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

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Rabbi Silver's farewell, 1917.



# THE JEWISH COMMUNITY BULLETIN

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## REACH YOUR HAND,—FRIEND

Reach your hand to me, my friend,  
 With its heartiest caress—  
 Sometime there will come an end  
 To its present faithfulness..  
 Sometime I may ask in vain  
 For the touch of it again,  
 When between us land and sea  
 Holds it ever back from me.

Sometime I may need it so  
 Groping somewhere in the night  
 It will seem to me as tho  
 Just a touch, however light,  
 Would make all darkness day—  
 And along some sunny way  
 Lead me thru an April shower  
 Of my tears to this fair hour.

O, the present is too sweet  
 To go on forever thus,  
 'Round the corner of the street  
 Who can say what waits for us?  
 Meeting, greeting, night and day,  
 Faring each the selfsame way,  
 Still somewhere the path must end—  
 Reach your hand to me, my friend.

—James Whitcomb Riley.



## *Rabbi Silver's Farewell*

It is with a sense of infinite tenderness that I speak of the short span of time which I was privileged to enjoy in your midst as your minister and which now draws to a close. It was a period replete with happiness. It abounded in countless great and small acts of kindness and courtesy towards me which intensified the joy of labor and the zeal of service. My ardor was never chilled by a manifestation of indifference on your part, nor was my enthusiasm lessened by irresponsiveness or apathy. Your eagerness to cooperate and your readiness to assist in any worthy cause were indeed exemplary.

One cannot incarcerate a plangent thought or emotion in the narrow confines of words. But I would love to express to you my deep, heartfelt appreciation for all the inspiration which you have brought into my work and for all the sweetness which you have brought into my life. I shall take with me hence a gift of precious memories which will echo and re-echo their message of cheer and confidence throughout the days of my life. I shall work better, I shall feel stronger, I shall serve in greater faith and devotion for the two years which I have spent among you.

My last thought is a prayer—a prayer for the splendid men and women of this community and for their earnest efforts to rise and raise to ever higher altitudes, to widen the circle of their life's interests so as to include a segment of the infinite. May their loyalties and sincerities reveal unto them the purposefulness of life and the glory of service. May they drink deep of the waters of contentment at the fountains of spiritual salvation.

My last thought is a prayer—a prayer that Leshem Shomayim, rededicated and reconsecrated, may in a still larger measure serve the cause of Israel and of Israel's faith. May it continue to be a blessing to men, reaching out into their lives, molding their higher ambitions, inspiring their purer motives, guiding and sustaining them. May the young men and women who shall be reared under its influence grow into splendid manhood and womanhood and into a supreme and transcendent devotion to their people and its manifest destiny.

My last thought is a prayer—a prayer that my short ministry in your midst has in some small measure touched the lives of some of you, helped some one, planted the seed of higher resolve in the heart of some one. If through some act or word of mine one soul has been winged to higher aspiration, one hand is reaching for the higher gifts of God, my labors have been amply rewarded.

In faith, in hope, in love I bid you farewell.

Rabbi A. H. Silver.

June 22, 1917