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

Series IV: Sermons, 1914-1963, undated.

Reel Box Folder 163 59 846

A New Springtime for the World, 1951.

A NEW SPRINGTIME FOR THE WORLD

March 25, 1951

I don't know how appropriate the subject of my address is for this morning. It doesn't look much like springtime. And yet, in this very fact there is perhaps the text of the sermon. "If winter comes, can spring be far behind?" Beneath the surface of things there is a life stirring, a new life; spring is certain. The optimist knows it; the pessimist doubts it.

The Christian world is today celebrating Easter. Easter is older than Christianity. The very name, Easter, is the name of a spring goddess, a pagan - a spring goddess. At this time of the year there is a world-wide celebration of the coming of
spring. Passover, too, was originally such a festival, a festival celebrating the
advent of spring, and were this not a Jewish leap year, we would be celebrating Passover at this very time.

Mankind has always rejoiced with the coming of spring. Winter is associated with cold and ice and death. Spring is associated with resurrection, with rebirth, with new hope and new life. In the ancient pagan world many important rites were centered upon the death of all vegetation in winter and their reappearance in spring. This was symbolized in the mythologies of the pagan religions in the descent of the god into the netherworld in winter and his reappearance in spring, like the god Tammuz among the Mesopotamian religions, like the goddess Persephone in Greek mythology. They lamented the death of the god in the winter; they rejoiced at the resurrection of the god in spring.

The interesting custom of Easter eggs is associated with the same idea. The egg is the symbol of life, for all life comes from the egg, and so in springtime the Easter egg is the symbol of resurrection and of immortality. That is why, too, at our mourners' feast following a funeral service there is the custom of eating hard-boiled eggs as the symbol of faith in resurrection or in immortality, and perhaps also the hard-boiled egg on the Seder dish at Passover time traces itself back to the same idea.

The mood of spring is a mood of hopefulness. The heart sings at this time of the year. It sings of life. The resurrgent spirit of man turns it back upon death, upon all the withering and the waning, upon all the grief and the sorrow of life, and greets the sun. The spirit of man will not be defeated. It will not be held forever cribbed and confined in frozen death. It will burst forth in budding and blossoming, in renewed life, renewed aspiration. It will try again.

Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away; For, lo, the winter is past. The rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth. The time of singing is come. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

To be sure, there will be other winters. The rain will come again and the cold. The flowers will disappear again and the birds will fly away, and with them, their singing, too. But sufficient for the day is the joy thereof. Springtime is here, says the human spirit. The sun shines. The earth is carpeted with the beauty of grass and flower. There is a stirring and a burgeoning everywhere. And so, the heart of man is glad. That is the immortal hopefulness of the human race which, like the phoenix, rises from its own ashes. It is life triumphant over death.

But not only in nature did man reach out longingly for springtime, but also in the social life of mankind. Always men looked forward to a time when their winter of discontent would come to an end; when all suffering and want and hate and warwould cease; when justice and love and brotherhood and peace would reign universally on earth. In those dark times when men or nations or races found themselves hard-frozen in the grip of tyranny or persecution or oppression or war, they yearned and prayed for a new springtime, a springtime of redemption and liberation, for a new order, a new birth of liberty, a fresh start to brighter prospects. And also, when men andnations found themselves on the threshold of revolutions, in the midst of great social upheavals, like the American Revolution or the French Revolution or the Russian Revolution, their hopes ran high and eager with the rich sap of expectancy. They felt somehow the approach of something new, of new and glorious opportunities. They were

convinced that spring had come and a new world order was begun.

And inspired religious leaders, men of spiritual vision everywhere, often spoke and with great confidence of the coming of mankind's springtime. It would be some day in the end of days. It would be the millenium. It would be the establishment of the Kingdom of God, as it were. It would be ushered in by the Messiah. It would be a golden age for mankind. In the Book of Leviticus we read: "And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall be at peace, and none shall make you afraid; and I will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land; neither shall the sword go through your land."

And you will recall those magnificent passages from the book of the prophet, Isaiah, in Chapter 11 and in Chapter 2. In Chapter 11, "And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse. And a twig shall grow forth out of his roots, and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him - the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. And his delight will be in the fear of the Lord, and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears, but with righteousness shall he judge the poor and decide with equity for the meek of the land and righteousness shall be the girdle of his joins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed together; their young ones shall lie down together. And the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the suckling child play on the brink of the asp; and the weaned child shall put his hand on the basilisk's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." A glorious, golden expectation for the new world order which will be ushered in by some great leader who will follow the exalted principles of justice and righteouspess.

