

WorldPerfect: The Jewish Impact On Civilization By Ken Spiro Quotes

In his essay “The Evolution of Childhood,” Lloyd DeMause reports: Infanticide during antiquity has usually been played down despite literally hundreds of clear references by ancient writers that it was an accepted, everyday occurrence. Children were thrown into rivers, flung into dung-heaps and cess trenches, “potted” in jars to starve to death, and exposed in every hill and roadside, “a prey for birds, food for wild beasts to rend.” (Euripides, *Ion*, 504)¹

Seneca, the famed Roman philosopher and writer, developed a lengthy treatise on the control and consequences of anger. In it, he draws the distinction between anger and wisdom, using the following example: *Children also, if weak and deformed, we drown, not through anger, but through the wisdom of preferring the sound to the useless.*²

Today, religion is seen as putting the brakes on licentious sexual behavior, but the religions of the Greeks and Romans (and of many other ancient cultures) were permeated with sexuality. Indeed, this was a ubiquitous feature of virtually all the mythologies of the ancient world. The gods were involved in rampant sexual activity. For example, in Greek mythology, which the Romans adopted wholesale, the god Uranus, the personification of heaven, cohabited with Gaia, the personification of Earth, to give birth to a phalanx of gods. Zeus, the most important of their descendants, was depicted as promiscuous, having more than two dozen divine and human consorts. Among his better known sexual conquests was the rape of Europa and the abduction, when overcome by erotic passion, of the beautiful boy Ganymede.³

This idea is most clearly expressed in the sixth of the Ten Commandments: “Thou shall not murder.” The Hebrew of the original is often mistranslated as “Thou shall not kill,” but the Torah does permit killing when necessary to destroy evil.⁴

Abraham is restrained from harming his son, and he sacrifices a ram in his place. Jewish scholars have drawn many lessons from this story, among them that obedience to God and his law must

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³ 45-46

⁴ 76

come above all else, and also that, by preventing the sacrifice of Isaac, God thereby decreed unequivocally that he does not want human sacrifice.⁵

The world has seen its share of wicked Jews, while there have been many righteous non-Jews in history. Certainly it's true that the Jews, as a people, have not always lived up to the values of the Torah; indeed, many turned away from their own religion. But there's no question that the Jews have been the moral giants of human history, and that their ethical vision has served as the model for the rest of humanity.⁶

Writes Robert S. Wistrich in *Anti-Semitism: The Longest Hatred: Admittedly, under Muslim rule, Jews before the modern era usually found greater toleration than under Christianity and were spared the regular massacres and frequent expulsion which were their curse in Christendom.*⁷

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⁵ 77

⁶ 110

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