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If Jesus came to Berlin on Christmas 1933, 1933.

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IF JESUS CAME TO BERLIN ON CHRISTMAS, 1933

By

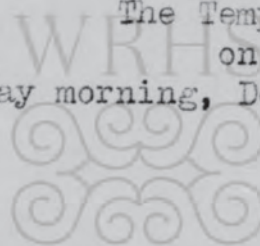
Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver

At

The Temple

on

Sunday morning, December 24, 1933.



If the Jew of Galilee, Jesus, were to visit Berlin on Christmas, 1933, his first impressions would be very pleasant ones. He would find the city in a holiday mood, celebrating his nativity. He would feel himself warmly welcomed. The streets would be filled with throngs of people in festive attire. The bells would be tolling. Christmas trees would be in many homes, brilliant with candle lights. Thousands of voices would be singing "Holy Night." He would be pleased to think that he was still remembered after so many years, that his sacrifice had not been in vain.

On Christmas morning, he might wander down the boulevards of Berlin, Wilhelmstrasse and Unter der Linden and suddenly his ears would be arrested by the sound of tramping feet. He would look about him and see soldiers marching, everywhere soldiers marching. Everywhere men in uniform. And on their arms signs of a crooked, double cross. Confused by the sight of marching soldiers on the day commemorating his birth, he, who was called "The Prince of Peace," absorbed in an effort to decipher the meaning of this twisted cross upon the arm-bands of the marching men, would probably fail to throw out his hand in salute and to shout "Hail Hitler!" And some burly person would probably

come over to him and with his fists he would clout him over the head and kick him into the gutter and spit upon him. A long time ago he was smote and spat upon, but that was not in a Christian land and among a people who worshipped him.

A look of bewilderment probably would come into his eyes. These are Christians. Clearly they are celebrating my nativity. They are my followers. But yet they are soldiers. Why are they singing war chants? Was not peace the very heart of my message? "Put up thy sword into its place, for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword." And did I not say unto them: "Resist not evil. But whoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other cheek also." And when I preached to my disciples, did I not say to them: "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God." Did not my early disciples, my followers preach peace? For three hundred years the early Christians refused to bear arms and to engage in any wars.

Origen, of the third century, was head of the Patristic School. He said "The Christians draw not the sword against any people and we do not learn the art of war; after that Jesus came, we are become the children of peace. We do not march with the emperor in the field even when he commands us so to do. We fight for him in that we form an army of our own, an army of piety and prayer."

Another church father, who was himself the son of a

centurion declared: "How should a Christian be a fighter save as a soldier in time of peace without a sword? But of a sword our Lord has deprived him. Military service is a descent from the camp of light to the camp of darkness."

St. Augustine, who wrote "The City of God," shortly after Rome was sacked, declared: "It is more glorious to kill war with the word, than to kill man by the sword."

These men marching these streets are Christians, are they not? Why, then, do they parade as soldiers and chant military hymns? Jesus would learn that while his early followers in the First Century remained faithful to his dream of universal peace, when the church became a worldly church, when Christianity became a State religion under Constantine and quickly surrendered the purposes and usages of the church and began to sanction war, the Christian church resorted to the use of war for the sake of the expansion of the churches. And the northern peoples, especially, this gentle Jesus would learn, love war and regard fighting as a noble virtue. They accepted him but they rejected his peace message.

And poor Jesus would look about him and realize that the whole Christian world on Christmas, 1933, was an armed camp. He would probably recall the Christmas mornings of 1914, 1915, 1916 and 1917 and how on that day dedicated to the birth of the "Prince of Peace" millions of its followers butchered one another in the filthy trenches. And he would realize that his followers

were again preparing themselves for another holocaust. They worshipped him but they follow the anti-Christ, the spirit of Neitzsche. "Ye shall have heard how it was said: Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth. But I say unto you: Blessed are the valiant, for they shall make the earth their throne ... And ye have heard many say: Blessed are the peacemakers; but I say unto you, blessed are the war-makers, for they shall be called, if not the Children of Jehovah, the children of Odin, who is greater than Jehovah."