And then that great vision of Isaiah:

And it shall come to pass in the end of days, That the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say: "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; And He will teach us of His ways, And we will walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge between the nations, And shall decide for many peoples; And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning-hooks; Nation shall not life up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war any more.

A golden vision of the international community, observing a common, moral law, united in obedience to God, reconciled, beating their swords into ploughshares and learning war no more.

Later Jewish history spoke of this hope for the future as the Messianic times. Following universal travail, fearful wars and apostasy and persecution, all the birthpangs of the Messiah, as they called it - there will come an era of peace and justice when man will be given a new heart and when all that is wrong will be permanently righted. And not only among the Jewish people, but among all other peoples, there persisted the same hope in the coming of mankind's springtime. Among the stoics, for example, the great moral teachers of the pagan world, there also was what we may call a Messianic ideal, and in their ideal all differences of nationality and of historic states will disappear. There is to be a universal state governed by universal law in which peace is to reign and no distinction of race or creed is to exist. Their aim was, as they themselves recorded it that "all the inhabitants of this world should not live differentiated by their respective rules of justice into separate cities and communities, but that we should consider all men to be of one community and one polity, and that we should have a common life and an order common to us all, even as a herd that feeds together and shares the pasturage of a common field."

They went beyond the vision of the Hebrew prophets, these stoic teachers. They thought of one humanity wherein all distinctions of nation or language are wiped out. The prophets being more realistic in their approach, recognized the continued existence of distinct historic states and linguistic groups, but looked to the time when they would all be united in peace through obedience to one common law. They looked forward to peace among nations, not to one universal state. But whether it be the pagan stoics or the Hebrew prophets or the sages and seers of all other peoples, they all looked forward confidently to a new time, a different time, a springtime for mankind. They believed, they were hopeful, they were optimistic. They saw the ice and the snow and the hard-frozen earth, but they knew that beneath it life was stirring, and ultimately into a great force, into buds and blossoms, into sap and life. And that is religious optimism, and that is the optimism underlying democracy, because democracy is faith in man and in his future.

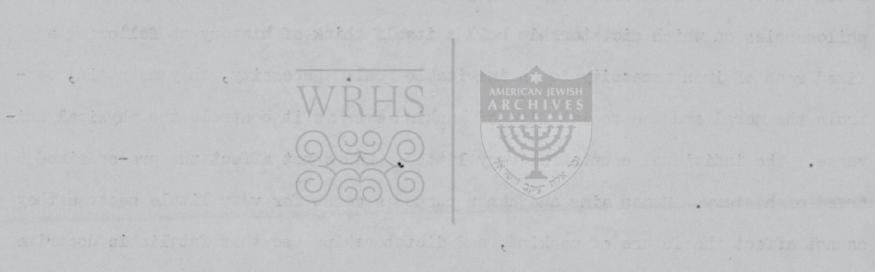
I dones know how many of you have noticed, at one time or another, the great seal of the United States, which appears on the dollar bill. On the reverse of the great seal of the United States, you will find first of all a pyramid which signifies strength and duration, and then on top of that an eye - the seeing eye - and the motto in Latin, "Annuit Coeptis" - that is, He - God has favored our undertakings; and then the words "Novus Ordo Seclorum", a new order of the ages, signifying the beginning of the new American era. A new era; A new order of the ages, a new springtime. Think of it! What superb confidence these men of the American Revolution, these founding fathers had. Here they were, thirteen poor struggling colonies, in some far-off corner of the globe, on the fringe of the great American wilderness, hardly emerged from war and revolution, almost bankrupt, torn with internal strife and dissention, and yet, they dared to announce to the world their revolution, and the state which they were establishing was ushering in a new order of the ages, a new world!

And indeed they usher in a new world and a new order of the ages, a new springtime for mankind. The torch which they kindled soon came to kindle other torches,
and despotism and tyranny began to crumble all over the old world on the continent
of Europe. One people after another, inspired by their example, broke their chains
and achieved freedom. A new world in which 150 millions of people ultimately came to
live under conditions hitherto unknown to mankind - freedom and competence and happimess. In this republic 150 years later there is still the hope of a new order for mankind.

