



## Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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

Series VII: Personal Miscellaneous, 1908-1989, undated.

Sub-series D: Writings, 1915-1963, undated.

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World Crisis and Jewish Survival, reviews, scrapbook, 1941-1952.



The World Crisis

and

Jewish Survival

WRHS



Scrap Book



## NEW VOLUME BY SILVER OUT TODAY

Rabbi's Essays Examine  
Jew and Judaism

BY TED ROBINSON

A group of thoughtful and exceedingly eloquent essays by Cleveland's famous Rabbi A. H. Silver, entitled "The World Crisis and Jewish Survival," has just been published by Richard R. Smith.

Rabbi Silver considers the factors that threaten the very existence of the Jewish people today, critically examines the status of the Jew and of Judaism in our time, and inquires how the threat is being met. He has confidence in the survival value of Israel, and his confidence is in no small part based on the history of the past. He says:

"Only one fact can we postulate with confidence about the history of our people. As a people, we have survived! There may be a difference of opinion as to how or why, but none as to the actual fact. We have survived—the one people that has come down intact from antiquity, that can trace an unbroken line of physical and spiritual continuity through 35 centuries, the one race that exemplifies in the modern world historical continuity and survival par excellence."

### Not Accomplished by Isolation

He proceeds to point out that this survival was not accomplished by isolation, but was achieved in the very midst of the warring nations of the world.

"We were invaded. We were attacked. We were exiled. We were driven over the face of the earth. We were scattered and broken, hounded and harassed, through long and weary centuries. We clashed with great empires. We resisted mighty civilizations. We were surrounded by militant faiths which sought to absorb us or to destroy us. We are today again upon the rack in the torture chambers of the earth. Nevertheless, we survived! And, for our size, we are today the most alive and creative people in the world."

### Five Essays in Volume

The question of whether the Jews will be able to prove their genius for survival in a Nazi-Fascist-Communist dominated world is calmly approached and confidently answered. Of course this question hinges upon the possibility that the world will be so dominated—a possibility which is almost unthinkable to all of us. In a world where all democracy and human rights and values are overthrown, the problem of survival is as acute with the gentile as with the Jew. But the author believes that neither will consent to a role of passivity, abdication and escapism.

There are five essays in this absorbing volume, and in them Dr. Silver considers many phases of Jewish thought and experience. It is impossible for me to review such a book adequately in the space at my disposal; but I can at least urge readers of every creed and race to give it their earnest attention. Its message is poignant and inspiring.

"The World Crisis and Jewish Survival," attractively bound and printed, contains 221 pages and is retailed at \$2.50. It appears in the bookshops today.

Plain Dealer  
6-29-47

## Religion in Review

Rabbi Silver Holds Fate of Jews Critical for  
Democracy... New Tide of Faith

BY WALTON W. RANKIN  
Church Editor

Few prophets of our time have seen with greater clarity the problems and issues of the contemporary world situation than Cleveland's own Rabbi A. H. Silver, whose recent book, "The World Crisis and Jewish Survival," brings together in a beautifully written volume the insights and conclusions which Dr. Silver has arrived at through profound study of world history and Jewish history.

Dr. Silver emphasizes again the close relationship between anti-Semitism and current attempts to undermine democracy.

"Anti-Semitism," Dr. Silver rightly says, "today is the reich's fifth column."

The quotations Dr. Silver has selected from the two learned non-Jewish theologians, John MacMurray and Jacques Maritain, are very apt. They stress the contention that the present world conflict is grounded in an irreconcilable conflict between paganism and Judaism.

### Extirpating Jewish Influence on World

John MacMurray particularly, in the quotation cited by Rabbi Silver, discerns the nature of Hitler's contest with Judaism. He says that Hitler recognizes that his task is "to extirpate the influence of the Jewish consciousness upon the world." The quotation, with Dr. Silver's comments, continues:

"At all costs the heaven must be got out of the lump, or very soon the whole will be leavened, and the result will be the final end of the 'Aryan' (sc. pagan) tradition. Europe will be so false to itself that it will create a universal Communism (Note: Communism, not necessarily, but justice), which will destroy blood and race as the basis of civilization, destroy the beauties and the heroisms of the struggle for power, deny the natural superiority of the white races, and of Germans in particular, and produce universal equality and brotherhood. The Jewish spirit is not merely under the illusion of these ideas; it is the force, in the world, which creates them in ideas and compels the rest of humanity to achieve them in practice."

One of the prophetic notes of the book is the discernment of an incoming tide of faith among the Jewish people. With his extraordinary knowledge of Jewish history and of Jewish mysticism, Dr. Silver is well qualified at forecasting trends and tendencies in Jewish life. His intellect, like a sensitive

barometer, records the impressions of changes in the spiritual atmosphere and unfolds the vision of developments to come. It is therefore significant when he says:

### Predicts Incoming Tide of Faith

"We sense an incoming tide of faith among our people, a faith charged in some instances with deep mysticism. It should not surprise us, and it would be in keeping with similar moments in our past history, if our age should witness a strong mystic movement among our people. Such mystic movements followed the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal at the close of the 15th century and the appalling disasters which overtook Polish Jewry in the 17th century. The present-day expulsions of the Jews, the tragic experiences of myriads of refugees, the dismal plight of war-ravaged Jewish communities throughout eastern Europe, the stress under which Israel finds itself everywhere, coupled with the distressed mood of mankind generally, may give rise to a strong mystic movement which will express itself in religion and literature and in personal habits of thought."

The interpretive studies of Jewish history in the book are invaluable. Dr. Silver has done for this age what the great prophets of Israel did in theirs, namely, view history "sub specie aeternitatis" (under the form of eternity) and see religion in history as the annals of God in time.

For Jews and non-Jews alike, these studies are of vital interest, but the message which strikes home most forcibly is Dr. Silver's assertion: "The Jewish problem is the world problem epitomized."

In effect, democracy and the Judeo-Christian tradition are bound up with one another, and the fall of one means the fall of the other. This is the lesson which many Americans have not yet understood and need to understand, and toward its understanding Rabbi Silver has made a most notable contribution.

Cleveland News  
6-14-47

**F**IVE essays dealing with varied aspects of the problems that confront modern Judaism make up Dr. Abba Hillel Silver's newest work, "The World Crisis and Jewish Survival."

In the course of his discussions Dr. Silver, rabbi of The Temple in Cleveland, shows how the war on democracy had its beginnings in war on the Jewish people, how anti-semitism is used as a weapon in the totalitarian program for world domination.

