

Chiefly Quotes

A collection of quotes from
Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks *zt'l*

Chosen & arranged by Rabbi Johnny Solomon

Preface

This book is a gift of a student to his teacher, which I hope will serve as a precious resource to many other teachers, as well as many other students.

To give some background about the origins of this book, I must first begin by explaining when, and how, Rabbi Sacks became one of my teachers.

Having been born in London in 1976, I was 17 when Rabbi Sacks became Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth. Admittedly, in his first few years as Chief Rabbi I saw him primarily as a leader and role model for the community in general, rather than a teacher and leader for me specifically. However, from my early 20s, as I began my career at *Immanuel College* as a Jewish Studies teacher, I had a number of opportunities to meet Chief Rabbi Sacks. He spoke at assemblies at the school, I attended some of his talks in various synagogues, and I had the fortune to visit his home for various gatherings (such as the *Lookstein Fellowship* awards) and for smaller meetings where I was able to ask him questions relating to Jewish education, prayer and halacha, and it was also around this time when I started to seriously read and reflect upon the ideas found in his growing number of books.

Wishing to study for semicha, I then attended the *Montefiore Kollel* where Chief Rabbi Sacks delivered a number of talks to our small cohort about leadership and practical rabbinics. In fact, he was among the interviewers for our semicha examination and was a signatory on my *semicha* certificate. Two years later, I invited Chief Rabbi Sacks to be the keynote speaker for the *A-Level Religious Studies Student Conference* which I coordinated in 2010 while working for the *Jewish Curriculum Partnership* (JCP) during which time I was privileged to spend a little time with him both before and after his talk and where he gave me a book with the following beautiful inscription: ‘To Johnny – In great friendship and admiration. You have great achievements ahead of you – may ה' be with you all the way. בברכה, Jonathan Sacks’.

In the following years I continued to read more of Rabbi Sacks’ books and attend more of his lectures – by which point I very much considered him as one of my teachers. In 2012, I moved to Israel with my family, and it was soon after this, in 2013, that the seeds of ‘Chiefly Quotes’ were sown while I taught at *Machon Ma’ayan*.

It was around this time that Chief Rabbi Sacks had just retired, but while some of my students (most of whom from North America) had heard of Rabbi Sacks, few had ever attended a talk by him or read his books (nb. this significantly changed in the years that followed when Rabbi Sacks spent more time in North America). I believed then, as I believe now, that the remarkable wisdom and Torah insights found in the teachings and writings of Rabbi Sacks could literally change the lives of my students. Given this, I began developing a course on ‘The Thought of Rabbi Sacks’ to teach in the 2013-2014 academic year.

In preparation for this course, I read/re-read all the books which Rabbi Sacks had published by that point, and over a period of time, I created a collection of quotes from these writings – bolstered by those provided to me by Dan Sacker, former Senior Adviser at *The Office of Rabbi Sacks* - which I organised by topic. I then shared this collection with Rabbi Sacks’ office as a gesture of appreciation for all that I had learnt from Rabbi Sacks, and this resource was then made available

on Rabbi Sacks' website (<https://rabbisacks.org/>) as a searchable database for all those who – like me – have been enriched and inspired by the teachings of Rabbi Sacks. Soon after, in September 2014, I received a lovely message from Rabbi Sacks in which he wrote:

'I am thrilled with the online database, and Dan tells me it would not have happened without your terrific help in collating and sorting a huge number of quotes from my books. Johnny, thank you so much for all the time and energy you have spent doing this. I write books, but I must be honest, I avoid reading them! So it is always heartening to hear that they are being used in such wonderful ways. Together with Elaine, I wish you and your family continued blessings and success in all you do.'

Since then, I've continued to teach about 'The Thought of Rabbi Sacks' in various institutions. In fact, having shared so many teachings of Rabbi Sacks for such a prolonged period of time, I share the sentiment expressed by Rabbi Alex Israel who once observed how, 'it is impossible to know where the ideas of Rabbi Sacks end, and where ours begin'. As a result of this genuine attachment – both to the personality of Rabbi Sacks and especially to the unique ideas which he taught us – I have become, like so many others around the world, a disciple of Rabbi Sacks.

In this spirit, during Chanukah 2017 I decided to write a series of online posts, titled '8daysfor8teachers', where I highlighted and explained how I felt indebted to various teachers who have guided me and inspired me in my journey. Among these was Rabbi Sacks, with my post concluding with the words: 'So to Rabbi Sacks I say THANK YOU for all you have taught me, THANK YOU for all you have inspired me to teach others, and THANK YOU for all your encouragement & support.' Amazingly, just days later, I received a phone call from Rabbi Sacks in which he thanked me for the post and for my efforts in teaching and spreading Torah. It was a phone call that moved me more than I can describe, and one for which I will forever be grateful.

Since producing the original collection of 'Chiefly Quotes' (based on 18 of Rabbi Sacks' books and a number of other collections), I slowly began collating quotes from his more recently published books. However, given that I was juggling numerous other projects, I did so intermittently when I had a spare moment here or there, with my intention being to comprehensively update 'Chiefly Quotes' when I could find the time.

Then, in November 2020, we all heard the bitter news of Rabbi Sacks' death. My response, like so many others around the world, was simply to weep. A few hours later, I was approached by *Aish* to write a piece about Rabbi Sacks. Unsure what to write, I delved, once again, into his teachings - while also making reference to the call he'd made to me some years previously – and I explained, as best I could while quoting from his own words that I'd become so familiar with over the years, how this gesture was a powerful expression of his unique theology:

For some people, the very idea that a global religious leader, who used every moment to the fullest and whose opinion was sought around the world, would even bother to acknowledge a social media post from a relatively insignificant Torah teacher seems absurd. Yet while Rabbi Sacks was a man of incredible vision, he was also someone who was attentive to, and who deeply valued, even the smallest of human gestures, and this is because he understood that it is the small things that, as he once put it, are part of "the poetry of everyday life." In fact, when both Rabbi Sacks and his wife Elaine were

interviewed in 2019 by the Sunday Times Magazine about their marriage, Elaine remarked how, “My greatest joys in life are simple. We live near Hampstead Heath and just love it. If we go for a muddy walk, the next day I will find my shoes sparkling clean. Jonathan likes cleaning them. If everything is tidy, then his mind is clear to think.” Here too, for some people the very idea that a global religious leader would make the time to clean and polish his wife’s shoes may be hard to fathom. But for Rabbi Sacks, cleaning his beloved wife’s shoes was a further expression of his appreciation of the simple human gestures, and the value he placed on “the poetry of everyday life.” Oftentimes, many of us distinguish between our relationship with God and our relationship with others. However, what made Rabbi Sacks and the ideas which he taught to be so refreshing and inspiring, was how he saw these spheres to be utterly interwoven. As he once wrote, “I have sought God, not through philosophical proofs, scientific demonstrations or theological arguments; not through miracles or mysteries or inner voices or sudden epiphanies; not by ceasing to question or challenge or doubt; not by blind faith or existential leap; certainly not by abandonment of reason and an embrace of the irrational. These things have brought many people to God. But they have also brought many people to worship things that are not God, like power, or ideology, or race. Instead, I have sought God in people – people in themselves seemed to point to something or someone beyond themselves.” (from <https://www.aish.com/jw/s/What-I-Learned-from-Rabbi-Jonathan-Sacks.html>)

In the days and weeks following his death, many disciples of Rabbi Sacks, myself included, spoke of the moments in our life when he offered us guidance and encouragement, and how it was his belief in our potential which helped drive us towards what we are doing today. Moreover, like many others, during this period I delivered many in-person and online talks about Rabbi Sacks’ teachings.

However, his death also served as a stark reminder to me that I still had one more project pending – which was to update ‘Chiefly Quotes’. As such, between July 2021-January 2022 I read, transcribed and organized quotes from 19 further books, which expanded ‘Chiefly Quotes’ to become a collection of over 1,600 quotes, arranged by topic, from 37 of Rabbi Sacks’ books (and some other essays and collections), and which I hoped to be a useful resource for Jews and non-Jews around the world.

Admittedly, ‘Chiefly Quotes’ was, and has continued to be, a true labour of love, and in addition to my great appreciation to the amazing team at the *Rabbi Sacks Legacy Trust* for their continued friendship and encouragement, I am indebted to my wife Donna and my five wonderful daughters for their incredible support. Beyond this, mention should be made of the fact that the period of July 2021-January 2022, when I was intensively working on ‘Chiefly Quotes’, was also when Donna was diagnosed with breast cancer which then involved her undergoing two surgeries, chemotherapy and radiotherapy, and since some of the time I spent on this project was when I was sitting alongside her while waiting or receiving treatment in Oncology wards, my hope was that any deeds inspired by this project would serve in her merit for a *refuah shelema* (speedy recovery). With thanks to the Almighty, Donna received an ‘all clear’ around Pesach 2022. Since then, *I Believe* was published in late 2022, from which I have since extracted 55 additional quotes which are now incorporated in this updated version of ‘Chiefly Quotes’.

In terms of this collection, a few minor points are worthwhile mentioning. Firstly, the quotes in each section have been presented in the order in which they were published. This has been done deliberately because, oftentimes, Rabbi Sacks developed his ideas on a given topic over a period of years which can be seen in the evolution of how he expressed himself when comparing earlier teachings to more recent ones. Second, I consider each quote to be a gem, and though some quotes may be similar, where they differ even slightly, such that each radiate an idea in its own unique way, I have included both. Third, I have been careful to avoid including quotes that, when read on their own, are not misunderstood when taken out of context. What this means is that I believe that each quote found in this book can be understood on its own while each clearly has even greater resonance when encountered in its original context. Still, every quote in this book is referenced, so that if you'd like to know more about an idea, you are encouraged to look it up in the original source. Fourth, at times Rabbi Sacks transliterated Hebrew terms in different ways. Rather than changing anything he wrote, I have been faithful to whatever he has written, meaning that sometimes the same word may be spelt slightly differently in two different quotes. Finally, while almost all of the quotes in this book are from the 38 books of Rabbi Sacks listed below, there were some topics which I felt should be represented here which he addressed in lectures or articles available on his website but which – for whatever reason - he did not significantly address in his books. As with all the quotes in this book, here too I give a clear indication of where the quote originated from. Yet even while doing so, I suspect that there are many gems of wisdom of Rabbi Sacks that I may have overlooked. It is in this spirit that it seems very fitting to quote the words of Avot 2:16, which Rabbi Sacks himself would often cite: *לֹא עָלֶיךָ הַמְלָאכָה לְגַמֹּר, וְלֹא אֶתָּה - בֶּן חֹרִין לְבָטֵל מִמְּנָה* - *It is not for you to complete the task, but neither are you free to desist from it.*

I shall end with the prayer that I wrote and which I shared during the April 2021 *LSJS* Tribute to Rabbi Sacks - which was also the formal book launch of his *Judaism's Life Changing Ideas*. The theme that I spoke about was 'Giving Thanks', and having quoted from Rabbi Sacks' essay on Parshat Tzav, I then explained that, "the primary reason why I chose to speak about 'Giving Thanks' is not in order to emphasize the emotional, psychological or spiritual value of appreciation. Instead, it is because I want to give thanks to Rabbi Sacks, from the deepest recesses of my heart and soul, for all that he has taught me, for all he has taught my dear friends and teachers - including those who I am privileged to be speaking with tonight, and for all that he has empowered us to do both within the Jewish world and beyond. Given this, I would like to offer a personal prayer of thanks, although in this case, while deeply personal, I suspect that this prayer of thanks will be shared by many others as well." And having done so, I said the following:

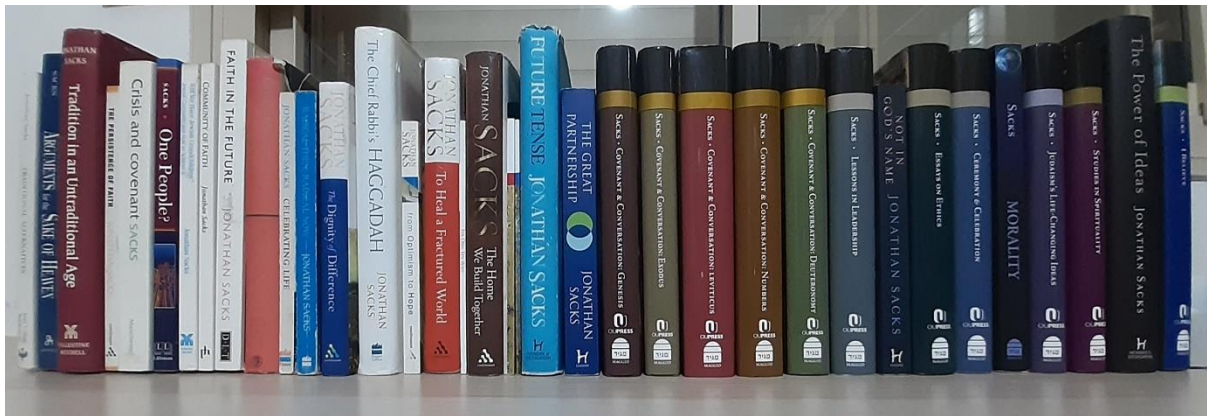
ריבונו של עולם
Master of the Universe,
הכאב גדול
The pain is great!
שלחת נשיא
You sent us a prince,
כמו משה רבינו של זמננו
like a Moshe Rabbeinu for our time,
מורנו הרב זקס זצ"ל
Our Teacher, Rabbi Sacks zt'l.
הוא לימד אותנו
He taught us,
הוא חיזק אותנו
He strengthened us,

והוא האמין בנו
and he believed in us.
תורתו היתה כמטר וכטל
His Torah was like sweet rain and dew,
ומדבריו צמחנו וגדלנו
And from his great words we grew and we became great.
אבל אפילו יותר מהאהבה שלו כלפינו
But even more than the love he had for us,
הוא אהב אותך
He loved you – God
והוא לימד אותנו
and he taught us,
את דברי תורתך
the words of Your Torah
כִּי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ
That the Lord your God
הוא ה' הַלֵּךְ עִמָּךְ
Is He who walks with you
הרב זקס זצ"ל
Rabbi Sacks zt"l,
שר את דברי השירה הזאת
Sang the words of this song
באזנינו
Into our ears,
והוא שם אותם בלבבנו
and he also placed them into our hearts.
אבל...
But...
לקחת אותו מאיתנו
You took him from us,
ובולנו יתומים
And we are all orphans,
אבל עם כל זה
Yet notwithstanding this,
מודים אנחנו לך
We thank you – God
על מורנו
For our teacher,
על תורתו
For his inspirational Torah
על חכמתו
for the abundant wisdom that he taught us
ועל מורשתו
and for his legacy - which we, as his students and followers, will strive to continue to love, to teach, and to share.



Johnny Solomon, November 2022/Cheshvan 5783 (ravjsolomon@gmail.com)

The works of Rabbi Sacks referenced in this book



- ❖ Traditional alternatives: Orthodoxy and the future of the Jewish people (1989)
- ❖ Tradition in an Untraditional Age (1990)
- ❖ Orthodoxy Confronts Modernity (1991)
- ❖ Persistence of Faith (1991)
- ❖ Crisis and Covenant (1992)
- ❖ One People? (1993)
- ❖ Will We Have Jewish Grandchildren? (1994)
- ❖ Community of Faith (1995)
- ❖ Faith in the Future (1995)
- ❖ The Chief Rabbi's Children's Siddur (1995)
- ❖ The Politics of Hope (1997)
- ❖ Celebrating Life (2000)
- ❖ Radical Then, Radical Now (2001)
- ❖ Dignity of Difference (2002)
- ❖ The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (2003)
- ❖ From Optimism to Hope (2004)
- ❖ To Heal a Fractured World – The Ethics of Responsibility (2005)
- ❖ Ten Days, Ten Ways (2007)
- ❖ The Home We Build Together – Recreating Society (2007)
- ❖ Israel – Home of Hope CD (2008)
- ❖ Letters to the Next Generation (2009)
- ❖ Future Tense: Jews, Judaism, and Israel in the Twenty-first Century (2009)
- ❖ Covenant and Conversation: Genesis (2009)
- ❖ Covenant and Conversation: Exodus (2010)
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- ❖ The Great Partnership: God, Science and the Search For Meaning (2011)
- ❖ A Judaism Engaged with the World (2013)
- ❖ Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus (2015)
- ❖ Lessons in Leadership (2015)
- ❖ Not in God's Name (2015)
- ❖ Essays on Ethics (2016)
- ❖ Covenant and Conversation: Numbers (2017)
- ❖ Ceremony and Celebration (2017)
- ❖ Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy (2019)
- ❖ Morality (2020)
- ❖ Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas (2020)
- ❖ Studies in Spirituality (2021)
- ❖ The Power of Ideas (2021)
- ❖ I Believe (2022)

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ANGER

- ❖ “The “anger” of God, so often expressed in the Hebrew Bible, is actually not anger but anguish: the anguish of a parent who sees a child do wrong but knows that he or she may not interfere if the child is ever to grow, to learn, to mature, to change, to become responsible.”¹
- ❖ “The moral life is one in which we grapple with anger but never let it win. The verdict of Judaism is simple: either we defeat anger or anger will defeat us.”²
- ❖ “We should never feel anger. But there are times when we should show it. These are few and far between, but they exist.”³
- ❖ “There are families and cultures where anger is used all too often. This is abusive and harmful. Anger is bad for the person who feels it and often for the one who receives it.”⁴
- ❖ “Anger is a mood, not a strategy, and it can make things worse not better. Anger never solves problems, it merely inflames them.”⁵

ANTI-SEMITISM

- ❖ “The only sane response to anti-Semitism is to monitor it, fight it, but never let it affect our idea of who we are. Pride is always a healthier response than shame.”⁶
- ❖ “Anti-Semitism is not a unitary phenomenon, a coherent belief or ideology. Jews have been hated because they were rich and because they were poor; because they were capitalists and because they were communists; because they believed in tradition and because they were rootless cosmopolitans; because they kept to themselves and because they penetrated everywhere. Antisemitism is not a belief but a virus. The human body has an immensely sophisticated immune system which develops defences against viruses. It is penetrated, however, because viruses mutate. Antisemitism mutates.”⁷
- ❖ “Racial anti-Semitism was a more deadly form than any of its predecessors, because whereas religious convictions can be renounced, races can only be exterminated.”⁸
- ❖ “For Jews, the response to anti-Semitism must be to fight it but never to internalize it or accept it on its own terms.”⁹
- ❖ “Antisemitism – the hatred of difference – is an assault not on Jews only but on the human condition as such.”¹⁰
- ❖ “The old anti-Semitism, a product of nineteenth-century European romantic nationalism, is not the same as the new, however old the recycled myths. You cannot fight hate

¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 122

² *Essays on Ethics* p. 249

³ *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* p. 110

⁴ *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* p. 111

⁵ *The Power of Ideas* p. 174

⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 205

⁷ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 36

⁸ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 37

⁹ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 41

¹⁰ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 43

transmitted by the Internet in the way you could fight hate that belonged to the public culture.”¹¹

- ❖ “Jews cannot fight antisemitism alone. The victim cannot cure the crime. The hated cannot cure the hate. It would be the greatest mistake for Jews to believe that they can fight it alone. The only people who can successfully combat antisemitism are those active in the cultures that harbour it.”¹²
- ❖ “Antisemitism begins with Jews, but it never ends with them. A world without room for Jews is one that has no room for difference, and a world that lacks space for difference lacks space for humanity itself.”¹³
- ❖ “Antisemitism is never ultimately about Jews. It is about a profound human failure to accept the fact that we are diverse and must create space for diversity if we are to preserve our humanity.”¹⁴
- ❖ “Anti-Semitism is a complex, protean phenomenon because anti-Semites must be able to hold together two beliefs that seem to contradict one another: Jews are so powerful that they should be feared, and at the same time so powerless that they can be attacked without fear.”¹⁵
- ❖ “Jews were hated in Germany because they were rich and because they were poor, because they were capitalists and because they were communists, because they kept to themselves and because they infiltrated everywhere, because they believed in a primitive faith and because they were rootless cosmopolitans who believed nothing. Hitler believed that Jews were controlling both the United States and the Soviet Union. How could they be doing both? Because they were Jews.”¹⁶
- ❖ “Antisemitism is only contingently about Jews. Jews are its *victims* but they are not its *cause*.”¹⁷
- ❖ “Wherever you find obsessive, irrational, murderous antisemitism, there you will find a culture so internally split and fractured that if its members stopped killing Jews they would start killing one another.”¹⁸
- ❖ “The best way of curing antisemitism is to get people to experience what it feels like to be a Jew. The best way of curing hostility to strangers is to remember that we too, from someone else’s perspective, are strangers. Memory and role reversal are the most powerful resources we have to cure the darkness that can sometimes occlude the human soul.”¹⁹
- ❖ “Those who seek to eliminate Jews, seek to eliminate freedom. Antisemitism is a sickness that destroys all who harbour it. Hate harms the hated but it destroys the hater. There is no exception.”²⁰

¹¹ *Future Tense* p. 5

¹² *Future Tense* pp. 108-109

¹³ *Future Tense* p. 111

¹⁴ *Future Tense* p. 129

¹⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 162

¹⁶ *Not in God’s Name* p. 71

¹⁷ *Not in God’s Name* p. 76

¹⁸ *Not in God’s Name* p. 76

¹⁹ *Not in God’s Name* p. 188

²⁰ *Not in God’s Name* p. 261

- ❖ “There is, in short, nothing in Judaism to suggest that it is the fate of Jews to be hated. It is neither written into the texture of the universe nor encoded in the human genome. It is not the will of God.”²¹
- ❖ “Jews cannot cure anti-Semitism. Only anti-Semites can do that, together with the society to which they belong. The reason is that Jews are not the *cause* of anti-Semitism. They are the objects of it, but that is something different. The cause of anti-Semitism is a profound malaise in the cultures in which it appears. It happens whenever a society feels that something is badly amiss, when there is a profound cognitive dissonance between the way things are and the way people think they ought to be. People are then faced with two possibilities. They can either ask, “What did we do wrong?” and start to put it right, or they can ask, “Who did this to us?” and search for a scapegoat.”²²
- ❖ “The appearance of antisemitism is always an early warning sign of a dangerous dysfunction within a culture, because the hate that begins with Jews never ends with Jews.”²³
- ❖ “Antisemitism is the hardest of all hatreds to defeat because, like a virus, it mutates, but one thing stays the same. Jews, whether as a religion or a race or as the State of Israel, are made the scapegoat for problems for which all sides are responsible. That is how the road to tragedy begins.”²⁴
- ❖ “Antisemitism is not about Jews. It is about anti-Semites. It is about people who cannot accept responsibility for their own failures and have instead to blame someone else.”²⁵

ART

- ❖ “Art speaks to emotion. It moves us in ways that go deeper than words.”²⁶
- ❖ “Judaism does not believe in art for art’s sake, but in art in the service of God, giving back as a votive offering to God a little of the beauty He has made in this created world. At the risk of oversimplification, one could state the difference between ancient Israel and ancient Greece thus: that where the Greeks believed in the holiness of beauty, Jews believed in *hadrat kodesh*, the beauty of holiness. There is a place for the aesthetic in avodah. In the words of the Song at the Sea: *zeh Keili ve-anvehu*, “This is my God and I will beautify Him.” For beauty inspires love, and from love flows the service of the heart.”²⁷
- ❖ “Art in Judaism always has a spiritual purpose: to make us aware of the universe as a work of art, testifying to the supreme Artist, God Himself.”²⁸
- ❖ “I believe that beauty has power, and in Judaism it has always had a spiritual purpose: to make us aware of the universe as a work of art, testifying to the supreme Artists, God Himself.”²⁹

²¹ *Essays on Ethics* p. 254

²² *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 226

²³ *The Power of Ideas* p. 48

²⁴ *The Power of Ideas* p. 209

²⁵ *The Power of Ideas* p. 350

²⁶ *Tetzaveh (5772) – The Aesthetic in Judaism*

²⁷ *Tetzaveh (5772) – The Aesthetic in Judaism*

²⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 301

²⁹ *I Believe* p. 115

ASKING QUESTIONS

- ❖ “In Judaism, to be without questions is not a sign of faith, but a lack of depth.”³⁰
- ❖ “To ask is to grow.”³¹
- ❖ “Questioning is at the heart of Jewish spirituality.”³²
- ❖ “To ask is to believe that somewhere there is an answer. The fact that throughout history people have devoted their lives to extending the frontiers of knowledge is a compelling testimony to the restlessness of the human spirit and its constant desire to go further, higher, deeper. Far from faith excluding questions, questions testify to faith – that history is not random, that the universe is not impervious to our understanding, that what happens to us is not blind chance. We ask, not because we doubt, but because we believe.”³³
- ❖ “To be a Jewish child is to learn how to question.”³⁴
- ❖ “The responsible life is one that responds. In the theological sense it means that God is the question to which our lives are an answer.”³⁵
- ❖ “Judaism is a questioning and argumentative faith, in which even the greatest ask questions of God, and in which the rabbis of the Mishna and Midrash constantly disagree. Rigid doctrinal faith that discourages questions calling instead for blind obedience and submission, is psychologically damaging and fails to prepare a child for the complexity of real life.”³⁶

ASSIMILATION

- ❖ “When I was last in America.. my eye was caught by a story on the front page of the New York Times. It was headed ‘The Assimilating Bagel’, and the tale it told was this. A bagel was once a hard, round roll with a large hole in the centre. It was a Jewish delicacy which you ate with cream cheese or smoked salmon and temporarily forgot the troubles of the world. But according to the New York Times the bagel was subtly changing. Its crust was getting softer. The hole was getting smaller. Little by little, the bagel was assimilating into a bun. For ‘bagel’ read ‘Jewry’, and the metaphor is clear. Jewish identity in America is vanishing with frightening, unprecedented speed.”³⁷
- ❖ “After the Shoah, one phrase came to encapsulate the collective response of world Jewry: ‘Never again.’ Never again would we stand by defenceless as Jews were dying because they were Jews. Yet, albeit in a radically different form, it is happening again. Admittedly, it is not Jews who are dying. But it is no less significant from the perspective of Jewish

³⁰ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 105

³¹ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 106

³² *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 106

³³ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 106

³⁴ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 25

³⁵ *The Great Partnership* p. 37

³⁶ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 78

³⁷ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* p. 22

continuity. Judaism and Jewish identity are dying; that which made us Jews and gave shape and meaning to our lives. Every nation that suffered casualties during the Second World War has since repopulated itself. Except the Jewish people. For every Jewish child who perished in the Holocaust there is a child today who could have been enjoying a free and secure Jewish identity, but is not, because its parents have divorced, or because one of its parents is not Jewish, or because it has no understanding or knowledge of what it is to be a Jew.”³⁸

- ❖ “My grandparents were not born in this country. Many, even most, of the Jews in Britain had grandparents who came here in the great wave of immigration from Eastern Europe between 1880 and 1914. We are Anglo-Jews of the third generation. It is an almost universal law that inherited wealth lasts three generations, not more. The same applies to inherited Judaism. Ours is the last generation that can still remember *booba* and *zeida* from the *heim*, with their fluent Yiddish and undiminished *Yiddishkeit*. *Ours is the last generation for whom Jewish identity can be sustained by memory alone*. The Rebbe of Ger once pointed out that the ‘four sons’ of the *Haggadah* represent four generations. The wise son is the immigrant generation who still lives the traditions of the ‘home’. The rebellious son is the second generation, forsaking Judaism for social integration. The ‘simple’ son is the third generation, confused by the mixed messages of religious grandparents and irreligious parents. But the child who cannot even ask the question is the fourth generation. For the child of the fourth generation no longer has memories of Jewish life in its full intensity. *Our children are children of the fourth generation*. Already it is clear that what we took for granted, they do not. They do not take it for granted that they will belong to an Orthodox synagogue or indeed any synagogue. They do not take it for granted that they will marry, or marry another Jew, or stay married. They do not take it for granted that they will have Jewish children or that it is important to do so. *Nothing* can be taken for granted in the fourth generation, least of all in the secular, open society in which even a common moral code is lacking.”³⁹
- ❖ “Throughout the Diaspora, with minor regional variations, one-half of young Jews is deciding not to have a Jewish marriage, build a Jewish home and have Jewish children. Each such loss is a tragedy. A family tree that had lasted a hundred generations comes to an end with them. A chain of continuity that held strong for a hundred generations has broken.”⁴⁰

ATHEISTS/ATHEISM

- ❖ “If the new atheists are right, you would have to be sad, mad or bad to believe in God and practise a religious faith. We know that is not so.”⁴¹
- ❖ “Atheism deserves better than the new atheists, whose methodology consists in criticising religion without understanding it, quoting texts without contexts, taking exceptions as the rule, confusing folk belief with reflective theology, abusing, mocking, ridiculing,

³⁸ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* pp. 25-26

³⁹ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* p. 60

⁴⁰ *A Judaism Engaged with the World* p. 12

⁴¹ *The Great Partnership* p. 1

caricaturing and demonising religious faith and holding it responsible for the great crimes against humanity. Religion has done harm; I acknowledge that candidly...But the cure of bad religion is good religion, not no religion, just as the cure of bad science is good science, not the abandonment of science. The new atheists do no one a service by their intellectual inability to understand why it should be that some people lift their eyes beyond the visible horizon or strive to articulate an inexpressible sense of wonder; why some search for meaning despite the eternal silences of infinite space and the apparently random injustices of history; why some stake their lives on the belief that the ultimate reality at the heart of the universe is not blind to our existence, deaf to our prayers and indifferent to our fate; why some find trust and security and strength in the sensed, invisible presence of a vast and indefinable love. A great Jewish mystic, the Baal Shem Tov, compared such atheists to a deaf man who for the first time comes on a violinist playing in the town square while the townspeople, moved by the lilt and rhythm of his playing, dance in joy. Unable to hear the music, he concludes that they are all mad. Perhaps I am critical of the new atheists because I had the privilege of knowing and learning from deeper minds than these.”⁴²

- ❖ “I for one do not have enough faith to be an atheist. To be an atheist you have to have faith, either in humankind as a whole, or in yourself. How anyone can have faith in humankind after the Holocaust defies all reason.”⁴³
- ❖ “Today’s angry atheists, far from being profound, are likely humourless individuals wondering why people laugh at a joke. Their attitudes have nothing to do with science and everything to do with a failure of imagination. We need science to tell us how the world is and religion to tell us how the world ought to be. Both are necessary. Each properly understood can enhance our respect for the other.”⁴⁴

BEREAVEMENT

- ❖ “Bereavement leaves us deeply vulnerable. In the midst of loss we can find it hard to control our emotions. We make mistakes. We act rashly. We suffer from a momentary lack of judgement.”⁴⁵
- ❖ “It is worth thinking about why self-help, in this peculiarly modern sense, has emerged—often as a substitute for what in previous centuries would have been a religious quest. The answer, I think, was given by the American scholar Philip Rieff in his book *The Triumph of the Therapeutic* (1966). One of his most insightful points was that in all previous generations, people helped those suffering depression or loss or bereavement by seeking to reintegrate them into the community. That, for example, is the point of the ancient and still powerful Jewish custom of *shiva*: a bereaved family sit together for a week and are visited by members of the community and by friends. It is a period in which you are hardly ever alone. It is exhausting, but it achieves many things; above all, it prevents you from retreating into yourself. It softens the jagged edges of grief.”⁴⁶

⁴² *The Great Partnership* pp. 11-12

⁴³ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 6

⁴⁴ *The Power of Ideas* pp. 128-129

⁴⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 274

⁴⁶ *Morality* p. 41

- ❖ “It took me two years to recover from the death of my father, of blessed memory. To this day, almost twenty years later, I am not sure why. He did not die suddenly or young. He was well into his eighties. In his last years he had to undergo five operations, each of which sapped his strength a little more. Besides which, as a rabbi, I had to officiate at funerals and comfort the bereaved. I knew what grief looked like... Yet knowing these things did not help. We are not always masters of our emotions... I felt an existential black hole, an emptiness at the core of my being. It deadened my sensations, leaving me unable to sleep or focus, as if life was happening at a great distance, and as if I was a spectator watching a film out of focus with the sound turned off. The mood eventually passed, but while it lasted I made some of the worst mistakes of my life.”⁴⁷

BIBLE (TANAKH)

- ❖ “The message of the Hebrew Bible is that serving God and our fellow human beings are inseparably linked, and the split between the two impoverishes both.”⁴⁸
- ❖ “Greatness, even for God, certainly for us, is not to be above people but to be with them, hearing their silent cry, sharing their distress, bringing comfort to the distressed and dignity to the deprived. The message of the Hebrew Bible is that civilizations survive not by strength but by how they respond to the weak; not by wealth but by how they care for the poor; not by power but by their concern for the powerless. What renders a culture invulnerable is the compassion it shows to the vulnerable.”⁴⁹
- ❖ “Philosophy teaches truth-as-system, the Bible teaches truth-as-story.”⁵⁰
- ❖ “The story of the Hebrew Bible as a whole, extending across a thousand years in real time, is of the progressive withdrawal of divine intervention and the transfer of responsibility to human beings.”⁵¹
- ❖ “The Bible is interested not in *physis*, but in *nomos*: not in the laws that govern nature, but in the moral laws that should govern humankind. The Greek translation of *Torah*, the Jewish name for the Mosaic books, is *Nomos*, ‘law’. Hence the Bible does not begin with the birth of *Homo sapiens*, a biological species, hundreds of thousands of years ago, but much later, with the discovery of monotheism some six thousand years ago. The critical moment seems to have been the dawn of individual self-consciousness.”⁵²
- ❖ “Jewish tradition divide[s] the books of the Bible into three categories: *Torah*; *Neviim*, the prophets; and *Ketuvim*, the writings. What makes them different is not their subject matter but their relative holiness, their relationship to God. To put it at its simplest: *Torah* is the word of God *to* man. The prophetic books are the words of God *through* man. The other writings are the words of man to God.”⁵³

⁴⁷ *Studies in Spirituality* pp. 205-206

⁴⁸ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 9

⁴⁹ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 37

⁵⁰ *The Home We Build Together* p. 117

⁵¹ *The Home We Build Together* pp. 124-125

⁵² *The Great Partnership* p. 230

⁵³ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 33

- ❖ “Tanakh is a love story through and through – the passionate love of the creator for His creatures that survives all the disappointments and betrayals of human history. God needs us to encounter Him, not because He needs mankind but because we need Him.”⁵⁴
- ❖ “In truth, Tanakh is a love story through and through – the passionate love of the creator for His creatures that survives all the disappointments and betrayals of human history. God needs us to encounter Him, not because He needs mankind but because we need Him. If civilization is to be guided by love, justice, and respect for the integrity of creation, there must be moments in which we leave the “I” behind and encounter the fullness of being in all its glory.”⁵⁵
- ❖ “What is striking about Judaism as a whole is that the Torah is not the sum total of *kitvei kodesh*, sacred Scripture. It is merely the first and holiest of what are essentially three libraries, the others being *Nevi'im* and *Ketuvim*, the Prophets and the Writings. One way of summarising the difference between them is this: The Torah is God’s word *to* human beings. *Nevi'im* represents God’s word *through* human beings. *Ketuvim* are the words of human beings inspired by *ruah hakodesh*, the “holy spirit,” to God.”⁵⁶
- ❖ “Between God and the people is a mutual bond of love. The Israelites pledge themselves to be faithful to God and His commands. God pledges Himself to cherish the people as His treasure – for though He is the God of all humanity, He holds a special place in His affection (to speak anthropomorphically) for the descendants of those who first heard and heeded His call. This is the whole of Tanakh, the Hebrew Bible. The rest is commentary.”⁵⁷

CHALLENGE & CRISIS

- ❖ “As long as Adam and his wife were living in the Garden of Eden he called her ‘woman’ and blamed her for their sin. Only as they left Eden to face hardship together did he name her Eve, meaning ‘the source of life’. Far from being grounds for divorce, it is the crises that bring us together, showing us how, by sharing our vulnerabilities, we can discover strength.”⁵⁸
- ❖ “Crises happen when we attempt to meet the challenges of today with the concepts of yesterday.”⁵⁹
- ❖ “This is how to deal with crisis. Wrestle with it, refusing to let it go until it blesses you, until you emerge stronger, better or wiser than you were before. *To be a Jew is not to accept defeat*. That is the meaning of faith.”⁶⁰
- ❖ “The real test of a nation is not if it can survive a crisis but if it can survive the *lack* of a crisis. Can it stay strong during times of ease and plenty, power and prestige? That is the challenge that has defeated every civilisation known to history.”⁶¹

⁵⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 146

⁵⁵ *Essays on Ethics* p. 168

⁵⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 66

⁵⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* pp. 247-248

⁵⁸ *Celebrating Life* p. 98

⁵⁹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 23

⁶⁰ *Letters to the Next Generation* p. 31

⁶¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 89

- ❖ “Whenever I faced controversy or crisis, I said to myself, “That was a character-forming experience.” And because I thought it, it was.”⁶²
- ❖ “Whenever something unexpected has happened in my life, I have always asked, “What is Heaven trying to tell me? How does it want me to respond? Given that this has happened, how shall I turn this moment into a blessing?””⁶³
- ❖ “The deepest crises of your life can turn out to be the moments when you encounter the deepest truths and acquire your greatest strengths.”⁶⁴
- ❖ “Seen through the eye of faith, today’s curse may be the beginning of tomorrow’s blessing.”⁶⁵
- ❖ “The real test of a society is not the absence of crises, but whether we come out of them cynical and disillusioned, or strengthened by our rededication to high ideals.”⁶⁶
- ❖ “Some of the greatest positive changes in our lives come when, having undertaken a challenge, we cross our own Red Sea and know that there is no way back. There is only a way forwards. Then God gives us the strength to fight our battles and win.”⁶⁷

CHANGE

- ❖ “All significant change in human behaviour takes place at the microcosmic, not the macrocosmic level. It belongs not to social forces or trends, but to the here-and-now of single individuals.”⁶⁸
- ❖ “Change has become part of the texture of life itself, and there are few things harder to bear than constant flux and uncertainty.”⁶⁹
- ❖ “When the world out there is changing faster than the world in here – in our mental and emotional responses – our environment becomes bewildering and threatening.”⁷⁰
- ❖ “We are changed, not by what we receive, but by what we do.”⁷¹
- ❖ “Change is not threatening, so long as we keep firm hold of the values by and for which we live. We can travel with confidence so long as we have a map. We can jump with safety knowing that there is someone to catch us as we fall.”⁷²
- ❖ “Jewish life is not always as consistently inspiring as we would wish it to be. The way to change that is to get involved and make it better.”⁷³
- ❖ “There are aspects of Judaism that never change, wherever and whenever we are. The laws of purity and impurity, permitted and forbidden, sacred and secular – these have barely changed through the centuries. And though many of them are no longer operative, because there is no Temple and its service, they remain part of the Jewish law still studied in

⁶² *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. xix

⁶³ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* pp. xix-xx

⁶⁴ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 34

⁶⁵ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 43

⁶⁶ *The Power of Ideas* p. 6

⁶⁷ *I Believe* p. 95

⁶⁸ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 207

⁶⁹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 26

⁷⁰ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 70

⁷¹ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 149

⁷² *Marble Arch Synagogue*

⁷³ *Letters to the Next Generation* 2 p. 65

yeshivas and houses of study throughout the world. This is when we encounter the holiness, the otherness, of God as He exists beyond time and space, infinite and eternal. But there are aspects of Judaism that are deeply enmeshed in time and place, above all in the fate of the Jewish people as a nation in its land or as a people scattered and dispersed throughout the world. Most of the books in Tanakh – some historical, others prophetic – are about this dimension. They tell a story about the faithfulness or faithlessness of the people to their covenant with God. There is nothing metaphysical or other-worldly about this story. It is about politics and economics, battles won or lost, about Israel as a nation in a world of nations, and about its ability or otherwise to stay true to its founding principles as a covenanted people through the whitewater rapids of history. *Judaism lives in the creative tension between these two essential elements of its being.*⁷⁴

CHESED

- ❖ “Acts of kindness never die. They linger in the memory, giving life to other acts in return.”⁷⁵
- ❖ “What is *hesed*? It is usually translated as ‘kindness’ but it also means ‘love’ – not love as emotion or passion, but love expressed as deed.”⁷⁶
- ❖ “Where *tzedakah* is a gift or loan of money, *hesed* is the gift of the person.”⁷⁷
- ❖ “The beauty of justice is that it belongs to a world of order constructed out of universal rules through which each of us stands equally before the law. *Hesed*, by contrast, is intrinsically personal. We cannot care for the sick, bring comfort to the distressed or welcome a visitor impersonally. If we do so, it merely shows that we have not understood what these activities are. Justice demands disengagement... *Hesed* is an act of engagement. Justice is best administered without emotion. *Hesed* exists only in virtue of emotion, empathy and sympathy, feeling-with and feeling-for. We act with kindness because we know what it feels like to be in need of kindness. We comfort the mourners because we know what it is to mourn. *Hesed* requires not detached rationality but emotional intelligence.”⁷⁸
- ❖ “A community based on *chesed* is a place of grace, where everyone feels honoured, everyone is at home.”⁷⁹
- ❖ “The best way of breaking down barriers between people or communities is through simple, unforced acts of kindness. One act can undo years of estrangement.”⁸⁰
- ❖ “Faiths, as we know, unite and divide. They unite by dividing: by identifying an ‘us’ as opposed to ‘them’. Hence both the good and harm they do come hand-in-hand. We are the children of the light; they are the children of the darkness. That generates light but also darkness. There is only one non-utopian way of creating the good without the harm, and

⁷⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers p. 113*

⁷⁵ *From Optimism to Hope p. 130*

⁷⁶ *To Heal a Fractured World p. 45*

⁷⁷ *To Heal a Fractured World p. 46*

⁷⁸ *To Heal a Fractured World p. 51*

⁷⁹ *Ten Days, Ten Ways p. 30*

⁸⁰ *The Home We Build Together p. 132*

that is to create programmes of what in Hebrew is called *chesed*, in Latin *caritas*, or in English, loving kindness, across boundaries. We must love strangers as well as neighbours, in the simple sense of love-as-deed, practical help. That imperative flows from the covenant of human solidarity, and in a national context, from the covenant of citizenship.”⁸¹

- ❖ “Through *hesed*, Jews humanized fate as, they believed, God’s *hesed* humanizes the world.”⁸²
- ❖ “I believe that what elevates us in life is not what we receive but what we give. The more of ourselves that we give, the greater we become.”⁸³
- ❖ “In *hesed*, God created the universe. In *hesed* we create moments of moral beauty that bring joy and hope where there was darkness and despair.”⁸⁴

CHOICE

- ❖ “There is one respect in which each of us has precisely the same strength as Moses. Namely, the strength to choose. There is no hand of heaven – no physiological, genetic, psychological or providential compulsion – that forces us to act one way rather than another. The fear of heaven is not in the hands of heaven; therefore the fear of heaven is as live an option to us as it was to Moses. Here is indeed a thing which, if it is small for Moses is small for us.”⁸⁵
- ❖ “Our fate does not lie in the stars, not in the human genome, or in any other form of determinism. We become what we choose to be.”⁸⁶
- ❖ “Individually and collectively we are free to choose between good and evil and *our fate is determined by our choices*. We are moral agents, and therefore responsible and called to account for what we do.”⁸⁷
- ❖ “Choice is like a muscle: use it or lose it. Jewish law is an ongoing training regime in willpower. Can you eat this, not that? Can you exercise spiritually three times a day? Can you rest one day in seven? Can you defer the gratification of instinct – what Freud took to be the mark of civilization? Can you practise self-control – according to the “marshmallow test,” the surest sign of future success in life? To be a Jew means not going with the flow, not doing what others do just because they are doing it. It gives us 613 exercises in the power of will to shape our choices. That is how we, with God, become co-authors of our lives.”⁸⁸
- ❖ “Judaism is a religion of freedom and responsibility. Against all the many determinisms in the history of thought – astrological, philosophical, Spinozist, Marxist, Freudian, neo-Darwinian – Judaism insists that we are masters of our fate. We are neither programmed nor predestined. We can choose. That is the fourteenth principle of Jewish faith.”⁸⁹

⁸¹ *The Home We Build Together* p. 180

⁸² *Essays on Ethics* p. 31

⁸³ *I Believe* p. 110

⁸⁴ *I Believe* p. 271

⁸⁵ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 205

⁸⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 8

⁸⁷ *Essays on Ethics* p. xxiii

⁸⁸ *Essays on Ethics* p. 320

⁸⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 287

- ❖ “Do not believe that the future is written. It isn’t. There is no fate we cannot change, no prediction we cannot defy. We are not predestined to fail; neither are we pre-ordained to succeed. We do not predict the future, because we make the future – by our choices, our willpower, our persistence, and our determination to survive.”⁹⁰
- ❖ “However much we plan in advance, factor in all the contingencies, rehearse every scenario, there are events that take us by surprise. That is the human condition. We live with constitutive uncertainty. Those who fear risk fear life itself.”⁹¹

CHOSENNESS/CHOSEN PEOPLE

- ❖ “To be chosen does not mean that others are unchosen. To be secure in one’s relationship with God does not depend on negating the possibility that others too may have a (different) relationship with Him. Jacob was loved by his mother, Esau by his father; but what of God who is neither father nor mother but both and more than both?”⁹²
- ❖ “At the heart of all three faiths is the idea that within humanity there is one privileged position – favoured son, chosen people, guardian of the truth, gatekeeper of salvation – for which more than one candidate competes. The result is conflict of the most existential kind, for what is at stake is the most precious gift of all: God’s paternal love.”⁹³
- ❖ “A chosen people is the opposite of a master race, first, because it is not a race but a covenant; second, because it exists to serve God, not to master others. A master race worships itself; a chosen people worships something beyond itself. A master race values power; a chosen people cares for the powerless. A master race believes it has rights; a chosen people knows only that it has responsibilities. The key virtues of a master race are pride, honour and fame. The key virtue of a chosen people is humility. A master race produces monumental buildings, triumphal inscriptions and a literature of self-congratulation. Israel, to a degree unique in history, produced a literature of almost uninterrupted self-criticism...A chosen people is not a master race but its opposite: a servant community. That is why Jewry has always been attacked by – because its existence is an affront to – those who see themselves as a master race, an imperial power, or sole guardians of God’s truth.”⁹⁴

CIVILITY

- ❖ “Civility and civil society look like different things. One is a personal matter of manners, sensitivity, politeness, tact. The other is a social phenomenon: associations, congregations,

⁹⁰ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 59

⁹¹ *The Power of Ideas* p. 102

⁹² *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 175

⁹³ *Not in God’s Name* p. 99

⁹⁴ *Not in God’s Name* pp. 198-199

communities of commitment. What connects them is concern for the welfare of others, a refusal to let everything be determined by politics or economics, an insistence that human beings owe one another a respect that is not coerced or paid for, but simply because they are human beings. Civility and civil society represent the power of the personal in a world of impersonal forces. They create friendships in societies where we are thrown together as strangers. They are oases of togetherness in the anonymity of urban life and the lonely crowd. They cut across conflict and competition. If we lose civility, and if civil society becomes politicized, the future of freedom is in danger.”⁹⁵

- ❖ “Civility is dying, and when it dies, civilisation itself is in danger.”⁹⁶
- ❖ “Civility is more than good manners. It is a recognition that violent speech leads to violent deeds; that listening respectfully to your opponents is a necessary part of the politics of a free society; and that liberal democracy, predicated as it is on the dignity of diversity, must keep the peace between contending groups by honoring us all equally, in both our diversity and our commonalities. All politics is about the pursuit of power, but liberal democratic politics carries with it a special responsibility to use that power for the dignity of each and the good of all.”⁹⁷
- ❖ “Civility is more than good manners. It is an affirmation that the problems of some are the problems of all, that a good society presupposes collective responsibility, that there is a moral dimension to being part of this nation, this people, this place. We speak to one another because we feel bound to one another in a shared enterprise in which we each have a part to play.”⁹⁸

COMMANDMENTS/MITZVOT

- ❖ “By keeping mitzvot, following the commandments – or more precisely, bringing God, the voice of the world that ought to be, into the world that is – we bring heaven down to earth.”⁹⁹
- ❖ “Every mitzvah is a window in the wall separating us from God. Each mitzvah lets God’s light flow into the world.”¹⁰⁰
- ❖ “Every mitzvah we do, every prayer we say, every act of learning we undertake, is a way of making space for God.”¹⁰¹
- ❖ “Every mitzvah is a miniature act of redemption. It turns something secular into something holy.”¹⁰²
- ❖ “The mitzvot bring God into our lives through the intricate choreography of a life lived in accordance with God’s will. They are the poetry of the everyday, turning life into a sacred work of art.”¹⁰³

⁹⁵ *The Home We Build Together* p. 188

⁹⁶ *Not in God’s Name* p. 22

⁹⁷ *Morality* p. 221

⁹⁸ *Morality* pp. 226-227

⁹⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* pgs. 163-164

¹⁰⁰ *Ten Days, Ten Ways* p. 20

¹⁰¹ *Letters to the Next Generation* p. 27

¹⁰² *Mitzvot: Responding to God - Introduction*

¹⁰³ *Mitzvot: Responding to God - Introduction*

- ❖ “Whenever you do a mitzvah, stop and be mindful. Every mitzvah is there to teach us something, and it makes all the difference to pause and remember why.”¹⁰⁴
- ❖ “Ritual turns us from lonely individuals into members of the people of the covenant.”¹⁰⁵
- ❖ “Ritual is the poetry of deed, the choreography of faith.”¹⁰⁶
- ❖ “I believe that we make a fundamental error when we think that all we need to know and keep are the rules governing interactions *bein adam lehavero*, between us and our fellows. The rules are essential but also incomplete. We need to develop a conscience that does not permit us to wrong, harm, or hurt someone even if the rules permit us to do so.”¹⁰⁷

COMMUNITY

- ❖ “Neither the individual nor the state is where we discover who we are and why... Beyond the most basic rules necessary for the maintenance of the most rudimentary social order, morality lives in communities and the traditions which sustain them.”¹⁰⁸
- ❖ “The problem of our moral ecology is that we have thought exclusively in terms of two domains: the state as an instrument of legislation and control and the individual as the bearer of otherwise unlimited choices. But morality can no longer be predicated of the state, for we have become too diverse to allow a single morality to be legislated. Nor can it be located in the individual, for morality cannot be private in this way. We have neglected the third domain: that of community. But it is precisely as the member of a community that I learn a moral language, a vision and its way of life. I become articulate by acquiring a set of meanings not of my own invention, but part of a common heritage. I become connected to others through bonds of loyalty and obligation that are covenantal rather than contractual. And I become connected too, to the community’s past and future, so that I can understand my life as a chapter in a larger narrative. That is what Jews, Christians and others do when they grow up within a religious tradition, and what Aristotle believed education was: induction into a community.”¹⁰⁹
- ❖ “A Jewish community should build its standards around its aspirations, holding out to its members the challenge of eternal ideas rather than an ever-changing set of accommodations to passing fashion, moral, spiritual or intellectual. It therefore matters that it embodies an institutional expression of humility in the face of God and reverence for the traditions of its ancestors, never losing its sense of infinity in the midst of space or of eternity in the flux of time.”¹¹⁰
- ❖ “Jewish faith is learned and taught, lived and experienced, in community. That is why the integrity of the community, its inner cohesiveness and its loyalty to the founding terms of its existence, matter even more than the learning or piety of individuals.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁴ *Things Life Has Taught Me About Judaism*

¹⁰⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 31

¹⁰⁶ *The Power of Ideas* p. 21

¹⁰⁷ *I Believe* p. 265

¹⁰⁸ *The Persistence of Faith* pp. 14-15

¹⁰⁹ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 45

¹¹⁰ *Community of Faith* p. 12

¹¹¹ *Community of Faith* p. 97

- ❖ “Community is the human expression of Divine love. It is where I am valued simply for who I am, how I live and what I give to others. It is the place where they know my name.”¹¹²
- ❖ “Community is society with a human face – the place where we know we’re not alone.”¹¹³
- ❖ “In Judaism, community is essential to the spiritual life.”¹¹⁴
- ❖ “Community is the antidote to individualism on the one hand, and overreliance on the state on the other.”¹¹⁵
- ❖ “We are not made to live alone. Not only is the unprecedented atomisation of modern life bad for our health and happiness. It is also dangerous because it makes us vulnerable to the dangers that lie ahead: turbulence, change, unpredictability. When the environment changes, people who are members of strong and diverse groups are at a huge advantage. They contain people with different strengths, variegated knowledge, diverse skills, and by working together they can negotiate their situation with effectiveness and speed. They have collective resilience. A crowd of disconnected individuals does not have that strength.”¹¹⁶
- ❖ “That availability of collective strength that we find in strong communities held together by moral bonds is an important source of resilience that we will need as we face the kind of uncertainty that seems to be the mark of the twenty-first-century thus far. It is easier to face the future without fear when we know we do not do so alone.”¹¹⁷
- ❖ “You don’t need to be religious to be moral, but it makes a huge difference to be part of a community dedicated to being a blessing to others.”¹¹⁸
- ❖ “Communities build; they do not destroy. They bring out the best in us, not the worst. They speak not to our baser emotions such as fear but to higher aspirations like building a symbolic home for the Divine Presence in their midst.”¹¹⁹

COMMUNITIES OF FAITH

- ❖ “The more friendship I share, the more I have. The more love I give, the more I possess. The best way to learn something is to teach it to others. The best way to have influence is to share it as widely as possible. These are the things that operate by the logic of multiplication not division, and they are precisely what is created and distributed in communities of faith: friendship, love, learning and moral influence, along with those many other things which only exist by virtue of being shared.”¹²⁰
- ❖ “Communities of faith are where we preserve the values and institutions that protect our humanity”¹²¹
- ❖ “A community of faith... cuts across boundaries. It brings together what other institutions keep apart.”¹²²

¹¹² *Celebrating Life* p. 149

¹¹³ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 14

¹¹⁴ *Essays on Ethics* p. 142

¹¹⁵ *Essays on Ethics* p. 143

¹¹⁶ *Morality* p. 35

¹¹⁷ *Morality* p. 37

¹¹⁸ *The Power of Ideas* p. 29

¹¹⁹ *I Believe* p. 125

¹²⁰ *Celebrating Life* p. 54

¹²¹ *Celebrating Life* p. 60

¹²² *Celebrating Life* p. 144

- ❖ “In our communities we value people not for what they earn or what they buy or how they vote but for what they are, every one of them a fragment of the Divine presence. We hold life holy. And each of us is lifted by the knowledge that we are part of something greater than all of us, that created us in forgiveness and love, and asks us to create in forgiveness and love. Each of us in our own way is a guardian of values that are in danger of being lost, in our short-attention-span, hyperactive, information-saturated, wisdom-starved age. And though our faiths are profoundly different, yet we recognize in one another the presence of faith itself, that habit of the heart that listens to the music beneath the noise, and knows that God is the point at which soul touches soul and is enlarged by the presence of otherness. We celebrate both our commonalities and differences, because if we had nothing in common we could not communicate, and if we had everything in common, we would have nothing to say. You have spoken of the Catholic Church as a creative minority. And perhaps that is what we should all aspire to be, creative minorities, inspiring one another, and bringing our different gifts to the common good.”¹²³
- ❖ “The great faiths do more than give abstract expression to our shared humanity; they move us to action and give compelling shape to the claims of others upon us”¹²⁴

CONSUMERISM

- ❖ “The consumer society is constantly tempting us, all the time, to spend money we don’t have, to buy things we don’t need, for the sake of a happiness that won’t last. In fact, the consumer society, by constantly making us aware of what we don’t have instead of making us thankful for what we do have, has turned out to be the most efficient system yet devised for the manufacture and distribution of unhappiness.”¹²⁵
- ❖ “The Hebrew writer Achad ha-Am once said that more than the Jewish people kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath kept the Jewish people. Jews are not opposed to the market economy or technological advance; we welcome them. But in the Sabbath there is a necessary counter-affirmation, best expressed by one of our ancient sages who said, ‘Who is rich? One who rejoices in what he has.’ The remorseless pressure of consumerism to define ourselves in terms of what we lack, not what we have, takes a heavy toll in a culture which has no counter-voice.”¹²⁶
- ❖ “*When money rules, we remember the price of things and forget the value of things.*”¹²⁷
- ❖ “Shabbat is our refuge from what has become, in the late capitalist economies, a consumer culture. Consumerism has become the new religion. Its cathedrals are shopping centres, its most heinous sin is *not having this year’s model*, and it promises “retail therapy,” salvation by shopping, and remission of sins by credit card. Shabbat is precisely the opposite: the one

¹²³ Opening address for Papal Visit, Twickenham, 17 September 2010

¹²⁴ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 112

¹²⁵ *Interfaith Summit on Happiness*

¹²⁶ *The Good Society - The St George’s Lecture at St George’s Hall, Windsor Castle*

¹²⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 260

day in seven on which we live by the truth of Ben Zoma's aphorism, "Who is rich? One who rejoices in what he has."¹²⁸

- ❖ "Blessings are not measured by how much we own or earn or spend or possess but by how much we share."¹²⁹
- ❖ "A consumer society... encourages us to spend money we don't have, on products we don't need, for a happiness that won't last. The reason such happiness does not last lies in the fundamental difference between hedonic happiness, a momentary feeling of pleasurable sensation, and eudaemonic happiness, which is the lasting feeling brought by having lived a good, meaningful, and worthy life. Hedonic happiness requires constant stimulation. Hence the idea of the "hedonic treadmill": getting what we want only temporarily satisfies desire. We almost immediately find new things to desire, so that though we may find ourselves better off materially, we do not become happier psychologically."¹³⁰
- ❖ "'If only' is the opposite of love. If only I was more attractive, my children more appreciative, my colleagues more friendly, if only I earned more, achieved more. 'If only' is toxic to happiness. It focuses on what we don't have instead of what we do. The consumer culture invites us to an existence of 'if only'. It's the worst investment in life."¹³¹
- ❖ "When religion dies and consumerism takes its place, people are left with a culture that encourages them to buy things they don't need with money they don't have for a happiness that won't last. It is a bad exchange, and it will end in tears."¹³²

CONVERSATION

- ❖ "The greatest single antidote to violence is conversation, speaking our fears, listening to the fears of others, and in that sharing of vulnerabilities discovering a genesis of hope."¹³³
- ❖ "In a debate one side wins, the other loses, but both are the same as they were before. In a conversation neither side loses and both are changed, because they now know what reality looks like from a different perspective. That is not to say that either gives up its previous convictions. That is not what conversation is about. It does mean, however, that I may now realize that I must make space for another deeply held belief, and if my own case has been compelling, the other side may understand that it too must make space for mine."¹³⁴
- ❖ "Society is a conversation scored for many voices. But it is precisely in and through that conversation that we become conjoint authors of our collective future, rather than dust blown by the wind of economic forces. Conversation – respectful, engaged, reciprocal, calling forth some of our greatest powers of empathy and understanding – is the moral form of a world governed by the dignity of difference."¹³⁵

¹²⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* pp. 261-262

¹²⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 129

¹³⁰ *Morality* p. 106

¹³¹ *The Power of Ideas* pp. 116-117

¹³² *The Power of Ideas* p. 176

¹³³ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 2

¹³⁴ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 83

¹³⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 84

- ❖ “Without a moral vision, we will fail. And that vision, to be shared, can only emerge from conversation – from talking to one another and listening to one another across boundaries of class, income, race and faith.”¹³⁶
- ❖ “When there are no shared standards, there can be no conversation, and where conversation ends, violence begins.”¹³⁷

COVENANT

- ❖ “At the core of Jewish faith is the idea of covenant, the mutual commitment between God and the people Israel. But the covenant embodies a specific tension. On the one hand, it is immune to history. Its text, the Torah, and the way of life it commands, are Divine, eternal, immutable, unchanging. On the other hand, the covenant is realised in history... Judaism is thus a metahistorical and historical faith, peculiarly poised between timelessness and time.”¹³⁸
- ❖ “The affirmation of Jewish life after the Holocaust is itself testimony that the covenant survives and that the voice of God continues to be heard, however obliquely and obscurely, by the contemporary heirs of those who stood at Sinai.”¹³⁹
- ❖ “Secular and liberal Jews are part of the covenant, participants in Judaism’s bonds of collective responsibility, to be related to with love, dignity, and respect. This offends the modern self, which demands to be respected not for what it is but for what it believes and does. It is, in terms of modern consciousness, an imperfect solution. But perfect solutions are not to be found this side of the messianic time.”¹⁴⁰
- ❖ “What is the secret of Jewish survival?...Faith suggests an answer. At Sinai, Israel and God entered into a solemn and mutually binding pledge: the covenant. Israel would dedicate itself to God. God, in turn, would protect Israel. The Jewish people would exist, in Jeremiah’s words, as long as the sun and the stars and the waves roared in the sea. Israel would be God’s witness, and their eternity would mirror His. Jews survived for a simple reason. Interwoven in our history was something larger than history: Divine Providence.”¹⁴¹
- ❖ “A covenant is what turns love into law, and law into love.”¹⁴²
- ❖ “It is easier to understand the moral constraints on action when we believe that there is someone to whom we owe responsibility, that we are not owners of the planet, and that we are covenantally linked to those who will come after us.”¹⁴³
- ❖ “Social contract creates a state; social covenant creates a society. Social contract is about power and how it is to be handled within a political framework. Social covenant is about how people live together despite their differences. Social contract is about government. Social covenant is about coexistence. Social contract is about laws and their enforcement.

