just Ordainer of all natures, has made the mortal race of man the loveliest of all lovely things on earth. He has given to men good gifts suited to their existence here below. Among these is temporal peace, according to the poor limits of mortal life, in health, security, and human fellowship; and other gifts, too, needed to preserve this peace or regain it, once lost—for instance, the blessings that lie all around us, so perfectly adapted to our senses: daylight, speech, air to breathe, water to drink, everything that goes to feed, clothe, cure, and beautify the body. These good gifts are granted, however, with the perfectly just understanding that whoever uses the goods which are meant for the mortal peace of mortal men, as these goods should be used, will receive more abundant and better goods—nothing less than immortal peace and all that goes with it, namely, the glory and honor of enjoying God and one's neighbor in God everlastingly; but that whoever misuses his gifts on earth will both lose what he has and never receive the better gifts of heaven.

Chapter 14

In the earthly city, then, temporal goods are to be used with a view to the enjoyment of earthly peace, whereas, in the heavenly City, they are used with a view to the enjoyment of eternal peace. Hence, if we were merely unthinking brutes, we would pursue nothing beyond the orderly interrelationship of our bodily part and the appeasing of our appetites, nothing, that is, beyond the comfort of the flesh and plenty of pleasures, so that the peace of body might contribute to peace of the soul. For, if order in the body be lacking, the peace of an irrational soul is checked, since it cannot attain the satisfaction of its appetites. Both of these forms of peace meanwhile subserve that other form of peace which the body and soul enjoy between them, the peace of life and health in good order.

For, just as brutes show that they love the peace or comfort of their bodies by shunning pain, and the peace of their souls by pursuing pleasure to satisfy their appetites, so, too, by running from death, they make clear enough how much they love the peace which keeps body and soul together.

Because, however, man has a rational soul, he makes everything he shares with brutes subserve the peace of his rational soul, so that he first measures things with his mind before he acts, in order to achieve that harmonious correspondence of conduct and conviction which I called the peace of the rational soul. His purpose in desiring not to be vexed with pain, nor disturbed with desire, nor disintegrated by death is that he may learn something profitable and so order his habits and way of life. However, if the infirmity of his human mind is not to bring him in his pursuit of knowledge to some deadly error, he needs divine authority to give secure guidance, and divine help so that he may be unhampered in following the guidance given.

And because, so long as man lives in his mortal body and is a pilgrim far from the Lord, he walks, not by vision, but by faith. Consequently, he refers all peace of body or soul, or their combination, to that higher peace which unites a mortal man with the immortal God and which I defined as 'ordered obedience guided by faith, under God's eternal law.'

Meanwhile, God teaches him two chief commandments, the love of God and the love of neighbor. In these precepts man finds three beings to love, namely, God, himself, and his fellow man, and knows that he is not wrong in loving himself so long as he loves God. As a result, he must help his neighbor (whom he is obliged to love as himself) to love God. Thus, he must help his wife, children, servants, and all others whom he can influence. He must wish, moreover, to be similarly helped by his fellow man, in case he himself needs such assistance. Out of all this love he will arrive at peace, as much as in him lies, with every man—at that human peace which is regulated fellowship. Right order here means, first, that he harm no one, and, second, that he help whomever he can. His fundamental duty is to look out for his own home, for both by natural and human law he has easier and readier access to their requirements.

St. Paul says: 'But if any does not take care of his own, and especially of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.'[1] From this care arises that peace of the home which lies in the harmonious interplay of authority and obedience among those who live there. For, those who have the care of the others give the orders—a man to his wife, parents to their children, masters to their servants. And those who are cared for must obey—wives their husbands, children their parents, servants their masters. In the home of a religious man, however, of a man living by faith and as yet a wayfarer from the heavenly City, those who command serve those whom they appear to rule—because, of course, they do not command out of lust to domineer, but out of a sense of duty—not out of pride like princes but out of solicitude like parents.[2]

Chapter 15

This family arrangement is what nature prescribes, and what God intended in creating man: 'let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle, over all the wild animals and every creature that crawls on the

[1] 1 Tim. 5.8.
[2] . . . *nec principandi superbia, sed providendi misericordia.*

earth.'[1] God wanted rational man, made to His image, to have no dominion except over irrational nature. He meant no man, therefore, to have dominion over man, but only man over beast. So it fell out that those who were holy in primitive times became shepherds over sheep rather than monarchs over men, because God wishes in this way to teach us that the normal hierarchy of creatures is different from that which punishment for sin has made imperative. For, when subjection came, it was merely a condition deservedly imposed on sinful man. So, in Scripture, there is no mention of the word 'servant' until holy Noe used it in connection with the curse on his son's wrongdoing.[2] It is a designation that is not natural, but one that was deserved because of sin.