He would listen to what the present rulers of Berlin are saying. The mightiest of them today declared: "An alliance whose aim does not include the intention of war is worthless nonsense." One of his great lieutenants said: "On January 30, 1933, Germany struck out the word Pacifism from its vocabulary." Another said: "There is no higher or finer privilege for a woman than that of sending her children to war."

Yes, gentle Jesus, the bells would be tolling their message "Peace on earth; Goodwill to men." But the rulers of this land are preaching "War on earth and hate to men."

And then, Jesus, weary of marching the streets and watching parades of military men, would enter a Christian church on Christmas Morning and he would find a large and worshipful

congregation, in solemn and hushed devotion. Everywhere would be peace and holiness. In front of the church there would be the symbol of the cross and perhaps the image of Jesus and candles burning before the shrine. There he would listen to the words of the preacher. And the words would be familiar words, words which he, himself, had uttered in the fields of Galilee, by the sea of Kinnereth and among the hills of Judea: words about brotherhood, love and goodwill, universal reconciliation; words about one God and one humanity.

And when they asked him, "What commandment is the first of all?" he answered as he had been taught in the Hebrew Schools which he attended, "The first commandment is 'Sh'ma Yisroel, Adonoi Elohemu, Adonoi Echod -- Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One! 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy might and with all thy soul!'" "And the second commandment is this: 'Love thy neighbor as thyself, for I am the Lord thy God!'" "There is no other commandment greater than this," he preached.

He would listen to the preacher in the church repeat words which he had spoken long ago and which he had taught his disciples to preach in those days: "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is the Lord of all and is rich unto all that call upon him." And again: "God hath made of one blood every nation of men." And again:

"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. He who loveth God, love his brother also." And these would be familiar words to him.

And he would lift up his eyes and there above the altar he would find the same crooked double cross which so puzzled him when first he saw it on the streets. And he would inquire as to the meaning of this Swastika above the altar. And he would be told that it means that this church where this symbol is displayed is intended for Aryans only. It means that even those that accepted his teachings are aliens and outcasts if they are not of the race of this people. This symbol means implacable hatred of all semites -- of all members of his own race. "Only members of our own race may be citizens. Our own people are those of German blood, irrespective of religion. No Jew, therefore, may be a member of our people."

It means, therefore, that he and his forbears and all the descendants of his people are in this land regarded as "Niedermenschen" -- inferior human beings, without hope and without redemption. Think of it, gentle Jesus, Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Amos, Jeremiah and Hillel, the men whose teachings you listened to are "Niedermenschen." They would destroy the Jewish people from whose loins you sprang. When you watched the Brown Shirted marchers singing their songs, did you hear their refrain?

"So stand the storm battalions
"Ready for racial fight;
"Only when Jews lie bleeding
"Can we be really free.

This symbol that you see over that altar, Jesus, does not mean one humanity on earth, even as there is one God in Heaven. It means "Germany is the center of the World. And the World cannot exist without Germany. Germany is the 'Kingdom of God'."

They worship you, Jesus, out of custom, out of tradition but you are already suspect among them. They are afraid of your religion. They regard your religion as unfit for "Herrenrasse", a race whose religion is the "product of a moribund civilization of weary Mediterraneans."

They would reject or rewrite the Bible which you studied as a lad in Nazareth. They would like to fill the pages with war sagas of the Norsemen and of the Norse Gods of Thunder and War. They are still the step-children of Thor and Odin and the Gods of the valhala. That is their real religion.

And listening on this Christmas morning to the words of the preacher solemnly intoning his agonized message of old, listening but uncomprehending, he would feel that they were again offering him wine to drink mingled with gall. How strange and how lonely he would feel, this Jew of Galilee, this Joshua ben Joseph, in this Aryan church where the Swastika mocked his cross!

And with the burden of a new Teutonic cross, he would leave the church and his wandering feet would perhaps take him to the suburbs of Berlin to a huge Concentration Camp where thousands of weary and beaten men were huddled together in common misery.

He would walk among them and would inquire of them: "Brother, why are you here? What crime did you commit that brought you to the prison camp?" And the man would answer, "I was a Pacifist." Jesus answered, "And these your captors are Christians. Are they not my disciples?"

