



## Daniel Jeremy Silver Collection Digitization Project

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### **MS-4850: Daniel Jeremy Silver Papers, 1972-1993.**

Series III: The Temple Tifereth-Israel, 1946-1993, undated.

Sub-series B: Sermons, 1950-1989, undated.

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Hanukah sermon, 1988.

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WE ARE A PEACE-CONSCIOUS, PEACE-URGENT GENERATION. YET, HERE WE ARE, OBSERVING HANUKAH, WHICH IS LITTLE MORE THAN THE CELEBRATION OF A MILITARY TRIUMPH.

THE STORY OF HANUKAH IS A WAR STORY. IN THE YEAR 198 B.C.E. DESCENDANTS OF ONE OF THE GENERALS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT CONQUERED THE GALILEE AND JUDEA FROM THE DESCENDANTS OF ANOTHER OF ALEXANDER'S GENERALS. THE NEW CONQUERORS WERE AVARICIOUS AND CULTURALLY IMPERIAL. THEY FELT OBLIGED TO BRING THE LIGHT OF GREEK CIVILIZATION TO THE ORIENTAL NATIVE. IF THEIR ARMIES COULD CONQUER THE WORLD, OBVIOUSLY, <sup>that is</sup> THEIR CIVILIZATION WAS SUPERIOR TO THE REST OF THE WORLD.

LIKE MANY ANOTHER CITY IN ASIA MINOR, JERUSALEM WOULD BECOME A POLIS. A GYMNASIUM WAS BUILT WHERE JUDEAN LADS COULD LEARN GREEK SUBJECTS AND GREEK MANNERS, AND WHERE YOUNG JEWS COULD ENGAGE IN GYMNASTIC EXERCISES IN THE NUDE, AS THE GREEKS DID. A COLISEUM WAS BUILT SO THAT THE JEWS COULD ENJOY, AS THE GREEKS DID, THE BLOOD SPORTS.

THE GREEKS MEANT TO DO GOOD FOR THEIR PAROCHIAL AND BENIGHTED SUBJECTS, BUT MANY JEWS COULD NOT SEE THAT THE SUPERIORITY OF THE GREEK ARMIES PROVED THAT GREEK CIVILIZATION WAS SUPERIOR.

THEY PROVED RECALCITRANT WHEN THE GREEKS ADDED CULTURAL DEMANDS, OFFICERS WERE SENT INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE TO SPREAD THE LIGHT, AND A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE INCIDENTS OCCURRED.

WHAT WAS "HIGHER" ABOUT A CIVILIZATION WHICH RID ITSELF OF UNWANTED INFANTS BY EXPOSING THEM ON THE HILLSIDES? WHAT WAS SO FINE ABOUT A CIVILIZATION WHOSE YOUNG MEN SPORTED THEMSELVES IN THE NUDE, A PRACTICE WHICH VIOLATED THE JEWISH TRADITION OF MODESTY AND GLORIFIED HOMOSEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS? WHAT WAS SO FINE ABOUT A CIVILIZATION WHICH RELISHED WATCHING GLADIATORS FIGHT TO THE DEATH?

MOST JUDEANS WERE UNWILLING TO ACCEPT THE CULTURE THAT WAS OFFERED THEM. WHILE JEWS ACCEPTED THE BURDENS IMPOSED BY HEAVY TAXES AND EVEN FORCED LABOR, THEY PROVED RECALCITRANT WHEN THE GREEKS ADDED CULTURAL DEMANDS, OFFICERS WERE SENT INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE TO SPREAD THE LIGHT, AND A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE INCIDENTS OCCURRED.

FOR 4 YEARS, BETWEEN 168 AND 165 B.C.E.,  
JUDEA FINALLY, THE EMPEROR, ANTIOCHUS  
THE FOURTH, LOST PATIENCE WITH THE JEWS  
WHO WERE SO DIFFICULT TO ENLIGHTEN, AND  
IMPOSED GREEK WAYS. AS A FIRST STEP,  
EVERY JUDEAN CLAN HEAD WOULD HAVE TO  
OFFER A SACRIFICE TO ZEUS OLYMPIOS, THE  
EMPEROR'S PATRON GOD.