The Latin word for 'slave' is *servus* and it is said that this word is derived from the fact that those who, by right of conquest, could have been killed were sometimes kept and guarded, *servabantur*, by their captors and so became slaves and were called *servi*. Now, such a condition of servitude could only have arisen as a result of sin, since whenever a just war is waged the opposing side must be in the wrong, and every victory, even when won by wicked men, is a divine judgment to humble the conquered and to reform or punish their sin. To this truth Daniel, the great man of God, bore witness. When he was languishing in the Babylonian captivity he confessed to God his sins and those of his people and avowed, with pious repentance, that these sins were the cause of the captivity.[3] It is clear, then, that sin is the primary cause of servitude, in the sense of a social status in which one man is compelled to be subjected to another man. Nor does this befall a man, save by the decree of God, who is never unjust and who knows how to impose appropriate punishments on different sinners.

Our heavenly Master says: 'everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin.'[4] So it happens that holy people are sometimes enslaved to wicked masters who are, in turn, themselves slaves. For, 'by whatever a man is overcome, of this also he is a slave.'[5] Surely it is better to be the slave of a man than the slave of

[1] Gen. 1.26.
[2] Gen. 9.25, 'a servant of servants shall he be.'
[3] Dan. 9.5.
[4] John 8.34.
[5] 2 Pet. 2.19.

cf. MKL: 'no man loses his freedom'

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passion as when, to take but one example, the lust for lordship raises such havoc in the hearts of men. Such, then, as men now are, is the order of peace. Some are in subjection to others, and, while humility helps those who serve, pride harms those in power. But, as men once were, when their nature was as God created it, no man was a slave either to man or to sin. However, slavery is now penal in character and planned by that law which commands the preservation of the natural order and forbids its disturbance. If no crime had ever been perpetrated against this law, there would be no crime to repress with the penalty of enslavement.

It is with this in mind that St. Paul goes so far as to admonish slaves to obey their masters and to serve them so sincerely and with such good will[6] that, if there is no chance of manumission, they may make their slavery a kind of freedom by serving with love and loyalty, free from fear and feigning,[7] until injustice becomes a thing of the past and every human sovereignty and power is done away with, so that God may be all in all.[8]

Chapter 16

Our holy Fathers in the faith, to be sure, had slaves, but in the regulation of domestic peace it was only in matters of temporal importance that they distinguished the position of their children from the status of their servants. So far as concerns the worship of God—from whom all must hope for eternal blessings—they had like loving care for all the household without exception. This was what nature demanded, and it was from this kind of behavior that there grew the designation 'father of the family,' which is so widely accepted that even wicked and domineering men love to be so called.

Those who are true fathers are as solicitous for everyone in their households as for their own children to worship and to be worthy of God. They hope and yearn for all to arrive in that heavenly home where there will be no further need of

6 Eph. 6.5,7.
7 . . . *non timore subdolo, sed fideli dilectione serviendo.*
8 1 Cor. 15.24,28.

giving orders to other human beings, because there will be no longer any duty to help those who are happy in immortal life. In the meantime, fathers ought to look upon their duty to command as harder than the duty of slaves to obey.

Meanwhile, in case anyone in the home behaves contrary to its peace, he is disciplined by words or whipping[1] or other kind of punishment lawful and licit in human society, and for his own good, to readjust him to the peace he has abandoned. For, there is no more benevolence and helpfulness in bringing about the loss of a greater good than there is innocence and compassion in allowing a culprit to go from bad to worse. It is the duty of a blameless person not just to do no wrong, but to keep others from wrongdoing and to punish it when done, so that the one punished may be improved by the experience and others be warned by the example.

Now, since every home should be a beginning or fragmentary constituent of a civil community, and every beginning related to some specific end, and every part to the whole of which it is a part, it ought to follow that domestic peace has a relation to political peace. In other words, the ordered harmony of authority and obedience between those who live together has a relation to the ordered harmony of authority and obedience between those who live in a city. This explains why a father must apply certain regulations of civil law to the governance of his home, so as to make it accord with the peace of the whole community.

Chapter 17

While the homes of unbelieving men are intent upon acquiring temporal peace out of the possessions and comforts of this temporal life, the families which live according to faith look ahead to the good things of heaven promised as imperishable, and use material and temporal goods in the spirit of pilgrims, not as snares or obstructions to block their way to God, but simply as helps to ease and never to increase the burdens of this corruptible body which weighs down the soul. Both types of homes and their masters have this in common, that

1 . . . *verbo seu verbere.*

they must use things essential to this mortal life. But the respective purposes to which they put them are characteristic and very different.

