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## JEWISH LAW IN EVERYDAY LIFE NOWADAYS

by David Baram

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Jewish law is clear and to the point. The rich have to provide for those in need.

When the rich found ways of bypassing the law which requires them to support those in need, then the community found ways of collecting money from those who were prepared to give and of distributing it among those in need.

But then some rabbis interpreted the law as meaning that the rich should also benefit when needing help, and later laid down that those who benefit should be maintained in the style to which they are accustomed: the rich being treated to old wine and good meat, the poor to the meager fare they are used to.

So we collect from world Jewry, many of whom are suffering from some degree of antisemitism, many of whom are struggling for existence, for the benefit of Jews in greater need. But money so collected from the people is used in different ways for the benefit of those who are already well off, for the benefit of those who are already rich.

Donated funds have been and are being regularly misused in this way, involving new immigrants as well as many Israelis who happen to have the right connections. This has gone on for many years and the amounts involved are vast. {1}

The religious hierarchy offers no real guidance to the people because its members have been blinded by what they have been taught by those who were themselves blinded by others. This is how the attitudes of such a selfish and ambitious religious establishment and of their adherents are discussed in the Talmud:-

A man should 'always sell all he has and marry the daughter of a scholar' but should not marry the daughter of an ordinary person as this would be repulsive and unacceptable. Ordinary persons are said to be detestable, their wives are called vermin, their daughters are likened to beasts. Ordinary persons (that is the Jewish people) may not eat meat but scholars (of Jewish law) may enjoy meat. And we are told that it is permitted to stab an ordinary person.

No wonder we are also told that 'greater is the hatred with which ordinary persons (that is the Jewish people) hate the scholar than the hatred with which the heathens hate Israel'.

{1} 'The Way Ahead for Israel:- Causes of Present Problems', David Baram

It was written in a time of darkness many hundreds of years ago. It is the language and symbolism of the Talmud. But it can here be interpreted as meaning that if the religious hierarchy intermarries among itself and keeps itself to itself, then there would exist an intermarried and inter-bred (that is connected) establishment (class) which would look after its own interests and support itself at the expense of the common people. It would live well at the expense of the Jewish people who would be uneducated and thus unable to resist but who would hate.

Considering our own religious hierarchy, this description is not far removed from what we see today but it is far removed from and indeed opposes the essential requirements of Jewish law.

Those sincere fellow Jews who are so concerned about us while showing us 'their' ways of practice and belief, and those Jewish missionary activists who seek to press us into their particular mould of Judaism, are very preoccupied with details of observance of customs and traditions. But what they do not tell us is that what they are doing is in reality part of the underlying competition and struggle between the different sects and movements for adherents, for our money, for political influence and power.

It is then not surprising that what they show us are

ancient warm traditions and practices which no matter how rich and binding are still only mere forms of ceremonial and ritual.

Seeming generosity (small coins to the poor) behind which lies that it is we who provide their living (large sums to religious institutions) and that they want us to add our contribution. But we are not getting the kind of service we have a right to expect.

Warm phrases and statements quoted out of context without regard to (and often without knowledge or understanding of) their real meaning, strung together into seeming sense to 'prove' unfounded assertions (a form of brainwashing), spoken with warm voices and conviction to give an appearance of truth and certainty which is false and misleading.

It is unfortunate that too often these Jewish activists and missionaries are unaware of the extent to which they have been blinded. Their responses are unreasonable and do not stand up to examination and then their emotional, sometimes immoral or even illegal reaction merely proves how wrong and how blinded they are.

Ancient warm traditions and practices, nowadays the pretty decorative shell around the emptiness within, around an emptiness in which self-interest and selfishness and material ambitions at the centre have replaced the word of God, have replaced Jewish law.

So you see that the patterns of Jewish traditions and customs we are shown, when you consider them by themselves, are empty shells. The reason the 'religious' offer no real help or guidance to the people is because the religious hierarchies themselves gain enormously from donated funds.

You also see that the way Judaism is generally taught and applied is very far removed from the real thing because they have forgotten about and lost touch with the beautiful, meaningful and relevant reality of Judaism.

But our courses show that Judaism and Jewish law are much more relevant to everyday life than is appreciated or admitted by others. Come and join us. You are likely to find the courses and discussions absolutely fascinating and completely relevant to your everyday life.

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