



## 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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Passover lights and shadows, 1946.

695  
PASSOVER LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

WRHS  
By  
Dr. Abba Hillel Silver  
At  
The Temple



On  
Sunday morning, April 21, 1946



Dear Friends:

The concurrence of Pesach and Easter on this day stirs the mind to many reflections. Both holidays, of the Jewish people and of the Christian world are, in origin, Spring festivals. Easter - "The Goddess of Spring". The term Pesach is rather difficult to define because it is rather difficult to determine its exact meaning. It just suggests the springing to life. Passover refers to the gamboling of the new born lamb. Both festivals suggest Spring, new life, new hope.

In the course of time historical events came to be associated with these two festivals. In the case of Passover - the exodus of our forefathers from Egypt occurred. In the case of Easter -- the resurrection of the master of Christianity, according to tradition, occurred during the Spring festival, in fact, during the Passover season. And these historical events too therefore suggest new life and new hope. In the case of Pesach, freedom from slavery. In the case of Easter, freedom from death.

Now <sup>to</sup> the Jewish people Passover always meant emancipation, the birth of the nation into freedom. To the Christian world, Easter always meant not only the rise of its Master from the tomb, but the rise of a new faith of redemption and the spread of the doctrine of Love and Brotherhood through the world.

In 1946, both Jew and Christian need the reassuring message of their festivals to strengthen them in a world wherein the Jew is far from free and the Christian doctrine far from triumphant.

We are today on the backwash of the greatest war of all times. The war was won. The Judaeo-Christian world was saved. But modern warfare sweeps like a hurricane of destruction, uprooting, upheaval all over the world.

Not only are many bodies broken, but the spirit of man becomes tense. Values and ways of life are fearfully wrenched. The whole of Europe today is facing starvation. Millions of people are displaced, homeless. There is hardly a country in the world today where political stability exists....In some countries there is actually war going on -- in China.



As far as our own people is concerned, the remnants are in great distress. The victory of the United Nations did not eradicate that hatred which was so assiduously planted in the years between world wars One and Two. Their lives -- the lives of our people in the countries in Eastern and Central Europe are still very insecure and there is great unhappiness. And ~~the~~ tens of thousands of our people still find themselves as homeless refugees in concentration camps which have been converted for them, but which are still just camps for homeless refugees. And they are waiting today as did their forebears, waiting to cross that Red Sea to their promised land. Here they are waiting for the chance to rebuild their shattered lives in the Promised Land.

The Passover then which our people is celebrating in this year is not quite as happy as it might be, as it should be, as a festival of new life, new hope. Our people stands in need therefore of the reassuring message of this festival. It must come to our aid at this time, just as it came to the aid of our people who stood at the Red Sea unable to go forward because of the sea, unable to go back because of the Egyptians. At that moment, our people became very distressed, very embittered. They turned with recrimination and denunciation upon their leader, Moses and said to him: "Are there no grave-yards in Egypt that you have taken us out here to perish in the wilderness?" Then Moses said to the people: "Do not fear!"

I wish I could say the same words in the ears of the one hundred thousand Jewish refugees who are on this Passover week waiting, languishing in spirit and I am sure with a great deal of bitterness in their hearts, "Do not be afraid! You too will soon cross your Red Sea of blood. You too will reach your promised land!" I am confident that these Jews of Europe now in these scattered concentration camps will this year or next year, perhaps this very year experience that which their forefathers in Egypt experienced -- an exodus from their Egypt. They will find their way to new life and new hope in a new Holy land of their people.



This promised land to which they will go, with the help of God, this remnant of our people, this promised land to which our forefathers went a long time ago, was in those days not inhabited by their kinfolks. The ancient people of Canaan were a hostile people. The modern refugees from the lands of Egypt, from serfdom and horror, will come to a land where a large Jewish community, their kith and kin, six hundred thousand of them will await them, will welcome them with joy and with every manner of help to strengthen them and to make them at home. A people is waiting for them, a people which is experiencing new life and new hope.

