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161

Box
58

Folder
727

Across the Rhine and the Red Sea, 1945.

658

ACROSS THE RHINE AND THE RED SEA
A Passover Sermon



By
Dr. Abba Hillel Silver



At
The Temple

On
Sunday morning, April 1, 1945

This festival of ours is known as "Zman Harusanu" - the season of our emancipation, the time of our deliverance. This year Pesach is an occasion for double rejoicing. We are celebrating not only an ancient deliverance from slavery and death. We are celebrating the most important festival which marks the most significant event in the history of our people. These days through which we are now passing give promises of another deliverance from slavery and death from a foe ten times as cruel and deadly and terrible as Pharaoh, as brutal and pitiless as any foe that mankind has ever seen.

We are told in our Sacred Literature that the Egyptian bondage lasted for some 400 years. The modern bondage lasted for no more than twelve years. But in these dozen years far more human suffering, tragedy, slaughter has taken place than in all these four centuries. A whole continent has been devastated. Whole countries were ravaged by fire and sword. Great populations were decimated by slaughter. As far as our people are concerned, some four millions of them were put to death.

The Jewish population, more than six times the size of that which left Egypt in the days of old were slaughtered. The Egyptian hosts were drowned in the Red Sea and the host of the Nazis are being broken and shattered by the River Rhine. The people of Israel crossed the Red Sea to safety and freedom. The Armies of the United Nations crossed the Rhine to victory and to the emancipation of mankind. So that this is truly a glorious Pesach for us. As we celebrate this year, what marvelous memories are stirred within us. What historic parallels, and analogies are suggested. What strange coincidences. What heroic ironies -- irony that would defy the Gods themselves.

For example, in the public press it is recorded that in the very Rhineland Castle where Hitler at the height of his power laid down the law to Chamberlain in 1938, in the days just preceding Munich, one reads that at this very place, in this castle, near the Rhine, Jewish soldiers have spent the evening conducting a Seder service which was broadcast throughout the world. And one could just see

this hysterical paperhanger on reading this news, this man whom a nation raised to power to their own destruction, one can just see him gnashing his teeth and hear him saying: "Jews are celebrating Passover in the very room where I at the height of my power was announcing a thousand year reign of Nazism in the world.

One reads in the same paper that in Goebbel's own palatial home at Muenchen Gladbach, three hundred American Jewish dough boys got together and decided to read the Haggadah. Of all places in Germany they selected that very place with the great portrait of Hitler looking down upon them, gathered round the Seder table and read as every Jew must have read, for it is in the Haggadah: "This is the established law of our history valid for our forefathers and for us that not only one man has arisen to destroy us, but every generation men arise to destroy us, and the Holy One, Blessed be He, delivers us from their hands." Here we are.

And the newspaper reported that a group of Jewish boys made special potato pancakes. That is not exactly an appropriate food for Passover, but then anything can happen when Brooklyn Jewish doughboys get together. I am sure when they opened the door for Elijah to come in with his message of freedom, the mystic figure who was to announce universal deliverance for mankind, I am sure they welcomed him and replied with that traditional prayer: Pour out thy wrath upon nations that do not know thee, and upon kingdoms who do not call upon thy name, for they that wish to consume Jacob and to devastate thy dwelling, place, pursue them and destroy them from off the face of the earth." That is what Eisenhower is doing now, and Montgomery.

Seder and Passover are again being celebrated in the land from which all Jews have been expelled and all synagogues destroyed. The message of liberty is again being heard in the land where liberty was utterly suppressed and where the blackest tyranny was riveted upon an easily misled and beguiled people. So this week in Germany non-Aryans are again reminding the would-be world-conquerors whose

hosts and chariots are broken and whose armies are in disastrous route and headlong flight -- these non-Aryans are now again reminding them and the world that there are things far more powerful than weapons. The aroused spirit of man, the hungering for freedom -- that is far more powerful than all the ~~best~~ weapons of the days of Egypt.

I read, too, in the press that in the very shadow of the Egyptian pyramids which were built by Jewish slaves in Egypt, Jewish soldiers of Great Britain and the and Palestine United States/celebrating the Seder. I also read where a Jewish Chaplain presided at a Seder in the Mussolini Forum in Rome. And I said to myself as I read these things, how marvelously true is that phrase in the song which Miriam sang when they crossed the Red Sea: It is God, and God alone Who is the man of war! In the long run His might and his plan alone always win the ultimate victory! You know that one of the glories of belonging to an old and ancient like ours is that we can have a perspective on history. We get a sweep, a panorama of history. We can watch the cycles of history. We are not shaken and demoralized by a momentary relaxed set pattern, because we can take the view of the ages and see how these momentary defeats are only stops on the way to the ultimate triumph. Four thousand years of history have given us this confidence. It is God who is the victorious general in the eternal struggle between light and darkness, truth and light, freedom and slavery.