¹³⁶ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 175

¹³⁷ *The Home We Build Together* p. 47

¹³⁸ *Crisis and Covenant* pp. 1-2

¹³⁹ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 22

¹⁴⁰ *One People* p. 216

¹⁴¹ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* pp. 31-32

¹⁴² *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 57

¹⁴³ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 170

Social covenant is about the values we share. Social contract is about the use of potentially coercive force. Social covenant is about moral commitment, the values we share and the ideals that inspire us to work together for the sake of the common good.”¹⁴⁴

- ❖ “To enter into a covenant, like deciding to marry or have a child, is to take a risk, an act of faith in an unknown, unknowable future.”¹⁴⁵
- ❖ “Covenant is the politics of quest: for the promised land, the place of freedom, the society that honours the dignity of all.”¹⁴⁶
- ❖ “At the heart of covenant is the profound realization that society is what we make of it. The way things are is not necessarily the way things ought to be. Covenant is born when a free people question the established order and conclude that there is a better way. They seek to create a society that refuses to divide humanity into rulers and ruled, those who command and those who obey. It is a collective moral undertaking on the part of ‘We, the people’, all the people, rich, poor, weak, strong, powerful and powerless alike. It says, in effect: there is no one else to do it for us, and we can achieve together what none of us can do alone. It is built on the idea that we are individually and collectively responsible for our future. We each have a part to play. Covenant is the conscious decision to create a society in the light of shared ideals.”¹⁴⁷
- ❖ “Those bound by a covenant, voluntarily undertake to share a fate. They choose to link their destinies together. They accept responsibilities to and for one another. Covenants redeem the solitude of the ‘lonely crowd’.”¹⁴⁸
- ❖ “Covenant is a binding commitment, entered into by two or more parties, to work and care for one another while respecting the freedom, integrity and difference of each. Covenant is politics without power, economics without self-interest. What difference does it make? For one thing, it gets us to think about the common good, the good of all-of-us-together.”¹⁴⁹
- ❖ “Every child in Britain should be taught two skills: contract-making and covenant-making. Contract is about association for self-interest; covenant is about association in shared identity. Both are important life skills. Contract teaches us the logic of non-zero-sumness. Life is not a match in which you either win or lose. Creative, lateral thought can often create win-win scenarios. Covenant teaches us about relationships: love and loyalty, commitment and responsibility. Teaching children about covenant-making will help them in later life to build families and communities, based on a regard for the other as well as self. It will also help them answer one of the most difficult of life’s questions: Who am I?”¹⁵⁰
- ❖ “Covenant generates an ethic of social responsibility. It is rooted in a sense of history and identity. It is predicated on the belief that a free society is a moral achievement and one for whose maintenance all the people share responsibility.”¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁴ *The Home We Build Together* p. 110

¹⁴⁵ *The Home We Build Together* p. 118

¹⁴⁶ *The Home We Build Together* p. 118

¹⁴⁷ *The Home We Build Together* pp. 123-124

¹⁴⁸ *The Home We Build Together* p. 142

¹⁴⁹ *The Home We Build Together* p. 151

¹⁵⁰ *The Home We Build Together* p. 158

¹⁵¹ *Essays on Ethics* p. xxix

- ❖ “The covenant bestows an unrivaled dignity on humans. Judaism acknowledges, as do most faiths, that God is infinite and we infinitesimal, God is eternal and we ephemeral, God is everything and we next to nothing. But Judaism makes the momentous claim in the opposite direction, that we are “God’s partners in the work of creation” (Shabbat 10a and 119b). We are not tainted by original sin; we are not incapable of greatness; we are God’s stake in the world. Tanakh tells an astonishing love story: about God’s love for a people to whom He binds Himself in covenant, a covenant He never breaks, rescinds or changes however many times we betray it and Him. The covenant is law as love and loyalty.”¹⁵²
- ❖ “Covenant lifts our horizon from self-interest to the common good. There is nothing wrong with self-interest. It drives economics and politics, the market and the state. But there are certain things that cannot be achieved on the basis of self-interest alone, among them trust, friendship, loyalty, and love. Covenant really is a life-and-world-changing idea.”¹⁵³
- ❖ “A covenant is less like a deal than like a marriage: it is a moral bond.”¹⁵⁴
- ❖ “Wealth and power, economics and politics, the market and the state, are arenas of *competition*, whereas covenantal goods are arenas of *co-operation*.”¹⁵⁵

CREATION, REVELATION, REDEMPTION

- ❖ “The three great principles of Judaism are creation, revelation and redemption. That, I believe, is why the sages said ‘The world depends on Torah study, worship and acts of kindness.’ In Torah study we live revelation. We listen to Torah as God’s word, and through learning and teaching place it at the centre of our lives. In worship we live creation. In structure and style the Torah indicates that the Israelites’ building of the sanctuary in the wilderness was the human counterpart of the Divine creation of the universe. As God made space in whose midst man lived, so we are commanded to create a space in whose midst God lives. In acts of kindness we live redemption, building through small deeds a world slowly perfected under the sovereignty of God.”¹⁵⁶
- ❖ “Maimonides famously set out Thirteen Principles of Faith. But, as Rabbi Simeon ben Zemah Duran pointed out in the Middle Ages, and Franz Rosenzweig did in modern times, they can be further summarized as three: creation, revelation, redemption. On Shabbat we live creation. Learning Torah we live revelation. Performing acts of *bessed*, covenantal love, we live redemption. We do not philosophize about these things, we enact them. Jewish faith is not primarily about creeds or theologies; it is not faith thought, but faith lived.”¹⁵⁷
- ❖ “The movement from creation to revelation to redemption is one of the great structural motifs of prayer. One example is the three blessings in the morning service, surrounding the Shema and leading up to the Amidah. The first is about the creation of the universe in

¹⁵² *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 70

¹⁵³ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 89

¹⁵⁴ *The Power of Ideas* p. 96

¹⁵⁵ *The Power of Ideas* p. 297

¹⁵⁶ *Community of Faith* p. 129

¹⁵⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 165

space and time; the second is about the revelation of the Torah; and the third is about the miracles of history, ending with the words, ‘who redeemed Israel’. The three paragraphs of the Shema display the same pattern. The first is about creation (God’s unity and sovereignty), the second about revelation (acceptance of the commandments), and the third about redemption (“I am God your Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt”). The weekday morning as a whole is constructed on this principle. First come the Verses of Praise, taken from the Book of Psalms, with their majestic vision of creation. Then follows the central section – the Shema and its blessings, leading to the Amidah – in which we sit, then stand, in the immediate presence of God (revelation). Finally we come to the concluding prayers with their central line, “A redeemer will come to Zion”. The second paragraph of Aleinu is likewise a vision of redemption. The pattern is repeated yet again in the Shabbat evening, morning and afternoon prayers. On Friday evening, in the central blessing of the Amidah, we speak of the Shabbat of creation (“the culmination of the creation of heaven and earth”). In the morning we refer to the Shabbat of revelation (when “Moses brought down in his hands the two tablets of stone”). In the afternoon, we anticipate future redemption (when “You are One and Your name is One” and the people Israel are again “one nation on earth”). In these multiple ways, prayer continually reiterates the basic principles of Jewish faith.”¹⁵⁸

- ❖ “Axiomatic to Jewish faith is the belief that God is encountered in three ways: in creation, revelation, and redemption [which]... represent the three basic relationships within which Judaism and human life are set. Creation is God’s relationship to the world. Revelation is God’s relationship with us. When we apply revelation to creation, the result is redemption: the world in which God’s will and ours coincide.”¹⁵⁹
- ❖ “The relationship between God and the universe is creation: the *work* of God. Between God and humanity it is revelation: the *word* of God. When we apply revelation to creation, the *word* of God to the *work* of God, the result is redemption.”¹⁶⁰
- ❖ “*Elokim* is God as we encounter Him in nature. *Hashem* is God as we encounter Him in personal relationships, above all in that essentially human mode of relationship that we call speech, verbal communication, conversation, dialogue, words. *Elokim* is the aspect of God to be found in creation. *Hashem* is the aspect of God disclosed in revelation.”¹⁶¹
- ❖ “God discloses Himself in three ways: creation, redemption, and revelation. *Creation* means the world that is: the wonders of nature, the vicissitudes of history, and the conflict within the human heart between duty and desire. *Redemption* is the world that ought to be: a world of justice, compassion, the dignity of the individual, and the sanctity of life, the world God had in mind when He created humankind and to which we are still travelling. *Revelation* is the word that decodes the world. It is the set of instructions – mitzvot – God has given us for reaching Him. Revelation is what happens when we put the world aside and listen to the will of God.”¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ *Introduction to the Siddur*

¹⁵⁹ *Covenant & Conversation: Emor*

¹⁶⁰ *Future Tense* p. 217

¹⁶¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 288

¹⁶² *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 34

- ❖ “The God of creation, the God of redemption, and the God of revelation are one and the same. It is we on earth who cannot see all three aspects or hear all three voices simultaneously.”¹⁶³
- ❖ “Creation, revelation, and redemption represent the three basic relationships within which Judaism and human life are set. Creation is God’s relationship with the world. Revelation is God’s relationship with us. When we apply revelation to creation, the result is redemption: the world in which God’s will and ours coincide.”¹⁶⁴
- ❖ “Creation, revelation, and redemption form the basic triad of Jewish faith.”¹⁶⁵
- ❖ “Creation means seeing the universe as God’s work. Revelation means seeing Torah as God’s word. Redemption means seeing history as God’s deed and God’s call.”¹⁶⁶

CRIME/CRIMES OF RELIGION

- ❖ “People have killed in the name of God. But their crimes do not rival the crimes of those who have killed believing that they were gods.”¹⁶⁷
- ❖ “Crimes against humanity are not crimes against humanity alone. They are crimes against God, even when – especially when - they are committed in the name of God.”¹⁶⁸
- ❖ “The crimes of religion have one thing in common. They involve making God in our image instead of letting him remake us in his.”¹⁶⁹
- ❖ “*The great crimes of humanity have been committed against the stranger, the outsider, and the one-not-like-us.*”¹⁷⁰

CULTURAL CLIMATE CHANGE

- ❖ “One of the great ironies of cultural climate change is that if Charles Darwin were alive today, he would be one of the most passionate advocates for religion, not against religion. How is that? Because for Darwin and natural selection, what is the test of adaptive fitness? The answer is reproductive success. You hand down your genes to the next generation. That for Darwin was the mark of fitness.”¹⁷¹
- ❖ “We’re passing through one of humanity’s great moments, a cultural climate change. The signs of it are that the weather patterns that existed for so long, the progressive secularisation, the progressive Westernisation, the progressive accommodation of religion to society — those weather patterns no longer hold. We are entering one of the world’s great ages of de-secularisation and it is the rise of non-Western cultures that will shape the 21st century. The end result is — as Rabbi Soloveitchik and Alasdair MacIntyre and others

¹⁶³ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 35

¹⁶⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 334

¹⁶⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 336

¹⁶⁶ *I Believe* p. 105

¹⁶⁷ *Faith in the Future* p. 71

¹⁶⁸ *Faith in the Future* p. 86

¹⁶⁹ *Not in God’s Name* p. 265

¹⁷⁰ *Essays on Ethics* p. 113

¹⁷¹ “*Cultural Climate Change*” – Rabbi Sacks at The Chautauqua Institution

warned us decades ago — that if you lose religion from the mainstream of society, you will lose the sanctity of marriage. You will lose the bond of community and you will lose the social covenant that says *e pluribus unum*: we're all in this together.”¹⁷²

- ❖ “Divisive politics, inequitable economics, the loss of openness in universities, and the growth of depression and drug abuse are the result of what I call cultural climate change. They are the long-term consequences of the unprecedented experiment embarked on throughout the West a half-century ago: *the move from 'We' to 'I'*.”¹⁷³

DA'AT TORAH

- ❖ “*Lo ba-shamayim hi* is not an intrinsically revolutionary doctrine; if anything it is a conservative one. It may have relevance in contemporary halakhic discourse, for example to counter any quasi-oracular interpretation of the concept of *daat Torah*. But it places *pesak* firmly in the context of interpretation and consensus...*lo ba-shamayim hi*, along with the rabbinic insistence that “prophets may not innovate,” is.. directed against a revolutionary by-passing of text, precedent, and consensus in the name of a “heavenly voice.”¹⁷⁴
- ❖ “*Da'at torah* bridged the gap between aggadah and halakhah. It lent unqualified authority to the views of a sage on precisely those issues of interpretation and evaluation that lay beyond the parameters of halakhah. The idea itself is deeply rooted in tradition. But it contains a fateful ambiguity. It may mean *a* Torah view or *the* Torah view. In principle, since the subjects with which it deals are not given to halakhic resolution, it means *a* Torah view. But in practice, since the institutions in which it is voiced are usually monolithic, it has come to mean *the* Torah view.”¹⁷⁵
- ❖ “The extension of authority implicit in modern uses of *da'at torah* means, in effect, excluding tradition's alternative voices...The areas where *da'at torah* have been invoked have been precisely those where different evaluations were possible within Orthodoxy and where different rulings were appropriate to different groups and circumstances.”¹⁷⁶
- ❖ “The invocation of *da'at torah* in the sense of a uniquely and universally correct solution to questions that admit of none is untraditional and destructive of other values that are unquestionably central to Torah, not least of *keneset yisrael* itself. Its use could only be justified as a concession to crisis.”¹⁷⁷

DEMOCRACY

- ❖ “*The form of politics closest in spirit to Judaism at this time is liberal democracy*. Liberal democracy is not Athenian democracy. In ancient Greece, the people existed to serve the state. In Judaism, and liberal democracy, the state exists to serve the people. Liberal democracy

¹⁷² “Cultural Climate Change” – Rabbi Sacks at The Chautauqua Institution

¹⁷³ *Morality* p. 12

¹⁷⁴ *Creativity and Innovation in Halakhah*

¹⁷⁵ *One People* p. 103

¹⁷⁶ *One People* p. 105

¹⁷⁷ *One People* p. 106

respects one of Judaism's most fundamental values: the priority of the personal over the political. It is limited government, of a kind Judaism favours. The liberal democratic state does not aspire to be a vehicle of redemption; it is there to keep the peace, establish the rule of law, and ensure non-violent transitions of power. Although Judaism does not recognise the concept of separation of church and state (neither, for that matter, does England, a liberal democracy with an established church), it recognises a no less fundamental idea, namely the separation of powers between king, priest and prophet, the 'three crowns' spoken of by the sages. The Hasmonean kings were criticised by the sages because they combined kingship and priesthood: in effect, they breached the separation between political and religious leadership. Any attempt to see the state as the highest value is, as the late Yeshayahu Leibowitz never tired of saying, a form of idolatry. Judaism exists to etch social relationships with the charisma of grace. That is not the task of politics."¹⁷⁸

- ❖ "Liberal democratic politics...*makes space for difference*. It recognises that within a complex society there are many divergent views, traditions and moral systems. It makes no claim to know which is true. All it seeks to do is ensure that those who have differing views are able to live peaceably and graciously together."¹⁷⁹
- ❖ "A research project undertaken by Yascha Mounk of Harvard and Roberto Foa of the University of Melbourne suggests that Millennials (those born in or after 1980) are losing faith in democracy. Only a third of them regard civil rights as "absolutely essential" in a democracy, compared with 41 percent of the previous generation. More than a quarter dismiss the importance of free elections, and only a minority declare themselves interested in politics, as compared with their elders, of whom a majority did so. In 1995, only 16 percent of young Americans thought democracy was a "bad system" for their nation, but in 2011, nearly a quarter thought so. There are obvious reasons why this might be so. The world, under the vortex of forces unleashed by the internet, instantaneous global communication, smartphones, and social media, is undergoing the kind of change that occurs only rarely in history. The most obvious comparison is with the invention of printing in the mid-fifteenth century. Political systems can collapse under such disruptive innovation. The very nature of power is changing, becoming less centralized and more diffused. The democratic institutions we have inherited from the past were made for a different age and a slower pace of change. Technology moves fast, whereas the democratic process is slow. The problems we face today—economic, social, and environmental—are global, while our most effective political structures are at best national. It would be astonishing if our democratic structures were not strained under such circumstances."¹⁸⁰
- ❖ "A democratic vote does not in and of itself create a free society. For that you need other things as well: respect for minorities, justice and the impartial rule of law, a collective commitment to the common good and a delicate balance of rights and responsibilities."¹⁸¹
- ❖ "There is nothing natural about democracy. It's the legacy of two great ancient civilisations: Greece, that gave us the word 'democracy' itself, and the Judeo-Christian heritage, that

¹⁷⁸ *Future Tense* p. 179

¹⁷⁹ *Not in God's Name* pp. 229-230

¹⁸⁰ *Morality* pp. 119-120

¹⁸¹ *The Power of Ideas* pp. 25-26

said that we are all equally in the image and likeness of God and should therefore have an equal say in deciding our collective future.”¹⁸²

DIFFERENCE

- ❖ “It is in our difference that we are most Divine, and by respecting our differences we do most to bring God into the world.”¹⁸³
- ❖ “When difference leads to war, both sides lose. When it leads to mutual enrichment, both sides gain.”¹⁸⁴
- ❖ “Our very dignity as persons is rooted in the fact that none of us – not even genetically identical twins – is exactly like any other.”¹⁸⁵
- ❖ “The very fact that we are different means that what I lack, someone else has, and what someone else lacks, I have.”¹⁸⁶
- ❖ “The test of faith is whether I can make space for difference. Can I recognise God's image in someone who is not in my image, whose language, faith, ideals are different from mine? If I cannot, then I have made God in my image instead of allowing Him to remake me in His.”¹⁸⁷
- ❖ “To love God is to recognize His image in a human face, especially one whose creed, colour or culture is different from ours.”¹⁸⁸
- ❖ “I write as one who believes in the dignity of difference. If we were all the same, we would have nothing unique to contribute, nor anything to learn from others. The more diverse we are, the richer our culture becomes, and the more expansive our horizons of possibility. But that depends on our willingness to bring our differences as gifts to the common good. It requires integration rather than segregation, and that in turn means that we must have a rich and compelling sense of the common good. Without it, we will find that difference spells discord and creates, not music, but noise.”¹⁸⁹
- ❖ “What makes us different is what we are; what unites us is what we do.”¹⁹⁰
- ❖ “Judaism's great contribution to humanity [has been] to show that one can be other, and still human, still a loyal and active citizen, still make contributions to every field of human endeavour, still be loved by God and held precious in his sight.”¹⁹¹
- ❖ “The only adequate response to the fear and hatred of difference is to honour the dignity of difference. That is the Jewish message to the world.”¹⁹²
- ❖ “We are all different, but we each carry in our being the trace of the one God.”¹⁹³

¹⁸² *The Power of Ideas* p. 36

¹⁸³ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 88

¹⁸⁴ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 23

¹⁸⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 47

¹⁸⁶ *The Dignity of Difference* pp. 100-101

¹⁸⁷ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 201

¹⁸⁸ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 144

¹⁸⁹ *The Home We Build Together* p. 10

¹⁹⁰ *The Home We Build Together* p. 16

¹⁹¹ *Future Tense* p. 111

¹⁹² *Future Tense* p. 111

¹⁹³ *Not in God's Name* p. 172

- ❖ “Humanity lives suspended between the twin facts of commonality and difference. *If we were completely unlike, we would be unable to communicate. If we were completely alike, we would have nothing to say.*”¹⁹⁴
- ❖ “It’s the people not like us who make us grow.”¹⁹⁵
- ❖ “Every time we hold out the hand of friendship to somebody not like us, whose class or creed or color are different from ours, we heal one of the fractures of our wounded world.”¹⁹⁶
- ❖ “After the Flood, [God] taught Noah and through him all humanity, that we should think, not of ourselves but of the human other as in the image of God. That is the only way to save ourselves from violence and self-destruction. This really is a life-changing idea. It means that the greatest religious challenge is: Can I see God’s image in one who is not in my image – whose colour, class, culture or creed is different from mine?”¹⁹⁷
- ❖ “Next time we meet someone radically unlike us, we should try seeing difference not as a threat but as an enlarging, possibility-creating gift.”¹⁹⁸

DIFFERENCE ACROSS FAITHS

- ❖ “We have to learn to speak to those we do not hope to convert, but with whom we wish to live.”¹⁹⁹
- ❖ “Faiths are like languages. There are many of them, and they are not reducible to one another. In order to express myself at all, I must acquire a mastery of my own language... But as I venture out into the world I discover that there are other people who have different languages which I must learn if we are to communicate across borders.”²⁰⁰
- ❖ “We have great difficulty in recognising the integrity – indeed the sanctity – of those who are not in our image, whose faith and traditions and culture and language are not like ours. None the less we are told, and must struggle to see, that the wholly other, he or she who is not in our image, is yet in God’s image.”²⁰¹
- ❖ “There is one God, and there are many faiths. That tells us that God is bigger than religion, even though we need religion to speak to God. Religions are like languages. The existence of English does not refute, replace or supersede the existence of French, Italian or Urdu. Each language preserves a unique set of sensibilities. There are things you can say in one that you cannot translate, without loss, into others. That is why we are enlarged by their multiplicity and would be impoverished if one disappeared. Nonetheless, they describe the same reality, as religions reach out to the one God. They do not, should not, threaten one another. To believe otherwise is to mistake religion for God.”²⁰²

¹⁹⁴ *Not in God’s Name* p. 205

¹⁹⁵ *Morality* p. xv

¹⁹⁶ *Morality* p. 325

¹⁹⁷ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 11

¹⁹⁸ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 12

¹⁹⁹ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 64

²⁰⁰ *Faith in the Future* p. 79

²⁰¹ *Faith in the Future* p. 81

²⁰² *Celebrating Life* p. 155

- ❖ “The great challenge to religions in a global age is whether, at last, they can make space for one another, recognizing God’s image in someone who is not in my image, God’s voice when it speaks in someone else’s language.”²⁰³
- ❖ “The multiplicity of faiths is not a tragedy but the gift of God, who is closer to us than we are to ourselves and yet lives in lives quite different from ours.”²⁰⁴
- ❖ “Since mankind in its diversity cannot be reduced to a single image, so God cannot be reduced to a single faith or language. God exists in difference and thus chooses as His witness a people dedicated to difference.”²⁰⁵
- ❖ “Judaism argues that despite the irreducible differences between faith and cultures, all people are the children of one God.”²⁰⁶
- ❖ “Nature, and humanly constructed societies, economies and politics, are systems of ordered complexity. That is what makes them creative and unpredictable. Any attempt to impose on them an artificial uniformity in the name of a single culture or faith, represents a tragic misunderstanding of what it takes for a system to flourish. Because we are different, we each have something unique to contribute, and every contribution counts.”²⁰⁷
- ❖ “The supreme religious challenge is to see God’s image in one who is not in our image.”²⁰⁸
- ❖ “The faith of Israel declares the oneness of God and the plurality of man.”²⁰⁹
- ❖ “Nothing has proved harder in the history of civilization than to see God, or good, or human dignity in those whose language is not mine, whose skin is a different colour, whose faith is not my faith and whose truth is not my truth.”²¹⁰
- ❖ “Those who are confident in their faith are not threatened but enlarged by the different faith of others.”²¹¹
- ❖ “Because we are different we each have something unique to give – not to ourselves and our communities alone but to all of us and the life we share. This means integration without assimilation. There are, and will continue to be, Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and all the other shades of the rainbow. But what we make, we make together.”²¹²

DIGNITY OF DISSENT

- ❖ “Judaism is about diffused responsibility, making each individual count, building a cohesive nation on the basis of a shared vision, educating people to their full potential, and valuing honest argument and the dignity of dissent.”²¹³
- ❖ “A free society depends on the dignity of dissent. Judaism itself is predicated on this principle. That is what is happening in the biblical dialogues between heaven and earth,

²⁰³ *Celebrating Life* p. 155

²⁰⁴ *Celebrating Life* p. 158

²⁰⁵ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 72

²⁰⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 91

²⁰⁷ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 22

²⁰⁸ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 60

²⁰⁹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 60

²¹⁰ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 65

²¹¹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 66

²¹² *The Home We Build Together* p. 22

²¹³ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 130

and the rabbinic dialogues between Hillel and Shammai and their descendants. Dismiss a contrary view and you impoverish the entire culture. The book of Job is not about whether Job is right or wrong in his complaint about the injustice he feels has been done to him. Its purpose is to show that he has the right to speak, to challenge God, to be heard and (in some sense) to be answered. William Safire, a political journalist, perceptively called his book on Job *The First Dissident*. A healthy culture protects places that welcome argument and respect dissenting views. Enter them and you will grow, others will grow, and you will do great things together. But resist with all your heart and soul any attempt to substitute power for truth. And stay far from people, movements, and parties that demonize their opponents. As Barack Obama said: “If all you’re doing is casting stones, you’re probably not going to get that far.”²¹⁴

- ❖ “When you learn to listen to views different from your own, realizing that they are not threatening but enlarging, then you have discovered the life-changing idea of argument for the sake of Heaven.”²¹⁵
- ❖ “Judaism does not silence dissent; to the contrary, it dignifies it. This was institutionalized in the biblical era in the form of the prophets who spoke truth to power. In the rabbinic era it lived in the culture of argument evident on every page of the Mishna, Talmud and their commentaries. In the contemporary State of Israel, argumentativeness is part of the very texture of its democratic freedom, in the strongest possible contrast to much of the rest of the Middle East...If you seek to learn, grow, pursue truth, and find freedom, seek places that welcome argument and respect dissenting views.”²¹⁶

DIVERSITY

- ❖ “The conceptual structure of Judaism, with its belief in one God and many faiths, is as near as we have yet come to a world view that does justice to diversity while at the same time acknowledging the universal human condition.”²¹⁷
- ❖ “One of the most profound religious truths Judaism ever articulated was that God loves diversity; He does not ask us to serve Him in the same way.”²¹⁸
- ❖ “The proposition at the heart of monotheism is not what it has traditionally been taken to be: one God, therefore one faith, one truth, one way. To the contrary, it is that unity creates diversity. The glory of the created world is its astonishing multiplicity: the thousands of different languages spoken by mankind, the hundreds of faiths, the proliferation of cultures, the sheer variety of the imaginative expressions of the human spirit, in most of which, if we listen carefully, we will hear the voice of God telling us something we need to know. That is what I mean by the dignity of difference.”²¹⁹
- ❖ “Biblical monotheism is not the idea that there is one God and therefore one truth, one faith, one way of life. On the contrary, it is the idea that unity creates diversity.”²²⁰

²¹⁴ *Morality* p. 199

²¹⁵ *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* p. 69

²¹⁶ *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* p. 213

²¹⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 97

²¹⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* pgs. 216-217

²¹⁹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 21

²²⁰ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 53

- ❖ “Judaism is about the miracle of unity that creates diversity.”²²¹
- ❖ “Just as the natural environment depends of biodiversity, so the human environment depends on cultural diversity, because no one creed has a monopoly on spiritual truth; no one civilization encompasses all the spiritual, ethical and artistic expressions of mankind.”²²²
- ❖ “The miracle of creation is that unity in heaven creates diversity on earth.”²²³
- ❖ “The glory of creation is that unity in heaven creates diversity on earth. God wants every human life to be unique.”²²⁴
- ❖ “To present the diversity of a *tzibbur* with the unity of purpose of an *edab* – that is the challenge of *kehillah*-formation, community-building, itself the greatest task of a great leader.”²²⁵
- ❖ “When a single culture is imposed on all, suppressing the diversity of languages and traditions, this is an assault on our God-given differences.”²²⁶
- ❖ “*Shalom* is the harmonious coexistence of otherwise conflicting individuals, tribes, and nations, each with their distinctive nature and unique contribution to the totality of humankind. *Shalom* is thus not uniformity but *integrated diversity*.”²²⁷

DREAMS

- ❖ “Never be afraid to let your imagination soar. When people come to me for advice about leadership I tell them to give themselves the time and space and imagination to dream. In dreams we discover our passion, and following our passion is the best way to live a rewarding life.”²²⁸
- ❖ “When students ask me for advice about their careers, I tell them that the most important thing is to dream. Dream about what you would like to do, to be, to achieve. Dream about the chapter you would like to write in the story of our people. Dream about what difference you would like to make to the world... Dreams... are where we start thinking about the future. They signal the direction of our journey.”²²⁹
- ❖ “Dreams are where we visit the many lands and landscapes of human possibility and discover the one where we feel at home.”²³⁰
- ❖ “I believe the best way to stay young is never to forget “the devotion of our youth,” the defining experiences that made us who we are, the dreams we had long ago of how we might change the world to make it a better, fairer, more spiritually beautiful place.”²³¹

²²¹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 54

²²² *The Dignity of Difference* p. 62

²²³ *Future Tense* p. 213

²²⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 150

²²⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 288

²²⁶ *Not in God's Name* p. 193

²²⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 103

²²⁸ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 49

²²⁹ *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* p. 189

²³⁰ *The Power of Ideas* p. 121

²³¹ *I Believe* p. 307

DUALISM

- ❖ “Dualism is the single most effective doctrine in persuading good people to do evil things.”²³²
- ❖ “The most powerful antidote to dualism is monotheism, best defined in a verse in Isaiah (45:7): ‘I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster [*ra*, literally ‘evil’]; I, the Lord, do all these things.’ By refusing to split light and dark, good and evil, into separate forces or entities, monotheism forces us to wrestle with the ambiguities of our own character, the necessity for moral choice and the inescapability of personal responsibility. Dualism relieves us of all these burdens. It is the supreme betrayal of monotheism.”²³³
- ❖ “*Dualism is what happens when cognitive dissonance becomes unbearable, when the world as it is, is simply too unlike the world as we believed it ought to be.*”²³⁴
- ❖ “Dualism entered Judaism and Christianity when it became easier to attribute the sufferings of the world to an evil force rather than to the work of God.”²³⁵
- ❖ “*The most profound moralising experience, the only one capable of defeating dualism, is to undergo role reversal. Imagine a Crusader in the Middle Ages, or a German in 1939, discovering that he is a Jew. There can be no more life-changing trial than finding yourself on the other side.*”²³⁶

ECOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- ❖ “For some years we have known that unrestricted pursuit of economic growth has devastated our physical environment. Pollution, waste and the depletion of natural resources have disturbed that ‘natural strip of soil, air and water... in which we live and move and have our being.’ No one intended it. It happened. But having happened, we can no longer ignore it... But as well as a physical ecology, we also inhabit a moral ecology, that network of beliefs, relationships and virtues within which we think, act and discover meaning. For the greater part of human history it has had a religious foundation. But for the past two centuries, in societies like Britain, that basis of belief has been profoundly eroded. And we know too much about ecological systems to suppose that you can remove one element and have the rest unchanged. There is, if you like, a God-shaped hole in our ozone layer. And it is time that we thought about moral ecology too.”²³⁷
- ❖ “There have been protests... against the erosion of the natural environment.. but there has been no equivalent protest at the erosion of our human environment, the world of relationships into which we bring our children. How, I have often asked, can we devote

²³² *The Great Partnership* p. 256

²³³ *The Great Partnership* p. 257

²³⁴ *Not in God's Name* p. 48

²³⁵ *Not in God's Name* p. 49

²³⁶ *Not in God's Name* p. 152

²³⁷ *The Persistence of Faith* pp. 26-27

our energies to saving planet earth for the sake of future generations while neglecting our own children who are our future generations?”²³⁸

- ❖ “We should expand our horizons of environmental responsibility for the sake of generations not yet born, and for the sake of God whose guests on earth we are.”²³⁹
- ❖ “Giving testimony in the British House of Commons on July 9, 2019, the naturalist Sir David Attenborough called for a moral transformation in attitudes to the natural environment similar to the one that took place in relation to slavery in the nineteenth century. There was a time when slavery was considered normal; then it became unacceptable. The same has to become true, he said, about the human degradation of the environment. What makes climate change so significant in this context is that it highlights the fatal weakness of an I-centered culture, where the major institutions of the market and the state are the only recognized authorities. The market is predominantly focused on short-term profit, not long-term responsibility. There are market-based solutions to environmental problems, but they involve government intervention. They are rarely arrived at by the market left to its own devices.”²⁴⁰
- ❖ “We need to recover a sense of limits because, in our uncontrolled search for ever-greater affluence, we are endangering the future of the planet and betraying our responsibility to generations not yet born.”²⁴¹

ECONOMICS & THE MARKET

- ❖ “Consumption is a poor candidate for salvation.”²⁴²
- ❖ “The only thing that makes social or economic trends inevitable is the belief that they are. The unfolding drama of the twenty-first century is one of which we are the co-writers of the script. It can be turned this way or that by collective consent. Our aim must be to settle for nothing else than an economic system that maximises human dignity. We must hand on to future generations a more gracious, less capricious and inequitable world.”²⁴³
- ❖ “If anything has a moral dimension, economics does.”²⁴⁴
- ❖ “Unlike the battlefield, the market is an arena in which both sides can win.”²⁴⁵
- ❖ “Markets depend on virtues not produced by the market, just as states depend on virtues not created by the state.”²⁴⁶
- ❖ “Man was not made for the service of economies; economies were made to serve mankind; and men and women were made - so I believe - to serve one another, not just themselves. We may not survive while others drown; we may not feast while others starve; we are not free when others are in servitude; we are not well when billions languish in disease and premature death.”²⁴⁷

²³⁸ *Faith in the Future* p. 25

²³⁹ *Essays on Ethics* p. 304

²⁴⁰ *Morality* p. 158

²⁴¹ *I Believe* p. 153

²⁴² *The Dignity of Difference* p. 40

²⁴³ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 86

²⁴⁴ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 88

²⁴⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 103

²⁴⁶ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 152

²⁴⁷ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 196

- ❖ “The market economy depends on moral virtues that are not themselves produced by the market, and may be undermined by the market itself.”²⁴⁸
- ❖ “The market economy has generated more real wealth, eliminated more poverty, and liberated more human creativity than any other economic system. The fault is not with the market itself, but with the idea that the market alone is all we need. Markets do not guarantee equity, responsibility, or integrity. They can maximize short-term gain at the cost of long-term sustainability. They cannot be relied upon to distribute rewards fairly. They cannot guarantee honesty. When confronted with flagrant self-interest, they combine the maximum of temptation with the maximum of opportunity. Markets need morals, and morals are not made by markets. They are made by schools, the media, custom, tradition, religious leaders, moral role models, and the influence of people. But when religion loses its voice and the media worship success, when right and wrong become relativized and all talk of morality is condemned as “judgmental,” when people lose all sense of honor and shame and there is nothing they will not do if they can get away with it, no regulation will save us. People will continually outwit the regulators, as they did by the so-called securitization of risk that meant no one knew who owed what to whom. Markets were made to serve us; we were not made to serve markets. Economics needs ethics. Markets do not survive by market forces alone. They depend on respect for the people affected by our decisions. Lose that and we will lose not just money and jobs but something more significant still: freedom, trust, and decency, the things that have a value, not a price.”²⁴⁹
- ❖ “Markets need morals. We tend to forget that the keywords of a market economy are deeply religious. Credit comes from the Latin *credo*, meaning ‘I believe’. Confidence comes from the Latin from ‘shared faith’. Trust is a religious and moral concept.”²⁵⁰

EDUCATION, SCHOOLS & TEACHERS

- ❖ “Moral education is not simply learning to make choices. It is becoming part of a community with a particular tradition, history and way of life.”²⁵¹
- ❖ “A generation of young Jews, those who grew up in the 1970s and 1980s, has been liberally exposed to literature, films and lectures about the Holocaust, and it is this generation which is choosing to marry out of Judaism at the rate of one in two. The reason is not hard to find. As one Holocaust historian, disturbed by the obsessive interest in the Shoah, put it: our children will learn about the Greeks and how they lived, the Romans and how they lived, and the Jews and how they died. Unlike traditional Jewish education, Holocaust education in itself offers no meaning, no hope, no way of life.”²⁵²
- ❖ “The fate of the Jews in the diaspora was, is and predictably will be, determined by their commitment to Jewish education.”²⁵³

²⁴⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 46

²⁴⁹ *Morality* p. 101

²⁵⁰ *The Power of Ideas* p. 151

²⁵¹ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 44

²⁵² *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* p. 45

²⁵³ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* p. 47

- ❖ “About a year ago I received an invitation to lunch with the Prime Minister... At the same time I received an invitation to take part in the opening ceremony of a new Jewish school in London. Both events were on the same day, at roughly the same time. I could not attend both. Which took precedence?... Governments sustain society, but education sustains the world. On that occasion I regretfully declined the Prime Minister’s invitation and opened the school.”²⁵⁴
- ❖ “Morality is taught by being lived. It is learned by doing.”²⁵⁵
- ❖ “To defend a land, you need an army. But to defend freedom, you need education. You need families and schools to ensure that your ideals are passed on to the next generation and never lost, or despaired of, or obscured. The citadels of liberty are houses of study. Its heroes are teachers, its passion is education and the life of the mind. Moses realized that a people achieves immortality not by building temples or mausoleums, but by engraving their values on the hearts of their children, and they on theirs, and so on until the end of time.”²⁵⁶
- ❖ “One of the most stunning gestures of Judaism was to overturn the whole idea of a hierarchy of knowledge, for if there are inequalities of learning, they will be replicated through all other social structures, giving some people unwarranted power over others. This is the great insight of the Jewish vision, from which all else followed: A free society must be an educated society, and a society of equal dignity must be one in which education is universal.”²⁵⁷
- ❖ “A free society - that precarious balance between the conflicting principles of liberty and order - exists not through the rule of law alone, but through a system of education that allows every individual to internalize the law and thus become its master, not its slave.”²⁵⁸
- ❖ “To defend a country, you need an army. But to defend an identity, you need a school. Judaism is the religion of the book, not the sword.”²⁵⁹
- ❖ “Education is the single greatest key to human dignity.”²⁶⁰
- ❖ “Education – the ability not merely to read and write but to master and apply information and have open access to knowledge – is essential to human dignity. I have suggested that it is the basis of a free society. Because knowledge is power, equal access to knowledge is a precondition of equal access to power.”²⁶¹
- ❖ “Throughout the centuries, when the vast majority of Europe was illiterate, Jews maintained an educational infrastructure as their highest priority. It is no exaggeration to say that this lay at the heart of the Jewish ability to survive catastrophe, negotiate change and flourish in difficult circumstances.”²⁶²
- ❖ “Jewry is one of the paradigm cases of a group that predicated the idea of a society of equal human dignity not on the distribution of wealth or power but on access to education; and it worked.”²⁶³

²⁵⁴ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* p. 52

²⁵⁵ *Faith in the Future* p. 14

²⁵⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* pgs. 32-33

²⁵⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* pgs. 125-126

²⁵⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 129

²⁵⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 156

²⁶⁰ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 15

²⁶¹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 137

²⁶² *The Dignity of Difference* p. 139

²⁶³ *The Dignity of Difference* pp. 139-140

- ❖ “To defend a land you need an army, but to defend freedom you need education. You need parents, families and homes and a constant conversation between the generations. Above all you need memory – the kind of memory that never forgets the bread of affliction and the bitter herbs of slavery.”²⁶⁴
- ❖ “To defend a country, you need an army. But to defend humanity, you need education.”²⁶⁵
- ❖ “Long ago the Jewish people came to the conclusion that to defend a country you need an army. But to defend a civilization you need schools. The single most important social institution is the place where we hand on our values to the next generation – where we tell our children where we’ve come from, what ideals we fought for, and what we learned on the way. Schools are where we make children our partners in the long and open-ended task of making a more gracious world.”²⁶⁶
- ❖ “Teachers open our eyes to the world. They give us curiosity and confidence. They teach us to ask questions. They connect us to our past and future. They’re the guardians of our social heritage. We have lots of heroes today – sportsmen, supermodels, media personalities. They come, they have their fifteen minutes of fame, and they go. But the influence of good teachers stays with us. They are the people who really shape our life.”²⁶⁷
- ❖ “Why, generally, have faith schools become so popular in a profoundly secular society? One can only speculate. But the following might reflect the thoughts of many traditionally minded parents. The wider society is no longer congruent with our values. We do not want our children taught by fashionable methods that leave them bereft of knowledge and skills. We do not want them to have self-esteem at the cost of self-respect, won by hard work and genuine achievement. We do not want them to be taught that every difference of behaviour reflects an equally valid lifestyle. We do not want them to be moral relativists, tourists in all cultures, at home in none. We do not want to take the risk of our children taking drugs or alcohol or becoming sexually promiscuous, still less becoming teenage mothers (or fathers). Many parents do not want there to be a massive gap between their children’s values and their own. They do not want moral values undermined by a secular, sceptical, cynical culture. Nor do they believe that the countervailing influences of place of worship, supplementary schooling and home will be enough. For the values of the wider secular culture are not confined to school. They are present in the every-more-intrusive media of television, the internet, YouTube...and the icons of popular culture.”²⁶⁸
- ❖ “The invention of the alphabet was the birth of the possibility of universal literacy and the beginning of the end of hierarchical societies.”²⁶⁹
- ❖ “There is only one way to change the world, and that is through education. Children must be taught the importance of justice, righteousness, kindness, and compassion. They must learn that freedom can only be sustained by the laws and habits of self-restraint. They must be reminded of the lessons of history, “We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt,” because those who forget the bitterness of slavery eventually lose the commitment and courage to fight for freedom. And they must be empowered to ask, challenge, and argue.”²⁷⁰

²⁶⁴ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 14

²⁶⁵ *From Optimism to Hope* pp. 123-124

²⁶⁶ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 131

²⁶⁷ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 132

²⁶⁸ *The Home We Build Together* p. 83

²⁶⁹ *The Great Partnership* p. 42

²⁷⁰ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 75

- ❖ “As Chief Rabbi, I often visited old-age homes, and it was in one of these that I met Florence. She was 103, going on 104, yet she had about her the air of a young woman. She was bright, eager, full of life. Her eyes shone with a delight in being alive. I asked her for the secret of eternal youth. With a smile she said, “Never be afraid to learn something new.” That was when I discovered that if you are prepared to learn something new, you can be 103 and still young. If you are not prepared to learn something new, you can be twenty-three and already old.”²⁷¹
- ❖ “God wants us to keep His laws freely and voluntarily because we understand them. Hence the unique insistence, throughout the Torah, on the importance of education as the constant conversation between the generations.”²⁷²
- ❖ “The poet Shelley famously said, “Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.” In truth, though, it is not poets but teachers who shape society, handing on the legacy of the past to those who build the future.”²⁷³
- ❖ “If we truly wish to hand on our legacy to our children, we must teach them to love it. The most important element of any education is not learning facts or skills but learning what to love. What we love, we inherit. What we fail to love, we lose.”²⁷⁴
- ❖ “Teachers deserve our highest respect. They are the guardians of our civilisation, the trustees of our collective future.”²⁷⁵
- ❖ “Schools teach us theories and facts. They help us answer the question, ‘What do I know?’ Schools teach us skills. They help us answer the question, ‘What can I do?’ But they also teach us the story of our nation, what freedom is and how it was fought for, and what battles those who came before us had to fight. They help us to answer the question: ‘Who am I? Of what story or stories am I a part? And how then shall I live?’ They teach us about keeping faith with the past while honouring our obligations to the future. At best, they teach us collective responsibility for the common good.”²⁷⁶
- ❖ “To defend a country you need an army. But to defend a civilisation you need schools. You need education as the conversation between the generations.”²⁷⁷
- ❖ “Whatever you see to create in the world, start with education. If you want to create a just and compassionate society, start with education. If you want to create a society of equal dignity, ensure that education is free and equal to all.”²⁷⁸
- ❖ “If you want to come close to Heaven, don’t search for kings, priests, saints or even prophets. They may be great, but a fine teacher helps *you* to become great, and that is a different thing altogether.”²⁷⁹

EMPATHY

²⁷¹ *Lessons in Leadership* pp. 301-302

²⁷² *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 191

²⁷³ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 23

²⁷⁴ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 232

²⁷⁵ *The Power of Ideas* p. 111

²⁷⁶ *The Power of Ideas* p. 187

²⁷⁷ *The Power of Ideas* p. 207

²⁷⁸ *I Believe* p. 197

²⁷⁹ *I Believe* p. 251

- ❖ “I have argued, in *Not in God's Name*, that empathy is structured into the way the Torah tells certain stories – about Hagar and Ishmael when they are sent away into the desert, about Esau when he enters his father's presence to receive his blessing only to find that Jacob has taken it, and about Leah's feelings when she realises that Jacob loves Rachel more. These stories *force us into recognising the humanity of the other*, the seemingly unloved, unchosen, rejected. Indeed, it may be that *this is why the Torah tells us these stories in the first place*. The Torah is essentially a book of law. Why then contain narrative at all? Because law without empathy equals justice without compassion.”²⁸⁰
- ❖ “Empathy is not a lightweight, touchy-feely, add-on extra to the moral life. It is an essential element in conflict resolution. People who have suffered pain often respond by inflicting pain on others. The result is violence, sometimes emotional, sometimes physical, at times directed against individuals, at others, against whole groups. The only genuine non-violent alternative is to enter into the pain of the other in such a way as to ensure that the other knows that he, she, or they have been understood, their humanity recognised, and their dignity affirmed.”²⁸¹

EMUNAH

- ❖ “*Emunah* is not faith contemplated but faith realised in life, by the way we live.”²⁸²
- ❖ “*Emunah* means that I take your hand and you take mine and we walk together across the unknown country called the future. It is what I call a covenantal relationship. That is our relationship with God. It is also the relationship of marriage.”²⁸³
- ❖ “The biblical word *emuna*, usually translated as “faith,” does not mean this at all. It is not a cognitive attribute, meaning something you believe to be true. It belongs to an entirely different sphere of discourse. It is a moral attribute and means faithfulness, as in a marriage. Faith in the Hebrew Bible is the story of a love – the love of God for creation, for humanity, and for a particular family, the children of Abraham, a love full of passion but one that is not always, or even often, reciprocated. Sometimes, as in the Mosaic books, it is described like the relationship between a parent and a child. At other times, particularly in the prophetic literature, it is envisaged as the love between a husband and an often faithless wife. But it is never less than love.”²⁸⁴
- ❖ “The Hebrew word *emuna* is usually translated as “faith”... But in Tanakh it does not have that meaning. It is not a cognitive term but a moral one.”²⁸⁵
- ❖ “Because the Bible entered Western civilization through the medium of Greek, and because to the Greeks the highest vocation was the pursuit of knowledge, we have for centuries thought of faith as a kind of knowledge, intuitive, visionary perhaps, but cognitive. On this view, to have faith is to know, or believe, certain facts about the world. [However], that is not the Jewish view at all. *Emunah* is about relationship. It is that bond

²⁸⁰ *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* p. 94

²⁸¹ *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* p. 94

²⁸² *Community of Faith* p. 129

²⁸³ *Celebrating Life* p. 89

²⁸⁴ *Essays on Ethics* pp. xxvii-xxviii

²⁸⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 299

by which two persons, each respecting the freedom and integrity of the other, pledge themselves by an oath of loyalty to stay together.”²⁸⁶

ENCOURAGEMENT

- ❖ “To help others become what they can be is to give birth to creativity in someone else’s soul.”²⁸⁷
- ❖ “Not all of us can paint like Monet or compose like Mozart. But we each have gifts, capacities that can lie dormant throughout life until someone awakens them. We can achieve heights of which we never thought ourselves capable. All it takes is for us *to meet someone who believes in us, challenges us, and then, when we have responded to the challenge, blesses and celebrates our achievements.*”²⁸⁸
- ❖ “Those who are a source of strength to others need their own source of strength.”²⁸⁹
- ❖ “Many years ago, at the beginning of my rabbinical career, I kept waiting for a word of encouragement from a senior rabbinical figure. I was working hard, trying to innovate approaches, seeking new ways of getting people engaged in Jewish life and learning. You need support at such moments, because taking risks and suffering the inevitable criticism is emotionally draining. The encouragement never came. The silence hurt. It ate, like acid, into my heart. Then in a lightning-flash of insight, I thought: What if I turn the entire scenario around. What if, instead of waiting for Rabbi X to encourage me, I encouraged him? What if I did for him what I was hoping he would do for me? That was a life-changing moment. It gave me a strength I never had before. I began to formulate it as an ethic. Don’t wait to be praised: Praise others. Don’t wait to be respected: Respect others. Don’t stand on the sidelines, criticising others. Do something yourself to make things better. Don’t wait for the world to change: Begin the process yourself, and then win others to the cause.”²⁹⁰

ENVY

- ❖ “Most people in the West tend to rate their wellbeing not on an absolute scale, but relative to others. Given the choice between earning \$50,000 a year in a society where the average wage is \$30,000, or earning \$100,000 a year in a society in which the average wage is \$200,000, most prefer the former. This is symptomatic of the force driving consumerism, namely envy, whose strange logic consists of letting someone else’s happiness spoil mine. Envy is the art of counting other people’s blessings. The fastest route to happiness is precisely the opposite: not thinking of what others have and we do not, but instead thanking God for what we do have, and sharing some of that with others.”²⁹¹

²⁸⁶ *Marriage is a song for two voices in harmony*

²⁸⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 27

²⁸⁸ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 118

²⁸⁹ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 215

²⁹⁰ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* pp. 290-291

²⁹¹ *The Great Partnership* pp. 201-202

- ❖ “Envy is the failure to understand the principle of creation as set out in Genesis 1, that everything has its place in the scheme of things. Each of us has our own task and our own blessings, and we are each loved and cherished by God. Live by these truths and there is order. Abandon them and there is chaos. Nothing is more pointless and destructive than letting someone else’s happiness diminish your own, which is what envy is and does.”²⁹²
- ❖ “Consumer societies are built on the creation and intensification of envy, which is why they lead to people having more and enjoying it less.”²⁹³

EVIL

- ❖ “All it takes for evil to happen is for intelligent men to anaesthetize the moral sense of a generation.”²⁹⁴
- ❖ “Judaism is not faith as illusion, seeing the world through rose-tinted lenses as we would wish it to be. It is faith as relentless honesty, seeing evil as evil and fighting it in the name of life, and good, and God.”²⁹⁵
- ❖ “The way we learn not to commit evil is to experience an event from the perspective of the victim.”²⁹⁶
- ❖ “Evil never dies, and – like liberty – it demands constant vigilance.”²⁹⁷
- ❖ “Technically, humans have excelled. Morally they have failed and continue to fail. For freedom is a double-edged sword. The freedom to do good is inseparable from the freedom to do harm, to commit sin, to practice evil. The problem of evil is *the* problem of humanity.”²⁹⁸

EXTREMISM & FUNDAMENTALISM

- ❖ “We have not yet reflected sufficiently on how to renew our religious commitments and with them our most basic social institutions, and that in an age of transition there is a great danger of secular and religious extremisms creating conflicts for which we are ill prepared.”²⁹⁹
- ❖ “Fundamentalism is the belief that timeless religious texts can be translated directly into the time-bound human situation, as if nothing significant has change. But something has changed: our capacity for destruction and the risk that conflict will harm the innocent.”³⁰⁰
- ❖ “Living traditions constantly interpret their canonical texts. That is what makes fundamentalism – text without interpretation – an act of violence against tradition. In fact,

²⁹² *Essays on Ethics* p. 108

²⁹³ *Essays on Ethics* p. 108

²⁹⁴ *The Home We Build Together* p. 47

²⁹⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 241

²⁹⁶ *Not in God’s Name* p. 158

²⁹⁷ *Essays on Ethics* p. 102

²⁹⁸ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 36

²⁹⁹ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 20

³⁰⁰ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 81

fundamentalists and today's atheists share the same approach to texts. They read them directly and literally, ignoring the single most important fact about a sacred text, namely that its meaning is not self-evident. It has a history and an authority of its own. Every religion must guard against a literal reading of its hard texts if it is not to betray God's deeper purposes."³⁰¹

- ❖ "What is wrong with the word 'fundamentalism' is its assumption that the fundamentals of faith are dangerous. On the contrary, religions become dangerous when we forget their fundamentals."³⁰²
- ❖ "If the voice of reconciliation does not speak, the voices of extremism will."³⁰³

FAILURE/FAILURES

- ❖ "Creativity without failure is like being lifted to the top of a mountain without the climb. It may be fun, but it is not an achievement."³⁰⁴
- ❖ "Each of us knows from personal experience that events that seemed disappointing, painful, even humiliating at that time, can be the most important in our lives. Through them we learned how to try harder next time; or they taught us a truth about ourselves; or they shifted our life into a new and more fruitful direction. We learn, not from our successes but from our failures. We mature and grow strong and become more understanding and forgiving through the mistakes we make. A protected life is a fragile and superficial life."³⁰⁵
- ❖ "The great human beings are not those who never fail. They are those who survive failure, who keep on going, who refuse to be defeated, who never give up or give in. They keep trying. They learn from every mistake. They treat failure as a learning experience. And from every refusal to be defeated, they become stronger, wiser, and more determined."³⁰⁶
- ❖ "We learn by making mistakes. We live life forwards, but we understand it only looking back. Only then do we see the wrong turns we inadvertently made. This discovery is sometimes our greatest moment of moral truth."³⁰⁷
- ❖ "The distance between who we are and who we ought to be is, for most of us, vast. We fail. We fall. We give in to temptation. We drift into bad habits. We say or do things in anger we later deeply regret. We deeply disappoint those who had faith in us. We betray those who trusted us. We lose friends. Sometimes our deepest relationships can fall apart. We experience frustration, shame, humiliation, remorse. We let others down. We let ourselves down. These things are not rare. They happen to all of us, even the greatest. One of the most powerful features of biblical narrative is that its portraits are not idealized. Its heroes are human. They too have their moments of self-doubt. They too sin."³⁰⁸

³⁰¹ *The Great Partnership* p. 254

³⁰² *The Power of Ideas* p. 66

³⁰³ *The Power of Ideas* p. 4

³⁰⁴ *Celebrating Life* p. 33

³⁰⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* pp. 232-233

³⁰⁶ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 69

³⁰⁷ *Essays on Ethics* p. 39

³⁰⁸ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 27

- ❖ “Better to fail while striving greatly than not to strive at all.”³⁰⁹
- ❖ “When we grow through our failures, we become greater than those who never failed.”³¹⁰
- ❖ “Even the greatest human beings made mistakes, failed as often as they succeeded, and had moments of black despair. What made them great was not that they were perfect but that they kept going. They learned from every error, refused to give up hope, and eventually acquired the great gift that only failure can grant, namely humility. They understood that life is about falling a hundred times and getting up again. It is about never losing your ideals even when you know how hard it is to change the world. It’s about getting up every morning and walking one more day towards the Promised Land even though you know you may never get there, but knowing also that you helped others get there.”³¹¹
- ❖ “The feeling of failure does not necessarily mean that you have failed. All it means is that you have not yet succeeded. Still less does it mean that *you are* a failure. To the contrary, failure comes to those who take risks; and the willingness to take risks is absolutely necessary if you seek, in however small a way, to change the world for the better.”³¹²
- ❖ “Moses believed he was a failure. That is worth remembering every time we think we are failures. His journey from despair to self-effacing strength is one of the great psychological narratives in the Torah, a timeless tutorial in hope.”³¹³
- ❖ “Success does not mean a life without failure. To the contrary, almost all the great figures in any field – arts, the sciences, business, and certainly the religious life – had more than their share of disasters. What marked them out was, first, their willingness to take risks, to experiment, and secondly, their ability to learn from failure rather than be defeated by it.”³¹⁴
- ❖ “Read the Bible and you will discover that Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, Jonah and Job all reached a point in their lives when they prayed to die. They felt they had failed. Yet their lives inspire us still, centuries later. They were among the great leaders of all time.”³¹⁵
- ❖ “Even more than the strength to win, we need the courage to try, the willingness to fail, the readiness to learn and the faith to persist.”³¹⁶
- ❖ “Any great undertaking comes with fear. Often we fear failure. Sometimes we even fear success. Are we worthy of it? Can we sustain it? We long for the security of the familiar, the life we have known. We are afraid of the unknown, the uncharted territory. And the journey itself exposes our vulnerability...Even the greatest people have felt fear. Courage is not fearlessness. It is, in the words of a well-known book title, feeling the fear but doing it anyway.”³¹⁷

FAITH

³⁰⁹ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 28

³¹⁰ *Ceremony & Celebration* pp. 37-38

³¹¹ *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* p. 306

³¹² *Studies in Spirituality* p. 188

³¹³ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 191

³¹⁴ *The Power of Ideas* p. 87

³¹⁵ *The Power of Ideas* p. 87

³¹⁶ *The Power of Ideas* p. 88

³¹⁷ *I Believe* p. 95

- ❖ “If the unredeemed are not, at some level, objects of moral concern, possessing independent integrity and rights, then faith itself becomes morally untenable.”³¹⁸
- ❖ “Faith is not measured by acts of worship alone. It exists in the relationships we create and it lies deep in our moral commitments.”³¹⁹
- ❖ “Faith is not certainty but the courage to live with and for God in the presence of uncertainty and to hear the voice of God even in the heart of the whirlwind.”³²⁰
- ❖ “For Judaism, the search for religious certainty through science or metaphysics is not merely fallacious but ultimately pagan. To suppose that God is scientifically provable is to identify God with what is observable, and this for Judaism is idolatry.”³²¹
- ❖ “There is such a thing as an ecology of hope, and it lies in restoring to our culture a sense of family, community and religious faith... If Judaism and the history of the Jewish people have a message for our time, it is surely this. Faith in the future changes lives and rebuilds the ruins of Jerusalem.”³²²
- ❖ “Creation testifies not merely to God’s power but also, as it were, to His belief in mankind. At the heart of religion is not just the faith we have in God. No less significant is the faith God has in us.”³²³
- ❖ “Faith is not a complex set of theological propositions. It is simpler and deeper than that. It is about not taking things for granted. It is a sustained discipline of meditation on the miracle of being.”³²⁴
- ❖ “The majesty of faith is that it teaches us to see what exists, not merely what catches our attention.”³²⁵
- ❖ “Faith is about the dignity of the personal and it can never be obsolete.”³²⁶
- ❖ “Faith is what redeems us from loneliness and humanizes the world.”³²⁷
- ❖ “The problem of faith is not God but mankind. The central task of religion is to create an opening in the soul.”³²⁸
- ❖ “Faith is the space we create for God.”³²⁹
- ❖ “Faith is not certainty. It is the courage to live with uncertainty. It is not knowing all the answers.”³³⁰
- ❖ “Faith is the ability to face the future knowing that we are loved and, being loved, find the power to love in return. Faith is a marriage; marriage is an act of faith.”³³¹
- ❖ “[Faith] is not about optimism but about courage, the courage to face an unknown future knowing that we are not alone, that God is with us, lifting us when we fall, signalling the way.”³³²

³¹⁸ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 177

³¹⁹ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 57

³²⁰ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 41

³²¹ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 258

³²² *Faith in the Future* p. 7

³²³ *Faith in the Future* p. 73

³²⁴ *Celebrating Life* p. 9

³²⁵ *Celebrating Life* p. 21

³²⁶ *Celebrating Life* p. 58

³²⁷ *Celebrating Life* p. 61

³²⁸ *Celebrating Life* p. 82

³²⁹ *Celebrating Life* p. 83

³³⁰ *Celebrating Life* p. 83

³³¹ *Celebrating Life* p. 89

³³² *Celebrating Life* p. 189

- ❖ “When Jews speak of life, they do so amidst memories of death. That is why, for me, faith is no simple, naïve, optimistic affirmation. It needs enormous strength, emotional and intellectual, to have faith in the human story.”³³³
- ❖ “Faith is born not in the answer but in the question, not in harmony but in dissonance.”³³⁴
- ❖ “For Judaism, faith is cognitive dissonance, the discord between the world that is and the world as it ought to be.”³³⁵
- ❖ “Jewish faith is the supreme expression of reality as it responds to and affirms the personal.”³³⁶
- ❖ “The faith of Israel declares the oneness of God and the plurality of man.”³³⁷
- ❖ “Faith is the call to human responsibility.”³³⁸
- ❖ “It is precisely those who challenge most strongly who are the great exemplars of faith.”³³⁹
- ❖ “Jewish faith is not primarily about creeds or theologies; it is not faith thought, but faith lived.”³⁴⁰
- ❖ “Faith is neither rational nor irrational. It is the courage to make a commitment to an Other, human or divine. It is the determination to turn “ought” into “is”. It is the willingness to listen to a voice not my own, and through hearing, find the strength to heal a fractured world. It is truth made real by how I live.”³⁴¹
- ❖ “Jewish faith is not about believing the world to be other than it is. It is not about ignoring the evil, the darkness and the pain. It is about courage, endurance and the capacity to hold fast to ideals even when they are ignored by others. It is the ability to see the world for what it is and yet still believe that it could be different. It is about not giving up, not letting go.”³⁴²
- ❖ “There are other cultures, other civilizations, other peoples, other faiths. Each has contributed something unique to the total experience of mankind. Each, from its own vantage point, has been chosen. But this is ours. This is our faith, our people, our heritage.”³⁴³
- ❖ “Jewish faith is not a metaphysical wager, a leap into the improbable. It is the courage to see the world as it is, without the comfort of myth or the self-pity of despair, knowing that the evil, cruelty and injustice it contains are neither inevitable nor meaningless but instead a call to human responsibility - a call emanating from the heart of existence itself.”³⁴⁴
- ❖ “The duty I owe my ancestors who died because of their faith is to build a world in which people no longer die because of their faith.”³⁴⁵
- ❖ “To have faith, as Judaism understands it, is to recognize God’s image in the weak, the powerless, the afflicted, the suffering, and then to fight for their cause.”³⁴⁶

³³³ *Celebrating Life* p. 176

³³⁴ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 54

³³⁵ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 55

³³⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 70

³³⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 91

³³⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 97

³³⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* pgs. 98-99

³⁴⁰ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 165

³⁴¹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* pgs. 165-166

³⁴² *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 182

³⁴³ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 206

³⁴⁴ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 214

³⁴⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 190

³⁴⁶ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 19

- ❖ “Faith is a form of attention. It is a sustained meditation on the miraculousness of what is, because it might not have been.”³⁴⁷
- ❖ “Faith doesn’t mean living with certainty. Faith is the courage to live with uncertainty, knowing that God is with us on that tough but necessary journey to a world that honours life and treasures peace.”³⁴⁸
- ❖ “Faith isn’t certainty. It’s the courage the live and even celebrate in the very heart of uncertainty, knowing that God is with us, giving us the strength to meet any challenge that undiscovered country called tomorrow may bring.”³⁴⁹
- ❖ “Behind the ethic of responsibility is the daring idea that more than we have faith in God, God has faith in us.”³⁵⁰
- ❖ “In Judaism, faith is not acceptance but protest, against the world that is, in the name of the world that is not yet but ought to be. Faith lies not in the answer but the question – and the greater the human being, the more intense the question.”³⁵¹
- ❖ “Faith does not mean certainty. It means the courage to live with uncertainty. It does not mean having the answers, it means having the courage to ask the questions and not let go of God, as he does not let go of us. It means realising that God creates divine justice but only we, acting in accord with his word, can create human justice – and our very existence means that this is what God wants us to do.”³⁵²
- ❖ “Faith is the refusal to let go until you have turned suffering into a blessing.”³⁵³
- ❖ “If I were to sum up what faith asks us to be, I would say: a healing presence.”³⁵⁴
- ❖ “The antidote to fear is faith, a faith that knows the dangers but never loses hope.”³⁵⁵
- ❖ “Jews kept faith alive. Faith kept the Jewish people alive.”³⁵⁶
- ❖ “Judaism is not an ethnicity, a culture, a set of folkways, a defiance of antisemitism or political correctness plus a *yarmulke* and Jewish jokes. It is a faith, and the people who are in a state of denial about this are Jews. It was as a faith that Jews were born as a people, and it is as a faith that Jews will survive as a people. Leave faith out of the Jewish equation and what is left is a body without a soul.”³⁵⁷
- ❖ “Faith, coerced, is not faith. Worship, forced, is not true worship. A Temple built by conscripted labour conflicts with the very nature of God to whom it is dedicated.”³⁵⁸
- ❖ “Faith does not render us invulnerable to tragedy but it gives us the strength to mourn and then, despite everything, to carry on.”³⁵⁹
- ❖ “Our task is to be true to our faith and a blessing to others, regardless of their faith.”³⁶⁰

³⁴⁷ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 130

³⁴⁸ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 66

³⁴⁹ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 72

³⁵⁰ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 12

³⁵¹ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 27

³⁵² *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 199

³⁵³ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 224

³⁵⁴ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 249

³⁵⁵ *Future Tense* p. 10

³⁵⁶ *Future Tense* p. 3

³⁵⁷ *Future Tense* p. 69

³⁵⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 197

³⁵⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 156

³⁶⁰ *Marble Arch Synagogue*

- ❖ “Faith begins with the search for meaning, because it is the discovery of meaning that creates human freedom and dignity. Finding God’s freedom, we discover our own.”³⁶¹
- ❖ “Faith is not a form of ‘knowing’ in the sense in which that word is used in science and philosophy. It is, in the Bible, a mode of listening.”³⁶²
- ❖ “There is no faith humans can have in God equal to the faith God must have in humankind to place us here as guardians of the vastness and splendour of the universe. We exist because of God’s faith in us.”³⁶³
- ❖ “Faith lives, breathes and has its being in the world of relationships, in the respect we pay our marriage partner, the steadfastness with which we bring up our children, and the way we extend the feeling of family to embrace neighbours and strangers in acts of hospitality and kindness.”³⁶⁴
- ❖ “Belief in God is an assertion of human dignity in the face of humiliation, and of hope in the midst of the dark night of despair. It is a refusal to accept evil as inevitable, but at the same time an acknowledgement that we cannot leave redemption entirely to God.”³⁶⁵
- ❖ “Faith is the defeat of probability by the power of possibility.”³⁶⁶
- ❖ “Religious people in the grip of strong emotions – fear, pain, anxiety, confusion, a sense of loss and humiliation – often dehumanise their opponents with devastating results. Faith is God’s call to see His trace in the face of the Other.”³⁶⁷
- ❖ “Religion in general, Judaism specifically, is the attempt to find meaning in the cosmos and in human life. Faith is the attempt to hear the music beneath the noise, discern the path amidst the undergrowth, to sense the destination of the long journey of which our lives are a part. Judaism is the bold attempt to address directly what Viktor Frankl called “Man’s Search for Meaning.””³⁶⁸
- ❖ “Faith is the call to be not an object but a subject, not passive but active. To influence more than to be influenced by our environment. We are called on to be more than others make us.”³⁶⁹
- ❖ “Faith is the courage to take a risk for the sake of God or the Jewish people; to begin a journey to a distant destination knowing that there will be hazards along the way, but knowing also that God is with us, giving us strength if we align our will with His. Faith is not certainty, but the courage to live with uncertainty.”³⁷⁰
- ❖ “Faith is the ability to hear the music beneath the noise.”³⁷¹
- ❖ “Faith means that I believe that God cares about me. I am here because He wanted me to be.”³⁷²
- ❖ “In Judaism, faith is not a rival to science, an attempt to explain the universe. It’s a sense of wonder, born in a feeling of gratitude.”³⁷³

³⁶¹ *The Great Partnership* p. 15

³⁶² *The Great Partnership* p. 74

³⁶³ *The Great Partnership* p. 98

³⁶⁴ *The Great Partnership* p. 172

³⁶⁵ *The Great Partnership* p. 247

³⁶⁶ *The Great Partnership* p. 283

³⁶⁷ *Not in God’s Name* p. 25

³⁶⁸ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 113

³⁶⁹ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 237

³⁷⁰ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 12

³⁷¹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 178

³⁷² *Studies in Spirituality* p. 184

³⁷³ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 258

- ❖ “Faith isn’t science. It’s not about *how* the world came into being but about *why*.”³⁷⁴
- ❖ “Sometimes it seems as if we have just enough religion to make us hate one another and not enough to make us love one another. But the answer to that is more faith, not less: faith in God who asks us to love others as He loves us.”³⁷⁵
- ❖ “Faith is the defeat of probability by the power of possibility. The prophets dreamt the improbable and by doing so helped to bring it about. All the great human achievements, in art and science as well as the life of the spirit, came through people who ignored the probable and had faith in the possible.”³⁷⁶
- ❖ “I believe faith is part of what makes us human. It is a basic attitude of trust that always goes beyond the available evidence, but without which we would do nothing great. Without faith in one another we could not risk the vulnerability of love. Without faith in the future, we would not choose to have a child. Without faith in the intelligibility of the Universe we would not do science. Without faith in our fellow citizens, we would not have a free society.”³⁷⁷
- ❖ “Faith is understood in the living and proved in the doing. We encounter the Divine presence in prayer and ritual, story and song. These lift us beyond ourselves toward the infinite. Thou at the heart of being, who teaches us to see His trace in the face of the human other, leading us to acts of loving kindness that make gentle the life of this world. Faith is the bond of loyalty and listening that binds us to God and through Him to humanity. Faith is life lived in the light of love.”³⁷⁸
- ❖ “When a civilisation loses its faith, it loses its future. When it recovers its faith, it recovers its future.”³⁷⁹
- ❖ “Faith is the redemption of solitude, and this is its most humanistic gift. God lives in the space between us when we come together in love and joy.”³⁸⁰
- ❖ “God seeks change in the real world of everyday lives. And He seeks those who have the tenacity of faith to keep going despite all the setbacks.”³⁸¹
- ❖ “Faith helps us to find the “Why” that allows us to bear almost any “How”.”³⁸²
- ❖ “When God said, “I will be what I will be,” He was telling us something not only about God but about us when we are open to God and have faith in His faith in us. We can be what we will be if we choose the right and the good. And if we fail and fall, we can change because God lifts us and gives us strength.”³⁸³
- ❖ “Difficult though Jewish faith is, it has had the effect through history of leading us to say: If bad things have happened, let us blame no one but ourselves, and let us labour to make them better. I believe it was this that led Jews, time and again, to emerge from tragedy, shaken, scarred, limping like Jacob after his encounter with the angel, yet resolved to begin

³⁷⁴ *The Power of Ideas* p. 30

³⁷⁵ *The Power of Ideas* p. 30

³⁷⁶ *The Power of Ideas* p. 100

³⁷⁷ *The Power of Ideas* p. 127

³⁷⁸ *The Power of Ideas* p. 129

³⁷⁹ *The Power of Ideas* p. 149

³⁸⁰ *The Power of Ideas* p. 158

³⁸¹ *I Believe* p. 22

³⁸² *I Believe* p. 31

³⁸³ *I Believe* p. 77

again, to rededicate ourselves to our mission and faith, to ascribe our achievements to God and our defeats to ourselves.”³⁸⁴

FAITH VRS. FATE

- ❖ “Judaism is a supreme expression of religion as freedom, and hence of the priority of faith over fate.”³⁸⁵
- ❖ “At Sinai, the Israelites were transformed from a community of fate into a community of faith, from an *am* to an *edah*, meaning a body of politic under the sovereignty of God, whose written constitution was the Torah.”³⁸⁶
- ❖ “In the transition from exodus to Sinai, from *am* to *edah*, Jewish identity itself is transformed from passive to active, from fate to faith, from a people defined by what happens to it to a people defined by the social order they are called on to create.”³⁸⁷
- ❖ “The definition of Jews as the people-that-dwells-alone does great harm to Jewish peoplehood. Essentially it defines Jews as victims. It says that Jews are the people who, historically, have been subject to persecution, isolation and alienation...This is the wrong way to think of Jewish peoplehood. Jews are a people of faith, not fate alone. Jews are choosers, not victims; co-authors of their destiny, not swept by the winds of circumstance.”³⁸⁸
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- ❖ “Without the covenant of faith, there is no covenant of fate. Without religion, there is no global nation.”³⁹⁰
- ❖ “The Jewish people exists in all its bewildering complexity because it is both a religion and a nation, a faith and a fate. Remove either element and it will fall apart.”³⁹¹