"And why are you here?" he would ask another. "I, I was a Socialist. I was a Communist." "But I, too, was a Communist. I, too, preached against the evils of wealth. I, too, drove the money-changers from the Temple. My early followers lived in communistic fellowships and shared all their goods together."

"And you, why are you here?" "Because I am a Jew." "But I, too, was a Jew. They crucified me because they thought I was the 'King of the Jews'." "No, gentle brother, it is enough to be just a plain Jew in Berlin to be crucified."

Listening to these men, the thousands of them, weary men, he would feel as if they were again plating a crown of thorns upon his head. And he would go back to the great city, on this Christmas morning and seek out his own brethren. When he first set out on his mission 1900 years ago, it was to "the lost sheep of Israel" that he went. And now, he would go back to them. Perhaps among them he would find his brothers who understand him and he would find them in fearful seclusion and in hiding like haunted people, afraid of their own shadows, men scarred with wounds which cruelty and hate

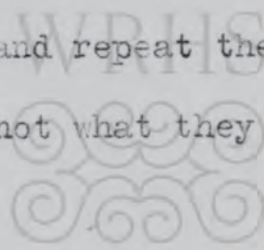
and lust of inflicting pain, inflicted upon them. And he would sit among them and listen to their tales, the stories of men and women driven to want and to exile and to suicide; the stories of men tortured, beaten and degraded; the stories of scholars humbled and dejected; the stories of men of honor and achievement driven out like outcasts; the stories of youth denied their opportunities of education and of careers; the stories of little children humiliated and degraded in their classrooms -- little children of whom Jesus so frequently spoke and said: "See that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father."

And as he listened to these stories of suffering, of degradation, he would feel as though the nails were being driven in again into his hands and feet, as though the spears were again piercing his sides, and from his lips would perhaps again come these words: "My God, my God, why hast thou foresaken me?"

No, it would not be a Merry Christmas for this humble Galilean in Berlin on Christmas, 1933. The bells would be tolling, the choirs would be singing, the preachers would be praying and the multitudes would be radiant with joy, but he, himself, would be sitting alone, like a man on whom the burdens

of the world had fallen. For he would know that he and his people had again been rejected and that this was for him and for them another Golgotha.

And he would understand how closely the fate of his people was following his fate, how both have been made despised and forsaken of men, how both have been made to suffer for the transgressions of the world, that the purpose of the Lord might prosper by their hands. And he would pray again as once before he had prayed in his hour of agony: "Father, forgive them. They know not what they do." And his people, crucified anew, would rise and repeat the prayer: "Father, forgive them. They know not what they do."



⑥ Augustine - "Civitas Dei" - Sack
7 Rome by Goths 410 -
"It is more glorious to kill war with the
word, than to kill man by the sword".
(Matt. v. 29)

⑦ Resist not evil. But whoever shall smite thee on the
right cheek, turn to him the other cheek also.

(Matt. xxxvi. 52)

⑧ Put up thy sword into its place, for all they that
take the sword shall perish by the sword.

(Luke xxii. 36)

He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and
buy one.

(Matt. x. 34)

I come not to bring peace but a sword.

(Origen) - 3c - head of Patristic School.

⑨ (The Christians unlike the Jews are not allowed to fight
their enemies.) We draw not the sword against any people and we
do not learn the art of war; after that Jesus came we are
become the children of the peace. We do not march with the
emperor in the field even when he commands us so to do. We
fight for him in that we form an army of our own, an army of
piety and prayer.

(Ambrosius) - 4c 305.

If all men would but lend ear to the saving and peaceful
commands of Christ, the whole world, sending iron to a
kindlier usage, would live in a sweet tranquillity, united
by inviolable covenants of alliance.

(Tertullian) - son of a centurion

⑩ How should a Christian be a fighter save as a soldier
in time of peace without a sword? But of a sword our Lord
has deprived him. Military service is a descent from the
camp of light to the camp of darkness.

⑪ "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall
be called sons of God"

Is no the word.

✓ When they asked us: "What commandment is the
(8) first call? - of sl - but then shall love etc.
The second is this: love. There is no other
commandment greater than these.

