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Nationalism - the struggle for survival, 1926.

"NATIONALISM--THE STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL."

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER.

THE TEMPLE, SUNDAY MORNING

FEBRUARY 14, 1926, CLEVELAND.



Among the four great tendencies in Jewish life I named Nationalism. In recent years, or to be more exact, since the beginning of the era of emancipation, which dates from the French revolution, the status of the Jew whether it be that of a race or a nation or a religion, has been broadly discussed. The reform movement, which began at the beginning of the last century, added fuel to this controversy. Many of the leaders of the early reform movement maintained that Israel was not a race or a nation but a religious community. Some of the conferences abroad, and especially one in the United States--the Pittsburgh conference held in 1885, declared among other things that we consider ourselves no longer a nation but a religious community, and therefore expect neither to return to Palestine, and so forth.

This view, of course, was furiously attacked by the conservative leaders of Israel, and also by some of the reform leaders. The rise of political Zionism in the last decade of the nineteenth century still further aggravated this controversy, and only in the last decade since the war, and especially since the triumph of political Zionism, as attested by the Balfour declaration, which gave Israel the status of a nation among nations, did this controversy abate somewhat.

Now I shall not undertake this morning to stir

the roiled and troubled waters anew. This subject of the status of the Jew, race, nation or religion, is at best an academic subject, and I am concerned with the realities of Jewish life. The reality of the situation is that the Jew has, since the beginning of his career, looked upon himself as a distinct people, and that he still regards himself today as a distinct people. There have been a few men who have wished that the Jew would lose his physical identity; there are still a few men here and there who wish today that the Jew would assimilate and lose his identity, or who wish, as the Pittsburgh platform reads, "to consider themselves no longer a nation but only a religious community."

But this is at best only a wish--a wish of what ought to be rather than a statement of what is. A wish cannot undo history and a wish cannot obliterate facts of history. The fact of history is that for the first thousand years of our existence the Jew possessed all the essential characteristics which we are wont to attribute to a nation. He had a common land, a common language, a common religion, a common racial ancestry. In the last two thousand years of his existence he lacked a common center and land; to a degree he lacked a common speech. I say to a degree and only to a degree, because Hebrew continued through the ages to be the universal language of Jewish prayer and of Jewish literature. He did possess a common religion, and to a remarkable degree he maintained common racial antecedents. The racial strain of the Jew is less

blended with alien racial influxes than that of any other modern people. In place of a common land or a common center the Jew substituted an embracing messianic ideal-- a hope of restoration and rehabilitation, which since proved the ideal home in which the people lived during the years of exile waiting for the restoration to its own home. And destiny (fortunately) surrounded the Jews with so many restrictions and so many oppressions that his life of necessity and by force of circumstances became isolated, and to that extent conserved.

So that the Jew comes down to the twentieth century very much an integrated people held together by ties racial, religious, historical, enjoying common memories, common traditions, common loyalties, common aspirations; and these, we maintain--in deference to the realities of the situation--are the essentials of nationality.

And another reality of the situation which we must accept is that the non-Jewish world regards the Jew as a distinct people. The non-Jew who has reasoning is not confused by any issue complex; he sees facts, and sees in the Jew a people possessing those distinctive qualities which he is wont to attribute to a people, and he accepts him as such. So that really a metaphysical or intellectual discussion of the problem of the status of the Jew is altogether beyond the point.

So potent was this idea of nationalism in Jewish life that when the Jew lost his political independence

and became scattered to the four corners of the earth, he refused to disappear. He posited two tremendous dogmas in his life as an expression of his will to live, of his will to persist. The first dogma is the dogma of the eternal people, and the second dogma is the dogma of the Messiah. The dogma of the eternal people was first enunciated under exile, the first exile--the Babylonian. When the first temple was destroyed in 586 B.C. and the Jews were exiled to Babylon, they sensed then and there the menace of disintegration. There were many forces about them tending to break them up and to destroy their national self-identity. And so they established there in exile the dogma of the eternal people, and through the mouth of their great prophet, the anonymous prophet of the exile, whom we call for lack of a better term the second Isaiah, whose prophecies are found in the chapters 40 to 66 in the Book of Isaiah,--through his voice this national will-to-live expresses itself most perfectly. "Whereas the new heaven and the new earth which I make endure before me, saith the Lord, so shall your race and your name endure." "For the mountain shall depart and the hills be overthrown, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, nor shall my covenant of peace be overthrown, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." "When thou shalt pass through the waters," cries this prophet in anger in this magnificent and heroic passage, "I shall be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou shalt go through fire, thou

shalt not be burned, and the flames shall not be kindled against thee. For thou art an eternal people."

Now this dogma of the eternal people was never logically proved. Like all dogmas they cannot be proved, and yet if logic has not established the truth of it, experience, to a degree, has. The Jew today is warranted in believing that somehow in him there is resident the quality of eternity; for what has not the world done to him in order to break him and to destroy him? When he stands today and scans the purview of all his yesterdays; when he considers what the armies of Babylon and Assyria sought to do to him, and the winged armies of Memphis and Thebes, and the hoplites of the Greeks and the iron legions of the Romans and all the followers of the cross and the crescent, who mistook and misintrepreted the ideals of their own faith,--what the rack and the stake and the Inquisition and exile and ghetto and yellow badge and pogrom and massacre have sought to do to the Jew,--I say, when the Jew scans his past and sees what instruments of destruction were brought to play upon him, and that in spite of them all he is, he persists, he lives, perhaps he is justified in believing in the dogma of the eternal people.

The second dogma which the Jew established as an expression of his will to live was the dogma of the Messiah. In a way it derives from the first dogma--the dogma of the eternal people. The belief in the Messiah began with the conquest of Palestine by the Romans and with

the beginning of the oppression of the people by the Romans. It gained tremendous impetus at the time of the destruction of the temple and the loss of national independence, and from the day of the destruction of the temple to the day, almost nineteen hundred years later, when the Hebrew university was dedicated on Mount Scopus, in sight of the temple mount, this faith in the coming of an era of redemption, of emancipation, of reconstruction, physical and spiritual, was never wanting in the life of the people. At every crisis in its life it flared up; at every great universal movement or event it came to the surface, whether it was the collapse of the Roman Empire or the rise of Mohammedanism or the Crusades or the Black Death in the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries, or the Protestant Reformation or the Cossack uprisings in the seventeenth century, or the French Revolution, or the World War. Whenever there transpired an event which stirred the world the messianic hopes in Israel surged to the surface and the embers glowed with rare expectancy. And the finest minds in Israel throughout the ages dreamt of the return, prayed for the coming of the Messiah, and even calculated the time when he would come. Whether it was rabbis like Jochanan ben Zaccai and Akiba, or philosophers like Saadia and Maimonides, or poets like Gabirol or Jehuda Halevi, or statesmen like Hasti ibn Shaprut or Isaac Abarbanel, or mystics like Abulafia and Isaac Luria,-- whatever type, whatever profession, the finest minds in Israel throughout the ages hoped for the return, prayed for

it, and even calculated the coming of the Messiah.