I read and reread that beautiful song of Moses by the Red Sea and I came across this phrase: "The enemy said: I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; My lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them." These familiar words, they reverberate from all the slogans and propaganda from Egypt to Berlin. "With our invincible armes, with the Wermacht, we shall conquer the world. Our lust will be satisfied. We will amass. We will get everything." That was five or six years ago. That was two or three years ago. Today the blitzkrieg is in reverse. The same armies are on the run. They can't surrender fast enough. The white flag is flying today from many a town in Germany. There is no longer a ~~Sw~~astika flying in many cities in Berlin. Their cities are

no longer proud cities. Many are heaps of rubble and hills of debris. So the words of that song of Miriam come back: "But Thou, in the greatness of Thy might dost destroy the enemy. Thou dost send forth Thy rock. They are consumed as stubble."

How the circumference of their ambitions and power has shrunk -- they who sent out their tentacles to embrace the world. From the coast of Africa and the Gates of Egypt they were beaten and hurled back across the Mediterranean. They they talked of the Europa impregnable. That was cracked. Then in Italy, in Normandy and in the East, so that their circumference has shrunk. Their fortress Deutschland, Germania, that strong fortress has also been cracked in a hundred places and the armies of the allies are pouring over its rivers, its planes and over its cities. And death like hail, is raining down from the skies of Germany. One recalls the words of the Prophet, Isaiah: "And the high fortress of thy walls will He bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust."

Good friends, rivers have always played a great role in military history. Napoleon at Beresina and the destruction of the Grande Armee! The Battles of the Marne in the last war. The crossing of the Don, the Dnieper, the Vistula, the Danube, the Oder in this war.

The River Rhine has been crossed by armies before, but not in a long time, nor by so large a force, nor with such crushing consequences. It will prove as significant for the future of Europe and mankind as the crossing of the Red Sea, for Israel and Mankind. These pontoon bridges, which Eisenhower, Montgomery and Patton have thrown across the Rhine to make possible the crossing of our soldiers are more than bridges between the left and the right banks of the Rhine. They are the highways, really the highways leading the world to a new order in Europe and the world. They are bridges of destiny!

And one thinks about the amazing feat of the crossing of the Rhine. One comes to the conclusion that it was far more than an engineering feat, physical prowess, material resources, the amazing production back home and the fighting stamina of our

men. It was far more than all of these things together. I believe that it was the unbeatable strength of democracy and the unquenchable spirit of freedom in men, and faith, unshaken faith in our ideals and in our way of life, in truth, that is responsible for all that is taking place in Germany today.

Remember that just a few short years ago, the Wermacht did think they were invincible. Their military equipment was far superior to that which we could command. They overwhelmed the world with their might. They had everything that victory required. Yet steadily in a few short years, their might dwindled and has begun to vanish while the might of the United Nations which began in a minimum of strength, has increased multiplied until it reached a point of real strength. Why did one dwindle and the other increase? Because behind that facade of military armor there was spiritual rottenness, spiritual void. There was nothing to sustain that first flush of success. Once that armor of theirs was cracked, once it began to receive mighty blows of resistance and opposition they began to dwindle. Behind the other there was spiritual faith, there was belief in man and devotion to freedom and a consecration to ideals, not necessarily in the mind and heart of every individual soldier, but of the army as a whole and the people behind those armies.

The Rabbis said that upon the rod with which Moses smote and parted the waters "were graven in plain letters the great and exalted name of God." It is faith which moves mountains, cuts through highways and crosses rivers/ It is faith which brings people ultimately through darkness singing to the dawn of a new day.

Our Haggadah says that at the Red Sea when the Jews found themselves with Egypt behind them and the waters before them they were in great despair. There were four classes of men among them. Each one gave this kind of advice to Moses. One group said: Let us throw ourselves in the Red Sea. There is no hope for us. Another said: Let us return to Egypt and our masters are coming on us with armed hosts. Let us prepare to submit to slavery. The third group said: Let us fight, engage in battle with them. There are more than we are, but let us fight

anyhow. The fourth group said: Let us try to intimidate the enemy by making a lot of noise and give the impression that we are mightier than we are.