(1) But I say unto you, that every one who is angry with
his brother shall be in danger of the judgment; and
whoever shall say to his brother, Rāca, shall be
in danger of the council; and whoever shall say,
than fove, shall be in danger of the hell of fire.

X(12) (2) "Whoever hateth his brother is a murderer"
"He who loveth God, love his brother also" John

(3) But thou, why dost thou judge thy brother?
or thou again, why dost thou set at naught
thy brother? for we shall all stand before the
judgment-seat of God. Paul

X(10) (4) "For there is no distinction between Jew and
Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and
is rich unto all that call upon him" Paul

✓(9) (5) "And they shall all become one flock,
one shepherd" Jesus

(6) He died,
"not for one nation only, but that he might
gather together into one the children of God
that are scattered abroad".

X(11) (7) "God hath made of one blood every nation
of men" Paul

~~Jew~~
"The word Aryan stands for work, nobility and unselfishness, while the name Jew means lack of self-sacrifice." Hitler

(12B) "Only members of our own race may be citizens. Our own people are those of German blood, irrespective of religion. No Jew, therefore, may be a member of our people." Nazi program.

Weltisch land erwache! Juda verrecke!

(12C) "Germany is the centre of the world, and the world cannot exist without Germany. Germany is the Kingdom of God."

Nazi thought

Children

(1) "See that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father."

(14)

~~Matthew: "Blessed are the humble in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."~~
~~"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."~~

Communion. And all that believed were together, and had all things common. And they sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all, according as any man had need" Acts 2.

(13)

~~"If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham."~~

Neitzsche: "ye have heard how it was said: blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. But I say unto you. Blessed are the valiant, for they shall make the earth their throne.... and ye have heard many say - blessed are the peace-makers, but I say unto you, blessed are the war-makers, for they shall be called, if not the children of Jehovah, the children of Odin, who is greater than Jehovah" _____

(7)

ABSTRACT OF ADDRESS DELIVERED BY RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER AT THE TEMPLE,
ANSEL AND E. 105TH STREET ON SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 24, 1933.

IF JESUS CAME TO BERLIN ON CHRISTMAS, 1933

Were Jesus to visit Berlin on Christmas, 1933, he would find a city filled with uniformed men with twisted crosses on their arm^{bands}, singing of war and glorifying force and ruthlessness. He would find that they *indeed* worship him who said: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God," *but they are follow* ~~following~~ the spirit of the anti-Christ Neitzsche who declared: ~~"Ye have heard how it was said: Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. But I say unto you, blessed are the valiant, for they shall make the earth their throne. And ye have heard ~~me~~ how it was said~~ -- Blessed are the peacemakers; but I say unto you, blessed are the war-makers, for they shall be called, if not the children of Jehovah, the children of Odin, who is greater than Jehovah." The bells would be tolling: "Peace on earth. Good Will to men." But the rulers would be shouting; "War on earth and hate to men."

Were he to enter a Christian church on Christmas morning in Berlin, he would hear words which would be familiar to him, his own words ~~spoken by him in the fields of Gallilee, by the sea of Kinnereth, and among the hills of Judea,~~ *words* concerning brotherhood, ~~good will, love of our fellow men,~~ *and these* one God and one humanity, words which he taught his disciples to preach: "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all." *But* ~~And~~ over the altar his eyes would again be attracted by the crooked double cross, the Swastika. And he would inquire after its meaning and he would be told that this church *and this land are* ~~is~~ intended for Aryans only, that even those who accept his teachings remain ~~aliens~~ and outcasts if they are not of the race of the Aryans. He would be told

that this symbol means implacable hatred of ~~all~~ ^{all} Semites -- ~~of his own~~ ^{Jesus'} race; ~~that it means~~ ^{the} that he and ~~his~~ ^{hears} forefathers and ~~all the descendants of~~ ^{of his people Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all their descendants} his people are in this land regarded as "Niedermenschen" -- inferior human beings. ~~He would feel strangely lost~~ ^{How strangely lost} this ~~Jew~~ ^{gentle} of Galilee, ~~in this Aryan~~ ^{would feel} church where the Swastika mocked his cross....