And why? Because in them the will to live, the national, the racial will to survive and to live a fuller and richer and quieter life was never dead; and modern Zionism, I make bold to say, is an expression of this self-same messianic hope. It may be less mystic, it may be more realistic, its technique and apparatus may be more scientific, it may be paying much more attention to the realities of the international situation than the forefathers in the Middle Ages, but the rise of the movement is the same, the faith which inspires it is the same, the driving impulse, the dynamics of it are the same.

So that nationalism, to my way of thinking, is just as real a tendency in Jewish life as prophecy and as legalism and as mysticism, of which I spoke in the past weeks. But this is an essential thought: the Jew gave the idea of nationalism a unique turn; the Jew gave the concept of nationalism a distinctive definition, and that perhaps is one of the great contributions which Israel has made to civilization. To the Jew it is not enough for a nation merely to survive, to exist, or to grow through conquest. That is not enough; to the Jew a nation must vindicate its existence through some social, creative purpose, just like an individual. Just as no individual fulfills his destiny merely by living or by growing great and powerful through acquisition of things, so a nation does not justify its existence merely by surviving or by growing imperial through

conquest and aggrandizement. That is not enough. A nation must--so says the philosophy of Jewish nationalism--find its highest motif and its highest goal in some organ, in some form of human service.

Now early in Jewish history the Jew found for himself his motif, his goal, and very early in his history the Jew came and spoke of himself as the . . . Servant of God. As a kingdom of priests and a holy people. Not a people which arrogates unto itself a priesthood and holiness, but of a people which strives to be priestly and holy. And that same great prophet who announced the dogma of the eternity of Israel also announced in marvelous phrase the dogma of the mission of Israel. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen one in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall make the right to go forth to the nations. He shall not fail nor become weary until he shall have established justice in the earth." Again: "I, the Lord, have called thee for salvation; I will hold thee by the hand; I will defend thee and make thee a covenant of the peoples, a light unto the nations."

Why? To open the eyes of the blind, to bring the prisoners out of the prison-house, and they that dwell in darkness out of the dungeons. Think of it! Twenty-six hundred years ago, in exile, a broken people was in position to define a conception of nationalism which so far transcends all the conceptions of nationalism which the nations of the world have today in the twentieth century.

Israel conceived it to be its task in the world not to grow great and conquer, not to establish a vast empire, not to explore the extreme ends of the earth and exploit the resources of the earth, but to shed a light unto the nations, to bring the prisoners out of the prison-house, and him who dwells in darkness out of the dungeon; to establish the right, the right justice, God's moral law in the world. That is the mission of Israel. People have spoken flippantly of it; some people have spoken cynically of it, and yet it is one of the real facts of Jewish life. And the mission idea does not at all, as has been frequently maintained and as is still being frequently maintained, preclude the idea of nationalism. The great prophet, the second Isaiah, who gave the classic expression to the ideal of the mission of Israel, was himself the supreme nationalist and the supreme Zionist of his day.

The Jew need not be scattered to the four corners of the earth in order to carry out his mission, any more than the Greeks had to be scattered to the four corners of the earth to carry out their national mission, which was to teach mankind how to think logically and critically and how to feel esthetically the beauty of the world. But it would be a mistake on the part of the champions of Jewish nationalism to push to the background this inspiring motif of Jewish life. I would not wish my people to become another little statelet, another little Montenegro some-

wheres in the corner of the earth, merely for the sake of existing as a separate entity there. I wish my people to continue its historic mission as a light-bringer unto mankind, and as a reclaimed and integrated people on its own soil carry on this great work which destiny seems to have outlined for it from the beginning of time.

It is of interest to note, friends,--this is perhaps my last word in connection with this series--that these four great tendencies of which I spoke--prophecy, legalism, mysticism, nationalism--received their consummate expression in Palestine; their most complete and most perfect expression in Palestine. I do not mean to say that in exile in the last two thousand years the Jews did not create any values and did not contribute to society. He did; he gave much to the world even as he received much from the world. He participated in every great cultural movement, but somehow the real stamp of creative genius, of originality, of world-conquering truth are possessed by those things which were born on the soil of Palestine.

Now it is not that the soil of Palestine is any more inspiring or holier than the soil of any other nation or any other land, but in exile the Jew lacked freedom, and freedom is at the very root of creative genius. Freedom alone enables a man to express, without let or hindrance, the gifts which are latent in his soul, which he can express, and throughout the last two thousand years the Jew has lacked that complete freedom, that spaciousness,

that stability, that sense of belonging which enables a people to create for it great and lasting things.

And then in exile the Jew has lacked the stimulating environment which makes for greatness. In the diaspora his greatness is either crishing, stultifying, forcing him in upon himself, or it is completely disintegrating and assimilating. Either is dangerous to creative greatness. The fact of the Zionist ideal is, I take it, just this wish to regain the authentic mood in Jewish life and the authentic voice, to recapture greatness by finding freedom and the stimulating environment which it had in its ancient days.

The Jew in Palestine may create in the years to come values comparable to those which he created in the past in Palestine. It is not at all certain that he will. Perhaps people will say the Zionist is a miracle-monger; he is hoping for miracles; the past cannot be recaptured. Perhaps so; but Israel's life has been so full of miracles, its very existence and survival has been such a marvelous miracle, that I am ready to take a chance upon this miracle of tomorrow. As for those Jews who will remain in the diaspora--and the majority of our people will always remain outside of Palestine--they can do three things and remain contributing forces to civilization. The first is this: they can remain loyal to their faith. The second is this: they can preserve their racial and historical identity. In other words, in this beloved land of ours the Jew can

completely Americanize himself, share in the common life of America, obey its laws, participate in its government, contribute to its national life, love it, serve it, and at the same time keep from destroying himself, from assimilating himself beyond recognition.

And lastly the Jew in the diaspora, here and elsewhere, may continue as a contributing force to civilization by living up to the ideals of his race--the moral law, the moral teaching; by living up to the ideal, the mission of his people; that he is, in a sense, a missionary to mankind, an apostle of truth, a messenger of good tidings, a champion of justice and truth.

I hear a great deal today about anti-Semitism. I hear various complaints everywhere about prejudice, and I hear these complaints most in those circles which somehow seem to have entirely drifted away from Judaism. When I come into a circle of people who are not affiliated with a temple or a synagogue, who do not participate in Jewish educational movements or in any movement of Jewish interests, the first subject of conversation is anti-Semitism. That is the one thing that hurts them; it is the one thing that disturbs their bovine peace; it is the one thing that irritates them. If that were removed, why, they would be in Paradise.