So, too, the earthly city which does not live by faith seeks only an earthly peace, and limits the goal of its peace, of its harmony of authority and obedience among its citizens, to the voluntary and collective attainment of objectives necessary to mortal existence. The heavenly City, meanwhile—or, rather, that part that is on pilgrimage in mortal life and lives by faith—must use this earthly peace until such time as our mortality which needs such peace has passed away. As a consequence, so long as her life in the earthly city is that of a captive and an alien (although she has the promise of ultimate delivery and the gift of the Spirit as a pledge), she has no hesitation about keeping in step with the civil law which governs matters pertaining to our existence here below. For, as mortal life is the same for all, there ought to be common cause between the two cities in what concerns our purely human living.[1]

Now comes the difficulty. The city of this world, to begin with, has had certain 'wise men' of its own mold, whom true religion must reject, because either out of their own daydreaming or out of demonic deception these wise men came to believe that a multiplicity of divinities was allied with human life, with different duties, in some strange arrangement, and different assignments: this one over the body, that one over the mind; in the body itself, one over the head, another over the neck, still others, one for each bodily part; in the mind, one over the intelligence, another over learning, another over temper, another over desire; in the realities, related to life, that lie about us, one over flocks and one over wheat, one over wine, one over oil, and another over forests, one over currency, another over navigation, and still another over warfare and victory, one over marriage, a different one over fecundity and childbirth, so on and so on.

The heavenly City, on the contrary, knows and, by religious faith, believes that it must adore one God alone and serve Him with that complete dedication which the Greeks call *latreía*

[1] . . . *ut, quoniam communis est ipsa mortalitas, servetur in rebus ad eam pertinentibus inter civitatem utramque concordia.*

and which belongs to Him alone. As a result, she has been unable to share with the earthly city a common religious legislation, and has had no choice but to dissent on this score and so to become a nuisance to those who think otherwise. Hence, she has had to feel the weight of their anger, hatred, and violence, save in those instances when, by sheer numbers and God's help, which never fails, she has been able to scare off her opponents.

So long, then, as the heavenly City is wayfaring on earth, she invites citizens from all nations and all tongues, and unites them into a single pilgrim band. She takes no issue with that diversity of customs, laws, and traditions whereby human peace is sought and maintained. Instead of nullifying or tearing down, she preserves and appropriates whatever in the diversities of divers races is aimed at one and the same objective of human peace, provided only that they do not stand in the way of the faith and worship of the one supreme and true God.

Thus, the heavenly City, so long as it is wayfaring on earth, not only makes use of earthly peace but fosters and actively pursues along with other human beings a common platform in regard to all that concerns our purely human life and does not interfere with faith and worship.[2] Of course, though, the City of God subordinates this earthly peace to that of heaven. For this is not merely true peace, but, strictly speaking, for any rational creature, the only real peace, since it is, as I said, 'the perfectly ordered and harmonious communion of those who find their joy in God and in one another in God.'

When this peace is reached, man will be no longer haunted by death, but plainly and perpetually endowed with life,[3] nor will his body, which now wastes away and weighs down the soul, be any longer animal, but spiritual, in need of nothing, and completely under the control of our will.

This peace the pilgrim City already possesses by faith and it lives holily and according to this faith so long as, to attain its

[2] . . . *et de rebus ad mortalem hominum naturam pertinentibus humanarum voluntatum compositionem, quantum salva pietate ac religione conceditur, tuetur adque adpetit.*

[3] . . . *non erit vita mortalis, sed plane certeque vitalis.*

heavenly completion, it refers every good act done for God or for his fellow man. I say 'fellow man' because, of course, any community life must emphasize social relationships.

. . .

[skipping chaps. 18–27]

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Chapter 28

of the City of God is an unending wretchedness that is called 'the second death,' because neither the soul, cut off from the life of God, nor the body, pounded by perpetual pain, can there be said to live at all. And what will make that second death so hard to bear is that there will be no death to end it.

Now, since unhappiness is the reverse of happiness, death of life, and war of peace, one may reasonably ask: If peace is praised and proclaimed as the highest good, what kind of warfare are we to think of as the highest evil? If this inquirer will reflect, he will realize that what is hurtful and destructive in warfare is mutual clash and conflict, and, hence, that no one can imagine a war more unbearably bitter than one in which the will and passions are at such odds that neither can ever win the victory, and in which violent pain and the body's very nature will so clash that neither will ever yield. When this conflict occurs on earth, either pain wins and death puts an end to all feeling, or nature wins and health removes the pain. But, in hell, pain permanently afflicts and nature continues to feel it, for neither ever comes to term, since the punishment must never end.

However, it is through the last judgment that good men achieve that highest good (which all should seek) and evil men that highest evil (which all should shun), and so, as God helps me, I shall discuss that judgment in the Book that comes next.