I don't know whether we think of it when we speak of dictatorship, but essentially dictatorship is grounded in pessimism, in fatalistic philosophies. I called attention to this fact last week when I spoke about the Hand of Destiny. These philosophies on which dictatorship builds itself think of history as following a fixed road of iron necessity to an inevitable goal. Necessity, they maintain, controls the moral and the social life of mankind even as it controls the physical universe. The individual counts for very little. He cannot affect the pre-ordained trend of history. Human aims and human purposes count for very little because they cannot affect the future of mankind, and dictatorships use this fatalistic doctrine to justify their regimentation of man, the reducing of the stature and the importance of the individual, and the total submergence of men to state or to government or to party or to the dictator.

But not so, democracy. Democracy is grounded in optimism, in the optimism of the perennial pioneer, the man who is not afraid of the iron laws of necessity which pre-determine his world, a man who carves a new highway for himself, confident that he will build his own world, the pioneer who is not afraid of the wilderness and the hardships and the difficulties confronting him. Democracy has that faith - faith in man, in his capacity to affect his own future, to remold and re-fashion his environment, confidence in the imnate goodness of man and in his ultimate triumph in his struggle for a free and just society.

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Democracy is prophetic and democracy, therefore, has the burden and the mandate of mission. It plans and builds hopefully for the future. There is the song of spring in the soul of democracy.

John Adams of the Revolution, one of the great men of the American Revolution, declared: "I always consider the settlement of America with reverence and wonder, as the opening of a grand scheme and design in Providence for the illumination and the emancipation of the slavish part of mankind all over the earth." They thought of themselves, this little people, on the seabord of the Atlantic, just bringing a new state into existence - they thought of themselves as being part of a grand scheme and design of Providence. They thought of it in reverence and wonder, but they thought of it as being part of a universal scheme to put an end to slavery, not only to their own enslavement, but slavery all over the world.

Thomas Jefferson, the great Jefferson, who wrote the Declaration of Independence, wrote in one of his letters to a friend of his:

We feel that we are acting under obligations not confined to the limits of our own society. It is impossible not to be sensible that we are acting for all mankind; that circumstances denied to others, but indulged to us, have imposed on us the duty of proving what is the degree of freedom and self-government in which a society may venture to leave its individual members."

This was to be the proving ground for the whole of mankind. They were acting out the first act in a great drama for the whole world, and just a few days before he died, he declared, concerning the Declaration of Independence while he carefact!

May it be to the world what I believe it will be (to some parts sconer, to others later, but finally to all), the signal of arousing men to burst the chains under which monkish ignorance and superstition had persuaded thum to bind themselves and to assume the blessings and security of self-government.

I sometimes wonder, as I look around me and readk much that is being said and written today in this great and free country of ours, the country of Adams and Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence - I sometimes wonder whether we have not

lost that faith which was theirs, that unshaken confidence in time for mankind, which is at the heart of democracy. If we have, then we are lost indeed, and armed might will not save us. Then our feet are set on the road, the tragic road, which other nations have followed - the pessimistic road, the hopeless road to dictatorship of one kind or another. And I am afraid that our growing reliance on the strength of our armed forces may be a dangerous symptom of our loss of faith in the strength of our ideals. These Founding Fathers, when they spoke se confidently of the ultimate triumph of America in the world, were not thinking of their military might they had none! There were wast empires in the world the and the French and others, - which far overshadowed their puny and pitiful military strength. They were among the smallest and the weakest nations on earth in 1776, and bet, they spoke so exultantly, so confidently of conquer ring the world by their ideas. They weren't relying on the might of their arms. They were relying upon the irresistible dynamics of their revolutionary ideals, upon the superiority - the moral superiority a of their ideas, upon the inevitability of their ideas. At first, "to some parts sooner, to others later, but finally to all." They hoped to conquer the world by their example. They were acting out their drama for the whole of mankind here. and their success would be the signal for arousing men everywhere to burst their chains.