My great concern is not anti-Semitism; I am used to it; my people is used to it; we have experienced it for twenty centuries; it is not a novel experience in our

life; we are reconciled to it; we have developed a strategy how to meet it; we have seen it in uglier forms in the past; we shall see it in the future; we shall abide as we did in the past. It does not bother me. What bothers me, what hurts me to the quick, what brings sorrow to my heart is to see the moral debacle of our people, the break-up of moral idealism, the encroaching of materialism and saturation of the whole body of Israel in this land with all the vileness and the corruption which comes from prosperity too quickly gotten and not readily assimilated. That is the tragedy of Jewish life in America; and it is a growing tragedy, and it is a tragedy for which the non-Jew is not responsible, for which we ourselves are responsible. When I see the rising Jewish generation, the young Jewish men and women, steeping in sensuality, in materialism, thinking only of the day and of success and of prosperity and of pleasure and the hectic chase after material things; when I look about me and see the standards which have been set up in Jewish life, I say to myself how tragically we have failed in our mission as the priest people of mankind.

Oh, I know you will tell me everybody else is doing it; the non-Jew is no better. Of course he is no better; we have no monopoly on vice; we have no monopoly on materialism. I know that. But we assumed the task, we burdened ourselves twenty-six hundred years ago with a world-revolutionizing career of service; we were to make the right to prevail on the earth; we were to establish justice; we

were to be a light and a leading to the nation. We are not doing it. When I see daily the number of Jews in the professions who fall below the line of the ethics of the profession; when I see the number of Jews, adult and juvenile, who are crowding into our courts, crowding in frightful numbers into our courts; when I look about me and see the number of Jewish homes that are breaking up; when I look about me and see the hundreds and the thousands of young Jewish boys and girls growing up without God, without Torah, without ideals, I see before me the greatest tragedy in Jewish life, and all your wealth and all your prosperity and all your beautiful homes and all your sense of ease and peace do not for a moment compensate for this tragic loss.

I believe that American Israel needs a stirring revival, an awakening, a return to fundamentals, a taking of stock of its spiritual life. If we are to continue as a people, as a distinct group, then we ought to continue as a worthwhile, helpful, creative group in American life. In other words, we shall have to go back and pay an attentive ear to the mighty phrases of our sages and prophets of old; we shall have to think a little more of spirit, of ideal, of God, of worship, of prayer, of service, of education, and a little less of pleasure and money and wealth and display.

That is our task for tomorrow. The same four tendencies must continue if we are to continue: the

spirit of prophecy--to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with God; the spirit of legalism--to observe the laws of the Torah, those laws which are still essential in our life today; the spirit of mysticism--the higher quest of God, the yearning after God; and the spirit of national loyalty and group solidarity.

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RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER.

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FEBRUARY 14, 1926, CLEVELAND.

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This view, of course, was furiously attacked by the conservative leaders of Israel, and also by some of the reform leaders. The rise of political Zionism in the last decade of the nineteenth century still further aggravated this controversy, and only in the last decade since the war, and especially since the triumph of political Zionism, as attested by the Balfour declaration, which gave Israel the status of a nation among nations, did this controversy abate somewhat.

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So ~~that~~ the Jew comes down to the twentieth century very much an integrated people held together by ties racial, religious, historical, enjoying common memories, common traditions, common loyalties, common aspirations; and these, we maintain--in deference to the realities of the situation--are the essentials of nationality.

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Why? To open the eyes of the blind, to bring the prisoners out of the prison-house, and they that dwell in darkness out of the dungeons. Think of it! Twenty-six hundred years ago, in exile, a broken people was in position to define a conception of nationalism which so far transcends all the conceptions of nationalism which the nations of the world have today in the twentieth century.

Israel conceived it to be its task in the world not to grow great and conquer, not to establish a vast empire, not to ~~explore the extreme ends of the earth~~ and exploit the resources of the earth, but to ^{be} ~~the~~ a light unto the nations, (to bring the prisoners out of the prison-house, and him who dwells in darkness out of the dungeon; to establish the right, the right justice, God's moral law in the world.) That is the mission of Israel. People have spoken flippantly of it; ~~some people have spoken cynically of it,~~ and yet it is one of the real facts of Jewish life. ~~And the mission idea does not at all,~~ as has been frequently maintained and as is still being frequently maintained, preclude the idea of nationalism. The great prophet, the second Isaiah, who gave the classic expression to the ideal of the mission of Israel, was himself the supreme nationalist and the supreme Zionist of his day.

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It is of interest to note, ~~friends, this is~~ perhaps my last word in connection with this series--that these four great tendencies of ^{Jewish life -} ~~which I spoke--~~ prophecy, legalism, mysticism, nationalism--received their consummate expression in Palestine; ~~their most complete and most perfect expression in Palestine.~~ I do not mean to say that in exile in the last two thousand years the Jews did not create any values and did not contribute to society. ~~He did;~~ He gave much to the world even as he received much from the world. He participated in every great cultural movement, but somehow the real stamp of creative genius, of originality, of world-conquering truth are possessed by those things which were born on the soil of Palestine.

~~Now~~ It is not that the soil of Palestine is any more inspiring or holier than the soil of any other nation or any other land, but in exile the Jew lacked freedom, and freedom is at the very root of creative genius. Freedom alone enables a man to express, without let or hindrance, the gifts which are latent in his soul, which he can express, and throughout the last two thousand years the Jew has lacked that complete freedom, that spaciousness,

that stability, that sense of belonging which enables a people to create for it great and lasting things.

And then in exile the Jew has lacked the stimulating environment which makes for greatness. In the diaspora his greatness is either crishing, stultifying, forcing him in upon himself, or it is completely disintegrating and assimilating. Either is dangerous to creative greatness. The fact of the Zionist ideal is, I take it, just this wish to regain the authentic mood in Jewish life and the authentic voice, to recapture greatness by finding freedom and the stimulating environment which it had in its ancient days.

The Jew in Palestine may create in the years to come values comparable to those which he created in the past in Palestine. It is not at all certain that he will. Perhaps people will say the Zionist is a miracle-monger; he is hoping for miracles; the past cannot be recaptured. Perhaps so; But Israel's life has been so full of miracles, its very existence and survival has been such a marvelous miracle, that I am ready to take a chance upon this miracle of tomorrow. As for those Jews who will remain in the diaspora--and the majority of our people will always remain outside of Palestine--they can do three things and remain contributing forces to civilization. ~~The first is this:~~ they can remain loyal to their faith. ~~The second is this:~~ they can preserve their racial and historical identity. In other words, in this beloved land of ours the Jew can

completely Americanize himself, share in the common life of America, obey its laws, participate in its government, contribute to its national life, love it, serve it, and at the same time keep from destroying himself, from assimilating himself beyond recognition.

~~And~~ ^{Then} lastly the Jew in the diaspora, here and elsewhere, may continue as a contributing force to civilization by living up to the ideals of his race--~~the moral law,~~ the moral teaching; by living up to the ideal, the mission of his people; ^{Then} that he is, in a sense, a missionary to mankind, an apostle of truth, a messenger of good tidings, a champion of justice and truth.

I hear a great deal today about anti-Semitism. I hear ~~various complaints everywhere about prejudice, and~~ I hear these complaints most in those circles which somehow seem to have entirely drifted away from Judaism. When I come into a circle of people who are not affiliated with a temple or a synagogue, who do not participate in Jewish educational movements or in any movement of Jewish interests, the first subject of conversation is anti-Semitism. That is the one thing that hurts them; ~~it is~~ the one thing that disturbs their bovine peace; ~~it is the one thing that~~ irritates them. If that were removed, why, they would be in Paradise.