The Jews have through history successfully survived other dark hours in their existence, Dr. Silver recalls and then proceeds to show they can meet the challenge of those forces that threaten them today.

The role of Zionism in Jewish life and the place of the prophet in Jewish history, are also discussed.

Dr. Silver writes with the telling fluency and force that mark his speeches. (Richard R. Smith, \$2.50).



This Clipping From  
WINSTON SALEM, N. C.  
JOURNAL

JUN 22 1941

## Jews in Nation Face Problem

THE WORLD CRISIS AND JEWISH SURVIVAL. A group of essays by Abba Hillel Silver. Richard R. Smith, New York. 221 pp. \$2.50. 1941.

Thank God for an arrogant Jew. It is with such a prayer, and with a deep, real reverence that this reviewer presents to possible Twin-City readers a book which has within its contents a great deal of the inspiration and the comfort of a reading of the Holy Bible. Its author, to our mind, is a modern prophet of the direct line of the men who wrote and worked as recorded in the Old Testament.

Abba Silver is a teacher in the Temple of Cleveland, a "learner" he calls himself in his dedication, and this humbleness in the individual has become, over a span of years which has brought him honor from his own race and from his friends and even detractors, a noble arrogance of race which shines through this group of five essays as "the shining armour" of prophets of a living God of old.

### Poses Question

His first essay in this volume poses the question: Shall the Jew survive this world crisis? And immediately the next sentence answers and poses another: How shall the Jew survive this world crisis? Hillel Silver, in the wisdom of years of freedom and a deep belief in his own true God, is not one bit interested in survival unless it means the survival of his proud race as children

and preachers of a God who has brought it from dust to glory. That of arrogance will solve all the problems of this so sorry, so magnificent crisis.

### A Challenge

The whole of this volume can well be called a history of the Jewish race within the theme which is startlingly new of a new missionary idea, the idea that Jewery may best resolve its destiny in a determined fight to turn the world again to one true God. For the social student it is this theme discussed as against the nationalism which has been evidenced in the recent Palestine settlements, and the nationalism which Hitler claims is the necessity of his German peoples. Best of all, it is a challenge to a forward movement to take the place of the series of retrogressions which are the banes of this age.

Thank God for an arrogant Jew.  
—E. CARL SINK.

JACKSONVILLE, FLA.  
TIMES-UNION

JUN 22 1941

## Facing the Future

THE WORLD CRISIS AND JEWISH SURVIVAL.—By Abba Hillel Silver. New York. Richard R. Smith.

Reviewed by Israel L. Kaplan

In a series of brilliant and provocative essays, full of learning and deep thought, the author has given us a most challenging statement of the Jew in the world today. It was my great pleasure to listen with rapt attention to the delivery of the first essay in this volume by the writer himself when he addressed his colleagues in the Rabbinate or the Annual Conference of American Rabbis. He held me spellbound by his perfervid oratory, by his keen analysis, and the earnestness with which he drove home his thought.

The Jew, harassed and hounded as he is today under the ruthlessness of Nazidom needs to take hope. He has been uprooted before in his long history and has undergone vicissitudes on numerous occasions. If he remains steadfast he will not be vanquished. Upholding the spiritual ideas and traditions that molded him in the past, all the diabolical designs of Hitler will avail naught. Not that

the Jew thrives on suffering, but through his suffering he will emerge a witness to the living truth; that the moral principles his sages and prophets enunciated long ago are part and parcel of the Christian ethics. These he will never yield to the pagan philosophy of brute force and rank materialism of Hitler, for what the foe of the Jew is systematically attempting to do is not only to uproot the Jew, but the Judea-Christian ethics which are contrary to the cold, brutal, pagan program of race supremacy and world domination of one super-state. The two cannot exist side by side. The molders of "blood and soil" in Germany know this full well. Hence their cruel determination to exterminate not only the Jew but the Jewish spirit.

To any one who desires to acquaint himself with the problems of the Jewish people in a troubled world and see in the fate and destiny of the Jew the challenge to western civilization, I heartily recommend a thoughtful perusal of the inspiring essays of this distinguished Rabbi in Israel.



THE AMERICAN MERCURY

Lexington Avenue New York

From the

issue

THE WORLD CRISIS AND JEWISH SURVIVAL, by Abba Hillel Silver. \$2.50.

Richard R. Smith. Five essays on Jewish cultural and political subjects by the erudite Cleveland rabbi. He explores the natural interdependence of liberal democracy and Jewish culture at a time when this phenomenon is deeply significant for the survival of freedom in the civilized world. — E. L.



SPRINGFIELD, MASS.  
SUNDAY UNION  
& REPUBLICAN

JUL 6 - 1941

### Jewry in the Crisis

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, spiritual leader of the Temple of Cleveland, O., in a series of essays has examined the status of the Jew and Judaism in the modern world. Five of these essays are published under the title of "The World Crisis and Jewish Survival" (Richard R. Smith, New York, \$2.50). Two of the essays were written for the Central Conference of American Rabbis, one in 1935 and the other in 1939, another was read before the convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in 1939, a fourth was presented at the Harvard summer school conference last year and the last is the Dudleian lecture given at Harvard in the spring of 1940.

Dr Silver views the scene of the Jews against a background of world events, against the breakdown of civilization and from anti-Semitism and its political motivations. Writes Dr Silver in his preface, "The war which is now shaking the world will affect Jews and Judaism radically, regardless of its outcome. It will change the face of the entire world. No people and no culture will escape. . . . I believe that the basic conclusions touching the tangled problems of our existence will be vindicated in the future as they were in the past. It is not in ignorance of the fateful possibilities of the long, suspended crisis of our day, that these essays were written, but rather in full recognition of them, but also in full and unshaken faith in the deep quiet channels of strength which move silently beneath the surface twists and whirls of circumstances and which bear our lives steadily onward to their appointed destinies."

NASHVILLE, TENN.  
BANNER

JUL 9 - 1941

## The Jew and Survival

THE WORLD CRISIS AND JEWISH SURVIVAL. By Abba Hillel Silver. 211 pp. New York: Richard R. Smith. \$2.50.

Reviewed by

RABBI ABRAHAM CHILL

IN THE present crisis, world Jewry faces the fiercest battle for survival in all its centuries-old struggle against extinction. A scientifically implemented barbarism—founded in pseudo nationalism, pseudo socialism, and pseudo racism—which has behind it the resources of powerful governments, is today threatening the very existence of Israel. The war now raging in the Old World and which is so swiftly engulfing the New, began as a war on democracy and on the Jewish people. The interlocking destinies of the two have again been made manifest. The murderous assault upon the whole Judaeo-Christian culture of the Western World was heralded and has been symbolized by the declaration of total war upon the Jews. The Jewish problem is thus again the world problem epitomized.

How are Jews and Judaism meeting this gravest crisis in their long history? What are their defenses, their techniques and their resources? Will they be able to prove their genius for survival under the new conditions of a Nazi-Fascist-Communist dominated world?

Dr. Silver has critically examined the status of the Jew and Judaism in the modern world and has taken stock of the forces of both disintegration and conservation, of destruction and revival. In this volume he states some of his confident and challenging conclusions.

"What should therefore concern us today is not whether the Jewish people will survive, but how. Shall it be affirmatively and challengingly as in the great periods of the past, holding our banners high in a day of battle and storm; or negatively, creeping into the nooks and crannies of the earth, waiting for the wrath to pass, and grateful for the mere gift of existence and

survival?—the Jewish people as a whole will not, I believe, because it cannot consent to such a role of passivity, abdication and escapism. When dangers threaten, when the enemy appears on the horizon, then the Ark of the Covenant begins to move, and a militancy, a bitter stubbornness, a sharp defiance comes into the hearts of our people and they are ready for battle. . . . The Jew will defend himself by an audacious counterattack all along the line upon all things which set totalitarian trends in motion in the world and which in turn are served by them—upon corruption and special privilege, upon poverty and the economic insecurity of the masses, upon monopoly and exploitation, upon militarism and national exhibitionism, upon race arrogance and race domination.

In the course of his five penetrating essays, Dr. Silver touches illuminatingly upon many phases of Jewish thought and experience—Anti-Semitism and its political motivations, Christian-Jewish relations and their points of contact and conflict, Zionism, Judaism and the various secular substitutes which have been offered, and the dynamics of the Jewish spirit as revealed in the unbroken tradition of prophetism. Dr. Silver is the spokesman of the total program and the classic balance which characterize the great epochs in Jewish history and which resist all efforts to reduce Jewish life to what is only a fraction of itself.

Those of us who are personally acquainted with Rabbi Silver and his fearless leadership have expected something to spring from his prolific pen along the order of this collection of essays. With no hesitancy and entertaining no compunction he launches a "blitzkrieg" upon his fellow Reform Rabbis. In the essay, "Israel," he condemns in the most furious words the attitude of the Reformed Rabbinate: "We consider ourselves no longer a nation but a religious community." Silver then goes on to prove that Israel is and must remain a nation in all of its manifestations.

Likewise, he bitterly denounces the variety of associations that Anti-Semites attach to the Jew.



## Tribulations of Israel.

THE WORLD CRISIS AND JEWISH SURVIVAL. By Abba Hillel Silver. Richard R. Smith, Publisher. New York. 221 pp. \$2.50.

In the course of his five penetrating essays, Dr. Silver touches illuminatingly on many phases of Jewish thought and experience—anti-Semitism and its political motivations, Christian-Jewish relations and their points of contact and conflict, Zionism, Judaism and the various secular substitutes which have been offered, and the dynamics of the Jewish spirit as revealed in the unbroken tradition of prophetism.

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver is the spokesman of the total program and the classic balance which characterize the great epochs in Jewish history and which resist all efforts to reduce Jewish life to what is only a fraction of itself.

The Jewish scene is here viewed against the background of civilization, the sad decline of the individual, the tragic attempts of peoples to seek freedom through slavery and to build happier communities through revolutionary techniques of terror and hate, which achieve only variant forms of older despotisms.

Because men ignored the sovereignty of God's moral law, they now have a world, writes Dr. Silver, in which men, parties and governments have set themselves up above all law. Where there is no longer the law of God, there ensues the law of the Duce, the Fuehrer or the Commissar, before which all men must tremble.

With the lights going out everywhere in the world, men are turning again to the light of God, says the author, and by that light men will find their way to a kingdom of just human values, achieved through just human methods.

Men will no longer seek freedom through slavery, justice through class struggle, abundance through confiscation, knowledge through the burning of books, or unity through blood purges and liquidations.

The central theme of Dr. Silver's brilliant essays is that the basic traditions of Judaism and Christianity—the rights of the individual, the one universal moral law, the brotherhood of men, universal peace—these are fighting for their very life today, with their backs to the wall.

out having one group's interests advanced at the expense of any other group.

It remains to be seen, however, whether Jews and Christians can successfully meet their new and greatest testing hour and can co-operate to make secure for the future the kind of civilization which Moses, Isaiah, Micah and Jesus visioned.

JOSEPH A. LOEWINSOHN.

LOUISVILLE, KY.  
COURIER-JOURNAL

JUL 6 - 1941

## The Basis Of Freedom

THE WORLD CRISIS AND JEWISH SURVIVAL: By Rabbi Hillel Silver. 221 pp. Richard R. Smith. \$2.50.

Reviewed by Joseph Landau

"The World Crisis and Jewish Survival" is a collection of essays by Rabbi Silver in which he discusses the so-called Jewish problem in its setting against the larger world problem brought on by Fascism and Naziism.

It is Rabbi Silver's thesis that the problem facing the Jews today is not so much an isolated case of persecution as it is a part of a world campaign against all free thought and free institutions: a drive which now is manifesting itself in Jewish persecution but which likely as not will show itself in persecution of all religions, which, as Rabbi Silver sees them, are the bases of free institutions.

Rabbi Silver knows well enough that there is no preventive for insane persecutions. But apparently he hopes to persuade his people to resistance rather than allow them to think of giving up the fight and letting themselves be annihilated.

The book is scholarly, almost too much so. It is must reading for anyone who is interested in the so-called Jewish problem, or for one who would like to delve into religion as the historic basis of freedom; but it is too hard sledding to be of interest to a large public.

PORTLAND, OREGON  
OREGON JOURNAL

JUL 20 1941

WORLD CRISIS AND JEWISH SURVIVAL, By Abba Hillel Silver: Richard R. Smith—Five scholarly essays by a renowned rabbi who urges his race to develop spiritually and repress traits exaggerated by the Nazis into a reason for suppression. He reasons the Jew will survive the present crisis but that in this country he must be especially tolerant himself, so that he can co-operate with all who believe in religious freedom. He clarifies political misconceptions about Jewry and urges a united stand for fair play.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.  
CHRONICLE

AUG 3 - 1941

THE WORLD CRISIS AND JEWISH SURVIVAL. A Group of Essays. By Abba Hillel Silver. New York: Richard R. Smith 221 pp.; \$2.50.

THE noted Cleveland rabbi, author, and lecturer has gathered five essays, constituting "a sort of unpremeditated summary of views, on major problems of Jewish life and destiny."

Not without satisfaction, Dr. Silver views the current world crisis as giving the death-blow to non-Jewish ideas of assimilation which began to spread throughout Jewish society with the birth of the "reform" movement almost a century ago. Jews must remain Jews whether they like it or not, he observes; whether they are orthodox believers, ethical Christians, or atheists, their lot is cast with that of the Jewish community.

That the situation is anything but new is made clear in Dr. Silver's learned review of his people's history. Anti-Semitism, due simply to the fact that Jews everywhere have been a national minority, is the central and inescapable burden of Hebrew destiny. In order to be "a light unto the Gentiles," to honor God in the commanded way, even, now, to live the common life of men, Jews must know the burden for what it is, accept it and come to terms with their destiny.

The author's faith is genuine, his scholarship admirable, his message in many ways absorbing and inspiring. The unconverted will nevertheless question the inevitability of his logic. He does not speak for all Jews, as his essay on "The Prophet and His People" suggests he would like to do; the community has never, at least in America, formed a unified bloc. With this reservation in mind, persons of all parties will find stimulating reading in Dr. Silver's essay.



Houston, Texas Post

7-27-41

## Dr. Abba Silver Discusses Crisis

Reviewed by Frank Boyce

**J**EWES in all parts of the world today are facing their fiercest battle for survival, asserts Dr. Abba Hillel Silver in a new book that summarizes his views on Jewish life and destiny. It is "The World Crisis and the Jewish Survival."

Can the rising tide of race prejudice be stemmed? Doctor Silver says it depends upon how long the Nazi regime lasts, and predicts no abatement until the Nazis are defeated or until they themselves either grow weary of it or find the preachment of racism no longer serviceable.

And in placing the blame for the present world crisis, the author says: "Nazi propaganda, saturated as it is with the bitterest race hate, will continue to penetrate this country and every free country."

"Propaganda ever since the last World war has developed into a new science, a voodoo science if you will, but still a science. It is no longer left to chance."

"What can be done to counteract it? There still remains, of course, the old fashioned but very dependable method of democratic education. Education still remains the strongest bulwark of a free people."

**The World Crisis and Jewish Survival**

By Abba Hillel Silver. Richard R. Smith, New York City. \$2.50.

Book of Month Club  
Review

Aug. 1941

### A RABBI DISCUSSES THE JEWISH PROBLEM.

In five essays grouped together under the title *The World Crisis and Jewish Survival* (\$2.50), Rabbi Hillel Silver discusses, with insight and with a dramatic intensity of feeling, the problems of the Jews in the present state of the world. He is one of those who believe that the persecutions of the Jews come in the last analysis from the fact that they stand as symbolic representatives of the Judaeo-Christian religious tradition, which the Nazis rightly regard as the enemy and antithesis of everything they represent. And since the basis of Jewish history is religious in its nature, Rabbi Silver sees a need for a return to their traditional religion.

## THE WORLD CRISIS and JEWISH SURVIVAL

By DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

Rabbi, The Temple, Cleveland, Ohio

"Rabbi Silver discusses, with insight and with a dramatic intensity of feeling, the problems of the Jews in the present state of the world. He is one of those who believe that the persecutions of the Jews come in the last analysis from the fact that they stand as symbolic representatives of the Judaeo-Christian religious tradition, which the Nazis rightly regard as the enemy and antithesis of everything they represent. And since the basis of Jewish history is religious in its nature, Rabbi Silver sees a need for a return to their traditional religion."—*Book-of-the-Month-Club News*.

"The essay on 'The Prophet and His People' is itself prophetic."—SHOLEM ASCH.

"It has rare qualities; immense courage, clean intellectual rectitude and at the same time, high persuasiveness. It strikes at the center again and again. I wish that more Jews and many more non-Jews could be brought to ponder its eloquent and trenchant pages."—LUDWIG LEWISOHN.

"Dr. Silver's book would have served as vital a purpose two decades ago, and will be as timely a score of years after Hitlerism has disappeared from the memory of living men. Chapters like 'The Rediscovery of Judaism' and 'The Prophet and His People' possess an essential timelessness . . . Dr. Silver's book is, at the very least, provocative; at best a powerful guidework for the perplexed."—*Opinion*.

"There are five essays in this absorbing volume, and in them Dr. Silver considers many phases of Jewish thought and experience. It is impossible for me to review such a book adequately in the space at my disposal; but I can at least urge readers of every creed and race to give it their earnest attention. Its message is poignant and inspiring."—TED ROBINSON, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*.

CLOTH, OCTAVO, \$2.50

RICHARD R. SMITH, Publisher

120 EAST 39th STREET

NEW YORK

## The Jewish Spectator Books in Brief

**THE WORLD CRISIS AND JEWISH SURVIVAL** by Abba Hillel Silver, Richard R. Smith, \$2.50.

It is encouraging that the problem of Jewish survival—the most crucial issue of our generation—is

receiving of late the thorough consideration and close scrutiny of the spokesmen of American Jewry. Rabbi Silver's new volume of essays, too, is primarily devoted to this theme. Its chapters—*The World Crisis and Jewish Survival*, *The*

*Rediscovery of Judaism*, *Israel, In the Midst of Many Peoples*, *The Prophet and His People*—present an able analysis of the contemporary Jewish problem and trace the paths along which its solution must be found. The value of the book lies

primarily in its being an honest and on the whole successful attempt of evaluating and reinterpreting the past experiences of the Jewish people in terms of their twentieth century problems.



Nov. 14, 1941

## BOOK NOTES

By THEODORE N. LEWIS

"THE WORLD CRISIS AND JEWISH SURVIVAL," by Abba Hillel Silver. Richard R. Smith Company, 221 pages.

THE volume contains five stimulating addresses, enlarged and revised, which the author delivered before American audiences, Jewish and Christian. Dr. Silver writes with profound conviction and moving fervor concerning God, Torah, Palestine, and Israel. These ideals he defends convincingly and with great passion. Against those who would undermine the integrity of Judaism by minimizing or eliminating any of these basic Jewish concepts he strikes telling blows. An abiding faith in the future of Israel and in the ultimate redemption of mankind makes the book provocative and uplifting.

