



## Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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

Series VI: Speaking Engagements, 1917-1964.

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Athens, Georgia, 1934-1936.



THOS. F. GREEN  
MAX MICHAEL  
JOHN L. GREEN

**GREEN & MICHAEL**  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
416-421 SOUTHERN MUTUAL BLDG.  
ATHENS, GA.

January 24, 1934

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

There is a small Jewish community in Athens, Georgia, but for seventy years we have had an organized Jewish community and for more than fifty years we have had a Rabbi (though not the same one) as our leader and teacher.

On December 28, 1883 our Synagogue was dedicated but we did not hold our Golden Jubilee celebration on December 28, 1933 because of the absence of the Jewish students of the University of Georgia, who are actively associated with our Congregation.

Rabbi Abraham Shusterman, a graduate of the Hebrew Union College of the Class of 1931, is our Rabbi and since he has been with us there has been a very close contact between the Synagogue and the one hundred and thirty-five Jewish students attending the University of Georgia.

My purpose in writing to you is two fold. First, to invite you to deliver the principal address at the Celebration in commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of our Temple, and second, so that you may deliver an address to the student body of the University of Georgia. The invitation to deliver this address will, of course, come from the President of the University of Georgia.

We feel that since there has been no evidence of anti-semitism on the campus of the University, and since the University makes no restrictions or discriminations against the Jewish students irrespective of from what State they come, we want you as the outstanding Rabbi of the country to come to Athens and re-dedicate our Synagogue and speak to the students, Jewish and Christian, because we know that your address will have the effect of cementing the cordiality that now exists.

It is our plan and purpose to invite every Christian minister in the city to be at this dedication service and to have one or more take minor parts, and likewise to invite all of the Rabbis in the State of Georgia to be our guests on that occasion. It is also our plan to have a banquet on the night before the dedication service for you, our honored guest, for



Dr. Abba Hillel Silver-----#2

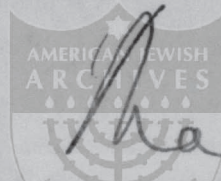
the members of the Congregation, the visiting Rabbis and representatives from each Jewish student group at the University.

Your address at the University could either be given the morning of the dedication service or the morning before.

We should like to have our service sometime during the last two weeks of March and not on a Friday night because of our desire to have the Rabbis from over the State with us during the dedication service.

Rabbi Shusterman joins with me in extending you this invitation and it is our sincere hope that you will give this invitation your favorable consideration and advise me that you will accept.

Very cordially,



President, Congregation  
Children of Israel.

M-E



January 29, 1934.

Mr. Max Michael,  
416-421 Southern Mutual Bldg.,  
Athens, Ga.

My dear Mr. Michael:

I am deeply appreciative of your kind invitation to deliver the address on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of your Temple as well as to address the student body at the University of Georgia some time in March.

I truly wish that I were free to come. Unfortunately my work here and my commitments outside of Cleveland for the next few months are so heavy that I cannot accept any other engagements. You probably know that I was away from Cleveland for a whole year on a leave of absence. My work this year is therefore considerably increased. Furthermore, the German-Jewish situation has imposed upon me a number of obligations and an excessive amount of traveling throughout the country.

I deeply regret that I cannot come to you and I do hope that I may be of service to you at some future time. Please convey my greetings and best wishes to Rabbi Shusterman. With all good wishes, permit me to remain

Very cordially yours,

AHS:BK



THOS. F. GREEN  
MAX MICHAEL  
JOHN L. GREEN

GREEN & MICHAEL  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
416-421 SOUTHERN MUTUAL BLDG.  
ATHENS, GA.

January 31, 1934

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver  
c/o The Temple  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

I don't want to appear too insistent but we must have you for our Fiftieth Anniversary. If March doesn't suit you we will make it in April. We just wanted to be sure to have it at a time when the Jewish students are here.

We are doing such a splendid piece of work with these boys and girls that we just must have you for our Anniversary. Next week we are having a debate between a team from the University of Alabama and the University of Georgia. Of course Jewish students will take part and this debate will be held in our Community House, preceded by a dance. I am simply telling you this to show you the character of work that is being carried on here.