My great concern is not anti-Semitism; I am used to it; my people is used to it; we have experienced it for twenty centuries; it is not a novel experience in our

life; we are reconciled to it; we have developed a strategy ^{for meeting} ~~how to meet~~ it; we have seen it in uglier forms in the past; we shall see it in the future; we shall abide as we did in the past. It does not bother me. What bothers me, what hurts me to the quick, ~~what brings sorrow to my heart is~~ to see the moral debacle of our people, the break-up of moral idealism, the encroaching of materialism and saturation of the whole body of Israel in this land with all the vileness and the corruption which comes from prosperity too quickly gotten and not readily assimilated. That is the tragedy of Jewish life in America; and it is a growing tragedy, ~~and it is a tragedy~~ for which the non-Jew is not responsible, for which we ourselves are responsible. When I see the rising Jewish generation, ~~the young Jewish men and women,~~ steeping in sensuality, in materialism, thinking only of the day and of success and of prosperity and of pleasure and the hectic chase after material things; when I look about me and see the standards which have been set up in Jewish life, I say to myself how tragically we have failed in our mission as the priest people of mankind.

Oh, I know you will tell me everybody else is doing it; the non-Jew is no better. Of course he is no better; we have no monopoly on vice; we have no monopoly on materialism. I know that. But we assumed the task, we burdened ourselves twenty-six hundred years ago with a world-revolutionizing career of service; we were to make the right to prevail on the earth; we were to establish justice; we

were to be a light and a leading to the nation. We are not doing it. When I see daily the number of Jews in the professions who fall below the line of the ethics of the profession; when I see the number of Jews, adult and juvenile, who are crowding into our courts, ~~crowding in frightful numbers into our courts~~; when I look about me and see the number of Jewish homes that are breaking up; when I look about me and see the hundreds and the thousands of young Jewish boys and girls growing up without God, without Torah, without ideals, I see before me the greatest tragedy in Jewish life, and all your wealth and all your prosperity and all your beautiful homes and all your sense of ease and peace do not for a moment compensate for this tragic loss.

I believe that American Israel needs a stirring revival, an awakening, a return to fundamentals, a taking of stock of its spiritual life. If we are to continue as a people, as a distinct group, then we ought to continue as a worthwhile, helpful, creative group in American life. In other words, we shall have to go back and pay an attentive ear to the mighty phrases of our sages and prophets of old; we shall have to think a little more of spirit, of ideal, of God, of worship, of prayer, of service, of education, and a little less of pleasure and money and wealth and display.

~~That is our task for tomorrow. The same~~
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spirit of prophecy--to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with God; the spirit of legalism--to observe the laws of the Torah, those laws which are still essential in our life today; the spirit of mysticism--the higher quest of God, the yearning after God; and the spirit of national loyalty and group solidarity.

That is our task and our challenge for tomorrow.

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NATIONALISM -- THE STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL*at* The Temple, February 14, 1926(Begin on p. 2.)

This subject of the status of the Jew, race, nation, or religion is at best an academic subject, and I am concerned with the realities of Jewish life. The reality of the situation is that the Jew has, since the beginning of his career, looked upon himself as a distinct people, and that he still regards himself today as a distinct people. There have been a few ~~men~~ who have wished that the Jew would lose his ^{physical} identity; there are still a few here and there who wish today that the Jew would assimilate and lose his identity, or who wish, as the Pittsburgh platform reads, to consider themselves no longer a nation but only a religious community.

But this is at best only a wish - a wish of what ought to be rather than a statement of what is. A wish cannot undo history and a wish cannot obliterate facts of history. The fact of history is that for the first thousand years of our existence the Jew possessed all the essential characteristics which we are wont to attribute to a nation. He had a common land, a common language, a common religion, a common racial ancestry. In the last two thousand years of his existence he lacked a common center and land; to a degree he lacked a common speech. I say to a degree and only to a degree, because Hebrew continued ~~to be~~ through the ages to be the universal language of Jewish prayer and of Jewish literature. He did possess a common religion, and to a remarkable degree he maintained common racial antecedents.

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blended with alien racial influxes than that of any other modern people.) In place of a common land or a common center the Jew substituted an embracing messianic ideal-- a hope of restoration and rehabilitation, which since proved the ideal home in which the people lived during the years of exile waiting for the restoration to its own home. And destiny fortunately surrounded the Jews with so many restrictions and so many oppressions that his life of necessity and by force of circumstances became isolated, and to that extent conserved.

So that the Jew comes down to the twentieth century very much an integrated people held together by ties racial, religious, historical, enjoying common memories, common traditions, common loyalties, common aspirations; and these, we maintain--in deference to the realities of the situation--are the essentials of nationality.

~~And~~ another reality of the situation which we must accept is that the non-Jewish world regards the Jew as a distinct people. The non-Jew who has reasoning is not confused by any issue complex; he sees facts, and sees in the Jew a people possessing those distinctive qualities which he is wont to attribute to a people, and he accepts him as such. So that really a metaphysical or intellectual discussion of the problem of the status of the Jew is altogether beyond the point.

So potent was this idea of nationalism in Jewish life that when the Jew lost his political independence

and became scattered to the four corners of the earth, he refused to disappear. He posited two tremendous dogmas in his life as an expression of his will to live, ~~of his will~~ to persist. The first dogma is the dogma of the eternal people, and the second dogma is the dogma of the Messiah. The dogma of the eternal people was first enunciated under ~~exile~~, the first exile--the Babylonian. When the first temple was destroyed in 586 B.C. and the Jews were exiled to Babylon, they sensed then and there the menace of ~~dis~~-disintegration. There were many forces about them tending to break them up and to destroy their national self-identity. And so they established there in exile the dogma of the eternal people, and through the mouth of their great prophet, the anonymous prophet of the exile, whom we call for lack of a better term the second Isaiah, whose prophecies are found in the chapters 40 to 66 in the Book of Isaiah,--through his voice this national will-to-live expresses itself most perfectly. "Whereas the new heaven and the new earth which I make endure before me, saith the Lord, so shall your race and your name endure." "For the mountain shall depart and the hills be overthrown, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, nor shall my covenant of peace be overthrown, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." "When thou shalt pass through the waters," cries this prophet in anger in this magnificent and heroic passage, "I shall be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not cverflow thee; when thou shalt go through fire, thou

shalt not be burned, and the flames shall not be kindled against thee. For thou art an eternal people."

Now this dogma of the eternal people was never logically proved. Like all dogmas they cannot be proved, and yet if logic has not established the truth of it, experience, to a degree, has. The Jew today is warranted in believing that somehow in him there is resident the quality of eternity; for what has not the world done to him in order to break him and to destroy him? When he stands today and scans the purview of all his yesterdays; when he considers what the armies of Babylon and Assyria sought to do to him, and the winged armies of Memphis and Thebes, and the hoplites of the Greeks and the iron legions of the Romans and all the followers of the cross and the crescent, who mistook and misinterpreted the ideals of their own faith, (what the rack and the stake and the Inquisition and exile and ghetto and yellow badge and pogrom and massacre have sought to do to the Jew,) --I say, when the Jew scans his past and sees what instruments of destruction were brought to play upon him, and that in spite of them all he is, he persists, he lives, perhaps he is justified in believing in the dogma of the eternal people.

