



## Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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### **MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.**

Series IV: Sermons, 1914-1963, undated.

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Embattled Israel, 1933.

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EMBATTLED ISRAEL  
A Sermon in the Spirit of Chanukah  
By  
Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
At  
The Temple  
On  
Sunday morning, December 17, 1934.



They are rebuilding now <sup>the</sup> ~~at~~ our sanctuary  
which Jews always erect for ever in lands, their  
desperation - inner pride - self respect - derived  
from knowledge, their people etc - the Jewish  
trans - the Jewish school - the Jewish ~~trans~~  
Myagga - the Jewish way, life!

9. Let the heathen rage! Let them brag fondly  
& vainly of their organs, & their powers -  
They are still savages just emerging from the  
jungle! - They have not yet learned <sup>every</sup> the  
element of civilized life - the decencies &  
amenities of human existence, which an  
ancient race learned 3000 yrs. ago -  
Ours is the quiet confidence of an old  
& mellowed civilization & a rich & refined  
culture - of a solid & enduring literature, faith  
turn of mind - and present abundant &  
creative spiritual & intellectual powers  
which can satisfy our best & profoundest  
aspirations! ...

10. This is the spirit, Channukah.

(1.) The Temple ~~has~~ is being destroyed  
by the enemy - by murderers? - We will  
cleanse it, & dedicate it - & rededicate  
it!

(2) Light has gone out in the world -  
from darkness covers the nation -  
we will kindle our Chanukyah -  
again - just as - a peach flower -  
then two - & three & more & more

would its illumination will shine through  
the world - and be a light unto the  
nation. 8 Spears - torches

(3) We are undefeated! Undefeated in  
ancient Jerusalem - when our sun & daylight  
are rebuilding J. life - when Judah the War.  
& 1 centuries ago rebuilt it.

We are undefeated in all the land, the  
diaspora - even in Hitler's Germany - Jews are  
rallying to their ancient standard! Turning  
from falling stars, fresh! Our great Jews  
who - are returning to their native home!

Trials awaiting us - but we shall meet  
the unseen perils & strength & faith to meet  
them.

We are undefeatable <sup>as long as we speak</sup>  
freedom <sup>to our ideal, justice, freedom & peace</sup>  
to our people <sup>light</sup> - ~~as~~ as  
long as we have love & pride & loyalty -  
as long as we defend the J. home, school,  
synagogue, as long as we hold our youth &  
workers firm with faith & strength -

++ We are can deceive death upon us - only  
we murder - We are the refuge guardians  
of our immortality.

3/ Jew fight! He wants to live! Forlorn Twisted "Why should Jew survive?" - Wald Frank.

- The normal, healthy person asks himself -  
no " " " nation people -

And Israel is a normal, healthy people.  
Our question has always been not "Why should we survive?" But how can we live more abundantly, more nobly, more purposefully -

4. The Jew fought for his survival <sup>(1) on the battlefield</sup> with physical weapons in ancient times - Maccabees - have for -  
Roman legions -

(2) And in later times with sp. weapons, spiritually strong, brave, with self sacrifice, martyrdom

5/ This struggle was voluntary, self-willed.  
He could have succumbed Canaan - Maccabees -  
Roman - Arab - used - Christian world -

(1) There were no insurmountable racial barriers recognized in those days -

(2) He chose to live!

(3) He chose to live! - 112 11 bit . .  
116 11 bit . .  
112 11 bit . .

6. It was voluntary, and it was a Confident Struggle

(1) He dared to oppose world trends, & overwhelming currents, ideas & beliefs. Dec. he was  
convinced that his set sp. & moral ideals  
were noblest & true! He believed in them unshakably -

(2) Jacob - "Israel"

לְיִשְׂרָאֵל  
The name "Israel" means victory over fools  
and men.

"The best strive - and best prevails"

7. I do not wish to criticize - we would not be  
better. But if German Jewry had had more of  
the dynamism, living faith, their father - men  
of spirit, Maccabees, they would have resisted  
much more - <sup>more resistance</sup> - but yielded so utterly & so  
dimly - like lambs driven to the slaughter -  
- produced some martyrs which moved  
heart & hand and their tragedy with an  
heroic national spirit!

(2) But they had been so anxious in  
their last generations to demonstrate not their  
Judaism but their Germanism - but  
their vigor & affirmation of life which  
they could have had - but have lost, weak,  
unwilling & unwieldy.

(3) And it all passed - as it must always  
pass - so vain, so futile, so sad. They  
have been denied the previous compensations  
of suffering - suffering for a cause - an ideal!

8. Fortunately they have profited <sup>by</sup> their  
experience - schools - Hebrew - clubs -  
Synagogues - Palestine - Renaissance -

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sermon 395.1

ABSTRACT OF ADDRESS DELIVERED BY RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER AT THE TEMPLE, ANSEL  
AND E. 105TH STREET ON SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 17, 1933.

### EMBATTLED ISRAEL

Foolish people who live on the periphery of Jewish life sometimes ask the question: Why should the Jew survive? No normal healthy people ever asks itself such a question. Its very existence is its own justification. Loyal Jews never asked themselves "Why should we survive?" but "How can we live more abundantly, more nobly and more purposefully?"

The Jew has fought for his survival with physical weapons and with spiritual weapons, with arms against the armies of the Greeks and the legions of Rome and with sacrifice and martyrdom in later centuries. This struggle for survival was altogether voluntary. The Jew could have yielded to his environment over and over again and saved himself untold suffering and persecution. He chose then and he chooses now to remain himself. He wishes to cooperate with the world in every sphere of human endeavor freely and eagerly. He asks of the world only to respect his religious and racial integrity.

The Jew has survived through the ages and will continue to survive as long as he will remain true to his own inner light, to his ideals of justice, freedom and peace; as long as he will have love for pride in loyalty to his ancient heritage and inculcate them in his children; and as long as he will defend the sanctity of the Jewish home, school and synagogue.

History has attested that no one can decree death upon Israel -- only himself. He is the guardian of his own immortality.