Perhaps his wanderings would take him to the suburbs of Berlin to a huge Concentration Camp where thousands of weary, broken men are huddled together in a common ~~suffering and~~ misery. He would go among them and inquire, "Why are you here?" And he would be told, "I was a Pacifist." And he would exclaim, ^{But} "I, too, was a Pacifist, ^{and these your} ~~capitulators are~~ ^{my Christians -- my followers, are they not?}..." "Why are you ~~here~~ ^{here}?" "I was a Communist." "But so was I. I, too, preached of the evils of wealth. I drove the money-changers out of the Temple. My first disciples lived in communistic brotherhood..."

"And why are you here?" "I am a Jew." "But I, too, ~~was~~ ^{was a Jew} a Jew." They ~~er~~ crucified me because they thought that I was 'King of the Jews'." And the man would answer, "In Berlin, gentle brother, it is enough to be only a plain Jew to be crucified." ^{And Jesus} And ~~he~~ would feel that they were again ^a plating ~~the~~ crown of thorns upon his head....

No, it would not be a Merry Christmas for ~~the~~ ^{this humble} Jew of Galilee in Berlin, in 1933. He would hear the bells ringing, the choirs chanting, ~~and~~ ^{celebrating.} priests praying, and all the joyous multitude. But he would sit apart and alone, knowing that he has again been rejected by men and that for him and his people this is another Golgotha. ^{And} And he would pray as he prayed once before in his hour of agony: And Israel would pray with him: "Father, forgive them, ~~They~~ ^{They} know not what they do."

1. First impressions - very pleasant - would find whole city in holiday mood, in ~~festive~~ ~~atmosphere~~ celebrating his nativity, Warm Welcome.
- Streets thronged with crowds in festive attire.
 - Homes decorated - Christmas trees ablaze with candle-light.
 - Church bells tolling - thousands voices - "Heilige Nacht!"
 - "I am remembered - after these many years. Sacrifice not in vain."

2. On Christmas morning he might find himself wondering down Victoria Street - Unter den Eichen - arrested by the sound of marching feet. Soldiers - Soldiers every where. Men in uniform every where. Children in uniform everywhere. And on their arms two pricked crosses... ~~but~~ Confused by the sight of military parades on his birthday - who was called the Prince of Peace - and ab- sorted in deciphering the meaning of the pricked crosses on the arm-bands, he failed to throw out his hand in salute and shout Heil, Hitler! - whereupon a burly figure approached him - and with his fist clouted him over the head, knitted him in the gutter and spat upon him.... Long ago, he was also smote on the head and spat upon - but then it was not in a Christian land and by the hand of a people that worshipped him...

© A look of bewilderment comes into his eyes. There are Christians - my followers - celebrating my birth - why then are they soldiers? Why do they sing such warlike songs? Was not the very heart, my message to them Peace ① and ② and ③

(b). You did gentle, pacifist Jesus! And for 300 years your
disciples refused to carry arms - or engage in war. (4) (5) (6)
(c) They were persecuted for it - enemies of the State. They were
for the peace

(d)

(d) But soon your church became a worldly church. Under
Constantine - a State Religion. It served interests of
state - it sanctioned war. - It later resorted to
war in its own behalf.

(e) These Northern peoples, especially, gentle Jesus,
love war, and regard fighting as a noble virtue.
They accepted you - but not your messages, peace.

(f). Poor Jesus - your Christian world which worships
you is an armed camp - You recall the Christmas
Days 9 1914-15-16-17 - Butchered -

- They are preparing another holocaust -

(g) They worship you - but they follow their anti-Christ
Nietzsche (h) Dust).

(h) Listen to what their present ruler says:

"An alliance whose aim does not include
the intention of war is worthless nonsense"

And his lieutenant - von Papen

"On Jan. 30, 1933 Germany struck out the
word pacifism from its vocabulary"

And another: "There is no higher or finer privilege
for a woman than that of sending her children to war"

(i) The Bells are tolling, Jesus, 'Peace on Earth. Good-will to Men'!
but they preach 'war on Earth; and hate to men'.