That in my humble judgment, dear friends, is still the supreme mission and the supreme opportunity of America. Let us not lose faith. We have far less occasion to lose confidence than the men of 150 years ago and more. Communist dictatorship has no future in the world, for no dictatorship has any future. Dictatorship does not speak of springtime to mankind, but of winter and death for the human mind and spirit. A dictatorship state is a cage. It offers some security, but at the frightful price of life-long imprisonment. The hope of the world lies in democracy, in the self-government of peoples and their freedom to express themselves, in their initiative

and their enterprise, in their collective wisdom. It isn't that democracy is perfect be sperfectable. It is not that there is no insecurity accompanying democracy - for that's the price we pay for the freed m which goes with it. It isn't that there isn't much groping, blind groping, and much uncertainty - but that's how life moves and expresses itself. Leading I Want I was a supplied to the state of the s

I thinks that the world expects of America today not the bayonets and the arms
that we can give them. They'll accept them - of course - especially if we urge it
upon them. What this sick, cold and tired world of ours in its winter of discontent
prayerfully hopes from America is a new voice, the kindling of a new hope, the confident reassertion of our democratic ideals, and the bringing to them, if possible,
those economic aids which willhelp them to rise within the depths of their misery and
poverty, their ignorance to higher levels of economic subsistence, of health and education. That is the voice of America. Thatle the voice that echoed around the world.

a century and a half ago. That is the voice that toppled kingdoms and empires at through the nineteenth century. That is the voice which would break the back of every
dictatorship in the world, not through a frontal attack by our arms, but through the
strengthening of the free peoples of the world in confidence in free institutions and
the rights of man, in the dignity of man, and in keeping, by example, our own country
strong in freedom and in defense of man.

I read and re-rear Walt Whitman's great poem, "Pioneers! O Pioneers!" in these days when somehow we feel that America is no longer the land of the pioneers. Walt Whitman thought of America not as a land of pioneers in the physical sense, which our people, of course, has been right along. He thought of America, as did the Founding Fathers, in terms of a nation of pioneers in a spiritual and intellectual sense, as opening new continents of the mind and the spirit, new worlds of justice and truth for mankind. I read you a verse or two from Walt Whitman's "Pioneers! O Pioneers!" I wish our youth today would take that to their souls:

For we cannot tarry here,
We must march, my dealings, we must bear the brunt of danger,
We the youthful sinewy races, all the rest on us depend,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Have the elder races halted?

Do they droop and end their lesson, wearied over there beyond the seas?

We take up the task eternal, and the burden and the lesson,

Pioneers: O pioneers:

All the past we leave behind, We debouch upon a newer mightier world, varied world, Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labour and the march, Pioneers: O pioneers:

Will there be a springtime for mankind? Largely it will depend upon what is in the soul of the remaining democratic peoples on earth, whether there is springtime in their hearts; and largely it will depend upon America, whether we have here the hopefulness, the optimism, the confidence of spring in our souls.



PENDIX A491

The American mission came to flower with the adoption of the Constitution. "Father of the Constitution" reminded the Philadelphia convention that "it was more than probable we were now digesting a plan which in its operation would decide forever the fate of republican government," reason enough to aim for the best. Washington, too, was conscious of the mission. In his first inaugural address he expressed the conviction that "the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered, perhaps, as deeply, as finally, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people." In his Farewell Address he hoped that the "free Constitution" would be worked in such a manner that it would recommend itself "to the applause,

the affection, and the adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it."

The Jeffersonians were, if anything, even stouter believers in the higher destiny of the infant Republic. Jefferson, who had the infant Republic. Jefferson, who had proposed that the seal of the United States picture "the children of Israel in the wilderness led by a cloud by day and a pillar by night," never wearied of saying that Americans had a clear responsibility for the promotion of liberty. In 1802 he wrote

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"We feel that we are acting under obligations not confined to the limits of our own society. It is impossible not to be sensible that we are acting for all mankind; that circumstances denied to others, but indulged to us, have imposed on us the duty of proving what is the degree of freedom and selfgovernment in which a society may venture to leave its individual members."

