

The Moral State We're In – A Manifesto For A 21<sup>st</sup> century Society by Julia Neuberger.  
Harper Collins 2005.

Julia Neuberger spent 12 years as a congregational Rabbi in South London before she began to immerse herself in the area of healthcare ethics. Before entering the House of Lords she was an illustrious and successful Chief Executive of the King's Fund, in which capacity she was at the heart of the services that provide healthcare to the citizens of the United Kingdom.

The Moral State We're In is the book that she was destined to write, and develops a range of themes and subjects about which she has frequently spoken in public. Under five main headings, The Elderly, The Mentally Ill, The Young and Vulnerable, The Prison System, The Outsider, she deals with broad general issues but also focuses on specific cases that exemplify what is going right but more often what is going wrong.

Julia Neuberger writes with power and passion, but she is also immensely persuasive, and one would like to think that the relevant government departments would consider very carefully what she has said and particularly the proposals that she makes in each area.

It is especially striking – though not surprising – how the spirit of Prophetic Judaism pervades every page of the book, and how Neuberger's views and attitudes, as well as her proposals, are so grounded in prophetic teaching about the proper treatment of the weak and vulnerable in society.

This is a superb testimony to one of this country's leading thinkers on healthcare issues and deserves to be very widely read.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh