

THE JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF AMERICA

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Professor Philip J. Davis
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Dear Phil:

I was interested in your comment that most mathematicians who are philosophers are also Platonists. I myself noticed this many years ago. Being myself deeply influenced by Morris R. Cohen, I also tend to think of Universals and Relations, as well as Ideas, as more real than their reflections in this shadowy world. However, I have not found many other people who agree with this.

Your use of Philo is ingenious.

Now, as for the dreams of this particular professional religionist. They are really questions that I often ask myself, although in my youth I used to put the issues more positively, as things which I hoped myself to help realize in this tough world.

1. Can we ever develop a civilization in which everyone, or almost everyone, will be devout in his own religion, and totally committed to its theology, and yet tolerant and understanding of all others?
2. Can we develop a world or civilization in which to ask this question is not considered heretical?
3. Can we develop a civilization in which the most pious people are also the most moral? (Some of them are now, or were a generation ago, like Rabbi Israel Salanter.) But it ought to be axiomatic that a religious person behaves properly and lovingly toward his fellowmen.

I am hoping to see you and Hadassah before the summer really sets in. With much love,

Levin