3). Wearry of watching the stamping soldiers - he might enter
a Chr. Church. He would find a large worshippful Congreg.
in hushed and solemn devotion. In front would be the
symbol of his crucifixion - perhaps, his image, and
shining tapers before his shrine. ^{listen to preachers} Everywhere peace
and holiness. The words would be familiar to him -
his own words spoken by him in the fields of Galilee,
by the sea of Tiberias, among the hills of Judea - words
concerning ^{good will - love of fellowmen -} brotherhood - universal reconciliation -
One God - One Humanity! (8)(9).

Words which he taught his disciples to teach (10)(11)(12)
And then over the altar, ^{the} strange symbol
would again attract him - the ^{Swastika} crooked double cross
He would inquire after its meaning. Would be told.

- It means that this church, and this country
is intended for Aryans only.

- It means that even those who accept your
teachings are aliens and outcasts if they are
not of the race of this strange people.

- It means implacable hatred of all Semites -
that is of your race, gentle Jesus! (12B)

- It means that you and your forebears, and
all the descendants of your people are in the

eyes of these land - nieder menschen - inferior human
beings - they and hope or redemption - Thun, it, Jesus,
^{Aphrahah,} Moses, Isaiah, Amos, ^{Amos,} Jeremiah, Judah the Maccabee,
Hillel the Sage - nieder menschen -

- They would destroy the Jewish people, Jesus, from whose loins you sprang: When you watched the Hebrew
shouted marchers did you hear them sing:

"So stand the storm battalions

"Ready for racial fight;

"Only when Jews lie bleeding

"Can we be really free."

- It means not one Humanity - but (Quot 12C)

- They worship you, Jesus, out of custom and tradition,
but you are already suspect among them. Your
religion, they regard, as unfit for a "Herrnrasse"
"the product of a moribund civilization of weary
Mediterraneans" -

- They would reject or rewrite the Bible which you
studied as a lad in Nazareth - They would ^{rather} people
its pages with the bloody sagas of Norse ~~Myth~~
gods of thunder and war. Under their Christian
kennels they are still the step-children of Thor and
Odin. That is their real religion, gentle Jesus!

- And listening on this Christmas morning to the words
of the preacher solemnly intoning ^{his} ~~your~~ agonized
message, to listening but uncomprehending ears -
you Jesus feel as though they were again offering

him ~~going~~ to drink mingled with gall... How strange
and ~~lost~~ ^{he} would feel in this Angan Church ^{where the Passover}
^{the Jew - Jesus has done} ^{worked his cross}

4- Bent with the burden of a new ^{Teutonic} ^{Jesus} cross ~~to~~ ^{he} would lead the
Church and his wandering feet would take him to
the suburbs of Berlin - to a huge concentration camp,
where thousands of weary, broken men are huddled together
in a common misery and suffering:

→ He would go among them and inquire:

"Why are you here?" - In what crimes are you im-
prisoned? ~~to you of them?~~

"I was a pacifist!" What! But your captors are
Christians - and I taught pacifism -

→ And he would ask another: Why are you here?

"I was a communist!" So was I! I preached the
evils, wealth - I drove the money-changers from the
Temple - my first disciples lived in communist
fellowships (Note 13)

→ And you, my brother, why are you here? I am a Jew!
But they crucified me because they thought that I
was "King of the Jews" - but you are ~~only a Jew~~ ^{only a Jew}
are not King of the Jews. In Berlin, brother, it is
enough to be only a plain Jew - to be crucified.

And Jesus would feel as if they had again
platted a crown of thorns on his head...