The second dogma which the Jew established as an expression of his will to live was the dogma of the Messiah. In a way it derives from the first dogma--the dogma of the eternal people. (The belief in the Messiah began with the conquest of Palestine by the Romans and with

the beginning of the oppression of the people by the Romans. It gained tremendous impetus at the time of the destruction of the temple and the loss of national independence, and from the day of the destruction of the temple to the day, almost nineteen hundred years later, when the Hebrew university was dedicated on Mount Scopus, in sight of the temple mount, this faith in the coming of an era of redemption, of emancipation, of reconstruction, physical and spiritual, was never wanting in the life of the people. At every crisis in its life it flared up; at every great universal movement or event it came to the surface, whether it was the collapse of the Roman Empire or the rise of Mohammedanism or the Crusades or the Black Death in the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries, or the Protestant Reformation or the Cossack uprisings in the seventeenth century, or the French Revolution, or the World War. Whenever there took place an event which stirred the world the messianic hopes in Israel surged to the surface and the embers glowed with rare expectancy. And the finest minds in Israel throughout the ages dreamt of the return, prayed for the coming of the Messiah, and even calculated the time when he would come. Whether it was rabbis like Jochanan ben Zaccar and Akiba, or philosophers like Saadia and Maimonides, or poets like Gabirol or Jehuda Halevi, or statesmen like Hasdi ibn Shaprut or Isaac Abarbanel, or mystics like Abulafia and Isaac Luria,-- whatever type, whatever profession, the finest minds in Israel throughout the ages hoped for the return, prayed for

it, and even calculated the coming of the Messiah.

And why? Because in them the will to live, the national, the racial will to survive and to live a fuller and richer and quieter life was never dead; and modern Zionism, I make bold to say, is an expression of this self-same messianic hope. It may be less mystic, it may be more realistic, its technique and apparatus may be more scientific, it may be paying much more attention to the realities of the international situation than the forefathers in the Middle Ages, but the rise of the movement is the same, the faith which inspires it is the same, the driving impulse, the dynamics of it are the same.

So that Nationalism, to my way of thinking, is just as real a tendency in Jewish life as prophecy and as legalism and as mysticism, of which I spoke in the past weeks. But this is an essential thought: the Jew gave the idea of nationalism a unique turn; the Jew gave the concept of nationalism a distinctive definition, and that perhaps is one of the great contributions which Israel has made to civilization. To the Jew it is not enough for a nation merely to survive, to exist, or to grow through conquest. That is not enough; to the Jew a nation must vindicate its existence through some social, creative purpose, just like an individual. Just as no individual fulfills his destiny merely by living or by growing great and powerful through acquisition of things, so a nation does not justify its existence merely by surviving or by growing imperial through

conquest and aggrandizement. ~~That is not enough.~~ A nation must--so says the philosophy of Jewish nationalism--find its highest motif and its highest goal in some organ, in some form of human service.

~~New~~ Early in Jewish history the Jew found for himself his motif, his goal, and very early in his history the Jew came and spoke of himself as the ^{2171 328} "Servant of God. As a kingdom of priests and a holy people. Not a people which arrogates unto itself a priesthood and holiness, but of a people which strives to be priestly and holy. And that same great prophet who announced the dogma of the eternity of Israel also announced in marvelous phrase the dogma of the mission of Israel. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen one in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall make the right to go forth to the nations. He shall not fail nor become weary until he shall have established justice in the earth." Again: "I, the Lord, have called thee for salvation; I will hold thee by the hand; I will defend thee and make thee a covenant of the peoples, a light unto the nations."

Why? To open the eyes of the blind, to bring the prisoners out of the prison-house, and they that dwell in darkness out of the dungeons. Think of it! Twenty-six hundred years ago, in exile, a broken people was in position to define a conception of nationalism which so far transcends all the conceptions of nationalism which the nations of the world have today in the twentieth century.

Israel conceived it to be its task in the world not to grow great and conquer, not to establish a vast empire, not to explore ~~the extreme ends of the earth~~ and exploit the resources of the earth, but to ^{be} ~~the~~ a light unto the nations, (to bring the prisoners out of the prison-house, and him who dwells in darkness out of the dungeon; to establish the right, the right justice, God's moral law in the world.) That is the mission of Israel. People have spoken flippantly of it; ~~some people have spoken cynically of it,~~ and yet it is one of the real facts of Jewish life. ~~And the mission idea does not at all, as~~ has been frequently maintained and as is still being frequently maintained, preclude the idea of nationalism. The great prophet, the second Isaiah, who gave the classic expression to the ideal of the mission of Israel, was himself the supreme nationalist and the supreme Zionist of his day.

The Jew need not be scattered to the four corners of the earth in order to carry out his mission, any more than the Greeks had to be scattered to the four corners of the earth to carry out their national mission, which was to teach mankind how to think logically and critically and how to feel esthetically the beauty of the world.) But it would be a mistake on the part of the champions of Jewish nationalism to push to the background this inspiring motif of Jewish life. I would not wish my people to become another little statelet, another little Montenegro some-

whereas ~~in the corner of the earth~~, merely for the sake of existing as a separate entity there. I wish my people to continue its historic mission as a light-bringer unto mankind, and as a reclaimed and integrated people on its own soil carry on this great work which destiny seems to have outlined for it from the beginning of time.

It is of interest to note, ~~friends,--this is~~ perhaps my last word in connection with this series--that these four great tendencies of ^{Jewish life} ~~which I spoke--~~ prophecy, legalism, mysticism, nationalism--received their consummate expression in Palestine; ~~their most complete and most~~ perfect expression in Palestine. I do not mean to say that in exile in the last two thousand years the Jews did not create any values and did not contribute to society. ~~He did;~~ He gave much to the world even as he received much from the world. He participated in every great cultural movement, but somehow the real stamp of creative genius, of originality, of world-conquering truth are possessed by those things which were born on the soil of Palestine.

Now it is not that the soil of Palestine is any more inspiring or holier than the soil of any other nation or any other land, but in exile the Jew lacked freedom, and freedom is at the very root of creative genius. Freedom alone enables a man to express, without let or hindrance, the gifts which are latent in his soul, which he can express, and throughout the last two thousand years the Jew has lacked that complete freedom, that spaciousness,

that stability, that sense of belonging which enables a people to create for it great and lasting things.

And then in exile the Jew has lacked the stimulating environment which makes for greatness. In the diaspora his greatness is either ~~cr~~ushing, stultifying, forcing him in upon himself, or it is completely disintegrating and assimilating. Either is dangerous to creative greatness. The fact of the Zionist ideal is, I take it, just this wish to regain the authentic mood in Jewish life and the authentic voice, to recapture greatness by finding freedom and the stimulating environment which it had in its ancient days.