I was deeply moved this week, moved almost to tears when I received by airplane flowers from Palestine — these flowers. They were sent a few days ago from the Vallley of the Sharon by airplane. They were sent to me so that I could convey to the Jews of America the greetings of the Jews of Palestine. With it came a message which translated, reads as follows: "We, the Yishuv of Palestine, on this festival of Passover commemorating the liberation of our forefathers from bondage, send you, our comrades in America, these flowers grown on the soil of the reborn land of Israel. When our ancestors were redeemed from Egypt and achieved liberty, they bequeathed to us and to all mankind their love of freedom. Let this gift be both a remembrance of that dedication and a token of redemption." These flowers bring us the spirit of the planting, of the Springtime in Palestine, and of the new life there. And that those Jews of Palestine could find it in their hearts at this time of great struggle to send us this message through the fragrant speech of flowers is a tribute not alone to their stoutness of heart, but to the sensitiveness of their spirit.....(Jacob - to sons -- Take with you some of produce of land -- means something of melody of Palestine). These flowers bring to us something of the memody of the new life, the reborn people in the ancient land of our forefathers. That is the hope that I am speaking of, the hope that we need to strengthen our hearts.

You know, good friends, that when objects recede in the distance and fade in size, their colors become indistinguishable. That is true of history, of events of



history. But <sup>for</sup>/certain great moments of history, like Passover, <sup>for</sup>/certain great characters of history, like Moses, for example, legend has a way of enlarging their size, of making their outlines even more distinctive and of adding brilliancy and life to their color. The Exodus from Egypt has continued to loom larger and increasingly larger, as has the personality of Moses. Leaders in every critical hour of our history, particularly in the dark hours, always point to the Saga of Egypt as an example of encouragement as a strengthening of the spirit of our people.

When Isaac Abravanel, the noble Jewish statesman who lived through the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, when Don Isaac Abravanel, who was ~~xxx~~ financial adviser to the royal houses of Spain and Portugal, Spain and later on Naples, when this great Jew who tried to serve his people in Spain tried to use his influence to have the effect of expulsion revoked failed, he went with his people into exile. After long wandering he finally reached a place in Italy where he wrote a commentary on the stirring exodus of the Jews ~~of Israel~~ from Egypt so that he could revive the broken confidence of his people in their terrible hour. This is how he describes it in his own words:

"When the dreadful news reached the people, they mourned their fate; and wherever the report of the decree spread, Jews wept bitterly. The terror and lamentation were greater than at any time since the expulsion of our forefathers from their own soil in Judah to foreign strands. However, they ~~he~~ bravely encouraged each other: 'Let us cling unflinchingly to our faith, holding our heads with pride before the voice of the enemy that taunts and blasphemes. If they let us live, we will live; if they kill us, we will perish. But we will not break our Divine Covenant nor shall we turn back. We will go forth in the name of the Lord our God.'"

They went back to the lesson of Egypt, the classic example of fear and hatred of our people, the program devised to exterminate our people, and the archetype in Pharaoh of all subsequent foes of Israel.

"In this spirit," writes Abravanel, "the ~~and~~ people, old and young, women and children, a multitude of 300,000 from every province went forth on one day, unarmed and



afoot...."Blessed be the name of the Lord! I, too, chose the path of my people, departing on a seagoing vessel. I went into exile with my whole family and came to this glorious city of Naples, whose kings are merciful. Thereupon I decided to pay my vow to God by setting upon the task of writing a commentary on the books of Kings. It was a time to recall the destruction of our Holy Temple and the Exile of our people, which are recorded in these books. It was a time to remember our glories and our misfortunes."

He then proceeded to write a commentary, first on the Exodus from Egypt, then on the Book of Kings which tells of the story of the destruction of the Kingdom of Judea and the exile of the people of Babylon. He then proceeded to write three books on the coming of the Messiah, to cheer his people, and through his inspiration largely from the Saga of the Exodus from Egypt because that was the classic example of Jewish persecution of all times.

And you find in the Saga of the exodus from Egypt the fear and hatred of our people, and you find the cause which inspires this hatred, the program devised to exterminate a people and ~~the~~ in Pharaoh the archetype of all subsequent foes of Israel. There was, for example, nothing in Nazis and nothing in Hitler ~~today~~ that you do not find in Egypt and in Pharaoh. They were afraid of the people of Israel. "He holds that the children of Israel are too powerful for us." Actually the Jews were an insignificant percentage of the population. Yet in Germany, too, this was used as an excuse. First of all they discredited the Jews and charged them with disloyalty. "If ever war overtake the people, these people will join up with our enemies." Having discredited them, you begin first to persecute them, to subject them to all manner of discrimination, to embitter their lives, and finally, as the logical sequence, to torture them and to exterminate them to "throw their children into the Nile."

When I was a child and learned the story of the throwing of the children into the Nile, I shuddered. The cruelty and bestiality of it! When I became older, I discredited the whole story. I knew better! But I didn't because what the Egyptians did was little in comparison with what was done in the last few years when men and women



and children were exterminated not by being thrown into the sea, but by burning them in gas chambers.