"The World Crisis and Jewish Survival," the opening essay, is a penetrating survey of Jewish history and a scholarly analysis of the many factors which have made for Jewish survival. Concerning the survival of the Jew, the author entertains no doubts whatever. What concerns him and rightly, is *how* the Jews will survive, whether in dignity or degradation, in loyalty to Judaism or in perpetual and futile efforts at escape. And the author summons his people to a rededication to Jewish ideals, ideals that are divine, universal, and therefore eternal. "Reaction is attacking the Jew today. Let the Jew defend himself by a judicious counter-attack."

The third essay, "Israel," is a brilliant and logically irrefutable criticism of that ancient dogma of German Reform Judaism which transformed Israel into a religious sect, repudiated Palestine and rejected the nationalistic basis of Judaism. The refutation of this disreputable German Reform dogma, dear to the hearts of the members of the old school, is presented with great skill, with biting sarcasm and irony. Here the author writes

out of a sense of deep hurt. For he knows, as do other Reform Rabbis, how cruel and deep has been the injury inflicted upon American Israel by this outrageous distortion of Jewish history, which reduced a proud people to the status of a religious sect. Justly and proudly does he declare that "Nation, land, and language were always vital and indispensable concepts of Jewish life, indissolubly associated with religion. . . ." The exposure of the specious reasoning which the German Reform Rabbis indulged in to justify their German patriotism at the expense of Jewish nationalism and loyalties is penetrating as it is devastating. And the spiritual kindred of these rabbis, our own assimilationists, who, though devoid of religion and contemptuous towards the synagogue, yet monotonously intone the refrain that they are Jews in religion only, are castigated sharply and deservedly.

In Reform Jewish literature, the idea of the Mission of Israel is particularly prominent. Dr. Silver analyzes the concept afresh, rejects the fallacious theology which has evolved around it, and which proclaimed the major Jewish tragedy, the dispersion of the people, a blessing—one today—the *galut* an eternal, divinely ordained condition, and Jewish nationalism a shameful and passing phenomenon—while validating all other forms of nationalism. In righteous anger Dr. Silver demolishes the false premises upon which this anti-Jewish thinking was built. Conclusively he proves that the mission idea as proclaimed by the Prophets of Israel does not negate Palestine, does not regard the diaspora as a divine necessity, and does not reject, or undermine, the peoplehood of Israel. One and all, the prophets preached the very antithesis of all this. For well did they realize that only in Palestine can the Jew be free enough and daring enough and have the wherewithal to serve as "A Light unto the Na-



tions." In the diaspora, this hope will always remain an empty platitude, and in the eyes of our Christian fellow citizens, an unpardonable insolence.

"In the Midst of Many Peoples" is a moving defense of Israel, and as exhaustive a refutation of anti-Semitism as it is possible to make. It answers practically every base charge against the Jew. That it will affect the hearts and minds of anti-Semites is too much to hope. But it certainly can bring assurance to the hosts of Jews who have more or less become afflicted with feelings of "guilt," accusing themselves of sins which their enemies attribute to them! In addition to assurance, the address should bring insight and understanding, for the author points the path to Israel's salvation in the restoration of a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine, which, among other achievements, will confer upon the Jew *status*, which every human being enjoys, excepting the Jew.

The weakest chapter in the book is that entitled "The Rediscovery of Judaism," an address delivered before a convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. It is too homiletical, and too vague. The author dwells too much on religion in general and too little on Judaism. That our people today are dissatisfied with "substitutes" for Judaism and that their souls hunger and yearn for some faith is quite true. But that does not mean that they can or will find satisfaction and uplift in present day Judaism. Dr. Silver fails to define or to deal with the nature and content of that Judaism to which he urges his readers to return.

Some of the "incidentals," i.e., the quotations, reveal the amazing lack of foresight and understanding on the part of Jewish leaders concerning the Jewish position in the world. At the Rabbinical Conference at Frankfort, in 1845, Rabbi Isaac Auerbach, in his great love for the Fatherland, proclaimed, "In our day, the ideals of justice and the brotherhood of men have been so strengthened that they

can never again be shattered. We are witnessing an ever nearer approach to the establishment of the Kingdom of God on Earth." The great Geiger is guilty of this piece of *galut* thinking: "Any desire to form, together with his co-religionists, a people outside of Germany is . . . downright thankless towards the nation in whose midst he lives—a chimera; for the German Jew is a German in his national peculiarities and Zion is for him the land only of the past, not of the future." In 1911, Dr. Maurice Fishberg wrote that "Reactions such as were witnessed in Spain and other countries during the medieval ages are at present unlikely." And the renowned Dr. Arthur Ruppin, a professor at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, writes in his justly famous volume, "The Jews of Today," that, "It is unthinkable that either in Europe or in American anti-Semitism could ever bring about legal disabilities for Jews," and that, "Jews as a race are beyond the reach of legislation." In June, 1935, before the Seminary National Council, Dr. Cyrus Adler said: "The German State does not close synagogues. It does not forbid religious teachings. The State outlaws the Jew on the race theory . . . let us get into our minds . . . that even before the destruction of our nation in Palestine we became a religious community, *that* we are, or we are nothing." In November, 1938, the synagogues were not only closed, but demolished with a sadistic fury. This is the world of disillusion and delusion in which responsible Jewish opinion dwelt during the last three or more decades, and which has been shattered with appalling suddenness and inconceivable brutality.

In these scholarly essays we find the basis for that Jewish life which will lead not only to the emancipation of the individual Jew but to the emancipation of the Jewish people. A Jewish leadership which ignores or rejects the ideals and programs implicit in this volume does not deserve the moral or financial support of American Jewry.



Aug. 1941

## BOOKS

### *A Powerful Guidebook*

DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER'S ELOQUENT and hortatory collection of essays, "The World Crisis and Jewish Survival" (Richard R. Smith \$2.50) reaches us at a time when the problem of survival is also an issue for myriads of men and women who have no closer affinity with the Jewish people than the biologic kinship common to all humankind. The very involvement of those unrelated multitudes lends a darker cast to Israel's peril. Whenever in history vast cataclysms have occurred . . . the Crusades, the Black Death, the World War . . . Jewish life has suffered most profoundly. The Scriptures declare: "Every affliction in which Israel and the other nations of the earth share, is indeed an affliction; that of Israel alone is not."