H. Thurman, Jesus and the Disinherited (Boston, 1976)

CHAPTER THREE

Deception

DECEPTION is perhaps the oldest of all the techniques by which the weak have protected themselves against the strong. Through the ages, at all stages of sentient activity, the weak have survived by fooling the strong.

The techniques of deception seem to be a part of the nervous-reflex action of the organism. The cuttlefish, when attacked, will release some of the fluid from his sepia bag, making the water all around him murky; in the midst of the cloudy water he confuses his attacker and makes his escape. Almost any hunter of birds has seen the mother simulate a broken wing so as to attract attention to herself and thereby save the life of her young. As a boy I have seen the shadow of the hawk on the grassy meadow where I lay resting underneath a shade tree. Consider the behavior of the birds a few feet away as they see the shadow. I have seen them take little feet full of dried grass or leaves, turn an easy half somersault, and play dead. The hawk blinks his eyes, thinks he has had an optical illusion, and goes on

to find birds that do not know enough to pretend to be dead. We often played a game of hide-and-seek in which the refrain was, "Lay low, slick duck, the hawk's around." Natural selection has finally resulted in giving to various animals neutral colors or blending colors so that they fade into the landscape and thus protect themselves from destruction by deceiving the enemy.

All little children well know this technique. They know that they cannot cope with the parental will on equal terms. Therefore, in order to carry on their own purposes, they work all kinds of simple—and not so simple—schemes for making the parents do the children's will as if it were their own. Until the teacher catches on, it is a favorite device of students. When a particular lesson has not been studied, or there is danger that the teacher will cover territory that extends beyond the day's preparation, some apparently innocent question is asked about the teacher's prejudice, pet interest, or particular concern. Once the teacher is discussing that particular point, there is nothing more to fear; for before he comes to the end of his talk, the bell will ring and all will be saved.

It is an ancient device that a man-dominated social order has forced upon women, even down to latest times. Olive Schreiner spent much of her energy attacking this form of deception by which the moral life of women was bound. Much of the constant agitation for an equal-rights amendment to the Constitution grows out of recognition of the morally degrading aspects of deception and dishonesty that enter into the relationship between men and women.

When the children of Israel were in captivity in Babylon, the prophet Ezekiel could not give words of comfort and guidance by direct and overt statement. If he had, he would not have lasted very long, and the result would have been a great loss to his people and a tightening of the bonds that held them. He would have been executed as a revolutionary in short order and all religious freedom would have been curtailed. What did the prophet do? He resorted to a form of deception. He put words in the mouth of an old king of Tyre that did not come from him at all, but from Nebuchadrezzar. It was Nebuchadrezzar who had said, "I am a God." He used what we would call now "double talk." But the Jews understood, even though the Babylonian "secret service" was helpless because he was not openly talking against the state.

In a certain southern city a blind Negro had been killed by a policeman. Feeling ran very high. The Negroes were not permitted to have any kind of eulogy or sermon at the funeral service. There was fear of rioting. Nevertheless, the funeral was held, with policemen very much in evidence. There was no sermon, but there was a central prayer. In the prayer the minister told God all that he would have said to the people had he not been under very rigid surveillance. The officers could do nothing, for the minister was not addressing the people; he was talking to his God. How tragically sordid! But it is the old, old method by which the weak have survived through the years.

One of the oldest of the Negro spirituals deals quite

interestingly with this technique. The setting is very dramatic.

The slave had often heard his master's minister talk about heaven, the final abode of the righteous. Naturally the master regarded himself as fitting into the category. On the other hand, the slave knew that he too was going to heaven. He reasoned, "There must be two heavens—no, this cannot be true, because there is only one God. God cannot possibly be divided in this way. I have it! I am having my hell now. When I die, I shall have my heaven. The master's having his heaven now. When he dies, he will have his hell." The next day, chopping cotton beneath the torrid skies, the slave said to his mate:

> I got shoes,
> You got shoes,
> All God's children got shoes.
> When we get to heaven
> We're goin' to put on our shoes
> An' shout all over God's heaven,
> Heaven! Heaven!

Then, looking up to the big house where the master lived, he said:

> Everybody talkin' 'bout heaven
> Ain't goin' there!

Instances could be multiplied from all over the world, and from as far back in human history as records have been kept. It is an old, old defense of the weak against the strong.

The question of deception is not academic, but profoundly ethical and spiritual, going to the very heart of all human relations. For it raises the issue of honesty, integrity, and the consequences thereof over against duplicity and deception and the attendant consequences. Does the fact that a particular course of action jeopardizes a man's life relieve him of the necessity for following that course of action? Are there circumstances under which the ethical question is irrelevant, beside the point? If so, where does one draw the line? Is there a fine distinction between literal honesty and honesty in spirit and intent? Or is truthtelling largely a matter of timing? Are there times when to tell the truth is to be false to the truth that is in you? These questions and many related ones will not be downed. For the disinherited they have to do with the very heart of survival.