And just 10 days before he died, in the

last of his exhortations, he could say of the

Declaration of Independence:

"May it be to the world what I believe it will be (to some parts sooner, to others later, but finally to all), the signal of arousing men to burst the chains under which monkish ignorance and superstitution had persuaded them to bind themselves, and to assume the blessings and security of self-

For all men in this heroic age, whether Federalist or Republican, merchant or "mechanick," pious or secular, President "mechanick," pious or secular, President Ezra Stiles, of Yale, spoke as prophet of inspiration in the United States Elevated to Glory and Honor. If he foretold wealth and might and dominion, he did so only to remind his Connecticut listeners that God gave these good things to those who deserved them, in this instance to a people determined to prove to a doubting world that "a democratic polity for millions, standing when the broad having the provider of the provider. ing upon the broad basis of the people at large," could be made to work. The American mission was an influential ideological force in the formative years of the Republic.

In the decades of expansion, most Americans lost sight of the interpretation of the Nation's mission formulated by Washington and Jefferson. This was the age of Manifest Destiny, a phrase of huge import coined by John O'Sullivan in his Democratic Review in 1845. The loudly voiced assertion that it was America's duty to expand without delay to its natural geographic limits obscured the simpler, uncombative beliefs of the founding fathers. Even the concept of America

men. Andrew Jackson reminded his fellowcountrymen that "the eyes of all nations are
fixed on our Republic," and in his farewell
address observed that "Providence has
showered on this favored land blessings without number, and has chosen you as the
guardians of freedom, to preserve it for the
benefit of the human race." No less convinced of this truth were his opponents,
Story and Calhoun. Said the first of these,
"We stand the latest, and, if we fail, probably the last experiment of self-government
by the people." Said the second, "We may

* * * do more to extend liberty by our
example over this continent and the world
generally, than would be done by a thousand
victories." Representative Severance, of
Maine, countered the shrill cries of the expansionists by urging that we "rather extend
the 'area of freedom' by * * our bright
and shining example as a pattern Republic."

The philosopher and the poet joined the statesman in this persuasion. Emerson proclaimed his belief in the Nation's peculiar destiny: "The Office of America is to liberate * * * I wish to see America a benefactor such as no country ever was." He hoped profoundly that we would contribute "our peculiar and legitimate advantages to the benefit of humanity."

And, of course, Walt Whitman:

"For we cannot tarry here,

We must march. * * * We must bear the brunt of danger,

We the youthful sinewy races, all the rest on us depend, Pioneers! O Pioneers!"

Politer folk preferred to hear this message from Longfellow:

"Thou, too, sail on, O ship of state! Sail on, O Union, strong and great! Humanity with all its fears, With all the hopes of future years, Is hanging breathless on thy fate!"

The mission was given one final prewar turn by the economist, Henry Carey. In his Principles of Social Science, published some 11 years after Marx had proclaimed the inexorable antagonism of classes, Carey called America to testify that the class struggle was not the inevitable consequence of an industrial civilization.

"Such is the true mission of the United States * * * to prove that among the people of the world, whether agriculturists, manufacturers, or merchants, there is perfect harmony of interests, and that the happiness of individuals, as well as the grandeur of nations, is to be promoted by that greatest of all commandments, 'Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you.'"

The fateful meeting of the great American and the great American crisis cast this antique doctrine in a new and vital role. Repeatedly Lincoln expressed the persuasion that the cause of free government everywhere hung in the balance of this epic struggle, and repeatedly this theme was hammered home in press and pulpit. For Lincoln the mission was an article of national faith, "felt in the blood and felt along the heart." His profound distaste for slavery derived to an important degree from his opinion that the mere existence of human bondage as a legal and social institution vir-

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In this Stoic Messianic ideal all differences of nationality or of historic states will disappear. There is to be a universal state governed by universal law in which peace is to reign and no distinction of race or creed is to exist. Their aim was, as it is recorded in their name, that "all the inhabitants of this world of ours should not like differentiated by their respective rules of justice into separate cities and communities, but that we should consider all men to be of one community and one polity, and that we should have a common life and an order common to us all, even as a herd that feeds together and shares the pasturage of a common field."

Plutarch, De Alexandri Magni Fortuna aut Virtute I, 6.

For we cannot tarry here,
We must march, my darlings, we must bear the brunt of danger,
We the youthful sinewy races, all the rest on us depend,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Have the elder races halted?

Do they droop and end their lesson, wearied over there beyond the seas?

We take up the task eternal, and the burden and the lesson,

Pioneers! O pioneers!

We debouch upon a newer, mightier world, varied world,
Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labour and the march,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Pioneers! - Walt Whitman