Obviously Dr. Silver's volume is highly topical. All the nations of the earth are sharing Israel's despair today. It is not as though this upheaval were one of the localized disturbances of our past, when a Spain or a France or some other host-nation saw the *status quo* temporarily imperiled by the Jewish menace. The world of 1941 has no *status quo*.

Granting the timeliness of the discussion, let us ask on the other hand, whether

this question of Jewish survival is a thesis unique either to our own ominous present or to any period of specific disaster. Look backward for a moment, to the halcyon yesterdays of peace (within living memory, yet how distant already!) Were not the spiritual leaders occupied with that same problem in variant keys? Recall those years of tranquillity before the onset of history's most calculated and pretentious program of evil, before the devastation of a continent and the enslavement of its free peoples, before the brutally enforced migrations which have driven human beings like chaff across all the roads of the earth. Were there not voices emanating from a thousand pulpits of a world still free, voices which demanded of the Jewish people "Where now?" The peril, at that time, was not persecution, but a more insidious danger: the softening influences of assimilation. The hazard was not "Shall we be destroyed", but "Shall we be absorbed?"

Apparently, then, whether in peacetime or wartime, in seasons of affluence or periods of oppression, the Jewish people, by the very nature of their complex and tragic psychology, are kept in perpetual awareness of racial destiny. The Hamans and the Hitlers make their own paradoxical contribution to Jewish self-awareness, whenever the wheel of history brings them ranting to the helm. But the question of Jewish survival remains a living and vital issue even when Jewish horizons seem greenest.

Thus it might be said that Dr. Silver's book would have served as vital a purpose two decades ago, and will be as timely a score of years after Hitlerism has disappeared from the memory of living men. Chapters like "The Rediscovery of Judaism" and "The Prophet And His People" possess an essential timelessness. No matter how utopian may be the status of Jews in a reconstructed post-Nazi world, the psychological nature of the "Jewish problem" will perhaps never cease to evoke from the pens and hearts of scholars, teachers and spiritual leaders, exhortations such as these.

There are certain pages here which will meet less generous acceptance than the injunctions to a renewed religious vision. Zealous Zionists will want to take issue with Dr. Silver, for instance, when he declares "It is not possible to brush aside the spiritual needs of the Jews in the Diaspora and their problems of survival as Jews in lands outside of Palestine, where most Jews will continue to live, merely by talking long, loud and enticingly about Palestine. The upbuilding of a Jewish national home in Palestine is one great, urgent and historically inescapable task of Jewry. The upbuilding of Jewish religious life in America and else-

### *By The Spectator*

where throughout the world, inclusive of Palestine, is another. One is no substitute for the other. One is not opposed to the other." Social economists will not welcome Dr. Silver's ironic remarks in re "the protelarian Messiah riding upon a droshky." Nor will the militant assimilationists (if such there still be) respond with much enthusiasm to the author's jibes at "ersatz Judaism."

But the quibblers and the contentious partisans of contrary platforms are part of any philosopher's audience, and a vigorous mind will welcome the stimulus of intellectual argument. Dr. Silver's book is, at the very least, provocative; at best a powerful guidework for the perplexed.



# Is Jewish Survival Burden or Mission? Rabbi Silver Answers



by RABBI M. N. EISENDRATH  
Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto

"— millions are tolerated only as members of an inferior race. They are segregated — as to schools, residential districts, hospitals, travel, places of amusement. Millions are to be segregated as to the Jewish race. They find it hard to get employment. They are restricted to the lower strata of the industrial life —."

These sentences from Dr. Silver's stirring essays on "The World Crisis and Jewish Survival" would seem to adumbrate but another dreary repetition of Israel's present woes.

But it is indicative of the author's catholicity that these words are part of a scorching exhortation of his complacent American compatriots, whose consecration to the ending of Nazism abroad has so recently been bespoken by their President, but who seem to find little inconsistency between this and equally repugnant discrimination within their own frontiers, particularly toward the Negro to whom these quoted phrases refer.

So it is the leitmotif of Dr. Silver's penetrating volume that "what makes the present crisis so grave for the Jewish people, is that it is a world crisis, not a localized disturbance or one in which the Jew alone is involved."

That is something of which some of our Jewish brethren cannot be too frequently reminded. Though admittedly our tragedy has been insufferable, we Jews are apt to forget the vast multitudes in China, in Spain, in the conquered countries of Europe, as well as the "lesser breeds" at home, frequently without the protection of the law which the Jew usually enjoys at least in our own midst.

It is salutary, therefore, that on the very first page of this commendable volume, we should be reminded of Midrashic counsel:

"Every affliction in which Israel and the other nations share is indeed an affliction; that of Israel alone is not."

Notwithstanding the fact however, that this broad spirit of universalism suffuses these essays and burgeons forth in paragraph after paragraph of flaming zeal for a better social order for all, and for a larger justice for the embattled workers of the world for righteous economic adjustments, and universal peace, still — contrary to some of his rabbinic colleagues of the Reform camp — Dr. Silver does not exhaust his message in a plea for a humanity-minus-Israel. He succeeds to a remarkable degree in harmonizing sublime universalism with a deep and warm particularism, with a profound and unflinching loyalty to the peoplehood of Israel. The unique harmonization has ever been the genius of our past.

While his Zionism might be suspect to the zealots to whom Palestine must be "all or nothing," he who has perhaps done as much as any other single individual to make possible the rehabilitation of the Homeland and whose love for Zion breathes through his every spoken word, is

not so chauvinistic as to omit from this more permanent record of his philosophy of Jewish life a challenging appeal for the reconsecration of our Diaspora life which has been suffering vicariously its moral and spiritual well-being through the proxy of the epic of the Yishuv.

Those who have thus offered Jewish nationalism as an "ersatz" for Judaism forget, Dr. Silver vigorously reminds them, "that nationalism, such, unredeemed by a moral vision and responsibility, has sadly fragmented our world, provincialized its peoples, and is driving nations madly from one disaster to another; forgetting, further, that there is a widely-recognized and widely-answered need for religious and religious institutions even among peoples whose national life is already fully established, who are in their own lands, and who are possessed of a rich national culture. . . . It is not possible to brush aside the spiritual needs of the Jews in the Diaspora and their problem of survival as Jews in lands outside Palestine, where most Jews will continue to live, merely by talking long, loud, and enticingly about Palestine."