FAMILY & HOME

- ❖ “Once the family is seen as the place where the ethical enterprise begins – something the Bible conveys dramatically by making ‘Be fruitful and multiply’ the first of all the commands – then traditional sexual ethics becomes not one alternative among many in a sexually pluralistic world, but the only persuasive way of life for those who want to engage in the ethical undertaking.”³⁹²
- ❖ “If changing the family would change the world, might not protecting the family be the best way of protecting our world?”³⁹³

³⁸⁴ *I Believe* p. 313

³⁸⁵ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 23

³⁸⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 116

³⁸⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 116

³⁸⁸ *Future Tense* pp. 29-30

³⁸⁹ *Future Tense* p. 30

³⁹⁰ *Future Tense* p. 38

³⁹¹ *Future Tense* p. 47

³⁹² *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 170

³⁹³ *The Persistence of Faith* pp. 53-54

- ❖ “The family as a religious institution is what holds much of our moral world in place. It lies behind our ideas of individual dignity and freedom, or social kinship and concern, and our sense of continuity between the future and the past. Lose it and we will lose much else as well.”³⁹⁴
- ❖ “Faith, family and community are... mutually linked. When one breaks down, the others are weakened. When families disintegrate, so too does the sense of neighbourhood and the continuity of our great religious traditions. When localities become anonymous, families lose the support of neighbours, and congregations are no longer centres of community. When religious belief begins to wane, the moral bonds of marriage and neighbourly duty lose their transcendental base and begin to shift and crumble in the high winds of change. That is precisely what has happened in our time and the loss, though subtle, is immense.”³⁹⁵
- ❖ “It is within the family that the three great ethical concerns arise: welfare, or the care of dependents; education, or the handing on of accumulated wisdom to the next generation; and ecology, or concern with the fate of the world after our own lifetime.”³⁹⁶
- ❖ “Families are the crucible of our humanity. They are the miniature world in which we learn how to face the wider world.”³⁹⁷
- ❖ “Families are not ideal worlds. They are significant precisely because they are real worlds with people we know and trust. Working out our tensions with them, we learn how to resolve tensions with society. They are where we count, where we make a difference, where we first find that others are there for us and we must be there for them. And, yes, they have their share of pain. It is the pain of life lived in relationship. Without it we could not learn to love.”³⁹⁸
- ❖ “Through love as the bond between parents and children we understand the love of God for mankind. Through the trust that grows in families, we discover what it is to have trust in God and His world.”³⁹⁹
- ❖ “In truth, the whole of Jewish consciousness is tied to the strength of the family. For without an ordered family we could not envisage an ordered world.”⁴⁰⁰
- ❖ “Time to sit together, eat together, be in one another’s company, sharing our problems, our frustrations, our hopes, the simple things that turn a stable family, at its best, into the poetry of everyday life.”⁴⁰¹
- ❖ “If we care about the common good, the cohesion of society and the support it gives to individuals, the family must be at the very heart of our concern.”⁴⁰²
- ❖ “The fact that we have deconstructed the family – morally, psychologically, economically, politically – is the single most fateful cultural development of our times.”⁴⁰³
- ❖ “The Jewish family is not authoritarian. It is based, rather, on mutual respect – the children’s respect for those who have brought them into the world, and the parents’ respect

³⁹⁴ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 55

³⁹⁵ *Faith in the Future* p. 6

³⁹⁶ *Faith in the Future* p. 29

³⁹⁷ *Celebrating Life* p. 95

³⁹⁸ *Celebrating Life* p. 101

³⁹⁹ *Celebrating Life* p. 104

⁴⁰⁰ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 86

⁴⁰¹ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 112

⁴⁰² *The Home We Build Together* p. 209

⁴⁰³ *The Home We Build Together* p. 213

for the right of adult children to make their choices free of excessive parental interference.”⁴⁰⁴

- ❖ “A home is a haven in a heartless world. It’s where we belong and where, if we are lucky, we raise a family. Home is where we learn the poetry of everyday life, the choreography of *hesed*, the countless daily acts of reciprocity and kindness that constitute the language of love.”⁴⁰⁵
- ❖ “No one surely wants to go back to the narrow prejudices of the past - loveless marriages, authoritarian families, harsh parenthood, and the rest. But our compassion for those who choose to live differently should not inhibit us from being advocates for the single most humanizing institution in history. The family—man, woman, and child—is not one lifestyle choice among many. It is the best means we have yet discovered for nurturing future generations and enabling children to grow in a matrix of stability and love. It is where we learn the delicate choreography of relationship and how to handle the inevitable conflicts within any human group. It is where we first take the risk of giving and receiving love. It is where one generation passes on its values to the next, ensuring the continuity of a civilization. For any society, the family is the crucible of its future, and for the sake of our children’s future, we must be its defenders.”⁴⁰⁶
- ❖ “Faith begins in families. Hope is born in the home.”⁴⁰⁷
- ❖ “When it works, the family is the matrix of our humanity. It is where we learn love and self-confidence and the basic values that will serve as our satellite navigation system through the uncharted territory of life. It is where we learn responsibility and the choreography of turn-taking and making space for others. It is where we acquire the habits of the heart that help us take responsibility and risks, knowing here is someone to lift us if we fall. A childhood lived in the stable presence of two loving parents is the greatest gift anyone can have, which is why so much of Jewish ritual and celebration is centred on the home.”⁴⁰⁸
- ❖ “Family life isn’t easy or straightforward. The Bible does not hide that fact from us. The stories of Genesis do not contain a single sentence saying, ‘And they all lived happily ever after.’ Families need constant work, sacrifice and mutual respect. But if you get home right, your children will have a head start in making their own fulfilling relationships, and relationships truly are what make us human.”⁴⁰⁹
- ❖ “The family – man, woman, and child – is not one lifestyle choice among many. It is the best means we have yet discovered for nurturing future generations and enabling children to grow in a matrix of stability and love. It is where we learn the delicate choreography of relationship and how to handle the inevitable conflicts within any human group. It is where we first take the risk of giving and receiving love. It is where one generation passes on its values to the next, ensuring the continuity of civilisation. For any society, the family is the crucible of its future, and for the sake of our children’s future, we must be its defenders.”⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 139

⁴⁰⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* pp. 260-261

⁴⁰⁶ *Morality* p. 74

⁴⁰⁷ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 79

⁴⁰⁸ *The Power of Ideas* p. 157

⁴⁰⁹ *The Power of Ideas* pp. 158-159

⁴¹⁰ *The Power of Ideas* p. 339

- ❖ “When a man and woman turn to one another in a bond of faithfulness, God robes them in garments of light, and we come as close as we will ever get to God Himself, bringing new life into being, turning the prose of biology into the poetry of the human spirit, redeeming the darkness of the world by the radiance of love.”⁴¹¹
- ❖ “I believe that family is the birthplace of freedom. Caring for one another, we learn to care for the common good.”⁴¹²

FORGIVENESS

- ❖ “In a world without forgiveness, evil begets evil, harm generates harm, and there is no way short of exhaustion or forgetfulness of breaking the sequence. Forgiveness breaks the chain. It introduces into the logic of interpersonal encounter the unpredictability of grace. It represents a decision not to do what instinct and passion urge us to do. It answers hate with a refusal to hate, animosity with generosity. Few more daring ideas have ever entered the human situation. Forgiveness means that we are not destined endlessly to replay the grievances of yesterday. It is the ability to live with the past without being held captive by the past. It would not be an exaggeration to say that forgiveness is the most compelling testimony to human freedom. It is about the action that is not reaction. It is the refusal to be defined by circumstance. It represents our ability to change course, reframe the narrative of the past and create an unexpected set of possibilities for the future...In the face of tragedy, forgiveness is the counternarrative of hope. It is not a moral luxury, an option for saints. At times it is the only path through the thickets of hate to the open spaces of coexistence.”⁴¹³
- ❖ “Forgiveness is, in origin, a religious virtue. There is no such thing as forgiveness in nature.”⁴¹⁴
- ❖ “Forgiveness is, and can only be, a relationship between free persons: between the forgiven, who has shown that he or she can change, and the forgiver who has faith that the other person will change.”⁴¹⁵
- ❖ “God is envisaged as both judge and parent; when law and love, justice and mercy, join hands. God forgives, and in so doing, teaches us to forgive.”⁴¹⁶
- ❖ “Forgiveness does not mean forgetting, nor does it mean abandoning the claims of justice. It does mean, however, an acknowledgement that the past is past and must not be allowed to cast its shadow over the future. Forgiveness heals moral wounds the way the body heals physical wounds.”⁴¹⁷
- ❖ “Every act of forgiveness mends something broken in this fractured world. It is a step, however small, in the long, hard journey to redemption.”⁴¹⁸

⁴¹¹ *The Power of Ideas* p. 341

⁴¹² *I Believe* p. 69

⁴¹³ *The Dignity of Difference* pp. 178-179

⁴¹⁴ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 180

⁴¹⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 180

⁴¹⁶ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 181

⁴¹⁷ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 188

⁴¹⁸ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 190

- ❖ “Forgiveness is the only way to live with the past without being held prisoner by the past.”⁴¹⁹
- ❖ “Forgiveness liberates us from the past. *Forgiveness breaks the irreversibility of reaction and revenge.* It is the undoing of what has been done.”⁴²⁰
- ❖ “The God of love and forgiveness created us in love and forgiveness, asking that we love and forgive others.”⁴²¹
- ❖ “Forgiveness is an action that is not a reaction. It breaks the cycle of stimulus-response, harm and retaliation, wrong and revenge, which has led whole cultures to their destruction and still threatens the future of the world. It frees individuals from the burden of their past, and humanity from the irreversibility of history. It tells us that enemies can become friends.”⁴²²
- ❖ “God does not forgive human beings until human beings learn to forgive one another.”⁴²³
- ❖ “Failure to heal relationships can split families, destroy marriages, ruin friendships and divide communities. That is not where God wants us to be.”⁴²⁴

FREEDOM

- ❖ “Our ability to see and do the unexpected is the link between human creativity and freedom.”⁴²⁵
- ❖ “God, who led His people from slavery to freedom, desires the free worship of free human beings.”⁴²⁶
- ❖ “The Jewish people were, from the outset, called on to live out the truth that the free God desires the free worship of free human beings, and that therefore it must construct a society whose members never take freedom for granted.”⁴²⁷
- ❖ “Freedom is the political transformation that occurs only through personal transformation.”⁴²⁸
- ❖ “Of all the great religions, Judaism has the strongest conception of the freedom and dignity of the individual, beginning with the principle that the human person as such is the one bearer of the image of God.”⁴²⁹
- ❖ “When contracts displace covenants and means replace ends, we are left with freedom without meaning, which is certainly more pleasant but not necessarily more fulfilled than meaning without freedom.”⁴³⁰

⁴¹⁹ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 103

⁴²⁰ *Essays on Ethics* p. 70

⁴²¹ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 28

⁴²² *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 34

⁴²³ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 43

⁴²⁴ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 89

⁴²⁵ *Celebrating Life* p. 44

⁴²⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 22

⁴²⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 109

⁴²⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 110

⁴²⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 147

⁴³⁰ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 157

- ❖ “Freedom begins with exodus but it reaches its fulfilment in the acceptance of a code of conduct, the Torah, freely offered by God, freely accepted by the people. The counting of the Omer is thus an act of retracing the steps from individual freedom to a free society.”⁴³¹
- ❖ “True freedom – *cherut* – is the ability to control oneself without having to be controlled by others, accepting voluntarily the moral restraints without which liberty becomes licence and society itself a battle-ground of warring instincts and desires.”⁴³²
- ❖ “Freedom means more than losing your chains. It involves developing the capacity to think, feel and act for the benefit of others.”⁴³³
- ❖ “Freedom is lost when it is taken for granted. We have taken ours for granted for too long.”⁴³⁴
- ❖ “The history of the past three centuries has been the story of the progressive dethronement of the idea of human freedom.”⁴³⁵
- ❖ “The story of the Bible is the tangled tale of the consequences of God’s fateful gift of human freedom. Faith, or more precisely, faithfulness, is born where the freedom of human beings meets the freedom of God in an unconstrained act of mutual commitment.”⁴³⁶
- ❖ “Without compromising one iota of Jewish faith or identity, Jews must stand alongside their friends, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh or secular humanist, in defence of freedom against the enemies of freedom, in affirmation of life against those who worship death and desecrate life.”⁴³⁷
- ❖ “The belief that freedom is an all-or-nothing phenomenon – that we have it either all the time or none of the time – blinds us to the fact that there are degrees of freedom. It can be won or lost, and its loss is gradual. Unless the will is constantly exercised, it atrophies and dies. We then become objects, not subjects, swept along by tides of fashion, or the caprice of desire, or the passion that becomes an obsession. Only narrative can portray the subtlety of Pharaoh’s slow descent into a self-destructive madness. That, I believe, is what makes Torah truer to the human condition than its philosophical or scientific counterparts.”⁴³⁸
- ❖ “At the heart of Judaism is faith in freedom: Our faith in God’s freedom, and God’s faith in ours.”⁴³⁹
- ❖ “Freedom needs three institutions: parenthood, education, and memory. You must tell your children about slavery and the long journey to liberation. They must annually taste the bread of affliction and the bitter herbs of slave labour. They must know what oppression feels like if they are to fight against it in every age.”⁴⁴⁰
- ❖ “It would have been easy for God to create a billion computers programmed to sing His praises continually. But that would not be worship. Freedom of the will is not accidental to human existence as Judaism conceives it. It is of its very essence. Worship is not worship

⁴³¹ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 68

⁴³² *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 71

⁴³³ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 72

⁴³⁴ *The Home We Build Together* p. 11

⁴³⁵ *The Home We Build Together* p. 59

⁴³⁶ *The Home We Build Together* p. 105

⁴³⁷ *Future Tense* p. 10

⁴³⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 50

⁴³⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 51

⁴⁴⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* pp. 78-79

if it is coerced. Virtue is not virtue if we are compelled by inner or outer forces over which we have no control. In creating humanity, God, as it were, placed Himself under a statute of self limitation. He had to be patient. He could not force the pace of moral development of mankind without destroying the very thing He had created. This self limitation – what the kabbalists called *tzimtzum* – was God’s greatest act of love. He gave humanity the freedom to grow. But that inevitably meant that change in the affairs of mankind would be slow.”⁴⁴¹

- ❖ “At the heart of Judaism is the idea – way ahead of its time, and not always fully realised – that the free God desires the free worship of free human beings. God, said the rabbis, does not act tyrannically with His creatures.”⁴⁴²
- ❖ “It is no accident that freedom occupies a central place in the Hebrew Bible but only a tenuous place in the annals of science. The relationship of soul to body or mind to brain, is precisely analogous to the relationship of God to the physical universe. If there is only a physical universe, there is only brain, not mind, and there is only the universe, not God. The non-existence of God and the non-existence of human freedom go hand in hand.”⁴⁴³
- ❖ “By making the human person ‘in his image’ God has given us freedom: the freedom to do good, which also necessarily entails the freedom to do evil.”⁴⁴⁴
- ❖ “A free society is a moral achievement. That is the central insight of the Torah. It depends on the existence of a shared moral code, a code we are taught by our parents, a code we internalize in the course of growing up, a code for whose maintenance we are collectively responsible.”⁴⁴⁵
- ❖ “Freedom is God’s greatest gift to humankind but it is also the most fateful and terrifying. For it means that we alone have the power to destroy the work of God.”⁴⁴⁶
- ❖ “Our souls are more than our minds, our minds are more than our brains, and our brains are more than mere chemical impulses responding to stimuli. Human freedom – the freedom to choose to be better than we were – remains a mystery but it is not a mere given. Freedom is like a muscle and the more we exercise it, the stronger and healthier it becomes.”⁴⁴⁷
- ❖ “Judaism constantly asks us to exercise our freedom. To be a Jew is not to go with the flow, to be like everyone else, to follow the path of least resistance, to worship the conventional wisdom of the age. To the contrary, to be a Jew is to have the courage to live in a way that is not the way of everyone. Each time we eat, drink, pray or go to work, we are conscious of the demands our faith makes on us, to live God’s will and be one of His ambassadors to the world. Judaism always has been, perhaps always will be, countercultural.”⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 99

⁴⁴² *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 153

⁴⁴³ *The Great Partnership* p. 126

⁴⁴⁴ *Not in God’s Name* p. 156

⁴⁴⁵ *Essays on Ethics* pp. xxxiv-xxxv

⁴⁴⁶ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 36

⁴⁴⁷ *Ceremony & Celebration* pp. 83-84

⁴⁴⁸ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 84

- ❖ “Freedom is sustained only when a nation becomes a moral community. And any moral community achieves a greatness far beyond its numbers, as we lift others and they lift us.”⁴⁴⁹

FRIENDS/FRIENDSHIP

- ❖ “What once made relationships constitutive of personal identity and self-respect is precisely the fact that they stood outside the world of contracts and market exchange. Family, friends, neighbours, mentors, were people to whom you were bound by moral reciprocity. What was important is that they were there in bad times as well as good; when you needed them, not when you could pay for them. They told you things you didn’t want to hear as well as the things you did. Compare that to the marketization of friendship in the form of the advertisement for a ‘personal coach’ quoted by Robert Reich: ‘Best friends are wonderful to have. But is your best friend a professional who you will trust to work with you on the most important aspects of your life?’ The answer to this rhetorical question is Yes: you *trust* a friend precisely because you do *not* pay for his or her friendship.”⁴⁵⁰
- ❖ “Where there is no loyalty, there is no friendship; where no friendship, no trust; and where no trust, no true relationship.”⁴⁵¹
- ❖ “A 2018 research exercise showed that the average person in Britain had 554 friends online, but only five true and close friends. That is a measure of the difference between real and electronic friendship—between people you can turn to for help and who will make some sacrifice for you if you need it and people with whom you merely exchange information. Social media has an enormously positive role to play in allowing people to stay in touch with one another, share experiences and knowledge, and enhance interactions within a real community. But real interpersonal friendship needs an investment of time, intimacy, and a degree of privacy.”⁴⁵²
- ❖ “Friends matter. They shape our lives. The Sages believed that good friends tend to make us good, and bad friends bad... It matters to have friends who have honesty, integrity, generosity of spirit, and loyalty. It helps to make friends with people who embody the virtues to which you aspire.”⁴⁵³
- ❖ “Judaism has foundational beliefs, to be sure, but it is fundamentally about something else altogether. For us, *faith is the redemption of solitude*. It is about relationships – between us and God, us and our family, us and our neighbours, us and our people, us and humankind. Judaism is not about the lonely soul. It is about the bonds that bind us to one another and to the Author of all. It is, in the highest sense, about friendship.”⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁴⁹ *I Believe* p. 277

⁴⁵⁰ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 77

⁴⁵¹ *The Home We Build Together* p. 154

⁴⁵² *Morality* p. 58

⁴⁵³ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* pp. 199-200

⁴⁵⁴ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 201

GLOBALISATION

- ❖ “On the one hand, globalization is bringing us closer together than ever before, interweaving our lives, nationally and internationally, in complex and inextricable ways. On the other, a new tribalism – a regression to older and more fractious loyalties - is driving us ever more angrily apart. One way or another, religion is and will continue to be, part of these processes. It can lead us in the direction of peace. But it can equally, and with high combustibility, lead us to war. Politicians have power, but religions have something stronger: they have influence. Politics moves the pieces on the chessboard. Religion changes lives. Peace can be agreed around the conference table; but unless it grows in ordinary hearts and minds, it does not last. It may not even begin.”⁴⁵⁵
- ❖ “I believe that globalization is summoning the world’s great faiths to a supreme challenge, one that we have been able to avoid in the past but can do so no longer. Can we find, in the human 'thou', a fragment of the Divine 'Thou'? Can we recognize God’s image in one who is not in my image? There are times when God meets us in the face of a stranger. The global age has turned our world into a society of strangers. That should not be a threat to our identity but a call to a moral and spiritual generosity more demanding than we had sometimes supposed it to be. Can I, a Jew, recognize God’s image in one who is not in my image: in a Hindu or Sikh or Christian or Muslim or an Eskimo from Greenland speaking about a melting glacier? Can I do so and feel not diminished but enlarged? What then becomes of my faith, which until then had bound me to those who are like me, and must now make space for those who are different and have another way of interpreting the world?”⁴⁵⁶
- ❖ “The globalization of communications, trade and culture, globalizes human responsibility likewise. The freedom of the few may not be purchased at the price of the enslavement of the many to poverty, ignorance and disease.”⁴⁵⁷
- ❖ “The key word of the twenty-first century is ‘globalisation’. For most, it is the newest of the new. For Jews it is the oldest of the old. Since the Babylonian exile twenty-six centuries ago, certainly since the Roman era two thousand years ago, Jews lived at great distances from one another, yet they were connected by a thousand gossamer strands of the spirit. They were the world’s first and, until recently, its only global people.”⁴⁵⁸

GOD

- ❖ “Together with a separation of man from God and the world goes an estrangement of man from himself.”⁴⁵⁹
- ❖ “In the beginning, God created the world. Thereafter He entrusted us to create a human world which will be, in the structures of our common life, a home for the Divine presence.

⁴⁵⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 7

⁴⁵⁶ *The Dignity of Difference* pp. 17-18

⁴⁵⁷ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 123

⁴⁵⁸ *Future Tense* p. 26

⁴⁵⁹ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 220

That command still addresses us with its momentous challenge, the persisting call of faith.”⁴⁶⁰

- ❖ “In the beginning God created the world as a home for humanity. Since then He has challenged humanity to create a world that will be a home for Him. God lives wherever we treat one another as beings in His image.”⁴⁶¹
- ❖ “God is to be found less in the ‘I’ than in the ‘We’, in the relationships we make, the institutions we fashion, the duties we share, and the moral lives we lead.”⁴⁶²
- ❖ “God has given us many universes of faith but only one world in which to live together.”⁴⁶³
- ❖ “Whether it was because of Judaism’s strong sense of God’s transcendence or our long experience of exile, Jews found God in the when rather than the where.”⁴⁶⁴
- ❖ “Once in a while God lets us see the script.”⁴⁶⁵
- ❖ “God often chooses circuitous routes but it helps to know that where we are, now, is where we need to be.”⁴⁶⁶
- ❖ “In finding God, our ancestors found themselves. Discovering God, singular and alone, they found the human person, singular and alone.”⁴⁶⁷
- ❖ “God is reality with a human face, the mirror without which we cannot see ourselves.”⁴⁶⁸
- ❖ “God is the music of all that lives, but there are times when all we hear is noise. The true religious challenge is to ignore the noise and focus on the music.”⁴⁶⁹
- ❖ “The greatest kindness God ever does for us is that He never lets us know in advance what we’re letting ourselves in for.”⁴⁷⁰
- ❖ “It is easy for an infinite creator to make a home for humanity. It is hard for us to make a home for God. That is why making the sanctuary takes up so much more space in the [Torah] narrative than the birth of the universe.”⁴⁷¹
- ❖ “The greatest challenge as Judaism has seen it is not to ascend from earth to heaven through the journey of the soul, but to bring the Divine presence from heaven to earth and share it with others.”⁴⁷²
- ❖ “More than the Bible is interested in the home God made for man, it is concerned with the home man makes for God.”⁴⁷³
- ❖ “God is found less in nature than in human society, in the structures we make to honour His presence by honouring His image in other human beings.”⁴⁷⁴
- ❖ “God is the creator of the natural world, but He has left space for man to become the creator of the social world.”⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁶⁰ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 107

⁴⁶¹ *Faith in the Future* p. 11

⁴⁶² *Faith in the Future* p. 12

⁴⁶³ *Faith in the Future* p. 73

⁴⁶⁴ *Faith in the Future* p. 130

⁴⁶⁵ *Celebrating Life* p. 36

⁴⁶⁶ *Celebrating Life* p. 36

⁴⁶⁷ *Celebrating Life* p. 72

⁴⁶⁸ *Celebrating Life* p. 72

⁴⁶⁹ *Celebrating Life* p. 75

⁴⁷⁰ *Celebrating Life* p. 88

⁴⁷¹ *Celebrating Life* p. 110

⁴⁷² *Celebrating Life* p. 137

⁴⁷³ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 71

⁴⁷⁴ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 74

⁴⁷⁵ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 76

- ❖ “The greatest discovery of the Hebrew Bible was not monotheism, the idea that there is only one God, but the idea that God is personal, that at the core of reality is something that responds to our existence as persons. The assertion of Jewish faith, deeply human in its implications, is that God is the objective reality of personhood.”⁴⁷⁶
- ❖ “The God to whom we speak in prayer is not the ultimate power but the ultimate person, the Other in whom I find myself.”⁴⁷⁷
- ❖ “The Hebrew Bible speaks of a God who not only loves, but who loves precisely those who are otherwise unloved – the younger rather than the elder; the weak, not the strong, the few, not the many.”⁴⁷⁸
- ❖ “[God] chose the powerless to teach that He is not to be found in power, and people who neither shared the faith of others nor imposed their faith on others to teach that there is not one way to His presence, but many.”⁴⁷⁹
- ❖ “No other religion has shared the idea of a single God with many names, who has set His image on each of us, but with whom we can talk, each faith in its own language, each in its own way.”⁴⁸⁰
- ❖ “God lives in the room we make for him in the human heart.”⁴⁸¹
- ❖ “God is the call to human responsibility, the voice that we hear only if we first learn how to listen, the voice that summons us to act.”⁴⁸²
- ❖ “God, the creator of humanity, having made a covenant with all humanity, then turns to one people and commands it to be different in order to teach humanity the dignity of difference.”⁴⁸³
- ❖ “God is God of all humanity, but no single faith is or should be the faith of all humanity.”⁴⁸⁴
- ❖ “God no more wants all faiths and cultures to be the same than a loving parent wants his or her children to be the same.”⁴⁸⁵
- ❖ “A God of your side as well as mine must be a God of justice who stands above us both, teaching us to make space for one another, to hear each other’s claims and to resolve them equitably. Only such a God would be truly transcendent – greater not only than the natural universe but also than the spiritual universe capable of being comprehended in any one language, any single faith. Only such a God could teach mankind to make peace other than by conquest and conversion, and as something nobler than practical necessity.”⁴⁸⁶
- ❖ “One of the classic roles of religion has been to preserve a space – physical and metaphysical – immune to the pressures of the market. When we stand before God we do so regardless of what we earn, what we own, what we buy, what we can afford. We do so as beings of ultimate, non-transactional value, here because someone – some force at the heart of being – called us into existence and summoned us to be a blessing.”⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁷⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 83

⁴⁷⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 84

⁴⁷⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 90

⁴⁷⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 92

⁴⁸⁰ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 94

⁴⁸¹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 154

⁴⁸² *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 163

⁴⁸³ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 53

⁴⁸⁴ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 55

⁴⁸⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 56

⁴⁸⁶ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 65

⁴⁸⁷ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 158

- ❖ “God did not create the universe as a scientist in a laboratory, or as a technocrat setting in motion the big bang, but rather as a parent giving birth to a child.”⁴⁸⁸
- ❖ “God cannot redeem the world without human participation; humanity cannot redeem the world without recognition of the divine.”⁴⁸⁹
- ❖ “God, by giving us free will, empowered us to make mistakes. He never asked us to be perfect. All He asked was that we try our best, own up to our mistakes when we make them, and try a little harder next time. Once we believe in a forgiving God, then it doesn’t matter if other people lose faith in us. It doesn’t even matter if we lose faith in ourselves. Because somewhere someone has faith in us; and God never loses that faith.”⁴⁹⁰
- ❖ “We know God less by contemplation than by emulation. The choice is not between ‘faith’ and ‘deeds’, for it is by our deeds that we express our faith and make it real in the life of others and the world.”⁴⁹¹
- ❖ “Creating the universe, God made a home for human beings. Making the sanctuary, human beings made a home for God.”⁴⁹²
- ❖ “There is no life without a task; no person without a talent; no place without a fragment of God’s light waiting to be discovered and redeemed; no situation without its possibility of sanctification; no moment without its call. It may take a lifetime to learn how to find these things, but once we learn, we realise in retrospect that all it ever took was the ability to listen. When God calls, he does not do so by way of universal imperatives. Instead, he whispers our name – and the greatest reply, the reply of Abraham, is simply *hineni*: ‘Here I am’, ready to heed your call, to mend a fragment of your all-too-broken world.”⁴⁹³
- ❖ “There are many ways to God. Where we begin doesn’t matter, so long as we begin.”⁴⁹⁴
- ❖ “To find God you don’t need to climb mountains, cross oceans or travel to a fabled land. God is in the breath we breathe, the acts we do, the prayers we say, the love we give. God, vaster than the universe, is closer to us than we are to ourselves.”⁴⁹⁵
- ❖ “Unlike the god of the philosophers, the God of Abraham is a *personal* God. He is not an abstract concept: the first cause, the force of forces, the prime mover, pure Being. He is a God who relates to us as persons, sensing our suffering, hearing our prayers, a presence in our lives. And it is in personal relationships – first and foremost within the family – that He expects us to honour Him by honouring others, who bear His image no less than we do.”⁴⁹⁶
- ❖ “In Judaism, God does not command blind obedience: *Ein haKadosh Barukh Hu bat biturnya im beriyotar*, “God does not deal despotically with His creatures.” (Avoda Zara 3a). If He sought no more than mindless submission to the divine will, He would have created robots, machines, or genetically programmed people who responded automatically to commands as dogs to Pavlov’s bell. God wants us to be mature, deliberative, to do His will because

⁴⁸⁸ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 180

⁴⁸⁹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 203

⁴⁹⁰ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 102

⁴⁹¹ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 5

⁴⁹² *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 151

⁴⁹³ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 262

⁴⁹⁴ *Ten Days, Ten Ways* p. 4

⁴⁹⁵ *Letters to the Next Generation* p. 33

⁴⁹⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* pp. 9-10

we understand or because we trust Him when we do not understand. He seeks from us something other and greater than obedience, namely *responsibility*.⁴⁹⁷

- ❖ “Only when God is God can man be man. That means keeping heaven and earth distinct, organising the latter only under the conscious sovereignty of the former.”⁴⁹⁸
- ❖ “*It is not what God does for us, but what we do for God, that changes us.*”⁴⁹⁹
- ❖ “To be sure, at the highest levels of mysticism, God is to be found in the innermost depths of the human soul, but God is equally to be found in the public square and in the structures of society: the marketplace, the corridors of power, and the courts of law. There must be no gap, no dissociation of sensibilities, between the court of justice (the meeting-place of man and man) and the Temple (the meeting-place of man and God).”⁵⁰⁰
- ❖ “God is the soul of being in whose freedom we discover freedom, in whose love we discover love, and in whose forgiveness we learn to forgive.”⁵⁰¹
- ❖ “Far from being timeless and immutable, God in the Hebrew Bible is active, engaged, in constant dialogue with his people, calling, urging, warning, challenging and forgiving.”⁵⁰²
- ❖ “God creates order; it is man who creates chaos.”⁵⁰³
- ❖ “God is the distant voice we hear and seek to amplify in our systems of meaning, each particular to a culture, a civilisation, a faith. God is the One within the many; the unity at the core of our diversity; the call that leads us to journey beyond the self and its strivings, to enter into otherness and be enlarged by it, to seek to be a vehicle through which blessing flows outwards to the world, to give thanks for the miracle of being and the radiance that shines wherever two lives touch in affirmation, forgiveness and love.”⁵⁰⁴
- ❖ “God lives wherever we open our eyes to his radiance, our hearts to his transforming love.”⁵⁰⁵
- ❖ “We make space for God in the same way that God makes space for us, by *tzimtzum*, self-effacement, self-renunciation.”⁵⁰⁶
- ❖ “God is God whatever we do or fail to do. But God, having set His image on every human being, took the risk of identifying His presence in history with one small people with whom He made a covenant in a lonely desert long ago, and that fact has charged Jewish existence with immense responsibility ever since. We are God’s witnesses. How the people of God behave affects how God Himself is perceived.”⁵⁰⁷
- ❖ “Though the people may be faithless to God, God will never be faithless to the people. He may punish them but He will not abandon them. He may judge them harshly but He will not forget their ancestors who followed Him, nor will He break the covenant He made with our ancestors. God does not break His promises even if we break ours.”⁵⁰⁸

⁴⁹⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 46

⁴⁹⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 54

⁴⁹⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 15

⁵⁰⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 177

⁵⁰¹ *The Great Partnership* p. 7

⁵⁰² *The Great Partnership* p. 65

⁵⁰³ *The Great Partnership* p. 69

⁵⁰⁴ *The Great Partnership* p. 94

⁵⁰⁵ *The Great Partnership* p. 98

⁵⁰⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 18

⁵⁰⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 322

⁵⁰⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 430

- ❖ “With rare exceptions, God does not intervene in history. He acts *through* us, not *to* us.”⁵⁰⁹
- ❖ “God saved Noah from the Flood, but Noah had to make the ark. He gave the land of Israel to the people of Israel, but they had to fight the battles. God gives us the strength to act, but we have to do the deed. What changes the world, what fulfils our destiny, is *not what God does for us but what we do for God.*”⁵¹⁰
- ❖ “God never loses faith in us, even if we sometimes lose faith in ourselves.”⁵¹¹
- ❖ “We think religion is about faith in God. What I had not fully understood before was that faith in God should lead us to have faith in people, for God’s image is in each of us, and we have to learn how to discern it.”⁵¹²
- ❖ “To be secure in my relationship with God does not depend on negating the possibility that others too may have a relationship with him.”⁵¹³
- ❖ “God does not prove his love for some by hating others. Neither, if we follow him, may we.”⁵¹⁴
- ❖ “Though God is our God, he is also the God of all, accessible to all: the God who blesses Ishmael, who tells the children of Jacob not to hate the descendants of Esau, who listens to the prayers of strangers and whose messengers appear as strangers. Only a faith that recognises both types of covenant – the universal and the particular – is capable of understanding that God’s image may be present in the one whose faith is not mine and whose relationship with God is different from mine.”⁵¹⁵
- ❖ “However perfect our faith, there is something of God that lies beyond, which is known to God but cannot be known to the frail, fallible humanity that is all we are and ever will be, this side of heaven.”⁵¹⁶
- ❖ “God, who created the universe in freedom, wants humankind, to whom He gave the gift of choice, to create a social universe where all can live in liberty.”⁵¹⁷
- ❖ “The more we believe that God punishes the guilty, the more forgiving we become. The less we believe that God punishes the guilty, the more resentful and punitive we become. This is a totally counterintuitive truth, yet one that finally allows us to see the profound wisdom of the Torah in helping us create a humane and compassionate society.”⁵¹⁸
- ❖ “When humans commit a sin they worry that other people might see them. They forget that God certainly sees them.”⁵¹⁹
- ❖ “*Just as God makes space for man by an act of self-limitation, so man makes space for God by an act of self-limitation.*”⁵²⁰
- ❖ “When we confuse God’s will with our will, we turn the holy – the source of life – into something unholy and a source of death.”⁵²¹

⁵⁰⁹ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 6

⁵¹⁰ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 25

⁵¹¹ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 70

⁵¹² *Lessons in Leadership* p. 149

⁵¹³ *Not in God’s Name* p. 142

⁵¹⁴ *Not in God’s Name* p. 173

⁵¹⁵ *Not in God’s Name* p. 205

⁵¹⁶ *Not in God’s Name* p. 206

⁵¹⁷ *Essays on Ethics* p. xxiii

⁵¹⁸ *Essays on Ethics* p. 136

⁵¹⁹ *Essays on Ethics* p. 147

⁵²⁰ *Essays on Ethics* p. 167

⁵²¹ *Essays on Ethics* p. 168

- ❖ “More than the Jewish people love God, God loves the Jewish people.”⁵²²
- ❖ “The highest form of greatness is to open ourselves to God so that His blessings flow through us to the world.”⁵²³
- ❖ “God may save us from our enemies, but only we can save us from ourselves.”⁵²⁴
- ❖ “For Judaism, God lives here, on earth, in human lives, interactions, and associations. The Torah is terrestrial because God seeks to dwell on earth. Thus the Jewish task is to create a society with the Divine Presence in its midst.”⁵²⁵
- ❖ “God’s creation is universal. God’s redemption and revelation are particular to the people of Israel who, by their history and way of life, testify to His existence and involvement with the world.”⁵²⁶
- ❖ “Life is meaningful. We are not mere accidents of matter, generated by a universe that came into being for no reason and will one day, for no reason, cease to be. We are here because a loving God brought the universe, and life, and us, into existence – a God who knows our fears, hears our prayers, believes in us more than we believe in ourselves, who forgives us when we fail, lifts us when we fall and gives us the strength to overcome despair.”⁵²⁷
- ❖ “Monotheism as it appears for the first time in the Hebrew Bible raises a fundamental question. Why would an infinite God create a finite universe?...The Torah does not give an explicit answer, but one is implicit. God loves. Love seeks otherness. Love is emotion turned outward. Love seeks to give, to share, to create... Goodness creates goodness. Love creates life. God sought to bestow the gift of being on beings other than Himself. We exist and the universe exists because God loves.”⁵²⁸
- ❖ “To know God is to act with justice and compassion, to recognise His image in other people, and to hear the silent cry of those in need.”⁵²⁹
- ❖ “The real religious mystery, according to Judaism, is not our faith in God. It is God’s faith in us.”⁵³⁰
- ❖ “This is the extraordinary idea that shines through the entire Tanakh. God invests his hopes for the universe in this strange, refractory, cantankerous, ungrateful and sometimes degenerate creature called Homo sapiens, part dust of the earth, part breath of God, whose behaviour disappoints and sometimes appalls him. Yet He never gives up.”⁵³¹
- ❖ “There may be times in our lives – certainly there have been in mine – when the sun disappears and we enter the cloud of black despair... We may lose heart; God never will. We may despair; God will give us hope. God believes in us even if we don’t believe in ourselves. We may sin and disappoint and come short again and again, but God never ceases to forgive us when we fail and lift us when we fall. Have faith in God’s faith in us and you will find the path from darkness to light.”⁵³²

⁵²² *Essays on Ethics* p. 173

⁵²³ *Essays on Ethics* p. 338

⁵²⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 312

⁵²⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 421

⁵²⁶ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 5

⁵²⁷ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 22

⁵²⁸ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 229

⁵²⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 136

⁵³⁰ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 5

⁵³¹ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 5

⁵³² *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* pp. 7-8

- ❖ “God believes in us even if we don’t always believe in ourselves. Remember this, and you will find the path from darkness to light.”⁵³³
- ❖ “Sometimes it is when we feel most alone that we discover we are not alone. We can encounter God in the midst of fear or a sense of failure. I have done so at the very points when I felt most inadequate, overwhelmed, abandoned, looked down on by others, discarded, and disdained. It was then that I felt the hand of God reaching out to save me...”⁵³⁴
- ❖ “I, like many others, have found God in the depths of despair and the heights of joy. I found Him in a Jerusalem sunset, standing on Mount Scopus looking out toward the Judean hills, as the whole landscape turned red-gold and the world seemed ablaze with a divine radiance. I felt Him lifting me in some of the most difficult moments of my life, helping me to stand up and carry on. I sense Him when our children and grandchildren were born, as the love that brings new life into being. I feel Him each Friday evening as He surrounds our Shabbat table with clouds of glory. I turn to Him for strength whenever I begin a new stage of life’s journey. I try to express my thanks to Him every time I feel I have done something He would have wanted me to do.”⁵³⁵
- ❖ “We all need times when we silence the clamorous demands of the self and open ourselves to the majestic beauty of the created world, the inner voice of the divine command, and God’s call to mend some of the fractures of our deeply injured world.”⁵³⁶
- ❖ “*God enters our lives as a call from the future.* It is as if we hear Him beckoning us from the far horizon of time, urging us to take a journey and undertake a task that, in ways we cannot fully understand, we were created for.”⁵³⁷
- ❖ “*Believing that there is a God in whose presence we stand means that we are not the centre of our world.* God is.”⁵³⁸
- ❖ “God as He is in heaven is beyond change. But God as He is on Earth – what we call in Judaism the *Shekhinah*, the Divine presence – depends on what we do in His name.”⁵³⁹
- ❖ “Finding God singular and alone, our ancestors discovered the human person, singular and alone.”⁵⁴⁰
- ❖ “The world is a place in which God creates order, but humanity has a tendency to create chaos.”⁵⁴¹
- ❖ “*Our relationship to God parallels our relationship to one another. Only when we respect and recognize the uniqueness of another person are we capable of respecting and recognizing the uniqueness of God Himself.*”⁵⁴²
- ❖ “Far from being timeless and immutable, God in the Hebrew Bible is active, engaged, in constant dialogue with His people, calling, urging, warning, challenging, and forgiving.”⁵⁴³

⁵³³ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 8

⁵³⁴ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 32

⁵³⁵ *Studies in Spirituality* p. xviii

⁵³⁶ *Studies in Spirituality* p. xx

⁵³⁷ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 24

⁵³⁸ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 263

⁵³⁹ *The Power of Ideas* p. 38

⁵⁴⁰ *The Power of Ideas* p. 262

⁵⁴¹ *The Power of Ideas* p. 269

⁵⁴² *I Believe* p. 5

⁵⁴³ *I Believe* p. 74

- ❖ “To love God is to love our fellow humans. To honour God is to honour our fellow humans. We may not ask God to listen to us if we are unwilling to listen to others. We may not ask God to forgive us if we are unwilling to forgive others.”⁵⁴⁴

GOD VRS. RELIGION

- ❖ “There is a difference between God and religion. God is universal, religions are particular. Religion is the translation of God into a particular language and thus into the life of a group, a nation, a community of faith. In the course of history, God has spoken to mankind in many languages: through Judaism to Jews, Christianity to Christians, Islam to Muslims. Only such a God is truly transcendental – greater not only than the natural universe but also than the spiritual universe articulated in any single faith, any specific language of human sensibility.”⁵⁴⁵
- ❖ “The truth at the beating heart of monotheism is that God is greater than religion; that He is only partially comprehended by any faith. He is my God, but also your God. He is on my side, but also on your side. He exists not only in my faith, but also in yours.”⁵⁴⁶
- ❖ “The God of Israel is the God of all humanity, but the religion of Israel is not, and is not intended to be, the religion of all humanity.”⁵⁴⁷

GOOD/GOODNESS

- ❖ “The very fact that bad things are newsworthy is the most telling evidence of the fundamental goodness of our world.”⁵⁴⁸
- ❖ “It is difficult to talk about the common good when we lose the ability to speak about duty, obligation and restraint, and find ourselves only with desires clamouring for satisfaction.”⁵⁴⁹
- ❖ “The good we do does live after us, and it is by far the most important thing that does.”⁵⁵⁰
- ❖ “The greatest gift is to be able to give, and the life we lead is measured by the good we do.”⁵⁵¹
- ❖ “If we were able to see how evil today leads to good tomorrow – if we were able to see from the point of view of God, creator of all – we would understand justice but at the cost of ceasing to be human.”⁵⁵²
- ❖ “To see the good in others and let them see themselves in the mirror of our regard is to help someone grow to become the best they can be.”⁵⁵³

⁵⁴⁴ *I Believe* pp. 140-141

⁵⁴⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 55

⁵⁴⁶ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 65

⁵⁴⁷ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 39

⁵⁴⁸ *Celebrating Life* p. 21

⁵⁴⁹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 32

⁵⁵⁰ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 14

⁵⁵¹ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 14

⁵⁵² *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 22

⁵⁵³ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 27

- ❖ “However dark the world, love still heals. Goodness still redeems.”⁵⁵⁴
- ❖ “The good we do lives after us. It is the great thing that does. We may leave a legacy of wealth, power, even fame, but these are questionable benefits and sometimes harm rather than help those we leave them to. Our true legacy is the trace of our influence for good. We may never see it, but it is there.”⁵⁵⁵
- ❖ “Social scientists tell us that bad events have four or five times as much impact as good ones. So, it’s important to equal the score by celebrating the good.”⁵⁵⁶

GRATITUDE

- ❖ “Judaism is a sustained discipline in not taking life for granted.”⁵⁵⁷
- ❖ “Jewish prayer is an ongoing seminar in gratitude.”⁵⁵⁸
- ❖ “Part of the essence of gratitude is that it recognizes that we are not the sole authors of what is good in our lives.”⁵⁵⁹
- ❖ “I remember when my late father died and we – my mother and brothers and I – were sitting *shiva*. Time and again people would come and tell us of kindnesses he had done for them, in some cases more than fifty years before. Many people who have sat *shiva* have had similar experiences. How moving, I thought, and at the same time how sad that my father was not there to hear their words. What comfort it would have brought him to know that despite the many hardships he faced, the good he did was not forgotten. How tragic that we so often keep our sense of gratitude to ourselves, saying it aloud only when the person to whom we feel indebted has left this life, and we are comforting his or her mourners. But that is the human condition. We never fully know how much we have given others – how much the kind word, the thoughtful deed, the comforting gesture changes lives and is never forgotten.”⁵⁶⁰
- ❖ “When Jews had little to thank God for, they thanked Him, prayed to Him, and came to synagogue and the house of study to hear and heed His word. When they had everything to thank Him for, many turned their backs on the synagogue and the house of study.”⁵⁶¹
- ❖ “Judaism is gratitude with attitude.”⁵⁶²
- ❖ “Every day we begin our morning prayers with a litany of thanks, that we are here, with a world to live in, family and friends to love and be loved by, about to start a day full of possibilities, in which, by acts of loving kindness, we allow God’s presence to flow through us into the lives of others.”⁵⁶³

⁵⁵⁴ *Future Tense* p. 20

⁵⁵⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 138

⁵⁵⁶ *The Power of Ideas* p. 53

⁵⁵⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 119

⁵⁵⁸ *Essays on Ethics* p. 289

⁵⁵⁹ *Essays on Ethics* p. 290

⁵⁶⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 138

⁵⁶¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 127

⁵⁶² *Studies in Spirituality* p. 88

⁵⁶³ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 259

GUILT & SIN

- ❖ “Jewish law is concerned not only with protecting the rights of those who have been wronged, but also helping wrongdoers rebuild their future. Guilt, in Judaism, is about acts, not persons. It is the act, not the person, that is condemned.”⁵⁶⁴
- ❖ “In the Torah sin is something more than a transaction in the soul, or even an act of wrongdoing narrowly conceived. It is *an act in the wrong place*. It disturbs the moral order of the world. The words for sin – *bet* and *avera* – both have this significance. *Het* comes from the same verb as “to miss a target.” *Avera*, like the English word “transgression,” means “to cross a boundary, to enter forbidden territory, to be in a place once should not be.”⁵⁶⁵

GUILT VRS. SHAME

- ❖ “In a shame society it is difficult to create space for confession, repentance, forgiveness, and rehabilitation. Shame cultures tend to be deeply conformist, and can lead to rule of the mob or, as at present, the electronic crowd.”⁵⁶⁶
- ❖ “The emergence of a guilt culture in Judaism flowed from its understanding of the relationship between God and humankind. In Judaism we are not actors on a stage with society as the audience and judge. We can fool society; we cannot fool God. All pretence and pride, every mask and persona, the cosmetic cultivation of public image are irrelevant. “The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (I Sam. 16:7). Shame cultures are collective and conformist. By contrast, Judaism, the archetypal guilt culture, emphasizes the individual and his or her relationship with God. What matters is not whether we conform to the culture of the age but whether we do what is good, just, and right.”⁵⁶⁷
- ❖ “Shame and necessity give rise to a culture of tragedy. Guilt, repentance, and responsibility give rise to one of hope. If we have free will, we are not slaves to fate. If at the heart of reality there is a forgiving presence, then we are not condemned by guilt. “Penitence, prayer and charity avert the evil decree,” goes one of the most famous Jewish prayers. There is no fate that is inevitable, no future predetermined, no outcome we cannot avert. There is always a choice. There are tragic cultures and there are hope cultures, and, though some combine elements of both, the two are ultimately incompatible. In hope cultures, we are agents. We choose. All depends on what we decide, and that cannot be known in advance. In tragic cultures, we are victims. We are acted on by forces beyond our control, and they will eventually defeat even the strongest. The only redemption of victimhood is to refuse that self-definition. In the long run no good can come of it, for it belongs to a world of tragedy. It divides us into victims and oppressors—and we are always the victims, while the others are the oppressors. Look at any conflict zone in the world and you will find that both sides see themselves as the victims, therefore innocent, and the others as the

⁵⁶⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 211

⁵⁶⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 263

⁵⁶⁶ *Essays on Ethics* p. xxxiii

⁵⁶⁷ *Essays on Ethics* p. 180

wrongdoers. That is a recipe for perpetual conflict and perennial disappointment. There is only resentment, rage, and desire for revenge, all of which achieve nothing, as all they do is provoke a reaction of attempted retaliation. The choice of freedom brings the defeat of victimhood and the redemptive birth of hope.”⁵⁶⁸

- ❖ “Guilt cultures conceive of morality as *a voice within*—the voice of conscience that tells us whether or not we have done wrong. Shame cultures think of morality as *an external demand*—what other people expect of us. To feel shame is to experience or imagine what one looks like in the sight of others who pass judgment on us. Shame cultures are other-directed. Guilt cultures are inner-directed. Guilt cultures make a sharp distinction between the sinner and the sin. The act may be wrong, but the agent’s integrity as a person remains intact. That is why guilt can be relieved by remorse, confession, restitution, and the resolve never to behave that way again. In guilt cultures there is repentance and forgiveness. Shame is not like that. It is a stain on the sinner that cannot be fully removed. A shame culture does not provide forgiveness; it offers something similar but different: namely, appeasement, usually accompanied by an act of self-abasement. In a guilt culture it makes sense to confess your sins. In a shame culture it makes no sense at all— instead it becomes all-important to cover up your wrongdoing by any means possible. As Herbert Morris puts it: “With guilt, we are disposed to confess; with shame to hide. We seem to rid ourselves of guilt, when we are fortunate enough to do so, by restoration; we seem to rid ourselves of shame by changing ourselves.”⁵⁶⁹
- ❖ “Judaism, with its belief in an invisible God who created the world with words, is an attempt to base the moral life on something other than public opinion, appearance, honor, and shame. As God tells Samuel, “The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Sam. 16:7). Hence the ethic of the divine word; hence the key term in Judaism, *Shema*: “hear” or “listen.” Hence the importance of the inner voice, of conscience, of guilt rather than shame; of repentance, not rejection; of forgiveness rather than appeasement; of the integrity of the individual regardless of his or her deeds. This was, and remains, one of the most revolutionary shifts in the history of ethics, and Western civilization owes a great deal to it.”⁵⁷⁰
- ❖ “In shame cultures what matters is what other people think of you: the embarrassment, the ignominy, the loss of face. Whereas in guilt cultures it’s what the inner voice of conscience tells you. In shame cultures, we’re actors playing our part on the public stage. In guilt cultures, we’re engaged in inner conversation with the better angels of our nature.”⁵⁷¹

HALAKHAH/JEWISH LAW

⁵⁶⁸ *Morality* pp. 210-211

⁵⁶⁹ *Morality* pp. 216-217

⁵⁷⁰ *Morality* p. 218

⁵⁷¹ *The Power of Ideas* p. 33

- ❖ “Halakhah aims at creating an ideal society, but it must always be workable within a real society.”⁵⁷²
- ❖ “The very heart of the halakhic system is its translation of the Infinite into the finite.”⁵⁷³
- ❖ “Torah does not change. But in one sense, halakhah does change... Halakhah is the application of an unchanging Torah to a changing world. Halakhah changes so that the Torah should not change.”⁵⁷⁴
- ❖ “The central underlying proposition of the halakhah is that it articulates, within the limits of human understanding, the will of God as set forth in the Torah.”⁵⁷⁵
- ❖ “Sa’adia Gaon... stated that only halakhah, Jewish law, joined Jews together into a people. What then becomes of peoplehood once the majority of Jews worldwide – some 80 per cent... no longer see themselves as bound by halakhah?”⁵⁷⁶
- ❖ “Halakhah was inclusive as Judaism itself was inclusive.”⁵⁷⁷
- ❖ “*Halakhah* is Judaism’s unique ‘way’ to God, turning abstract ideas into concrete acts and relationships, and making daily life a home for the divine presence.”⁵⁷⁸
- ❖ “Never be impatient with the details of Jewish life. *God lives in the details*. Judaism is about the poetry of the ordinary, the things we would otherwise take for granted. Jewish law is the sacred choreography of everyday life.”⁵⁷⁹
- ❖ “There was always halakha. But after the Temple’s destruction, it became the vehicle through which the priestly task was spread throughout the people. Halakha invested, and invests, every detail of daily life with the charisma of holiness. No longer did anyone need a special uniform to single them out as priests or holy people, because the Jewish people as a whole had become, individually and collectively, “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:6). If the kohen represented the routinization of charisma, Judaism – through its halakhic sanctification of everyday life – eventually became the charismatization of routine.”⁵⁸⁰
- ❖ “Halakha is a systematic way of turning the great ethical and spiritual truths into a tapestry of deeds and... one must never lose the larger vision in an exclusive focus on the details.”⁵⁸¹
- ❖ “There are religious Jews who will go to great lengths to avoid shaming an inanimate loaf of bread but have no compunction about putting their fellow Jews to shame if they regard them as less religious than they are. That is what happens when we remember the halakha but forget the underlying moral principle behind it.”⁵⁸²
- ❖ “Halakha is part of *Torat Kohanim*, Judaism’s priestly voice. In the Torah, its key verbs are *lehavdil*, to distinguish/analyse/categorise, and *leborot*, to instruct/guide/issue a ruling. But in Judaism there is also a prophetic voice. The key words for the prophet are *tzedek umishpat*, righteousness and justice, and *hesed verahamim*, kindness and compassion.”⁵⁸³

⁵⁷² *Traditional Alternatives/ Arguments for the Sake of Heaven* p. 225

⁵⁷³ *Orthodoxy Confronts Modernity* p. 142

⁵⁷⁴ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 154, 156

⁵⁷⁵ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 156

⁵⁷⁶ *One People* p. 36

⁵⁷⁷ *One People* pp. 91-92

⁵⁷⁸ *Community of Faith* p. 133

⁵⁷⁹ *Letters to the Next Generation* p. 27

⁵⁸⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 248

⁵⁸¹ *Essays on Ethics* p. 55

⁵⁸² *Essays on Ethics* p. 58

⁵⁸³ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 300

HALAKHAH & AGGADAH

- ❖ “Aggadah... is rabbinic Judaism’s domain of pluralism, the realm in which the truth of one side of the argument does not entail the falsity of the other... Halakhah constitutes the rules of the language of Judaism. Aggadah represents the many different statements possible within it.”⁵⁸⁴
- ❖ “Through halakha, we learn to make choices in the present. Through *aggada*, we strive to understand the past. Together, these two ways of thinking constitute the twin hemispheres of the Jewish brain.”⁵⁸⁵
- ❖ “Judaism lives, breathes, and stays young because it never fully resolves the tension between... two modes of the religious life: between Aggada and Halakha, prophetic passion and priestly consistency, the ever-changing yet never-changing.”⁵⁸⁶
- ❖ “Law is not the whole of Judaism. That is why the Torah contains not only law but also narrative, and why the rabbinic literature includes not only Halakha but also Aggada: stories, speculations, and ethical reflections.”⁵⁸⁷
- ❖ “When it comes to halakha, the way of Jewish doing, we seek consensus. However, as Maimonides writes several times in his *Commentary to the Mishna* (Sanhedrin 10:3), there is no psak, no authoritative ruling, when it comes to non-halakhic aspects of Judaism. We each have our own way of understanding Judaism, our own path to God.”⁵⁸⁸

HANUKKAH

- ❖ “Hanukkah is about the freedom to be true to what we believe without denying the freedom of those who believe otherwise. It’s about lighting our candle, while not being threatened by or threatening anyone else’s candle.”⁵⁸⁹
- ❖ “You can see religion as a battle, a holy war, in which you win a victory for your faith by force or fear. Or you can see it as a candle you light to drive away some of the darkness of the world. The difference is that the first sees other religions as the enemy. The second sees them as other candles, not threatening mine, but adding to the light we share. What Jews remembered from that victory over the Greeks twenty-two centuries ago was not a God of war but the God of light. And it’s only the God of light who can defeat the darkness in the human soul.”⁵⁹⁰
- ❖ “The Greeks worshipped human reason, the Jews, divine revelation. The Greeks gave the West its philosophy and science. The Jews, obliquely, gave it its prophets and religious faith.”⁵⁹¹

⁵⁸⁴ *One People* p. 97

⁵⁸⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* pp. 282-283

⁵⁸⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 245

⁵⁸⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 299

⁵⁸⁸ *Studies in Spirituality* p. xx

⁵⁸⁹ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 94

⁵⁹⁰ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 96

⁵⁹¹ *The Great Partnership* p. 46

HATE, CONFLICT & VIOLENCE

- ❖ “I remain convinced that, in many conflict zones throughout the world, if religion does not become part of the solution, it will be part of the problem. We have not yet learned what it is for religion to be a force for peace... Faith persists. So does religious conflict. In the short term, wars are won by weapons; in the long run, by ideas. We need new ideas about what it means to honour human difference while at the same time renewing the global covenant of mankind.”⁵⁹²
- ❖ “To build a society of freedom, you have to let go of hate.”⁵⁹³
- ❖ “Religious believers cannot stand aside when people are murdered in the name of God or a sacred cause. When religion is invoked as a justification for conflict, religious voices must be raised in protest. We must withhold the robe of sanctity when it is sought as a cloak for violence and bloodshed. If faith is enlisted in the cause of war, there must be an equal and opposite counter-voice in the name of peace. If religion is not part of the solution, it will certainly be part of the problem.”⁵⁹⁴
- ❖ “One belief, more than any other is responsible for the slaughter of individuals on the altars of the great historical ideas. It is the belief that those who do not share my faith – or my race or my ideology – do not share my humanity.”⁵⁹⁵
- ❖ “More than hate destroys the hated, it destroys the hater.”⁵⁹⁶
- ❖ “We must answer hatred with love, violence with peace, resentment with generosity of spirit and conflict with reconciliation.”⁵⁹⁷
- ❖ “The new media have the power to defeat most forms of conflict resolution. They are themselves vehicles of conflict creation and conflict intensification.”⁵⁹⁸
- ❖ “When religion turns men into murderers, God weeps.”⁵⁹⁹
- ❖ “Too often in the history of religion, people have killed in the name of the God of life, waged war in the name of the God of peace, hated in the name of the God of love and practised cruelty in the name of the God of compassion. When this happens, God speaks, sometimes in a still, small voice almost inaudible beneath the clamour of those claiming to speak on his behalf. What he says at such times is: *Not in My Name*.”⁶⁰⁰
- ❖ “To invoke God to justify violence against the innocent is not an act of sanctity but of sacrilege. It is a kind of blasphemy. It is to take God’s name in vain.”⁶⁰¹
- ❖ “As Jews, Christians and Muslims, we have to be prepared to ask the most uncomfortable questions. Does the God of Abraham want his disciples to kill for his sake? Does he demand human sacrifice? Does he rejoice in holy war? Does he want us to hate our enemies and terrorise unbelievers? Have we read our sacred texts correctly? What is God saying to

⁵⁹² *The Persistence of Faith* p. ix

⁵⁹³ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 142

⁵⁹⁴ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 9

⁵⁹⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 45

⁵⁹⁶ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 179

⁵⁹⁷ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 190

⁵⁹⁸ *The Home We Build Together* p. 64

⁵⁹⁹ *Not in God’s Name* p. 3

⁶⁰⁰ *Not in God’s Name* p. 3

⁶⁰¹ *Not in God’s Name* p. 5

us, here, now? We are not prophets but we are their heirs and we are not bereft of guidance on these fateful issues.”⁶⁰²

- ❖ “Most conflicts and wars have nothing to do with religion whatsoever. They are about power, territory and glory, things that are secular, even profane. But if religion can be enlisted, it will be.”⁶⁰³
- ❖ “To be cured of potential violence towards the Other, I must be able to imagine myself as the Other.”⁶⁰⁴
- ❖ “How... do we avoid the violence that comes when different groups meet and clash? The answer proposed by the Bible is that something transcends our differences. That something is God, and he has set his image on each of us. That is why every life is sacred and each life is like a universe. The unity of God asks us to respect the stranger, the outsider, the alien, because even though he or she is not in our image – their ethnicity, faith or culture are not ours – nonetheless they are in God’s image.”⁶⁰⁵
- ❖ “Terror, the killing of the innocent and the sacrifice of human life in pursuit of political ends are not mere crimes. They are sacrilege. Those who murder God’s image in God’s name commit a double sacrilege.”⁶⁰⁶
- ❖ “Violence is what happens when you try to resolve a religious dispute by means of power. It cannot be done. Trying to resolve ultimate issues of faith, truth and interpretation by the use of force is a conceptual error of the most fundamental kind. Just as might does not establish right, so victory does not establish truth. Both sides may fight with equal passion and conviction, but at the end of the day, after thousands or millions have died, whole countries reduced to disaster zones, populations condemned to poverty and generations to hopelessness, after the very enterprise of faith has been degraded and disgraced, no one is a millimetre closer to God or salvation or illumination. *You cannot impose truth by force.* That is why religion and power are two separate enterprises that must never be confused.”⁶⁰⁷
- ❖ “To be free, you have to let go of hate.”⁶⁰⁸
- ❖ “Religion leads to violence when it consecrates hate.”⁶⁰⁹
- ❖ “Freedom involves letting go of hate, because hate is the abdication of freedom.”⁶¹⁰
- ❖ “No soul was ever saved by hate. No truth was ever proved by violence. No redemption was ever brought by holy war. No religion won the admiration of the world by its capacity to inflict suffering on its enemies. Despite the fact that these things have been endorsed in their time by sincere religious believers, they are a travesty of faith, and until we learn this, religion will remain one of the great threats to the peace of the world.”⁶¹¹
- ❖ “Martyrdom means being willing to die for your faith. It does not mean being willing to kill for your faith.”⁶¹²

⁶⁰² *Not in God’s Name* p. 21

⁶⁰³ *Not in God’s Name* p. 39

⁶⁰⁴ *Not in God’s Name* p. 179

⁶⁰⁵ *Not in God’s Name* pp. 194-195

⁶⁰⁶ *Not in God’s Name* p. 202

⁶⁰⁷ *Not in God’s Name* p. 225

⁶⁰⁸ *Not in God’s Name* p. 238

⁶⁰⁹ *Not in God’s Name* p. 241

⁶¹⁰ *Not in God’s Name* p. 250

⁶¹¹ *Not in God’s Name* p. 265

⁶¹² *Not in God’s Name* p. 266

- ❖ “Today God is calling us, Jew, Christian and Muslim, to let go of hate and the preaching of hate, and live at least as brothers and sisters, true to our faith and a blessing to others regardless of their faith, honouring God’s name by honouring his image, humankind.”⁶¹³
- ❖ “Freedom involves the abandonment of hate, because hate is the abdication of freedom.”⁶¹⁴

HOLOCAUST

- ❖ “To live and bear witness to their suffering, to live and give meaning to their suffering is a command by which all post-holocaust Jews stand bound.”⁶¹⁵
- ❖ “We have not yet learned how to integrate the holocaust into Jewish consciousness as we once integrated the exodus or the destruction of the Temples. The reason is clear. The holocaust does not point anywhere but everywhere.”⁶¹⁶
- ❖ “If Jews were condemned to die together, shall we not struggle to find a way to live together?”⁶¹⁷
- ❖ “The attempt to eliminate the people of God was an attempt to eradicate the presence of God from the human situation. The fact that after Auschwitz the Jewish people still lives and can still affirm its faith is the most powerful testimony that God still lives.”⁶¹⁸
- ❖ “Rather than engaging in theological reflection on the Holocaust, the survivors of the Chassidic and yeshiva communities of Eastern Europe concentrated on having children to replace a lost generation and rebuilding their shattered townships and institutions in Israel and America, as if to say that death is redeemed only in new life.”⁶¹⁹
- ❖ “The Holocaust raised in its most acute form the question of the interpretation of suffering. But the founding of the state of Israel in 1948 raised the no less intractable question of the interpretation of redemption.”⁶²⁰
- ❖ “Precisely because the Final Solution was addressed to the biological, not the theological, community of Jews, it reinforced the traditional understanding of *keneset yisrael* as a community of birth, not faith alone. If the covenant of hate did not distinguish between religious and secular Jews, believers and heretics, neither can its only possible redemption, the covenant of love.”⁶²¹
- ❖ “If you were to ask what our response to the Holocaust should be, I would say this: Marry and have children, bring new Jewish life into the world, build schools, make communities, have faith in God who had faith in man and make sure that His voice is heard wherever evil threatens. Pursue justice, defend the defenceless, have the courage to be different and fight for the dignity of difference. Recognize the image of God in others, and defeat hate

⁶¹³ *Not in God's Name* p. 267

⁶¹⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 205

⁶¹⁵ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 141

⁶¹⁶ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 153

⁶¹⁷ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 154

⁶¹⁸ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 38

⁶¹⁹ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 47

⁶²⁰ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 54

⁶²¹ *One People* pp. 139-140

with love. Twice a year, on Yom ha-Shoah and the Ninth of Av, sit and mourn for those who died and remember them in your prayers. But most of all, continue to live as Jews.”⁶²²

- ❖ “After the Holocaust we need God more than ever. For there is no limit to the evil men may do when they no longer believe that anything is sacred.”⁶²³
- ❖ “The Holocaust does not tell us about God but about man. It tells us not about divine justice but about human injustice. The question raised by Auschwitz is not “Where was God?” but “Where was man? Where was humanity?”⁶²⁴
- ❖ “When I first stood at Auschwitz-Birkenau the question that haunted me was not, “Where was God?”. God was in the command, “You shall not murder.” God was in the words, “You shall not oppress the stranger.” God was saying to humanity, “Your brother’s blood is crying to Me from the ground.” God did not stop the first humans eating forbidden fruit. He did not stop Cain committing murder. He did not stop the Egyptians enslaving the Israelites. God does not save us from ourselves. That, according to the Talmud, is why creating man was such a risk that the angels advised against it. The question that haunts me after the Holocaust, as it does today in this new age of chaos, is “Where is man?”⁶²⁵
- ❖ “Faith in God after the Holocaust may be hard; but faith in humanity is harder still, knowing the evil people do to one another, and the hate that lies dormant but never dead in the human heart.”⁶²⁶
- ❖ “All of us are, in some sense, survivors. To be a Jew is to carry the burden of memory without letting it rob us of hope and faith in the possibility of a world at peace.”⁶²⁷