And Moses discounted three of these courses, the two, the first ~~two~~ to commit suicide was an infamous idea and that of turning back to slavery he also discounted. He didn't think so much about making a great noise to intimidate the enemy. It was the group who wanted to fight to them Moses said: Fighting is not enough. You must fight in the name of a cause, of an ideal, and with the spirit of God. When you fight in that spirit, you will win.

When the world was facing Fascism and Nazis, there were also four classes. Some said: Let us accept Fascism and Nazism. Others said, let us surrender. Still others said: Let us fight them. Still others said: Let us carry on an intensive propaganda. You cannot fight without a faith. You can only overcome your enemy when your faith is greater than his, when your convictions are truer than his, nobler than his. You cannot overcome lying propaganda unless your propaganda is built on truth. So Moses said: "God will fight for you if you will fight with him."

This war, now mounting to its climax is proof and testament of the strength which resides in the conviction in the faith in our armies beyond the Rhine. Soon they will be in Berlin. And the question arises: What lies beyond the Rhine? and beyond Berlin, and beyond victory?

What lay beyond the Red Sea and the wilderness and long wandering and much suffering and great poverty before they reached the Promised Land. Forty years of wandering in the wilderness, back sliding into the worship of Egyptian idols, the golden calf, hankering for the fleshpots of Egypt, grumbling discontent. That is what lay beyond the Red Sea.

Now the question is, will it be easier for our world after victory? What will happen to this hungry, distraught, hate-ridden world of ours? Will it have to go through forty more years of wandering, discord, bitterness rebellion? Moses knew what

had to be done if the new found freedom was to be saved. He knew that freedom had to be disciplined in law. And so three months after the Children of Israel let Egypt at the foot of Mt. Nebo he gave them the Torah, the Ten Commandments the code by which they must regulate their lives. That same Torah, say the Rabbis, was offered to other peoples. They declined it with thanks. It was offered to the children of Esau and the children asked: What is in that law? They were told that one was "Thou shalt not kill." No thanks. We don't want it for we live by the sword. Then the law was offered to the children of Leth. They asked what is in the Ten Commandments? When they were told one was "Thou shalt not commit adultery" they said: No thanks -- from unchastity do we spring. When the Torah was offered to the Children of Ishmael they refused it because one of the commandments was "Thou shalt not steal". Oh no, we can't do that, we can't restrict our activities that way. So the Torah was taken round to all the nations of the world. All declined because as the Rabbis put it, "they could not give up the law of their fathers."

In a few weeks a new Torah will be offered to the nations of the world at the San Francisco Conference, at the conference of the United Nations, and perhaps some time thereafter there will be other conferences at which other laws and codes of international conduct will be offered to make secure that freedom for which the nations of the world sacrificed with the rich blood of their lives. And the question is will the nations be prepared to give up the laws of their fathers, the law of the claw and tooth, conquest and will they be led to accept the law of binding law the law of international cooperation. If they will be prepared, then mankind will be spared forty years of wandering in the desert.

What lies beyond the Rhine and beyond victory? What shall we do with the Germans after they are defeated? It is not vindication that one has in mind when one thinks of them. It is not vindictiveness or revenge. The Rabbis ^{were} faced with the same problem in connection with the Egyptian people. What shall be done with them when the hour of redemption comes? The Rabbis said: "One should not rejoice when the enemy falls." "The destruction of the wicked causes no joy unto God." When the children of Israel

crossed the Red Sea the Angel of Mercy sang songs of praise. The Almighty Himself said: "My handiwork are now drowned in the Red Sea, how can you sing songs?" On the other hand, justice demands the punishment of the guilty and the cleansing of the spirit. The Angel Uzza, the angel of the Egyptians attempted to persuade the Almighty not to destroy the Egyptians, say the Rabbis in one of their very incisive legends. Just as the Egyptians were about to drown in the Red Sea, Uzza declared: (mercy to Egyptians) The Lord was inclined to hear Uz a's pleadings when the angel Gabriel at the sign of Michael flew to Egypt and brought back with him "a brick which had been made with a Hebrew child used as mortar." Holding this incriminating object i n his hand he said: "O Lord, of the world, wilt Thou have compassion upon the accursed nation that has slaughtered Thy children so cruelly?" So the Lord turned himself away from the attribute of mercy and sat himself upon the throne of justice, he resolved to drown the Egyptian prisoners in the sea."