Rabbi Falk, who recently visited Athens said he didn't believe there was a Congregation in the United States that was doing the character of work as is being done in Athens. I realize that this is a rather broad statement and would appear on its face to be subject to serious challenge but any one familiar with the facts would know that the statement, though broad, is not an exaggeration.

Our Congregation sacrifices for the benefit of the students. You can see what a stupendous task it is to have a Synagogue, a Rabbi and a Community Center supported by only twenty seven members and you can appreciate too the fact that these members must pay and pay well, and I am sure that were it not for the fact that we have this large group of boys and girls, for whom we are responsible, there would be no organized Congregation in Athens. We are trying to fulfill a mission and send these young people back to their respective communities prepared to take their places as Jewish leaders.

Now, with all of this, I know that you can understand why we must have you. We must have you as the great Rabbi you are for our own dedication service, and we must have you as the great Rabbi you are to speak at the University. It is easy to get a Rabbi, but it is not easy to get one of whom we would be proud when he addresses the entire student



Dr. Abba Hillel Silver-----#2

body of the University.

I appreciate full well the burdens that are resting upon you, but won't you re-consider and see if it isn't possible for you to find sometime in April when you could be with us.

I apologize for the length of this letter.

Very cordially,

*Ray Michael*

M-E





February 8, 1934.

Mr. Max Michael,  
416-421 Southern Mutual Bldg.,  
Athens, Ga.

My dear Mr. Michael:

I cannot tell you how much I regret my inability to come to your Fiftieth Anniversary. It is simply a physical impossibility for me to accept your invitation. My program will not permit it.

With all good wishes, permit me to remain

Very sincerely yours,

AHS: BK



THOS. F. GREEN (1911-1934)  
MAX MICHAEL  
JOHN L. GREEN

**GREEN & MICHAEL**  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
416-421 SOUTHERN MUTUAL BLDG.  
ATHENS, GA.

August 27, 1936

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver  
Cleveland, Ohio

My dear Dr. Silver:

Last year I wrote you and asked if you could come to Athens to address the Jewish students of the University, your engagements would not permit you to accept the invitation.

Rabbi Lawrence Block has planned to have a series of open forums for the benefit of the Jewish students primarily and the students of the University and the citizens of Athens in general. Our forums will start in October.

I should like very much for you to be our guest speaker at a forum to be held on some Sunday in October, November or December that would best suit your convenience. We would like for you to have as your subject "The American of tomorrow" or some such kindred subject, but have an appeal to the Jewish as well as the Christian youth. If you could so arrange your trip that you could stay over Monday morning and leave here Monday afternoon for Cleveland the University of Georgia would extend you an invitation to address the student body on Monday morning.

I know you are a busy man but you can really do a wonderful amount of good by coming to Athens. If I only had an opportunity to see you and explain to you the work that we are doing I know that you would come to Athens.

The University of Georgia is the exception in that there is absolutely no anti-semitism and there is the finest spirit existing between the Jew and the non-Jew and this cordiality we want to continue to maintain.

The Athens community could not have a Rabbi except because of the assistance it is receiving from those interested in our activities. We have been advised that we may have a fund of \$200.00 payable during the next six months, and we want to use this to defray the expenses of certain speakers whom we think will help us to continue our efforts to avert a problem. We will be most happy to pay your expenses here and I do so hope that you can find some convenient Sunday during any of the months mentioned. I shall look forward with keen anticipation to your reply.

Very sincerely,

*Max Michael*

M-E



September 4, 1936

Mr. Max Michael,  
416-421 Southern Mutual Bldg.,  
Athens, Ga.

My dear Mr. Michael:

Thank you for your kind letter of August 27 and for the invitation which you extend to me to come Athens this season. I wish I were free to accept your invitation. Unfortunately my calendar is already crowded with lecture engagements and it would be impossible for me to take on additional obligations that would take me away from Cleveland for more than a day or two at the very most.

Thanking you again for your invitation and with best wishes for the New Year, permit me to remain

Very cordially yours,

AHS:BK