5- And he would go back to the great city - and seek

his own brethren. When he first ~~came~~ set out upon
his mission 19 centuries ago it was to "the lost sheep
of Israel" that he came. He would now go back to them.
He would find them in fearful ^{seclusion} retirement, ~~for~~ like haunted
men, scarred with the wounds which cruelty and hate
inflicted upon them - humiliated - and he would listen
to their tales of suffering - 7 men ~~and~~ women driven
to want to exile, to murder, for the crime, being Jews -
7 men tortured and ~~and~~ assassinated, 7 scholars humiliated and ejected, 7 men, houses and
achievement cast out like criminals, 7 doors every-
where closed against them, 7 youth denied opportunities
of education - 7 ^{little} children made to suffer pain & degradation
in their schools - children, whom he, Jesus, had so
often spoken John 14

And as he listened - he would feel the nails
being driven into his hands and feet again -
and a spear piercing his side - and his lips
would utter again the words of pain: My God, My God,
why hast thou forsaken me?

b). No, it would not be a merry Christmas for the poor
Galilean in Berlin, in the year 1933. He would hear
the bells tolling - the choir chanting - the priests
^{praying to him} ~~praying~~ in the churches and all the joyous
celebrations, the sumptuous. But he would sit
alone in silence, knowing that he has again
been rejected by men, and that for him and his

people - this is another Golgotha...

- 7/. He would understand how clearly the fate, his people has followed his ^{own} fate: how both have been made to ~~be~~ despised and forsaken, men, how both have been made to suffer for the transgressions, the unreal, that the purifiers, the Lord might prosper by their transgressions. And he would pray again, as he prayed once before, in his hour of agony, as Israel now, in its hour of agony, prays: "Father, ~~and~~ ^{forgive} them ~~for~~ they know not what they do!"



ABSTRACT OF ADDRESS DELIVERED BY RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER AT THE TEMPLE,
ANSEL AND EAST 105TH STREET ON SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 24, 1933.

IF JESUS CAME TO BERLIN ON CHRISTMAS, 1933

Were Jesus to visit Berlin on Christmas, 1933, he would find a city filled with uniformed men with twisted crosses on their arm-bands, singing of war and glorifying force and ruthlessness. He would find that they indeed worship him who said: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God," but they follow the spirit of the anti-Christ Neitzsche who declared: "Ye have heard how it was said -- Blessed are the peacemakers; but I say unto you, blessed are the war-makers, for they shall be called, if not the children of Jehovah, the children of Odin, who is greater than Jehovah." The bells would be tolling: "Peace on earth. Good Will to men." But the rulers would be shouting: "War on earth and hate to men."

Were he to enter a Christian church on Christmas morning in Berlin, he would hear words which would be familiar to him, his own words concerning brotherhood, love, one God and one humanity, and these words which he taught his disciples to preach: "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all." But over the altar his eyes would again be attracted by the crooked double cross, the Swastika. And he would inquire after its meaning and he would be told that this church and this land are intended for Aryans only, that even those who accept his teachings remain outcasts if they are not of the race of the Aryans. He would be told that this symbol means implacable hatred of all Semites -- Jesus' own race; that he and the forebears of his people, Abraham, Moses,

David, Isaiah, Jeremiah and all their descendants are in this land regarded as "Niedermenschen" -- inferior human beings. How strangely lost this gentle Jew of Galilee would feel in this Aryan church where the Swastika mocked his cross....

Perhaps his wanderings would take him to the suburbs of Berlin to a huge Concentration Camp where thousands of weary, broken men are huddled together in a common misery. He would go among them and inquire, "Why are you here?" And he would be told, "I was a Pacifist." And he would exclaim, "But I, too, was a Pacifist, and these your captors are Christians -- my followers, are they not?..."

"Why are you here?" he would ask of another. "I was a Communist." "But so was I. I, too, preached of the evils of wealth. I drove the money-changers out of the Temple. My first disciples lived in communistic brotherhoods"....

"And why are you here?" "I am a Jew." "But I, too, was a Jew. They crucified me because they thought that I was 'King of the Jews'." And the man would answer, "In Berlin, gentle brother, it is enough to be only a plain Jew to be crucified."

And Jesus would feel that they were again plating A crown of crown of thorns upon his head....

No, it would not be a Merry Christmas for this humble Jew of Galilee in Berlin, in 1933. He would hear the bells ringing, the choirs chanting, priests praying, and all the joyous multitude celebrating. But he would sit apart and alone, knowing that he has again been rejected by men and that for him and his people this is another Golgotha.

And he would pray as he prayed once before in his hour of agony. And Israel would pray with him. "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."