HOLY/HOLINESS

- ❖ “Neither the simple rejection of, nor simple accommodation to, our secular environment is an available option. We must labor anew in every generation to distinguish what is sanctifiable and what is not.”⁶²⁸
- ❖ “*Holiness is the space we make for God.* In the simplest and most elegant way, holiness is to humanity what *tzimtzum* is to God. Just as God effaces Himself to make space for mankind, so we efface ourselves to make space for God.”⁶²⁹
- ❖ “Holiness is the space we make for the Otherness of God – by listening, not speaking; by being, not doing; by allowing ourselves to be acted on rather than acting. It means disengaging from that flow of activity whereby we impose our human purposes on the world, thereby allowing space for the divine purpose to emerge. All holiness is a form of renunciation, but since God desires the existence of human beings as responsible and creative beings, He does not ask for total renunciation. Thus some times are holy; not all; some spaces are holy; not all; some people are holy; not all. All nations contain holy individuals. What makes Israel unique is that it is a holy nation, meaning, a nation all of

⁶²² *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 184

⁶²³ *Letters to the Next Generation 2* p. 40

⁶²⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 238

⁶²⁵ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 7

⁶²⁶ *The Power of Ideas* p. 8

⁶²⁷ *The Power of Ideas* p. 136

⁶²⁸ *Orthodoxy Confronts Modernity* p. 15

⁶²⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 142

whose members are summoned to holiness. It was the first faith to see holiness as a property not of a sacred elite, but of national life itself.”⁶³⁰

- ❖ “The Sanctuary was not a place in which the objective existence of God was somehow more concentrated than elsewhere. Rather, it was a place whose holiness had the effect of opening hearts to the One worshipped there. God exists everywhere, but not everywhere do we feel the presence of God in the same way. The essence of “the holy” is that it is a place where we set aside all human devices and desires and enter a domain wholly set aside for God.”⁶³¹
- ❖ “The Greeks, and many in the Western World who inherited their tradition, believed in the holiness of beauty (Keats’ “Beauty is truth, truth beauty, that is all / Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know”). Jews believed in the opposite: *hadrat kodesh*, the beauty of holiness: “Give to the Lord the glory due to His name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness” (Psalms 29:2).”⁶³²
- ❖ “Holiness represents those points in space and time where God becomes vivid, tangible, a felt presence. Holiness is a break in the self-sufficiency of the material world, where infinity enters space and eternity enters time.”⁶³³
- ❖ “The holy... is where human beings renounce their independence and self-sufficiency, the very things that are the mark of their humanity, and for a moment acknowledge their utter dependence on He who spoke and brought the universe into being.”⁶³⁴
- ❖ “*The universe is the space God makes for man.* The holy is the space man makes for God. The secular is the emptiness created by God to be filled by a finite universe. The holy is the emptiness in time and space vacated by humans so that it can be filled by the infinite presence of God.”⁶³⁵
- ❖ “The holy is where God’s glory casts off its cloak of concealment and becomes palpable, tangible.”⁶³⁶
- ❖ “The holy... is a time or space that in itself testifies to the existence of something beyond itself.”⁶³⁷
- ❖ “The holy is where transcendence becomes immanence, where within the universe we encounter the presence of the One beyond the universe. Holiness is the space we make for God.”⁶³⁸
- ❖ “The holy is where God is experienced as absolute presence.”⁶³⁹
- ❖ “Holiness belongs to all of us when we turn our lives into the service of God, and society into a home for the Divine Presence.”⁶⁴⁰

⁶³⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus p. 143*

⁶³¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus p. 192*

⁶³² *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus pp. 300-301*

⁶³³ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus p. 17*

⁶³⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus p. 17*

⁶³⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus p. 18*

⁶³⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus p. 18*

⁶³⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus p. 19*

⁶³⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus p. 19*

⁶³⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus p. 145*

⁶⁴⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus p. 287*

- ❖ “All nations in the ancient world had priests, but none was “a kingdom of priests” (Ex. 19:6). All religions have holy individuals – but none claim that every one of their members is holy.”⁶⁴¹
- ❖ “The holy is that segment of time and space God has reserved for His presence.”⁶⁴²
- ❖ “The holy is where God is experience as absolute presence.”⁶⁴³
- ❖ “To be holy means to bear witness to the presence of God in our, and our people’s, lives. Israel – the Jewish people - is the people who in themselves give testimony to One beyond themselves.”⁶⁴⁴

HOPE

- ❖ “Despair is not a Jewish emotion. *Od lo avda tikvatenur*: our hope, we say, has never been destroyed. For there is a Jewish way of telling the story of our situation... What happens is not chance but a chapter in the complex script of the covenant which leads, mysteriously but assuredly, to our redemption. Crisis in Jewish history has always led to renewal, not despair. So it must be now.”⁶⁴⁵
- ❖ “Humour is first cousin to hope.”⁶⁴⁶
- ❖ “Hope is the ability to combine aspiration with patience; to be undeterred by setbacks and delays; to have a sense of the time it takes to effect change in the human heart; never to forget the destination even in the midst of exile and disaster.”⁶⁴⁷
- ❖ “Hope is the narrow bridge across which we must walk if we are to pass from slavery to redemption, from the valley of death to the open spaces of new life.”⁶⁴⁸
- ❖ “History does not give rise to hope; hope gives rise to history.”⁶⁴⁹
- ❖ “Far from being simple or naïve, hope demands, creates and is the expression of indomitable moral courage.”⁶⁵⁰
- ❖ “Hope is ultimately a religious emotion. It is born in the conviction that we are more than a blind concatenation of ‘selfish genes’. That may be one way of describing what we are, but it is not all we are, and to believe otherwise is to be deaf to the music of life itself.”⁶⁵¹
- ❖ “The Jewish way is to rescue hope from tragedy. However dark the world, love still heals. Goodness still redeems. Terror, by defeating others, ultimately defeats itself, while the memory of those who offered kindness to strangers lives on.”⁶⁵²
- ❖ “Jews are the people who refused to be comforted because they never gave up hope.”⁶⁵³

⁶⁴¹ *Essays on Ethics* pp. 5-6

⁶⁴² *Essays on Ethics* p. 166

⁶⁴³ *Essays on Ethics* p. 167

⁶⁴⁴ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 153

⁶⁴⁵ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* pp. 19-20

⁶⁴⁶ *Celebrating Life* p. 38

⁶⁴⁷ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 81

⁶⁴⁸ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 96

⁶⁴⁹ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 117

⁶⁵⁰ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 118

⁶⁵¹ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 5

⁶⁵² *Future Tense* p. 20

⁶⁵³ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 256

- ❖ “Judaism is a religion of hope, and its great rituals of repentance and atonement are part of that hope. We are not condemned to live endlessly with the mistakes and errors of our past.”⁶⁵⁴
- ❖ “We are a self-critical people. The Hebrew Bible is the most self-critical of all national literatures. We know our failings. There is something admirable about this honesty. But it must never leave us bereft of hope.”⁶⁵⁵
- ❖ “Despair is never justified. Even if your life has been scarred by misfortune, lacerated by pain, and your chances of happiness seem gone forever, there is still hope. The next chapter of your life can be full of blessings.”⁶⁵⁶
- ❖ “Judaism, in [terms] of the concept of a Messianic Age, became the only civilization whose golden age is in the future. And throughout the Torah, the promised land lies in the future. Avraham does not acquire it. Nor does Isaac. Nor does Jacob. Even Moses, who spends forty years leading the people there, does not get to enter it. It is always just beyond. Soon but not yet.”⁶⁵⁷

HOPE VRS. OPTIMISM

- ❖ “Optimism is the belief that things are going to get better. Hope is the belief that we can make things better. Optimism is a passive virtue, hope is an active one. It takes no courage to be an optimist, but it does need courage to hope.”⁶⁵⁸
- ❖ “One of the most important distinctions I have learned in the course of reflection on Jewish history is the difference between optimism and hope. Optimism is the belief that things will get better. Hope is the belief that, together, we can make things better. Optimism is a passive virtue, hope an active one. It takes no courage to be an optimist, but it takes a great deal of courage to have hope. Knowing what we do of our past, no Jew can be an optimist. But Jews have never – despite a history of sometimes awesome suffering – given up hope.”⁶⁵⁹
- ❖ “The deepest difference between linear and covenantal time is that whereas the first gives rise to *optimism*, the latter leads to *hope*. These two concepts, often confused, are in fact utterly different. Optimism is the belief that things will get better. Hope is the belief that, together, we can make things better. Optimism is a passive virtue, hope an active one. It takes no courage – only a certain naivety – to be an optimist. It takes courage to sustain hope. No Jew – knowing what we do of the past, of hatred, bloodshed, persecution in the name of God, suppression of human rights in the name of freedom – can be an optimist. But Jews have never given up hope.”⁶⁶⁰
- ❖ “Optimism and hope are not the same. Optimism is the belief that the world is changing for the better; hope is the belief that, together, we can make the world better. Optimism is

⁶⁵⁴ *Essays on Ethics* p. 187

⁶⁵⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 36

⁶⁵⁶ *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* p. 42

⁶⁵⁷ *I Believe* p. 76

⁶⁵⁸ *Celebrating Life* p. 175

⁶⁵⁹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 206

⁶⁶⁰ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 80

a passive virtue, hope an active one. It needs no courage to be an optimist, but it takes a great deal of courage to hope. The Hebrew Bible is not an optimistic book. It is, however, one of the great literatures of hope.”⁶⁶¹

- ❖ “Hope is not costless in the way that optimism is. It carries with it a considerable price. Those who hope refuse to be comforted while the hoped-for outcome is not yet reached. Given their history of suffering, Jews were rarely optimists. But they never gave up hope. That is why, when the prophets saw evil in the world, they refused to be comforted.”⁶⁶²

HUKKIM

- ❖ “The concept of a *hok* tells us not to reject what we do not yet comprehend. There are aspects of life that call for faith in a wisdom greater than ours. We must strive to understand what we can, but we must also have the humility to make space in our lives for that which we cannot.”⁶⁶³
- ❖ “*Hukkim* are Judaism’s way of reconfiguring the limbic system, the emotional brain, by way of acts that bypass the prefrontal cortex, the rational brain. Contemporary neuroscience has shown us how this works, and why. Rationality, vitally important in its own right, is only half the story of why we do what we do.”⁶⁶⁴
- ❖ “My own view is that *hukkim* are commands deliberately intended to bypass the rational brain, the pre-frontal cortex, and for an extremely important reason. We are not fully rational animals, and we are capable of making momentous mistakes if we think we are... In general, the non-rational parts of the brain are faster acting and more powerful than the rational ones... A moral system, to be adequate to the human condition, must recognize the nature of the human condition. We are not perfectly rational beings, and if we tried to be, we would be found to be lacking in certain essential human qualities. We could not love or be moved to compassion. We would find it difficult to understand the nature of loyalty. We would not understand other people’s fears or hopes, or anxieties or distress. We would lack “emotional intelligence.””⁶⁶⁵
- ❖ “*hukkim* are commands deliberately intended to bypass the rational brain, the pre-frontal cortex.”⁶⁶⁶

HUMAN DIGNITY

- ❖ “The ironic yet utterly humane lesson of history is that what renders a culture invulnerable is the compassion it shows to the vulnerable. The ultimate value we should be concerned to maximize is human dignity – the dignity of all human being, equally, as children of the creative, redeeming God.”⁶⁶⁷

⁶⁶¹ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 166

⁶⁶² *The Great Partnership* p. 242

⁶⁶³ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 251

⁶⁶⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 259

⁶⁶⁵ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 218

⁶⁶⁶ *I Believe* p. 225

⁶⁶⁷ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 195

- ❖ “More than wealth and power, education is the key to human dignity.”⁶⁶⁸
- ❖ “In creating humanity, God empowers humanity. He grants dignity – radical, ontological dignity – to the fact that human beings are not gods. Infinity confers a blessing on finitude by recognizing that it is finite, and love it because it is. God not only speaks, he also listens, and in listening gives humankind a voice – Abraham’s voice.”⁶⁶⁹
- ❖ “The Bible radicalizes the human spirit with its vision of human dignity.”⁶⁷⁰
- ❖ “There is no greater defence of human dignity than the phrase from the first chapter of the Bible that dared to call the human being ‘the image of God’.”⁶⁷¹

HUMANITY

- ❖ “Behind us lies a bloodstained history of inquisitions, crusades and jihads. But beyond that lies Genesis’ momentous disclosure that every human being – the unredeemed, the infidel, the other – is still the image of God.”⁶⁷²
- ❖ “We are not insignificant, nor are we alone. We are here because someone willed us into being, who wanted us to be, who knows our innermost thoughts, who values us in our uniqueness, whose breath we breathe and in whose arms we rest; someone in and through whom we are connected to all that is.”⁶⁷³
- ❖ “We learn to love humanity by loving specific human beings.”⁶⁷⁴
- ❖ “Purity of heart is essential to the relationship between man and God. But in relations between man and man, what matters is the outcome, not the sentiment which brought it about.”⁶⁷⁵
- ❖ “If only we remembered that, yes, God is on our side, but He is also on the other side, we might stand a chance of realizing that, under the eye of heaven we are all on the same side, the side of humanity.”⁶⁷⁶
- ❖ “God in making humanity conferred on us the right and duty to see things from a human point of view... Making us human, not divine, God calls on us to judge and act within the terms of our humanity.”⁶⁷⁷
- ❖ “We have conquered every distance except one – the distance between human beings.”⁶⁷⁸
- ❖ “Implicit in the first chapter of Genesis is... a momentous challenge: Just as God is creative, so you be creative. In making man, God endowed one creature – the only one thus far known to science – with the capacity not merely to adapt to his environment, but to adapt his environment to him; to shape the world; to be active, not merely passive, in relation to the influences and circumstances that surround him.”⁶⁷⁹

⁶⁶⁸ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 116

⁶⁶⁹ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 22

⁶⁷⁰ *The Home We Build Together* p. 97

⁶⁷¹ *The Great Partnership* p. 127

⁶⁷² *The Persistence of Faith* p. 81

⁶⁷³ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 69

⁶⁷⁴ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 58

⁶⁷⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 98

⁶⁷⁶ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 9

⁶⁷⁷ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 26

⁶⁷⁸ *Marble Arch Synagogue*

⁶⁷⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 24

- ❖ “We remain fallible people, all too often falling short of what we are called on to become. Yet those who followed Abraham’s call gave rise to moments of graciousness that lifted our small and insignificant species to great heights of moral, spiritual and aesthetic beauty.”⁶⁸⁰
- ❖ “In striving to listen to the more-than-human, human beings learned what it is to be human, for in discovering God, singular and alone, they eventually learned to respect the dignity and sanctity of the human person, singular and alone.”⁶⁸¹
- ❖ “We may be dust of the earth, the debris of exploded stars, a concatenation of blindly self-replicating genes, but within us is the breath of God.”⁶⁸²
- ❖ “The search for God is the search for meaning. The discovery of God is the discovery of meaning. And that is no small thing, for we are meaning-seeking animals. It is what makes us unique. To be human is to ask the question, ‘Why?’”⁶⁸³
- ❖ “The Jewish view of the human condition is that everything we achieve is due to our own efforts, but equally and essentially the result of God’s blessing.”⁶⁸⁴
- ❖ “Our common humanity precedes our religious differences.”⁶⁸⁵
- ❖ “Relationships are where our humanity is born and grows, flowers and flourishes. It is by loving people that we learn to love God and feel the fullness of His love for us.”⁶⁸⁶
- ❖ “The first thing the Torah tells us about humanity is that we are each in the image and likeness of God Himself. Therefore if you wrong a human being, you are abusing the only creation in the universe on which God has set His image. A sin against any person is a sin against God.”⁶⁸⁷

HUMILITY

- ❖ “Those who have humility are open to things greater than themselves while those who lack it are not. That is why those who lack it make you feel small, while those who have it make you feel enlarged. Their humility inspires greatness in others.”⁶⁸⁸
- ❖ “The greatest tribute the Torah gives Moses is to call him *eved Hashem*, the servant of God. That is why Rambam writes that we can all be as great as Moses. Because we can all serve. We are as great as the causes we serve, and when we serve with true humility, a force greater than ourselves flows through us, bringing the Divine Presence into the world.”⁶⁸⁹
- ❖ “Physically, the taller you are the more you look down on others. Morally, the reverse is the case. The more we look up to others, the higher we stand. For us, as for God, greatness is humility.”⁶⁹⁰

⁶⁸⁰ *The Great Partnership* p. 22

⁶⁸¹ *The Great Partnership* p. 23

⁶⁸² *The Great Partnership* p. 23

⁶⁸³ *The Great Partnership* p. 25

⁶⁸⁴ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 95

⁶⁸⁵ *Not in God’s Name* p. 264

⁶⁸⁶ *I Believe* p. 7

⁶⁸⁷ *I Believe* p. 139

⁶⁸⁸ *Essays on Ethics* p. 231

⁶⁸⁹ *Essays on Ethics* p. 339

⁶⁹⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 115

- ❖ “God laughs at those who think they have godlike powers. The opposite is true. The smaller we see ourselves, the greater we become.”⁶⁹¹
- ❖ “Humility means that you are secure enough not to need to be reassured by others. It means that you don’t feel you have to prove yourself by showing that you are cleverer, smarter, more gifted, or successful than others. You are secure because you live in God’s love. He has faith in you even if you do not. You do not need to compare yourself to others. You have your task, they have theirs, and that leads you to co-operate, not compete.”⁶⁹²
- ❖ “Humility means living by the light of that which is greater than me.”⁶⁹³

I (ME) VRS. WE (US)

- ❖ “When we move from the politics of ‘Me’ to the politics of ‘Us’, we rediscover those life-transforming, counterintuitive truths: that a nation is strong when it cares for the weak, that it becomes rich when it cares for the poor, that it becomes invulnerable when it cares about the vulnerable.”⁶⁹⁴
- ❖ “There is no liberty without morality, no freedom without responsibility, no viable ‘I’ without the sustaining ‘We’.”⁶⁹⁵
- ❖ “The over-emphasis on ‘I’ and the loss of ‘We’ leaves us isolated and vulnerable. It is not good to be alone.”⁶⁹⁶
- ❖ “If I look back at my life I discover that it was always someone else who set me on a new trajectory. I suspect the same is true for most people. Someone who was there when we needed it, who listened as we poured out our problems, who gave us the encouraging word when we were about to give up, who believed in us more than we believed in ourselves. Or maybe it was actually someone who looked us in the eye and told us the honest truth: that we were self-obsessed, that we were wallowing in our emotions, that instead of thinking about how to develop the mindset to achieve great things, we should stop reading and start doing. Help, I have found time and time again, comes not from the self, but from others.”⁶⁹⁷
- ❖ “To be fully human, we need direct encounters with other human beings. We have to be in their presence, open to their otherness, alert to their hopes and fears, engaged in the minuet of conversation, the delicate back-and-forth of speaking and listening. That is how relationships are made. That is how we become moral beings. That is how we learn to think as “We.” This cannot be done electronically. The immediacy of global connection offered by social media makes it, potentially, one of the wonders of our age. But it must not become a replacement for face-to-face relationships in real space and time, which is where the moral life is born, lives, and has its being.”⁶⁹⁸

⁶⁹¹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 215

⁶⁹² *Studies in Spirituality* p. 263

⁶⁹³ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 265

⁶⁹⁴ *Morality* p. 21

⁶⁹⁵ *Morality* p. 21

⁶⁹⁶ *Morality* p. 37

⁶⁹⁷ *Morality* p. 39

⁶⁹⁸ *Morality* p. 61

- ❖ “Anomie, it seems to me, aptly describes the state we inhabit today: a world of relativism, non-judgmentalism, subjectivity, autonomy, individual rights, and self-esteem. The gains of this long process have been many, but the loss, too, has been profound. The revolutionary shift from “We” to “I” means that everything that once consecrated the moral bonds binding us to one another—faith, creed, culture, custom, and convention—no longer does so. The energy now localized in the “I” has been diverted from family, congregation, and community, all of which have now grown weak, leaving us vulnerable and alone.”⁶⁹⁹
- ❖ “To be a Jew... is not just a matter of believing or behaving, but also of belonging. Martin Buber wrote a famous book about spirituality called *I and Thou*. It had a huge impact on Christian theologians, much less so on Jewish ones. The reason is self-evident. Judaism is less about the I-and-thou than about the we-and-thou. It is constructed in the first-person plural of togetherness... All-of-us is greater than any-of-us.”⁷⁰⁰
- ❖ “Whenever ‘Me’ takes precedence over ‘We’, and pleasure today over viability tomorrow, a society is in trouble.”⁷⁰¹

IDEAS

- ❖ “At the heart of any institution is an idea. Marriage, parenthood, friendship, citizenship, each embody a certain way of life with its attendant obligations and expectations. There is nothing natural about institutions. They are the order we impose on the potential chaos of human relationships. At their best, they are complex works of art, continually rehearsed and re-enacted, through which we give living expression to some of humanity’s highest moral and spiritual ideals.”⁷⁰²
- ❖ “Weapons win wars, but it takes ideas to win the peace.”⁷⁰³
- ❖ “Wars are won by weapons, but it takes ideas to win a peace.”⁷⁰⁴
- ❖ “If we change the way we think, we can change the way we feel, which changes the way we act, which changes the person we become. Ideas change lives, and great ideas help us to courage, to happiness, and to lives filled with blessing.”⁷⁰⁵

IDEALS/IDEALISM

- ❖ “Never worry when people say that you are being too idealistic. It is only idealistic people who change the world.”⁷⁰⁶

⁶⁹⁹ *Morality* p. 85

⁷⁰⁰ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 116

⁷⁰¹ *The Power of Ideas* p. 147

⁷⁰² *Community of Faith* p. 100

⁷⁰³ *Not in God’s Name* p. 17

⁷⁰⁴ *Not in God’s Name* p. 264

⁷⁰⁵ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. xxii

⁷⁰⁶ *Letters to the Next Generation* p. 24

- ❖ “You are as great as your ideals. If you truly believe in something beyond yourself, you will achieve beyond yourself.”⁷⁰⁷
- ❖ “It is all too easy to abandon your ideals when you see how hard it is to change even the smallest part of the world, but when you do, you become cynical, disillusioned, disheartened. That is a kind of spiritual death. The people who don’t, who never give up, who “do not go gentle into that good night,” who still see a world of possibilities around them and encourage and empower those who come after them, keep their spiritual energy intact.”⁷⁰⁸
- ❖ “Nothing great and transformative happens overnight in the human world. You have to keep going, even if you are tired and lost, exhausted and despondent.”⁷⁰⁹

IDENTITY

- ❖ “If Jewish survival is problematic, it is because Jewish identity itself is problematic.”⁷¹⁰
- ❖ “Moses, confronted with his mission, asked “Who am I?” The modern Jew uses the same words but asks a different question. For Moses the doubt was about personal worthiness. For the modern Jew the doubt is about personal identity.”⁷¹¹
- ❖ “The Jews who came to Britain as refugees, among them my late father, became passionately British as well as Jewish. They saw no contradiction between the two; nor should we. In the secular state there is no incompatibility between religious and national identities. None the less, a sense of collective belonging does not happen without sustained and focused effort. I argued then, and believe still, that each of us has to learn to be ‘bilingual’, at home in two identities, one we share with fellow believers, the other we share with fellow citizens.”⁷¹²
- ❖ “As national identity grows weaker, other identities fill the vacated space, and of these, religion is the most personal and transmissible.”⁷¹³
- ❖ “What has become clear, if paradoxical, is that religious identity can go hand in hand with a decline along all measurable axes of religious behaviour.”⁷¹⁴
- ❖ “Jewish identity ...is not only a faith, but a fate. It is not an identity we assume, but one into which we are born.”⁷¹⁵
- ❖ “The history of my family is where my identity begins.”⁷¹⁶
- ❖ “Jews were commanded to become the people who never forget. And they never did.”⁷¹⁷
- ❖ “When it was hard to be a Jew, people stayed Jewish. When it became easy to be a Jew, people stopped being Jewish.”⁷¹⁸

⁷⁰⁷ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 29

⁷⁰⁸ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 240

⁷⁰⁹ *I Believe* p. 22

⁷¹⁰ *Traditional Alternatives/ Arguments for the Sake of Heaven* p. 104

⁷¹¹ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 3

⁷¹² *The Persistence of Faith* p. viii

⁷¹³ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 86

⁷¹⁴ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 86

⁷¹⁵ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 12

⁷¹⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 44

⁷¹⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 106

⁷¹⁸ *Future Tense* p. 51

- ❖ “At some stage Jews stopped defining themselves by the reflection they saw in the eyes of God and started defining themselves by the reflection they saw in the eyes of their Gentile neighbours.”⁷¹⁹
- ❖ “Jewishness is not an ethnicity but a living lexicon of ethnicities.”⁷²⁰
- ❖ “If Jews distrust the world, they will not seek to understand it and learn how to make their case and win allies in the world. They will see antisemitism where other factors are at work. They will lend Jewish identity a negativity that will encourage many young Jews to leave rather than stay. They will fall into the trap of moral solipsism, of talking to themselves in terms only intelligible to themselves. The phrase ‘a people that dwells alone’ will become a self-fulfilling prophecy that will not augur well for the future of Jews, Judaism or Israel.”⁷²¹
- ❖ “What rules in this universe is *interests*. Sometimes they are individual, at others collective, but interests are what are at stake. What is missing is *identity*. Identity is always a group phenomenon. It comes laden with history, memory, a sense of the past and its injustices, and a set of moral sensibilities that are inseparable from identity: loyalty, respect and reverence, the three virtues undermined by market economics, liberal democratic politics and the culture of individualism. As one who values market economics and liberal democratic politics, I fear that the West does not fully understand the power of the forces that oppose it. Passions are at play that run deeper and stronger than any calculation of interests. Reason alone will not win this particular battle. Nor will invocations of words like ‘freedom’ and ‘democracy’. To some they sound like compelling ideals, but to others they are the problem against which they are fighting, not the solution they embrace.”⁷²²
- ❖ “We are what we are because of those who came before us.”⁷²³
- ❖ “Identity is not just a matter of who my parents were. It is also a matter of *what they remembered and handed on to me*.”⁷²⁴
- ❖ “The paradox of identity is that it is precisely when we speak from within our particularity that we strike a chord with others of different particularity. You don’t have to be French to love Flaubert, Russian to admire Tolstoy or Japanese to enjoy a haiku. Affirming our identity need not involve negating anyone else’s. I can say this is who I am, without saying or implying that this is the only way to be.”⁷²⁵

INCLUSIVISM & PLURALISM

- ❖ “The difference between Jewish inclusivism and pluralism... is this. Inclusivism asserts that there is an authoritative set of beliefs that constitute Jewish faith. It involves, among other things, belief in the divine revelation of the Torah and the authority of rabbinic tradition, interpretation, and law...Inclusivism preserves Orthodoxy while not excluding

⁷¹⁹ *Future Tense* p. 59

⁷²⁰ *Future Tense* p. 62

⁷²¹ *Future Tense* p. 129

⁷²² *Not in God’s Name* pp. 22-23

⁷²³ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 23

⁷²⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 224

⁷²⁵ *The Power of Ideas* p. 109

the non-Orthodox from the covenantal community. A Jewish pluralist, on the other hand, would argue that liberal, Reform, Conservative, and secular Judaism are equally legitimate ways of understanding the Jewish destiny. None is an error.”⁷²⁶

- ❖ “Orthodoxy is the decision to continue to understand tradition in the traditional way, as objective truth and external authority. Pluralism arises when a movement initially conceived in opposition to a tradition seeks to reaffirm its links with that tradition within the framework of a non-traditional consciousness.”⁷²⁷
- ❖ “Pluralism conceives Jewish unity in terms of modern consciousness. Inclusivism conceives it in terms of traditional consciousness. The two... collide at the most fundamental conceptual level.”⁷²⁸
- ❖ “The inclusivist faith is that Jews, divided by where they stand, are united by what they are travelling towards, the destination which alone gives meaning to Jewish history: the promised union of Torah, the Jewish people, the land of Israel, and God.”⁷²⁹

INDIVIDUALITY/OUR UNIQUE GIFTS

- ❖ “By being what only we are, we contribute to the world what only we can give.”⁷³⁰
- ❖ “There is... all the difference in the world between *individuality* and *individualism*. Individuality means that I am a unique and valued member of a team. Individualism means that I am not a team player at all. I am interested in myself alone, not the group... Judaism values individuality, not individualism. As Hillel said, “If I am only for myself, what am I?” (Mishna Avot 1:14).”⁷³¹
- ❖ “Sibling rivalry is defeated the moment we discover that we are loved by God for what we are, not for what someone else is. We each have our own blessing.”⁷³²
- ❖ “What matters in the long run is not what gifts we have, but what use we put them to.”⁷³³
- ❖ “*The greatest mistake we can make is to do nothing because we cannot do everything.*”⁷³⁴
- ❖ “Leaders grow by leading. Writers grow by writing. Teachers grow by teaching. It is only by overcoming our sense of inadequacy that we throw ourselves into the task and find ourselves lifted and enlarged by so doing.”⁷³⁵
- ❖ “From the perspective of eternity, we may sometimes be overwhelmed by a sense of our own insignificance. We are no more than a wave in the ocean, a grain of sand on the sea shore, a speck of dust on the surface of infinity. *Yet we are here because God wanted us to be, because there is a task He wants us to perform.* The search for meaning is the quest for this task.”⁷³⁶

⁷²⁶ *One People* pp. 142-143

⁷²⁷ *One People* p. 148

⁷²⁸ *One People* p. 167

⁷²⁹ *One People* p. 228

⁷³⁰ *A Judaism Engaged with the World* p. 24

⁷³¹ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 186

⁷³² *Not in God's Name* p. 141

⁷³³ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 300

⁷³⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 385

⁷³⁵ *Studies in Spirituality* pp. 36-37

⁷³⁶ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 124

- ❖ “Each of us is unique. Even genetically identical twins are different. There are things only we can do, we who are what we are, in this time, this place, and these circumstances. For each of us God has a task: work to perform, a kindness to show, a gift to give, love to share, loneliness to ease, pain to heal, or broken lives to help mend. Discerning that task, hearing... God’s call, is one of the great spiritual challenges for each of us.”⁷³⁷
- ❖ “For each of us God may have a task: work to perform, a kindness to show, a gift to give, love to share, loneliness to ease, pain to heal, or broken lives to help mend. Discerning that task, hearing God’s call, gives a life meaning and purpose. Where what we want to do meets what needs to be done, that is where God wants us to be.”⁷³⁸
- ❖ “When we feel alone, we are not alone, because the great heroes of the human spirit felt this way at times – Moses, David, Elijah, and Jonah. So did modern masters like Rav Kook and Rabbi Soloveitchik. It was precisely their loneliness that allowed them to develop a deeper relationship with God. Plumbing the depths, they reached the heights. They met God in the silence of the soul and felt themselves embraced.”⁷³⁹

INFLUENCE VRS. POWER

- ❖ “Abraham is without doubt the most influential person who ever lived. Today he is claimed as the spiritual ancestor of 2.4 billion Christians, 1.6 billion Muslims, and 13 million Jews, more than half the people alive today. Yet he ruled no empire, commanded no great army, performed no miracles, and proclaimed no prophecy. He is the supreme example in all of history of *influence without power*.”⁷⁴⁰
- ❖ “Power works by division, influence by multiplication. Power, in other words, is a zero-sum game: the more you share, the less you have. Influence is a non-zero-sum game: the more you share, the more you have.”⁷⁴¹
- ❖ “The most important forms of leadership come not with position, title, or robes of office, not with prestige and power, but with the willingness to work with others to achieve what we cannot do alone; to speak, to listen, to teach, to learn, to treat other people’s views with respect even if they disagree with us; to explain patiently and cogently why we believe what we believe and do what we do; to encourage others, praise their best endeavours, and challenge them to do better still. Always choose influence rather than power. It helps change people into people who can change the world.”⁷⁴²
- ❖ “Power operates by division, influence by multiplication. *With power, the more we share, the less we have. With influence, the more we share, the more we have.*”⁷⁴³
- ❖ “The use of power diminishes others; the exercise of influence enlarges them.”⁷⁴⁴
- ❖ “Not all of us have power. But we all have influence, whether we see it or not. We make the people around us better or worse than they might otherwise have been. Worse if we

⁷³⁷ *Studies in Spirituality* pp. 124-125

⁷³⁸ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 131

⁷³⁹ *I Believe* p. 209

⁷⁴⁰ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 15

⁷⁴¹ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 194

⁷⁴² *Lessons in Leadership* p. 197

⁷⁴³ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 222

⁷⁴⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 225

infect them with our materialism and cynicism, better if we inspire them with what Wordsworth called ‘the best portion’ of a good life, our ‘little, nameless, unremembered acts / of kindness and of love’. That quiet leadership of influence seeks no power, but it changes lives.”⁷⁴⁵

- ❖ “Politicians have power, but religion has something greater than power. It has influence. Politics moves the pieces, but religion changes lives.”⁷⁴⁶

INTELLECTUAL HONESTY

- ❖ “Intellectual honesty is a precondition for the religious life.”⁷⁴⁷
- ❖ “Judaism – a religion of dissent, questioning and “arguments for the sake of heaven” – is a faith that values intellectual honesty and moral truthfulness above all things.”⁷⁴⁸

INTERPRETATION

- ❖ “We are not fundamentalists, believing that the Torah is always to be understood literally, or that it yields its meanings without interpretation, or that faith demands the abandonment of intelligence. On the contrary, faith without reason is as tragic as reason without faith.”⁷⁴⁹
- ❖ “Behind Jewish belief in *Torah shebe’al Peh*, the “Oral Law,” lies a fundamental truth. The meaning of a text is not given by the text itself. Between a text and its meaning lies the act of interpretation – and this depends on who is interpreting, in what context, and with what beliefs.”⁷⁵⁰
- ❖ “Every text needs interpretation. Every interpretation needs wisdom. Every wisdom needs careful negotiation between the timeless and time. Fundamentalism reads texts as if God were as simple as we are. That is unlikely to be true.”⁷⁵¹
- ❖ “It takes wisdom to know how to translate the word of God into the world of human beings.”⁷⁵²
- ❖ “Every religion must guard against a literal reading of its hard texts if it is not to show that it has learned nothing from history.”⁷⁵³
- ❖ “Fundamentalism – text without context, and application without interpretation – is not faith but an aberration of faith.”⁷⁵⁴
- ❖ “When the Torah withholds a fact essential to understanding a passage and reveals it only later, it is forcing us to realise that events are not always what they first seem.”⁷⁵⁵

⁷⁴⁵ *The Power of Ideas* p. 18

⁷⁴⁶ *The Power of Ideas* p. 247

⁷⁴⁷ *One People* p. vii

⁷⁴⁸ *Freedom & Truth (Va’era 5777)*

⁷⁴⁹ *Community of Faith* p. 133

⁷⁵⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 167

⁷⁵¹ *Not in God’s Name* p. 207

⁷⁵² *Not in God’s Name* p. 218

⁷⁵³ *Not in God’s Name* p. 219

⁷⁵⁴ *Not in God’s Name* p. 265

⁷⁵⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 310

- ❖ “Every sacred scripture has passages which, if wrongly interpreted, can lead to hate. That is why Jews, and not only Jews, believe that sacred texts need commentaries.”⁷⁵⁶

ISRAEL & THE DIASPORA

- ❖ “Israel has made all Jews, both its own and those of the diaspora, feel more at home in the world. At the same time, under the impact of Israel’s political isolation, it has served to emphasise the ‘not-at-homeness’ of the Jew.”⁷⁵⁷
- ❖ “For Jewish peoplehood to be a concept that embraces a continuity of Jewish life, past, present and future, there must be an asymmetry between Israel and the diaspora: the asymmetry between a permanent home and a temporary dwelling. That Jews have spent the vast majority of their history away from home and that most Jews today do not live there neither compromises nor contradicts the fact that Jewish life is a life lived toward Israel. A pluralism of ‘centres’ of Jewish life is as unavailable as a pluralism of ‘truths’ of Jewish faith.”⁷⁵⁸
- ❖ “The State of Israel has in itself transformed the terms of Jewish life and brought to the forefront a series of theological questions that had laid dormant or disattended since the end of the biblical period.”⁷⁵⁹
- ❖ “Statehood has changed the context but not the substance of the religious struggle, namely preserving fidelity to Torah in an age of non-belief.”⁷⁶⁰
- ❖ “Just as the existence of the state of Israel posed the problem of the meaning of redemption, so the persistence of the diaspora raises the problem of the meaning of exile.”⁷⁶¹
- ❖ “Israel does not negate the diaspora, because Judaism is a matter of holy lives as well as holy places.”⁷⁶²
- ❖ “Israel’s centrality in current Jewish self-definition rests precisely on its conceptual ambiguity and on a tacit agreement, pragmatically justified, not to push clarification too far.”⁷⁶³
- ❖ “There is nothing inevitable about Jewish identity in the diaspora, and there never was. In Israel one is Jewish by living in a Jewish state, surrounded by a Jewish culture and Jewish institutions. But elsewhere, being Jewish means going against the grain, being counter-cultural.”⁷⁶⁴
- ❖ “It is difficult to reflect deeply on the rebirth of Israel without sensing the touch of heaven in the minds of men and women, leading them to play their parts in a drama so much greater than any individual could have executed, even conceived.”⁷⁶⁵

⁷⁵⁶ *The Power of Ideas* p. 65

⁷⁵⁷ *Traditional Alternatives/Arguments for the Sake of Heaven* p. 113

⁷⁵⁸ *Traditional Alternatives/Arguments for the Sake of Heaven* p. 157

⁷⁵⁹ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 18

⁷⁶⁰ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 75

⁷⁶¹ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 105

⁷⁶² *Crisis and Covenant* p. 108

⁷⁶³ *One People* pp. 8-9

⁷⁶⁴ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* p. 38

⁷⁶⁵ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 53

- ❖ “Jews never relinquished the dream of return. Wherever they were, they prayed about Israel and facing Israel. The Jewish people was the circumference of a circle at whose centre was the holy land and Jerusalem the holy city. For centuries they lived suspended between memory and hope, sustained by the promise that one day God would bring them back.”⁷⁶⁶
- ❖ “When Jews began to rebuild their home in Israel, they had to do things they hadn’t done for centuries. They had to cultivate land that had never been cultivated before, from the rocky hills of the Galil to the desert wastes of the Negev. On barren lands they made farms, in desolate landscapes they built villages. They had to integrate wave after wave of olim, new arrivals from across the globe. They had to build a society and create the political and economic infrastructure of a nation. And in some ways the most remarkable of all: they made the decision to revive Hebrew, the language of the Bible, and turn it, after more than two thousand years, into a living tongue again.”⁷⁶⁷
- ❖ “Though Israel has had to fight many wars, from the very beginning it sought peace. The Hebrew language has two words for strength: *koach* and *gevurah*. *Koach* is the strength you need to win a war. *Gevurah* is the courage you need to make peace. Israel has shown both kinds of strength. But peace is a duet not a solo. It cannot be made by one side alone. If it could, it would have been made long ago.”⁷⁶⁸
- ❖ “How do you live with the constant threat of violence and war? That takes faith. Israel is the people that has always been sustained by faith, faith in God, in the future, in life itself. And though Israel is a secular state, its very existence is testimony to faith: the faith of a hundred generations that Jews would return; the faith that led the pioneers to rebuild a land against seemingly impossible odds; the faith that after the Holocaust the Jewish people could live again; the faith that, in the face of death, continues to say: choose life.”⁷⁶⁹
- ❖ “At the heart of Jewish faith is Jerusalem, the holy city whose name is peace. Has a people ever loved a city so deeply for so long? Almost every prayer in the Jewish prayer book includes a prayer for Jerusalem. The word itself figures more than 900 times in the Bible. Jerusalem, David’s city, the place where the Temple stood, home of the Divine presence, the place where, still today, you can feel God’s closeness as nowhere else. And though all that remains of the Temple is one wall, still to stand and pray in that spot is to feel the presence of three thousand years of Jewish prayers and tears and hopes.”⁷⁷⁰
- ❖ “The day will come, when the story of Israel in modern times will speak not just to Jews, but to all who believe in the power of the human spirit as it reaches out to God, as an everlasting symbol of the victory of life over death, hope over despair. Israel has achieved great things. It has taken a barren land and made it bloom again. It’s taken an ancient language, the Hebrew of the Bible, and made it speak again. It’s taken the West’s oldest faith and made it young again. Israel has taken a tattered, shattered nation and made it live again. Israel is the country whose national anthem, *Hatikva*, means hope. Israel is the home of hope.”⁷⁷¹

⁷⁶⁶ Israel – Home of Hope CD

⁷⁶⁷ Israel – Home of Hope CD

⁷⁶⁸ Israel – Home of Hope CD

⁷⁶⁹ Israel – Home of Hope CD

⁷⁷⁰ Israel – Home of Hope CD

⁷⁷¹ Israel – Home of Hope CD

- ❖ “The very existence of Israel is as near to a miracle as we will find in the sober pages of empirical history.”⁷⁷²
- ❖ “Israel is the only place in the world where Jews can create a society, and that is a religious task even though Israel is a secular state.”⁷⁷³
- ❖ “In Israel, Jewish life is a community of fate. There Jews, from the most secular to the most pious, suffer equally from war and terror, and benefit equally from prosperity and peace. Judaism, in Israel, is a presence you breathe, not just a religion you practise. In Israel as nowhere else, Jewishness is part of the public domain, in the language, the landscape, the calendar. There you can stand amid the ruins and relics of towns that were living communities in the time of the Bible and feel the full, astonishing sweep of time across which the Jewish people wrestled with its fate as Jacob once wrestled with the angel. And there you become conscious, in the faces you see and the accents you hear, of the astonishing diversity of Jews from every country and culture, brought together in the great ingathering as once, in Ezekiel’s vision, the dismembered fragments of a broken people joined together and came to life again. That is why, for Diaspora Jews, spending time in Israel is an essential and transformative experience of Jewish peoplehood and why Birthright, the American programme aimed at sending all young Jews to Israel, is so successful. At the same time, it is equally important that young Israelis spend time in the Jewish communities of the Diaspora. There they discover what it is to live Judaism as a covenant of faith, something many of them have never fully experienced before.”⁷⁷⁴
- ❖ “In Jewish law, one who rents a house outside Israel is obliged to affix a mezuzah only after thirty days. Until then it is not yet regarded as a dwelling place. Only after thirty days does it become, *de facto*, home. In Israel, however, one who rents a house is immediately obligated, *mishum Yishuv eretz Yisrael*, “because of the command to settle Israel.” Outside Israel, Jewish life is a way, a path, a route. Even an encampment, a place of rest, is still called a journey.”⁷⁷⁵
- ❖ “Those who deny Israel’s freedom will never achieve their own.”⁷⁷⁶
- ❖ “Israel exists. Jews have a home. In most countries in the Diaspora, Jews are no longer even the most conspicuous minority. *For the first time in four thousand years, Jews have sovereignty and independence in Israel, freedom and equality in the Diaspora.* Shall we act as if we were still in the nineteenth century, not the twenty-first?”⁷⁷⁷
- ❖ “A mere three years after coming eye to eye with the Angel of Death, the Jewish people, by establishing the State of Israel, made the single most powerful affirmation in two thousand years that *Am Yisrael hai*, the Jewish people lives.”⁷⁷⁸
- ❖ “In Israel, Judaism is part of the public square, not just the private, sequestered space of synagogue, school, and home.”⁷⁷⁹
- ❖ “Israel’s existence has never been easy: not in biblical times and not today. It has always been a small country surrounded by large empires, without the natural resources, the

⁷⁷² *Future Tense* p. 3

⁷⁷³ *Future Tense* p. 46

⁷⁷⁴ *Future Tense* pp. 46-47

⁷⁷⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 324

⁷⁷⁶ *Letters to the Next Generation* 2 p. 62

⁷⁷⁷ *A Judaism Engaged with the World* p. 14

⁷⁷⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* pp. 155-156

⁷⁷⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 278

wealth, the landmass or the demographic strength ever to become, in worldly terms, a superpower. All it had, then and now, was the individual strength and resourcefulness of its people – that and its faith and way of life. The relationship between God and the Jewish people has been fraught. There were times when the people turned away from God. There were times when God “hid His face” from the people. But the name “Israel” itself, according to the Torah (Gen. 32:28), means one who wrestles with God and with man and prevails. We never stop wrestling with God, nor He with us.”⁷⁸⁰

JEW

- ❖ “The word ‘Jew’ testifies to conflict. Before there were Jews, there was Israel, the people chosen by God to be the bearer of his covenant. After the death of Solomon the people split in two, into a northern kingdom of ten tribes called Israel, and a southern kingdom called Judah, though it comprised the tribe of Benjamin as well. In the eighth century BCE the northern kingdom was conquered by the Assyrians and its population deported. Rapidly they merged with the surrounding peoples, losing their language, their distinctive faith, and their identity. They assimilated and disappeared from the pages of history, to be remembered as the lost ten tribes. Those who remained were *yebudim*, Judeans, or, as the word gradually evolved from Greek to Latin to English, Jews. The history of the word takes us inexorably back to the first great division in Israel’s memory. It was not the last.”⁷⁸¹
- ❖ “As individuals, there is nothing remarkable about Jews. There have been many theories, Jewish and non-Jewish, which attribute to us an innate genius, a racial gift, a genetic endowment, a mystic difference. None is convincing. Removed from our traditions, our past, our way of life and our community, within three generations or less we merge into the wider landscape and become invisible. Individually we are ordinary. Collectively we become something else... Though we might not be born great or achieve greatness, our history thrusts greatness upon us. We are more than individuals. We are part of a collective history and destiny, perhaps the strangest and most miraculous the world has ever known. That is our inheritance, and the most important thing we can do is to hand it on to our children.”⁷⁸²
- ❖ “If we are Jews it is because our ancestors were Jews and because they braved much and sacrificed more to ensure that their children would be Jews. Can we do less?”⁷⁸³
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to be a member of the people of the covenant, an heir to one of the world’s most ancient, enduring and awe-inspiring faiths. It is to inherit a way of life which has earned the admiration of the world for its love of family, its devotion to education, its philanthropy, its social justice and its infinitely loyal dedication to a unique destiny. It is to know that this way of life, passed on from parents to children since the days of Abraham and Sarah, can only be sustained through the Jewish family; and knowing this, it is to choose to continue it by creating a Jewish home and having Jewish children.”⁷⁸⁴

⁷⁸⁰ *Ceremony & Celebration* pp. 199-200

⁷⁸¹ *One People* p. 18

⁷⁸² *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* pp. 13-14

⁷⁸³ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* p. 15

⁷⁸⁴ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* p. 102

- ❖ “To be a Jew [is to] inherit a faith from those who came before us, to live it and to hand it on to those who will come after us. To be a Jew is to be a link in the chain of the generations.”⁷⁸⁵
- ❖ “When Jews ask the question “Why be Jewish?” we know that we are in the presence of a major crisis in Jewish life.”⁷⁸⁶
- ❖ “If to live is to love life, then to be a Jew is to love Jewish life.”⁷⁸⁷
- ❖ “To be a Jew, now as in the days of Moses, is to hear the call of those who came before us and know that we are the guardians of their story.”⁷⁸⁸
- ❖ “I am a Jew because, knowing the story of my people, I hear their call to write the next chapter. I did not come from nowhere; I have a past, and if any past commands anyone this past commands me. I am a Jew because only if I remain a Jew will the story of a hundred generations live on in me. I continue their journey because, having come this far, I may not let it and them fail. I cannot be the missing letter in the scroll.”⁷⁸⁹
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to have the courage to refuse easy answers and to reject either consolation or despair. God exists; therefore life has a purpose. Evil exists; therefore we have not yet achieved that purpose. Until then we must travel, just as Abraham and Sarah travelled, to begin the task of shaping a different kind of world.”⁷⁹⁰
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to argue with heaven for the sake of heaven.”⁷⁹¹
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to see nothing as merely natural, not even the process of bringing a new generation into the world.”⁷⁹²
- ❖ “What is wrong in Jewish life today is that we have forgotten *Zis gut zu zein a Yid*, “It’s good to be a Jew.””⁷⁹³
- ❖ “Non-Jews respect Jews who respect Judaism, and they are embarrassed by Jews who are embarrassed by Judaism.”⁷⁹⁴
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to be part of a history touched, in a mysterious yet unmistakable way, by the hand of Providence.”⁷⁹⁵
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to know that one cannot be indifferent when one’s people are suffering.”⁷⁹⁶
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to hear a voice from the past, summoning us to an often tempestuous and never less than demanding future, and knowing inescapably that this is the narrative of which I am a part.”⁷⁹⁷
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to join the journey of our people, the story of Pesach and the long walk across centuries and continents from exile to homecoming.”⁷⁹⁸
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to be asked to give, to contribute, to make a difference, to help in the monumental task that has engaged Jews since the dawn of our history, to make the world

⁷⁸⁵ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 6

⁷⁸⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 17

⁷⁸⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 20

⁷⁸⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 46

⁷⁸⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 46

⁷⁹⁰ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 55

⁷⁹¹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 99

⁷⁹² *Radical Then, Radical Now* pgs. 108-109

⁷⁹³ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 195

⁷⁹⁴ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 205

⁷⁹⁵ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 9

⁷⁹⁶ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 16

⁷⁹⁷ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 17

⁷⁹⁸ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 58

a home for the Divine presence, a place of justice, compassion, human dignity and the sanctity of life.”⁷⁹⁹

- ❖ “To be a Jew is to be an agent of hope. Every ritual, every command, every syllable of the Jewish story is a protest against escapism, resignation and the blind acceptance of fate. Judaism, the religion of the free God, is a religion of freedom. Jewish faith is written in the future tense. It is belief in a future that is not yet but could be, if we heed God's call, obey His will and act together as a covenantal community. The name of the Jewish future is hope.”⁸⁰⁰
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to be willing to hear the still, small voice of eternity urging us to travel, move, go on ahead, continuing Abraham’s journey toward that unknown destination at the far horizon of hope.”⁸⁰¹
- ❖ “To be a child of Abraham is to have the courage to be different, to challenge the idols of the age, whatever the idols and whichever the age.”⁸⁰²
- ❖ “Non-Jews respect Jews who respect Judaism. They are embarrassed by Jews who are embarrassed by Judaism. Never be ambivalent about who and what you are.”⁸⁰³
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to know that though we are here, we are also elsewhere. We live in time, but we are addressed by the voice of One who is beyond time.”⁸⁰⁴
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to be an iconoclast, challenging the taken-for-granted assumptions of our time, willing to break the idols of the age.”⁸⁰⁵
- ❖ “*The world needs the Jews and Jews need the world.* Today for the first time we have the opportunity to live the double truth of that sentence. We must stop feeling defensive about being Jewish and engage with the world with humility but without fear.”⁸⁰⁶
- ❖ “*To be a Jew is to be a part of a people, sharing its joys, participating in its griefs, recalling its history, making its hopes my own.*”⁸⁰⁷
- ❖ “*Abraham had to have the courage to challenge God if his descendants were to challenge human rulers,* as Moses and the prophets did. Jews do not accept the world that is. They challenge it in the name of the world that ought to be.”⁸⁰⁸
- ❖ “Jews through the ages have been *in* but not *of* society. To be a Jew means keeping a calibrated distance from the age and its idols.”⁸⁰⁹
- ❖ “Long ago, we were called on to show the world that religion and morality go hand in hand. Never was that more needed than in an age riven by religiously motivated violence in some countries, rampant secularity in others. To be a Jew is to be dedicated to the proposition that loving God means loving His image, humankind. There is no greater challenge, nor, in the twenty-first century, is there a more urgent one.”⁸¹⁰

⁷⁹⁹ *Ten Days, Ten Ways* p. 54

⁸⁰⁰ *Future Tense* p. 250

⁸⁰¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 80

⁸⁰² *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 80

⁸⁰³ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 115

⁸⁰⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 51

⁸⁰⁵ *Letters to the Next Generation* 2 p. 35

⁸⁰⁶ *A Judaism Engaged with the World* p. 14

⁸⁰⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 425

⁸⁰⁸ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 22

⁸⁰⁹ *Essays on Ethics* p. 89

⁸¹⁰ *Essays on Ethics* p. 199

- ❖ “The Jewish task is not to fear the real world but to enter and transform it, healing some of its wounds and bringing to places often shrouded in darkness fragments of divine light.”⁸¹¹
- ❖ “*To be a Jew is to be summoned to become a living sefer Torah.* People learn how to behave not only from the books they study but also – perhaps more so – from the people they meet. Jewish educators speak of “text-people” as well as “text-books,” meaning that we need living role models as well as formal instruction.”⁸¹²
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to live poised between past and future: the past and the future of our individual lives, of our ancient but still young people, and of humanity as a whole.”⁸¹³
- ❖ “In ages of collectivism, Jews emphasized the value of the individual. In ages of individualism, Jews built strong communities. When most of humanity was consigned to ignorance, Jews were highly literate. When others were building monuments and amphitheaters, Jews were building schools. In materialistic times they kept faith with the spiritual. In ages of poverty they practiced *tzedaka* so that none would lack the essentials of a dignified life. The sages said that Abraham was called *halvri*, “the Hebrew,” because all the world was on one side (*ever ehad*) and Abraham on the other (Genesis Rabba 42:8). To be a Jew is to swim against the current, challenging the idols of the age whatever the idol, whatever the age.”⁸¹⁴
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to have faith that our individual lives and our collective history have meaning. God is there even if we cannot feel Him. He hears us even when we do not hear Him. That is the blessing.”⁸¹⁵
- ❖ “To be Jewish means to live in the conscious presence of the God we can’t see but can sense as the force within ourselves urging us to be more courageous, just, and generous than ourselves. That’s what Judaism’s rituals are about: reminding us of the presence of the Divine.”⁸¹⁶

JEWISH DEMOGRAPHICS

- ❖ “The Torah contains a remarkable perspective on demography. In the book of Exodus, God tells Moses: ‘When you take a census of the Israelites to count them, each one must pay the Lord a ransom for his life at the time he is counted. Then no plague will come on them when you number them.’ In other words, it is hazardous to count Jews... At most times in our history we have been a tiny people... Nevertheless, Jews did more than survive. Throughout history we have been at the epicentre of world history... The Judaic heritage shaped and continues to shape Western civilisation... Why then is it hazardous to count Jews? Because when we take a census we are basing our strength on numbers. Jewish strength has never lain in numbers. When we count Jews there is a serious danger that we will be demoralised, realising that we are so few. When a people depends – as the Jewish

⁸¹¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 152

⁸¹² *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 387

⁸¹³ *Ceremony & Celebration* pp. 19-20

⁸¹⁴ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 84

⁸¹⁵ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 184

⁸¹⁶ *Studies in Spirituality* pp. 153-154

people depends – on its spirit and sense of pride, demoralisation can be nothing short of catastrophic. It can lead to despair, and from despair to defeat.”⁸¹⁷

- ❖ “Numerically, Jewry is small, but in terms of its contributions to civilisation, it is vast.”⁸¹⁸
- ❖ “If you want to know the strength of the Jewish people, ask them to give, and then count the contribution. To win the Jewish battle, the battle of the spirit, the victory of heart, mind and soul, you do not need numbers. You need dedication, commitment, study, prayer, vision, courage, ideals and hope. You need to offer people tough challenges through which to grow.”⁸¹⁹

JEWISH DENOMINATIONS

- ❖ “A situation can arise in which Orthodoxy, Reform, Israel and the diaspora can each claim, within their own terms of reference, that the Jewish future is bright and that they are its inheritors. Each can argue that the others are insecure and under threat. These four ways of interpreting the present are radically incompatible with one another. But they reinforce the reluctance of each to come to terms with the existence of the others.”⁸²⁰
- ❖ “The classic beliefs of Judaism are not merely beliefs: they are constitutive of the covenant and thus of Jewish peoplehood. Orthodoxy, faithful to those beliefs, cannot admit a pluralism that would in effect legitimate their denial, secularisation or subjectivisation.”⁸²¹
- ❖ “As the Jewish people moved far from Orthodoxy, Orthodoxy moved in a direction that took it far from the majority of the Jewish people.”⁸²²
- ❖ “One distinctive feature of charedi religiosity is its high consistency between belief and practice and the willingness of its adherents to place principle over economic progress.”⁸²³
- ❖ “The relationship between modern and traditionalist Orthodoxy is asymmetrical. The former recognizes the validity of the latter; the latter deny it to the former. The modernists argue for an Orthodox pluralism, while the traditionalists frequently argue that theirs is the only valid interpretation of the rabbinic heritage.”⁸²⁴
- ❖ “More than by its philosophical sophistication, modern Orthodoxy will be judged by its capacity to safeguard Jewish continuity which is, in the last analysis, the continuity of the Jewish family.”⁸²⁵
- ❖ “There is no meaningful ideological sense that can be attached to phrases like right-wing, left-wing or centrist, modern or traditional Orthodoxy. For there is no unitary, permanent ideological or institutional expression of the relationship between Judaism and its contemporary environment. There are instead as many modes as there are communities and generations.”⁸²⁶

⁸¹⁷ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* pp. 28-29

⁸¹⁸ *Future Tense* p. 68

⁸¹⁹ *Future Tense* p. 68

⁸²⁰ *Traditional Alternatives/Arguments for the Sake of Heaven* p. 155

⁸²¹ *Traditional Alternatives/Arguments for the Sake of Heaven* p. 156

⁸²² *Traditional Alternatives/Arguments for the Sake of Heaven* p. 182

⁸²³ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 76

⁸²⁴ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 83

⁸²⁵ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 103

⁸²⁶ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* pp. 118-119

- ❖ “The parcelling of Orthodoxy into right, left and centrist positions, or into an antinomy of modernism against traditionalism, is a symptom of the collapse of overarching structures of community and the fragmentation of Orthodox life into non-communicating organisational enclaves. The cause is social, the effect intellectual, and the loss spiritual.”⁸²⁷
- ❖ “The word “Orthodoxy” testifies to crisis. For it is only when heterodoxies surface in the history of a religion that Orthodoxy needs to be articulated, defended, and defined.”⁸²⁸
- ❖ “Despite the internal health of Orthodoxy and the several thousands who have joined its ranks as *baalei teshuvah*, religious returnees, the rest of Jewry continues on its path of secularization. For generations, Orthodox leaders had seen their ranks as an embattled minority. Today the opportunity exists for them to exercise leadership on a far wider scale, and some have seized the initiative.”⁸²⁹
- ❖ “A formidable responsibility lies with Orthodoxy: a responsibility of leadership toward the entire Jewish people.”⁸³⁰
- ❖ “Wherever a Jew stands in the spectrum of commitment, those to the right of him are the fundamentalists, and those to the left of him are the assimilators. By a miracle of cognitive geometry, the midway point between fanaticism and unacceptable compromise always coincides exactly with wherever the individual happens to stand.”⁸³¹
- ❖ “It is no longer possible to be a Jew tout court. The noun, to convey anything at all, now needs to be qualified by an adjective, perhaps several. There are Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, Liberal, Reconstructionist, and secular Jews. There are Israeli and diaspora Jews, Zionists and non-Zionists. Each label is further divided. Zionists are religious or secular. Religious Zionists are messianic or pragmatic. And so on. Jewish existence has become adjectival existence.”⁸³²
- ❖ “Within Judaism... Orthodoxy, Conservatism, Reform, and Reconstructionism are regularly portrayed as the four Jewish denominations. Those who think in these terms see such a description as just that: neutrally descriptive. But it contains a momentous hidden premise. It imports pluralism into Judaism. And this itself is an accommodation to secularization. Orthodoxy does not, and cannot, make this accommodation. It recognizes pluralism along many axes. It recognizes at least some other faiths as valid religious options for non-Jews. It recognizes, within Judaism itself, different halakhic traditions: Ashkenazi and Sephardi, for example, or Hasidic or Mitnagdic. Beyond halakhah, it legitimates a vast variety of religious approaches: rationalist and mystical, intellectual and emotional, nationalist and universalist, pietist and pragmatic. But it does not recognize the legitimacy of interpretations of Judaism that abandon fundamental beliefs or halakhic authority. It does not validate, in the modern sense, a plurality of denominations. It does not see itself as one version of Judaism among others.”⁸³³
- ❖ “The paradox is that Judaism traditionally had no place for the concept of a denomination. Orthodoxy maintains that belief. The result is that liberal Judaisms and Orthodoxy are

⁸²⁷ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 124

⁸²⁸ *Orthodoxy Confronts Modernity* p. 1

⁸²⁹ *Orthodoxy Confronts Modernity* p. 7

⁸³⁰ *Orthodoxy Confronts Modernity* p. 140

⁸³¹ *Orthodoxy Confronts Modernity* p. 143

⁸³² *One People* p. 21

⁸³³ *One People* p. 31

condemned to systematic mutual misunderstanding, a situation that leads to division without providing any shared language through which division might be transcended.”⁸³⁴

- ❖ “Ideologically, Judaism recognizes neither denominations not sects. Sociologically, it is currently organized into just those forms. Ideologically, Judaism is inclusive of all Jews. Sociologically, exclusivist attitudes prevail in just those sectors of Orthodoxy that most strive to maintain continuity with the past.”⁸³⁵
- ❖ “Attaching no significance to liberal Jews’ description of their own actions and intentions allows Orthodoxy to include individuals within the halakhic community while excluding their ideologies... But it does so by devaluing the legitimacy of any interpretation of Judaism that lies outside the parameters of traditional faith.”⁸³⁶
- ❖ “Words are often born when the phenomenon they name is under threat. The adjective ‘orthodox’ first appears in a Jewish context in France in the early nineteenth century in the course of the debate about Jewish citizenship in the new nation state. For the first time in the modern world the traditional terms of Jewish existence were thrown into question. Alternatives were proposed. Some argued that Judaism must change. Those who disagreed were given the label ‘orthodox’. Only when something is challenged does it need a name. Until then it is taken for granted.”⁸³⁷
- ❖ “Judaism in the past two centuries has fissured and fractured into different *edot*: Orthodox and Reform, religious and secular, and the many subdivisions that continue to atomise Jewish life into non-communicating sects and subcultures. Yet in times of crisis we are still capable of heeding the call of collective responsibility, knowing as we do that Jewish fate tends to be indivisible. No Jew, to paraphrase John Donne, is an island, entire of him- or herself. We are joined by the gossamer strands of collective memory, and these can sometimes lead us back to a sense of shared destiny.”⁸³⁸
- ❖ “Thanks to the growth of the Haredi community, after half-a-century of year-on-year decline, British Jewry is no longer shrinking but growing.”⁸³⁹
- ❖ “By a miracle of rebirth, the Haredi community is stronger than it was before the start of the Second World War. It has won the battle. We are in its debt. By sheer commitment and dedication it has brought the worlds of Jewish learning and practice back to life. Now is the time to turn outward and share its energies with the rest of the Jewish world.”⁸⁴⁰

JEWISH HISTORY

- ❖ “History, for Torah, is neither random nor predetermined. It is not meaningless but it is not prescribed either. It is the story of the relationship between God and Abraham’s extended family. Its categories are those of fidelity and faithlessness, exile and return,

⁸³⁴ *One People* p. 44

⁸³⁵ *One People* p. 86

⁸³⁶ *One People* p. 152

⁸³⁷ *Future Tense* p. 25

⁸³⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 120

⁸³⁹ *A Judaism Engaged with the World* p. 4

⁸⁴⁰ *A Judaism Engaged with the World* p. 21

attempted flight and perpetual reminders that the covenant, once undertaken, cannot be rescinded.”⁸⁴¹

- ❖ “Jewish history begins in miracles, but culminates in human responsibility. What changes us is not what is done for us by God, but what we do in response to his call.”⁸⁴²
- ❖ “No Jew who knows Jewish history can be an optimist.”⁸⁴³
- ❖ “Jews have survived catastrophe after catastrophe, in a way unparalleled by any other culture. In each case they did more than survive. Every tragedy in Jewish history was followed by a new wave of creativity.”⁸⁴⁴
- ❖ “Jewish history is not so much read as sung.”⁸⁴⁵
- ❖ “Jewish history is not merely a story of Jews enduring catastrophes that might have spelled the end to less tenacious groups. It is that after every disaster, Jews renewed themselves. They discovered some hitherto hidden reservoir of spirit that fuelled new forms of collective self-expression as the carriers of God’s message to the world.”⁸⁴⁶

JEWISH PEOPLE

- ❖ “Jewish mystics used to preface their performance of a religious act with a dedication, *le-shem yichud*: ‘For the sake of the unification of the Holy One, blessed be He With His Divine Presence.’ Their acts ‘mended’ a ‘broken’ world. A similar dedication is needed now: ‘For the sake of the unification of the Jewish People with Torah.’ A religious act should seek to mend a divided Jewish people.”⁸⁴⁷
- ❖ “I have not yet found a source in the Torah for the obligation to divide the Jewish people into the saved and the damned.”⁸⁴⁸
- ❖ “Today... as we stand as if on a mountain peak surveying the breathtaking landscape of Jewish history, we know this: that those who sought to destroy the people of the covenant gather dust in the museums of mankind while *am Yisrael chai*, the people Israel lives. Ancient Egypt is no more. The Moabites have long since disappeared. The Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks and Romans successively strode the stage of world dominion. Each empire played its part, said its lines, and each in turn has gone... But the Jews survive.”⁸⁴⁹
- ❖ “Jews did more than survive under seemingly impossible circumstances. They maintained their distinctiveness against every inducement – sometimes benign, often brutal – to assimilate or convert. To every crisis they responded with renewal. Heirs to one of the world’s oldest faiths, they remained perennially young, creative, challenging, revolutionary. In each generation they embellished their ancient faith with new customs and interpretations and made it gleam as if it had just been given. Whenever the opportunity arose they enriched the life of the larger society in which they lived. Through thirty-seven