It may be argued that a man who places so high a price upon physical existence and survival that he is willing to perjure his own soul has a false, or at least an inadequate, sense of values. "What shall a man give in exchange for his own soul?" Jesus asks. The physical existence of a man makes of him the custodian, the keeper, of the fragment of life which is his. He lives constantly under the necessity to have life fulfill itself. Should he take chances, even in behalf of the values of a kind other than those which have to do with his physical survival? With reference to the question of deception the disinherited are faced with three basic alternatives.

The first alternative is to accept the apparent fact that, one's situation being what it is, there is no sensible choice

offered. The individual is disadvantaged because he is not a member of the "party in power," the dominant, controlling group. His word has no value anyway. In any contest he is defeated before he starts. He cannot meet his opponent on equal terms, because there is no basis of equality that exists between the weak and the strong. The only thing that counts is victory—or any level on which victory can be achieved. There can be no question of honesty in dealing with each other, for there is no sense of community. Such a mood takes for granted a facile insincerity.

The fact is, in any great struggle between groups in which the major control of the situation is on one side, the ethical question tends to become merely academic. The advantaged group assumes that they are going to be fooled, if it is possible; there is no expectation of honesty and sincerity. They know that every conceivable device will be used to render ineffective the advantage which they have inherited in their position as the strong. The pattern of deception by which the weak are deprived of their civic, economic, political, and social rights without its appearing that they are so deprived is a matter of continuous and tragic amazement. The pattern of deception by which the weak circumvent the strong and manage to secure some of their political, economic, and social rights is a matter of continuous degradation. A vast conspiracy of silence covers all these maneuvers as the groups come into contact with each other, and the question of morality is not permitted to invade it.

The tragic consequences of the alternative that there is *no* alternative are not far to seek. In the first place, it tends to destroy whatever sense of ethical values the individual possesses. It is a simple fact of psychology that if a man calls a lie the truth, he tampers dangerously with his value judgments. Jesus called attention to that fact in one of his most revealing utterances. His mother, in an attempt to excuse him from the harsh judgment of his enemies, said that he was a little out of his mind—not terribly crazy, but just a little off-balance. Those who did not like him said that he was all right with regard to his mind, but that he was full of the devil, and that it was by the power of the devil that he was casting out devils. Jesus, hearing the discussion, said that these men did not talk good sense: "A house . . . divided against itself . . . cannot stand." He suggested that if they continued saying that he was casting out devils by the power of the devil—and they knew that such was not the case—they would commit the unpardonable sin. That is to say, if a man continues to call a good thing bad, he will eventually lose his sense of moral distinctions.

Is this always the result? Is it not possible to quarantine a certain kind of deception so that it will not affect the rest of one's life? May not the underprivileged do with deception as it relates to his soul what the human body does with tubercle bacilli? The body seems unable to destroy the bacilli, so nature builds a prison for them, walls them in with a thick fibrosis so that their toxin cannot escape from the lungs into the blood stream. As long as the victim exercises care in the matter of rest, work, and diet, normal

activities may be pursued without harm. Is deception a comparable technique of survival, the fibrosis that protects the life from poison in its total outlook or in its other relations? Or, to change the figure, may not deception be regarded under some circumstances as a kind of blind spot that is functional in a limited area of experience? No! Such questions are merely attempts to rationalize one's way out of a critical difficulty.

The penalty of deception is to *become* a deception, with all sense of moral discrimination vitiated. A man who lies habitually becomes a lie, and it is increasingly impossible for him to know when he is lying and when he is not. In other words, the moral mercury of life is reduced to zero. Shakespeare has immortalized this aspect of character in his drama of Macbeth. Macbeth has a high sense of destiny, which is deeply underscored by the testimony of the witches. This is communicated to his wife, who takes it to head and to heart. By a series of liquidations their friends disappear and their enemies multiply, until Macbeth is king and his wife is queen. Together they swim across Scotland in seas of blood, tying laurels on their brows with other people's lives, heartstrings, and hopes. Then fatal things begin happening to them. Lady Macbeth walks in her sleep, trying in vain to wash blood from her hands. But the blood is not on her hands; it is on her soul. Macbeth becomes a victim of terrible visions and he cries:

> Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more!
> Macbeth does murder sleep!" The innocent sleep.

One day, at the most crucial point in Macbeth's life, an attendant announces to him that Lady Macbeth is dead. His reply reveals, in one agonizing flash, the death of values that has taken place in him:

> She should have died hereafter;
> There would have been a time for such a word.
> To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
> Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
> To the last syllable of recorded time,
> And all of our yesterdays have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
> Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
> And then is heard no more: it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing.