But having thus rebuked those who would stress only the particularistic facet of the two-sided coin, he castigates far more vitriolically, those who in taking in the entire forest of humanity have excluded the individual trees which Dr. Silver finds in the glory and grandeur of our Hebrew heritage.

Not every devout Reformer who laments the unfortunate contrast that exists while ". . . with Paul, the mission was a race to save the world. With the Reform Rabbi it was a rock in the horse race." It was not prejudice alone, nor the fear of the anti-Semite solely which drove many of the founders of the Reform movement in Germany to seek, in conformity with the whole spirit of Israel's past, to harmonize their ancient traditions with modern western civilization. He

These strictures apart, it is a sad thing to see them characterized together as fit followers of the Apostle Paul who ". . . focussed their antinomist program on the Talmud and Shulchan Aruch. The Bible they spared, for at all, the Bible was sacred also to the Christians."

There exists no fatuous "either . . . or" and sane Jewish way of life which Dr. Silver advocates. For him, there exists no fatuous "either . . . or": Israel or God, people or faith, nation or religion. In true consonance with our entire past, he recalls: "Nation, land, language were always vital and indispensable concepts in Jewish life, indissolubly associated of course with religion. It was never a case of one or the other. They were all one, organically united."

He is not anxious over the survival of the Jew. Of that his profound faith assures him.

The paramount problem for the Jew is, however, how shall the Jew survive: nobly or ignobly, with a sense of doom or destiny, surcharged with the feeling of "burden or mission." There can be no question regarding Dr. Silver's categorical answer.

"The World Crisis and Jewish Survival" is a potent antidote to our extremely bad case of Jewish jitters from which we Jews on this continent, particularly, so ingloriously are suffering. Though sounding the alarm in the ears of the complacent ones who are at ease in America by warning his compatriots that "anti-Semitism is not the slightly embarrassing thing that it was in the past . . . to be counteracted by easy-going goodwill movements . . . but a powerful and dangerously imminent threat to American democracy . . . the same sinister force which destroyed one free country after another," in proud and valorous contrast to the craven, Dr. Silver sternly rebukes the "Goyim" maxim silencers of our day and urges instead "audacious counter-attack" on all our traducers. For the Jew need ask no favours. He deserves no disfavours, inasmuch as he has too richly contributed to all greatness to all very democratic foundations.

In the present world crisis, Dr. Silver's volume would challenge Jewry to renewed loyalty to itself: to reconsecrated leadership toward a rehabilitated Israel and a humanly reborn.



# Studies of Jewish Survival

By JULIUS H. GREENSTONE

Jewish leaders have been called upon from time to time to issue messages of comfort and of strength to their people. In periods of disaster and national crises, these messages brought healing to the wounded hearts, gave courage to the drooping spirits and maintained the steadfastness and loyalty of many who might otherwise have succumbed to the despair leading to spiritual and physical ruin.

These messages whether uttered by prophet, sage or later teachers, were not entirely given to consolation and cheer, to promises for a more glorious future and to pictures of a resurrected people. Most of them, filled with love and sympathy for a suffering people as they were, also contained words of bitter renunciation, of scathing reproof and of merciless analyses of the shortcomings and sins which caused the catastrophes.

While soothing the sores and administering tonics to the ailing and distraught, these messages were also intended to call attention to certain national sins and to point the way to repentance and improvement. It is mainly because of their constructive and definite programs, their corrective and reformative tendencies that they retained a permanent position in our literature as well as in world literature. The hand that brought calm and soothing was a firm hand that also sought to lead to greater heights and to point to the better and more enduring way of life.

## Offer Consolation

The bewilderment in which our people have found themselves in the last few years in wake of the sufferings to which many of them become exposed also elicited numerous messages of comfort and of guidance on the part of the present-day leaders in Israel. The tone may differ, the approach may vary, the phraseology and diction may be more attuned to modern trends and modern thought, but the nature and the primary purpose and content are the same as those of former generations. From pulpit and platform, in the ephemeral journal and in the more stately and permanent book form, the modern leaders have attempted to offer consolation and guidance to the perplexed of these times.

Goldman and Goldstein, Greenberg and Gordis, Samuel and Ash, and many others presented their reactions to the present woes of Israel in more or less orderly and helpful volumes, differing to some extent in the conclusions reached, but generally agreeing in the main thesis that it was the duty of the modern Jew to become more intensely Jewish if he would overcome the perils facing him in a chaotic world, filled with hate and prejudice which are constantly being stimulated and artificially stirred by a powerful organization that has no scruples.

The latest volume in this helpful series is by Abba Hillel Silver, entitled "The World Crisis and Jewish Survival" (Richard R. Smith, New York). It consists of five essays, based on addresses delivered before notable assemblies during the past few years. The theme of the first four chapters is the role of Jewish people in the present crisis, while the fifth chapter on "The Prophet and His People" is only loosely connected with the general subject.

The assumption naturally is that Jewish survival is necessary and desirable and also assured even in the unprecedented conditions of the present. What concerns our author most is how this survival should proceed, and what Jews must do in order to

secure their continuance and growth.

## Second Chapter

In the brilliant second chapter, "The Rediscovery of Judaism," Dr. Silver proceeds to demonstrate the indispensable position of religion in human life of the present. He would have the genuine, time-hallowed and universally accepted form of religion, not an "Ersatz" Judaism that different persons seek to introduce. He excoriates the secular educator, the secular nationalist or the worshipper's of a purely secular Jewish culture, such as made their appearance in Communist Russia. All these are classed among the false prophets whose teachings and doctrines no more attract adherents as they did in the early after-war years. "We sense an incoming tide of faith among our people, a faith charged in some instances with deep mysticism. . . . The present day expulsions of the Jews the tragic experiences of myriads of refugees, the dismal plight of war-ravaged Jewish communities throughout Eastern Europe, the stress under which Israel finds itself everywhere, coupled with the distressed mood of mankind generally, may give rise to a strong mystic movement which will express itself in religion and literature and in personal habits of thought and conduct."

And still, he would most strenuously oppose the theory expounded by the early reform leaders and held also by some of the conservatives which reduces the whole of Judaism to religion alone. Dr. Silver is a powerful exponent of the national ideal in Jewish life and a leader in the Zionist movement. To him, "the Jewish religion is the crowning achievement of our people and our supreme gift to civilization," but it is not the whole of Judaism. "We should not attempt to substitute a part for the whole—even if it is the major part." Judaism is the "classic harmony" between the religious and the national elements and the Jewish people is a religious-national entity.