⁸⁴¹ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 20

⁸⁴² *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 160

⁸⁴³ *Future Tense* p. 18

⁸⁴⁴ *Future Tense* p. 54

⁸⁴⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 311

⁸⁴⁶ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 64

⁸⁴⁷ *Traditional Alternatives/ Arguments for the Sake of Heaven* p. 229

⁸⁴⁸ *Orthodoxy Confronts Modernity* p. 143

⁸⁴⁹ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* pp. 7-8

long and difficult centuries they remained faithful to the mandate given by God to Abraham in the first words of covenantal history: 'Through you shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' And we are their heirs."⁸⁵⁰

- ❖ "The Jewish people is not and cannot be a secular entity. It is a circle at whose centre is God."⁸⁵¹
- ❖ "It was then [in 1967,] that I knew that being Jewish was not something private and personal but something collective and historical. It meant being part of an extended family, many of whose members I did not know, but to whom I nonetheless felt connected by bonds of kinship and responsibility."⁸⁵²
- ❖ "Every Jew is a letter. Each Jewish family is a word, every community a sentence, and the Jewish people at any one time are a paragraph. The Jewish people through time constitute a story, the strangest and most moving story in the annals of mankind."⁸⁵³
- ❖ "Jews were always a tiny people, yet our ancestors survived by believing that eternity is found in the simple lives of ordinary human beings. They found God in homes, families and relationships. They worshipped God in synagogues, the first places ever to become holy because of the mere fact that people gathered there to pray. They discovered God in the human heart and in our capacity to make the world different by what we do. They encountered God, not in the wind or the thunder or the earthquake, but in words, the words of Torah, the marriage contract between God and the people He took as His own. They studied those words endlessly and tried to put them into practice. They brought heaven down to earth, because they believed that God lives wherever we dedicate our lives to Him."⁸⁵⁴
- ❖ "The relationship between God and Israel was sometimes tempestuous, often strained, but never broken. The Jewish people would be the bearers of God's presence in a sometimes godless, often unjust and violent world. In eras that worshipped the collective – the nation, the state, the empire – they spoke about the dignity and sanctity of the individual. In cultures that celebrated the right of the individual to do his or her own thing, they spoke of law and duty and mutual responsibility."⁸⁵⁵
- ❖ "No nation has dedicated itself more thoroughly than have the Jews to the proposition that ideas have power, that human freedom consists of our ability to see the world differently and thus begin to transform it."⁸⁵⁶
- ❖ "The Jewish people in its very being constitutes a living protest against a world of hatred, violence and war."⁸⁵⁷
- ❖ "The Jewish people live, and still bear witness to the living God."⁸⁵⁸
- ❖ "For as long as Jews are Jews, they contribute something unique to the intellectual, spiritual and moral life of society. So that if Jews are no longer Jews there is a missing voice, an empty place, in the conversation of mankind."⁸⁵⁹

⁸⁵⁰ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* p. 13

⁸⁵¹ *Community of Faith* p. 22

⁸⁵² *Radical Then, Radical Now* pp. 27-28

⁸⁵³ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 39

⁸⁵⁴ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 50

⁸⁵⁵ *Radical Then, Radical Now* pgs. 51-52

⁸⁵⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 59

⁸⁵⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 95

⁸⁵⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 184

⁸⁵⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 204

- ❖ “To be a Jew is to be part of the ongoing dialogue between earth and heaven that has persisted for two thirds of the recorded history of civilization and whose theme is as urgent now as at any time in the past: to build a society that honours the human person in our differences and commonalities, our singularity and interdependence.”⁸⁶⁰
- ❖ “World Jewry is small, painfully so. But the invisible strands of mutual responsibility mean that even the smallest Jewish community can turn to the Jewish people worldwide for help and achieve things that would be exceptional for a nation many times its size.”⁸⁶¹
- ❖ “The people of the Bible were the first to conceive of the possibility of a society of universal literacy and equal dignity.”⁸⁶²
- ❖ “Virtually every Jew alive today has a history more remarkable than the greatest novel or family saga.”⁸⁶³
- ❖ “Jews need to recover faith – not simple faith, not naïve optimism, but faith that they are not alone in the world.”⁸⁶⁴
- ❖ “Jews, whether in Israel or elsewhere, need to recover a sense of purpose. Until you know where you want to be, you will not know where to go.”⁸⁶⁵
- ❖ “The Jewish people are ancient but still young; a suffering people still suffused with moral energy; a people who have known the worst fate can throw at them, and can still rejoice. They remain a living symbol of hope.”⁸⁶⁶
- ❖ “One of the advantages of being a people with four thousand years of history is that, wherever Jews find themselves, they have been here before.”⁸⁶⁷
- ❖ “Believing themselves to be alone, Jews will find themselves alone.”⁸⁶⁸
- ❖ “The only people capable of threatening the future of the Jewish people are the Jewish people.”⁸⁶⁹
- ❖ “The Jewish task remains to be the voice of hope in an age of fear, the countervoice in the conversation of humankind.”⁸⁷⁰
- ❖ “To be sure, not all Jews today obey Jewish law. But many who do not, nevertheless identify with Israel and with the Jewish people. They plead its case. They support its cause. When Israel suffers, they too feel pain. They are implicated in the fate of the people. They know only too well that “Israel at the present time are persecuted and oppressed, despised, harassed and overcome by afflictions” but they do not walk away. They may not be religiously observant, but they are loyal – and loyalty is an essential part (if only a part) of what Jewish faith is.”⁸⁷¹
- ❖ “The Jewish people is proof that you can suffer centuries of persecution and exile and still survive and flourish, recovering from every defeat and turning every setback into a matrix of renewal. You can be written off by the world and prove time and again that the world

⁸⁶⁰ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 216

⁸⁶¹ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 96

⁸⁶² *The Home We Build Together* p. 67

⁸⁶³ *Letters to the Next Generation* p. 14

⁸⁶⁴ *Future Tense* p. 2

⁸⁶⁵ *Future Tense* p. 4

⁸⁶⁶ *Future Tense* p. 10

⁸⁶⁷ *Future Tense* p. 16

⁸⁶⁸ *Future Tense* p. 17

⁸⁶⁹ *Future Tense* p. 33

⁸⁷⁰ *Future Tense* p. 262

⁸⁷¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 90

was wrong. Inspired by high ideals and a respect for human dignity, you can outlast any empire. You can suffer and yet sing, walk through the valley of the shadow of death and emerge, limping but undefeated, into the light of new life. Time and again Jews have shown how you can defeat probability by the power of possibility.”⁸⁷²

- ❖ “The two dominant strands in the Jewish world today are fighting the battles of the past, not those of the future. Assimilation made sense in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in a Jewish world traumatised by antisemitism. It makes no sense at all today, either in Israel or in the multicultural democracies of the West. In the United States, where outmarriage continues at the rate of one-in-two, Harvard sociologist Robert Putnam has shown that Jews are the group more respected and admired than any other. Segregation made immense sense after the Holocaust, when the heartlands of tradition in Eastern Europe had been almost entirely obliterated. But today, by a miracle of rebirth, the Haredi community is stronger than it was before the start of the Second World War. It has won the battle. We are in its debt. By sheer commitment and dedication it has brought the worlds of Jewish learning and practice back to life. Now is the time to turn outward and share its energies with the rest of the Jewish world.”⁸⁷³
- ❖ “Non-Jews respect Jews who respect Judaism. Non-Jews are embarrassed by Jews who are embarrassed by Judaism.”⁸⁷⁴
- ❖ “World Jewry is small, but the invisible strands of mutual responsibility mean that even the smallest Jewish community can turn to the Jewish people worldwide for help and achieve things that would be exceptional for a nation many times its size. When the Jewish people join hands in collective responsibility, they become a formidable force for good.”⁸⁷⁵
- ❖ “A politics based on power comes to an end when a nation is defeated and loses power. A politics based on organic development, on the long experience of a people living together in the same land, is destroyed when the people are uprooted from the land and scattered over the face of the earth. Neither of these two forms of national existence can survive defeat and dispersion. Once lost, they are gone, never to return. Israel’s existence as a nation, however, is not based on power or a land (though it longs for and is promised both) but on words – the words of God to Israel and the acceptance of those words by Israel. *So as long as the word exists, Israel exists; and because God is eternal and never revokes his word, Israel will always exist.*”⁸⁷⁶
- ❖ “*The Jewish people are small but have achieved great things to testify in themselves to a force beyond themselves.*”⁸⁷⁷
- ❖ “The story of the Jewish people is an extraordinary interweaving of history and prophecy, of the natural and supernatural, of the choices of human beings and the overarching tutelage of God. The suffering of Jews in the Diaspora is not divine punishment but rather a consequence of exile itself – the loss of providence, the hiding of the face of God, and being “left to chance.” The idea that there is one answer to the problem of evil and the

⁸⁷² *A Judaism Engaged with the World* p. 17

⁸⁷³ *A Judaism Engaged with the World* pp. 20-21

⁸⁷⁴ *A Judaism Engaged with the World* p. 23

⁸⁷⁵ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 180

⁸⁷⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* pp. 29-30

⁸⁷⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 82

sufferings of the innocent, true at all times, is simply wrong. There are different historical eras, and these represent different relationships between Israel and God.”⁸⁷⁸

- ❖ “The world did not begin with us, nor will it end with our departure. We belong to a larger narrative, the story of a people who, long ago in the days of Abraham and Sarah, set out on a journey to a land of promise and a distantly glimpsed, not-yet-reached, vision of redemption.”⁸⁷⁹
- ❖ “God is in, but not of, the world. So we are called on to be in, but not of, the world. We don’t worship nature. We don’t follow fashion. We don’t behave like everyone else just because everyone else does. We don’t conform. We dance to a different music. We don’t live in the present. We remember our people’s past and help build our people’s future.”⁸⁸⁰
- ❖ “The Jewish people remains a family, often divided, always argumentative, but bound in a common bond of fate nonetheless.”⁸⁸¹

JEWISH THOUGHT & PHILOSOPHY

- ❖ “Jewish thought is counter-philosophical. It insists that truths are embodied precisely *in* particular times and places. There are holy times (the seventh day, seventh month, seventh year, and the end of seven septennial cycles, the Jubilee). There are holy people (the Children of Israel as a whole; within them, the Levites, and within them, the priests). And there is holy space (Israel; within that, Jerusalem; within that, the Temple; in the desert, they were the Tabernacle, the Holy, and the Holy of Holies).”⁸⁸²
- ❖ “*Philosophy cannot and never will understand the apparent contradiction between divine creation and human free will, or between Divine Presence and the empirical world in which we reflect, choose, and act.*”⁸⁸³

JUDAISM/FAITH AS A JOURNEY

- ❖ “Faith is the space where God and humanity touch. For Jews it has always been symbolized by a journey, the journey begun by Avraham when he left his country and his father’s house to travel to an unknown land, the journey taken by the Israelites as they left Egypt for the promised land, the journey each of us could trace if we could follow our grandparents and theirs back through the generations as they wandered from country to country. The way is always further than we thought, the route more complicated and beset with obstacles. But we continue it knowing, sometimes obscurely, sometimes with blazing clarity, that this is what God wants us to do. For we know that so long as the way the world is, is not the way it ought to be, we have not yet reached our destination.”⁸⁸⁴

⁸⁷⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 239

⁸⁷⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 377

⁸⁸⁰ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 153

⁸⁸¹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 165

⁸⁸² *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 145

⁸⁸³ *Essays on Ethics* p. 167

⁸⁸⁴ *Faith in the Future* pp. 2-3

- ❖ “The Jewish journey is not just a physical one but a spiritual, moral and political one as well. That is what has long given it a significance beyond itself. It is not just a Jewish journey, but the human journey in a particularly vivid form. It has inspired not only Jews, but all those who, having read the Hebrew Bible, have come to the conclusion that our lives have a moral purpose, that redemption can be sought in this world with all its imperfection, and that by our efforts we can leave society better than we found it. The Mosaic books and those of the prophets have echoed throughout human history, moving men and women to dedicate their lives to the uncertain proposition that by constant struggle we can reduce suffering and enhance dignity not for ourselves alone but for all those amongst whom we live.”⁸⁸⁵
- ❖ “Judaism is the truth that can only be told as a story, the truth that unfolds in the course of history, as part of the experience of a people who undertake a long journey, extended over many generations and continued by the act of passing on their memories and hopes to their children so that they never forget where they came from and where they are going.”⁸⁸⁶
- ❖ “Jewish time sees us as travellers on the road to a destination not yet reached; wayfarers on a journey begun by our ancestors, to be continued by our children.”⁸⁸⁷
- ❖ “*Faith is the ability to live with delay without losing trust in the promise; to experience disappointment without losing hope, to know that the road between the real and the ideal is long and yet be willing to undertake the journey.*”⁸⁸⁸
- ❖ “Judaism is a journey to the future. It is the only civilization whose golden age, the messianic age, is yet to come. As a result, Jews look forward more than they look back.”⁸⁸⁹
- ❖ “For each of us, even for the greatest, there is a Jordan we will not cross, a promised land we will not enter, a destination we will not reach. That is what R. Tarfon meant when he said: “It is not for you to complete the task, but neither are you free to desist from it.” (Mishna Avot 2:16). What we began, others will continue. What matters is that we undertook the journey. We did not stand still.”⁸⁹⁰
- ❖ “*To be a Jew is to travel.* Judaism is a journey, not a destination.”⁸⁹¹

JOY & HAPPINESS

- ❖ “Happiness is not far away. It is here, but first we have to know how to look.”⁸⁹²
- ❖ “Happiness is not made by what we own. It is what we share.”⁸⁹³
- ❖ “Happiness is a life lived in the active mode. It comes not to those who complain, but to those who do.”⁸⁹⁴

⁸⁸⁵ *Faith in the Future* p. 3

⁸⁸⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 110

⁸⁸⁷ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 79

⁸⁸⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* pp. 92-93

⁸⁸⁹ *A Judaism Engaged with the World* p. 3

⁸⁹⁰ *Essays on Ethics* pp. 336-337

⁸⁹¹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 117

⁸⁹² *Celebrating Life* p. 3

⁸⁹³ *Celebrating Life* p. 49

⁸⁹⁴ *Lessons in Leadership* p. xxviii

- ❖ “*Simha* in the Torah is never about individuals. It is always about something we share.”⁸⁹⁵
- ❖ “I think of Judaism as an ode to joy. Like Beethoven, Jews have known suffering, isolation, hardship, and rejection, yet they never lacked the religious courage to rejoice. A people that can know insecurity and still feel joy is one that can never be defeated, for its spirit can never be broken nor its hope destroyed. As individuals we may aspire to the goodness that leads to happiness, but as part of a moral and spiritual community, even in hard times we find ourselves lifted on the wings of joy.”⁸⁹⁶
- ❖ “Joy is at the heart of Judaism. “Serve the Lord with joy,” said the psalm (100:2), “come before Him with jubilation.” Israel would come to know more than its share of sufferings, defeats, destructions and exiles. Yet what sustained it was not sadness but gladness, a deep religious joy... The one defense against national entropy – the loss of collective energy over time – would be joy itself, a combination of thanksgiving, humility, gratitude and memories of the suffering that had to be endured in the course of arriving at this place and this estate. Judaism is not a religion of austerity, self-denial and stoic endurance. It is not a faith that allowed itself to be overwhelmed by tragedy. Time and again it arose, phoenix-like, from catastrophe, demoralization and defeat, and each time renewed itself, gathering ever-greater strength in the process. True faith, in Judaism, is marked by the capacity of joy.”⁸⁹⁷
- ❖ “Joy does not involve, as does happiness, a judgement about life as a whole. Joy lives in the moment. It asks no questions about tomorrow. It celebrates the power of now... Joy blesses God day by day. It celebrates the mere fact of being here, now, existing when we might not have existed, inhaling to the fully this day, this hour, this eternity-in-a-moment that was not before and will not be again. Joy embraces the contingency of life. It knows that yesterday has gone and tomorrow is unknown. It does not ask what was or will be. It makes no calculations. It is a state of radical thankfulness for the gift of being. Even in an age too fraught for happiness, there can still be joy... Happiness is something I can feel on my own. But joy in the Torah is essentially shared... Unlike happiness, *simha* only exists in virtue of being shared. It is a form of social emotion... Joy is a Jewish wedding. It is dancing in the presence of the Divine. There is nothing in it of pride or self-satisfaction... For a moment the “I” is silent and we become part of the celebrating “We,” our voice merging with others in the song creation sings to its Creator, the nation to its sovereign God, and we to God for “keeping us alive and sustaining us and bringing us to this day.”... Unlike happiness, joy is not conditional on things going well... Like music, it gives expression to the inexpressible. It says, yes, life is sometimes unfair and the world unjust, but the very brevity of life makes each moment precious. It says: stop thinking of tomorrow. Celebrate, sing, join the dance however undignified it makes you look. Joy bathes life with light. It liberates the soul from the prison of the self.”⁸⁹⁸
- ❖ “*It is easy to speak to God in tears. It is hard to serve God in joy.*”⁸⁹⁹
- ❖ “*Simha* is usually translated as joy, rejoicing, gladness, happiness, pleasure, or delight. In fact, *simha* has a nuance untranslatable into English, Joy, happiness, pleasure, and the like

⁸⁹⁵ *Essays on Ethics* p. 312

⁸⁹⁶ *Essays on Ethics* p. 315

⁸⁹⁷ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 103

⁸⁹⁸ *Ceremony & Celebration* pp. 127-129

⁸⁹⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 127

are all states of mind, emotions. They belong to the individual. We can feel them alone. *Simha*, by contrast, is not a private emotion. It means happiness shared. It is a social state, a predicate of “we,” not “I.” There is no such thing as feeling *simha* alone.”⁹⁰⁰

- ❖ “You do not have to be religious to be happy. But there is something profoundly spiritual about our capacity to live in a state of total insecurity and yet feel the joy of simply being, under the shelter of the Divine Presence.”⁹⁰¹
- ❖ “Joy in the Hebrew Bible is essentially shared. It is a phenomenon of “We.” A husband must make his wife rejoice (Deut. 24:5). Festivals are to be occasions of collective rejoicing, “you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, the Levites in your towns, and the strangers, the fatherless and the widows living among you” (Deut. 16:11). Bringing first fruits to the Temple involved collective celebration: “You and the Levites and the strangers in your midst shall rejoice in all the good things the Lord your God has given to you and your household” (Deut. 26:11). Joy is happiness shared.”⁹⁰²
- ❖ “Happiness is largely a matter of satisfying needs and wants. Meaning, by contrast, is about a sense of purpose in life, especially by making positive contributions to the lives of others. Happiness is largely about how you feel in the present. Meaning is about how you judge your life as a whole: past, present, and future.”⁹⁰³
- ❖ “The biblical world for happiness, *ashrei*, is the first word of the book of Psalms and a key word of our daily prayers. But far more often, Tanakh speaks about *simha*, joy – and they are different things. Happiness is something you can feel alone, but joy, in Tanakh, is something you share with others.”⁹⁰⁴
- ❖ “Happiness is about a lifetime, but joy lives in the moment. Happiness tends to be a cool emotion, but joy makes you want to dance and sing. It’s hard to feel happy in the midst of uncertainty. But you can still feel joy.”⁹⁰⁵
- ❖ “In Judaism joy is the supreme religious emotion. Here we are, in a world filled with beauty. Every breath we breathe is the spirit of God within us. Around us is the love that moves the sun and all the stars. We are here because someone wanted us to be. The soul that celebrates, sings.”⁹⁰⁶
- ❖ “Joy helps heal some of the wounds of our injured, troubled world.”⁹⁰⁷
- ❖ “Happiness – the sense of a life well lived – is born in the blessings we bestow on others. Bringing hope to someone else’s life brings meaning to our own.”⁹⁰⁸

JUDAISM

- ❖ “Jewish history begins in the choice of a family, the Divine election of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their children...The choice of Abraham was the election of a family. Judaism is

⁹⁰⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 127

⁹⁰¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 147

⁹⁰² *Morality* p. 115

⁹⁰³ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 121

⁹⁰⁴ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 257

⁹⁰⁵ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 258

⁹⁰⁶ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 258

⁹⁰⁷ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 259

⁹⁰⁸ *The Power of Ideas* p. 78

difficult to define in conventional categories. It is not simply a religious faith, for a secular Jew is still a Jew. It is not simply a nationality, a state, a country or a land, for the Jew who lives outside Israel is still a Jew. It is not a race or mode of ethnicity, for there are Jews of many races and colours and backgrounds and cultures. Judaism embraces these things, but it is something other than and prior to them all. To be a Jew is to be a member of a family.”⁹⁰⁹

- ❖ “Judaism is a faith. But it is the faith of a particular people. It is more than a set of truths and commands. It is a people to whom those truths and commands are addressed and in whose lives they are embodied. The future of the covenant depends on the future of the people of the covenant. Theology, in Judaism, is dependent on demography.”⁹¹⁰
- ❖ “Judaism speaks of the Torah as a private covenant with the Jewish people: ‘He has revealed His word to Jacob, His laws and decrees to Israel. He has done this for no other nation.’ (Tehillim 147:19-20). On the other hand, it projects the values of Torah against the backdrop of mankind. ‘Observe them carefully’, says Moses about the commandments, for this is your wisdom and understanding in the eyes of the nations. They will hear all these rules and say: This great nation is surely a wise and understanding people.’ (Devarim 4:6). A Jewish perspective is both inward and outward, concerned to maintain a critical distance from other cultures while at the same time engaging their attention and ultimately admiration. To be a Jew is to be a witness to the world of the presence of God.”⁹¹¹
- ❖ “If Judaism, either in Israel or the diaspora, fails to win the admiration of observers, it will fail ultimately to win the emulation of Jews themselves.”⁹¹²
- ❖ “Judaism contains a distinctive and highly articulated vision of society, but it is not one that can be translated into conventional political categories. Its emphasis on community, compassion and social justice led one generation to identify Judaism with socialism. Its equally strong insistence on individual responsibility led another generation to identify it with the New Right and the minimalist state. But Judaism is not the one nor the other but a religious culture that encompasses both.”⁹¹³
- ❖ “Judaism, in contradistinction to Christianity, maintains that human existence is redeemable but not yet redeemed.”⁹¹⁴
- ❖ “Judaism... is not an abstract moral system grounded in reason, but rather a revealed moral tradition grounded in covenantal relationships and the historic experience of powerlessness and suffering.”⁹¹⁵
- ❖ “Judaism is the sustained attempt to bring the Divine presence from the soul to the body, from poetry to prose, from the innermost mind to the public domain, from exalted moments into the texture of everyday life.”⁹¹⁶
- ❖ “Judaism is God’s perennial question mark against the conventional wisdom of mankind.”⁹¹⁷

⁹⁰⁹ *Traditional Alternatives/Arguments for the Sake of Heaven* p. 241

⁹¹⁰ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 101

⁹¹¹ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* pp. 110-111

⁹¹² *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 111

⁹¹³ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 13

⁹¹⁴ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 220

⁹¹⁵ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 265

⁹¹⁶ *Community of Faith* p. 92

⁹¹⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 40

- ❖ “Judaism is the insistence that history does have a meaning.”⁹¹⁸
- ❖ “Judaism begins not in wonder that the world is, but in protest that the world is not as it ought to be. It is in that cry, that sacred discontent, that Abraham’s journey begins.”⁹¹⁹
- ❖ “Judaism is a uniquely restless faith.”⁹²⁰
- ❖ “The faith of Judaism, beginning with Abraham, reaching its most detailed expression in the covenant of Sinai, envisaged by the prophets and articulated by the sages, is that, by acting in response to the call of God, collectively we can change the world. The flames of injustice, violence and oppression are not inevitable. The victory of the strong over the weak, the many over the few, the manipulative over those who act with integrity, even though they have happened at most times and in most places, are not written into the structure of the universe. They may be natural, but God is above nature, and because God communicates with man, man too can defeat nature. Judaism is the revolutionary moment at which humanity refuses to accept the world that is.”⁹²¹
- ❖ “The significance of Judaism to the moral environment of mankind is not just that it thought new truths, though it did. It is that Jews continue to live them, so that if Judaism were to cease to exist, something fundamental to Western civilization would die.”⁹²²
- ❖ “Jewish life, though it is made up of simple and sometimes repetitive deeds, is the way in which I am connected to a set of revolutionary ideas, monumental in their scope, utterly humane in their effect, which became real in the lives of individuals who make up the Torah scroll of the Jewish people as it has lived its story through the centuries and continents.”⁹²³
- ❖ “At the heart of Judaism is a covenant of love.”⁹²⁴
- ❖ “For Judaism, religious faith is not mysterious. It needs no sacrifice of the mind, no leap into the void. It is precisely like the gesture of commitment I make in a human relationship when I pledge myself to another, whose body I can see but whose consciousness must always be beyond my reach. My capacity to form relationships tells me that though I can never enter someone else’s mind, I can reach out beyond the self and, joining my life to an other, create the things that exist only in virtue of being shared: trust, friendship and love. So, though I can never enter the consciousness of God, I can still pledge myself to Him in faithfulness, listening to His voice as it is recorded in the Torah and responding to His affirmation of my personhood. Together we bring into being what neither God-without-man nor man-without-God could create: a society of free persons respecting one another’s freedom.”⁹²⁵
- ❖ “Judaism is an ongoing moral revolution.”⁹²⁶
- ❖ “For Judaism... the criterion of the good society is not wealth, power or prowess but the simple question: does it respect the individual as image of God?”⁹²⁷

⁹¹⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 41

⁹¹⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 55

⁹²⁰ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 55

⁹²¹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 58

⁹²² *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 63

⁹²³ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 64

⁹²⁴ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 83

⁹²⁵ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 86

⁹²⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 95

⁹²⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 96

- ❖ “Where Christianity sees man as in need of being saved, and Islam calls on him to submit to the will of God, Judaism advances the daring idea that man and God are partners in the work of creation. Faith is the call to human responsibility.”⁹²⁸
- ❖ “In Judaism, God is not in the answer but in the question.”⁹²⁹
- ❖ “Judaism is the systematic rejection of tragedy in the name of hope.”⁹³⁰
- ❖ “There is no ultimate ownership in Judaism. What I possess belongs to God, and I am merely its legal guardian.”⁹³¹
- ❖ “Judaism is not a religion of continuing revelation, but rather one of continuing interpretation.”⁹³²
- ❖ “The fundamental idea of Judaism was and is that we bring God into the world through daily acts and interactions, precisely as the book of Genesis portrays the religious drama in terms of ordinary lives.”⁹³³
- ❖ “Judaism is an egalitarian faith, but throughout the biblical era Israel remained a hierarchical society. There were kings and priests, dynastic rulers of the temporal and spiritual domains. Only when these disappeared could Israel genuinely become a kingdom, all of whose members were priests.”⁹³⁴
- ❖ “Much of Judaism is about creating those structures of togetherness in a way that honours individuality and yet brings us together to create the things that exist only by virtue of being shared.”⁹³⁵
- ❖ “Judaism is the ambitious attempt to build a society out of covenantal relationships, associations of free individuals, each respecting the integrity of the other, bound only by words, moral commitments, given, received and honoured in trust.”⁹³⁶
- ❖ “Judaism led ordinary people to lead extraordinary lives.”⁹³⁷
- ❖ “Hitler was not wrong when he called conscience a Jewish invention. That is one reason why I am a Jew. A world, a nation, a religion that does not have room for Judaism or Jews is a world, a nation, a religion that does not have room for humanity.”⁹³⁸
- ❖ “No religion has given God a more human face, or humanity a more awesome challenge, or history a more hope-laden script. None has more deeply challenged us, its guardians, to grow; and none has paid greater respect to critical intelligence and human responsibility.”⁹³⁹
- ❖ “Judaism is not a theory, a system, a set of speculative propositions, an “ism”. It is a call and it bears our name.”⁹⁴⁰
- ❖ “Judaism is not a truth addressed to all mankind. It is a summons to us, mediated through more than a hundred generations of our ancestors, written in the history of their lives and now confronting us as our heritage and responsibility.”⁹⁴¹

⁹²⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 97

⁹²⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 99

⁹³⁰ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 100

⁹³¹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 121

⁹³² *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 159

⁹³³ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 160

⁹³⁴ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 161

⁹³⁵ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 163

⁹³⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 163

⁹³⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 166

⁹³⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 182

⁹³⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* pp. 214-215

⁹⁴⁰ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 216

⁹⁴¹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 216

- ❖ “One of the paradoxes of Judaism is that, though it is a religion of commands (mitzvot), biblical Hebrew contains no word that means ‘to obey’. Instead it uses the word *shema*, which means to hear, to understand and to respond – to listen in the fullest range of senses. I believe that God is summoning us to a new act of listening, going back to the sources of our faith and hearing in them something we missed before, because we did not face these challenges, this configuration of dilemmas before. In religions of revelation, discoveries are rediscoveries, a discernment of something that was always there but not necessarily audible from where our ancestors stood. God’s word is for all time, but our act of listening is of this time; and the challenge is to discern within that word, as it speaks to us now, a narrative of hope.”⁹⁴²
- ❖ “Judaism is a particularist monotheism. It believes in one God but not in one religion, one culture, one truth. The God of Abraham is the God of all mankind, but the faith of Abraham is not the faith of mankind.”⁹⁴³
- ❖ “From its inception, Judaism was a living protest against hierarchical societies that give some, but not all, dignity, power and freedom. Instead it insisted that if any individual is sacred, then every individual is, because each of us is in the image of God.”⁹⁴⁴
- ❖ “There is nothing in Judaism of nostalgia for the pre-technological simplicities of a mythical past, paradise lost, a remembered Eden. But even a faith as focused on this world as Judaism, insists on limits. There are times and places - the Sabbath, festivals, daily prayer, the home, the school, the house of study - into which the market and its siren voice may not intrude.”⁹⁴⁵
- ❖ “Judaism is a particular covenant with the universal God, because it is only in and through our particularity that we are fully human, and it is only through the institutions of particularity – families, communities, languages and traditions, each with its own local character – that we protect and sustain our humanity.”⁹⁴⁶
- ❖ “Judaism is God’s question-mark against the random cruelties of the world. It is His call to us to ‘mend the world’ until it becomes a place worthy of the Divine presence, to accept no illness that can be cured, no poverty that can be alleviated, no injustice that can be rectified. To ask the prophetic question is not to seek an answer but to be energized to action.”⁹⁴⁷
- ❖ “Judaism is a complex and subtle faith, yet it has rarely lost touch with its simple ethical imperatives. We are here to make a difference, to mend the fractures of the world, a day at a time, an act at a time, for as long as it takes to make it a place of justice and compassion where the lonely are not alone, the poor not without help; where the cry of the vulnerable is heeded and those who are wronged are heard.”⁹⁴⁸
- ❖ “Judaism is not a religion that reconciles us to the world. It was born as an act of defiance against the great empires of the ancient world.”⁹⁴⁹

⁹⁴² *The Dignity of Difference* p. 19

⁹⁴³ *The Dignity of Difference* pp. 52-53

⁹⁴⁴ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 92

⁹⁴⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 159

⁹⁴⁶ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 40

⁹⁴⁷ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* pp. 107-108

⁹⁴⁸ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 5

⁹⁴⁹ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 18

- ❖ “Judaism is God’s perennial question-mark against the condition of the world. That things are as they are is a fact, not a value. Should it be so? Why should it be so? Only one who asks whether the world should be as it is, is capable of changing what it is.”⁹⁵⁰
- ❖ “Judaism is a collective faith. Despite its principled attachment to the dignity of the individual, its central experiences are not private but communal. We pray together. On 9 Av (the anniversary of the destruction of the Temple), we mourn together. On the Day of Atonement we confess together.”⁹⁵¹
- ❖ “Judaism is the guardian of an ancient but still compelling dream. To heal where others harm, mend where others destroy, to redeem evil by turning its negative energies to good: these are the mark of the ethics of responsibility, born in the radical faith that God calls on us to exercise our freedom by becoming his partners in the work of creation. That seems to me a life-affirming vision: the courage to take the risk of responsibility, becoming co-authors with God of the world that ought to be.”⁹⁵²
- ❖ “Judaism was never meant for Jews alone. It contains a message for all humanity, and much in the twenty-first century will depend on whether this message or a different one prevails. Judaism belongs to the human conversation, and we must take the trouble to share our ideas with others, and let others share theirs with us.”⁹⁵³
- ❖ “Jews and Judaism combine two phenomena that nowhere else coincide. Jews are a nation, and Judaism is a religion. There are nations that contain many religions. There are religions whose adherents are spread across many nations. What is unique is the way in which Judaism combines both.”⁹⁵⁴
- ❖ “Judaism is about sanctifying life, not just commemorating death.”⁹⁵⁵
- ❖ “Judaism survived two thousand years of exile, not because it was easy but because it was difficult, sometimes heartbreakingly so.”⁹⁵⁶
- ❖ “When people made Judaism easy, they found that their children preferred other ways of life.”⁹⁵⁷
- ❖ “Judaism is the ongoing conversation of the Jewish people with itself, with heaven and with the world. It is a conversation scored for many voices, often in the argumentative mode.”⁹⁵⁸
- ❖ “Judaism is about relationships. The Greeks asked, 'What exists?' Jews asked, 'What is the relationship between the things that exist?’”⁹⁵⁹
- ❖ “Judaism is about conversation. It is the only religion known to me in which human beings talk to, argue and remonstrate with God.”⁹⁶⁰
- ❖ “Judaism is the only civilisation whose key texts are anthologies of argument.”⁹⁶¹

⁹⁵⁰ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 26

⁹⁵¹ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 86

⁹⁵² *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 273

⁹⁵³ *Future Tense* p. 7

⁹⁵⁴ *Future Tense* pp. 35-36

⁹⁵⁵ *Future Tense* p. 60

⁹⁵⁶ *Future Tense* p. 67

⁹⁵⁷ *Future Tense* p. 67

⁹⁵⁸ *Future Tense* p. 70

⁹⁵⁹ *Future Tense* p. 182

⁹⁶⁰ *Future Tense* p. 183

⁹⁶¹ *Future Tense* p. 183

- ❖ “Judaism is the voice of hope in the conversation of humankind.”⁹⁶²
- ❖ “Judaism is the principled defeat of tragedy in the name of hope.”⁹⁶³
- ❖ “Judaism was much more than the discovery of monotheism, the discovery of a single unified God. That idea is contained in the word *Elokim*. It was also the discovery that God is a “person” – that the fact that we are persons, with loves, fears, hopes and dreams, is not an accidental by-product of evolution (as some neo-Darwinians claim), but rather an echo of the ultimate reality of the cosmos. We are not gene-producing machines but individuals, each of us unique, irreplaceable, here because God wants us to be here. That is the world-transforming concept of *Hashem* – and it was only when Adam responded to Eve as a person that he could see himself as a person, and so respond to God as such. That is why the mitzvot regulating the relationship between us and God are inseparable from the mitzvot defining the relationship between us and our fellow human beings.”⁹⁶⁴
- ❖ “Judaism is not an escape from the world, but an engagement with the world. It does not anaesthetise us to the pains and apparent injustices of life. It does not reconcile us to suffering. It asks us to play our part in the most daunting undertaking ever asked by God of mankind: to construct relationships, communities, and ultimately a society, that will create a home for the Divine Presence. And that means wrestling with God and with men and refusing to give up or despair.”⁹⁶⁵
- ❖ “What is revolutionary in Judaism is not simply the concept of monotheism – that the universe is not a blind clash of conflicting powers but the result of a single creative will. It is that God is *involved* in His creation. God is not simply the force that brought the universe into being, nor is He reached only in the private recesses of the soul. At a certain point He intervened in history, to rescue His people from slavery and set them on the path to freedom. This was the revolution, at once political and intellectual.”⁹⁶⁶
- ❖ “Judaism is the escape into history, the unique attempt to endow events with meaning, and to see in the chronicles of mankind something more than a mere succession of happenings – to see them as nothing less than a drama of redemption in which the fate of a nation reflects its loyalty or otherwise to a covenant with God.”⁹⁶⁷
- ❖ “Civilization always runs the risk of substituting “seems” for “is.” Those who dress like kings may have the hearts of slaves, fearful, resentful and vindictive. Those who wear the robes of holy people may be corrupt. That is why Jewish sensibility is, on the whole, sceptical of official uniforms. God sees, and teaches us to see, the inward person, what Hamlet called, “that within which passeth show.””⁹⁶⁸
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to keep faith with the past by building a Jewish future.”⁹⁶⁹
- ❖ “Judaism is God’s call to human responsibility, to bring the world that is closer to the world that ought to be.”⁹⁷⁰

⁹⁶² *Future Tense* p. 246

⁹⁶³ *Future Tense* p. 247

⁹⁶⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 39

⁹⁶⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 240

⁹⁶⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 64

⁹⁶⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 65

⁹⁶⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* pp. 244-245

⁹⁶⁹ *A Judaism Engaged with the World* p. 3

⁹⁷⁰ *A Judaism Engaged with the World* p. 16

- ❖ “The challenge of our time is to go out to Jews with a Judaism that relates to the world – their world – with intellectual integrity, ethical passion and spiritual power, a Judaism neither intimidated by the world nor dismissive of it, a Judaism fully expressive of the broad horizons and high ideals of our heritage.”⁹⁷¹
- ❖ “I have called Judaism the voice of hope in the conversation of humankind.”⁹⁷²
- ❖ “Judaism is neither hedonistic nor ascetic. It is about the consecration of desire.”⁹⁷³
- ❖ “Judaism is the civilisation that did not die because, despite its respect and loyalty to the past, it is a fundamentally future-oriented faith.”⁹⁷⁴
- ❖ “Judaism emerged as an answer to a series of questions: How can finite human beings be connected to an infinite God? How can they be connected to one another? How can there be co-operation, collaboration, collective action, families, communities, and a nation, without the coercive use of power? How can we form relationships of trust? How can we redeem the human person from his or her solitude? How can we create collective liberty such that my freedom is not bought at the cost of yours? The answer is: through words, words that communicate, words that bind, words that honour the Divine Other and the human other.”⁹⁷⁵
- ❖ “The concept of equality we find in the Torah specifically and Judaism generally is not an equality of wealth: Judaism is not communism. Nor is it an equality of power: Judaism is not anarchy. It is fundamentally an equality of dignity. We are all equal citizens in the nation whose sovereign is God.”⁹⁷⁶
- ❖ “Judaism was and remains the world’s great religion of protest.”⁹⁷⁷
- ❖ “Judaism is the counter-voice in the conversation of humankind.”⁹⁷⁸
- ❖ “Judaism is God’s call to responsibility.”⁹⁷⁹
- ❖ “Choose *life*. In many other faiths, life down here on earth with its loves, losses, triumphs, and defeats, is not the highest value. Heaven is to be found in life after death, or the soul in unbroken communion with God, or in acceptance of the world-that-is. Life is eternity, life is serenity, life is free of pain. But that, for Judaism, is not quite life. It may be noble, spiritual, sublime – but it is not life in all its passion, responsibility, and risk.”⁹⁸⁰
- ❖ “Judaism is not a religion of the solitary self, the soul in private communion with God. It is about the life we share, and the things we create together.”⁹⁸¹
- ❖ “*There are nations that contain many religions and there are religions that are spread over many nations, but only in the case of Judaism do religion and nation coincide.*”⁹⁸²

⁹⁷¹ *A Judaism Engaged with the World* p. 24

⁹⁷² *A Judaism Engaged with the World* p. 24

⁹⁷³ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 27

⁹⁷⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 122

⁹⁷⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* pp. 205-206

⁹⁷⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 286

⁹⁷⁷ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 6

⁹⁷⁸ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 16

⁹⁷⁹ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 22

⁹⁸⁰ *Essays on Ethics* p. 320

⁹⁸¹ *Marble Arch Synagogue*

⁹⁸² *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 119

- ❖ “The genius of Judaism was to take eternal truths and translate them into time, into lived experiences. Other cultures have constructed philosophies and theologies, elaborate systems of abstract thought. Judaism prefers truth lived to truth merely thought.”⁹⁸³
- ❖ “Other religions have sought God in heaven, or in the afterlife, the distant past or the distant future. Here there is suffering, there reward; here chaos, there order; here pain, there balm; here poverty, there plenty. Judaism has relentlessly sought God in the here-and-now of life on earth. Yes, we believe in life after death, but it is in life before death that we truly find human greatness.”⁹⁸⁴
- ❖ “Judaism is the religion of the free human being freely responding to the God of freedom.”⁹⁸⁵
- ❖ “The majesty and mystery of Judaism is that, though at best Jews were a small people in a small land, no match for the circumambient empires that periodically assaulted them, Jews did not give way to self-hate, self-disesteem or despair.”⁹⁸⁶
- ❖ “Judaism takes the simple things of life and makes them holy. *Kashrut* makes eating holy. *Kiddush* makes drinking holy. The laws of family purity make the physical relationship between husband and wife holy. Study sanctifies the intellect. Prayer reconfigures the mind. Constant acts of generosity and care sharpen our emotional intelligence, honing our skills of empathy. Judaism, as Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik put it, sees creativity as the essence of humanity, and our greatest creation is our self. We forge our life in the fire of love: love of God, the neighbor and the stranger. And by sanctifying family and community, Judaism sacralizes the bonds of belonging that make us who we are.”⁹⁸⁷
- ❖ “Judaism is not just a set of beliefs and practices. It is also a field of tensions: between the universal and the particular, exile and home, priest and prophet, halakha and Aggada, rationalism and mysticism, tradition and revolution, acceptance and protest, the walls of the house of study and the stalls of the marketplace. Its greatness is that, by and large, it has kept these tensions in play. That is what has given it gifts of survival and creativity unmatched by any other religious tradition in the West.”⁹⁸⁸
- ❖ “Judaism is a religion of rejoicing; of remembering where we came from, and therefore not taking our blessings for granted; of recalling the source of the good, and therefore not forgetting the larger truth that it comes to us from the hand of God; of knowing that what we have, God has placed in our trust, to be used for the good of all, not just ourselves. I know of no more sane, wise way of seeing reality steadily and seeing it whole.”⁹⁸⁹
- ❖ “The beauty of Judaism is that it did not become traumatised by tragedy. Despite their suffering, Jews did not let themselves become defined by it. They mourned on Tisha B’Av and the other specified fasts but did not allow the rest of their days to be darkened by grief. They set limits to sadness. During the rest of the week they might be toiling, but on Shabbat they ate as if at the royal table. During the rest of the year they might be in exile but on festivals they rejoiced.”⁹⁹⁰

⁹⁸³ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 20

⁹⁸⁴ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 21

⁹⁸⁵ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 21

⁹⁸⁶ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 85

⁹⁸⁷ *Ceremony & Celebration* pp. 93-94

⁹⁸⁸ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 320

⁹⁸⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 245

⁹⁹⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 245

- ❖ “Judaism was and remains a dazzlingly original way of thinking about life.”⁹⁹¹
- ❖ “Judaism through the millennia has been a living embodiment of the power of ideas to sustain a people and be a transformative force wherever those ideas penetrated the world.”⁹⁹²
- ❖ “In the course of my life I have had several deep conversations with Christians, and there is one aspect of Judaism that they find very difficult to understand. The conversation usually turns to the central figure of Christianity, and I am often asked, do I believe that he was the son of God. “I do indeed,” I reply, “because we believe that every Jew is a son or daughter of God.” What Christianity applies to one figure in its faith, we apply to all. Where Christianity transcendentalises, Judaism democratizes. My conversation partners often think I am being evasive, finding a polite way to avoid answering the question. In fact, though, the opposite is true.”⁹⁹³
- ❖ “Much of Judaism is about the shape and structure of our togetherness. It values the individual but does not endorse individualism.”⁹⁹⁴
- ❖ “Judaism is not a recipe for blandness or bliss. It is not a guarantee that you will be spared heartache and pain. It is not what the Stoics sought, *apatheia*, a life undisturbed by passion. Nor is it a path to *nirvana*, stilling the fires of feeling by extinguishing the self.... [Instead] Judaism is a faith for those who seek to change the world. That is unusual in the history of faith. Most religions are about accepting the world the way it is. *Judaism is a protest against the world that is in the name of the world that ought to be.* To be a Jew is to seek to make a difference, to change lives for the better, to heal some of the scars of our fractured world.”⁹⁹⁵
- ❖ “One of the great differences between Judaism and other religions is that while others seek to lift people to heaven, Judaism seeks to bring heaven down to earth.”⁹⁹⁶
- ❖ “Judaism was never meant for Jews alone... Jews were to be a source of blessing to the world.”⁹⁹⁷
- ❖ “The conclusion I have drawn from a lifetime lived in the public square is that *non-Jews respect Jews who respect Judaism.*”⁹⁹⁸
- ❖ “Speaking personally, I believe that the world in its current state of turbulence needs the Jewish message, which is that God calls on us to be *true to our faith and a blessing to others regardless of their faith.* Imagine a world in which everyone believed this. It would be a world transformed.”⁹⁹⁹
- ❖ “In Judaism we believe that our relationship with God is an ongoing tutorial in our relationships with other people.”¹⁰⁰⁰
- ❖ “Judaism needed no cathedrals, no monasteries, no abstruse theologies, no metaphysical ingenuities, beautiful though all these are; because for us God is the God of everyone and

⁹⁹¹ *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* p. xvii

⁹⁹² *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* p. xxiii

⁹⁹³ *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* p. 194

⁹⁹⁴ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 110

⁹⁹⁵ *Studies in Spirituality* pp. 188-189

⁹⁹⁶ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 195

⁹⁹⁷ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 246

⁹⁹⁸ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 247

⁹⁹⁹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 247

¹⁰⁰⁰ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 253

everywhere, who has time for each of us, and who meets us where we are, if we are willing to open our soul to Him.”¹⁰⁰¹

JUSTICE

- ❖ “Justice is a process, not just a product. It is not enough for the court to be right. It must hear both sides of the argument.”¹⁰⁰²
- ❖ “In the human domain there is a fundamental difference between justice and revenge. Revenge is personal, justice impersonal. Revenge involves taking the law into your own hands. Justice is the opposite. It means handing over your cause to an impartial tribunal to examine the evidence and apply the law. The move from revenge to justice is the most fundamental any society can make. When courts and the legal process take the place of retaliation, it is no longer the Montagues against the Capulets but both under the impartial rule of law. Justice is not revenge. It is the only sane alternative to it.”¹⁰⁰³
- ❖ “*Retribution is the principled rejection of revenge.* It says that we are not free to take the law into our own hands. Passion may not override the due process of the law, for that is a sure route to anarchy and bloodshed.”¹⁰⁰⁴
- ❖ “Abraham was the first person in recorded history to protest the injustice of the world in the name of God, rather than accept it in the name of God.”¹⁰⁰⁵

KIDDUSH HASHEM/HILLUL HASHEM

- ❖ “The key concept that has driven me since my encounter with Rabbi Soloveitchik and the Lubavitcher Rebbe has been *Kiddush haShem*, sanctification of God’s name. Tragically, often in the past this referred to Jews who died because of their faith. We say they died *al Kiddush haShem*. But what it primarily means is to live in such a way as to inspire respect for God.”¹⁰⁰⁶
- ❖ “When we behave in such a way as to evoke admiration for Judaism as a faith and a way of life, that is a *kiddush Hashem*, a sanctification of God’s name. When we do the opposite – when we betray that faith and way of life, causing people to have contempt for the God of Israel – that is a *hillul Hashem*, a desecration of God’s name.”¹⁰⁰⁷
- ❖ “When people associate religiosity with integrity, decency, humility, and compassion, God’s name is sanctified. When they come to associate it with contempt for others and for the law, the result is a desecration of God’s name.”¹⁰⁰⁸

¹⁰⁰¹ *Studies in Spirituality* pp. 281-282

¹⁰⁰² *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 107

¹⁰⁰³ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* pp. 310-311

¹⁰⁰⁴ *Essays on Ethics* p. 272

¹⁰⁰⁵ *I Believe* p. 18

¹⁰⁰⁶ *A Judaism Engaged with the World* pp. 14-15

¹⁰⁰⁷ *Lessons in Leadership* pp. 164-165

¹⁰⁰⁸ *Essays on Ethics* p. 198

LAW

- ❖ “It is surely no coincidence that Israel became the first – indeed the only – nation in history to receive its laws before its land. A law that could be easily written and read, and that could be transported anywhere, was the expression of the God who was everywhere, in the desert as well as in the land.”¹⁰⁰⁹
- ❖ “When there is no overarching rule of law, the world is filled with violence.”¹⁰¹⁰
- ❖ “The alternative to power is law: law freely accepted and freely obeyed. Only by observing the rule of law – law that applies equally to the rich and poor, the powerful and powerless – do we escape the tragic cycle of freedom that begets conflict that leads to chaos, resulting in the use of force that generates tyranny, the freedom of the few and the enslavement of the many. *God reveals Himself in the form of law, because law is the constitution of liberty.* That is the moral shape of a society of freedom under the sovereignty of God.”¹⁰¹¹
- ❖ “Judaism is not just about spirituality. It is not simply a code for the salvation of the soul. It is a set of instructions for the creation of what the late Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein called “societal beatitude.” It is about bringing God into the shared spaces of our collective life. That needs law: law that represents justice, honouring all humans alike regardless of colour or class; law that judges impartially between rich and poor, powerful and powerless, even *in extremis* between humanity and God; law that links God, its giver, to us, its interpreters; law that alone allows freedom to coexist with order, so that my freedom is not bought at the cost of yours.”¹⁰¹²
- ❖ “Law is about universals, principles that apply in all places and times. Do not murder. Do not rob. Do not steal. Do not lie. Yet there are important features of the moral life that are not universal at all. They have to do with specific circumstances and the way we respond to them. What is it to be a good husband or wife, a good parent, a good teacher, a good friend? What is it to be a great leader, or follower, or members of a team? When is it right to praise, and when is it appropriate to say, “You could have done better”? There are aspects of the moral life that cannot be reduced to rules of conduct, because what matters is not only what we do, but the way in which we do it – with humility or gentleness or sensitivity or tact.”¹⁰¹³
- ❖ “*Judaism exists in the cognitive dissonance between the order God creates and the chaos we create. Law is the path that leads us back from chaos to order, from discord to harmony, from death to life.*”¹⁰¹⁴
- ❖ “The moral system of the Torah depends on making a fundamental distinction between interpersonal emotion and impersonal law... When law and justice prevail, there can be punishment without animosity. The law-based society envisaged by the Torah is one where people hate not the sinner but the sin.”¹⁰¹⁵
- ❖ “Law alone is no defence against self-righteousness. Indeed law alone can lead to self-righteousness, for it can convince those who study it that the law is on their side. It may

¹⁰⁰⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 136

¹⁰¹⁰ *Not in God's Name* p. 192

¹⁰¹¹ *Essays on Ethics* p. xxv

¹⁰¹² *Essays on Ethics* p. 280

¹⁰¹³ *Essays on Ethics* p. 283

¹⁰¹⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 240

¹⁰¹⁵ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 257

be on their side, but what the law, in and of itself, cannot teach us is that the other person is also a human being, with feelings that can be injured and with merits that may not be apparent to those who view humanity in black-and-white terms, dividing it, as did the Second Temple sectarians, into the “children of light” and the “children of darkness.” Narrative teaches us the complexity of the moral life and the light-and-shade to be found in any human personality. Without this, self-righteousness can destroy the very perceptions and nuances, the tolerance and generosity of spirit on which society depends.”¹⁰¹⁶

LAW & LOVE

- ❖ “Judaism is a religion of law – not because it does not believe in love (“You shall love the Lord your God,” “You shall love your neighbour as yourself,”) but because, without justice, neither love nor liberty nor human life itself can flourish.”¹⁰¹⁷
- ❖ “Justice is universal. It treats all people alike, rich and poor, powerful and powerless, making no distinctions on the basis of colour or class. But love is particular. A parent loves his or her children for what makes them each unique. The moral life is a combination of both. That is why it cannot be reduced solely to universal laws. That is what the Torah means when it speaks of “the right and the good” over and above the commandments, statutes, and testimonies.”¹⁰¹⁸
- ❖ “Judaism has been accused over the centuries of being a religion of law, not love. This is precisely untrue. Judaism is a religion of law *and* love, for without law there is no justice, and even with law (indeed, *only* with law) there is still mercy, compassion and forgiveness. God’s great gift of love *was* law: the law that establishes human rights and responsibilities, that treats rich and poor alike, that allows God to challenge humans but also humans to challenge God, the law studied by every Jewish child, the law written in letters of black fire on white fire that burns in our hearts, making Jews among the most passionate fighters for justice the world has ever known.”¹⁰¹⁹
- ❖ “Law is the basis of liberty. Without it, there is chaos, violence, injustice, and the will to power. Judaism is a religion of law, not because it is solely concerned with justice rather than love. To the contrary, Torah is the source of the three great love commands in Western civilisation: you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, might, and soul; you shall love your neighbour as yourself; you shall love the stranger for you were once strangers. But love alone cannot structure grace in society.”¹⁰²⁰

LEADERS, LEADERSHIP & FOLLOWERSHIP

¹⁰¹⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* pp. 336-337

¹⁰¹⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 178

¹⁰¹⁸ *Essays on Ethics* p. 284

¹⁰¹⁹ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 73

¹⁰²⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 66

- ❖ “In the absence of a shared moral language, religious leadership is faced with the alternative of speaking either to its own faithful – in which case it fails to do justice to powerful opposed ethical claims – or to a minimalist moral consensus – in which case its pronouncements appear vapid and without content.”¹⁰²¹
- ❖ “I remember my first private audience with R. Menahem Mendel Schneerson, the Rebbe of Lubavitch. In the course of a long conversation I used the phrase – a classic in the vocabulary of excuse-making – “In the situation in which I find myself...” The Rebbe allowed the sentence to get no further. “No-one ever finds himself in a situation.” He said. “He places himself in a situation. And if he placed himself in this situation, he can place himself in another situation.””¹⁰²²
- ❖ “Some are born great, and others achieve greatness. Our generation is neither. The great saints and sages, leaders of the Jewish world, are with us no more. We are conscious of our smallness. But some have greatness thrust upon them. And that is us: all of us who live at this hour. We have the means, the freedom, the resources, the prevailing climate, to draw Jews closer to Judaism and hence to one another and to the land and state of Israel.”¹⁰²³
- ❖ “Who is a leader of the Jewish people? Only one who loves the Jewish people. Reading the prophetic literature, it is easy to see the prophets as social critics... [But] the prophets loved their people. They spoke not out of condemnation but from the depths of deep desire. They knew that Israel was capable of - and had been summoned to - great things. They never criticised in order to distance themselves, to set themselves above and apart. They spoke in love – God’s love.”¹⁰²⁴
- ❖ “Religious leaders should never seek power, but neither may they abdicate their task of being a counter-voice in the conversation of mankind.”¹⁰²⁵
- ❖ “Rabbinic leadership must be based on collegiality and mutual respect, and a willingness to give an honourable audience to conflicting views.”¹⁰²⁶
- ❖ “Who is a leader? To this, the Jewish answer is, one who identifies with his or her people, mindful of their faults, to be sure, but convinced also of their potential greatness and their preciousness in the sight of God.”¹⁰²⁷
- ❖ “Judaism is a complex faith. There is no one Torah model of leadership. We are each called on to full a number of leadership roles: as parents, teachers, friends, team members and team leaders. There is no doubt, however, that Judaism favours as an ideal the role of parent, encouraging those we lead to continue the journey we have begun, to go further than we did.”¹⁰²⁸
- ❖ “There are no universal rules when it comes to leadership. It is an art, not a science.”¹⁰²⁹
- ❖ “Leadership demands two kinds of courage: the strength to take a risk, and the humility to admit when a risk fails.”¹⁰³⁰

¹⁰²¹ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 165

¹⁰²² *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 211

¹⁰²³ *Orthodoxy Confronts Modernity* pp. 141-142

¹⁰²⁴ *Bamidbar (5773) – Love as Law, Law as Love*

¹⁰²⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 13

¹⁰²⁶ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 89

¹⁰²⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 33

¹⁰²⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* pp. 113-114

¹⁰²⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 96

¹⁰³⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 98

- ❖ “Don’t ever think that leaders are different from the rest of us. They aren’t. We all need the courage to live with the challenges, the mistakes and mishaps, and to keep going... It is not their victories that make people leaders; it is the way they cope with their defeats – their ability to learn, to recover, and to grow.”¹⁰³¹
- ❖ “To a remarkable degree, Judaism is about leadership by influence, not about authority in virtue of formal office.”¹⁰³²
- ❖ “One of the most important tasks of a leader is to encourage leadership in others.”¹⁰³³
- ❖ “We are all called on to be leaders. But we are also called on to be followers. In Judaism the two concepts are not opposites as they are in many cultures. They are part of the same process. Leaders and followers sit around the same table, engaged in the same task, asking the same question: how, together, can we lift one another?”¹⁰³⁴
- ❖ “Leadership is not only about what you achieve by it. It is what you become because of it.”¹⁰³⁵
- ❖ “Moses began his career as a leader unable to speak in public; he ended it as one of the most eloquent visionaries the world has ever known. Leading makes you grow. It is the most powerful thing that does.”¹⁰³⁶
- ❖ “When bad things happen, some avert their eyes. Some wait for others to act. Some blame others for failing to act. Some simply complain. But there are people who say, “If something is wrong, let me be among the first to put it right.” They are the leaders. They are the ones who make a difference in their lifetimes. They are the ones who make ours a better world.”¹⁰³⁷
- ❖ “To try, to fall, to fear, and yet to keep going: that is what it takes to be a leader.”¹⁰³⁸
- ❖ “*It is the task of a leader to empower, but it is also his or her task to inspire.*”¹⁰³⁹
- ❖ “The essential lesson of the Torah is that leadership can never be confined to one class or role. It must always be distributed and divided.”¹⁰⁴⁰
- ❖ “Leaders must have the strength to know what they cannot be if they are to have the courage to be themselves.”¹⁰⁴¹
- ❖ “People do not become leaders because they are great. They become great because they are willing to serve as leaders.”¹⁰⁴²
- ❖ “*In Judaism, followership is as active and demanding as leadership.*”¹⁰⁴³
- ❖ “Great leaders think long-term and build for the future. That has become all too rare in contemporary secular culture with its relentless focus on the moment, its short attention spans, its fleeting fashions and flash mobs, its texts and tweets, its fifteen minutes of fame, and its fixation with today’s headlines and “the power of now”.”¹⁰⁴⁴

¹⁰³¹ *Lessons in Leadership* pp. xx-xxi

¹⁰³² *Lessons in Leadership* p. xxiv

¹⁰³³ *Lessons in Leadership* p. xxvii

¹⁰³⁴ *Lessons in Leadership* p. xxvii

¹⁰³⁵ *Lessons in Leadership* p. xxviii

¹⁰³⁶ *Lessons in Leadership* p. xxviii

¹⁰³⁷ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 5

¹⁰³⁸ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 34

¹⁰³⁹ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 84

¹⁰⁴⁰ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 103

¹⁰⁴¹ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 133

¹⁰⁴² *Lessons in Leadership* p. 139

¹⁰⁴³ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 160

¹⁰⁴⁴ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 172

- ❖ “Leadership is, I have argued, the acceptance of responsibility. Therefore if we are all responsible for one another, we are all called on to be leaders, each within our sphere of influence – be it within the family, the community, the organisation, or a larger grouping still.”¹⁰⁴⁵
- ❖ “Leaders respect differences but, like the conductor of an orchestra, integrate them, ensuing that the many different instruments play their part in harmony with the rest. True leaders do not seek to impose uniformity. They honour diversity.”¹⁰⁴⁶
- ❖ “To be an agent of hope, to love the people you lead, and to widen their horizons to embrace humanity as a whole – that is the kind of leadership that gives people the ability to recover from crisis and move on.”¹⁰⁴⁷
- ❖ “To be a leader, you do not need a crown or robes of office. All you need to do is to write your chapter in the story, do deeds that heal some of the pain of this world, and act so that others become a little better for having known you. Live so that, through you, our ancient covenant with God is renewed in the only way that matters: in life.”¹⁰⁴⁸
- ❖ “Leaders must be teachers but also learners. They must be visionaries and yet have time for the details. They must push people – but never too far, never too fast, or they will fail. They must speak to the better angels of our nature, teaching us to love, not hate; to forgive, not seek revenge. They must always prefer the peaceful solution to the one that involves taking a stick and hitting people on the head, even though they are prepared to do so if there is no alternative. Leaders must be capable of more than one style of leadership. Otherwise, as Abraham Maslow said, when one only has a hammer, it becomes tempting “to treat everything as if it were a nail.””¹⁰⁴⁹
- ❖ “To preserve tradition and at the same time defend those who others condemn is the difficult, necessary task of a moral religious leadership in an unreligious age.”¹⁰⁵⁰
- ❖ “There can come a time in the life of any transformative leader when the sun of hope is eclipsed by the clouds of doubt – not about God, but about people, above all about oneself. Am I really making a difference? Am I deceiving myself when I think I can change the world?”¹⁰⁵¹
- ❖ “In Judaism, a leader is not one who holds himself higher than those he or she leads. That is a moral failing, not a mark of stature. The absence of hierarchy does not mean the absence of leadership. A leader is one who coordinates, giving structure and shape to the enterprise, making sure that everyone is following the same script, travelling in the same direction, acting as an ensemble rather than a collection of prima donnas.”¹⁰⁵²
- ❖ “*A true leader is a servant, not a master.*”¹⁰⁵³
- ❖ “People get angry when leaders cannot magically make harsh reality disappear. Leaders in such circumstances are called on to accept that anger with grace. That truly is a sacred task.”¹⁰⁵⁴

¹⁰⁴⁵ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 179

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 222

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 237

¹⁰⁴⁸ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 286

¹⁰⁴⁹ *Lessons in Leadership* pp. 292-292

¹⁰⁵⁰ *Essays on Ethics* p. 262

¹⁰⁵¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 137

¹⁰⁵² *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 191

¹⁰⁵³ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 193

¹⁰⁵⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 217

- ❖ “Each age produces its leaders, and each leader is a function of an age. There may be – indeed there are – certain timeless truths about leadership. A leader must have courage and integrity. He or she must be able, say the sages, to relate to each individual according to his or her distinctive needs. Above all, a leader must constantly learn (a king must study the Torah “all the days of his life”; Deut. 17:19). But these are necessary, not sufficient, conditions. A leader must be sensitive to the call of the hour – *this* hour, *this* generation, *this* chapter in the long story of a people. And because he or she is of a specific generation, even the greatest leader cannot meet the challenges of a different generation. That is not a failing. It is the existential condition of humanity.”¹⁰⁵⁵
- ❖ “A leader must have vision, but also realism. He or she must think the impossible but know the possible.”¹⁰⁵⁶
- ❖ “A leader of the people must go at the people’s pace. He or she must educate them, prepare them for the challenges ahead, listen to their grievances, give them courage, lift their sights, and be prepared to slow down if they are unable to accelerate. He or she must be impatient and patient all at once – a difficult balancing act. But there is no choice. Leaders must not go on ahead so far and fast that, nearing their destination, they find themselves alone.”¹⁰⁵⁷
- ❖ “The great leaders of Israel were defenders of Israel, people who saw the good within the not-yet-good.”¹⁰⁵⁸
- ❖ “A leader must have the courage to lead, the patience to consult, and the wisdom to know when the time is right for each.”¹⁰⁵⁹
- ❖ “A leader cannot be *in* the fray and *above* it at the same time. Nor can any single figure embody all the requisite qualities: a young leader may lack experience; an experienced leader may lack youth and fail to see new opportunities. There must be at least one other voice – spouse, friend, advisor, trusted colleague – because the judgement of even the greatest will fail at times. These figures are often invisible to the public: they are helpful precisely because they are discreet. Yet they are often a leader’s most important defence against disaster, and without them failure will eventually follow. A leader’s strengths are his or her own, but it takes *someone else* to protect them from their weaknesses. Self-help is often not help at all.”¹⁰⁶⁰
- ❖ “To be a pioneer – as Jews know from our history – you have to be prepared to spend a long time in the wilderness.”¹⁰⁶¹
- ❖ “[Rav Nahum Rabinovitch] and the late Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein ז”ל were the *gedolei hador*, the leaders and role models of their generation. They were very different, one scientific, the other artistic, one direct, the other oblique, one bold, the other cautious, but they were giants, intellectually, morally, and spiritually. Happy the generation that is blessed by people like these.”¹⁰⁶²
- ❖ “I believe that followership is the great neglected art. Followers and leaders form a partnership of mutual challenge and respect. To be a follower in Judaism is not to be

¹⁰⁵⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 267

¹⁰⁵⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 359

¹⁰⁵⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* pp. 359-360

¹⁰⁵⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 34

¹⁰⁵⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 294

¹⁰⁶⁰ *Morality* p. 43

¹⁰⁶¹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 12

¹⁰⁶² *I Believe* p. 249

submissive, uncritical, blindly accepting. Questioning and arguing are part of the relationship. Too often, though, we decry a lack of leadership when we are really suffering from a lack of followership.”¹⁰⁶³

LIFE

- ❖ “It is difficult to feel depressed when you remember fairly constantly that life is a gift.”¹⁰⁶⁴
- ❖ “We are here, I believe, because someone wanted us to be; who created us in love; who knows our fears, hears our cries, and believes in us more than we believe in ourselves, lifting us when we fall, giving us strength when strength fails, who forgives our mistakes as long as we acknowledge that they were mistakes; who holds us in his everlasting arms and who, though others may reject us, never does. And if all that should prove untrue, then I would rather be accused of taking the risk of believing the best about existence than of having taken refuge in the safety of believing the worst.”¹⁰⁶⁵
- ❖ “We can sometimes be so busy making a living that we hardly have time to live.”¹⁰⁶⁶
- ❖ “The things we spend most of our time pursuing turn out to be curiously irrelevant when it comes to seeing the value of a life as a whole.”¹⁰⁶⁷
- ❖ “Judaism, the religion of the God of life, whose greatest prophet said at the end of his life, ‘Now choose life’, is a sustained call to the sanctification of life.”¹⁰⁶⁸
- ❖ “Sometimes it is only after many years that, looking back, we see the pattern in our life, and understand how Providence has shaped our destiny.”¹⁰⁶⁹
- ❖ “We live our lives poised between a known past and an unknown future. Linking them is a present in which we make our choices. We decide between alternatives. Ahead of us are several diverging paths, and it is up to us which we follow. Only looking back does our life take on the character of a story. Only many years later do we realise which choices were fateful and which irrelevant. Things which seemed small at the time turn out to be decisive. Matters that once seemed important prove in retrospect to have been trivial. Seen from the perspective of the present, a life can appear to be a random sequence of disconnected events. It takes the passage of time for us to be able to look back and see the route we have taken, and the right and wrong turnings on the way.”¹⁰⁷⁰
- ❖ “To find meaning in life is to find something we are called on to do, something no one else can do. Discovering that task is not easy. There are depressive states in which we simply cannot do it on our own. But once we have found it, our life takes on meaning and we recover the will to live.”¹⁰⁷¹