The Jew in Palestine may create in the years to come values comparable to those which he created in the past in Palestine. It is not at all certain that he will. Perhaps people will say the Zionist is a miracle-monger; he is hoping for miracles; the past cannot be recaptured. Perhaps so; But Israel's life has been so full of miracles, its very existence and survival has been such a marvelous miracle, that I am ready to take a chance upon this miracle of tomorrow. As for those Jews who will remain in the diaspora--and the majority of our people will always remain outside of Palestine--they can do three things and remain contributing forces to civilization. ~~The first is this:~~ they can remain loyal to their faith. ~~The second is this:~~ they can preserve their racial and historical identity. In other words, in this beloved land of ours the Jew can

completely Americanize himself, share in the common life of America, obey its laws, participate in its government, contribute to its national life, love it, serve it, and at the same time keep from destroying himself, from assimilating himself beyond recognition.

And ^{then} lastly the Jew in the diaspora, here and elsewhere, may continue as a contributing force to civilization by living up to the ideals of his race--~~the moral law~~, the moral teaching; by living up to the ideal, the mission of his people; ^{then} that he is, in a sense, a missionary to mankind, an apostle of truth, a messenger of good tidings, a champion of justice and truth.

I hear a great deal today about anti-Semitism. I hear ~~various complaints everywhere about prejudice~~, and I hear these complaints most in those circles which somehow seem to have entirely drifted away from Judaism. When I come into a circle of people who are not affiliated with a temple or a synagogue, who do not participate in Jewish educational movements or in any movement of Jewish interests, the first subject of conversation is anti-Semitism. That is the one thing that hurts them; ~~it is the one thing that~~ disturbs their bovine peace; ~~it is the one thing that~~ irritates them. If that were removed, why, they would be in Paradise.

My great concern is not anti-Semitism; I am used to it; my people is used to it; we have experienced it for twenty centuries; it is not a novel experience in our

life; we are reconciled to it; we have developed a strategy ^{for meeting} ~~how to meet~~ it; we have seen it in uglier forms in the past; we shall see it in the future; we shall abide as we did in the past. It does not bother me. What bothers me, what hurts me to the quick, ~~what brings sorrow to my heart~~ is to see the moral debacle of our people, the break-up of moral idealism, the encroaching of materialism and saturation of the whole body of Israel in this land with all the vileness and the corruption which comes from prosperity too quickly gotten and not readily assimilated. That is the tragedy of Jewish life in America; and it is a growing tragedy, ~~and it is a tragedy~~ for which the non-Jew is not responsible, for which we ourselves are responsible. When I see the rising Jewish generation, the young Jewish men and ~~women~~ ^{and} steeping in sensuality, in materialism, thinking only of the day and of success and of prosperity and of pleasure and the hectic chase after material things; when I look about me and see the standards which have been set up in Jewish life, I say to myself how tragically we have failed in our mission as the priest people of mankind.

Oh, I know you will tell me everybody else is doing it; the non-Jew is no better. Of course he is no better; we have no monopoly on vice; we have no monopoly on materialism. I know that. But we assumed the task, we burdened ourselves twenty-six hundred years ago with a world-revolutionizing career of service; we were to make the right to prevail on the earth; we were to establish justice; we

were to be a light and a leading to the nation. We are not doing it. When I see daily the number of Jews in the professions who fall below the line of the ethics of the profession; when I see the number of Jews, adult and juvenile, who are crowding into our courts, ~~crowding in frightful numbers into our courts~~; when I look about me and see the number of Jewish homes that are breaking up; when I look about me and see the hundreds and the thousands of young Jewish boys and girls growing up without God, without Torah, without ideals, I see before me the greatest tragedy in Jewish life, and all your wealth and all your prosperity and all your beautiful homes and all your sense of ease and peace do not for a moment compensate for this tragic loss.

I believe that American Israel needs a stirring revival, an awakening, a return to fundamentals, a taking of stock of its spiritual life. If we are to continue as a people, as a distinct group, then we ought to continue as a worthwhile, helpful, creative group in American life. In other words, we shall have to go back and pay an attentive ear to the mighty phrases of our sages and prophets of old; we shall have to think a little more of spirit, of ideal, of God, of worship, of prayer, of service, of education, and a little less of pleasure and money and wealth and display.

~~That is our task for tomorrow. The same four tendencies must continue if we are to continue: the~~

out { spirit of prophecy--to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with God; the spirit of legalism--to observe the laws of the Torah, those laws which are still essential in our life today; the spirit of mysticism--the higher quest of God, the yearning after God; and the spirit of national loyalty and group solidarity.

That is our task and our challenge for tomorrow.

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④ NATIONALISM • THE STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL

Sermon, The Temple, February 14,
1926

This subject of the status of the Jew, be he race, nation, or religion, is at best academic, and I am concerned with the realities of ^{Jewish} life. The reality of the situation is that the Jew has, since the beginning of his career, looked upon himself as a distinct people, and that he still regards himself as a distinct people. There have been a few who have wished that the Jew would lose his physical identity. There are still a few here and there who wish that the Jew would assimilate and lose his identity, or who wish to consider themselves no longer ^{of} a nation but only ^{of} a religious community.

But this is at best only a wish - a wish of what ^{might} be rather than a statement of what is. A wish cannot undo history and a wish cannot obliterate facts of history. The fact of history is that for the first thousand years of ^{his} our existence the Jew possessed all the essential characteristics which we are wont to attribute to a nation. He had a common land, a common language, a common religion, a common racial ancestry. In the last two thousand years of his existence he ^{has} lacked a common center and a ^{common} land; to a degree he ^{has} lacked a common speech. I say to a degree and only to a degree, because Hebrew ^{has} continued to be the universal language of Jewish prayer and Jewish literature. He ^{does} possess a common religion, and to a remarkable degree he ^{has} maintained common racial antecedents.

Destiny surrounded the Jew with so many restrictions and so many oppressions that his life of necessity and by force of circumstance became isolated, and to that extent ^{was} conserved. In place of a common land or a common center the Jew substituted an embracing ^{messianic} ideal - a hope of restoration and rehabilitation, a common vision in which the people rejoiced during the years of exile, waiting for the restoration to its own home.

So that the Jew comes down to the twentieth century very much an integrated people held together by ties racial, religious, historical; enjoying common memories, common traditions, common loyalties, common aspirations; and these, we maintain - in

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 deference to the realities of the situation ¹_m are the essentials of nationality.

Another reality which we must accept is that the non-Jewish world regards the Jew as a distinct people. The non-Jew sees facts and sees in the Jews a people possessing those distinctive qualities which he is wont to attribute to a people, and he accepts them as such. So that really a metaphysical or intellectual discussion of the problem of the status of the Jew is altogether beyond the point.

So potent was this idea of nationalism in Jewish life that when the Jew lost his political independence and became scattered to the four corners of the earth, he refused to disappear. He posited two tremendous dogmas in his life as an expression of his will to persist. The first is the dogma of the eternal people, ^{and} the second is the dogma of the Messiah.