Life is only a tale told by a fool, having no meaning because deception has wiped out all moral distinctions.

The second alternative is a possible derivation from the first one. The underprivileged may decide to juggle the various areas of compromise, on the assumption that the moral quality of compromise operates in an ascending-descending scale. According to this argument, not all issues are equal in significance nor in consequence; it may be that some compromises take on the aspect of inevitability because of circumstances over which the individual has no control. It is true that we are often bound by a network of social relations that operate upon us without being particularly affected by us. We are all affected by forces,

social and natural, that in some measure determine our behavior without our being able to bring to bear upon them our private will, however great or righteous it may be.

All over the world there are millions of people who are condemned by the powerful in their society to live in ghettos. The choice seems to be the ghetto or suicide. But such a conclusion may be hasty and ill-advised; it may be the counsel of the kind of fear we discussed previously, or it may be the decision of cowardice. For all practical purposes there are great numbers of people who have decided to *live*, and to compromise on the matter of place and conditions. Further, we may say that those who have power know that the decision will be to live, and have counted on it. They are prepared to deal ruthlessly with any form of effective protest, because effective protest upsets the *status quo*. Life, then, becomes a grim game of wits, and the stakes are one's physical existence.

The term "compromise" then takes on a very special and highly differentiated meaning. It is less positive than ordinary deception, which may be regarded as deliberate strategy. If the assumption is that survival with some measure of freedom is at stake, then compromise is defined in terms of the actions which involve one's life continuation. It is a matter of behavior patterns. Many obvious interferences with freedom are ignored completely. Many insults are cast aside as of no consequence. One does battle only when not to do battle is to be vanquished without the recognition that comes from doing battle. To the morally sensitive person the whole business is sordid and degrading.

It is safe to say that the common attitude taken toward these deceptions that have to do with survival is that they are amoral. The moral question is never raised. To raise such a question is regarded as sheer stupidity. The behavior involved is in the same category as seeking and getting food or providing shelter for oneself. It belongs in the general classification of simple survival behavior. Obviously this is the reason why it is so difficult to make a moral appeal, either to the dominant group or to the disinherited, in order to bring about a change in the basic relation between them. For better or for worse, according to this aspect of our analysis, there is no point at which mere moral appeal makes sense. Whatever moral sensitiveness to the situation was present at some stage in the life of the individual has long since been atrophied, due to betrayal, suffering, or frustration.

This alternative, then, must be discussed from the point of view of the observer rather than from that of the victim. The rank and file of the oppressed do not formally raise the questions involved in their behavior. Specifically, the applicability of religion is restricted to those areas in which religious considerations commend themselves as being reasonable. A profound piece of surgery has to take place in the very psyche of the disinherited before the great claim of the religion of Jesus can be presented. The great stretches of barren places in the soul must be revitalized, brought to life, before they can be challenged. Tremendous skill and power must be exercised to show to the disinherited the awful results of the role of negative deception into which

their lives have been cast. How to do this is perhaps the greatest challenge that the religion of Jesus faces in modern life.

Mere preaching is not enough. What are words, however sacred and powerful, in the presence of the grim facts of the daily struggle to survive? Any attempt to deal with this situation on a basis of values that disregard the struggle for survival appears to be in itself a compromise with life. It is only when people live in an environment in which they are not required to exert supreme effort into just keeping alive that they seem to be able to select ends besides those of mere physical survival. On the subsistence level, values are interpreted in terms of their bearing upon the one major concern of all activity—not being killed. This is really the form that the dilemma takes. It is not solely a question of keeping the body alive; it is rather how not to be killed. *Not to be killed* becomes the great end, and morality takes its meaning from that center. Until that center is shifted, nothing real can be accomplished. It is the uncanny and perhaps unwitting recognition of this fact that causes those in power to keep the disinherited from participation in meaningful social process. For if the disinherited get such a new center as patriotism, for instance—liberty within the framework of a sense of country or nation—then the aim of *not being killed* is swallowed up by a larger and more transcendent goal. Above all else the disinherited must not have any stake in the social order; they must be made to feel that they are alien, that it is a great boon to be allowed to remain alive, not be extermi-

nated. This was the psychology of the Nazis; it grew out of their theory of the state and the place given the Hebrew people in their ideology. Such is also the attitude of the Ku Klux Klan toward Negroes.

Even within the disinherited group itself artificial and exaggerated emphasis upon not being killed tends to cheapen life. That is to say, the fact that the lives of the disinherited are lightly held by the dominant group tends to create the same attitude among them toward each other.