I read the other day the confession of the man who was responsible for the extermination of three million Jews made before the Court at Nuremberg. This was his testimony in 1946, not from the ancient pages of Egypt.

"Rudolf Hoess, a slight, meek-looking man ~~who~~ casually admitted having supervised the death of 3,000,000 persons at the Oswiecim concentration camp. He told of the improvements he had introduced in the gas chambers of Oswiecim. He listed as improvements the use of crystalized prussic acid rather than monoxide gas and a chamber in which 2,000 persons could be killed at one time, compared with the 200-capacity of Treblinka's ten chambers."

"He also boasted of "fooling his victims into thinking that they were entering a delousing room rather than a gas chamber."

"In an affidavit that the prosecution read to the court, Hoess testified that sometimes the victims realized that they were going to their death, and 'we had riots and ~~fix~~ difficulties.'

"Frequently, he continued, when women were stripped, it was found that they had hidden their children under their clothes. 'But, of course, when we found them, we would send the children in to be exterminated.'"

The horror today is the black, moral degradation, the utter, utter disregard of humanity. How can people do that? How can people do that? This is the curse of this people, the Germans. They lack a sense of humanity.

There is a story told of an ancient priest who found a shipwrecked pirate on the shore. He took care of him, fed him and clothed him and he was reproached for having shown kindness to a pirate who had raided the shore and who had been responsible for much theft etc. To which the priest replied: "I have not shown regard for this man, but for mankind."



Now when a man loses his sense of humanity he is worse than a beast....

All this was already foreseen in the story of the Exodus -- throwing them into the Nile. Twentieth century Germany sought to destroy not only the body of the race, but the spirit of the race as well.

In the Deutsche Jugendzeitung, there appeared an item in February 1940, which describes the burning of the library of the Yeshivath Hakhme in Lublin. This Yeshivath at Lublin is an academy which was established before the war and it gathered to itself the foremost scholars in Poland. They build up a magnificent library of the rarest books. When the Nazis marched in to Lublin this is what they did, as described by one of their commanders. "It was a special pride for us to destroy this Talmud Academy, known as the greatest in Poland. We threw out of the building the large Talmudic library, and brought it to the market place. There we kindled a fire under the books. The conflagration lasted twenty hours. The Jews of Lublin stood about, weeping bitterly. Their outcries rose above our own voices. We called up a military band, and the cries of triumph of the soldiers drowned out the noise of the Jewish outcries." A delight in burning books, bringing out a military band to play while the books representing the travail of the human minds were being burned.

But as was the case in Egypt, so was it the case of the Nazis. Neither Pharaoh nor Hitler prevailed. "Blessed be He who keeps his promise to his people."

But hope, my friends, is not enough. Hope inspires work, courageous work, action inspired by hope, based on the knowledge of history, the classic experience of our people. And it is in this kind of spirit that we must now begin to build all that has been destroyed, that we must begin to heal the wounds wherever they can be healed, feed the hungry to prepare the land for the refugees now standing by the Red Sea waiting for the moment to cross over. We must turn our backs on the past and face the future confidently redeemed and singing a new song. We shall work all of us, wherever we are in our respective countries, our respective communities



for enriching, ennobling Jewish life, in full confidence that a new day will come. We shall work with high spirit for all that is best and and creative in life.

As far as the Christian world is concerned on this Easter day, I am sure that thoughtful Christians, even as they celebrate Easter, will realize how little of the vision of that gentle Jew of Nazareth has been realized, how his dreams have been trampled into dust and blood, what a battlefield Christendom has become 2000 years after he preached his , how those who call themselves Christian crucified six million of his kith and kin. I am sure that Christians will take all this to heart and that they will not lose heart, for the Master of their faith too preached hope, hope-inspired and courageous work, for the salvation of the world.

There is on the horizon today the United Nations Organization which has within it itself the promise of salvation of mankind. That organization meeting on our shores, that organization, given the dynamic leadership of one or two even of one power~~s~~ of the world may save the world. Failing that leadership, that organization will go down to defeat even as the first League of Nations did. Our prayer, the prayer of Jew and Christian alike is that this United Nations Organization be permitted to work in the spirit in which it was created by the great  powers, and not as sounding board for mutual accusations and as an instrument in their power-politics. My prayer is that America, in connance with its great tradition, will assume that leadership in the United Nations Organization. If that happens then we and our children after us will be able to say: Not only our forefathers, the Lord God, blessed be He, but even us too, those who come after us, we will be redeemed.



