

Abraham Joshua Heschel Quotes

*Men, Prayer, Spiritual, Self, Heart, People, World, Art, Religious, Faith, Wonder,
Goal, Evil, Giving, Thinking, Light, Deeds, Appreciation, Loyalty, Worship*

We are closer to God when we are asking questions than when we think we have the answers.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Racism is man's gravest threat to man - the maximum of hatred for a minimum of reason.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Prayer cannot bring water to parched fields, or mend a broken bridge, or rebuild a ruined city; but prayer can water an arid soul, mend a broken heart, and rebuild a weakened will.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Remember that there is meaning beyond absurdity. Know that every deed counts, that every word is power...Above all, remember that you must build your life as if it were a work of art.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

In any free society where terrible wrongs exist, some are guilty - all are responsible.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

When I was young, I admired clever people. Now that I am old, I admire kind people.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The opposite of good is not evil, the opposite of good is indifference.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Indifference to evil is more insidious than evil itself. It is a silent justification affording evil acceptability in society.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

When I marched with Martin Luther King in Selma, I felt my legs were

praying.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Everything is phenomenal; everything is incredible; never treat life casually. To be spiritual is to be amazed.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The degree to which one is sensitive to other people's suffering, to other (people's) humanity, is the index of one's own humanity

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

We must first peer into the darkness, feel strangled and entombed in the hopelessness of living without God, before we are ready to feel the presence of His living light.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

It is gratefulness which makes the soul great.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

In a controversy, the instant we feel anger, we have already ceased striving for truth and have begun striving for ourselves.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

A religious man is a person... whose greatest passion is compassion.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The test of love is in how one relates not to saints and scholars but to rascals.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Speech has power. Words do not fade. What starts out as a sound, ends in a deed.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

God is not nice. God is not an uncle. God is an earthquake.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Few are guilty, but all are responsible.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

(People) can never attain fulfillment, or sense of meaning, unless it is shared, unless it pertains to other human beings.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Just to be is a blessing. Just to live is holy.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

As civilization advances, the sense of wonder declines. Such decline is an alarming symptom of our state of mind. Mankind will not perish for want of information; but only for want of appreciation.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

I have one talent, and that is the capacity to be tremendously surprised, surprised at life, at ideas. This is to me the supreme Hasidic imperative: Don't be old. Don't be stale.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Ultimately there is no power to narcissistic, self-indulgent thinking. Authentic thinking originates with an encounter with the world.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

There is no specialized art of prayer. All of life must be a training to pray. We pray the way we live.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Faith is not the clinging to a shrine but an endless pilgrimage of the heart.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Our concern is not how to worship in the catacombs but how to remain human in the skyscrapers.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

We can all do our share to redeem the world in spite of all absurdities and all frustrations and all disappointments.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Every little deed counts.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

There is happiness in the love of labor, there is misery in the love of gain.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

When religion speaks only in the name of authority rather than with the voice of compassion, its message becomes meaningless.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Self-respect is the fruit of discipline; the sense of dignity grows with the ability to say no to oneself.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Awareness of the divine begins with wonder.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Wonder rather than doubt is the root of all knowledge.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The course of life is unpredictable no one can write his autobiography in advance.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The tragedy of religion is partly due to its isolation from life, as if God

could be segregated.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The road to the sacred leads through the secular.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Worship is a way of seeing the world in the light of God.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The beginning of our happiness lies in the understanding that life without wonder is not worth living.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The problem to be faced is: how to combine loyalty to one's own tradition with reverence for different traditions.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Man's sin is in his failure to live what he is. Being the master of the earth, man forgets that he is the servant of God.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Much of what the Bible demands can be comprised in one imperative: Remember!