¹⁰⁶³ *I Believe* p. 259

¹⁰⁶⁴ *Celebrating Life* p. 8

¹⁰⁶⁵ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 6

¹⁰⁶⁶ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 85

¹⁰⁶⁷ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 6

¹⁰⁶⁸ *Future Tense* p. 22

¹⁰⁶⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 277

¹⁰⁷⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* pp. 280-281

¹⁰⁷¹ *The Great Partnership* p. 37

- ❖ “Believing and doing are part of a single continuum, and both are a measure of a living relationship characterised by loyalty.”¹⁰⁷²
- ❖ “Our life is the single greatest work of art we will ever make.”¹⁰⁷³
- ❖ “In the course of any life there are moments of awe and amazement when, with a full heart, you thank God *shebeheyanu vekiyemanu bebigiyanu lazeman hazeh*, “who has kept us alive and sustained us and brought us to this day.”¹⁰⁷⁴
- ❖ “In life, ask not, “What can I gain?” but “What can I give?” Be a blessing to others and you will find that life has been a blessing to you.”¹⁰⁷⁵
- ❖ “Whatever our life has been thus far, there is another chapter to be written, focused on being a blessing to others, sharing whatever gifts we have with those who have less, handing on our values across the generations, using our experience to help others come through difficult times of their own, doing something that has little to do with personal ambition and much to do with wanting to leave some legacy of kindness that made life better for at least someone on earth.”¹⁰⁷⁶
- ❖ “Life is too full of blessings to waste time and attention on artificial substitutes. Live, give, forgive, celebrate and praise: these are still the best ways of making a blessing over life, thereby turning life into a blessing.”¹⁰⁷⁷
- ❖ “There are times when we feel lost, and then someone says or does something that lifts us or points the way to a new direction and destination. Years later, looking back, we see how important that intervention was, even though it seemed slight at the time. This is when we know that we too encountered an angel who didn’t know he or she was an angel.”¹⁰⁷⁸
- ❖ “In 1978, I visited the Lubavitcher Rebbe to ask his advice on which career I should follow. I did the usual thing: I sent him a note with the options, A, B or C, expecting him to indicate which one I should follow. The options were to become a barrister, or an economist, or an academic philosopher, either as a fellow of my college in Cambridge or as a professor somewhere else. The Rebbe read out the list and said “No” to all three. My mission, he said, was to train Rabbis at Jews’ College (now the London School of Jewish Studies) and to become a congregational Rabbi myself. So, overnight, I found myself saying goodbye to all my aspirations, to everything for which I had been trained. The strange fact was, however, that I fulfilled all those ambitions... [despite] walking in the opposite direction. I became an honorary barrister (Bencher) of the Inner Temple and delivered a law lecture in front of six hundred barristers and the Lord Chief Justice. I delivered Britain’s two leading economics lectures, the Mais Lecture and the Hayek Lecture, at the Institute of Economic Affairs. I became a fellow of my Cambridge college and a philosophy professor at several universities. I identified with the biblical Joseph because, so often, what I had dreamed of came to be at the very moment that I had given up hope. Only in retrospect did I discover that the Rebbe was not telling me to give up my career plans. He was simply charting a different route and a more beneficial one.”¹⁰⁷⁹

¹⁰⁷² *The Great Partnership* p. 64

¹⁰⁷³ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 23

¹⁰⁷⁴ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 85

¹⁰⁷⁵ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 180

¹⁰⁷⁶ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 296

¹⁰⁷⁷ *The Power of Ideas* p. 91

¹⁰⁷⁸ *I Believe* p. 53

¹⁰⁷⁹ *I Believe* p. 64

LISTENING

- ❖ “Those who wish to learn to listen to God must learn to listen to other people – to the *kol demama daka*, “the still, small voice” of those who need our love.”¹⁰⁸⁰
- ❖ “If only we were to listen closely to the voice of the other, we would find that beneath the skin we *are* brothers and sisters, members of the human family under the parenthood of God. When others become brothers and conflict is transformed into conciliation, we have begun the journey to society-as-a-family and the redemptive drama can begin.”¹⁰⁸¹
- ❖ “The Hebrew Bible was a document meant to be *heard* rather than read.”¹⁰⁸²
- ❖ “In Judaism faith is a form of listening – to the song creation sings to its Creator, and to the message history delivers to those who strive to understand it.”¹⁰⁸³
- ❖ “The emphasis on listening lies at the heart of the unique intimacy Jews feel with God.”¹⁰⁸⁴
- ❖ “Listening is an art, a skill, a religious discipline, the deepest reflex of the human spirit. One who truly listens can sometimes hear, beneath the noise of the world, the deep speech of the universe, the song creation sings to its Creator.”¹⁰⁸⁵
- ❖ “Listening to another human being, let alone God, is an act of opening ourselves up to a mind radically other than our own. This takes courage. To listen is to make myself vulnerable. My deepest certainties may be shaken by entering into the mind of one who thinks quite differently about the world. But it is essential to our humanity.”¹⁰⁸⁶
- ❖ “It takes training, focus, and the ability to create silence in the soul to learn how to listen, whether to God or to a fellow human being.”¹⁰⁸⁷
- ❖ “Seeing shows us the beauty of the created world, but listening connects us to the soul of another, and sometimes to the soul of the Other, God as He speaks to us, calls to us, summoning us to our task in the world.”¹⁰⁸⁸
- ❖ “If I were asked how to find God, I would say: Learn to listen. Listen to the song of the universe in the call of the birds, the rustle of trees, the crash and heave of the waves. Listen to the poetry of prayer, the music of the Psalms. Listen deeply to those you love and who love you. Listen to the words of God in the Torah and hear them speak to you. Listen to the debates of the sages through the centuries as they tried to hear the texts’ intimations and inflections.”¹⁰⁸⁹
- ❖ “Listening alone bridges the abyss between soul and soul, self and other, I and the Divine.”¹⁰⁹⁰
- ❖ “Jewish spirituality is the art of listening.”¹⁰⁹¹

¹⁰⁸⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 210

¹⁰⁸¹ *Not in God's Name* p. 160

¹⁰⁸² *Not in God's Name* p. 161

¹⁰⁸³ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 69

¹⁰⁸⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 76

¹⁰⁸⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 77

¹⁰⁸⁶ *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* pp. 260-261

¹⁰⁸⁷ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 7

¹⁰⁸⁸ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 7

¹⁰⁸⁹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 7

¹⁰⁹⁰ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 7

¹⁰⁹¹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 7

- ❖ “To hear the voice of God you need a listening silence in the soul.”¹⁰⁹²
- ❖ “The silence that counts in Judaism is... a listening silence – and listening is the supreme religious art.”¹⁰⁹³
- ❖ “Judaism is not only a religion of doing and speaking; it is also a religion of listening.”¹⁰⁹⁴
- ❖ “Crowds are moved by great speakers, but lives are changed by great listeners. Whether between us and God, or use and other people, listening is the prelude to love.”¹⁰⁹⁵
- ❖ “What an underrated art listening is. Sometimes it is the greatest gift we can give to a troubled soul. It is an act of focused attention. It means being genuinely open to another person, prepared to enter their world, their perspective, their pain. It does not mean that we have a solution to their problem. There are some problems that cannot be solved. They can only be lived through, so that time itself heals the rupture or loss. When we listen, we share the burden so that its weight can be borne. There are times when friendship calls simply for a human presence, a listening ear and an understanding heart, so that soul can unburden itself to soul.”¹⁰⁹⁶
- ❖ “Judaism is, I have argued, a religion of words and silences, speaking and listening, communicating and attending. God created the universe by words – “And He said ... and there was” – and we create the social universe by words, by the promises with which we bind ourselves to meet our obligations to others. God’s revelation at Sinai was of words – “You heard the sound of words but saw no form; there was only a Voice” (Deut. 4:12). Every other ancient religion had its monuments of brick and stone; Jews, exiled, had only words, the Torah they carried with them wherever they went. The supreme mitzvah in Judaism is Shema Yisrael, “Listen, Israel.” For God is invisible and we make no icons. We can’t see God; we can’t smell God; we can’t touch God; we can’t taste God. All we can do is listen in the hope of hearing God. In Judaism, listening is high religious art.”¹⁰⁹⁷
- ❖ “We learn by listening to the views of our opponents, at times even before our own. I believe that what is happening at universities, turning the pursuit of truth into the pursuit of power, demonising and no-platforming those with whom people disagree, is the Korah phenomenon of our time, and very dangerous indeed. And old Latin motto says that to secure justice, *audi alteram partem*, “Listen to the other side.” It is through listening to the other side that we walk the path to truth.”¹⁰⁹⁸

LOVE

- ❖ “For life to have personal meaning, there must be people who matter to us, and for whom we matter, unconditionally and non-substitutably.”¹⁰⁹⁹
- ❖ “Loving God more does not entitle me to love people less.”¹¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁹² *Studies in Spirituality* p. 176

¹⁰⁹³ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 177

¹⁰⁹⁴ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 178

¹⁰⁹⁵ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 253

¹⁰⁹⁶ *The Power of Ideas* pp. 63-64

¹⁰⁹⁷ *I Believe* p. 161

¹⁰⁹⁸ *I Believe* p. 221

¹⁰⁹⁹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 157

¹¹⁰⁰ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 190

- ❖ “Love is stronger than hate; freedom more powerful than its enemies; and the human spirit too resilient to be intimidated for long.”¹¹⁰¹
- ❖ “The only force equal to a fundamentalism of hate is a counter-fundamentalism of love.”¹¹⁰²
- ❖ “Love is what redeems us from the prison cell of the self and all the sickness to which the narcissistic self is prone – from empty pride to deep depression to a sense of nihilism and the abyss.”¹¹⁰³
- ❖ “The love of which the prophets spoke, of God for Israel, that fractious, sometimes disobedient people, is love for those who are different because of their difference, not for those who are the same because of their sameness. *Love is particular*. That is why, having given humankind, in the Noahide covenant, the general rules of a moral society, God turns to Abraham and commands him and his descendants to be a living example of what it is to love and be loved by God.”¹¹⁰⁴
- ❖ “Judaism is a religion of love. It is so for profound theological reasons. In the world of myth the gods were at worst hostile, at best indifferent to humankind. In contemporary atheism the universe and life exist for no reason whatsoever. We are accidents of matter, the result of blind chance and natural selection. Judaism’s approach is the most beautiful I know. We are here because God created us in love and forgiveness asking us to love and forgive others. Love, God’s love, is implicit in our very being.”¹¹⁰⁵
- ❖ “Judaism is about love. But it does not make the mistake of thinking with Virgil that *omnia vincit amor*, ‘Love conquers all.’ Much of Genesis, surprisingly, is about the problems love creates... The verb ‘to love’ occurs fifteen times in Genesis, always between humans and almost always as the prelude to strife... This is an important and unexpected insight. Love – real, passionate, the very love that humanizes us, leading us to great acts of self-sacrifice – unites and divides, divides as it unites. It creates rivalries for attention and affection. Without such love, an essential element of our humanity is missing. But it creates problems that can split families apart and lead to estrangement and violence. Something else must enter the scene: *love as justice*. Something larger than the family must be its vehicle. Love must be transformed from a form of kinship into a societal bond... That is why Genesis must be followed by Exodus.”¹¹⁰⁶
- ❖ “Judaism is incomprehensible without love. How else would God have stayed faithful to a people that so often abandoned Him? How often would a people have stayed loyal to a God who seemed sometimes to have abandoned them? There is a passion, an intensity, a fervor to the books of the Bible explicable in no other terms... There is not the slightest suggestion anywhere in Tanakh that love is easy, calm, idyllic. Yet it is never less than passionate.”¹¹⁰⁷
- ❖ “Jews were and often still are the God-intoxicated people. For the knowledge of God in Judaism is not a form of theology; it is a form of love.”¹¹⁰⁸

¹¹⁰¹ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 52

¹¹⁰² *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 9

¹¹⁰³ *The Great Partnership* p. 205

¹¹⁰⁴ *Not in God’s Name* p. 200

¹¹⁰⁵ *Essays on Ethics* pp. 44-45

¹¹⁰⁶ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 237

¹¹⁰⁷ *Ceremony & Celebration* pp. 240-241

¹¹⁰⁸ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 242

- ❖ “If you seek to make love undying, build around it a structure of rituals – small acts of kindness, little gestures of self-sacrifice for the sake of the beloved – and you will be rewarded with a quiet joy, an inner light, that will last a lifetime.”¹¹⁰⁹
- ❖ “To bless, we must love, and to be blessed is to know that we are loved by the One vaster than the universe who nonetheless turns His face toward us as a parent to a beloved child. To know that is to find true spiritual peace.”¹¹¹⁰
- ❖ “Those we loved and lost live on in us, as we will live on in those we love. For love is as strong as death, and the good we do never dies.”¹¹¹¹
- ❖ “There are few ideas in the history of faith more beautiful than the prophetic insight that the love of husband and wife is as close as we will get to understanding the love of God for humanity.”¹¹¹²
- ❖ “There is something sacred about the joy we feel at a wedding, as we sense the power of love to bathe human beings in its radiance and make gentle the life of this world. Love, like faith, is the redemption of solitude, the slender bridge joining soul to soul, inspiring us to deeds of selflessness and sacrifice.”¹¹¹³
- ❖ “True faith is all about love. Love God with all your heart, your soul, your might. Love your neighbour as yourself. Love the stranger because to others you are a stranger. You don’t have to be religious to love, but you have to love to be religious. Love is the space we make for that which is not me. By opening ourselves to something bigger than ourselves, we grow.”¹¹¹⁴
- ❖ “When love of God leads you to a love of life and a life of love, you will find happiness even in hard times.”¹¹¹⁵
- ❖ “Every newborn baby is testimony to the love that brings new life to the world.”¹¹¹⁶
- ❖ “Every child conceived in love is testimony to a profound and moving faith in the future, in human renewal and in life itself as the supreme blessing.”¹¹¹⁷

LOVE VRS. JUSTICE

- ❖ “Love is an emotion; love is a virtue; love is the ultimate bond between soul and soul. But without justice, love alone is insufficient to sustain the world, insufficient even to maintain peace within a family.”¹¹¹⁸
- ❖ “Without justice, love is blind; and without love, justice is impersonal and cold.”¹¹¹⁹
- ❖ “You cannot build a family, let alone a society, on love alone. For that you need justice also. Love is partial, justice is impartial. Love is particular, justice is universal. Love is for

¹¹⁰⁹ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 255

¹¹¹⁰ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 185

¹¹¹¹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 209

¹¹¹² *The Power of Ideas* p. 11

¹¹¹³ *The Power of Ideas* p. 12

¹¹¹⁴ *The Power of Ideas* p. 117

¹¹¹⁵ *The Power of Ideas* p. 120

¹¹¹⁶ *The Power of Ideas* p. 125

¹¹¹⁷ *The Power of Ideas* p. 126

¹¹¹⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 200

¹¹¹⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 201

this person not that, but justice is for all. Much of the moral life is generated by this tension between love and justice. Justice without love is harsh. Love without justice is unfair, or so it will seem to the less loved.”¹¹²⁰

- ❖ “Judaism is a religion of love: you shall love the Lord your God; you shall love your neighbour as yourself; you shall love the stranger for you were once strangers. But it is also a religion of justice, for without justice, love corrupts... It is also a religion of compassion, for without compassion law itself can generate inequity. Justice plus compassion equals *tzedek*, the first precondition of a decent society.”¹¹²¹
- ❖ “Love without justice leads to rivalry, and eventually to hate. Justice without love is devoid of the humanising forces of compassion and mercy. We need both. This unique ethical vision – the love of God for humans and of humans for God, translated into an ethic of love towards both neighbour and stranger – is the foundation of Western civilisation and its abiding glory.”¹¹²²
- ❖ “Love is not enough. You cannot build a family, let alone a society, on love alone. For that you need justice also. Love is partial, justice is impartial. Love is particular, justice is universal. Love is this person, not that; justice is for all. Much of the moral life is generated by this tension between love and justice. It is no accident that this is the theme of many of the narratives of Genesis. Genesis is about people and their relationships while the rest of the Torah is predominantly about society. Justice without love is harsh. Love without justice is unfair, or so it will seem to the less-loved...At the heart of the moral life is a conflict with no simple resolution. There is no general rule to tell us when love is the right reaction and when justice is. In the 1960s the Beatles sang “All you need is love.” Would that it were so, but it is not. Let us love, but let us never forget those who feel unloved. They too are people. They too have feelings. They too are in the image of God.”¹¹²³
- ❖ “You cannot build a society on love alone. Love unites, but it also divides. It leaves the less-loved feeling abandoned, neglected, disregarded, “hated.” It can leave in its wake strife, envy, and a vortex of violence and revenge...We must learn to love; but we must also know the limits of love, and the importance of justice-as-fairness in families and in society.”¹¹²⁴

MARRIAGE

- ❖ “Marriage is a journey across an unknown land with nothing to protect you from the elements except one another.”¹¹²⁵
- ❖ “God lives in the unadorned heart of the human situation, in the covenantal love between husband and wife on which the republic of faith is built.”¹¹²⁶
- ❖ “Marriage, sanctified by the bond of fidelity, is the nearest life gets to a work of art.”¹¹²⁷

¹¹²⁰ *Not in God's Name* p. 166

¹¹²¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 41

¹¹²² *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 98

¹¹²³ *Essays on Ethics* p. 45

¹¹²⁴ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 271

¹¹²⁵ *Celebrating Life* p. 88

¹¹²⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 82

¹¹²⁷ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 69

- ❖ “Marriage is the most personal and intimate of all forms of human association, and the deepest matrix of faith. We can face any future without fear if we know we will not face it alone. There is no redemption of solitude deeper than to share a life with someone we love and trust, who we know will never desert us, who lifts us when we fall and believes in us even when we fail.”¹¹²⁸
- ❖ “Judaism from the beginning made a connection between sexuality and violence on the one hand, marital faithfulness and social order on the other. Not by chance is marriage called *kiddushin*, “sanctification.” Like covenant itself, marriage is a pledge of loyalty between two parties, each recognizing the other’s integrity, honouring their differences even as they come together to bring new life into being. Marriage is to society what covenant is to religious faith: a decision to make love – not power, wealth, or *force majeure* – the generative principle of life.”¹¹²⁹
- ❖ “One day early in my final year I saw, across a college courtyard, a girl who was everything I was not. She smiled, she radiated sunshine, she was full of joy. It took me three weeks to put aside metaphysics and say, “Let’s get married.” Forty-nine years, three children, and nine grandchildren later, I know it was the best decision of my life, because it’s the people not like us who make us grow. Marriage is the supreme embodiment of openness to otherness.”¹¹³⁰
- ❖ “Marriage is the supreme example of a religious concept translated into simple human terms. Faith is the redemption of human loneliness through the sacred bond of love.”¹¹³¹

MEANING

- ❖ “Religion [is] humanity’s greatest collective attempt to find meaning in this brief, tempestuous, often pain-filled span of days we call life.”¹¹³²
- ❖ “The meaning of the system lies outside the system. Therefore, the meaning of the universe lies outside the universe. That was the revolution of Abrahamic monotheism.”¹¹³³
- ❖ “Meaning is more like music than words, more like poetry than prose, more like home than a hotel. It lives in stories, not scientific formulae. Wisdom can give us stoic acceptance or epicurean pleasure, but not meaning. For meaning, we need the priest and the prophet. We need revelation and redemption. We need the word from beyond the universe that created the universe and is capable of inspiring us to change the universe. We need a sense of the sacred and a feeling, however inchoate, for God’s purposes in history.”¹¹³⁴
- ❖ “Meaning involves the acknowledgment of a world beyond the self. An individualistic, I-centered culture will be one in which people struggle to find meaning.”¹¹³⁵

¹¹²⁸ *The Home We Build Together* p. 213

¹¹²⁹ *Essays on Ethics* pp. 175-176

¹¹³⁰ *Morality* p. 325

¹¹³¹ *The Power of Ideas* p. 62

¹¹³² *From Optimism to Hope* p. 2

¹¹³³ *The Great Partnership* p. 29

¹¹³⁴ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 132

¹¹³⁵ *Morality* p. 251

MEMORY

- ❖ “Memory is our best guardian of liberty.”¹¹³⁶
- ❖ “Those who carry with them the heritage of the past are those who can face the future without fear.”¹¹³⁷
- ❖ “The news is about today. But the great faiths remind us of yesterday and tomorrow. They’re our living dialogue with the past and the future; those two essential things called memory and hope. There’s nothing more guaranteed to make us make the wrong decisions than to live solely in the present, forgetting the lessons of the past and our duty to generations not yet born.”¹¹³⁸
- ❖ “Without memory, there is no identity, and without identity we are cast adrift into a sea of chance, without compass, map or destination.”¹¹³⁹
- ❖ “History is complex, but memory is clear.”¹¹⁴⁰
- ❖ “The imperative of memory echoes like a leitmotif throughout biblical prose: the verb *zakhor*, remember, appears no less than 169 times. Memory in this sense *is* role reversal: do not harm the stranger because you were once where he is now. See the world from his perspective because it is where your ancestors stood, and you have never ceased to recall and re-enact their story. Biblical ethics is a prolonged tutorial in role reversal.”¹¹⁴¹
- ❖ “Memory and role-reversal are the most powerful resources we have to cure the darkness that can sometimes occlude the human soul.”¹¹⁴²
- ❖ “Biblical ethics is based on repeated acts of role reversal, using memory as a moral force.”¹¹⁴³

MEMORY VRS. HISTORY

- ❖ “There is a profound difference between history and memory. History is his story – an event that happened sometime else to someone else. Memory is my story – something that happened to me and is part of who I am. History is information. Memory, by contrast, is part of identity. I can study the history of other peoples, cultures and civilizations. They deepen my knowledge and broaden my horizons. But they do not make a claim on me. They are the past as part. Memory is the past as present, as it lives on in me. Without memory there can be no identity.”¹¹⁴⁴
- ❖ “To be a Jew is to know that over and above history is the task of memory.”¹¹⁴⁵

¹¹³⁶ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 42

¹¹³⁷ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 88

¹¹³⁸ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 90

¹¹³⁹ *The Home We Build Together* p. 122

¹¹⁴⁰ *Future Tense* p. 30

¹¹⁴¹ *Not in God's Name* p. 184

¹¹⁴² *Essays on Ethics* p. 115

¹¹⁴³ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 203

¹¹⁴⁴ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 29

¹¹⁴⁵ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 31

- ❖ “You can delegate history to computers, looking it up when you need it. But you cannot delegate memory. Memory is inherently, inescapably personal. It is what makes us who we are.”¹¹⁴⁶

MIDRASH

- ❖ “Midrash is a child of prophecy, though, in another sense. The prophets were interpreters of history. They spoke to their generation and their times. Lacking prophecy, the rabbis turned to biblical text to hear, within the word spoken for all time, the specific resonance for this time. Unlike *peshat*, the ‘plain, simple, or accepted meaning’, midrash is the hermeneutic quest for the meaning of the text as if it were spoken, not then but now. Midrash is interpretation in the context of covenantal time, the word spoken in the past but still active in the present. It is an exercise in conscious and deliberate anachronism (the secular equivalent would be a performance of a Shakespeare tragedy in modern dress, the better to feel its force as contemporary, rather than classical, drama). It is prophetic in the sense of interpreting current events in the light of the Divine word. Midrash is the attempt on the part of the sages to understand their own times as a continuation of the narrative of the covenant.”¹¹⁴⁷
- ❖ “Midrash is, among other things, the ability to listen to the Torah’s silences. Sometimes they contain great dramas.”¹¹⁴⁸
- ❖ “The Torah isn’t something we merely read. It involves total engagement. And what has made that engagement possible is the rabbinic concept of Midrash. Midrash as I understand it...was the rabbinic response to the end of prophecy. So long as there were prophets – until the time of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi – they brought the word of God to their generation. They heard it; they declared it; the divine word lived within the currents and tides of history. But there came a time when there were no more prophets. How then could Jews bridge the gap between the world then, and the historical situation now? It was an immense crisis, and different groups of Jews responded in different ways. The Sadducees, as far as we can tell, confined themselves to the literal text. For them Torah did not renew itself generation after generation. It has been given once and that was enough. Other groups, including those we know from the Dead Sea Scrolls, developed a kind of biblical exegesis known as *peshet*. There is a surface of meaning of the text but there is also a hidden meaning, that often has to do with events or people in the present, or the end of days, that were assumed to be coming soon. The Rabbis, however, developed the technique of Midrash which by close reading could give us insight into specifics of Jewish law (Midrash Halakha) or details of biblical narrative that are missing from the text (Midrash Aggadah). So powerful was this form of engagement that the single greatest institution of rabbinic Judaism is named after it; the *beit midrash*, the “house” or “home” of Midrash. Essentially, Midrash is the bridge across the abyss of time between the world of

¹¹⁴⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 225

¹¹⁴⁷ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 95

¹¹⁴⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 339

the original text, thirty to forty centuries ago, and our world in the present time and place. Midrash asks not “What did the text mean then?” but rather, “What does the text mean to me in the here and now?”¹¹⁴⁹

- ❖ “Behind Midrash are three fundamental principles of faith. **First, the Torah is God’s word, and just as God transcends time so does His Word.** It would be absurd, for instance, to suppose some human being more than three thousand years ago could have foreseen smartphones, social media and being online, on-call, 24/7. Yet Shabbat speaks precisely to that phenomenon and to our need for a digital detox once a week. God speaks to us today in the unsuspected inflections of words He spoke thirty-three centuries ago. **Second, the covenant between God and our ancestors at Mount Sinai still holds today.** It has survived the Babylonian exile, the Roman destruction, centuries of dispersion, and the Holocaust. The Torah is the text of that covenant, and it binds us still. **Third, the principles underlying the Torah have changed very little in the intervening centuries.** To be sure, we no longer have a Temple or sacrifices. We no longer practice capital punishment. But the values that underlie the Torah are strikingly relevant to contemporary society and to our individual lives in the 21st century secular time. So, we don’t merely read the Torah. We bring to it our time, our lives, our most attentive listening, and our deepest existential commitments...The Torah is not a systematic treatise about beliefs but it is a unique way of seeing the world and responding to it. And in an age of moral darkness, its message still shines.”¹¹⁵⁰

MIRACLE

- ❖ “If you read closely the book of Exodus, the book that contains the most and greatest miracles, you will see that none induced lasting faithfulness on the part of the Israelites.”¹¹⁵¹
- ❖ “Miracles in the Bible are usually for the sake of impressing people who believe in that sort of thing.”¹¹⁵²
- ❖ “A miracle is not necessarily something that suspends natural law. It is, rather, an event for which there may be a natural explanation, but which – happening when, where and how it did – evokes wonder, such that even the most hardened sceptic senses that God has intervened in history.”¹¹⁵³

MONOTHEISM

- ❖ “Monotheism was the first system in world history to postulate the fatherhood of God and thus the brotherhood of mankind.”¹¹⁵⁴

¹¹⁴⁹ *I Believe* pp. xvi-xvii

¹¹⁵⁰ *I Believe* p. xvii

¹¹⁵¹ *The Great Partnership* p. 81

¹¹⁵² *The Great Partnership* p. 168

¹¹⁵³ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 106

¹¹⁵⁴ *Celebrating Life* p. 153

- ❖ “Monotheism, by discovering the transcendental God, the God who stands outside the universe and creates it, made it possible for the first time to believe that life has a meaning, not just a mythic or scientific explanation.”¹¹⁵⁵
- ❖ “Abrahamic monotheism speaks on behalf of the poor, the weak, the enslaved. It tells a story about the power of human freedom, lifted by its encounter with the ultimate source of freedom, to create structures of human dignity. It bodies forth a vision of a more gracious world. It tells us that no one is written off, no one condemned to be a failure. It tells the rich and powerful that they have responsibilities to those who lack all that makes life bearable. It invites us to be part of a gentle revolution, telling us that influence is greater than power, that we must protect the most vulnerable in society, that we must be willing to make sacrifices to that end, and most daringly of all, that love is stronger than death. It sets love at the epicentre of the world: love of God, love of the neighbour, love of the stranger. If natural selection tells us anything, it is that this faith, having existed for longer than any other, creates in its followers an astonishing ability to survive.”¹¹⁵⁶
- ❖ “Theology creates an anthropology. Discovering God, singular and alone, the first monotheists discovered the human person singular and alone. Monotheism internalises what dualism externalises. It takes the good and bad in the human situation, the faith and the fear, the retribution and the forgiving, and locates them within each of us, turning what would otherwise be war on the battlefield into a struggle within the soul. ‘Who is a hero?’ asked the rabbis, and replied, ‘One who conquers himself.’ This is the moral drama that has been monotheism’s contribution to the civilisation of the West: not the clash of titans on the field of the battle, but the quiet inner drama of choice and will, restraint and responsibility.”¹¹⁵⁷
- ❖ “Monotheism is not just a set of beliefs about God. It has deep implications for our understanding of humanity as well. *Discovering God, singular and alone, humans discovered the significance of the individual, singular and alone.*”¹¹⁵⁸

MORALITY

- ❖ “For Jews, and not only Jews, the religious voice is above all a moral voice... No idea in the Hebrew Bible has been more influential than this, that society is founded on a moral covenant between its members, vested in an authority that transcends all earthly powers, and whose most famous symbol is the Ten Commandments engraved in stone.”¹¹⁵⁹
- ❖ “I called one of my 1990 Reith Lectures ‘Demoralization’, and I deliberately chose that ambiguous word. There is a deep connection between ethics and the human spirit, between morality and morale. If we lose the former, the latter begins to fail.”¹¹⁶⁰

¹¹⁵⁵ *The Great Partnership* p. 9

¹¹⁵⁶ *The Great Partnership* p. 290

¹¹⁵⁷ *Not in God’s Name* p. 64

¹¹⁵⁸ *Essays on Ethics* p. xxi

¹¹⁵⁹ *Faith in the Future* p. 11

¹¹⁶⁰ *Faith in the Future* p. 12

- ❖ “Moral reflection needs time the way the human body needs oxygen. But time is the one thing of which we starve the great moral issues of our age... Our ethical seriousness is measured by our attention span, and ours has grown dangerously short.”¹¹⁶¹
- ❖ “In teaching our children moral relativism we have placed them in the world without a moral compass, even hinting that there is no such thing. In the name of tolerance we have taught that every alternative lifestyle is legitimate and that moral judgement is taboo, even ‘judgemental’. What is right becomes what does not harm others, and in time degenerates to what I feel like doing and can get away with.”¹¹⁶²
- ❖ “The distance and depersonalization of contemporary life have robbed us of the immediate connection between act and consequence, and this too has weakened our moral sense.”¹¹⁶³
- ❖ “Morality has had a hard time of it in the past half-century. It has come to represent everything we believe ourselves to have been liberated from: authority, repression, the delay of instant gratification, all that went with the religious, puritanical, Victorian culture of our grandparents. Virtues once thought admirable – modesty, humility, discretion, restraint – are now dusty exhibits in a museum of the cultural curiosities. Words like ‘duty’, ‘obligation’, ‘judgement’, ‘wisdom’ either carry a negative charge or no meaning at all. What I have never seen clearly stated is the simple fact that systems of morality were (not always, but sometimes) an attempt to fight despair in the name of hope, and recover human dignity by reinstating us as subjects not objects, the authors of our deeds and of our lives.”¹¹⁶⁴
- ❖ “Morality is civilization’s greatest attempt to humanize fate.”¹¹⁶⁵
- ❖ “Morality is integral to the ecology of hope because it locates social change at a level at which we can make a difference through the acts we do, the principles by which we live, and the relationships we create.”¹¹⁶⁶
- ❖ “What morality restores to an increasingly uncertain world is the idea of responsibility – that what we do, severally and collectively, makes a difference, and that the future lies in our hands.”¹¹⁶⁷
- ❖ “Morality belongs no less in the boardroom than in the bedroom, in the market-place as much as in a house of prayer.”¹¹⁶⁸
- ❖ “Morality demands that we ignore probability and focus on possibility.”¹¹⁶⁹
- ❖ “It is not that religious people are more moral than their secular counterparts, but rather that their moralities tend to have a thicker and richer texture, binding groups together, not merely regulating the encounters of randomly interacting individuals.”¹¹⁷⁰
- ❖ “*Morality is that shared system of self-imposed restraints that allow my freedom to coexists with yours.*”¹¹⁷¹
- ❖ “Judaism is as much about the moralization of sex as it is about the moralization of power, and the two are connected.”¹¹⁷²

¹¹⁶¹ *Faith in the Future* p. 13

¹¹⁶² *Faith in the Future* p. 14

¹¹⁶³ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 35

¹¹⁶⁴ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 78

¹¹⁶⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 79

¹¹⁶⁶ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 81

¹¹⁶⁷ *The Dignity of Difference* pp. 84-85

¹¹⁶⁸ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 89

¹¹⁶⁹ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 10

¹¹⁷⁰ *Not in God’s Name* pp. 38-39

¹¹⁷¹ *Essays on Ethics* p. xxiv

¹¹⁷² *Essays on Ethics* p. xxviii

- ❖ “Morality is not just a set of rules, even a code as elaborate as the 613 commandments and their rabbinic extensions. It is also about the way we respond to people as individuals.”¹¹⁷³
- ❖ “In the end – not only in the religious life but in life as a whole – moral qualities count for more than intellectual or even spiritual ones.”¹¹⁷⁴
- ❖ “Morality is what allows us to get on with one another, without endless recourse to economics or politics. There are times when we seek to get other people to do something we want or need them to do. We can pay them to do so: that is economics. We can force them to do so: that is politics. Or we can persuade them to do so because they and we are part of the same framework of virtues and values, rules and responsibilities, codes and customs, conventions and constraints: that is morality.”¹¹⁷⁵
- ❖ “Morality is what broadens our perspective beyond the self and its desires.”¹¹⁷⁶
- ❖ “Morality has always been about the first-person plural, about ‘We’.”¹¹⁷⁷
- ❖ “When there is no shared morality, there is no society. Instead, there are subgroups, and hence identity politics. In the absence of shared ideals, many conclude that the best way of campaigning is to damage your opponent by ad hominem attacks. The result is division, cynicism and a breakdown of trust. The world is divided into people like us and the people not like us, and what is lost is the notion of the common good. When the ‘I’ takes precedence over the ‘We’, the result is weakened relationships, marriages, families, communities, neighbourhoods, congregations, charities, regions and entire societies.”¹¹⁷⁸
- ❖ “Morality is an essential feature of our human environment, as important as the market and the state but outsourceable to neither. Morality humanises the competition for wealth and power. It is the redemption of our solitude.”¹¹⁷⁹
- ❖ “Morality, at its core, is about strengthening the bonds between us, helping others, engaging in reciprocal altruism, and understanding the demands of group loyalty, which are the price of group belonging.”¹¹⁸⁰
- ❖ “Morality makes a difference to the way we think about problems and their solution. It shifts us from self-interest to concern for the common good, and from a narrow focus on immediate gain to more distant horizons. We need to be able to think in this collective, long-term way if we are to avoid the short-sightedness that led people to think that you could abandon morality without paying a momentous price.”¹¹⁸¹
- ❖ “Politics may give us “freedom from,” but morality gives us “freedom to”—to dance the choreography of interpersonal grace and be part of the music of loving commitment to the lives of others.”¹¹⁸²
- ❖ “The beautiful thing about morality...is that it begins with us. We do not need to wait for a great political leader, or an upturn in the economy, or a new mood in society, or an unexpected technological breakthrough to begin to change the moral climate within which we live and move and have our being. In the introduction, I described our current situation

¹¹⁷³ *Essays on Ethics* p. 284

¹¹⁷⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 299

¹¹⁷⁵ *Morality* p. 12

¹¹⁷⁶ *Morality* p. 12

¹¹⁷⁷ *Morality* p. 12

¹¹⁷⁸ *Morality* pp. 17-18

¹¹⁷⁹ *Morality* p. 21

¹¹⁸⁰ *Morality* p. 36

¹¹⁸¹ *Morality* p. 159

¹¹⁸² *Morality* p. 284

as one in which we have outsourced morality to the market and the state. But morality in its truest sense cannot be outsourced. It is about taking responsibility, not handing it away. All it needs is for us to think about the “We,” not just the “I,” and immediately we change the tenor of our relationships.”¹¹⁸³

- ❖ “I had the privilege of studying with some of the greatest philosophers of our time, yet I learned more about morality in my years as a congregational rabbi than I did at Oxford and Cambridge, and I did so by conducting funerals. As a young rabbi in an aging congregation, I often did not know the deceased personally, so I had to ask relatives and friends what they were like and what they would be remembered for. No one ever spoke about the clothes they wore or the cars they drove, the homes they lived in or the holidays they took. They spoke about their role in their family, their place in the congregation and its activities, the good deeds they did, the causes they supported, the voluntary work they undertook, and the people they helped. It is not what we do for ourselves but what we give to others that is our epitaph and that ultimately floods life with meaning. We are moral animals.”¹¹⁸⁴
- ❖ “The time has come for us to relearn many of the moral habits that came so naturally to our ancestors but have come to seem strange to us. We will have to rebuild families and communities and voluntary organizations. We will come to depend more on networks of kinship and friendship. And we will rapidly discover that their very existence depends on what we give as well as what we take, on our willingness to shoulder duties, responsibilities, and commitments as well as claiming freedoms and rights. The “I–It” relationship of taxation and benefit will increasingly be replaced by the “I–Thou” of fellowship and community. And we may well come to see that the eclipse of personal morality that dominated the consciousness of a generation was a strange and passing phase in human affairs, and not the permanent revolution many thought it to be.”¹¹⁸⁵
- ❖ “Morality is our oldest and most powerful resource for turning disconnected ‘I’s into a collective ‘We’.”¹¹⁸⁶
- ❖ “It is no accident that the word ‘demoralisation’ means what it does: a loss of confidence, enthusiasm and hope. Without a shared morality, we are left as anxious individuals, lonely, vulnerable and depressed, struggling to survive in a world that is changing faster than we can bear and becoming more unstable by the day.”¹¹⁸⁷
- ❖ “While the market and the state are about competition, morality is about co-operation.”¹¹⁸⁸
- ❖ “Judaism was the first civilization to put love at the heart of morality.”¹¹⁸⁹
- ❖ “Moral decisions are answers to the question, “What should I do?” Usually they are based on *rules that may not be transgressed whatever the consequences*. In Judaism, moral decisions are the province of halakha. Political decisions are answers to the question, “What should we do?” where the “we” means the nation as a whole. They tend to involve several conflicting considerations, and there is rarely a clear-cut solution. Usually the decision will be based on an evaluation of the likely consequences. In Judaism this sphere is known as *mishpat*

¹¹⁸³ *Morality* p. 310

¹¹⁸⁴ *Morality* p. 315

¹¹⁸⁵ *Morality* p. 318

¹¹⁸⁶ *The Power of Ideas* p. 177

¹¹⁸⁷ *The Power of Ideas* p. 178

¹¹⁸⁸ *The Power of Ideas* p. 181

¹¹⁸⁹ *I Believe* p. 169

melekh (the legal domain of the king), or *hilkhot medina* (public policy regulations). Whereas halakha is timeless, public policy tends to be time-bound and situational (“a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build”).”¹¹⁹⁰

MORTALITY

- ❖ “Mortality is written into the human condition, but so too is the possibility of immortality, in the good we do that continues, long after we are here, to beget further good. There are lives that defeat death and redeem existence from tragedy.”¹¹⁹¹
- ❖ “Human mortality does not ultimately bar us from being in the presence of divine immortality.”¹¹⁹²
- ❖ “If we lived forever, life itself would have no shape, no edge, no urgency, no compelling purpose. We would not act. For anything we wished to do, there would always be time in the future. We would leave our children, and be left by our parents, no space to be ourselves, to write our own chapter in the human story. The very fact of our mortality means that we have our moment on the stage of history, when everything depends on us.”¹¹⁹³

MUSIC & SONG

- ❖ “There is something about melody that intimates a reality beyond our grasp.”¹¹⁹⁴
- ❖ “Words are the language of the mind. Music is the language of the soul.”¹¹⁹⁵
- ❖ “There is something profoundly spiritual about music.”¹¹⁹⁶
- ❖ “When language aspires to the transcendent, and the soul longs to break free of the gravitational pull of the earth, it modulates into song.”¹¹⁹⁷
- ❖ “Faith is more like music than science. Science analyses, music integrates. And as music connects note to note, so faith connects episode to episode, life to life, age to age in a timeless melody that breaks into time. God is the composer and librettist. We are each called on to be voices in the choir, singers of God’s song. *Faith is the ability to hear the music beneath the noise.*”¹¹⁹⁸
- ❖ “Judaism is a religion of words, and yet whenever the language of Judaism aspires to the spiritual, it modulates into song, as if the words themselves seek escape from the gravitational pull of finite meanings. Music speaks to something deeper than the mind. If

¹¹⁹⁰ *I Believe* p. 238

¹¹⁹¹ *Letters to the Next Generation 2* p. 20

¹¹⁹² *Essays on Ethics* p. 117

¹¹⁹³ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 376

¹¹⁹⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 308

¹¹⁹⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 308

¹¹⁹⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 311

¹¹⁹⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 311

¹¹⁹⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 314

we are to make Torah new in every generation, we have to find ways of singing its song a new way. The words never change, but the music does.”¹¹⁹⁹

- ❖ “Judaism is a choral symphony scored for many voices, the written text its melody, the Oral Tradition its polyphony.”¹²⁰⁰
- ❖ “Though when Jews speak they often argue, when they sing, they sing in harmony, because words are the language of the mind but music is the language of the soul.”¹²⁰¹

NATURAL CATASTROPHES

- ❖ “What distinguished the biblical prophets from their pagan predecessors was their refusal to see natural catastrophe as an independent force of evil...Essential to monotheism is that conflict is not written into the fabric of the Universe. That is what redeems tragedy and creates hope. The simplest explanation is that of the 12th-century sage, Moses Maimonides. Natural disasters, he said, have no explanation other than that God, by placing us in a physical world, set life within the parameters of the physical. Planets are formed, tectonic plates shift, earthquakes occur, and sometimes innocent people die. To wish it were otherwise is in essence to wish that we were not physical beings at all. Then we would not know pleasure, desire, achievement, freedom, virtue, creativity, vulnerability and love. We would be angels — God’s computers, programmed to sing His praise. The religious question is, therefore, not: “Why did this happen?” But “What then shall we do?””¹²⁰²
- ❖ “God created a world, a physical world that obeys physical laws. And because it obeys physical laws, there are such things as earthquakes and tsunamis, and natural catastrophes. You couldn’t have a physical universe without these disasters happening. It was only because matter coalesced and formed stars, and those stars eventually exploded, spreading stardust throughout the world, that they ever coalesced to become planets, one of which was the earth, on one of which life began. Without these natural disasters, there couldn’t be a physical universe.”¹²⁰³
- ❖ “The idea that natural catastrophe is divine punishment is, for me, morally unacceptable. We are not prophets. We have no privileged access to the mind of God. We know that the victims of these disasters include children, the innocent, the old and frail, the poor. They were not the evil, the cruel or the corrupt. These past few years I have heard far too many religious leaders, from all the Abrahamic faiths, confidently proclaiming that this or that event was divine retribution for one or other sin. These are the Job’s comforters of our time. They forget that the task of the prophet is to comfort the afflicted, not to add to their affliction by saying that they deserved their fate.”¹²⁰⁴

¹¹⁹⁹ *Essays on Ethics* p. 326

¹²⁰⁰ *Essays on Ethics* p. 327

¹²⁰¹ *Essays on Ethics* p. 327

¹²⁰² *Why Does God Allow Terrible Things to Happen to His People?*

¹²⁰³ *Rabbi Sacks on God and Evil (Insider)*

¹²⁰⁴ *The Power of Ideas* p. 72

NATURE

- ❖ “Man is not only the master but also the guardian of nature.”¹²⁰⁵
- ❖ “The Jewish God is not the god of nature, but the God who transcends nature.”¹²⁰⁶
- ❖ “Nature is not the final word, for nature itself was created by a being who stands outside it and who, but making us in his image, gave us the power to stand outside it. We are free. We can choose. We are not predestined by chance, fate, the stars, our darker instincts or the human genome. We can opt for freedom over determinism, justice over the power of power; we can stop at the brink of history’s endless replays and chart a different course. We cannot defeat death, but we can defeat all those forces that lead human beings to kill other, innocent human beings. We can choose life.”¹²⁰⁷
- ❖ “In Judaism, the natural is greater than the supernatural in the sense that an “awakening from below” is more powerful in transforming us, and longer-lasting in its effects, than is an “awakening from above.” That is why the second tablets survived intact while the first did not. Divine intervention changes nature, but it is human initiative – our approach to God – that changes us.”¹²⁰⁸
- ❖ “The heavens proclaim the glory of God; they do not prove the existence of God. All that breathes praises its Creator; it does not furnish philosophical verification of a Creator...God, for the Bible, is not to be found in nature for God transcends nature, as do we whenever we exercise our freedom.”¹²⁰⁹

PARENTING

- ❖ “The secret of Jewish continuity is that no people has ever devoted more of its energies to continuity. The focal point of Jewish life is the transmission of a heritage across the generations. Time and again in the Torah we are drawn to dramas of the next generation. Judaism’s focus is its children.”¹²¹⁰
- ❖ “As we look back on this extraordinary century – the century in which Yom ha-Shoah, Yom ha-Atzma’ut and Yom Yerushalayim were added to the Jewish calendar – we have cause to wonder and give thanks. I cannot fathom the mysteries of the Holocaust. But I know this, that after one of the greatest tragedies in human history, the Jewish people has emerged from the valley of the shadow of death and found independence and sovereignty in the land of its birth, and freedom and affluence in most countries of the diaspora. But one question reverberates throughout the Jewish world today. What will God have given us if we gain all else and lose our own children?”¹²¹¹

¹²⁰⁵ *Faith in the Future* p. 207

¹²⁰⁶ *Future Tense* p. 22

¹²⁰⁷ *Future Tense* p. 23

¹²⁰⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 276

¹²⁰⁹ *The Great Partnership* p. 72

¹²¹⁰ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* p. 34

¹²¹¹ *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* p. 111

- ❖ “The first recorded words of man to God in the history of the covenant are a plea for there to be future generations.”¹²¹²
- ❖ “I know of nothing more moving than watching children pray. When I visit synagogues I always try to spend a few moments in the children’s service, seeing the faces of young girls and boys as they say the Shema, or listen to stories taken from the weekly Sidrah, or sing their first Jewish songs. Here as nowhere else I witness the miracle of Jewish continuity, the simple yet infinitely subtle way in which we pass on our faith to our children. There is nothing more precious we can give them. One day they will discover – as we who have been there before them discovered – that the siddur is nothing less than our route to the Divine presence.”¹²¹³
- ❖ “Judaism is a religion of continuity. It depends for its very existence on the willingness of successive generations to hand on their faith and way of life to their children, and on the loyalty of children to the heritage of their past.”¹²¹⁴
- ❖ “You achieve immortality not by building pyramids or statues – but by engraving your values on the hearts of your children, and they on theirs, so that our ancestors live on in us and we in our children, and so on until the end of time.”¹²¹⁵
- ❖ “To be a parent is to be willing to take one’s child and walk, hand in hand, part-way on the Jewish journey, showing that we are prepared to live by the faith we want him or her to continue.”¹²¹⁶
- ❖ “Sometimes we have too little confidence as parents. We underestimate how much our children want to hear from us the stories that give sense and purpose to our lives, and will one day give them strength.”¹²¹⁷
- ❖ “Perhaps the secret of Jewish survival through 4,000 years lies in the fact that we’ve always tried to put children first.”¹²¹⁸
- ❖ “Children grow to fill the space we create for them, and if it’s big, they will walk tall.”¹²¹⁹
- ❖ “To be a Jewish parent is to make space for your child, as God makes space for us, His children.”¹²²⁰
- ❖ “A true parent is one who fights battles on our behalf when we are young and defenceless, but who, once we have matured, gives us the inner strength to fight for ourselves.”¹²²¹
- ❖ “To be a parent, in Judaism, is to be a teacher. Education is the conversation between the generations.”¹²²²
- ❖ “We have to have the space to be ourselves if we are to be good children to our parents, and we have to allow our children the space to be themselves if we are to be good parents.”¹²²³

¹²¹² *Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?* p. 112

¹²¹³ *The Chief Rabbi’s Children’s Siddur* p. xvii

¹²¹⁴ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 19

¹²¹⁵ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 14

¹²¹⁶ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 114

¹²¹⁷ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 26

¹²¹⁸ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 40

¹²¹⁹ *Letters to the Next Generation* p. 8

¹²²⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 140

¹²²¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 123

¹²²² *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 100

¹²²³ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 19

- ❖ “God loves us as a parent loves a child – *but a parent who truly loves their child makes space for the child to develop his or her own identity.*”¹²²⁴
- ❖ “Unconditional love is not uncritical, but it is unbreakable. That is how we should love our children – for it is how God loves us.”¹²²⁵
- ❖ “The Torah is careful, in the first paragraph of the *Shema*, to say, “You shall love the Lord your God” *before* saying, “You shall teach these things diligently to your children.” Parenthood works when your children see that you love what you want them to learn.”¹²²⁶
- ❖ “One of our first duties is to ensure that our children know about and come to love our religious heritage. But sometimes we fail. Children may go their own way, which is not ours. If this happens to us we should not be paralysed with guilt. Not everyone succeeded with all their children, not even Abraham, or Moses, or David, or Solomon. Not even God Himself.”¹²²⁷
- ❖ “When our children follow our path we should be grateful. When they go beyond us, we should give special thanks to God. And when they choose another way, we must be patient, knowing that the greatest Jew of all time had the same experience with one of his grandchildren. And we must never give up hope. Moses’ grandson returned. In almost the last words of the last of the prophets, Malachi foresaw a time when God “will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers” (Mal. 3:24). The estranged will be reunited in faith and love.”¹²²⁸

PEACE

- ❖ “Peace in the home is where world peace begins.”¹²²⁹
- ❖ “Peace in the Judaic sense will come not when all nations are conquered (as in tribalism) or converted (as in universalism) but when, under God’s sacred canopy, different nations and faiths make space for one another.”¹²³⁰
- ❖ “Peace involves a profound crisis of identity. The boundaries of self and other, friend and foe, must be redrawn.”¹²³¹
- ❖ “There is a fundamental difference between the end-of-days peace of religious unity and the historical peace of compromise and coexistence. The pursuit of the former can sometimes be the most formidable enemy of the latter.”¹²³²
- ❖ “We will make peace only when we learn that God loves difference and so, at last, must we. God has created many cultures, civilizations and faiths but only one world in which to live together – and it is getting smaller all the time.”¹²³³

¹²²⁴ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 20

¹²²⁵ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 28

¹²²⁶ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 78

¹²²⁷ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 221

¹²²⁸ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 222

¹²²⁹ *Faith in the Future* p. 133

¹²³⁰ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 94

¹²³¹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 8

¹²³² *The Dignity of Difference* p. 10

¹²³³ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 23

- ❖ “Judaism has a dual concept of peace: the end-of-days peace envisioned by the prophets, [and] the modern modest here-and-now peace articulated by the sages in their concept of *darkhei shalom*, a set of rules for friendly coexistence with those with whom you disagree.”¹²³⁴
- ❖ “One day we will learn the lesson of peace, that war never solved any conflict in the long run; that in victory the victor too is defeated; that in conquering others we diminish ourselves; that only in and through peace do we honour the image of God that is mankind.”¹²³⁵
- ❖ “From war, no one gains. From peace, everyone benefits.”¹²³⁶
- ❖ “Whenever Jews pray, we end with a prayer for peace and at that point we take three steps backward. To make peace you have to make space for someone else. You have to give up a little of your dream for the sake of someone else’s dream.”¹²³⁷
- ❖ “The single greatest mistake, and it’s been made many times in history, is to believe that peace is a zero-sum game. If I win, you lose. If I suffer, you gain. It isn’t so. The truth is the opposite. From violence both sides suffer. From peace, both sides gain. That is why no one does a service to peace by demonizing one side and making heroes of the other. Peace is a duet scored for two voices; and someone who thinks that one voice can win by drowning out the other just hasn’t understood what a duet is.”¹²³⁸
- ❖ “Wars are won by weapons. Peace is won by words.”¹²³⁹
- ❖ “Power grows from the barrel of a gun but peace is born in the human heart.”¹²⁴⁰
- ❖ “Though war needs physical courage, peace needs moral courage, the courage to break with the past and turn enemies into friends.”¹²⁴¹
- ❖ “Whenever a religion speaks of peace, it means ‘peace on our terms’. Whatever the language in which it is couched, the argument tends to take this form: ‘Our faith speaks of peace; our holy texts praise peace; therefore, if only the world shared out faith and our texts there would be peace.’ Tragically, this path does not and cannot lead to peace because it is predicated on the conversion of the world – to our religion or ideology conceived as a global truth or universal salvation. Peace thus conceived is part of the problem, not part of the solution.”¹²⁴²
- ❖ “Isaiah spoke of utopian peace. The sages sought ways of achieving a lesser, more immediate goal, namely civil peace, cohesiveness and an absence of strife between different groups within a single society. The ‘ways of peace’ is a non-utopian programmes for peace in the imperfect world of the here-and-now.”¹²⁴³
- ❖ “I wonder if anyone who has not known the depths of Jewish suffering through the ages can understand how deeply the desire for peace is etched in the heart of almost every Jew.”¹²⁴⁴

¹²³⁴ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 82

¹²³⁵ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 135

¹²³⁶ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 18

¹²³⁷ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 18

¹²³⁸ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 35

¹²³⁹ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 36

¹²⁴⁰ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 73

¹²⁴¹ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 128

¹²⁴² *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 100

¹²⁴³ *The Home We Build Together* p. 179

¹²⁴⁴ *Marble Arch Synagogue*

- ❖ “Power is to be used not to impose truth, but to preserve peace.”¹²⁴⁵
- ❖ “Peace comes when we see our reflection in the face of God and let go of the desire to be someone else.”¹²⁴⁶
- ❖ “To make peace in the world we must be at peace with ourselves. To be at peace with ourselves we must know that we are unconditionally valued. That does not often happen. People value us for what we can give them. That is conditional value, what the sages called “love that is dependent on a cause” (Mishna Avot 5:16). God values us unconditionally. We are here because He wanted us to be. Our very existence testifies to His love. Unlike others, God never gives up on us. He rejects no one. He never loses faith, however many times we fail. When we fall, He lifts us. He believes in us more than we believe in ourselves.”¹²⁴⁷
- ❖ “We have to work for peace, not just pray for it.”¹²⁴⁸

PESACH & THE EXODUS

- ❖ “By reciting the Haggadah, Jews give their children a sense of connectedness to Jews throughout the world and to the Jewish people throughout time.”¹²⁴⁹
- ❖ “Pesach is an intensely political festival. It is about the central Jewish project: constructing a society radically unlike any that had existed before and most that have come into being since. It poses a fundamental question: can we make, on earth, a social order based not on transactions of power but on respect for the human person – each person – as ‘the image of God?’”¹²⁵⁰
- ❖ “Pesach is the festival of Jewish identity. It is the night on which we tell our children who they are.”¹²⁵¹
- ❖ “The Exodus is the inexhaustible source of inspiration to all those who long for freedom. It taught that right was sovereign over might; that freedom and justice must belong to all, not some; that, under God, all human beings are equal; and that over all earthly powers is the supreme power, the King of Kings, who hears the cry of the oppressed and who intervenes in history to liberate slaves.”¹²⁵²
- ❖ “The Exodus narrative is not a simple story of good versus evil. It is a critique of the politics of power, empires, hierarchical societies and the division of populations into free human beings and slaves.”¹²⁵³
- ❖ “There is a fundamental difference between living *with* the past and living *in* the past. Judaism is a religion of memory. We remember the exodus annually, even daily. But we do so for the sake of the future, not the past.”¹²⁵⁴

¹²⁴⁵ *The Great Partnership* p. 262

¹²⁴⁶ *Not in God's Name* p. 139

¹²⁴⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 96

¹²⁴⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 106

¹²⁴⁹ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 2

¹²⁵⁰ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 5

¹²⁵¹ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 15

¹²⁵² *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 65

¹²⁵³ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 4

¹²⁵⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 93

- ❖ “The Mosaic books refer time and again to the Exodus and the imperative of memory: “You shall remember that you were slaves in Egypt.” Yet never is this invoked as a reason for hatred, retaliation, or revenge. Always it appears as part of the logic of the just and compassionate society the Israelites are commanded to create: the alternative order, the antithesis of Egypt.”¹²⁵⁵
- ❖ “The end of Exodus is not quite an echo of the beginning of Genesis: it is an antidote to it. If humanity can reduce God’s order to chaos, then humanity must show that it can rescue order from chaos. That is the journey the Israelites must take from the Golden Calf to the making of the Tabernacle. We can travel from chaos to order.”¹²⁵⁶
- ❖ “Almost every phase of the exodus was fraught with difficulties, real or imagined. That is what makes the Torah so powerful. It does not pretend that life is any easier than it is. The road is not straight and the journey is long. Unexpected things happen. Crises suddenly appear. It becomes important to embed in a people’s memory the knowledge that we can handle the unknown. God is with us, giving us the courage we need.”¹²⁵⁷

POLITICS

- ❖ “If we were completely different we could not communicate. If we were exactly alike we would have nothing to say. Politics is the art of living with difference, and how we deal with it shapes much else in our world.”¹²⁵⁸
- ❖ “Politics is about power and the distribution of resources. It is not about the psychology of self-esteem or the allocation of blame. When these boundaries are blurred, the result is deeply damaging to the good group-relations on which an ethnically and religiously diverse society depends.”¹²⁵⁹
- ❖ “Politics is about power, and at the heart of the Abrahamic vision is a critique of power. Power is a fundamental assault on human dignity. When I exercise power over you, I deny your freedom, and that is dangerous for both of us.”¹²⁶⁰
- ❖ “Covenantal politics is a politics of new beginnings, of a people pledging themselves to one another and to the common good, a politics of ‘we, the people’. It is a politics of moral principle and collective responsibility.”¹²⁶¹
- ❖ “Apocalypse is what happens to prophecy when it loses hope, and to politics when it loses patience.”¹²⁶²
- ❖ “Apocalyptic politics is the search for revolution without transformation, change without the slow process of education. It uses power in place of persuasion, daggers instead of debate. It simplifies the issue of truth to the most elemental choice; agree or die. It is the longing for the end of time in the midst of time, the search for redemption now. That is why it suspends the normal rules that restrain people from murdering the

¹²⁵⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy pp. 202-203*

¹²⁵⁶ *I Believe p. 132*

¹²⁵⁷ *I Believe p. 177*

¹²⁵⁸ *The Home We Build Together p. 12*

¹²⁵⁹ *The Home We Build Together p. 56*

¹²⁶⁰ *The Great Partnership p. 132*

¹²⁶¹ *The Great Partnership p. 134*

¹²⁶² *Not in God’s Name p. 232*

innocent...Apocalyptic politics always fails, because you cannot create eternity in the midst of time, or unity without dissent. It is like Samson in the temple of the Philistines, bringing down the building on his enemies but destroying himself in the process.”¹²⁶³

- ❖ “Covenantal politics are moral politics. They involve ideas of duty and obligation. They are interwoven with a particular view of the history of the nation, whose fate is seen as a reflection of its successes or failure in honouring the terms laid down by its founders.”¹²⁶⁴
- ❖ “Populist politics involves magical thinking. The belief that a strong leader, with contempt for the democratic process, divisive rhetoric, relaxed about the truth or otherwise of his or her utterances, ignoring the conventions of normal politics, appealing directly to the people, blaming the state of the nation on some subgroup of the nation, or perhaps on neighboring nations and peoples, and speaking not to the better angels of our nature but to the worst, can restore a nation’s former greatness—that is magical thinking.”¹²⁶⁵
- ❖ “Politics is about power and who wields it, but liberty is about the moral limits of power, about self-restraint in imposing our views on others.”¹²⁶⁶

PRAYER

- ❖ “The siddur is the map of the Jewish heart. Through its words we retrace the steps taken by countless generations of Jews as they turned from their private hopes and fears to journey towards the presence of God.”¹²⁶⁷
- ❖ “Like music, prayer is a natural expression of human longing, evidence of the image of God within us all. But like music, prayer is also something we learn and inherit. One generation passes on its most powerful melodies to the next. So too Judaism has always passed on its most moving prayers to its children. We pray as our ancestors prayed, and because of this their spirit lives on in us.”¹²⁶⁸
- ❖ “To thank God is to know that I do not have less because my neighbour has more. I am not less worthwhile because someone else is more successful. Through prayer I know that I am valued for what I am. I learn to cherish what I have, rather than be diminished but what I do not have.”¹²⁶⁹
- ❖ “Making a blessing over life is the best way of turning life into a blessing.”¹²⁷⁰
- ❖ “A blessing is an expression of the miracle of simple things.”¹²⁷¹
- ❖ “Prayer is the act of listening to God listening to us.”¹²⁷²
- ❖ “The world we build tomorrow is born in the prayers we say today.”¹²⁷³

¹²⁶³ *Not in God's Name* pp. 233-234

¹²⁶⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 298

¹²⁶⁵ *Morality* pp. 127-128

¹²⁶⁶ *The Power of Ideas* p. 26

¹²⁶⁷ *The Chief Rabbi's Children's Siddur* p. xvii

¹²⁶⁸ *The Chief Rabbi's Children's Siddur* p. xvii

¹²⁶⁹ *Celebrating Life* p. 15

¹²⁷⁰ *Celebrating Life* p. 16

¹²⁷¹ *Celebrating Life* p. 19

¹²⁷² *Celebrating Life* p. 78

¹²⁷³ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 74

- ❖ “Prayer is our ultimate dialogue with Infinity, the profoundest expression of our faith that at the heart of reality is a Presence that cares, a God who listens, a creative Force that brought us into being in love.”¹²⁷⁴
- ❖ “In prayer we speak to a presence vaster than the unfathomable universe yet closer to us than we are to ourselves: the God beyond who is also the Voice within.”¹²⁷⁵
- ❖ “Prayer is a conversation between heaven and earth. But conversation is also a prayer – for in true conversation, I open myself up to the reality of another person. I enter his or her world. I begin to see things from a perspective not my own. In the touch of two selves, both are changed.”¹²⁷⁶
- ❖ “A genuine human conversation is a preparation for, and a microcosmic version of, the act of prayer. For in prayer I attend to the presence of God, listening as well as speaking, opening myself up to a reality other and infinitely vaster than my own, and I become a different person as a result. Prayer is not a monologue but dialogue.”¹²⁷⁷
- ❖ “Prayer is a ladder stretching from earth to heaven. On this ladder of words, thoughts, and emotions, we gradually leave earth’s gravitational field. We move from the world around us, perceived by the senses, to an awareness of that which lies beyond the world – the earth’s Creator.”¹²⁷⁸
- ❖ “Prayer is where the relentless first person singular, the “I,” falls silent for a moment and we become aware that we are not the centre of the universe. There is a reality outside. That is a moment of transformation.”¹²⁷⁹
- ❖ “*Prayer changes the world because it changes us.*”¹²⁸⁰
- ❖ “We pray not simply for God to fulfil our desires but in order to know what to desire.”¹²⁸¹
- ❖ “Prayer is the education of desire.”¹²⁸²
- ❖ “Prayer is like a protective wall, and praying together is more powerful and effective. We do not need superhuman piety – merely enlightened self-interest – to realise that our destinies are interconnected. When we are blessed, we are blessed together. Prayer is *community made articulate*, when we delete the first-person singular and substitute the first-person plural.”¹²⁸³
- ❖ “I remember visiting Auschwitz, walking through the gates with their chilling inscription, ‘Work makes you free’, and feeling the chill winds of Hell. It was a numbing experience. There were no words you could say. It was not until I entered one of the blocks where there was nothing but an old recording of the Jewish memorial prayer for the dead that I broke down and cried. It was then that I realised that prayer makes grief articulate. It gives us the words when there are no words. It gives sacred space to the tears that otherwise would have nowhere to go.”¹²⁸⁴

¹²⁷⁴ *Ten Days, Ten Ways* p. 10

¹²⁷⁵ *Ten Days, Ten Ways* p. 10

¹²⁷⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 133

¹²⁷⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 133

¹²⁷⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* pp. 188-189

¹²⁷⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 192

¹²⁸⁰ *Letters to the Next Generation 2* p. 45

¹²⁸¹ *Letters to the Next Generation 2* p. 45

¹²⁸² *Letters to the Next Generation 2* p. 45

¹²⁸³ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 100

¹²⁸⁴ *The Power of Ideas* p. 81

- ❖ “Prayer changes the world because it changes us. It opens our eyes to the sheer wonder of existence.”¹²⁸⁵
- ❖ “Prayer is not magic. It does not bend the world to our will; if anything it does the opposite. It helps us to notice the things we otherwise take for granted. It redeems our solitude. It gives us a language of aspiration, a vocabulary of ideals. And seeing things differently, we begin to act differently. The world we build tomorrow is born in the prayers we say today.”¹²⁸⁶
- ❖ “Communal prayer is not just an expression of community. It is also a builder of community.”¹²⁸⁷
- ❖ “Praying is as much about listening as speaking. And faith itself is the ability to hear the music beneath the noise.”¹²⁸⁸

PRIDE & ARROGANCE

- ❖ “To me, what it is to be a Jew in the world is to walk with pride, but never arrogance, to feel a sense of thanks to God for our faith without ever denigrating anyone else’s faith.”¹²⁸⁹
- ❖ “There is all the difference in the world between pride and arrogance. Arrogance is the belief that you are better than others. Jews have sometimes been guilty of this, and it is inexcusable. Pride is simply knowing that each of us is different and being at ease with that fact, never “desiring this man’s gift and that man’s scope.” Arrogance diminishes others, and therefore diminishes us. Pride values others, because we have learned to value ourselves.”¹²⁹⁰
- ❖ “Pride means valuing others because you value yourself. Arrogance means devaluing others so that you can have a high opinion of yourself. National arrogance is unforgivable. National pride is essential.”¹²⁹¹