## Problem Simpler Today

The problem of Jewish survival is even simpler today than it was in any other period in Jewish history. "The doors of escape from Jewish destiny have been shut. . . . The choice today is not between survival and extinction, but between doom and destiny, between burden and mission. Shall we live our Jewish lives greatly or meanly? . . . Our choice today is between the yoke of earthly kingdoms, which is grievously hard to bear, and the yoke of the Kingdom of God, which makes all other yokes easy to bear."

A fervent plea is then made for

an intensive Jewish education for the children so that they may come to understand "that it is not because we are weak and unworthy that barbarous governments have vowed to destroy us, problem of anti-Semitism, the author comes very close to the conclusions reached by Maurice Samuel in his "Great Hatred". Anti-Semitism is a conscious or unconscious revolt against the Judaeo-Christian tradition and carries with it perils to both the Jewish and Christian spiritual content.

"The rights of the individual, the one universal moral law, the brotherhood of men, universal peace—these are fighting for their very life today, with their backs to the wall. . . . It remains to be seen whether Jews and Christians can successfully meet their new and greatest testing hour and co-operate to make secure for the future the kind of a civilization which Moses, Isaiah, Micah and Jesus visioned. It is from this larger aspect that the whole problem of Christian-Jewish relationship should be viewed."

## Superb Oratorical

Dr. Silver's superb oratorical gifts are greatly enhanced by his wide and intimate acquaintance with Rabbinic and classic literature and his quotations are as a rule most apt and enlightening. It sometimes appears as if the stately paragraphs were constructed around a quotation or reference which he had in mind. Here is one from Tertullian in support of the prejudice against minorities at all times: "If the Tiber rose to the walls of the city, if the inundation of the Nile failed to give the fields enough water, if the heavens did not rain, if an earthquake occurred, if famine threatened, if pestilence raged, the cry resounded: 'Throw the Christians to the lions!'"

"His references to medieval Jewish literature are frequent and most illuminating. The story quoted from Shebet Yehu-

dah, at the end of the first chapter, forcefully illustrates the thought of the indomitable will of the Jews, their resoluteness in times of greatest trials, "another key to the mystery of Jewish but because we are strong and they fear us. They do not fear us, but the faith which is in us, the torch which is in our hearts and the passion which is in our blood for the prophetic mandates of our Jewish heritage."

In an incisive analysis of the survival."

The ability to bring down to the level of average intelligence weighty and eternal ideals and give them force and the concrete means of application characterizes this book. Dr. Silver does not appear here as the scholar, the inventor of new paths or the creator of new philosophies.

He is primarily the pleader for a return to the ancient and tried sources of faith and practice which have made Israel immor-

tal. In this capacity, he proved himself a master and his words of comfort and of warning, of consolation and criticism will call forth a hearty response and a renewed loyalty, greater courage and more enthusiasm in behalf of the sacred ideals which have made the Jewish people great. The message is timely as it is penetrating and the effect on the reader will be most salutary. We need such forceful utterances in these days and are grateful for their appearance.



N. Y. Times

9-28-41

## THE WORLD CRISIS and JEWISH SURVIVAL

By DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

"The essay on 'The Prophet and His People' is itself prophetic."  
—SHOLEM ASCH.

"It has rare qualities; immense courage, clean intellectual rectitude and at the same time, high persuasiveness. It strikes at the center again and again. I wish that more Jews and many more non-Jews could be brought to ponder its eloquent and trenchant pages."  
—LUDWIG LEWISOHN.

"Dr. Silver's book would have served as vital a purpose two decades ago, and will be as timely a score of years after Hitlerism has disappeared from the memory of living men. Chapters like 'The Rediscovery of Judaism' and 'The Prophet and His People' possess an essential timelessness. . . . Dr. Silver's book is, at the very least, provocative; at best a guidework for the perplexed."

Recommended by Book of the Month Club  
\$2.50

RICHARD R. SMITH, 120 E. 39th St., New York

Abba Hillel Silver, *The World Crisis and Jewish Survival. A Group of Essays*. Richard R. Smith. New York, 1941. 221 pp.

Though ostensibly diverse in content, the five papers included in this volume are essentially an eloquent and often stirring exposition of the unity of Israel and its faith. The third essay, in particular, entitled simply "Israel," originally delivered before the Central Conference of American Rabbis, makes this theme explicit. It contains an unsparingly critical analysis of the early Reform negation of the nationhood of the Jewish people—that "improvised philosophy of Jewish history," as Dr. Silver labels it, which he tellingly equates with the Paulinian rejection of nation, land, race or language, and whose shallow opportunism history has now so effectively demonstrated. This essay is easily the outstanding one in the volume, impressive alike for its vigor and forthrightness, its scholarship and realism.

*Historia Judaica - April, 1942*

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The same theme is implicit in the title essay, also presented to the Rabbinical Conference, in which the author voices what is ultimately a mystic faith in the will and ability of the Jews to survive, supported though it is by evidence from their historic experience. Weakest among the chapters is that entitled "The Rediscovery of Judaism," calling for a return to the Jewish faith as an essential element in such survival. Unfortunately Dr. Silver is not very clear as to what this religion is or requires of its adherents, so that the total effect is hazily hortatory and prolix. One is tempted to surmise that the nature of his audience—the Union of American Hebrew Congregations—impelled him, no doubt unwittingly, to "pull his punches." Rabbis can evidently be called upon to face the facts of life more readily than their lay followers.

The fourth essay, "In the Midst of Many Peoples," a compilation of addresses delivered before the Harvard Summer Conference of 1940, offers the well-known characterization of Nazi racism and anti-Semitism as political weapons, with the equally orthodox program of combatting them in America through education in democratic principles, greater mutual understanding, and the fostering of a pluralistic cultural ideal. The effectiveness of this presentation is no wit diminished by the fact that it covers familiar ground. Dr. Silver possesses a fertile and forceful pen, which lends his thought an impressively persuasive character. "The Prophet and his People," the Harvard Dupleian Lecture of 1940, the last in the book, is an eloquent and stirring appreciation of the character and role of the prophets, which reveals something of the prophetic spirit in the author himself. Here, too, Dr. Silver does not fail to point up the essential unity of national and religious aspiration which is the basic motif of his Jewishness, and the one platform upon which a healthy Jewish future can be built.

Easton, Pa.

Joshua Trachtenberg.