And they must be destroyed in every generation if men are ever to live in peace. The world must help the German people to repentance restitution and ~~repeal~~ regeneration. But no maudlin sentimentalism. Oswiceism, Lidices, Warsaws, no gas chambers.--These must not be overlooked for the sake of the salvation of the spirit of man. So as we sing a new song for our past redemption, for our future redemption, let us begin to think soberly of the tasks that lie ahead, the tasks behind the Rhine, beyond the rim of war and death and destruction. Let us think about the spiritual disciplines that will be required, the severe spiritual exactions to which men and nations will have to submit themselves, the voluntary assumption of binding power of law, laws of justice and human helpfulness which alone will lead mankind to the Promised Land of blessedness and peace in the world.

1) 1/10/1945 - Time of our Deliverance - Season of our Freedom

- Occasion for double rejoicing.
- Celebrate our ancient deliverance from slavery & Death ^{- most important}
- Then days since promise of another deliverance - " ^{at} from a far ^{10 times} cruel as Pharaoh - as brutal & pitiless as any -
- Eg. slavery lasted 400 yrs - Nazi slavery was over 12. But in these dozen years - far more human suffering, tragedy, slaughter - than in the Pharaonic 4 centuries -
- A whole continent was devastated - whole countries ^{by fire & sword & pillage} were razed - ^{by mass slaughter} populations were decimated - 41% Jews - over 76 Jews who left Eg. - were butchered -

- The Eg. ~~was~~ hosts were drowned in the Red Sea!
- The Nazi hosts were broken & scattered by the Rhine Rhine
- The people of Israel crossed the Red Sea to safety and freedom
- The Armies of the United Nations have crossed the Rhine to victory and to the emancipation of mankind.

What a glorious 1000 this is!
What memories it stirs! What historic parallels
and analogies of our ~~my past~~ ^{strange} ~~my past~~! What ~~consequences~~ ^{consequences}! ~~what~~ ^{diversity}
~~boundless hopes~~! - What heroic ironies to ~~make~~
the ~~Gods~~ of our Gods!

2) # In the Rheinfeld Castle, where Hitler, at the height of his power, laid down the law to Chamberlain, in 1938 - at this re-union ^{day of doom} ^{1000 yrs} ~~conference~~ - Jewish soldiers ~~and their~~
~~corrupted~~ 1000 series - broadcast to the world!
Could just hear that hysterical paper. Rager when a nation of pol. slaves raised to autonomous forces - to their own

destruction - crush his teeth - & then hit the floor - ^{at Muenchen Island} ~~up~~ ³⁰⁰ ~~up~~

3/ In the dwarf Rebels own palatial home - ^{at Muenchen Island} ~~300~~ ³⁰⁰ ~~up~~
Hyssop - rehears low Sabbath & red men drowned in
Red Sea - + 3000 men -

I am now not forget - Elforb - 3000 men drowned in Red Sea -
6 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

4/ Yes Sides and Passers are again being celebrated
in the land from which all Jews were expelled - and
all synagogues destroyed.

The message of liberty is again being heard in the
land where liberty was utterly suppressed and
blackest tyranny was invoked upon a dead and
comely misled and oppressed people.

The non-tyrants are again reminding the would-be world-tyrants,
whose armies in huts or chariots are broken and where
invincible armies are in desperate strife and had-
ling flight - that there are things more powerful than
weapons - the aroused spirit of man striving
for freedom! and id 3000

5/ I read that in the very shadow of the Egyptian pyramids
built by Hol. slaves - over the British Pal. Jews
who are arranged for a 300.
And that a J. chaplain preached at a 300 in the
Mission Forum in Paris!

And I say to myself - וזהו כלו - It is for, and ³
for also who is the man, הוא!
His might & his plan ^{always} win the ultimate victory!
→ story of belonging to an ancient people - panorama - עולם
by I read & re-read the פרק הוא - יהי - לכל - לכל הוא
לכל הוא - לכל הוא - לכל הוא

Only 5-6 yrs ago - only 2-3 yrs ago - Brit. King! Swat
carrying off the body! Same - same! Yrs amenable

To-day - They are on the men! They can't survive for
enough! The white flag flies from the city front
city of Germany - not the humble! And the city are
city no longer - but houses, ruins & wreck
bits of debris. הוא הוא הוא הוא הוא הוא
הוא הוא הוא הוא הוא הוא

7/. How these circumstances, their existence & former has
shrink - They who sent out their troops to emboss
the world!