PROOF

- ❖ “This is how I have sought God, not through philosophical proofs, scientific demonstrations or theological arguments; not through miracles or mysteries or inner voices or sudden epiphanies; not by ceasing to question or challenge or doubt; not by blind faith or existential leap; certainly not by abandonment of reason and an embrace of the irrational. These things have brought many people to God. But they have also brought many people to worship things that are not God, like power, or ideology, or race. Instead

¹²⁸⁵ *The Power of Ideas* p. 81

¹²⁸⁶ *The Power of Ideas* p. 82

¹²⁸⁷ *I Believe* p. 292

¹²⁸⁸ *I Believe* p. 295

¹²⁸⁹ *Rabbi Sacks on Advice for our Times (Insider)*

¹²⁹⁰ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 205

¹²⁹¹ *The Home We Build Together* p. 79

I have sought God in people – people in themselves seemed to point to something or someone beyond themselves.”¹²⁹²

- ❖ “You cannot prove that it is better to trust than to be perennially suspicious, or that it is worth taking the risk of love and the commitment of marriage, or that it makes sense to bring children into the world, or that you should be generous and forgiving, or that you should live by altruism rather than by narrow self-interest.”¹²⁹³
- ❖ “One who asks for proof before he or she is willing to have faith does not understand that faith always involves risk. It is always possible to live without it, but such a life is, in Macbeth’s words, ‘cabined, cribbed, confined, bound... [by] doubts and fears’. Without faith in people, I become a cynic. Without faith in financial institutions, we stop investing and economies founder. Without faith in our fellow citizens, democratic freedoms die. Without faith in God, the Universe slowly becomes meaningless. Life ceases to have an objective purpose. Human life is no longer sacred, nor are our promises, duties and responsibilities. Cultures that lose their religious faith eventually become individualistic and relativist. People become self-seeking and self-sustaining. At first this is experienced as a great liberation, but ultimately it leads to a breakdown of trust, and without trust, societies suffer entropy: a loss of energy and order, leading to decline and decay.”¹²⁹⁴

PROPHETS, PRIESTS, RABBI & SAGES

- ❖ “The prophets have always received a better press than the rabbis, for an obvious reason. They were the first and greatest social critics, fearless in speaking truth to power, unafraid to confront corrupt kings and indolent priests, tireless in their call to integrity and justice. Their success was, however, limited. In fact, with the sole exception of Jonah, the only prophet sent to a Gentile city, we know of none who actually brought about social transformation. The rabbis did succeed. Under their tutelage Jewry became one of the most obstinately faithful of all religious groups. The way of life of rabbinic Judaism was so compelling that Jews survived, their identity intact, in exile and dispersion, for longer and under more adverse circumstances than any other. The reason was that the rabbis were not utopians. Without losing sight of the end of days, they legislated for the here-and-now. Without relinquishing the prophet’s dreams, they translated them into codes of practice, learnable behavioural norms. They put their faith in education. They brought heavenly ideals down to earth, creating a redemption of small steps. They took a realistic view of humanity. They acknowledged human failings and found ways of turning them to good purposes. Even if people initially do good for ulterior motives, said the rabbis, if they do it long enough they will eventually come to do it for its own sake. The prophets spoke poetry, the rabbis prose; but the rabbis succeeded where even the greatest of the prophets failed. When it comes to realizing high ideals among ordinary human beings, choose non-utopian solutions. They are more effective, and more humane.”¹²⁹⁵

¹²⁹² *The Great Partnership* p. 89

¹²⁹³ *Letters to the Next Generation* 2 p. 32

¹²⁹⁴ *The Power of Ideas* pp. 127-178

¹²⁹⁵ *The Home We Build Together* pp. 177-178

- ❖ “The prophets were social critics. It was their task to admonish the people. But *you cannot be a prophet unless you love, and show that you love, the people whom you are criticising.*”¹²⁹⁶
- ❖ “An artist *may* be ahead of his time; a prophet *must* be ahead of his time. But they are not leaders of people. They are leaders of ideas. Often they are reclusive. Only a few of their contemporaries understand what they are trying to do, but that is enough for them. Eventually, long after their lifetime, their ideas penetrate a wider circle.”¹²⁹⁷
- ❖ “The prophet lives in the immediacy of the moment, not in the endlessly reiterated cycles of time... The priest represents order, structure, continuity, the precisely formulated ritual followed in strict, meticulous obedience.”¹²⁹⁸
- ❖ “Prophets and priests were different kinds of people who served God in different ways. What was appropriate for one was inappropriate, even forbidden, to the other. Judaism is a religion of distinctions and differences. Only thus do we bring order to the world. Judaism radically distinguishes between priestly and prophetic sensibilities. Each has its place in the religious life... But they are different... For the priest, the key words of the religious life are *kadosh*, holy, and *tabor*, pure. To be a Jew is to be *set apart*: That is what the word *kadosh*, holy, actually means. This in turn has to do with the special closeness the Jewish people have to God... The prophets are quite different. They use different words. They think in different ways... The prophets are intensely concerned with social morality. They regard injustice, corruption, the neglect of the poor and the oppression of the weak as national catastrophes. They are not indifferent to the relationship between the people and God – far from it. They constantly castigate idolatry. But they see this in moral terms. It is an act of betrayal, disloyalty, faithlessness. Also, they are concerned less with outward ritual than with inner remorse. “Rend your heart and not your garments.” They are not opposed to ritual and sacrifice, but they are outraged when it is used as an attempt, as it were, to bribe God to avert His eyes from evil and injustice... The prophet speaks not in the language of holy and profane, pure and defiled, commandment and sin, but in terms of the great covenantal virtues: *tzedek*, righteousness, *mishpat*, justice, *hesed*, love, and *rahamim*, compassion.”¹²⁹⁹
- ❖ “A prophet is not an oracle; a prophecy is not a prediction. Precisely because Judaism believes in free will, the human future can never be unfailingly predicted. People are capable of change. God forgives. As we say in our prayers on the High Holy Days: “Prayer, penitence, and charity avert the evil decree.” There is no decree that cannot be revoked. A prophet does not foretell. He warns. A prophet does not speak to predict future catastrophe but rather to avert it. *If a prediction comes true it has succeeded. If a prophecy comes true it has failed.*”¹³⁰⁰
- ❖ “The prophets *spoke* the word of God. The sages *interpreted* the word of God. We might think that the former was greater. But the sages saw things differently. The very process of interpretation meant, in effect, that God had vested authority in the sages. He trusted them. He empowered them. In so doing, He granted them the highest religious dignity. They had dignity *because they were human*; because they used the human mind and human intelligence

¹²⁹⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 220

¹²⁹⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 358

¹²⁹⁸ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 49

¹²⁹⁹ *Ceremony & Celebration* pp. 49-55

¹³⁰⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* pp. 160-161

to interpret and apply the word of God. The Torah is *from* heaven but not *in* heaven. It was given by God and handed over to the care of Israel, the community of those who study, debate, and decipher His word.”¹³⁰¹

- ❖ “A prophecy is not a prediction but a warning. It describes a fearful future in order to persuade the people to avert it.”¹³⁰²

RELIGION

- ❖ “If rabbinic Judaism has anything to say across its borders, it lies in how the voice of religion might be authoritative without being authoritarian, unifying without ceasing to be pluralist, and rational without lacking passion.”¹³⁰³
- ❖ “Religion should not be confused with its classic institutional expressions. It survives through time, but it may take new and unexpected forms.”¹³⁰⁴
- ❖ “In a culture which has become deeply secularised, some last embers of faith still glow... My argument in these lectures was simply this: that religious values are still active within our frame of moral reference. They have been eroded but not altogether eclipsed. They lie at the head of some of our deepest moral commitments: to the worth of the individual, to society as a covenant rather than as a contract, to morality itself as a communal endeavour, and to the family as the crucible of personal relationships.... Historically, religious communities have been their natural environment. Living, as we have done, by the inherited habits of an essentially religious way of life, we have come to underestimate the religious faith needed to sustain them.”¹³⁰⁵
- ❖ “Whether or not we believe in God, we inhabit a culture in which religious teachings are marginal to many people’s moral choices. When did we last hear, in a television discussion or a newspaper editorial, the simple assertion that something was wrong because God or religious doctrine said so? Even a religious leader who said this in the course of a public debate would nowadays be branded a fundamentalist. Our moral language has been effectively secularised. Religion enters our conversations obliquely and with embarrassment.”¹³⁰⁶
- ❖ “However tenuous our religious attachments are, they have not yet ceased, and that means that they can be renewed.”¹³⁰⁷
- ❖ “Religions are the structure of our common life. In their symbols and ceremonies, the lonely self finds communion with others who share a past and future and a commitment to both. In their visions, we discover the world of un-self-interested action, and find, in the haunting words of the Rabbi of Kotzk, that God exists where we let Him in.”¹³⁰⁸
- ❖ “I am convinced that religions can be both faithful to their traditions and answerable to the imperative of tolerance. They can come to terms with other cultures without sacrificing

¹³⁰¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 274

¹³⁰² *I Believe* p. 188

¹³⁰³ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 200

¹³⁰⁴ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 9

¹³⁰⁵ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 10

¹³⁰⁶ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 36

¹³⁰⁷ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 93

¹³⁰⁸ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 93

their identity. They can be responsive to social change without at the same time assenting to every ephemeral shift in moral mood. Not only do I believe this to be possible, I believe it to be necessary.”¹³⁰⁹

- ❖ “There is no problem that you cannot think yourself out of, but it needs a special kind of thought. It needs the ability to reframe, to see things differently, to alter perspective, sometimes even to turn the mental picture upside down. That, classically, was one of the greatest gifts of the religious vision. It does not show you something new. It shows you the things you have seen all along but never noticed.”¹³¹⁰
- ❖ “Time and again in recent years we have been reminded that religion is not what European Enlightenment thought it would become: mute, marginal and mild. It is fire – and like fire, it warms but it also burns. And we are the guardians of the flame.”¹³¹¹
- ❖ “In unchartered territory one needs a compass, and the great faiths have been the compass of mankind.”¹³¹²
- ❖ “In the fast-moving world economy there are winners and losers. Life takes on a ruthless, Darwinian struggle for survival. Religion reminds us that there are other sources of self-worth.”¹³¹³
- ❖ “Religion offers a different kind of solace. It speaks of the dignity of the person and the power of the human spirit. It tells us that we are more, or other, than what we earn or what we buy. In the fast-moving world economy there are winners and losers. Life takes on a ruthless, Darwinian struggle for survival. Religion reminds us that there are other sources of self-worth. We are not necessarily set against one another in a win-or-lose competition.”¹³¹⁴
- ❖ “The word religion... comes from the Latin *religare*, meaning ‘to bind’. That is what religions did and still do. They bind people to one another and to God.”¹³¹⁵
- ❖ “Religion is more than a system of beliefs. It is an act of focused listening – to the script of which we are the heroes and, with God, the co-authors.”¹³¹⁶
- ❖ “We make a mistake when we think religion is only about believing. It’s also about belonging; and belonging is about community, that delicate yet powerful network of relationships where we learn moral literacy – by being there for other people when they need us, knowing that they’ll be there for us when we need them.”¹³¹⁷
- ❖ “Religion doesn’t mean living in the past, it means living with the past.”¹³¹⁸
- ❖ “There can be religion without ethics, and ethics without religion. There can be pious individuals who are cruel and insensitive, and atheists who are environmentally conscious, socially committed, and vastly generous with their money and time. Yet taken as a whole and over time, when religion and ethics are separated, they both suffer.”¹³¹⁹

¹³⁰⁹ *The Persistence of Faith* pp. 105-106

¹³¹⁰ *Celebrating Life* p. 3

¹³¹¹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 11

¹³¹² *The Dignity of Difference* p. 12

¹³¹³ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 39

¹³¹⁴ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 39

¹³¹⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 42

¹³¹⁶ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 3

¹³¹⁷ *From Optimism to Hope* pp. 21-22

¹³¹⁸ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 32

¹³¹⁹ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 171

- ❖ “Religion in the biblical sense is not about power but influence, not about secular law but love, not about the state but about families and communities. The bible is first and foremost about freedom: how we construct relationships of trust without the use of power.”¹³²⁰
- ❖ “When religion seeks power, the result is disastrous, if not immediately then ultimately. The result is tragic for the people, catastrophic for the state, and disastrous for religion. When religion, any religion, seizes power, it forfeits the respect of ordinary, decent, righteous people, who once respected it and now fear and resent it. The result is the defeat of religion, the birth of a new secularism, and a desecration of the holy.”¹³²¹
- ❖ “The easier the religion, the less it will be observed.”¹³²²
- ❖ “Religion has inspired individuals to moral greatness, consecrated their love and helped them build communities where individuals are cherished and great works of loving kindness are performed.”¹³²³
- ❖ “The existence of the universe from the perspective of God, and the existence of God from the perspective of human beings, is the redemption of solitude. We exist because we are not alone. Religion is the cosmic drama of relationship.”¹³²⁴
- ❖ “Religion binds people into groups. It creates altruism, the only force strong enough to defeat egoism.”¹³²⁵
- ❖ “Religions work best when they are open and accountable to the world. When they develop into closed, totalising systems and sectarian modes of community, when they place great weight on the afterlife or divine intervention into history, expecting the end of time in the midst of time, then they can become profoundly dangerous, for there is then nothing to check their descent into fantasy, paranoia and violence.”¹³²⁶
- ❖ “The world’s great faiths have said sublime things about love, compassion, sacrifice and charity. But these noble sentiments have often been confined to fellow believers, or at least potential fellow believers. Against non-believers – members of another faith or of none, and those of our own faith we deem to be heretics – religions can be brutal and pitiless.”¹³²⁷
- ❖ “‘Religion’ comes from the Latin *ligare*, meaning to *join* or *bind*. Religion binds people within the group – Christian to Christian, Muslim to Muslim, Jew to Jew. More specifically, since some of the most bitter conflicts take place within a faith, it bonds members of the same sect, church or denomination. It invests group solidarity with sanctity. What it does *not* do is provide people with a reason to be gracious to, or even tolerant of, those outside the group.”¹³²⁸
- ❖ “Any religion that dehumanises others merely because their faith is different has misunderstood the God of Abraham.”¹³²⁹
- ❖ “Never say, I hate, I kill, because my religion says so.”¹³³⁰

¹³²⁰ *The Home We Build Together* p. 223

¹³²¹ *The Home We Build Together* p. 223

¹³²² *Future Tense* p. 66

¹³²³ *The Great Partnership* p. 1

¹³²⁴ *The Great Partnership* p. 24

¹³²⁵ *The Great Partnership* p. 156

¹³²⁶ *The Great Partnership* p. 266

¹³²⁷ *Not in God’s Name* p. 31

¹³²⁸ *Not in God’s Name* p. 182

¹³²⁹ *Not in God’s Name* p. 200

¹³³⁰ *Not in God’s Name* p. 207

- ❖ “Religions are culture-shaping institutions, and they include not just a theology, but also an anthropology. What we believe about God affects what we believe about ourselves.”¹³³¹
- ❖ “Understanding – *religious* understanding – comes from the willingness to be challenged.”¹³³²
- ❖ “One significant contribution of religion today is that it preserves what society as a whole has begun to lose: that strong sense of being there for one another, of being ready to exercise mutual aid, to help people in need, to comfort the distressed and bereaved, to welcome the lonely, to share in other people’s sadness and celebrations. These moral responses have not disappeared: we see them whenever there is a communal tragedy, a shooting, a terrorist incident or a major accident. People come together to give help and support. Our wellsprings of altruism have not run dry. They are a large part of what makes us human. But we tend not to exercise them on a day-to-day basis. That is what we have lost in society at large, but what can still be found in religious congregations.”¹³³³
- ❖ “The religious mindset awakens us to transcendence. It redeems our solitude. It breaks the carapace of selfhood and opens us to others and to the world.”¹³³⁴

RELIGION & POLITICS

- ❖ “Difference is where politics lives; but it is what religion transcends.”¹³³⁵
- ❖ “The single greatest risk of the twenty-first century is... not when politics is religionized but when religion is politicized.”¹³³⁶
- ❖ “A true global politics will begin, not with the clash of national interest, but with a greater over-arching truth; that we are one family under the parenthood of God, guardians of His world for the sake of generations not yet born.”¹³³⁷
- ❖ “Religion creates communities. Politics mediates between communities. Religion lives in justice and compassion, righteousness and mercy, loyalty and loving kindness. Politics requires compromise, tolerance, a willingness of live and let live.”¹³³⁸
- ❖ “Politicians have power, but religion has something greater than power. It has influence. Politics moves the pieces, but religion changes lives.”¹³³⁹
- ❖ “The greatest threat to freedom in the post-modern world is radical, politicised religion. It is the face of altruistic evil in our time.”¹³⁴⁰
- ❖ “There is nothing accidental about the spread of radical politicised religion in our time. It came about because of a series of decisions a half-century ago that led to the creation of an entire educational network of schools and seminaries dedicated to the proposition that loving God means hating the enemies of God. The end result has been a flood of chaos,

¹³³¹ *Not in God’s Name* p. 247

¹³³² *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 281

¹³³³ *Morality* pp. 36-37

¹³³⁴ *Morality* p. 303

¹³³⁵ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 42

¹³³⁶ *The Dignity of Difference* pp. 42-43

¹³³⁷ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 56

¹³³⁸ *The Home We Build Together* p. 227

¹³³⁹ *Marble Arch Synagogue*

¹³⁴⁰ *Not in God’s Name* p. 14

violence and destruction that is drowning the innocent and guilty alike. We now have, with equal seriousness, to educate for peace, forgiveness and love. Until our global institutions take a stand against the teaching and preaching of hate, all their efforts of diplomacy and military intervention will fail. Ultimately the responsibility is ours. Tomorrow's world is born in what we teach our children today.”¹³⁴¹

- ❖ “Politics is not a religion nor a substitute for one. The two are inherently different activities. Religion seeks truth, politics deals in power. Religion aims at unity, liberal democracy is about the mediation of conflict, politics is the art of compromise. Religion aspires to the ideal, politics lives in the real, the less-than-idea. Religion is about the truths that do not change, politics is about the challenges that constantly change. Harold Wilson said, ‘A week is a long time in politics.’ The book of Psalms says, ‘A thousand years are in your sight as yesterday when it is gone’ (Ps. 90:4). Religion inhabits the pure mountain air of eternity, politics the bustle of the here-and-now.”¹³⁴²
- ❖ “When a religion becomes political, or politics is turned into a religion, the result is usually disastrous for both politics and religion.”¹³⁴³
- ❖ “When religion enters the political arena, we should repeat daily Bunyan’s famous words: ‘Then I saw that there was a way to Hell, even from the gates of Heaven.’”¹³⁴⁴
- ❖ “We are living in an age in which... many people are disillusioned with secular politics, and are turning to religion instead. In itself that is a blessing. Religious faith is our noblest effort to understand ourselves and our place in the Universe. The expansive air of the spirit redeems the narrowness of the material world. But to expect it to solve political problems is to invite disaster. Religion becomes political at its peril, and ours.”¹³⁴⁵
- ❖ “When ancient theologies are used for modern political ends, they speak a very dangerous language indeed.”¹³⁴⁶
- ❖ “Even a *tzaddik* with the best of intentions, when he or she enters politics and assumes airs of authority, can make mistakes.”¹³⁴⁷

RELIGION & POWER

- ❖ “Religion is at its best when it relies on strength of argument and example. It is at its worst when it seeks to impose truth by force.”¹³⁴⁸
- ❖ “*Religion acquires influence when it relinquishes power.* It is then that it takes its place, not among the rulers but among the ruled, not in the palaces of power but in the real lives of ordinary men and women who become extraordinary when brushed by the wings of eternity. It becomes the voice of the voiceless, the conscience of the community, the perennial reminder that there are moral limits of power and that the task of the state is to serve the people, not the people the state. That is why we remember prophets and continue to be

¹³⁴¹ *Not in God's Name* pp. 25-26

¹³⁴² *Not in God's Name* p. 229

¹³⁴³ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 155

¹³⁴⁴ *The Power of Ideas* p. 75

¹³⁴⁵ *The Power of Ideas* p. 76

¹³⁴⁶ *The Power of Ideas* p. 198

¹³⁴⁷ *I Believe* p. 59

¹³⁴⁸ *Not in God's Name* p. 234

inspired by them, while the names of emperors and tyrants are lost to collective memory. To paraphrase Kierkegaard: 'When a king dies, his power ends. When a prophet dies, his influence begins.' When religion divests itself of power, it is freed from the burden or rearranging the deckchairs on the ship of state and returns to its real task: changing lives. Religion – as understood by Abraham and those who followed him – is at its best when it resists the temptation of politics and opts instead for influence. For what it tells us is that civilisations are judged not by power but by their concern for the powerless; not by wealth but by how they treat the poor; not when they seek to become invulnerable but when they care for the vulnerable. Religion is not the voice of those who sit on earthly thrones but of those who, not seeking to wield power, are unafraid to criticise it when it corrupts those who hold it and diminishes those it is held against. Elijah was a great prophet. He was 'zealous' for God's honour and bitterly opposed to the false prophets of Baal. He challenged them to a test on Mount Carmel. He won; they lost; the people were persuaded; the false prophets were killed – as convincing a demonstration of religious truth as any in the Bible. But the story (I Kgs 18-19) does not end there. Summoned by an angel to Mount Horeb, he witnesses an earthquake, a whirlwind and a raging fire. But 'God was not in' the earthquake or the wind or the fire. He came to Elijah in a 'still, small voice'. When religion becomes an earthquake, a whirlwind, a fire, it can no longer hear the still small voice of God summoning us to freedom."¹³⁴⁹

- ❖ "Politics knows what religion sometimes forgets, that the imposition of truth by force and the suppression of dissent by power is the end of freedom and a denial of human dignity."¹³⁵⁰
- ❖ "Today in many parts of the world I see religion confused with the pursuit of power, as if that whole tragic history has been forgotten. The Hebrew Bible tells us that power belongs to God, who uses it to liberate the powerless. Religion has nothing to do with power and everything to do with the holy and the good and the pursuit of justice and compassion. When religion and politics become confused the result is disastrous for both."¹³⁵¹

RESPECT & TOLERANCE

- ❖ "People do not win respect by insisting on the right to be respected. Respect is earned: that is what makes it respect."¹³⁵²
- ❖ "If you seek respect, you must give respect. If you ask for tolerance, you must demonstrate tolerance. If you wish not to be offended, then you must make sure you do not offend."¹³⁵³
- ❖ "Tolerance was born when people with strong beliefs recognised that others who disagreed with them also had strong beliefs and they too should have, as far as possible, the right to live by them."¹³⁵⁴

¹³⁴⁹ *Not in God's Name* pp. 236-237

¹³⁵⁰ *The Power of Ideas* p. 75

¹³⁵¹ *The Power of Ideas* p. 128

¹³⁵² *The Home We Build Together* p. 61

¹³⁵³ *Not in God's Name* p. 263

¹³⁵⁴ *The Power of Ideas* p. 10

RESPONSIBILITY

- ❖ “One of the most remarkable features of Judaism – in this respect it is supreme among religious faiths – is its call to human responsibility. God wants us to fight our own battles. This is not abandonment. It does not mean – God forbid – that we are alone. God is with us whenever and wherever we are with Him. “Yea, though I walk through the Valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me” (Psalm 23:4). What it means is that God calls on us to exercise those qualities – confidence, courage, choice, imagination, determination and will – which allow us to reach our full stature as beings in the image of God.”¹³⁵⁵
- ❖ “The story of humanity has been, for the most part, a flight from responsibility. The culprits change. Only the sense of victimhood remains. It wasn’t us. It was the politicians. Or the media. Or the bankers. Or our genes. Or our parents. Or the system – be it capitalism, communism, or anything in between. Most of all, it is the fault of the others, the ones not like us, infidels, sons of Satan, children of darkness, the unredeemed. The perpetrators of the greatest crime against humanity in all of history were convinced it wasn’t them. They were “only obeying orders.” When all else fails, blame God. And if you do not believe in God, blame the people who do. To be human is to seek to escape from responsibility.”¹³⁵⁶
- ❖ “The first humans lost paradise when they sought to hide from responsibility. We will only ever regain it if we accept responsibility and become a nation of leaders, each respecting and making space for those not like us.”¹³⁵⁷
- ❖ “*A free society cannot be built on centralised institutions alone.* The Torah is predicated on devolved responsibility. Each person is party to the covenant.”¹³⁵⁸
- ❖ “*The road from slavery to freedom is as long or short as it takes for people to develop the habits of responsibility for their and their children’s future.*”¹³⁵⁹

RESPONSIBILITY/DUTIES VRS. RIGHTS

- ❖ “Rights are things we claim. Duties are things we perform. Duties, in other words, are rights translated from the passive to the active mode.”¹³⁶⁰
- ❖ “One of Judaism’s most distinctive and challenging ideas is its ethics of responsibility, the idea that God invites us to become, in the rabbinic phrase, his ‘partners in the world of creation’. The God who created the world in love calls on us to create in love. The God who gave us the gift of freedom asks us to use it to honour and enhance the freedom of others.”¹³⁶¹

¹³⁵⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 120

¹³⁵⁶ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 294

¹³⁵⁷ *Lessons in Leadership* p. 297

¹³⁵⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 83

¹³⁵⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 396

¹³⁶⁰ *Celebrating Life* p. 129

¹³⁶¹ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 3

- ❖ “The Bible is more concerned with cultivating habits of responsibility than merely prescribing rights. Rights are legislated by states. Responsibility is created by society. You cannot have one with the other. A system of rights must be accompanied by a culture of responsibility.”¹³⁶²
- ❖ “Rights are noble things, essential to human dignity, but without the widespread diffusion of responsibility they are undeliverable.”¹³⁶³
- ❖ “If you want people to value something, get them to participate in creating it. Give them a challenge and give them responsibility. The effort we put into something does not just change the object: it changes us. The greater the labour, the greater the love for what we have made.”¹³⁶⁴
- ❖ “Many of the most seemingly intractable issues in contemporary Jewish life have appeared because Jews, especially in the West, are used to a culture in which individual rights are held to override all others. We should be free to live as we choose, worship as we choose, and identify as we choose. But a culture based solely on individual rights will undermine families, communities, traditions, loyalties, and shared codes of reverence and restraint.”¹³⁶⁵

REVELATION AT SINAI

- ❖ “Jews and Judaism represent more than a religion accidentally tied to a people, or a people coincidentally bound to a religion. The definitive moment which brought Israel into being was the covenant at Sinai, which married a people to God, and God to a people.”¹³⁶⁶
- ❖ “The imperative of Sinai allows us no rest. Jewish history is a path from exile to redemption, from alienation to return, and there is no standing still.”¹³⁶⁷
- ❖ “Jewish destiny was defined by one moment of revelation. But each age adds its commentaries.”¹³⁶⁸
- ❖ “A fundamentalist refuses to let faith be relativized by history or science or sociology. Revelation stands above time and speaks to us now as clearly as it ever did. We may have changed the wavelengths on our cultural radio, but we can still hear the voice of God.”¹³⁶⁹
- ❖ “Revelation was a unique event to which subsequent history is the commentary. As a result, all authority lies within the word spoken at Sinai.”¹³⁷⁰
- ❖ “At Sinai, God reveals Himself equally to everyone. At Israel’s founding moment, every individual is a party to the covenant and none stands higher than any other. Revelation creates a republic of free and equal citizens under the sovereignty of God.”¹³⁷¹

¹³⁶² *The Home We Build Together* p. 133

¹³⁶³ *The Home We Build Together* p. 144

¹³⁶⁴ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 100

¹³⁶⁵ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 233

¹³⁶⁶ *Traditional Alternatives/Arguments for the Sake of Heaven* p. 187

¹³⁶⁷ *Orthodoxy Confronts Modernity* p. 15

¹³⁶⁸ *Orthodoxy Confronts Modernity* p. 16

¹³⁶⁹ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 77

¹³⁷⁰ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 215

¹³⁷¹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 115

- ❖ “In Judaism, revelation is political because the Jewish project is not to scale the heavens in search of God but to bring the Divine presence down to earth in the structures of our social life.”¹³⁷²
- ❖ “The Sinai covenant was not the first made by God. He had already made one with Noah (Genesis 9), and another with Abraham and his descendants (Genesis 15, 17). There were subsequent covenant renewal ceremonies at the end of Moses’ life, in the days of Joshua, during the reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah, and later, after the Babylonian exile, in the age of Ezra and Nehemiah. The covenant at Sinai was, however, the fulcrum on which all else turned. The Noahide and Abrahamic covenants were unilateral initiatives on the part of God. Noah and Abraham were not asked for their agreement. The subsequent ratification ceremonies were all at the initiative of human beings: prophets, kings and scribes. Only the Sinai covenant was fully mutual, a divine initiative that involved and depended on human consent.”¹³⁷³
- ❖ “At Mount Sinai, all Israel became partners to the covenant. God spoke to everyone – the only recorded revelation, not to a prophet or a group of initiates but to an entire people. Everyone was party to the law, because, potentially, everyone could read it and know it. All were equal citizens in the nation of faith under the sovereignty of God. That is what happened at Sinai.”¹³⁷⁴
- ❖ “Creating a mindless universe, implies the Torah, is easy. In Genesis, it takes a mere thirty-four verses. Creating a social order in which free human beings act justly and compassionately is difficult. This is why the story of Sinai takes fifty-nine chapters. At the beginning of time God spoke the laws that frame the natural universe. At Sinai He spoke the laws that shape the moral universe, inviting the Israelites to construct a society that would serve as a pilot project for humanity as a whole.”¹³⁷⁵

ROSH HASHANAH & YOM KIPPUR

- ❖ “We need to come close to God for God to feel close to us. That is what happens on the Ten Days of Repentance, and it begins on Rosh Hashana.”¹³⁷⁶
- ❖ “No people has believed as lucidly and long as have Jews that life has a purpose; that this world is an arena of justice and human dignity; that we are, each of us, free and responsible, capable of shaping our lives in accordance with our highest ideals. We are here for a reason. We were created in love and forgiveness by the God of love and forgiveness who asks us to love and forgive. However many times we may have failed to live up to our aspirations, God always gives us the chance and the power to begin again. On Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur, the holiest days of a holy people, God summons us to greatness.”¹³⁷⁷
- ❖ “The [Yom Kippur] ritual of the two identical goats, one of which was sent away bearing with it our sins, can then be seen to symbolize the two identities that live in every troubled

¹³⁷² *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 116

¹³⁷³ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 13

¹³⁷⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 137

¹³⁷⁵ *Ceremony & Celebration* pp. 285-286

¹³⁷⁶ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 2

¹³⁷⁷ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 3

heart: the one that is myself and the one that is not-myself. *When I learn to let the “not-myself” go, as the goal was let go on Yom Kippur, I find inner peace and can live at peace with the world.*”¹³⁷⁸

- ❖ “More than Yom Kippur expresses our faith in God, it is the expression of God’s faith in us.”¹³⁷⁹
- ❖ “Yom Kippur invites us to become better than we were in the knowledge that we can be better than we are. That knowledge comes from God.”¹³⁸⁰
- ❖ “The most demanding day of the Jewish year, a day without food and drink, a day of prayer and penitence, confession and pleading, in which we accuse ourselves of every conceivable sin, still calls to Jews, touching us at the deepest level of our being. It is a day in which we run toward the open arms of God, weeping because we may have disappointed Him, or because sometimes we feel He had disappointed us, yet knowing that we need one another, for though God can create universes, He cannot live within the human heart unless we let Him in.”¹³⁸¹

SACRIFICE/SACRIFICES

- ❖ “*The fundamental sacrifice in Judaism is that of the will.* Since freedom of the will is the highest gift of God to man, the way we acknowledge that it is a gift is periodically to give some of it back.”¹³⁸²
- ❖ “The fact that sacrifice in Judaism has nothing intrinsically to do with the offerings of animals on the altar is the reason Judaism was able to survive the loss of the Temple, its rites, and sacrifices with its religious life largely intact. What matters in sacrifice is the act of renunciation. We give up something of ourselves, offering it to God in recognition of the gifts He has given us.”¹³⁸³
- ❖ “A sacrifice in Judaism is always the token of an I-Thou relationship between us and God. It is a gesture of love.”¹³⁸⁴
- ❖ “Sacrifice is what God allows us to give Him to show our love and gratitude for what He has given us.”¹³⁸⁵
- ❖ “Animal sacrifices are a concession to human nature. *Sacrifices are a substitute for violence directed against mankind.*”¹³⁸⁶
- ❖ “It needs moral courage to say No to the things that are tempting in the present but ruinous in the long run: drugs, cheap plastic goods, cars for all, and the other ways in which we enjoy our present at the cost of our children’s future. We need space in our lives to gather collective wisdom about the common good, and to consider sacrifice now for the sake of benefit in generations to come.”¹³⁸⁷

¹³⁷⁸ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 79

¹³⁷⁹ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 85

¹³⁸⁰ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 93

¹³⁸¹ *Ceremony & Celebration* pp. 94-95

¹³⁸² *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 21

¹³⁸³ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 21

¹³⁸⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 22

¹³⁸⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 23

¹³⁸⁶ *Essays on Ethics* p. 161

¹³⁸⁷ *Morality* p. 160

- ❖ “What... was sacrifice in Judaism and why does it remain important, at least as an idea, even today? The simplest answer – though it does not explain the details of the different kinds of offering – is this: *We love what we are willing to make sacrifices for.* That is why, when they were a nation of farmers and shepherds, the Israelites demonstrated their love of God by bringing Him a symbolic gift of their flocks and herds, their grain and fruit; that is, their livelihood. To love is to thank. To love is to want to bring an offering to the Beloved. To love is to give. Sacrifice is the choreography of love.”¹³⁸⁸

SAGE & SAINT

- ❖ “A saint may give all his money away to the poor. But what about the members of the saint’s own family? A saint may refuse to fight in battle. But what about the saint’s own country? A saint may forgive all crimes committed against him. But what about the rule of law, and justice? Saints are supremely virtuous people, considered as individuals. Yet you cannot build a society out of saints alone. Ultimately, saints are not really interested in society. Their concern is the salvation of the soul.”¹³⁸⁹
- ❖ “The sage is not an extremist, because he or she realizes that there are other people at stake. There are the members of one’s own family and the others within one’s own community. There is a country to defend and an economy to sustain. The sage knows he or she cannot leave all these commitments behind to pursue a life of solitary virtue. For we are called on by God to live in the world, not escape from it; to exist in society, not seclusion; to strive to create a balance among the conflicting pressures on us, not to focus on some while neglecting the others.”¹³⁹⁰
- ❖ “If you want to come close to Heaven, don’t search for kings, priests, saints or even prophets. They may be great, but a fine teacher helps you to become great, and that is a different thing altogether.”¹³⁹¹

SCIENCE/SCIENCE & RELIGION

- ❖ “Science speaks of causes but not purposes. It understands events caused by things in the past, but not acts and decisions motivated by a vision of the future.”¹³⁹²
- ❖ “In the beginning people believed in many gods. Monotheism came and reduced them to one. Science came and reduced them to none.”¹³⁹³
- ❖ “I come from a religious tradition where we make a blessing over great scientists regardless of their views on religion.”¹³⁹⁴

¹³⁸⁸ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 128

¹³⁸⁹ *Essays on Ethics* pp. 224-225

¹³⁹⁰ *Essays on Ethics* p. 225

¹³⁹¹ *My Teacher: In Memoriam (Matot – Masei 5780)*

¹³⁹² *Celebrating Life* p. 3

¹³⁹³ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 68

¹³⁹⁴ *The Great Partnership* p. 1

- ❖ “Science takes things apart to see how they work. Religion puts things together to see what they mean.”¹³⁹⁵
- ❖ “Science is about explanation. Religion is about meaning. Science analyses, religion integrates. Science breaks things down to their component parts. Religion binds people together in relationships of trust. Science tells us what is. Religion tells us what ought to be. Science describes. Religion beckons, summons, calls. Science sees objects. Religion speaks to us as subjects. Science practices detachment. Religion is the art of attachment, self to self, soul to soul. Science sees the underlying order of the physical world. Religion hears the music beneath the noise. Science is the conquest of ignorance. Religion is the redemption of solitude.”¹³⁹⁶
- ❖ “There is absolutely nothing in science – not in cosmology or evolutionary biology or neuroscience – to suggest that the universe is bereft of meaning, nor could there be, since the search for meaning has nothing to do with science and everything to do with religion.”¹³⁹⁷
- ❖ “A civilization that had space for science but not religion might achieve technological prowess. But it would not respect people in their specificity and particularity. It would quickly become inhuman and inhumane.”¹³⁹⁸
- ❖ “People have sought in the religious life the kind of certainty that belongs to philosophy and science. But it is not to be found. Between God and man there is moral loyalty, not scientific certainty.”¹³⁹⁹
- ❖ “If science is about the world that is, and religion is about the world that ought to be, then religion needs science because we cannot apply God’s will to the world if we do not understand the world. If we try to, the result will be magic or misplaced supernaturalism. We will rely on miracles – and the rabbis ruled, ‘Don’t rely on miracles.’ By the same token, science needs religion, or at the very least, some philosophical understanding of the human condition and our place within the universe, for each fresh item of knowledge and each new accession of power raises the question of how it should be used, and for that we need another way of thinking.”¹⁴⁰⁰
- ❖ “Religion and science, the heritages respectively of Jerusalem and Athens, products of the twin hemispheres of the human brain, must now join together to protect the world that had been entrusted to our safekeeping, honouring our covenant with nature and nature’s God, the God that is the music beneath the noise, the Being at the heart of being, whose still, small voice we can still hear if we learn to create a silence in the soul, the God who, whether or not we have faith in him, never loses faith in us.”¹⁴⁰¹
- ❖ “When science is worshipped and everything spiritual dethroned, then a certain decision has been made to set aside human feelings for the sake of something seemingly higher, nobler, larger. That is how idolatry begins.”¹⁴⁰²

¹³⁹⁵ *The Great Partnership* p. 2

¹³⁹⁶ *The Great Partnership* pp. 6-7

¹³⁹⁷ *The Great Partnership* p. 27

¹³⁹⁸ *The Great Partnership* pp. 55-56

¹³⁹⁹ *The Great Partnership* p. 73

¹⁴⁰⁰ *The Great Partnership* p. 214

¹⁴⁰¹ *The Great Partnership* p. 291

¹⁴⁰² *Morality* p. 242

- ❖ “The natural world is something science and religion both speak about in their very different ways. Science explains; religion celebrates. Science speaks, religion sings. Science is prose, religion is poetry, and we need them both.”¹⁴⁰³
- ❖ “I think we miss something essential when we take Darwinian selection to be more than a law about biology and turn it into a metaphor for life itself, as if all that matters is conflict and the struggle to survive, so that love and beauty and even birdsong are robbed of their innocence and reduced to genetic instincts and drives.”¹⁴⁰⁴

SHABBAT

- ❖ “Shabbat is not private time, but shared time, a time for sharing, not owning.”¹⁴⁰⁵
- ❖ “Shabbat is the greatest tutorial in liberty ever devised.”¹⁴⁰⁶
- ❖ “The Sabbath (in Hebrew, Shabbat) is Judaism’s stillness at the heart of the turning world.”¹⁴⁰⁷
- ❖ “The Sabbath sustains every one of Judaism’s great institutions. In the synagogue we re-engage with the community, praying their prayers, celebrating their joys, defining ourselves as part of the “We” rather than the “I”. Hearing and studying the Torah portion of the week, we travel back to join our ancestors at Sinai, when God spoke and gave us His written text, His marriage contract with the Jewish people. At home, I spend time - sacrosanct, undisturbed - with my family, my wife and children, and know that our marriage is sheltered under God’s tabernacle of peace.”¹⁴⁰⁸
- ❖ “Shabbat is where a restless people rested and renewed itself.”¹⁴⁰⁹
- ❖ “Shabbat is the day we stand still and let all our blessings catch up with us.”¹⁴¹⁰
- ❖ “[Shabbat] is Judaism’s great messianic institution.”¹⁴¹¹
- ❖ “The Sabbath is a weekly reminder of the integrity of nature and the boundaries of human striving.”¹⁴¹²
- ❖ “What the Sabbath does for human beings and animals, the sabbatical and jubilee years do for the land. The earth too is entitled to its periodic rest.”¹⁴¹³
- ❖ “Despite attempts of historians to trace a connection to the Babylonian calendar, the Sabbath was an unprecedented innovation. It meant that one day in seven all hierarchies of wealth and power were suspended.”¹⁴¹⁴

¹⁴⁰³ *The Power of Ideas* p. 19

¹⁴⁰⁴ *The Power of Ideas* p. 32

¹⁴⁰⁵ *Faith in the Future* p. 135

¹⁴⁰⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 130

¹⁴⁰⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 130

¹⁴⁰⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* pp. 133-134

¹⁴⁰⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 134

¹⁴¹⁰ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 134

¹⁴¹¹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 135

¹⁴¹² *The Dignity of Difference* p. 167

¹⁴¹³ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 167

¹⁴¹⁴ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 25

- ❖ “The Sabbath is the lived enactment of the messianic age, a world of peace in which striving and conflict are (temporarily) at an end and all creation sings a song of being to its Creator.”¹⁴¹⁵
- ❖ “*On Shabbat we rehearse utopia*, or what Judaism came later to call the messianic age. One day in seven, all hierarchies of power are suspended. There are no masters and slaves, employers and employees. Even domestic animals cannot be made to work. We are not allowed to exercise control over other forms of life, or even forces of nature. On Shabbat, within the covenantal society, all are equal and all are free. It is the supreme antithesis of Egypt. What a stroke of genius it was to introduce a foretaste of the future into the present, to remind us constantly of our ultimate destination and to be strengthened by it regularly on the way.”¹⁴¹⁶
- ❖ “Shabbat has meant many things over the course of time. During the biblical era it was a sustained protest against slavery. For one day in seven even a slave was free. In later ages it was a defence against poverty and oppression, a moment in which a much-afflicted people found serenity and breathed a more spacious air. Judah Halevi said that on Shabbat even the poorest Jew was freer than the most powerful king. In modern times it has become a counterforce to stress and the ever more intrusive presence of emails, mobile phones and the pressures of work. In the foreseeable future it will become a major force in the battle against overexploitation of the environment.”¹⁴¹⁷
- ❖ “Shabbat, one of the first commands Moses gave the Jewish people, remains as relevant now as it was then. It tells us that happiness lies not in what we buy but in what we are; that true contentment is to be found not by seeking what we lack but by giving thanks for what we have; and that we should never allow ourselves to be so busy making a living that we have all too little time to live.”¹⁴¹⁸
- ❖ “When it comes to divine creation, there is no gap between intention and execution. God spoke, and the world came into being. In relation to God, Isaiah says: “I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please” (Isaiah 46:10). God knows in advance how things will turn out. With human beings, it is otherwise. Often, we cannot see the end at the beginning, the outcome at the outset. A great novelist may not know how the story will turn out until he has written it, nor a composer, a symphony, nor an artist, a painting. Creativity is fraught with risk. All the more so is it so with human history. The “law of unintended consequences” tells us that revolutions rarely turn out as planned. Policies designed to help the poor may have the opposite effect... One alternative is simply to let things happen as they will. This kind of resignation, however, is wholly out of keeping with the Judaic view of history... The other solution – unique, as far as I know, to Judaism – is to reveal the end at the beginning. That is the meaning of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is not simply a day of rest. It is an anticipation of “the end of history,” the messianic age.”¹⁴¹⁹
- ❖ “The Sabbath is a focused, one-day-a-week antidote to the market mindset. It is dedicated to the things that have a value but not a price. It is the supremely nonmarket day. We can’t

¹⁴¹⁵ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 25

¹⁴¹⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 17

¹⁴¹⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 263

¹⁴¹⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 264

¹⁴¹⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* pp. 280-281

sell or buy. We can't work or pay others to work for us. It's a day when we celebrate relationships. Husbands sing a song of praise to their wives. Parents bless their children. We take time to have a meal together with family and friends. In the synagogue we renew our sense of community. People share their joys—a new child, a bar or bat mitzvah, an engagement, a forthcoming wedding—with others. The bereaved find comfort for their grief. We study the Bible together, reminding ourselves of the story of which we are a part. We pray together, thanking God for our blessings.”¹⁴²⁰

- ❖ “Shabbat [is] humanity’s greatest source of renewable energy, the day that gives us the strength to keep on creating.”¹⁴²¹
- ❖ “The Sabbath is one of those phenomena – incomprehensible from the outside – which you have to live in order to understand.”¹⁴²²

SHAVUOT

- ❖ “Shavuot is the festival of Jewish identity, and the controversies to which it gave rise through the ages are evidence of how variously at different times that identity was conceived.”¹⁴²³
- ❖ “Shavuot is when we celebrate the giving of the law at Mount Sinai. The fact that we read Ruth’s story at this time tells us that society cannot be made by laws alone. It needs something more – the unforced, unlegislated kindness that makes us reach out to the lonely and vulnerable, even if we are lonely and vulnerable ourselves. Then and now, society needs the kindness of strangers.”¹⁴²⁴

SIX DAY WAR

- ❖ “[The Six Day War] was one of those rare moments...which can fairly be said to have changed Jewish consciousness and left their permanent mark on our collective personality.”¹⁴²⁵
- ❖ “There is a difference between history and memory, especially group memory... Israel’s battle for survival in 1967 came to be seen by a whole generation... as something more than a remarkable military victory, and as something other than a miracle in the traditional sense. It became a symbol, an emblem of the new Jewish identity. Jews had been sentenced to death in the Shoah. Israel now came face to face with the spectre of a second holocaust at the hands of its hostile neighbours. But the Jewish people survived. Indeed, that was our fate. Jews are the people who are threatened but who survive.”¹⁴²⁶

¹⁴²⁰ *Morality* p. 116

¹⁴²¹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 84

¹⁴²² *The Power of Ideas* p. 239

¹⁴²³ *Ceremony & Celebration* pp. 319-320

¹⁴²⁴ *The Power of Ideas* p. 78

¹⁴²⁵ *Will We Have Jewish Grandchildren?* p. 66

¹⁴²⁶ *Will We Have Jewish Grandchildren?* p. 66

- ❖ “It was [in 1967] that an extraordinary thing began to happen. Throughout the university, Jews suddenly became visible. Day after day they crowded into the little synagogue in the centre of town. Students and dons who had never before publicly identified as Jews could be found there praying. Others began collecting money. Everyone wanted to help in some way, to express their solidarity, their identification with Israel’s fate...I had witnessed something... that didn’t make sense in the rest of my world. It had nothing to do with politics or war or even prayer. It had to do with Jewish identity.... What I discovered in those emotional days of the summer of 1967 – perhaps what each of us discovers when Jewish identity takes us by surprise – is that this covenant is still alive.”¹⁴²⁷

SLAVERY

- ❖ “Slavery was not immediately abolished; it existed in most parts of the world until the nineteenth century. Even today there are lesser forms of servitude—insecurity, workaholism, the hundred stresses and anxieties of everyday life. And as Marx never tired of telling us, slaves get used to their chains. So, within time itself, everyone had to experience unconditional freedom so as never to lose the love of liberty, even though as yet it lasts only one day in seven. Jews never lost those two memories: the taste of affliction on Pesach, the taste of freedom on Shabbat.”¹⁴²⁸
- ❖ “The Torah does not abolish slavery, but it mitigates and restricts it in such a way as to steer the nation towards its eventual abolition.”¹⁴²⁹
- ❖ “The Torah functions in the medium of time. It did not abolish slavery, but it set in motion a series of developments – most notably Shabbat, when all hierarchies of power were suspended and slaves had a day a week of freedom – that were bound to lead to its abolition in the course of time.”¹⁴³⁰

SOCIETY

- ❖ “The more plural a society we become, the more we need to reflect on what holds us together.”¹⁴³¹
- ❖ “In a society of plurality and change, there may be no detailed moral consensus that can be engraved on tablets of stone. But there can and must be a continuing conversation, joined by as many voices as possible, on what makes our society a collective enterprise: a community that embraces many communities.”¹⁴³²
- ❖ “We have neglected the institutions needed to sustain communities of memory and character. The assumption has been that society could exist on the basis of the private choices of individuals and the occasional intervention of the state, as if these were the only

¹⁴²⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* pp. 27, 29

¹⁴²⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* pp. 131-132

¹⁴²⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 331

¹⁴³⁰ *Essays on Ethics* p. 4

¹⁴³¹ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 67

¹⁴³² *The Persistence of Faith* p. 68

significant entities in our social landscape. But a plural society needs a moral and cultural base.”¹⁴³³

- ❖ “Just as there is political, so there is religious totalitarianism, and it comes from eroding the distinction between religion and God. God is the covenantal partner to particular forms of religious living. But beyond this He is the author of all being in its irreducible diversity. A plural society tests to the limit our ability to see God in religious forms which are not our own.”¹⁴³⁴
- ❖ “In relation to nature, God is creator, but in relation to society, God is a teacher.”¹⁴³⁵
- ❖ “[At Sinai] a fundamental truth was established: that a free society must be a moral society, for without the rule of law, constrained by the overarching imperatives of the right and the good, freedom will eventually degenerate into tyranny, and liberty, painfully won, will be lost.”¹⁴³⁶
- ❖ “In a plural society – all the more so in a plural world – each of us has to settle for less than we do when we associate with fellow believers.”¹⁴³⁷
- ❖ “Society is a moral construct, a place where freedom is a collective reality to which all contribute and by which all have equal access, if not to wealth and power, then at least to human dignity in its most tangible forms: food to eat, clothes to wear, a source of independent livelihood, and a home.”¹⁴³⁸
- ❖ “Society is where we come together to achieve collectively what none of us can do alone. It is our common property. We inhabit it, make it, breathe it. It is the realm in which all of us is more important than any of us. It is our shared project, and it exists to the extent that we work for it and contribute to it.”¹⁴³⁹
- ❖ “It is not that religious people have abandoned society: it is that they feel society has abandoned them.”¹⁴⁴⁰
- ❖ “Society does not belong to any of us, but to all of us. It is the home we build together.”¹⁴⁴¹
- ❖ “Just as God creates the natural universe, so we are called on to create the social universe – a universe, like that of the planets and stars, that is ordered, rule-governed, a space of integrated diversity, a world we can see and saw, as God saw and said, that it is good.”¹⁴⁴²
- ❖ “Society is made out of the contributions of many individuals. What they give is unimportant; that they give is essential. Society is what we build together – and the more different types of people there are, the more complex and beautiful will be the structure we create. The important thing is that we build together. A nation is made by contributions, not claims; active citizenship, not rights; what we give, not what we demand. A national identity can be made out of the contributions of many cultures, many faiths. What matters is that together we build something none of us could make alone.”¹⁴⁴³

¹⁴³³ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 89

¹⁴³⁴ *Faith in the Future* p. 116

¹⁴³⁵ *Celebrating Life* p. 111

¹⁴³⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 116

¹⁴³⁷ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 83

¹⁴³⁸ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 26

¹⁴³⁹ *The Home We Build Together* p. 5

¹⁴⁴⁰ *The Home We Build Together* p. 84

¹⁴⁴¹ *The Home We Build Together* p. 87

¹⁴⁴² *The Home We Build Together* p. 138

¹⁴⁴³ *The Home We Build Together* p. 140

- ❖ “What the great religions understand is that society is larger than the state. Politics depends on pre-political virtues, nurtured in non-political environments: the family, the community, the congregation. These are where we first discover the give and take of reciprocity and the healing power of love and forgiveness. They are where we learn to negotiate the tensions between independence and inter-dependence. They are the matrix of the larger ‘We’ that makes possible the ‘I’. They are where we acquire moral intelligence. Without families, communities and friends, society becomes a mere aggregation of individuals, ‘the lonely crowd’, without trust or grace or meaning; without hope.”¹⁴⁴⁴
- ❖ “What then is society? It is where we set aside all considerations of wealth and power and value people for what they are and what they give. It is where Jew and Christian, Muslim and Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh, can come together, bound by their commonalities, enlarged by their differences. It is where we join in civil conversation about the kind of society we wish to create for the sake of our grandchildren not yet born. It is where we share an overarching identity, a first language of citizenship, despite our different second languages of ethnicity or faith. It is where strangers can become friends. It is not a vehicle of salvation, but it is the most effective form yet devised for respectful coexistence. Society is the home we build together when we bring our several gifts to the common good.”¹⁴⁴⁵
- ❖ “When a society loses its religion it tends not to last very long thereafter. It discovers that having severed the ropes that moor its morality to something transcendent, all it has left is relativism, and relativism is incapable of defending anything, including itself.”¹⁴⁴⁶
- ❖ “Read the Torah and you will immediately note that it is not a formula for the salvation of the soul or the acquisition of inner peace. It is about welfare and the treatment of employees, war and the conduct of an army, justice and the impartial application of the law, charity and the alleviation of poverty. It is about the construction of a society – and a society needs a land.”¹⁴⁴⁷
- ❖ “A free society is a moral achievement.”¹⁴⁴⁸
- ❖ “Societal freedom cannot be sustained by market economics and liberal democratic politics alone. It needs a third element: morality, a concern for the welfare of others, an active commitment to justice and compassion, a willingness to ask not just what is good for me but what is good for all-of-us-together. It is about ‘Us’, not ‘Me’; about ‘We’, not ‘I’.”¹⁴⁴⁹
- ❖ “Society is constituted by a shared morality.”¹⁴⁵⁰
- ❖ “Nations are enriched by diversity, and integrated diversity coexists with a shared national identity. The best way I have found of putting it is: By being what we uniquely are, we contribute to society what only we can give. That is a way of being Christian or Hindu or Muslim or Jewish while being proud to be English. And precisely because of the rise of the far right to meet the newly resurgent far left, it becomes very urgent indeed that we recall George Orwell’s fundamental distinction between patriotism and nationalism. Nationalism, which he opposed, is “inseparable from the will to power.” Its abiding purpose is to secure ever more prestige for the nation: “Nationalism is power hunger

¹⁴⁴⁴ *The Home We Build Together* pp. 225-226

¹⁴⁴⁵ *The Home We Build Together* p. 240

¹⁴⁴⁶ *The Great Partnership* p. 2

¹⁴⁴⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 61

¹⁴⁴⁸ *Morality* p. 1

¹⁴⁴⁹ *Morality* p. 1

¹⁴⁵⁰ *Morality* p. 12

tempered by self-deception.” Patriotism, by contrast, he defined as “devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life, which one believes to be the best in the world but has no wish to force upon other people.” Without patriotism, a cohesive sense of belonging and identity is impossible. But patriotism belongs to civil society—that is, to the moral community whose shared values we live by as citizens. If there is no such thing as a national moral community, if civil society atrophies and dies while all that is left are the competitive arenas of the market and the state, then liberal democracy is in danger. Identity politics is a symptom of the breakdown of national identities and the institutions of civil society. Lose the moral basis of society and you will then have what Hobbes described as “the general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death.” That is no recipe for the collective grace of a free society.”¹⁴⁵¹

- ❖ “When individual feelings (negative self-image) become part of the self-definition of the group, and when groups call for remedial action by the state, then *identity politics* or the *politics of recognition* is born. This is at the heart of contemporary multiculturalism and constitutes its greatest danger.”¹⁴⁵²

SONG OF SONGS

- ❖ “The Song of Songs, a duet scored for two young lovers, each delighting in the other, longing for one another’s presence, is one of the central books of Tanakh and the key that unlocks the rest. It is about love as the holy of holies of human life. It is about the love of Israel for God and God for Israel, and the fact that it is written as the story of two young and human lovers is also fundamental, for it tells us that to separate human and divine love is to allocate one to the body, the other to the soul, is a false distinction. Love is the energy God has planted in the human heart, redeeming us from narcissism and solipsism, making the human or divine Other no less real to me than I am to myself, thus grounding our being in that-which-is-not-me. One cannot love God without loving all that is good in the human situation. Love creates. Love reveals. Love redeems. Love is the connection between God and us. That is the faith of Judaism, and if we do not understand this we will not understand it at all. We will, for example, fail to realize that the demands God makes of His people through the prophets are expressions of love, that what Einstein called Judaism’s “almost fanatical love of justice” is about love no less than justice, that the Torah is God’s marriage contract with the Jewish people, and the mitzvot are all invitations to love: “I see You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commands” (Ps. 119:10).”¹⁴⁵³
- ❖ “In Judaism there is no renunciation of the physical: no monasteries, convents, celibacy or other asceticisms of the flesh. In this context, the Song of Songs is a restatement of the case for *eros*. It is not passion that corrupts, but power. The two lovers sing of a love that is faith, not faithlessness. Their songs evoke the innocence of Eden before the sin. They seek to escape from the city to the garden, the hills, the countryside. This is love as it might

¹⁴⁵¹ *Morality* p. 143

¹⁴⁵² *Morality* p. 207

¹⁴⁵³ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 225

have been without the serpent, love that is as strong as death, love like purifying fire. The Song of Songs is about the power of love purged of the love of power.”¹⁴⁵⁴

SPEECH & WORDS

- ❖ “We cannot edit God out of the language and leave our social world unchanged.”¹⁴⁵⁵
- ❖ “Just as we’re concerned about the purity of the air we breathe and the water we drink, so we should care about the clarity of the words we speak. Waffle, obfuscation and impenetrable jargon are to communication what global warming is to the earth’s atmosphere. Debase language and you erode the very environment of thought.”¹⁴⁵⁶
- ❖ “Judaism is a religion of holy words, because it believes in a transcendental God, a God who cannot be seen, felt, touched, represented in images or icons, a God beyond the universe unlike anything within the universe. The only ultimate connection between an infinite God and finite human beings is language. In revelation God speaks to us. In prayer we speak to God. Language is the narrow bridge across the abyss between soul and soul, whether the relationship is between two people, or between myself and the Self of the universe. Language is the redemption of solitude.”¹⁴⁵⁷
- ❖ “Just as God makes the natural world by words (“And God said... and there was”) so we make the human world by words, which is why Judaism takes words so seriously.”¹⁴⁵⁸
- ❖ “Words hurt. Words harm. Verbal injuries may cut deeper even than physical injuries. They tear the fabric of society. They damage relationships and destroy trust – and without trust, no society can survive.”¹⁴⁵⁹
- ❖ “Judaism, like other religions, has holy places, holy people, sacred times, and consecrated rituals. What made Judaism different, however, is that it is supremely *a religion of holy words*.”¹⁴⁶⁰
- ❖ “*God created the natural universe with words. We create – and sometimes destroy – the social universe with words.*”¹⁴⁶¹
- ❖ “*Speech is what holds society together.*”¹⁴⁶²
- ❖ “The word lives and gives life to the people who dedicate their life to the word.”¹⁴⁶³
- ❖ “Judaism is a religion of words, and yet whenever the language of Judaism aspires to the spiritual it breaks into song, as if the words themselves sought to escape from the gravitational pull of finite meanings.”¹⁴⁶⁴

¹⁴⁵⁴ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 234

¹⁴⁵⁵ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 28

¹⁴⁵⁶ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 107

¹⁴⁵⁷ *Future Tense* pp. 185-186

¹⁴⁵⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 25

¹⁴⁵⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 193

¹⁴⁶⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 202

¹⁴⁶¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 203

¹⁴⁶² *Essays on Ethics* p. 181

¹⁴⁶³ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 30

¹⁴⁶⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 308

- ❖ “The way we use words shapes our social environment. Speaking negatively about others harms them, harms us, and damages the delicate strands of relationship that constitute our common life.”¹⁴⁶⁵
- ❖ “If you want to change lives, speak to people’s feelings, not just to their minds. Enter their fears and calm them. Understand their anxieties and allay them. Kindle their hopes and instruct them. Raise their sights and enlarge them. Humans are more than algorithms. We are emotion-driven beings. Speak from the heart to the heart, and mind and deed will follow.”¹⁴⁶⁶
- ❖ “Words create. Words communicate. Our relationships are shaped, for good or bad, by language. Much of Judaism is about the power of words to make or break worlds.”¹⁴⁶⁷
- ❖ “If we are truly in awe at the greatness of God, the vastness of the universe, and the almost infinite extent of time, our deepest emotions will indeed lie too deep for words. We will experience silent communion.”¹⁴⁶⁸
- ❖ “Words create moral obligations, and moral obligations, undertaken responsibly and honoured faithfully, create the possibility of a free society.”¹⁴⁶⁹
- ❖ “Judaism’s sages were eloquent on the dangers of what they called evil speech, by which they meant derogatory, demeaning or offensive words. They called this a cardinal sin and said that it destroys three people, the one who says it, the one he says it against and the one who listens. Words injure; they hurt; they wound. And every new technology that allows us to share words more widely calls for the renewed insistence on the ethics of communication. Free speech does not mean speech that costs nothing. It means speech that respects the freedom and dignity of others. Forget this and free speech will prove to be very expensive indeed.”¹⁴⁷⁰
- ❖ “Of the 6,000 languages spoken throughout the world today, only one is truly universal: the language of tears.”¹⁴⁷¹
- ❖ “I believe we need the laws of *lashon hara* now more than almost ever before. Social media is awash with hate. The language of politics has become *ad hominem* and vile. We seem to have forgotten the messages that Tazria and Metzora teach: that evil speech is a plague. It destroys relationships, rides roughshod over people’s feelings, debases the public square, turns politics into a jousting match between competing egos and defiles all that is sacred about our common life. It need not be like this.”¹⁴⁷²

SPIRITUALITY

- ❖ “Jewish spirituality, at least since rabbinic times, finds its most significant context at the level neither of the individual nor the state, but in a series of settings midway between

¹⁴⁶⁵ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 150

¹⁴⁶⁶ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* pp. 301-302

¹⁴⁶⁷ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 176

¹⁴⁶⁸ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 177

¹⁴⁶⁹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 227

¹⁴⁷⁰ *The Power of Ideas* p. 28

¹⁴⁷¹ *The Power of Ideas* p. 137

¹⁴⁷² *I Believe* p. 163

them, namely, the family, the *bet ha-midrash* and *bet ha-knesset* – the fellowships of learning and praying – and the *kehillah*, the community.”¹⁴⁷³

- ❖ “Spirituality is the poetry of the soul. Religion is the prose. Spirituality is the direct encounter with God. Religion is the behaviour we adopt when we express ourselves of belonging to a group who, at a key point in its history, encountered the Divine. You can be spiritual without being religious. You can be religious without being spiritual. It is almost like the distinction between love and marriage. Love is an emotion. Marriage is an institution. They are linked, but they are not the same.”¹⁴⁷⁴
- ❖ “Physically, we are almost nothing; spiritually, we are brushed by the wings of eternity. We have a Godly soul.”¹⁴⁷⁵
- ❖ “Secular Israelis are wrong in thinking that secular Israelis are secular. They are *maaminim bnei maaminim*, “believers, the children of believers,” who have simply not yet encountered a Judaism that speaks to them.”¹⁴⁷⁶
- ❖ “There are saintly people for whom spirituality comes as easily as did music to Mozart. But God does not reach out only to saints. He reaches out to all of us.”¹⁴⁷⁷
- ❖ “Spirituality is not the same as “religion,” though the two are related. In essence spirituality is what happens when we open ourselves to something greater than ourselves.”¹⁴⁷⁸
- ❖ “Not everyone is a master of Jewish law, but spirituality is engraved in all our souls.”¹⁴⁷⁹
- ❖ “There is, undeniably, something of a crisis in Jewish spirituality today.”¹⁴⁸⁰
- ❖ “Sometimes our deepest spiritual experiences come when we least expect them, when we are closest to despair. It is then that the masks we wear are stripped away. We are at our point of maximum vulnerability – and it is then we are most fully open to God that God is most fully open to us.”¹⁴⁸¹
- ❖ “Alleviating poverty, curing disease, ensuring the rule of law, and respect for human rights: these are spiritual tasks no less than prayer and Torah study. To be sure, the latter are higher, but the former are prior. People cannot hear God’s message if their spirit is broken and their labour harsh.”¹⁴⁸²
- ❖ “Though there are undoubtedly principles of Jewish faith, when it comes to spirituality there is no single normative Jewish approach... There are norms about how to act as Jews. But there are few about how to think and feel as Jews.”¹⁴⁸³
- ❖ “The beauty of Jewish spirituality is precisely that in Judaism, God is close. You don’t need to climb a mountain or enter an ashram to find the Divine Presence. It is there around the table at a Shabbat meal, in the light of the candles, and the simple holiness of the Kiddush wine, and the challot, in the praise of the *Eishet Hayil*, and the blessing of children, in the peace of mind that comes when you leave the world to look after itself for a day while you

¹⁴⁷³ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 168

¹⁴⁷⁴ *Celebrating Life* p. 164

¹⁴⁷⁵ *Essays on Ethics* p. 155

¹⁴⁷⁶ *A Judaism Engaged with the World* p. 24

¹⁴⁷⁷ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 38

¹⁴⁷⁸ *Studies in Spirituality* p. xvii

¹⁴⁷⁹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. xviii

¹⁴⁸⁰ *Studies in Spirituality* p. xviii

¹⁴⁸¹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 31

¹⁴⁸² *Studies in Spirituality* p. 73

¹⁴⁸³ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 92

celebrate the good things that come not from working but resting, not from buying but enjoying, the gifts you have had all along but did not have time to appreciate.”¹⁴⁸⁴

