



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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

Series V: Writings, 1909-1963, undated.

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Palestine, Cleveland newspaper article, circa 1920s.

Rabbi Silver Writes About Life That is Springing Up in Colony.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Rabbi A. H. Silver was asked to draw a picture of colonization in Palestine. Cleveland's \$150,000 campaign, part of the United Palestine Appeal drive for \$7,500,000, opened Sunday.)

BY RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER.

From earliest times Palestine has been the keystone in the arch of empire, the link connecting three continents, the highway of international traffic and the confluence of many cultures.

The one Holy Land of humanity! It cradled two great historic faiths and is sacred ground to still a third. A marvelous breeding ground it has been of Titanic souls—prophets and sages and dreamers of unforgettable dreams. The noblest literature of mankind was fashioned there.

Through the centuries the east and the west met there and struggled for mastery. The occident launched eight crusades to conquer it, but the orient never relinquished it.

For centuries now Palestine has slumbered, together with the whole of the near east. Silence and death descended upon it. The land that once flowed with milk and honey was barren and desolate. But by one of those strange miracles of history it now again is springing into life—an eager, pulsating, joyous life—and with it the whole of the near east seems destined to reawaken.

Destroyed politically 1,900 years ago, the people of Israel refused to die. Driven from its land and scattered to the four corners of the earth, it never lost its physical and spiritual identity. Worn by wandering and broken by persecution it never surrendered its invincible hope of restoration, and now after passing through the tribulations of the World War in which no people suffered more, Israel astounds the world by its amazing physical and spiritual efforts to rehabilitate itself again as a people in its historic home—Palestine.

By thousands they are returning! From the impoverished ghettos of Poland, from the pogrom ridden lands of eastern Europe, they come, artisans from Lithuania, farmers from the Ukraine, merchants from Roumania, students from the universities of Vienna and Berlin, a motley host of men and women either driven by economic and political necessity or drawn by a glorious vision of the New Zion. Verily, the Second Restoration has begun.

Return as to Old Home.

They return as men return to their old homes—after a long absence. They do not come as Europeans come to oriental lands on business bent, to exploit them. They come to rebuild Palestine—to make it their home and the home of their children even as it was the home of their sires.

And what a miracle of transformation they are achieving there, and how swiftly! New roads everywhere, new towns, new colonies, new industries, new schools. Everywhere enterurise and progress—everywhere the visible effects of the scientific methods of the west applied by men who love and understand the east.

Palestine, at the hands of these eager pioneers, is indeed becoming a land of promise. The soil is being irrigated and reclaimed. Agricultural settlements wherein men are seeking to organize life upon the basis of the prophetic principles of absolute economic and social justice are being everywhere established. A remarkable health program—perhaps the finest in the east—is being carried through. Hospitals and clinics which serve the entire population irrespective of race or creed are being erected. A modern educational system now covers the land.

And within the last two years the Hebrew university, with Albert Einstein as one of its governors, has been founded.

Revive Hebrew Speech.

The Hebrew language has been revived. Here again a miracle! A language which for centuries has been forgotten, at least as far as the spoken word is concerned, is now the language of trade and commerce, of the school and the street, and of a rich and vigorous literature.

The words of Isaiah come back: "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her triumph go forth as brightness and her salvation as a torch that burneth."

"And the nations shall see thy triumph and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a name, which the mouth of