

TEXT 1 KAPLAN ON THE DIARY.

“ In my frustration, I turn to writing in this journal as the only means left to me to externalize and render transferable that aspect of my being I experience as my soul ,self or reason” (May 14, 1931)

TEXT 2. REACTION TO THE EXCOMMUNICATION.

What a shattering effect this exhibition of moral degeneracy on the part of men who call themselves rabbis has upon me I can hardly express. ...truth to tell, i experience neither the sufferings nor the consolations of a martyr. (June 16, 1945)

TEXT 3. FINAL PHASE OF THE BAT MITZVAH.

This morning the SAJ inaugurated in its religious services the practice of calling up women to the Torah. I had all the time been in favor of this innovation, but it has taken all these years of effort on Ira [Eisenstein]'s part finally to have the congregation pass on it. . . . Of those called up this morning—to the reading of the last third of the torah portion—four were women. Judith was called and Lena [kaplan's wife]. Lena was in a state of nerves last night for fear that she would forget the benediction or not chant it properly.... We had an unusually large attendance at the services. (December 2, 1950).

TEXT 4. THE SOLDIER'S EXPERIENCE

There is the war of maps and logistics, of campaigns, of ballistics, armies, divisions, and regiments—and that is General Marshall's war. Then there is the war of homesick, weary, funny, violent, common men who wash their socks in their helmets, complain about the food, whistle at Arab girls—or any girls, for that matter—and lug themselves through as dirty a business as the world has ever seen and do it with humor, dignity, and courage—and that is “Ernie Pyle's war.” (January 25, 1945)

TEXT 5 ISRAEL COMES INTO BEING.

“ In fifteen minutes from now a new Jewish state will officially come into being. The mental and physical agonies of birth are beyond those suffered by any people known to history. May God grant that it will not be stillborn...”

..

“ No words of my own could possibly express any better the feelings that storm in my heart at this moment. ...the new state has been parented by the U.N. with the U.S. as its father and the soviet republic as its mother.....]” He goes on.

“This is 5:30 pm. Judith and Ira just phoned telling me Truman issued a statement at 6:01 pm (N.Y.. time.) recognizing the Jewish state. It is simply impossible for me to describe how I feel at this moment. Again and again. *Baruch she'heheyanu ve'keyemanu la' zman ha'zeh.* [heb: blessed [are you o lord] who has kept us alive and sustained us to this time.]” (May 14, 1948)

TEXT 6. THE INDIVIDUAL AND SALVATION

In the yearning for salvation, for life's worthwhileness, for truth, goodness and beauty for their own sake, for freedom, justice and peace in society, man experiences something supra-human or supra-natural. One who experiences that yearning in himself cannot be so vain or unreasonable as to believe that he is alone in the possession of such yearning. The most difficult step in achieving faith in God is thus the first one of achieving faith in oneself. The rest follows easily (July 24, 1940) (at Long Branch New Jersey.)

TEXT 7. SALVATION ON ONE FOOT.

Salvation= life abundant = security and growth=living up to one's potentialities and enjoying what life has to offer=vitality and expansiveness=enjoyment and achievement. (June 2, 1943)

TEXT 8 KAPLAN DOUBTS HIMSELF.

I cant do what I tell others to do

From the apparently little effect which all these exalted ideas about salvation seem to have upon me personally considering how far I am from doing the best, etc.,--I began to suspect the value of those ideas. But then I recalled two facts which reconciled me to the paradox of urging something upon others which has but little effect on myself. First, the fact clearly pointed out by Aristotle that a desirable state of character cannot be attained through knowledge merely. It calls for long and arduous habituation, and not having being habituated to live my ideas I am condemned to keep on talking about them. (July 20, 1934)

TEXT 9 NOT BY POWER.

The contribution which Judaism has made and should continue to make to democracy and the American way of life is best summarized in the motto enunciated by the prophet Zachariah. [4:6] "Not by might nor by power but by my Spirit saith the Lord of Hosts," and to add the supplement of Hillel's famous summary of Judaism, "the rest is commentary, go and learn."

The importance of Zachariah's motto is that it furnishes the key to that inner freedom without which democracy is merely a hollow form. "Not by might nor by power but by my spirit" sets forth the mental attitude which is a prerequisite to the building of a world on the foundations of peace. Before we can have democracy in action, we must will it. That calls for a sense of values which are certain to direct our will toward democracy and impel us to live by it and give our all in defense of it is that implied in the prophet's motto: Not by might nor by power &c.

(Thurs.Dec.24/42)

TEXT 10

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