STORY

- ❖ “The single most important challenge facing the Jewish people, in Israel and the Diaspora, is to recover the Jewish story.”¹⁴⁸⁵
- ❖ “I do not believe Jews have a monopoly of wisdom. Yet I was born a Jew, and I cannot betray the hundred generations of my ancestors who lived as Jews and were prepared to die as Jews, who handed their values on to their children, and they to theirs, so that one day their descendants might be free to live their faith without fear, and be a source of inspiration to others, not because Jews are any better than anyone else, but because that is our story, our heritage, our task, to be a source of hope against a world of despair.”¹⁴⁸⁶
- ❖ “Identity, which is always particular, is based on story, the narrative that links me to the past, guides me in the present, and places on me responsibility for the future.”¹⁴⁸⁷
- ❖ “Storytelling is the great vehicle of moral education. It was the Torah’s insight that a people who told their children the story of freedom and its responsibilities would stay free for as long as humankind lives and breathes and hopes.”¹⁴⁸⁸
- ❖ “The greatest gift we can give our children is not money or possessions, but a story – a real story, not a fantasy, one that connects them to us and to a rich heritage of high ideals. We are not particles of dust blown this way or that by the passing winds of fad or fashion. We are heirs to a story that inspired a hundred generations of our ancestors and eventually transformed the Western world. What you forget, you lose. The West is forgetting its story. We must never forget ours.”¹⁴⁸⁹
- ❖ “Those who tell the story of their past have already begun to build their children’s future.”¹⁴⁹⁰
- ❖ “The only way to stay young, hungry, and driven is through periodic renewal, reminding ourselves of where we came from, where we are going, and why. To what ideals are we committed? What journey are we called upon to continue? Of what story are we a part?”¹⁴⁹¹
- ❖ “*We are the story we tell ourselves.* There is an intrinsic, perhaps necessary, link between narrative and identity. In the words of the thinker who did more than most to place this idea at the centre of contemporary thought, Alasdair MacIntyre, “Man is in his actions and practice, as well as in his fictions, essentially a storytelling animal.” We come to know who we are by discovering of which story or stories we are a part. Jerome Bruner has persuasively argued that narrative is central to the construction of meaning, and meaning is what makes the human condition human. No computer needs to be persuaded of its purpose in life before it does what it is supposed to do. Genes need no motivational

¹⁴⁸⁴ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 281

¹⁴⁸⁵ *Future Tense* p. 18

¹⁴⁸⁶ *Future Tense* p. 262

¹⁴⁸⁷ *Essays on Ethics* p. 94

¹⁴⁸⁸ *Essays on Ethics* p. 95

¹⁴⁸⁹ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 80

¹⁴⁹⁰ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 277

¹⁴⁹¹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 287

encouragement. No virus needs a coach. We do not have to enter their mindset to understand what they do and how they do it, because they do not have a mindset to enter. But humans do. We act in the present because of things we did or that happened to us in the past, and in order to realise a sought-for future. Even minimally to explain what we are doing is already to tell a story.”¹⁴⁹²

- ❖ “If we are the story we tell about ourselves, then as long as we never lose the story, we will never lose our identity.”¹⁴⁹³

STRANGER

- ❖ “The Bible commands us only once to love our neighbour. But it never tires of urging us to love the stranger. To have faith in God as creator and ruler of the universe is to do more than to believe that God has spoken to us. It is to believe that God has spoken to others, in a language which we may not understand.”¹⁴⁹⁴
- ❖ “The Hebrew Bible contains the great command, ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself’ (Leviticus 19:18), and this has often been taken as the basis of biblical morality. But it is not: it is only part of it. The Jewish sages noted that on only one occasion does the Hebrew Bible command us to love our neighbour, but in thirty-seven places it commands us to love the stranger. Our neighbour is one we love because he is like ourselves. The stranger is one we are taught to love precisely because he is not like ourselves.”¹⁴⁹⁵
- ❖ “Places of worship are about turning strangers into friends.”¹⁴⁹⁶
- ❖ “It is easy to love our neighbour. It is difficult to love the stranger. This is why the Torah commands us only one to love our neighbour, but on thirty-six occasions commands us to love the stranger. A neighbour is one we love because he is like us. A stranger is one we are taught to love precisely because he is not like us. That is the Torah’s repeated and most powerful command. I believe it to be the greatest religious truth articulated in the past four thousand years.”¹⁴⁹⁷
- ❖ “A world that cannot live with strangers is a world not yet redeemed.”¹⁴⁹⁸
- ❖ “For Judaism the greatest spiritual challenge is not so much finding God within oneself as finding God within the other, the stranger.”¹⁴⁹⁹
- ❖ “The global age has turned our world into a society of strangers. That is not a threat to faith but a call to a faith larger and more demanding than we had sometimes supposed it to be.”¹⁵⁰⁰

¹⁴⁹² *I Believe* pp. 86-87

¹⁴⁹³ *I Believe* p. 88

¹⁴⁹⁴ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 106

¹⁴⁹⁵ *Faith in the Future* p. 78

¹⁴⁹⁶ *Celebrating Life* p. 146

¹⁴⁹⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 92

¹⁴⁹⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 93

¹⁴⁹⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 96

¹⁵⁰⁰ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 17

- ❖ “We encounter God in the face of a stranger. That, I believe, is the Hebrew Bible’s single greatest and most counterintuitive contribution to ethics. God creates difference; therefore it is in one-who-is-different that we meet God.”¹⁵⁰¹
- ❖ “The knowledge that we are strangers teaches us to reach beyond the boundary of 'us' and extend friendship and reciprocity to 'them'. The knowledge, too, that the earth is not ours, that we are temporary residents, heirs of those who came before us and guardians for those who will come after us in turn, steers us away from the destructive impulse which may sometimes come to those who have no stake in a future beyond their lifetime.”¹⁵⁰²
- ❖ “It is not difficult to love your neighbour as yourself because in many respects your neighbour is like yourself. He or she belongs to the same nation, the same culture, the same economy, the same political dispensation, the same fate of peace or war. We are part of the same community of fate, and we participate in the same common good. What is difficult is *loving the stranger*.”¹⁵⁰³

SUKKOT

- ❖ “In a way not shared by any other festival, Sukkot celebrates the dual nature of Jewish faith: the *universality of God* and the *particularity of Jewish existence*.”¹⁵⁰⁴
- ❖ “Sukkot is the festival of insecurity. It is the festival of a people who know they will never be entirely safe, surrounded as they are by larger, stronger nations, assaulted as they have so often been for having the courage to be different. Sitting in the sukka, *betzila demehemnuta*, “under the shadow of faith” (*Zohar, Emor* 103a), is all the security we need.”¹⁵⁰⁵

SYNAGOGUE

- ❖ “The synagogue had the most profound political and spiritual consequences. It turned Jews from a people defined by territory into that rarest of phenomena, a global nation.”¹⁵⁰⁶
- ❖ “The synagogue was Jerusalem in exile, a country of the mind, the place where the prayers of a scattered people met and temporarily reunited them across time and space. The *bet knesset* was the home of a homeless nation, the centre of its collective life, and when the second Temple was destroyed, it sustained them as a nation through the longest exile any people has ever suffered and survived.”¹⁵⁰⁷
- ❖ “The synagogue was one of Jewry’s greatest creations. It sustained the Jewish people through almost two thousand years of exile. It kept them together as the only nation ever to survive an extended period without a land, a country or political power, dispersed throughout the world. It was their spiritual home, educational citadel and welfare centre,

¹⁵⁰¹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 59

¹⁵⁰² *The Dignity of Difference* p. 81

¹⁵⁰³ *Not in God's Name* p. 181

¹⁵⁰⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* pp. 350-351

¹⁵⁰⁵ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 139

¹⁵⁰⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 151

¹⁵⁰⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 151

and it connected them to all other Jews through time and space. Wherever ten Jews gathered and formed a community, it was as if they were the entire Jewish people in microcosm. Wherever they sat and studied it was as if they were back at Sinai.”¹⁵⁰⁸

- ❖ “By building communities around the synagogue in space, and the Sabbath in time, Jews became the living circle at whose centre is God.”¹⁵⁰⁹
- ❖ “Only a monotheistic people could have invented the synagogue. Other ancient gods were territorial. They were the gods of this land, not that. But the God of Abraham, creator of heaven and earth, was the God of everywhere. Therefore he could be reached anywhere.”¹⁵¹⁰
- ❖ “One of the striking differences between the synagogues and the cathedrals of the Middle Ages [is that] *in a cathedral you sense the vastness of God and the smallness of humankind. But in the Altneuschul in Prague or the synagogues of the Ari and Rabbi Joseph Karo in Safed, you sense the closeness of God and the potential greatness of humankind.*”¹⁵¹¹

TECHNOLOGY & SOCIAL MEDIA

- ❖ “New communication technologies make possible new modes of relationship, new social, economic and political structures, and thus new ways of understanding the human situation under God.”¹⁵¹²
- ❖ “Information technology has not only transformational possibilities but also deep ethical implications. Worldwide, the number of children - girls especially – who lack adequate education is a scandal. It means that most will remain disadvantaged throughout their lives. Schools, curricula, the training of teachers, the provision of computers, and low cost downloading of information should be key forms of international aid and voluntary assistance to developing countries. No other single intervention offers greater prospects of enhancing economic opportunities for everyone, and for moving us forward in the long, hard journey to universal human dignity.”¹⁵¹³
- ❖ “Every technological civilization faces two opposing dangers. One is the hubris that says: we have godlike powers, therefore let us take the place of God. The other is the fear that says: in the name of God, let us not use these godlike powers at all. Both are wrong. Each technological advance carries with it the possibility of diminishing or enhancing human dignity. What matters is how we use it. The way to use it is in covenant with God, honouring His image that is mankind.”¹⁵¹⁴
- ❖ “Every technology can be used for good or evil, which is why the greater our scientific knowledge, the stronger must our ethics be.”¹⁵¹⁵
- ❖ “Global communications, especially the internet, have in effect abolished space, or at least our experience of space. Yet the nation state was predicated on space. It was a political-

¹⁵⁰⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* pgs. 154-155

¹⁵⁰⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 155

¹⁵¹⁰ *Future Tense* p. 39

¹⁵¹¹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 107

¹⁵¹² *The Dignity of Difference* p. 136

¹⁵¹³ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 141

¹⁵¹⁴ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 172

¹⁵¹⁵ *From Optimism to Hope* p. 122

social-economic-cultural phenomenon that thought together a group of people, however heterogeneous, because they lived in the same region. They might be quite different, but they were neighbours. They occupied the same territory. They shared the same language. They lived under the same political system. They were part of the same economy. When my family came to Britain, they were opting to share its fate. They were sacrificing their past for the sake of what they saw as a better future. They were moving home. Today, thanks to globalization and the ease and low real cost of travel, no one has to make that choice any more. What then becomes of identity? Britain is where we are, but in what sense is it who we are? Citizens of the world, we no longer have a sense of the local, which is where identity begins. The nation state is fragmenting before our eyes. What, in such a world, is the meaning of the word 'home'?"¹⁵¹⁶

- ❖ "The new technologies, by uniting people globally, divide people locally. They strengthen non-national affiliations. They can make people feel more Hindu or Muslim or Jewish than British. They turn ethnic minorities into 'diasporas', people whose home and heart is elsewhere. They amplify fear and erode trust. They simplify issues and weaken the politics of nuance and compromise."¹⁵¹⁷
- ❖ "Social media has an enormously positive role to play in allowing people to stay in touch with one another, share experiences and knowledge, and enhance interactions within a real community. But real interpersonal friendship needs an investment of time, intimacy, and a degree of privacy."¹⁵¹⁸
- ❖ "Social media have played a significant part in the move from 'We' to 'I'. In the world they create, I am on the stage, bidding for attention, while others form my audience. This is not how character is made, nor is it how we develop as moral agents. Morality is born when I focus on you, not me; when I discover that you, too, have emotions, desires, aspirations and fears. I learn this by being present to you and allowing you to be present to me. It is this deeply subtle interaction that we learn slowly and patiently through ongoing conversations with family, friends, peers, teachers, mentors and others. We develop empathy and sympathy. We learn that what it is to receive acts of kindness and then to reciprocate them. Morality is about engaging with the raw human vulnerabilities of others that lie beneath the carefully burnished image, and about our ability to heal some of the pain. I learn to be moral when I develop the capacity to put myself into your place, and that is a skill I only learn by engaging with you, face to face or side by side."¹⁵¹⁹
- ❖ "We can communicate instantly across the globe but often find it difficult to chat with our next-door neighbor."¹⁵²⁰

TERROR/TERRORISM

¹⁵¹⁶ *The Home We Build Together* p. 8

¹⁵¹⁷ *The Home We Build Together* p. 72

¹⁵¹⁸ *Morality* p. 58

¹⁵¹⁹ *Morality* p. 59

¹⁵²⁰ *Morality* p. 86

- ❖ “Terror is the epitome of idolatry. Its language is force, its principle to kill those with whom you disagree. That is the oldest and most primitive form of conflict resolution. It is the way of Cain. If anything is evil, terror is.”¹⁵²¹
- ❖ “The victims of terror are not only the dead and injured, but the very values on which a free society is built: trust, security, civil liberty, tolerance, the willingness of countries to open their doors to asylum seekers, the gracious safety of public places.”¹⁵²²
- ❖ “Religiously motivated terror desecrates and defames religion itself. It is sacrilege against God and the life he endowed with his image.”¹⁵²³
- ❖ “Terror is not a justifiable means to an acceptable end, because it does not end.”¹⁵²⁴
- ❖ “Terror fails and will always fail because it arouses in us a profound instinct for life.”¹⁵²⁵

TESHUVA (REPENTANCE)

- ❖ “Teshuva insists that we can liberate ourselves from our past, defy predictions of our future, by a single act of turning . . . as long as we do it now”¹⁵²⁶
- ❖ “There is no precise English translation of *teshuva*, which means by “return” – homecoming, a physical act; and “repentance” – remorse, a change of heart and deed, a spiritual act. The reason the Hebrew word means both is because, for the Torah, sin leads to exile. Adam and Eve, after they have sinned, were exiled from the Garden of Eden. Cain, after he had murdered his brother, was punished by being sentenced to eternal exile (Gen. 4:12). The idea of justice in the Torah is based on the principle of *mida keneged mida*, “measure for measure.” A sin, *bet*, is an act in the wrong place. The result, *galut*, is that the agent finds himself in the wrong place. Sin disturbs the moral harmony of the universe.”¹⁵²⁷
- ❖ “God forgives. That one fact rescues life from tragedy. The sages said that God created repentance before He created humanity (*Nedarim* 39b). What they meant was that God, in creating humanity and endowing the human person with free will, knew that we would make mistakes. We are not angels. We stumble, we sin. We are dust of the earth and to dust we will one day return. Without repentance and forgiveness, the human condition would be unbearable. Therefore God, creating humanity, created the possibility of repentance, meaning that when we acknowledge our failings, we are forgiven. Exile is not an immutable fate. Returning to God, we find Him returning to us. We can restore the moral harmony of the universe.”¹⁵²⁸
- ❖ “*Teshuva* tells us that our past does not determine our future. We can change. We can act differently next time than last. If anything, our future determines our past.”¹⁵²⁹
- ❖ “*Teshuva* means I can take risks, knowing that I may fail but knowing that failure is not final. Time and again Moses failed to engender in his people a clear sense of history and

¹⁵²¹ *Not in God's Name* p. 265

¹⁵²² *Not in God's Name* pp. 265-266

¹⁵²³ *Not in God's Name* p. 266

¹⁵²⁴ *Not in God's Name* p. 266

¹⁵²⁵ *The Power of Ideas* p. 68

¹⁵²⁶ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* pp. 203-204

¹⁵²⁷ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 11

¹⁵²⁸ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 11

¹⁵²⁹ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 20

destiny, even a basic gratitude for what God had done for them. But failing a hundred times does not make a failure. Indeed in God's eyes none of us is a failure so long as we still have breath to breathe and a life to live. *Teshuva* means that if I get it wrong and make mistakes, God does not lose faith in me even though I may lose faith in myself...That along is a life-changing fact if we fully open ourselves to its implications. *Teshuva* means that the past is not irredeemable... [it] means that from every mistake, I grow. There is no failure I experience that does not make me a deeper human being; no challenge I accept, however much I fall short, that does not develop in me strengths I would not otherwise have had.”¹⁵³⁰

- ❖ “Each year for the twenty-two years that I was Chief Rabbi, I was given the privilege by the BBC of making a television program to be broadcast around the time of the Jewish New Year. The idea of the program was to deliver as far as possible a universal message—obviously so, since the Jewish community in Britain is so small, and in any case a large section of the British public is not religious at all. This presented a challenge each year. How do you translate religious concepts into a language and sensibility that is deeply secular? In particular, one year, I wanted to explain to viewers the important but difficult ideas of repentance and behavioral change that are at the heart of the Judeo-Christian ethic. How could you do so without religious terminology or iconography? In the end, I realized that the best way of doing so was through the idea of addiction. We know how much harm we do to ourselves when we become addicted to alcohol, drugs, or other such activity like gambling. But it is extremely difficult to wean ourselves away from such habits, however self-destructive they are. What has to happen is something very like repentance. First, you have to realize you are doing something wrong. Second, you have to make something like a public admission of this. Third, you have to commit to behavioral change, however hard that may be. Weaning yourself off addictive drugs was the nearest I could come to weaning yourself from bad habits and wrong deeds. So I spent a day with a group of eighteen-year-old heroin addicts. It was a wrenching experience. Most of them came from broken and abusive homes. They had not had a fair chance in life, and my heart went out to all of them. If I had been in their situation, I am not sure I would have had the strength to avoid falling into some kind of drug- or alcohol-induced oblivion. The director of the center was an amazing young woman who seemed to be able to inspire behavioral change in these wounded but lovely individuals. I asked her, simply, “What is it that you give them that gives them the strength to change?” I will never forget her reply. “We are the first people they have met who give them unconditional love,” she began. That was something I expected: that is what faith is about, religious or otherwise. It was her next statement that shook me. “We are the first people they have met who care enough about them to say, ‘No.’” A shiver went down my spine. Sometimes the fate of a life depends on the ability to say and hear the word No.”¹⁵³¹
- ❖ “Sometimes we find our life is on the wrong track, not because of a specific sin, but because we have an overall sense of being lost. *Teshuva* means coming home to God.”¹⁵³²

¹⁵³⁰ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 88

¹⁵³¹ *Morality* pp. 156-157

¹⁵³² *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* p. 162

THE STATE

- ❖ “In Judaism the state exists to serve the individual; the individual does not exist to serve the state.”¹⁵³³
- ❖ “The state is about power. Families and communities are about people. They are about personal relationships and lifting one another from depression and despair. When these are lost from civil society, they cannot be outsourced to the state. The state is and must be impersonal. Therefore it cannot help when the damage is deeply personal. The strength of the Anglo-American model as it evolved in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was that it did not rely exclusively on the state. Whether in churches, friendly societies, trade unions, or ethnic enclaves, people helped one another at a local level, in often life-changing ways. The “We” made the “I” stronger, because it showed people what they could achieve by working together without relying wholly on the state. When there is only the state, people’s expectations are not and cannot be fully met. Rights are increasingly thought of as entitlements at the very time that the “We,” the feeling of collective responsibility, has grown weaker. The result is the secession of the successful: the rich who separate themselves off and do not recognize any special responsibility to the poor.”¹⁵³⁴

TIKKUN OLAM

- ❖ “We cannot fulfil the mandate of *tikkun olam* by talking only to ourselves.”¹⁵³⁵
- ❖ “The challenge of *tikkun olam* – of knowing which issues to address, which strategic interventions to make – calls for a prophetic sensibility, meaning, the ability to hear, within God’s word for all time, the particular resonance for *this* time.”¹⁵³⁶
- ❖ “*Tikkun olam*, that vast and majestic aspiration, in the end comes down to this: that each of us, by the integrity with which we conduct our business or professional lives, the grace and gentleness we bring to our relationships, the beauty that radiates from our homes, the way we use words to heal, not harm, bears witness to the Divine presence, the shekhinah, that exists wherever we make space for it, flooding this transitory life with momentary radiance and giving us as much of an intimation as we will see of a world where heaven and the human spirit touch.”¹⁵³⁷
- ❖ “God teaches, man acts, and together they begin the task of *tikkun olam*, ‘repairing, or mending, the world’.”¹⁵³⁸
- ❖ “Though a vast distance separates the infinity of God from the finitude of man, something unites us, the moral enterprise of perfecting the world, in respect of which we are ‘partners of the Holy One, blessed be He, in the work of creation’”¹⁵³⁹

¹⁵³³ *Not in God’s Name* p. 228

¹⁵³⁴ *Morality* p. 126

¹⁵³⁵ *Jewish Action* Fall 5760/1999

¹⁵³⁶ *Tikkun Olam: Perfecting God’s World*

¹⁵³⁷ *Tikkun Olam: Perfecting God’s World*

¹⁵³⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* pp. 57-58

¹⁵³⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 52

- ❖ “*Tikkun olam* involves the recognition that the world does need repair, rather than Stoic acceptance of ascetic denial.”¹⁵⁴⁰

TIME

- ❖ “Where other faiths, ancient and modern, saw religion as the flight from history into a world without time, Judaism saw time itself as the arena where God and mankind met.”¹⁵⁴¹
- ❖ “Some of Judaism’s most profound truths are to be found, not in texts but in time, in the Jewish calendar itself.”¹⁵⁴²
- ❖ “Jewish time is not linear but something more profound. I call it covenantal time. This is time, not as continuous advance, but as a narrative with a beginning and a distant end, in whose midst we are and whose twists and turns continue to surprise us.”¹⁵⁴³
- ❖ “There are all sorts of inequalities in the world, but there’s one thing we all have equally, and that’s time itself. Whether we’re rich or poor, there are still only twenty-four hours in the day; 365 days in the year; and a span of life that’s all too short.”¹⁵⁴⁴
- ❖ “Whether in literature or in life, there is an intrinsic connection between time and meaning. The same series of events that once seemed mere happenstance becomes, with hindsight, the unfolding of a script.”¹⁵⁴⁵
- ❖ “Jewish time always faces an open future. The last chapter is not yet written. The messiah has not yet come. Until then, the story continues – and we, together with God, are its co-authors.”¹⁵⁴⁶
- ❖ “The Hebrew Bible is the first document to see time as an arena of change. Tomorrow need not be the same as yesterday. There is nothing given, eternal and immutable about the way we construct societies and live our lives together. Time is not a series of moments traced on the face of a watch, always moving yet always the same. Instead it is a journey with a starting point and a destination, or a story with a beginning, middle and end. Each moment has a meaning, which can only be grasped if we understand where we have come from and where we are going to. This is time not as it is in nature but as it is in history. The Hebrew prophets were the first to see God in history.”¹⁵⁴⁷
- ❖ “Time management is more than management and larger than time. It is about life itself... However rich we are, there are still only twenty-four hours in a day, seven days in a week, and a span of years that, however long, is still all too short. Whoever we are, whatever we do... the single most important fact about our life, on which all else depends, is how we spend our time.”¹⁵⁴⁸

¹⁵⁴⁰ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 81

¹⁵⁴¹ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 28

¹⁵⁴² *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 67

¹⁵⁴³ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* p. 80

¹⁵⁴⁴ *From Optimism to Hope* pp. 85-86

¹⁵⁴⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 281

¹⁵⁴⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 353

¹⁵⁴⁷ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 215

¹⁵⁴⁸ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 169

TORAH

- ❖ “If Torah does not inspire even irreligious Jews, then irreligious Jews will not come closer to Torah. If it does not make women feel included, then we will have excluded them. If Torah is not allowed to speak with its true stature, then the rabbis and teachers we produce will not have their true stature. And if Torah is ideologized, politicized, and used to delegitimize other Jews who also believe in and care for Torah, then it will bring not peace but conflict to the world.”¹⁵⁴⁹
- ❖ “That is the challenge... to teach every Jew, left, right, and center, to find his or her place in Torah.”¹⁵⁵⁰
- ❖ “Whatever is the condition of Jews today, it is not what was expected. One example: In the early summer of this year, twenty thousand Jews gathered in Madison Square Garden to celebrate the completion of a seven year cycle of Talmud study. Not obviously an epoch-making event, until we recall that little over a century earlier, one of the greatest Jewish scholars of his day, Leopold Zunz, had predicted that by the twentieth century there would be no one left to understand a rabbinic text... The trajectory mapped out by Judaism in the late twentieth century has run counter to prediction.”¹⁵⁵¹
- ❖ “For Judaism God is to be found not in a person or a place but in words, the words of the Mosaic books, Torah in its narrow sense. Neither Moses, the greatest of the prophets, nor Sinai, the place of revelation, have intrinsic sanctity. They were the vehicles of revelation, not its embodiment. That description belongs to Torah alone.”¹⁵⁵²
- ❖ “The idea of ‘Torah from Heaven’ was, even before it was explicitly formulated, far more than a belief about the origin of a text. It was a belief about the origin of a destiny. ‘Torah from Heaven’ did more than negate the idea that a people was the author of its own texts. It reversed it. It suggested that the text was the author of the people.”¹⁵⁵³
- ❖ “Torah is the constitution of the covenant between God and Israel. As such it is a relational concept. It involves One who proposes the covenant and those who accept it as binding; One who commands, and those who are commanded. It embodies two ideas, the giving of the Torah and the receiving of the Torah.”¹⁵⁵⁴
- ❖ “Torah – not simply ‘that which is taught’ but the process of learning and teaching, the ongoing conversation between parents and children, teachers and disciples – is the oxygen which Judaism breathes.”¹⁵⁵⁵
- ❖ “The holiest object in Judaism is a Sefer Torah, a scroll of the law. Still written today as it was thousands of years ago, by hand with a quill on parchment, it symbolizes some of Judaism’s deepest beliefs: that God is to be found in words, that these words are to be found in the Torah, and that they form the basis of the covenant – the bond of love – between God and the Jewish people.”¹⁵⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴⁹ *Orthodoxy Confronts Modernity* p. 143

¹⁵⁵⁰ *Orthodoxy Confronts Modernity* p. 144

¹⁵⁵¹ *The Persistence of Faith* pp. 6, 7

¹⁵⁵² *Crisis and Covenant* p. 177

¹⁵⁵³ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 209

¹⁵⁵⁴ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 227

¹⁵⁵⁵ *Community of Faith* p. 127

¹⁵⁵⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 38

- ❖ “The Torah is no mere document, but the marriage contract between heaven and a people, the terms of their relationship, their bond of trust.”¹⁵⁵⁷
- ❖ “The Hebrew Bible, the Torah, is an unusual book. It is.. the unique endeavour to communicate the truths that can never be told as system; the truths that can only be told as story, handed on from parents to children, preserved not as a historical document but as a living memory, one that shapes the lives of successive generations as they continue to walk towards the promised land.”¹⁵⁵⁸
- ❖ “The word Torah means "teaching". God reveals Himself to mankind not in the storm, the wind, the sun, the rain, but in the voice that teaches, the words that instruct.”¹⁵⁵⁹
- ❖ “Every Jew is an equal citizen of the republic of faith because every Jew has access to its constitutional document, the Torah, and is literate in its provisions.”¹⁵⁶⁰
- ❖ “The story of the Jewish people, especially after the second Temple, is about one of the great love affairs of all time, the love of a people for a book, the Torah.”¹⁵⁶¹
- ❖ “In Judaism we not only learn to live; we live to learn. In study, we make Torah real in the mind so that we can make it actual in the world.”¹⁵⁶²
- ❖ “Torah is a commentary on life, and life is a commentary on Torah. Together they constitute a conversation, each shedding light on the other.”¹⁵⁶³
- ❖ “Many traditional commentaries look at the Torah through a microscope: the detail, the fragment of text in isolation. I have tried to look at it through a telescope: the larger picture and its place in the constellation of concepts that make Judaism so compelling a picture of the universe and our place within it.”¹⁵⁶⁴
- ❖ “The *text* of Torah is our covenant with God, our written constitution as a nation under His sovereignty. The *interpretation* of this text has been the subject of an ongoing conversation for as long as Jews have studied the divine word, a conversation that began at Sinai thirty-three centuries ago and has not ceased since. Every age has added its commentaries, and so must ours. Participating in that conversation is a major part of what it is to be a Jew. For we are the people who never stopped learning the Book of Life, our most precious gift from the God of life.”¹⁵⁶⁵
- ❖ “Torah is God’s book of humanity, and each of us is a chapter in its unfinished story. Its words form our covenant with heaven. And as we listen and respond, we add our voice to the unbroken conversation between the Jewish people and its destiny.”¹⁵⁶⁶
- ❖ “Torah is not a book of history, even though it includes history. It is not a book of science, even though the first chapter of Genesis – as the nineteenth-century sociologist Max Weber points out – is the necessary prelude to science: it represents the first time people saw the universe as the product of a single creative will, and therefore as intelligible rather than capricious and mysterious. Rather, it is, first and last, a book about how to live. Everything it contains – not only mitzvot but also narratives, including the narrative of

¹⁵⁵⁷ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 83

¹⁵⁵⁸ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 107

¹⁵⁵⁹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 128

¹⁵⁶⁰ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 129

¹⁵⁶¹ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 157

¹⁵⁶² *Ten Days, Ten Ways* p. 15

¹⁵⁶³ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 2

¹⁵⁶⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 3

¹⁵⁶⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 3

¹⁵⁶⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 11

creation itself – is there solely for the sake of ethical and spiritual instruction. For Jewish ethics is not confined to law. It includes virtues of character, general principles and role models. It is conveyed not only by commandments but also by stories, telling us how particular individuals responded to specific situations. Torah moves from the minutest details to the most majestic visions of the universe and our place within it. But it never deviates from its intense focus on the questions: What should one do? How should one live? What kind of person should one strive to become? It opens, in Genesis 1, with the most fundamental question of all. As the Psalm (8:4) puts it: “What is man that You are mindful of him?”¹⁵⁶⁷

- ❖ “The Torah was not given to the ministering angels, but to humans, because humans need it. And in giving human beings freewill, God expressed His faith that one day they would learn to use it responsibly and morally and thus create a world of societal beatitude.”¹⁵⁶⁸
- ❖ “Torah – God’s law and teaching – was not a code written by a distant king, to be imposed by force. Nor was it an esoteric mystery understood by only a scholarly elite. It was to be available to, and intelligible by, everyone. God was to become a teacher, Israel His pupils, and the Torah the text that bound them to one another.”¹⁵⁶⁹
- ❖ “God is in heaven, but we honour Him here on earth: that is what Torah – the word that means “law, teaching, ethical instruction” – is about. It is precisely through the instrumentality of law that we enact spiritual truths in physical circumstances, creating fragments of heaven in our interactions on earth.”¹⁵⁷⁰
- ❖ “Torah is not merely learned. It cries out to be lived. Nor is the Torah merely a private code of conduct. It is about the way we construct a society. By establishing a dialogue between Torah and contemporary society, we will find ourselves enlightened by new facets of its insight into the human condition.”¹⁵⁷¹
- ❖ “The Torah is the primal literary expression of the monotheistic mind.”¹⁵⁷²
- ❖ “The Torah is concerned not only with behaviour but also with character; not just with *what we do* but also *the kind of person we become*.”¹⁵⁷³
- ❖ “What is impressive about the Torah is that it *both* articulates the highest of ideas, *and* at the same time speaks to us as human beings.”¹⁵⁷⁴
- ❖ “No religion has held a higher view of humanity than the book that tells us we are each in the image and likeness of God.”¹⁵⁷⁵
- ❖ “Torah is not just “revealed legislation.” It represents God’s faith in our ancestors that He entrusted them with the creation of a society that would become a home for His presence and an example to the world.”¹⁵⁷⁶
- ❖ “The Written Torah is *min haShamayim*, “from Heaven,” but about the Oral Torah the Talmud insists: *Lo bashamayim hi*, “It is not in heaven” (Bava Metzia 59b). Hence Judaism

¹⁵⁶⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis pp. 16-17*

¹⁵⁶⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis pp. 237-238*

¹⁵⁶⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus pp. 137-138*

¹⁵⁷⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus p. 177*

¹⁵⁷¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus p. 294*

¹⁵⁷² *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus p. 35*

¹⁵⁷³ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus p. 297*

¹⁵⁷⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus p. 306*

¹⁵⁷⁵ *Essays on Ethics p. 20*

¹⁵⁷⁶ *Essays on Ethics p. 216*

is a continuing conversation between the Giver of the law and the interpreters of the law.”¹⁵⁷⁷

- ❖ “The Torah is God’s libretto, and we, the Jewish people, are His choir.”¹⁵⁷⁸
- ❖ “The Torah is God’s call to create a freedom that honours order and a social order that honours human freedom, to respect both what is universal in our shared humanity and what is particular in our historical specificity.”¹⁵⁷⁹
- ❖ “What does it mean to call the Five Books of Moses, with all their internal variety, *Torah*? The word itself means “law,” but it also means “teaching,” “instruction,” “guidance.” The verb *y-r-h* from which it derives also means “to shoot an arrow,” “to aim at a target.” Clearly we have here a concept larger than “law” in a narrow, legalistic sense, for which the Mosaic books have other words, among them *hok*, *mishpat*, *edut*, *din*, and *mitzva*. *Torah* does sometimes have a narrow meaning, roughly, “the procedure to be followed in such-and-such a case.” But in its more general sense, it seems to mean guidance as it emerges not only from laws but also from history. “*Torah*” in this broad sense is about the counterpoint, the creative tension, between law and life, between the world as it ought to be and the world as it is.”¹⁵⁸⁰
- ❖ “The Torah is about more than merely abstract principles and universal truths. It is also about marriage and the family, a people and its history, a nation and its destiny.”¹⁵⁸¹
- ❖ “There are three kinds of Torah: the Torah we learn from books, the Torah we learn from teachers, and the Torah we learn from life. The first two are straightforward. That is how most of us learn. But the third can sometimes be the deepest and most personal. We learn because something happens to us or through us that gives us a new insight into what the Torah is trying to teach us to see.”¹⁵⁸²
- ❖ “The Torah is not fundamentally about the salvation of the soul. It is about the redemption of society. It is about how to construct a social order that will honour the dignity of the individual, the sanctity of life, and the twin imperatives of justice and compassion. It is about our life together, not about the inner life of the soul...”¹⁵⁸³
- ❖ “The Torah ends with the last command: to keep writing and studying Torah. And this is epitomised in the beautiful custom, on Simhat Torah, to move immediately from reading the end of the Torah to reading the beginning. The last word in the Torah is *Yisrael*; the last letter is a *lamed*. The first word of the Torah is *Bereishit*; the first letter is *beit*. *Lamed* followed by *beit* spells *lev*, “heart.” So long as the Jewish people never stop learning, the Jewish heart will never stop beating. Never has a people loved a book more. Never has a book sustained a people longer or lifted it higher.”¹⁵⁸⁴
- ❖ “The Torah is God’s song, and we collectively are its singers.”¹⁵⁸⁵
- ❖ “The Torah is compared to rain precisely to emphasise that its most important effect is to make each of us grow into what we could become.”¹⁵⁸⁶

¹⁵⁷⁷ *Essays on Ethics* p. 280

¹⁵⁷⁸ *Essays on Ethics* p. 327

¹⁵⁷⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 39

¹⁵⁸⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 239

¹⁵⁸¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 300

¹⁵⁸² *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 355

¹⁵⁸³ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 65

¹⁵⁸⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 304

¹⁵⁸⁵ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 308

¹⁵⁸⁶ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 318

- ❖ “The real subject of the Torah is not our faith in God, which is often faltering, but His unfailing faith in us. The Torah is not man’s book of God. It is God’s book of man. He spends a mere thirty-four verses describing His own creation of the universe, but more than five hundred verses describing the Israelites’ creation of a tiny, temporary, portable building called the Mishkan, the Sanctuary. God never stops believing in us, loving us, and hoping for the best from us.”¹⁵⁸⁷
- ❖ “The Torah is not myth but anti-myth, a deliberate insistence on removing the magical elements from the story and focusing relentlessly on the human drama of courage versus fear, hope versus despair, and the call, not to some larger-than-life hero but to all-of-us-together, given strength by our ties to our people’s past and the bonds between us and the present. The Torah is not some fabled escape from reality but reality itself, seen as a journey we must all undertake, each with our own strengths and contributions to our people and to humanity.”¹⁵⁸⁸
- ❖ “What is beautiful about the Torah is that it shows the heroes and heroines of our people’s past not as epitomes of perfection but as human beings – great, to be sure, but always human – wrestling with God and finding Him wrestling with us.”¹⁵⁸⁹
- ❖ “The holiest object in Judaism is a book, the Scroll of the Law. The reverence we pay it is astonishing. We stand in its presence as if it were a king, dance with it as if it were a bride, and if, God forbid, it is desecrated or ruined beyond repair we bury it as if it were a relative who had died.”¹⁵⁹⁰
- ❖ “*Keriat HaTorah*, properly understood, is a performative act. It is a weekly recreation of the revelation at Mount Sinai.”¹⁵⁹¹
- ❖ “The more we understand the way the world is, the more we understand why the Torah is as it is. It is our roadmap through reality. It is as if secular and scientific knowledge were the map, and the Torah the route.”¹⁵⁹²
- ❖ “The challenge for our time is to open a series of windows so that the world can illuminate our understanding of Torah and Torah will guide us as we seek to make our way through the world.”¹⁵⁹³
- ❖ “The prophets reinterpreted biblical narrative for their day. Then came Midrash, which reinterpreted it more radically because the situation of Jews had changed more radically. Then came the great biblical commentators and mystics and philosophers. There has hardly been a generation in all of Jewish history when Jews did not reinterpret their texts in the light of the present-tense experience. We are the people who tell stories, and then retell them repeatedly, each time with a slightly different emphasis, establishing a connection between then and now, rereading the past in the light of the present as best we can.”¹⁵⁹⁴
- ❖ “*The Torah is not humanity’s book of God but God’s book of humankind.*”¹⁵⁹⁵

¹⁵⁸⁷ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 5

¹⁵⁸⁸ *Judaism’s Life-Changing Ideas* p. 241

¹⁵⁸⁹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. xx

¹⁵⁹⁰ *The Power of Ideas* p. 114

¹⁵⁹¹ *I Believe* p. xv

¹⁵⁹² *I Believe* p. 12

¹⁵⁹³ *I Believe* p. 13

¹⁵⁹⁴ *I Believe* pp. 63-64

¹⁵⁹⁵ *I Believe* p. 144

- ❖ “I believe that [the] fugue between Torah and *haftara*, priests and prophetic voices, is one of Judaism’s great glories. We hear both how to act and why. Without the how, action is lame; without the why, behaviour is blind. Combine priestly detail and prophetic vision and you have spiritual greatness.”¹⁵⁹⁶

TORAH & CHOKHMAH

- ❖ “Neither the biblical nor rabbinic tradition allows a prolonged retreat from the tense, unpredictable, ongoing dialogue with contemporary culture, with society in its Israeli or diaspora dimensions, and with the Jewish people as a whole. Renewing that holy argument is the future task of Jewish thought. For at stake is the fate of Torah whose living commentary is the Jewish people in dialogue with its covenantal calling.”¹⁵⁹⁷
- ❖ “The Jewish encounter with the policy issues of an age, in short, occurs when an expert in the facts seeks the guidance of an expert in the values; and there is nothing to compel that seeking, short of a continued demonstration that Judaism is in touch with life.”¹⁵⁹⁸
- ❖ “Chokhmah is the truth we discover; Torah is the truth we inherit. Chokhmah is the shared heritage of mankind; Torah is the particular heritage of the Jewish people. Chokhmah is the world of ‘is’, of fact; Torah is the world of ‘ought’, of command. Chokhmah is where we encounter God through creation; Torah is how we hear God through revelation. The two are not equal in their significance to Jews – Torah is holy in a way chokhmah cannot be – yet both are significant, for if we are to apply Torah to the world, we must understand the world to which it applies. Because the God of creation is also the God of revelation, there is ultimate harmony between them, even though, given the imperfections in our understanding of both, it may not be evident at any given moment. There must, I believe, be an ongoing conversation between them, for otherwise Torah will remain a closed system with no grip, no purchase, no influence, on the world outside its walls.”¹⁵⁹⁹
- ❖ “If we are to apply Torah to the world, we must understand the world. We need a new generation of Jews committed to the dialogue between sacred and secular if Judaism is to engage with the world and its challenges.”¹⁶⁰⁰
- ❖ “Chokhmah is the truth we discover; Torah is the truth we inherit. Chokhmah is the universal heritage of humankind; Torah is the specific heritage of Israel. Chokhmah is what we attain by being in the image of God; Torah is what guides Jews as the people of God. Chokhmah is acquired by seeing and reasoning; Torah is received by listening and responding. Chokhmah tells us what is; Torah tells us what ought to be. Chokhmah is about facts; Torah is about commands. Chokhmah yields descriptive, scientific laws; Torah yields prescriptive, behavioural laws. Chokhmah is about creation; Torah is about revelation.”¹⁶⁰¹

¹⁵⁹⁶ *I Believe* p. 147

¹⁵⁹⁷ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 134

¹⁵⁹⁸ *Tradition in an Untraditional Age* p. 199

¹⁵⁹⁹ *The Chief Rabbi’s Haggadah (Essays)* pp. 6-7

¹⁶⁰⁰ *Future Tense* p. 211

¹⁶⁰¹ *Future Tense* p. 214

- ❖ “Without Torah we cannot understand the Jewish story. But without chokhmah we cannot understand the human story.”¹⁶⁰²
- ❖ “We cannot apply Torah to the world unless we understand the world.”¹⁶⁰³
- ❖ “A Judaism divorced from society will be a Judaism unable to influence society. It will live and thrive and flourish behind high walls within its own defensive space, but it will not speak to those who wrestle with the very realities - poverty, disease, injustice, inequality and other assaults on human dignity - to which Torah was directed in the first place.”¹⁶⁰⁴
- ❖ “Torah and chokhmah must be reunited if Judaism is to recover its ability to speak to the world without fear of the world.”¹⁶⁰⁵
- ❖ “I have argued for a Judaism that has the courage to engage with the world and its challenges. Faith begets confidence which creates courage. That is how Jews lived in the past and should live in the future.”¹⁶⁰⁶

TRUST

- ❖ “Covenantal relationships – where we develop the grammar and syntax of reciprocity, where we help others and they help us without calculations of relative advantage – are where trust is born, and without them there would be no selves and no contracts.”¹⁶⁰⁷
- ❖ “People in positions of trust must be, and be *seen to be*, individuals of moral integrity.”¹⁶⁰⁸
- ❖ “Trust is of the essence in public life. A nation that suspects its leaders of corruption cannot function effectively as a free, just, and open society.”¹⁶⁰⁹
- ❖ “A free society depends on trust. Trust depends on keeping your word. That is how humans imitate God – by using language to create. Words create moral obligations, and moral obligations, undertaken responsibly and honoured faithfully, create the possibility of a free society.”¹⁶¹⁰

TRUTH/TRUTHS

- ❖ “For life to be livable, truth on earth cannot be what it is in heaven. Truth in heaven may be platonic – eternal, harmonious, radiant. But man cannot aspire to such truth, and if he does, he will create conflict not peace. Men kill because they believe they possess the truth while their opponents are in error. In that case, says God, throwing truth to the ground, let human beings live by a different standard of truth, one that is human and thus conscious of its limitations. Truth on the ground is multiple, partial.

¹⁶⁰² *Future Tense* p. 226

¹⁶⁰³ *Future Tense* p. 226

¹⁶⁰⁴ *Future Tense* p. 227

¹⁶⁰⁵ *Future Tense* p. 230

¹⁶⁰⁶ *Future Tense* p. 252

¹⁶⁰⁷ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 151

¹⁶⁰⁸ *Essays on Ethics* p. 147

¹⁶⁰⁹ *Essays on Ethics* p. 149

¹⁶¹⁰ *Essays on Ethics* p. 267

Fragments of it lie everywhere. Each person, culture and language has part of it; none has it all. Truth on earth is not, nor can it aspire to be, the whole truth. It is limited, not comprehensive; particular, not universal. When two propositions conflict it is not necessarily because one is true the other false. It may be, and often is, that each represents a different perspective on reality, an alternative way of structuring order, no more and no less commensurable than a Shakespeare sonnet, a Michelangelo painting or a Schubert sonata. In heaven there is truth; on earth there are truths. Therefore each culture has something to contribute.”¹⁶¹¹

- ❖ “Truth is not something we discover at one time. That is how things are for God, but not for us. For Judaism, truth – as understood and internalized by humanity – is a developmental process.”¹⁶¹²
- ❖ “Biblical truth, a truth that cannot emerge at once but only through the experience of formative events, is a movement from acts done by God for the sake of human beings, to acts done by human beings for the sake of God.”¹⁶¹³
- ❖ “Philosophy is *truth as system*. Genesis is *truth as story*. It is a unique work, philosophy in the narrative mode.”¹⁶¹⁴
- ❖ “Almost none of the truths by which we live are provable, and the desire to prove them is based on a monumental confusion between explanation and interpretation. Explanations can be proved, interpretations cannot.”¹⁶¹⁵
- ❖ “There are truths we can express in systems, but others we can only tell through story. There is the kind of knowledge for which we need detachment, but another kind of knowledge we can only achieve through attachment – through empathy and identification with an other. There are truths that apply at all times and places, but there are others that are context-specific. There are truths we can tell in prose, but others for which only poetry is adequate.”¹⁶¹⁶
- ❖ “If I argue for the sake of truth, then if I win, I win. But if I lose, I also win, because being defeated by the truth is the only defeat that is also a victory. I am enlarged. I learn something I did not know before. In a contest for power, if I lose, I lose. But if I win, I also lose, because in diminishing my opponents I have diminished myself.”¹⁶¹⁷
- ❖ “In an argument for the sake of victory, both sides lose. In an argument for the sake of truth, both sides win, for each is willing to listen to the views of its opponents, and is thereby enlarged.”¹⁶¹⁸
- ❖ “Truth was defeated in theory long before it was destroyed by social media.”¹⁶¹⁹
- ❖ “Without moral commitment, the still small voice of truth is inaudible beneath the cacophony of lies, half-truths, obfuscations, and evasions. Without truth, no trust; without trust, no society. Truth and trust create a world we can share.”¹⁶²⁰

¹⁶¹¹ *The Dignity of Difference* pp. 64-65

¹⁶¹² *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 156

¹⁶¹³ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 157

¹⁶¹⁴ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 6

¹⁶¹⁵ *The Great Partnership* p. 32

¹⁶¹⁶ *The Great Partnership* p. 54

¹⁶¹⁷ *Essays on Ethics* pp. 241-242

¹⁶¹⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 210

¹⁶¹⁹ *Morality* p. 171

¹⁶²⁰ *Morality* p. 173

- ❖ “Truth in heaven transcends space and time, but human perception is bounded by both space and time.”¹⁶²¹

TRUTH VRS. PEACE

- ❖ “Truth and truthfulness are fundamental values in Judaism. We call the Torah “the law of truth” (Malachi 2:6). The sages define truth as the signature of God. Yet truth is not the highest value in Judaism. Peace is.”¹⁶²²
- ❖ “The way to peace is to realise that our grasp of truth is partial, fragmentary, incomplete. That is the human condition. Truth matters, but peace matters more. That is Judaism’s considered judgement. Many of the greatest crimes in history were committed by those who believed they were in possession of the truth while their opponents were sunk in error. To make peace between husband and wife (Abraham and Sarah) and between brothers (Joseph and Jacob’s other sons), the Torah sanctions a statement that is less than the whole truth. Dishonesty? No. Tact, sensitivity, discretion? Yes. That is an idea both eminently sensible and humane.”¹⁶²³

TZEDAKAH/CHARITY

- ❖ “There must be justice not only in how the law is applied, but also in how the means of existence - wealth as God’s blessing - are distributed. That is tzedakah.”¹⁶²⁴
- ❖ “Charity is a form of prayer, a preliminary to prayer. With its combination of charity and justice, its understanding of the psychological as well as material dimensions of poverty, and its aim of restoring dignity and independence, not just meeting needs, tzedakah is a unique institution. Deeply humanitarian, it could not exist without the essentially religious concepts of divine ownership and social covenant. To know God is to act with justice and compassion, to recognise his image in other people, and to hear the silent cry of those in need.”¹⁶²⁵
- ❖ “We own what we are willing to share. That is tzedakah: charity as justice.”¹⁶²⁶
- ❖ “*Even a poor person completely dependent on charity is still obliged to give charity.* Giving is essential to self-respect. To be in a situation where you can only receive, not give, is to lack human dignity.”¹⁶²⁷
- ❖ “The idea of *tzedaka* arises from the theology of Judaism, which insists on the difference between possession and ownership. Ultimately, all things are owned by God, Creator of the world. What we possess, we do not own – we merely hold it in trust for God.”¹⁶²⁸

¹⁶²¹ *Morality* p. 229

¹⁶²² *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 333

¹⁶²³ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* p. 336

¹⁶²⁴ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 33

¹⁶²⁵ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 41

¹⁶²⁶ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 42

¹⁶²⁷ *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 20

¹⁶²⁸ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 135

- ❖ “Charity is always voluntary. *Tzedaka* is compulsory. Therefore *tzedaka* does not mean charity. What would be seen as charity in other legal systems is, in Judaism, a strict requirement of the law, enforceable by the courts.”¹⁶²⁹

UNITY

- ❖ “Jewish unity exists as an idea. Why then should it not exist as a fact?”¹⁶³⁰
- ❖ “Recent history – the Holocaust, and the sense of involvement that most Jewish throughout the world feel in the fate of Israel – has convinced us that the Jewish destiny is indivisible. We are implicated in the fate of one another. That is the substantive content of our current sense of unity. But it is a unity imposed, as it were, from outside. Neither anti-Semitism nor anti-Zionism, we believe, makes distinctions between Jews. Hence our collective vigilance, activity, and concern. But from within, in terms of its own self-understanding, the Jewish people evinces no answering solidarity. External crisis unites Jews; internal belief divides.”¹⁶³¹
- ❖ “If unity is to be a value it cannot be one that is sustained by the hostility of others alone.”¹⁶³²
- ❖ “Jewish unity is a cause that is not advanced by the advocacy of one point of view over another. It demands the difficult but not impossible exercise of thinking non-adjectivally as a Jew: not as a member of this or that group, but as a member of an indivisible people.”¹⁶³³
- ❖ “The problem that threatens to render all contemporary Jewish thought systematically divisive is not the absence, but paradoxically, the presence, of a shared language. Jews use the same words but mean profoundly different things by them... Jews are, to use Bernard Shaw’s phrase, divided by a common language.”¹⁶³⁴
- ❖ “Almost all Jewish groups in Israel and the diaspora express a commitment to Jewish survival, peoplehood, and unity. But the interpretation of those concepts different systematically from group to group.”¹⁶³⁵
- ❖ “For some Orthodox thinkers, the division of the Jewish people into Orthodoxy and others, deeply tragic though it is, does not sanction the pursuit of unity at the cost of other values. Creating unity in the short term, if it involved abandoning covenantal imperatives that traditionally constituted Jewish peoplehood, would be both impossible and undesirable: impossible because it would mean abandoning values that are non-negotiable, undesirable because pluralism might result in greater disunity in the long term.”¹⁶³⁶
- ❖ “Unity is undeniably a Jewish value, but not necessarily and in all circumstances a supreme and overriding one.”¹⁶³⁷

¹⁶²⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Deuteronomy* p. 135

¹⁶³⁰ *One People* p. vii

¹⁶³¹ *One People* p. viii

¹⁶³² *One People* p. ix

¹⁶³³ *One People* p. x

¹⁶³⁴ *One People* p. 3, 6

¹⁶³⁵ *One People* p. 13

¹⁶³⁶ *One People* p. 39

¹⁶³⁷ *One People* p. 39

- ❖ “The unity of the Jews, like that of Torah, is the counterpart, as it were, of the unity of God. To destroy one is to compromise the others.”¹⁶³⁸
- ❖ “Today’s Jewry is both uncompromisingly divided and unprecedentedly united: divided by religious difference, but united by a powerful sense – reinforced by the Holocaust and the State of Israel – of a shared history, fate, and responsibility.”¹⁶³⁹
- ❖ “This is the paradox. In their own land, the place where every other nation is to some degree united, Jews were split beyond repair. In dispersion, where every other nation has assimilated and disappeared, they remained distinctive and, in essentials at least, united. There is something surpassingly strange about Jewish peoplehood.”¹⁶⁴⁰
- ❖ “What unites Jews, or should do, is action, not reflection. We do the same deeds but we understand them differently. There is agreement on the *naase* but not the *nishma*.”¹⁶⁴¹

UNIVERSALISM & PARTICULARISM

- ❖ “From the late eighteenth century in one way or another Jews had been engaged in a *flight from particularism*.”¹⁶⁴²
- ❖ “Judaism embodies a unique paradox that has distinguished it from polytheism on the one hand and the great universal monotheisms, Christianity and Islam, on the other. Its God is universal: the creator of the universe, author and sovereign of all human life. But its covenant is particular: one people set among the nations, whose vocation is not to convert the world to its cause, but to be true to itself and to God. That juxtaposition of universality and particularity was to cause a tension between Israel and others, and within Israel itself, that has lasted to this day.”¹⁶⁴³
- ❖ “Faith belongs to particular covenants with a universal God. There are universal requirements of morality, but beyond this minimum our moral and spiritual lives are as plural as languages, neither private nor universal but bound by the rules preserved by faith-communities in their dialectic between revelation and interpretation. Each of us carries the inescapable burden of duality, of being true to our faith while recognizing the image of God in, and being a blessing to, those who are unlike us.”¹⁶⁴⁴
- ❖ “Judaism is the particular case that exemplifies the universal rule that the world exists under the sovereignty of God, and that every person is the image of God.”¹⁶⁴⁵
- ❖ “Judaism is structurally unique – the only world religion ever to believe in a universal God, the God of all peoples, times and places, and at the same time to believe in a particular way of life that not all people have to follow, because just as there is more than one way to be a leader, so there is more than one way to find God.”¹⁶⁴⁶

¹⁶³⁸ *One People* p. 42

¹⁶³⁹ *One People* p. 195

¹⁶⁴⁰ *Future Tense* p. 35

¹⁶⁴¹ *I Believe* p. 105

¹⁶⁴² *Crisis and Covenant* p. 15

¹⁶⁴³ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 250

¹⁶⁴⁴ *Crisis and Covenant* p. 277

¹⁶⁴⁵ *Radical Then, Radical Now* p. 87

¹⁶⁴⁶ *Radical Then, Radical Now* pgs. 87-88

- ❖ “The Bible argues that universalism is the first, not the last, phase in the growth of the moral imagination.”¹⁶⁴⁷
- ❖ “We are particular and universal, the same and different”¹⁶⁴⁸
- ❖ “The Universality of moral concern is not something we learn by being universal but by being particular. Because we know what it is to be a parent, loving our children, not children in general, we understand what it is for someone else, somewhere else, to be a parent, loving his or her children, not ours.”¹⁶⁴⁹
- ❖ “Judaism is a particularist faith that recognises the universality of the human condition.”¹⁶⁵⁰
- ❖ “The way of Judaism is particular; the concern of Judaism is universal.”¹⁶⁵¹
- ❖ “Judaism is both particularist and universalist... Judaism is unique yet has a message for all humankind.”¹⁶⁵²
- ❖ “Without negating the universal, Judaism is a celebration of particularity.”¹⁶⁵³
- ❖ “The basic structure of Jewish thought is the movement from the universal to the particular.”¹⁶⁵⁴
- ❖ “Judaism honours both the universality of the human condition and the particularity of Jewish faith.”¹⁶⁵⁵
- ❖ “Jews have turned inward; they need to turn outward... Our uniqueness is our universality, and it is precisely by sharing our uniqueness that we enlarge the heritage of humankind.”¹⁶⁵⁶
- ❖ “Philosophy aimed at universality – at propositions that were true in all places, at all times. But meaning is expressed in particularity.”¹⁶⁵⁷
- ❖ “[The] tension between the universal and the particular is unique to Judaism. The God of Israel is the God of all humanity, but the religion of Israel is not the religion of all humanity. It is conspicuous that while the other two Abrahamic monotheisms, Christianity and Islam, borrowed much from Judaism, they did not borrow this. They became universalist faiths, believing that everyone ought to embrace the one true religion, their own, and that those who do not are denied the blessings of eternity... Judaism disagrees. For this it was derided for many centuries, and to some degree still today. Why, if it represents religious truth, it is not to be shared with everyone? If there is only one God, why is there not only one way to salvation? There is no doubt that if Judaism had become an evangelizing, conversion-driven religion – as it would have had to, had it believed in universalism – there would be many more Jews than there are today.... Judaism is the road less traveled, because it represents a complex truth that could not be expressed in any other way... by creating all humans in His image, God set us the challenge of seeing His image in one who is not in my image: whose color, culture, class and creed are not mine. The ultimate spiritual

¹⁶⁴⁷ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 51

¹⁶⁴⁸ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 56

¹⁶⁴⁹ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 58

¹⁶⁵⁰ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 106

¹⁶⁵¹ *Ten Days, Ten Ways* p. 46

¹⁶⁵² *Future Tense* p. 118

¹⁶⁵³ *Future Tense* p. 213

¹⁶⁵⁴ *Future Tense* p. 214

¹⁶⁵⁵ *Future Tense* p. 226

¹⁶⁵⁶ *Future Tense* p. 252

¹⁶⁵⁷ *The Great Partnership* p. 84

challenge is to see the trace of God in the face of a stranger... we are commanded to be true to our faith, and a blessing to others, regardless of their faith.”¹⁶⁵⁸

VICTIMHOOD

- ❖ “The flight from responsibility into victimhood is the oldest of all human temptations... But it is negative, destructive, it robs us of trust in the world, it leads us to see fate as a conspiracy directed against us. It leads us to the impotence of anger and the anger of impotence. The best way of curing a victim is to help him cease to think of himself as a victim.”¹⁶⁵⁹
- ❖ “Victims want the world to change, forgetting that it may be they who have to change.”¹⁶⁶⁰
- ❖ “Nowadays, to win sympathy for your cause, you have to establish your credentials as a victim. This has overwhelming advantages. People empathise with your situation, give you support, and avoid criticising your actions. It has, however, three drawbacks: it is false, it is corrupting, and it is a denial of humanity. A victim is an object, not a subject; a done-to, not a doer. He or she systematically denies responsibility, and those who wish to help only prolong the denial. They become what is known in addiction therapy as co-dependents. By locating the cause of someone’s plight in factors external to the person, the victim culture perpetuates the condition of victimhood. Instead of helping the prisoner out of prison, it locks him in and throws away the key.”¹⁶⁶¹
- ❖ “Those who blame others, defining themselves as victims, are destined to remain victims. Those who accept responsibility transform the world because they have learned to transform themselves.”¹⁶⁶²
- ❖ “Defining yourself as a victim is ultimately a diminution of what makes us human. It teaches us to see ourselves as objects, not subjects. We become done-to, not doers; passive, not active. Blame bars the path to responsibility. The victim, ascribing his condition to others, locates the cause of his situation outside himself, thus rendering himself incapable of breaking free from his self-created trap. Because he attributes a real phenomenon (pain, poverty, illiteracy, disease) to a fictitious cause, he discovers that murdering the cause does not remove the symptom. Hence efforts must be redoubled. Blame cultures perpetuate every condition against which they are a protest.”¹⁶⁶³
- ❖ “Blaming others for our failings is as old as humanity, but it is disastrous. It means that we define ourselves as victims. A culture of victimhood wins the compassion of others but at too high a cost. It incubates feelings of resentment, humiliation, grievance and grudge. It leads people to rage against the world instead of taking steps to mend it. Jews have suffered much, but Yom Kippur prevents us from ever defining ourselves as victims. As we confess our sins, we blame no one but ourselves. That is demanding, psychologically and spiritually. Yet it is the price we must pay for freedom. Other ancient literatures record the successes

¹⁶⁵⁸ *Ceremony & Celebration* pp. 156-157

¹⁶⁵⁹ *The Home We Build Together* p. 62

¹⁶⁶⁰ *Future Tense* p. 3

¹⁶⁶¹ *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis* pp. 69-70

¹⁶⁶² *Covenant and Conversation: Leviticus* p. 258

¹⁶⁶³ *Not in God’s Name* p. 249

of rulers and empires. The Hebrew Bible is a unique chronicle of failures. No one in its pages is perfect, not the patriarchs and matriarchs, not priests or prophets, not kings or the ruling elite. No history is as painfully honest as that of the Tanakh, and it was possible only in the deep belief that God forgives. God pardons; God atones; God is holding out His hand, calling us back with inextinguishable love. That allows us to be honest with ourselves.”¹⁶⁶⁴

- ❖ “There is injustice and oppression, inequality and exclusion, and in the past whole groups—Jews, blacks, gypsies, women, homosexuals, transsexuals—have found themselves subjugated, marginalized, ill-treated, and ignored. Those injustices must be fought and ended. That is a given. Compassion, the emotion we feel toward victims, is among the constitutive elements of the moral sense. It defines what is best in the great ethical and religious traditions. Nothing should be taken as qualifying this emotion and the acts for good it evokes. What is dangerous, though, is the *politicization* of victimhood: its transfer from individuals to groups, and from there to the public square. In every age there are victims, and we must help them. “Do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor,” says the Bible. “Learn to do right,” says Isaiah. “Seek justice. Relieve the oppressed. Defend orphans. Plead for the widow.” What is new and dangerous is the culture of victimhood. It involves the blurring of the boundaries between the personal and the political. It has to do with what Philip Rieff called “the triumph of the therapeutic.””¹⁶⁶⁵
- ❖ “Often we cannot choose what happens to us, but we can always choose how to react. We are never defined by events. To allow ourselves to be so defined is to hand sovereignty over our own lives to others.”¹⁶⁶⁶

VOLUNTEERING

- ❖ “The voluntary sector differs from the state and the market in one vital respect. The state is about the production and distribution of power. The market is about the production and distribution of wealth. But power and wealth are, at any given moment, zero-sum games. If I have total power and then I share it with nine others I am left with only a tenth of what I had. If I had a thousand pounds and then share it with nine others, again I have only a tenth of the amount with which I began. Politics and economics are about competition – they are arenas of mediated conflict. But there are other goods – among them love, friendship, trust – which are different. The more I share them, the more I have. Indeed, they only exist in virtue of being shared. That is why communities, neighbourhood groups and voluntary organisations are vital to the health of society. They are not arenas of conflict, but rather the seedbeds of co-operation.”¹⁶⁶⁷
- ❖ “Volunteering is rarely glamorous and never easy, especially for those with many other pressures on their time. But few things count more when it comes to looking back on a life than being able to say, ‘I made a difference.’ Beneath the clamour of self-interest, a

¹⁶⁶⁴ *Ceremony & Celebration* p. 86

¹⁶⁶⁵ *Morality* p. 205

¹⁶⁶⁶ *Morality* p. 209

¹⁶⁶⁷ *The Power of Ideas* p. 60

quieter voice within us whispers the deeper truth, that the greatest gift is to be able to give.”¹⁶⁶⁸

WALLS

- ❖ “Today the world of tradition is for the most part as closed as it was a century ago. Jewish piety, in the main, lives behind high walls and imagines that this constitutes strength... This is not strength. It is weakness.”¹⁶⁶⁹
- ❖ “Faith does not hide behind high walls.”¹⁶⁷⁰
- ❖ “I am a rabbi. For twenty-two years I was a chief rabbi. But in the end, I think it was we, the rabbis, who did not do enough to help people open their doors, their minds, and their feelings to the Presence beyond the universe, who created us in love that our ancestors knew so well and loved so much. We were afraid: of the intellectual challenges of an increasingly secular culture; of the social challenges of being in, yet not entirely of, the world; of the emotional challenge of finding Jews or Judaism or the State of Israel criticized or condemned. So we retreated behind a high wall, thinking that made us safe. High walls never make you safe; they only make you fearful. The only thing that makes you safe is confronting the challenges without fear and inspiring others to do likewise.”¹⁶⁷¹

WEALTH, POVERTY & SUFFERING

- ❖ “The economic growth produced by globalization and information technology has religious significance first and foremost because of the degree to which, more than any previous economic order, it allows us to alleviate poverty.”¹⁶⁷²
- ❖ “A world in which the few prosper and many starve, offends our deepest sense of fairness and human solidarity. You do not have to be a convinced egalitarian to know that disparities of this magnitude – vast, concentrated wealth alongside widespread suffering – is intolerable.”¹⁶⁷³
- ❖ “Poverty humiliates, and a good society will not allow humiliation”¹⁶⁷⁴
- ❖ “We cannot enjoy the food of affluence while others eat the bread of affliction. We are not fully free if others are oppressed.”¹⁶⁷⁵
- ❖ “What can be changed need not be endured. Human suffering is not a fate to be borne, but a challenge to be overcome.”¹⁶⁷⁶

¹⁶⁶⁸ *The Power of Ideas* p. 79

¹⁶⁶⁹ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 176

¹⁶⁷⁰ *Covenant and Conversation: Numbers* p. 179

¹⁶⁷¹ *Studies in Spirituality* p. 282

¹⁶⁷² *The Dignity of Difference* p. 97

¹⁶⁷³ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 111

¹⁶⁷⁴ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 119

¹⁶⁷⁵ *The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah (Essays)* p. 2

¹⁶⁷⁶ *Judaism's Life-Changing Ideas* p. 49

- ❖ “I believe wealth and power are not privileges but responsibilities, and we are summoned to become God’s partners in building a world less random and capricious, more equitable and humane.”¹⁶⁷⁷

WORLD/UNIVERSE

- ❖ “The very growth of modern knowledge has come about through specialization and compartmentalisation, so that an integrated universe linking man and the cosmos is now beyond us. The more we know collectively, the less we know individually. Each of us understands very little of our world.”¹⁶⁷⁸
- ❖ “There is little doubt that something has gone wrong among the many things that have gone right in today’s world.”¹⁶⁷⁹
- ❖ “Creation has its own dignity as God’s masterpiece, and though we have the mandate to use it, we have none to destroy or despoil it.”¹⁶⁸⁰
- ❖ “Within the limits of human intelligence, we can climb at least part of the way to heaven but the purpose of the climb is the return to earth, knowing that here is where God wants us to be and where he has given us work to do.”¹⁶⁸¹
- ❖ “The very terms of creation involve a paradox. Without God the universe would not exist; but the presence of God threatens the existence of anything apart from Him. “No man,” says God, “can see Me and live” (Exodus 33:20).”¹⁶⁸²
- ❖ “The universe does not come emblazoned with its purpose. To fathom it has taken much wisdom and humility and the experience of humankind over many centuries. To express it may take music and art, ritual and celebration. But to say, ‘What is, is, for no other reason than it is,’ is to halt prematurely the human tendency to ask and never rest satisfied with the answer ‘It just is.’ Curiosity leads to science, but it also leads to questions unanswerable by science.”¹⁶⁸³

¹⁶⁷⁷ *I Believe* p. 184

¹⁶⁷⁸ *The Persistence of Faith* p. 31

¹⁶⁷⁹ *Celebrating Life* p. 1

¹⁶⁸⁰ *The Dignity of Difference* p. 167

¹⁶⁸¹ *To Heal a Fractured World* p. 4

¹⁶⁸² *Covenant and Conversation: Exodus* p. 141

¹⁶⁸³ *The Great Partnership* pp. 24-25