From the coast, Africa & the Jabs, Eg. they were
hurled back, across the Mediterranean -
Festung Europa! That was cracked. In Italy. In
Normandy - In the East!
Festung Deutschland - And that has cracked - and
gumms are pouring on its ruins, its plans,
its city -

And death like hail, is raining down from the skies,
"And the high fortress of thy walls will be bring down, very low,
And bring to the ground, even to the dust"

8) Rivers have played a great role in Military history.
Napoleon at Besamun, & the destruction, the Grand Armee.
The Battles the Rhine - in the last war -
The crossing, the Danube, ^{the Danube, the Danube} the order in this war.

The Rhine has been crossed by invading armies before,
but not in ~~was~~ a long time, nor by so large a force,
nor with such crushing consequences.
It will be proof as sig. for the future of Europe & mankind
as the crossing of the Red Sea, for Israel & mankind.
The pontoon-bridges - Amshoven, Montgomery - D. Vickers
are 2 bridges bet. left & right bank, Rhine - highways
leading the world to a new order in Europe & on the
world. They are bridges of destiny!

9) Engineering skill, military genius, physical prowess, production,
material resources, and psychic stamina made the
possible the victory on the Rhine.
But something much more than all that - the unshakable
strength of democracy - the unshakable spirit of freedom
in men - and faith, unshakable faith in our ideals
and in our way of life; and in Truth Behind the everything
might was with friends
and army and faith -
you fight for
Upon the Red, with which these men marked the water -
"prayer in plain letters the great and exalted
name of God"
It is faith which works into - cuts a highway thru
river & seas - and drives new swinging to the
down of new destinies tomorrow -

10/. At the Red Sea - 4 classes of people - desperate

(5)

① Death by drowning - Suicide

② Return to Egypt - Surrender

③ Pitched battle with enemy -

④ Intimidate enemy by noise and great hubbub -

Fearing Foes and Hopes - 4 classes - accept them -

Surrender to their demands - fight them a pro forma of them

First two - infamous. Latter two - inadequate.

You ~~must~~ can fight them only with a faith - a faith -
a conviction, not a ^{truth} -

You can overcome them by propaganda - only by your truth

פ. י. פ. י. פ. י. פ. י.

11/. What lies beyond the Rhine? & beyond Berlin? & beyond
Victory?

What lies beyond the Red Sea - a Wilderness, and
long wandering, & much suffering & faithlessness & apostasy
before Promise Land was reached.

40 years, it - brotherhood to the world, E. & W. - Golden Age -
standing for the flesh-pots of E. - ^{desire and} ~~craving~~ rebellion
in a hungry world.

Will it be any easier for ^{us} the world after Victory?
a ruined, hungry, desolate, hate-ridden world?

We pray that it might!

~~There~~ knew the only way by which new-born freedom

could be saved and turned into a blessing. - By 16
describing it in law.

3 months - Tivari - 2012.

Offend to other nations. (1) Children / Esau - p 322 k1 -
do no spury (2) Ch. 7 Lot - p 121 k1 - "From uncharity
(3) Ch. 7 Ishmael - 217 k1 - 12 k 311 k 2 131
(4) All other nations - cannot pick up law / their fathers

14/ If at the S. Fawcett Conf - nations will pick up law /
their fathers - law / claw & tooth - of theft - & murders
& conquest & dominations - accept law / cooperation
living - will be spread the law, weary wanderers
in the wilderness -

13/ Fate of the Germans - It is not in righteousness that we think
of them. Rabbin were faced with same problem - Egyptians.
Told not to rejoice in their destruction - 13/ 131 -

On the other hand - further demands punishment of guilty!

U359 - To delay Angel / E - persuaded not to destroy E. Kip
'I know - attribute Mercy - they were men as well as the guilty

→ Almost the Lord yielded to Uzai's pleading - Thichard said
syn to fabric - flew - "a brick for which a Hebrew
child had been used as mortar". Holding this was an
notary object in her hand - "O Lord, of the world, meet them
have compassion upon the accused nation that has
slaughtered Thy children so cruelly". Lord turned away

5

The E.J. nation was not destroyed! It survived! The
~~leaders~~ - the ~~persecutors~~ - the ~~captains~~ - ^{the ~~top leaders~~} ~~the~~ ~~armies~~ - ~~they~~
were destroyed. They must be destroyed!

14). Wald must help German people to repentance,
~~and~~ restoration and regeneration! But no manchen
 such menschen - Österreich - Lieber - Kasow - Gas-chauke.

15). And so, as we sing a new song, for our part of future
redemption - let us think wholly of the fact that his
ahand - thus regard to him - by and the win of
war - is and death & destruction - the sp. deception
men & nations - the law & justice & helpfulness which
also will buy an add to the promised land & a
blessed powerful to morning -