(C) The dogma of the eternal people was first enunciated during the first exile - the Babylonian. When the First Temple was destroyed in 586 B.C.E. and the Jews were exiled to Babylon, they sensed then and there the menace of disintegration. There were many forces about them tending to break them up and to destroy their national self-identity. So they established in their exile the dogma of the eternal people, and through the voice of their great prophet, whom we call for lack of a better term the second Isaiah, this national will ^h _{2 2} to live expressed itself most perfectly. "As the new heaven and the new earth ^h _{2 2} which I make endure before me, saith the Lord, so shall your race and your name endure." "For the mountain shall depart and the hills be overthrown, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, nor shall my covenant of peace be overthrown, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." "When thou shalt pass through the waters," cries this prophet in anger in a magnificent and heroic passage, "I shall be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou shalt go through fire, thou

shalt not be burned, and the flames shall not be kindled against thee. For thou art an eternal people."

~~This~~ This dogma of the eternal people was never logically proved. ~~Like all dogmas they cannot be proved.~~ Yet if logic has not established ^{its} truth, ~~of~~ ^{its} experience, to a degree, has. The Jew ~~is~~ is warranted in believing that somehow in him ^{there} ~~there~~ is resident the quality of eternity; for what has not the world done to him in order to break ~~him~~ and to destroy him? When he stands today and scans the purview of all his yesterdays; when he considers what the armies of Babylon and Assyria sought to do to him, and the ^{chariot} ~~winged~~ armies of Memphis and Thebes, and the hoplites of the Greeks and the iron legions of the Romans and all the followers of the Cross and the Crescent, who mistook and misinterpreted the ideals of their own faith, ~~what~~ what the rack and the stake and the Inquisition and exile and ghetto and yellow badge and pogrom and massacre have sought to do to the Jew, ~~I~~ I say, when the Jew scans his past and sees what instruments of destruction were brought to play upon him, and that in spite of them all ^{he is,} ~~he~~ he persists, he lives, perhaps he is justified in believing in the dogma of the eternal people.

The second dogma which the Jew established as an expression of his will to live was the dogma of the Messiah. In a way it derives from the ~~first dogma~~ the dogma of the eternal people. [&] The belief in the Messiah began with the ^{Roman and oppression} conquest of Palestine, ~~by the Romans and with~~

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It gained tremendous impetus at the time of the destruction of the Temple and the loss of national independence, and from ^{that} ~~the day of the destruction of the Temple~~ to the day, almost nineteen hundred years later, when the Hebrew University was dedicated on Mount Scopus, in sight of the Temple mount, this faith in the coming of an era of redemption, of emancipation, of reconstruction, physical and spiritual, was never wanting in the life of the people. At every crisis in its life it flared up; ^{during} ~~at~~ every revolutionary moment ~~or~~ or event it came to the surface, whether it was the collapse of the Roman Empire or the rise of ^{Islam} ~~Mohammedanism~~ or the Crusades or the Black Death, ~~the~~ ~~fourteenth century~~, or the Protestant Reformation or the Cossack uprisings, ~~in the seventeenth century~~, or the French Revolution, or the World War. Whenever there ^{took place} ~~was~~ an event which stirred the world, the messianic hopes in Israel surged to the surface and the embers glowed with rare expectancy. ~~The~~ The finest minds in Israel ~~throughout the~~ ~~ages~~ dreamt of the return, prayed for the coming of the Messiah, and even calculated the time when he would come. Whether it was rabbis like Jochanan ben Zakkai and Akiba, or philosophers like Saadia and Maimonides, or poets like Gabirol or Jehuda Halevi, or statesmen like Hasdi ibn Shaprut or Isaac ^{Abarbanel} ~~or~~ mystics like ^{Abraham} ~~Abulafia~~ and Isaac Luria, whatever type, whatever profession, the finest minds in Israel ~~throughout the ages~~ hoped for the return, prayed for it,

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And why? Because in them ~~the will to live~~
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modern Zionism, I make bold to say, is an expression of this
self-same messianic hope. It may be less mystic. It may be
more realistic. Its technique and apparatus may be more
scientific. It may be paying much more attention to the
realities of the international situation, ~~than the Jews~~
~~of the Middle Ages~~ but the rise of the movement is
the same, the faith which inspires it is the same, ^{The}
the driving impulse one and the same.

^{a basic instinct}
Nationalism is an essential thought, but the Jew gave the idea of nationalism
a unique turn, a distinctive definition, and that perhaps is one of the great contri-
butions which Israel has made to civilization. To the Jew it is not enough for a na-
tion merely to survive, to exist, or to grow through conquest. That is not enough:
to the Jew a nation must vindicate its existence through some social, creative pur-
pose.

~~one of the great contributions which Israel has made to~~
~~civilization. To the Jew it is not enough for a nation~~
~~merely to survive, to exist, or to grow through conquest.~~
~~That is not enough; to the Jew a nation must vindicate its~~
~~existence through some social, creative purpose, just like~~

^{no #}
~~an individual~~ Just as no individual fulfills his destiny
merely by living or by growing great ~~and powerful~~ through
acquisition of things, so a nation does not justify its
existence merely by surviving or by growing imperial through

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conquest and aggrandizement. ~~It is not enough~~
 nation must--so says the philosophy of Jewish nationalism--
 find its highest motif and its highest goal ~~in some organ~~
 in some form of human service.

The Jew was of

~~He~~ Early in Jewish history the Jew found
~~for himself~~ his motif ^{and} his goal, and ~~very~~ early in his history
 the Jew came and spoke of himself as the ~~the~~ "Servant of God."
~~He~~ a kingdom of priests and a holy people. Not a people
 which arrogates unto itself a priesthood and holiness, but
~~of~~ a people which strives to be priestly and holy. ~~That~~
 same great prophet who announced the dogma of the eternity
 of Israel also announced ~~in marvelous phrase~~ the dogma of
 the mission of Israel. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold;
 my chosen one in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my
 spirit upon him; he shall make the right to go forth to the
 nations. He shall not fail nor become weary until he shall
 have established justice in the earth." Again: "I, the
 Lord, have called thee for salvation; I will hold thee by
 the hand; I will defend thee and make thee a covenant of
 the peoples, a light unto the nations."

Why? To open the eyes of the blind, to
 bring the prisoners out of the prison-house, and they that
 dwell in darkness out of the dungeons. Think of it!
 Twenty-six hundred years ago, in exile, a broken people was
 in position to define a conception of nationalism which so
 far transcends ^{modern} ~~the~~ conceptions of nationalism, ~~which~~
~~the world has known since the beginning of time.~~

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Israel's task in the world was not to grow great and conquer, not to establish a vast empire, not to exploit the resources of the earth, but to be a light unto the nations. That is the mission of Israel. Some have spoken flippantly of it; ~~xxxxx~~ some have spoken cynically of it; yet it is one of the real facts of Jewish life. The mission idea does not at all, as has been frequently maintained and is still being frequently maintained, preclude the idea of nationalism. The great prophet, the second Isaiah, who gave the classic expression to the ideal of the mission of Israel, was himself the supreme nationalist and the supreme Zionist of his day.