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

To serve does not mean to surrender but to share.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

God is not a hypothesis derived from logical assumptions, but an immediate insight, self-evident as light. He is not something to be sought in the darkness with the light of reason. He is the light.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

To abstain completely from all enjoyments may be easy. Yet to enjoy

life and retain spiritual integrity - there is the challenge.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

In the darkest night to be certain of the dawn...to go through Hell and to continue to trust in the goodness of God-this is the challenge and the way.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Prayer begins at the edge of emptiness.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Life is not meaningful...unless it is serving an end beyond itself; unless it is of value to someone else.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

We forfeit the right to worship God as long as we continue to humiliate negroes. ... The hour calls for moral grandeur and spiritual audacity.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

To become aware of the ineffable is to part company with words.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

God is either of no importance, or of supreme importance.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Sometimes we wish the world could cry and tell us about that which made it pregnant with fear-filling grandeur. Sometimes we wish our own heart would speak of that which made it heavy with wonder.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Spiritual life begins to decay when we fail to sense the grandeur of what is eternal in time.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The higher goal of spiritual living is not to amass a wealth of information, but to face sacred moments.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Never once in my life did I ask God for success or wisdom or power or fame. I asked for wonder, and he gave it to me.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Religion has become an impersonal affair, an institutional loyalty. It survives on the level of activities rather than in the stillness of commitment.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The true meaning of existence is disclosed in moments of living in the presence of God

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Man is a messenger who forgot the message.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

We can never sneer at the stars, mock the dawn, or scoff at the totality of being.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Self-respect is the root of discipline

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

In the midst of our applauding the feats of civilization, the Bible flings itself like a knife slashing our complacency; remind us that God, too, has a voice in history.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

It is of the essence of virtue that the good is not to be done for the sake of a reward.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The essence of man is not what he is, but in what he is able to be.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The hour calls for moral grandeur and spiritual audacity.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Self-respect is the fruit of discipline.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

In prayer we shift the center of living from self-consciousness to self-surrender

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Faith opens our hearts for the entrance of the holy. It is almost as though God were thinking for us.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

To be spiritual is to be amazed.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

(People achieve) fullness of being in fellowship, in care for others.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

All that is left is to us is our being horrified at the loss of our sense of horror.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Then comes the insight that All is God. One still realizes that the world is as it was, but it does not matter, it does not affect one's faith.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

To sing means to sense and to affirm that the spirit is real and that its

glory is present.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

To pray is to dream in league with God, to envision His holy visions.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

All action is vicarious faith.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

A soul can create only when alone.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

He who is satisfied has never truly craved, and he who craves for the light of God neglects his ease for ardor.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The worship of reason is arrogance and betrays a lack of intelligence. The rejection of reason is cowardice and betrays a lack of faith.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The riches of the soul are stored up in its memory. this is the test of character, not whether a man follows the daily fashion, but whether the past is alive in his present.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Wise criticism always begins with self-criticism.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The awe of God is wisdom.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

To be is to stand for.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Faith is something that comes out of the soul. It is not an information that is absorbed but an attitude, existing prior to the formulation of any creed.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

We worship God through our questions.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Wonder or radical amazement is the chief characteristic of the religious man's attitude toward history and nature.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The work on weekdays and the rest on the seventh day are correlated. The Sabbath is the inspirer, the other days the inspired.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The man who has not suffered - what does he know anyway?

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Knowledge-like the sky- is never private property. No teacher has a right to withhold it from anyone who asks for it. Teaching is the art of sharing.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Solitude is a necessary protest to the incursions and the false alarms of society's hysteria, a period of cure and recovery.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Celebration is a confrontation, giving attention to the transcendent meaning of one's actions.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The Sabbath is not for the sake of the weekdays; the weekdays are for the sake of Sabbath. It is not an interlude but the climax of living.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

When we pray, we bring G-d into the world

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

You must build your life as if it were a work of art.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

The task of life is to face sacred moments.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

All events are secretly interrelated; the sweep of all we are doing reaches beyond the horizon of our comprehension.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Those of faith who plant sacred thoughts in the uplands of time, the secret gardeners of the Lord in mankind's desolate hopes, may slacken and tarry but rarely betray their vocation.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Only those will apprehend religion who can probe its depth, who can combine intuition and love with the rigor of method

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

It is not enough for me to ask question; I want to know how to answer the one question that seems to encompass everything I face: What am I here for?

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Self-sufficiency, independence, the capacity to stand apart, to differ, to resist, and to defy-all are modes of being human.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

To pray is to take notice of the wonder, to regain a sense of the mystery

that animates all beings, the divine margin in all attainments.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

Prayer begins where our power ends.

~Abraham Joshua Heschel

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