

My Judaism

My religious views relate to how they define me inwardly as a person rather than the outward trappings. God to me is not a parent figure that has to keep me in line but a model of love and goodness. Any religion that needs a set of rules to define itself and its congregants is proclaiming itself a victim. A victim needs to go outside itself for its self worth while a truly spiritual person goes inside for all its self value.

I have struggled with my Judaism for most of my life. There must have been a basic teaching that I received that was not consistent with my formal teaching of Judaism. Somewhere my basic teaching taught me about unconditional love while my formal teaching taught me about trappings, and conditional love. Does God only love me when I follow his rules or does God love always and forever?

More and more I came to realize that my religion was teaching me that man made God in man's image. When I looked around it seemed that all religions I was aware of, were telling the same story. My truth is the only truth, they appeared to be saying. Only love people in your group. The histories of all the religious conflicts seem to have the same message: God loves me and not you, us and not them.

And yet, there were those men and women who seemed to be seeing a different message. They rose up and became symbols of another way of seeing and being. Unfortunately they did not become models of their religions and they became Gods of their religion. The message to the masses was "I cannot see myself attaining what was being modeled for me, therefore these must be entities that I must worship". The message was always "Be like me" but we heard "Believe in me". We preferred to follow the dictates of men and women who saw and practiced less than what was being offered.

When I discovered ACIM® , a new way of seeing was offered me. My vision of God changed from inconsistent to consistent. God was the embodiment of absolute unconditional love rather than a strict, righteous, wrathful, judgmental and yet loving entity. God could be anything man wanted him to be and justified anything man wanted to do. Even the ten commandments could be interpreted any way we needed to see it. "Thou shalt not kill" became conditional. We could interpret it any way we happened to see God at that moment.

I am now re-interpreting my Judaism to be consistent with my new understanding of God. Prayers that ask God to do for me are no longer valid. My prayers to God now reflect my desire to see clearly in the light of unconditional love. What I want for me is what I want for you. We are all one and that is God's message. That was God's message from the start. Demonstrate to the world unconditional love. The ten commandments are but one commandment: "Teach only love for that is who you are."

To clarify it more we can stretch it out to two commandments: 1)"Have no other God's before me" means make unconditional love you only goal. Anything else is just a

distraction; 2) "Love your neighbor as yourself". What you do to others you do to yourself. What you offer to others you offer to yourself.

To clarify it more we can stretch it out to ten commandments but the essence is already there.

To me, a truly religious person embodies this idea about an unconditionally loving God. It's not the trappings, the rules, the dress, or anything else. You can tell by the kindness, the honoring, the bliss, and the peace that surrounds this person.

I am making the judgements between truly religious and religious, this is not God's way. A perfect God loves perfectly and sees us all as his creations. It's how we see God that defines our state of grace and our bliss.

I am content to retain my Judaism but I am seeking a new way of observing and practicing it. In the Old Testament, the references to God choosing the Hebrews has new meaning for me; he chose them to be teachers, to be models. He chose them to help their fellow man remove the blocks that they have set up to hide their true loving nature. Anyone willing to model this to the rest of the world becomes God's teachers, expressions of God's love. To be a teacher requires no label, no trappings, and no title. It requires a new vision and a new commitment.

This Haggadah demonstrates this teaching. It is not for a select some of us, it is for all of us.