The Jew need not be scattered to the four corners of the earth in order to carry out his mission, any more than the Greeks had to be scattered to the four corners of the earth to carry out their national mission, which was to teach mankind how to think logically and critically, and how to feel ~~esthetically~~ the beauty of the world. But it would be a mistake on the part of the champions of Jewish nationalism to push to the background this inspiring motif of Jewish life. I would not wish my people to become another little statelet, another little Montenegro some

where ~~in the corner of the earth~~, merely for the sake of existing as a separate entity there. I wish my people to continue its historic mission as a light-bringer unto mankind, and as a reclaimed and integrated people on its own soil carry on this great work which destiny seems to have outlined for it from the beginning of time.

It is of interest to note ~~friends, that~~ ~~perhaps my last word in connection with this series~~ that ^{the} ~~the~~ four great tendencies of ^{Jewish life} ~~the~~ prophecy, legalism, mysticism, nationalism--received their consummate expression in Palestine. ~~their most complete and most perfect expression in Palestine~~ I do not mean to say that in exile ^{during} ~~in~~ the last two thousand years the Jews did not create any values and did not contribute to society. ^{He did.} ~~He~~ gave much to the world even as he received much from the world. He participated in every great cultural movement. But somehow the real stamp of creative genius, of originality, of world-conquering truth are possessed by those things which were born on the soil of Palestine.

~~It~~ It is not that the soil of Palestine is any more inspiring or holier than the soil of any other nation or any other land, but in exile the Jew lacked freedom, and freedom is at the very root of creative genius. Freedom alone enables a man to express, without let or hindrance, the gifts which are latent in his soul, which he can express, and throughout the last two thousand years the Jew has lacked that complete freedom, that spaciousness,

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that stability, that sense of belonging which enables a
people to create for it ^{grand} ~~great~~ and lasting things.

In exile the Jew has lacked the stimulating environment which makes for greatness. In the ~~disapora~~ ^{diaspora} his greatness is either crushed and stultified as he is forced in upon himself, or is weakened and distorted as he seeks to exceed himself. Either is dangerous to creative greatness.

~~Therefore~~ The fact of the Zionist ideal is, I take it, just this wish to regain the authentic mood in Jewish life and the authentic voice, to recapture greatness by finding freedom and the stimulating environment which it had in its ancient days.

The Jew in Palestine may create in the years to come values comparable to those which he created ^{there} in the past, ~~in Palestine~~. It is not at all certain that he will. Perhaps people will say the Zionist ~~movement~~; ~~he~~ is hoping for miracles; the past cannot be recaptured. Perhaps so. But Israel's life has been so full of miracles, its ~~very~~ existence and survival has been such a marvelous miracle, that I am ready to take a chance upon this miracle, ~~tomorrow~~. As for those Jews who will remain in the diaspora--and the majority of our people will always remain outside of Palestine--they can do three things and remain contributing forces to civilization. ~~The First, is this:~~ they can remain loyal to their faith. ~~Second, is this:~~ they can preserve their racial and historical identity. In other words, in this beloved land of ours the Jew can

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completely Americanize himself, share in the common life of America, obey its laws, participate in its government, contribute to its national life, love it, serve it, and at the same time keep from destroying himself, from assimilating himself beyond recognition.

~~And~~ ^{Thirdly} ~~lastly~~ the Jew in the diaspora, here and elsewhere, may continue as a contributing force to civilization by living up to the ideals of his race, ~~the moral law,~~ the moral teaching; ~~by living up to the ideal,~~ the mission of his people; ^{then} ~~he~~ he is, in a sense, a missionary to mankind, an apostle of truth, a messenger of good tidings, a champion of justice and truth.

I hear a great deal today about anti-Semitism, and I hear these complaints most in those circles which somehow seem to have drifted away from Judaism. When I come into a circle of people who are not affiliated with a temple or a synagogue, who do not participate in Jewish educational movements or in any movement of Jewish interests, the first subject of conversation is anti-Semitism. That is the one thing that hurts them, ~~that~~ the one thing that disturbs their bovine peace, ~~it is the one thing that irritates them.~~ If that were removed, why, they would be in Paradise.

My great concern is not anti-Semitism. I am used to it; my people is used to it; we have experienced it for twenty centuries; it is not a novel experience in our

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life; we are reconciled to it; we have developed a strategy ^{for meeting} ~~how to meet~~ it; we have seen it in uglier forms ^{than now} ~~in the past~~; we shall see it in the future; we shall abide as we did in the past. It does not bother me. What bothers me, what hurts me to the quick, ~~what brings sorrow to my heart~~ is to see the moral debacle of our people, the break-up of moral idealism, the encroaching of materialism and ^{the} saturation of the whole body of Israel in this land with all the vileness and the corruption which comes from prosperity too quickly gotten and not readily assimilated. That is the tragedy of Jewish life in America, and it is a growing tragedy. ~~It is a tragedy~~ for which the non-Jew is not responsible, for which we ourselves are responsible. When I see the rising Jewish generation, ~~the young Jewish men and~~ ^{ed} steeped in sensuality, in materialism, thinking only of the day and of success and of prosperity and of pleasure and the hectic chase after material things; when I look about me and see the standards which have been set up in Jewish life, I say to myself how tragically we have failed in our mission as the priest people of mankind.

Oh, I know you will tell me everybody else is doing it; the non-Jew is no better. Of course he is no better; we have no monopoly on vice; we have no monopoly on materialism. I know that. But we ~~are not the same~~ ^{we} burdened ourselves twenty-six hundred years ago with a world-revolutionizing career of service; we were to make the right to prevail on the earth; we were to establish justice; we

were to be a light and a leading to the nation. We are not doing it. When I see ~~daily~~ the number of Jews in the professions who fall below the line of the ethics of the profession; when I see the number of Jews, adult and juvenile, who are crowding into our courts; ~~making a frightful number into our courts~~ when I look about me and see the number of Jewish homes that are breaking up; when I look about me and see the hundreds and the thousands of young Jewish boys and girls growing up without God, without Torah, without ideals, I see before me the greatest tragedy in Jewish life, and all your wealth and all your prosperity and all your beautiful homes and all your sense of ease and peace do not for a moment compensate for this tragic loss.

I believe that American Israel needs a stirring revival, an awakening, a return to fundamentals, a taking of stock of its spiritual life. If we are to continue as a people, as a distinct group, then we ought to continue as a worthwhile, helpful, creative group in American life. In other words, we shall have to go back and pay an attentive ear to the mighty phrases of our sages and prophets of old; we shall have to think a little more of spirit, of ideal, of God, of worship, of prayer, of service, of education, and a little less of pleasure and money and wealth and display.

~~That is our task for tomorrow. The same~~
~~few tendencies must continue if we are to continue: the~~

~~spirit of prophecy--to do justly, to love mercy and to walk
humbly with God; the spirit of legalism--to observe the
laws of the Torah, those laws which are still essential in
our life today; the spirit of mysticism--the higher quest
of God, the yearning after God; and the spirit of national
loyalty and group solidarity.~~

That is our task and our challenge for
tomorrow.