We come now to the third alternative—a complete and devastating sincerity. I have in my possession a copy of a letter from Mahatma Gandhi to Muriel Lester. The letter says in part: "Speak the truth, without fear and without exception, and see everyone whose work is related to your purpose. You are in God's work, so you need not fear man's scorn. If they listen to your requests and grant them, you will be satisfied. If they reject them, then you must make their rejection your strength." The acceptance of this alternative is to be simply, directly truthful, whatever may be the cost in life, limb, or security. For the individual who accepts this, there may be quick and speedy judgment with attendant loss. But if the number increases and the movement spreads, the vindication of the truth would follow in the wake. There must always be the confidence that the effect of truthfulness can be realized in the mind of the oppressor as well as the oppressed. There is no substitute for such a faith.

Emphasis upon an unwavering sincerity points up at once the major challenge of Jesus to the disinherited and

the power of his most revolutionary appeal. "Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, . . . but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil." What does he mean? Does he mean that factors having to do with physical survival are trivial or of no consequence? Is this emphasis merely the counsel of suicide? It seems inescapable that either Jesus was infinitely more realistic than we dare imagine or, taking his words at their face value, he is talking as one who has no understanding of the basic facts of life that touch this central problem. From our analysis of the life of Jesus it seems clear that it was from within the framework of great social pressures upon him and his group that he taught and lived to the very end. It is reasonable to assume, then, that he speaks out of understanding and that his words cannot be lightly disregarded, however devastating they may seem.

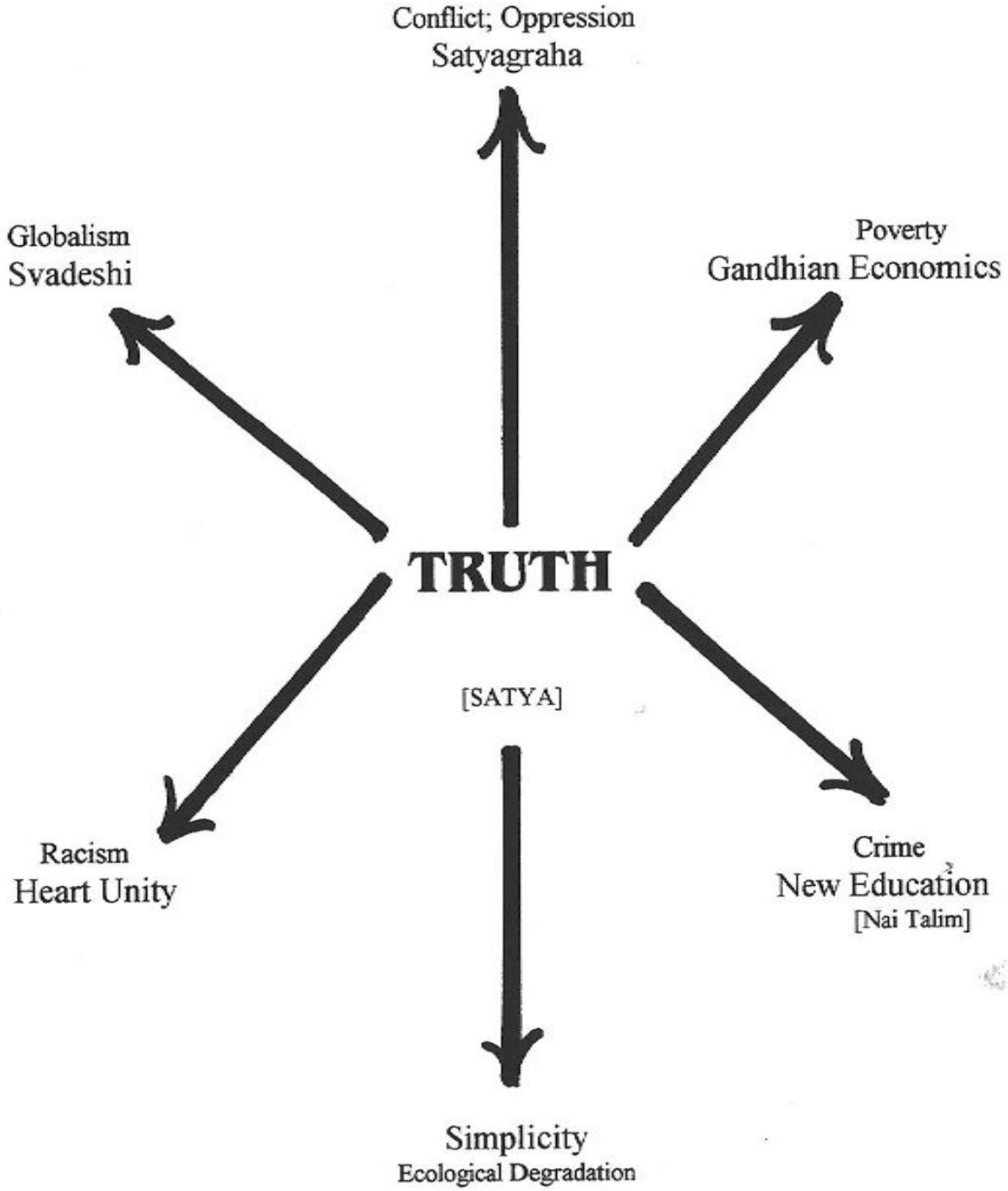
It may be argued that the insistence upon complete sincerity has to do only with man's relation to God, not with man's relation to man. To what does such a position lead? Unwavering sincerity says that man should always recognize the fact that he lives always in the presence of God, always under the divine scrutiny, and that there is no really significant living for a man, whatever may be his status, until he has turned and faced the divine scrutiny. Here all men stand stripped to the literal substance of themselves, without disguise, without pretension, without *seeming* whatsoever. No man can fool God. From him nothing is hidden.