1) Coincidence - stirs the mind to many reflections " (

Both, in origin, are Spring festivals - "Isodness of Spring"  
nod - springing into life - burgeoning - shipping  
As such, both suggest - New Life, New Hope.

2) In the course of time - historical events.

These hist. events, accordingly, also suggest New Life  
and New Hope - ~~the~~ Freedom from Slavery! Freedom for both

3) For J. people nod meant Emancipation, Birth of the Nation  
into Freedom.

For the Christian world - Easter - not only Rise of J. Christ  
from the Tomb - Rise of a new Faith, Redemption  
and the spread of its doctrine of Love & Brotherhood  
thru the world.

In 1946, both Jew & Christian, need the reassuring  
message, these festivals to show them in  
a world where the Jew is far from free &  
Christianity's doctrine far from insignificant.

4) We are in Backwash - War was won - Judaic-Chr  
tradition saved - But modern warfare wrote  
like a hurricane of destruction, uprooting, upheaval



Broken are broken and spirit is spent, and values and 1/2  
ways of life are <sup>perished</sup> wretched. Europe is ~~now~~ facing starvation.  
Millions of men are displaced and homeless. <sup>Pol. as Statist</sup> <sup>52-60-61</sup>

(a) ~~The same~~ As far as our people is concerned - the  
remnants are in great distress. ~~See~~ Victory - did not  
eradicate hatred, so anxiously planted in year bet.  
world wars & before. Their lives are still so unhappy  
and insecure - Refugees in camps - wandering as  
did Jews by side of Red Sea - ~~in~~ in chance to  
cross over to Promised Land.

(b) Not as happy a mood as it should be, spirit of  
mood should come to our aid - At Red Sea - bitter recrimi-  
nations - 723 N2 1st 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 9th 10th  
= 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

(c) I wish I could see the same words in the ears  
of the 100,000. <sup>100,000</sup> Yes, tw, will cross the  
Red Sea - Perhaps <sup>again</sup> this very year. You will  
come to the Promised Land - rest - restoration.

(d) The Promised Land to which our ancestors moved  
- <sup>was not</sup> inhabited by any other Kingfolk - Hostile people  
Joshua - 600,000 - easily avenging them - also full of  
Ita - Flowers <sup>read</sup> coming in mood soon - Chant  
- That they found it in their hearts.

(1) 723 N2 1st 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 9th 10th



3/ Perseus - as objects needed - History - (3)  
Exodus brings larger & larger - our leaders  
Don Isaac Abarbanel - (Just) Hope - 3 Books

6/ They went back to lesson, Egypt - classical  
Example of Fear & hatred from people, <sup>the cause</sup> of program  
designed to exterminate our people, & the archetype  
in ענין of all mismanagement from Israel.

There was, for example, nothing in Negusim, Hittim -

- Fear - אין אנו יכולים לראות
- Charges, Disloyalty - אין אנו יכולים לראות
- Begin, first, to discriminate - doing separate & deny -  
and enlighten their lives
- Extermination - אין אנו יכולים לראות - Gas chambers

(Just) - utter, black, moral degradation

(Shipwrecked Pirate) - "I have not shown regard  
for this man, but for mankind"

Books - destroy also spirit (Just) אין אנו יכולים לראות

7/ But it did not avail - ענין was drowned -  
Hope! But Hope is not enough! Hope - inspired - work  
(action) - In this spirit - rebuild, heart, feet, prepare  
Turning our backs - free confidently - אין אנו יכולים לראות  
We shall work with high spirit for all that is best



7/ Christian World - celebrating Easter - how little  
the vision of that gentle Jesus of Nazareth - has been  
realized - how his dream - have been trampled into  
dust & blood - what a battered & crushed  
has become 2000 yrs after he preached his message  
- how those who call him Christ are ~~crushed~~  
6 % of his 16th Flk - will talk all this  
to heart - but not lose heart!

① He too preached hope - hope - wisdom &  
courageous work! for the salvation of the world

8/ The UNO is hopeless - work -  
Let it be permitted to work! Great Power

Let America lead - on this bed -

9/ Let the UNO be a place where the world can meet  
and work together

*Handwritten signature or note at the bottom right.*



# NAZI RACE THEORIST PLEADS INNOCENCE

**Dr. Rosenberg Says He Wanted  
Jews to Go to Asia—Oswiecim  
Leader Boasts of Killings**

**By SYDNEY GRUSON**

By Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

NUREMBERG, Germany, April 15—Dr. Alfred Rosenberg, creator of Nazi ideology and guardian of the spiritual training of the Nazi party, pictured himself before the international military tribunal today as a peace-loving disciple of Goethe who wanted only "understanding between the Western European Powers and a bloodless solution of the Jewish question."