Thou compassest my path and my lying down,
and art acquainted with all my ways.
For there is not a word in my tongue,
but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. . . .
Whither shall I go from thy spirit?
or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:
if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. . . .
If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me;
even the night shall be light about me.
Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee;
but the night shineth as the day:
the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.

Was it against the background of his heritage and his religious faith in the 139th psalm that Jesus assumed his great ethical imperative? This seems to be conclusively brought out in his treatment of the climax of human history. The Judge is on his throne; the sheep are on the right, the goats on the left. The Judge speaks: "I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: . . . sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." The climax of human history is interpreted as a time when the inner significance of men's deeds would be revealed to them. But here a new note is introduced. Sincerity in human relations is equal to, and the same as, sincerity to God. If we accept this explanation as a clue to Jesus' meaning, we come upon the stark fact that the insistence of Jesus upon genuineness is absolute; man's relation to man and man's relation to God are one relation.

A death blow is struck to hypocrisy. One of the major

defense mechanisms of the disinherited is taken away from them. What does Jesus give them in its place? What does he substitute for hypocrisy? Sincerity. But is sincerity a mechanism of defense against the strong? The answer is No. Something more significant takes place. In the presence of an overwhelming sincerity on the part of the disinherited, the dominant themselves are caught with no defense, with the edge taken away from the sense of prerogative and from the status upon which the impregnability of their position rests. They are thrown back upon themselves for their rating. The experience of power has no meaning aside from the other-than-self reference which sustains it. If the position of ascendancy is not acknowledged tacitly and actively by those over whom the ascendancy is exercised, then it falls flat. Hypocrisy on the part of the disinherited in dealing with the dominant group is a tribute yielded by those who are weak. But if this attitude is lacking, or is supplanted by a simple sincerity and genuineness, then it follows that advantage due to the accident of birth or position is reduced to zero. Instead of relation between the weak and the strong there is merely a relationship between human beings. A man is a man, no more, no less. The awareness of this fact marks the supreme moment of human dignity.


Conflict; Oppression
Satyagraha
Globalism
Svadeshi
Poverty
Gandhian Economics
TRUTH
[SATYA]
Racism
Heart Unity
Crime
New Education
[Nai Talim]
Simplicity
Ecological Degradation

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Principles of Nonviolence

1) Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people.
- It is active nonviolent resistance to evil.
- It is assertive spiritually, mentally and emotionally.

2) Nonviolence seeks to win friendship and understanding.
- The end result of nonviolence is redemption and reconciliation.
- The purpose of nonviolence is the creation of the Beloved Community.

3) Nonviolence seeks to defeat injustice, not people.
- Nonviolence holds that evil doers are also victims.
- The nonviolent resister seeks to defeat evil, not people.

4) Nonviolence holds that voluntary suffering can educate and transform.
- Nonviolence accepts suffering without retaliation.
- Nonviolence accepts violence if necessary, but will never inflict it.
- Nonviolence willingly accepts the consequences of its acts.
- Unearned voluntary suffering is redemptive and has tremendous educational and transforming possibilities.
- Voluntary suffering can have the power to convert the enemy when reason fails.

5) Nonviolence chooses love instead of hate.
- Nonviolence resists violence of the spirit as well as the body.
- Nonviolent love gives willingly, even knowing that it might face hostility.
- Nonviolent love is active, not passive.
- Nonviolent love is unending in its ability to forgive in order to restore community.
- Nonviolent love does not sink to the level of the hater.
- Love for the enemy is how we demonstrate love for ourselves.
- Love restores community and resists injustice.
- Nonviolence recognizes the fact that all life is interrelated.

6) Nonviolence believes that the universe is on the side of justice.
- The nonviolent resister has deep faith that justice will eventually win.
- Nonviolence believes that God is a God of justice and love.

This summary of M.L. King, Jr.'s principles was adapted by the Fellowship of Reconciliation from King's book Stride Toward Freedom (New York: Harper & Row, 1958).