Before the impatient bench and prosecution, Rosenberg declared that his theory of German race supremacy was not "an invention of National Socialism but the conclusion of 400 years of investigation of the laws of inheritance."

Instead of the evil genius pictured by the prosecution who had financed Vidkun Quisling and paved the way for the German invasion of Norway, Rosenberg described himself as having been merely the messenger of warnings that Quisling had brought from Norway that the British and French intended to land in the south and the Russians in the north. As a good German, he said, he had to tell Hitler of these threats to encircle Germany. But when Hitler acted against Norway, it was without his knowledge, Rosenberg said.

## **Admits Killing 3,000,000**

Before Rosenberg took the stand in opening his defense, Rudolf Hoess, a slight, meek-looking man who casually admitted having supervised the death of 3,000,000 persons at the Oswiecim concentration camp, gave the crushing climax to the case against Gen. Kaltenbrunner, chief of the Nazi security police.

Hoess, captured only a few weeks ago in the British zone, had been called as a defense witness for Kaltenbrunner, but under cross examination he admitted that orders for commitments to and punishments in Oswiecim and Mauthausen, Austria, had been signed either personally by the police chief or his deputy. Kaltenbrunner looked on tight-lipped as his story of having been ignorant of what went on in the camps was attacked.

Rosenberg was the sixth defendant to take the stand. When he repeatedly wandered into a philosophic discussion of the reasons for his beliefs, the court stopped him sharply with the admonition that it was not interested in how he had formed his theories, but only in the question whether they had been used to commit international offenses.

# Grosvenor Square Statue Of Roosevelt Is Proposed

By Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

LONDON, April 15—Grosvenor Square, the area in London that during the war years was considerably more American than British, is likely to be the site of this country's memorial to the Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The memorial committee has disclosed that the Government has agreed to take over the square and the statue in perpetuity if cooperation in the project can be obtained from the Duke of Westminster, owner of the land, and from owners of properties on the square.

The United States Embassy is situated on Grosvenor Square, as was headquarters of the United States forces.

Asia, because he said he was convinced that, "after the epoch of general emancipation in the 19th century, the Jewish people would try to fall back on their traditional and special character," in Europe.

He said that a "certain different will" from the rest of the German people was being expressed by the Jews, who had sneered at German soldiers returning from World War I and had favored the deportation of Germans to Africa to solve the unemployment problem after the war. The rest of Germany, he said, was trying to find a form of national unity, which eventually expressed itself in National Socialism.

## **Hoess Boasts of Efficiency**

Sketching his biography for the court, Rosenberg, a native of Estonia, declared that the events he "had lived through" studying in Russia at the end of World War I had decided him to work in Germany, convinced that communism would be a "tremendous catastrophe" for Germany.

Almost pridefully, Hoess told of the "improvements," he had introduced in the gas chambers of Oswiecim after having inspected the Treblinka camp. He listed as improvements the use of crystallized prussic acid rather than monoxide gas and a chamber in which 2,000 persons could be killed at one time, compared with the 200-capacity of Treblinka's ten chambers.

He also boasted of "fooling" his victims into thinking that they were entering a delousing room rather than a gas chamber.

In an affidavit that the prosecution read to the court, Hoess testified that sometimes the victims realized that they were going to their death, and "we had riots and difficulties."

Frequently, he continued, when women were stripped, it was found that they had hidden their children under their clothes. "But, of course, when we found them, we would send the children in to be exterminated."





675

*The Men, Women and Youth Groups*  
*of*  
**Cleveland Lodge B'nai B'rith**  
*will observe*

**B'NAI B'RITH SYNAGOGUE DAY**

AT THE ANSEL ROAD TEMPLE 1946  
ON SUNDAY, APRIL 21st, 10:30 A. M.

The Temple is dedicating to B'nai B'rith the Sunday morning Service on April 21st. Members of the Lodge will participate in the conduct of the worship. Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver will deliver the sermon. There will be special music in observance of Passover.

You are invited to attend with your family.

**PLEASE PRESENT THIS CARD**

RAY S. FREILER, President

LLOYD SCHWENGER, Chairman





THIS SIDE OF CARD IS FOR ADDRESS



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