IN THE COUNTRY THERE WAS SILENT  
OUTRAGE. A MAN NAMED MATTATHIAS, A  
LOCAL PRIEST, BECAME SO ANGRY WHEN ONE  
OF THE EMPEROR'S PACIFICATION OFFICERS  
CAME TO HIS TOWN THAT HE KILLED HIM.  
IN THIS ACT OF RAGE, A NATIONAL REVOLT  
WAS BORN. JEWS TOOK TO THE HILLS AND  
BEGAN TO HARASS AND AMBUSH THE EMPEROR'S  
FORCES. IN RESPONSE, THE GREEKS SENT  
OUT SEARCH-AND-KILL MISSIONS.

FOR 4 YEARS, BETWEEN 168 AND 165 B.C.E., JUDEA WAS A PLACE OF BLOODSHED AND BATTLE, UNTIL THE JEWS FINALLY REGAINED THE TEMPLE MOUNT.

THE FIRST HANUKAH, CELEBRATED IN 165 B.C.E., WAS A GREAT VICTORY CELEBRATION. THE RAGTAG GUERILLA ARMY OF JEWS ENTERED JERUSALEM AND PURIFIED THE TEMPLE. THAT NIGHT THEY RAN THROUGH THE STREETS CARRYING LIT TORCHES, SHOUTING "HALLELUYA, FREEDOM IS OURS."

JUDAH THE MACCABEE ORDERED AN ANNUAL INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION. SOME

BACKGROUND ON THE MACCABEE'S REBELLION IS PERTINENT

WHEN MATTATHIAS AND HIS SONS HAD FIRST TAKEN TO THE HILLS, THEY WERE STRICT SABBATARIANS WHO WOULD DO NO WORK ON THE SABBATH, NOT EVEN DEFEND THEMSELVES. GREEK TROOPS WOULD GO OUT ON FRIDAYS TO FIND JEWS ~~WERE~~ HOLED UP OVER THE SABBATH, AND ON THE SABBATH THEY WOULD ENTER THE CAVES IN WHICH THE JEWS WERE HIDING, IN FULL CONFIDENCE THAT THEY WOULD MEET NO RESISTANCE. BECAUSE OF THE 4TH COMMANDMENT, "REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY AND KEEP IT HOLY," JEWS WERE UNWILLING TO DO ANYTHING WHICH WOULD DESECRATE THE SABBATH, EVEN IF IT COST THEM THEIR LIVES.

IN 168 THE MACCABEES GATHERED THE LEADERS OF THEIR LIBERATION MOVEMENT TO DISCUSS THE QUESTION - TO FIGHT OR NOT TO FIGHT ON THE SABBATH. IT WAS DECIDED THAT IT IS BETTER TO LIVE FOR GOD'S LAW, THAN TO DIE BECAUSE OF GOD'S LAW. THE LAW WAS GIVEN TO MAN, NOT MAN TO THE LAW. TO TAKE UP ARMS IN DEFENSE AGAINST AN ENEMY WHO HAD DESECRATED THE SANCTUARY AND PROSCRIBED THE FAITH WAS NOT NECESSARILY WRONG.

TO FIGHT OR NOT TO FIGHT IS NOT A  
NEW QUESTION. / WITH RARE EXCEPTIONS WE  
JEWS HAVE NEVER GLORIFIED MARTYRDOM.  
"BETTER A LIVE DOG," THE BIBLE SAYS,  
"THAN A DEAD LION." JUDAISM IS NOT  
A PASSIVE OR PACIFISTIC FAITH: YET,  
OBVIOUSLY, WE'RE NOT A BELLIGERENT  
OR AGGRESSIVE FAITH. WE ARE  
SELECTIVE IN OUR OBJECTIONS TO WAR.

OUR FAITH HAS NEVER BEEN  
PACIFISTIC BECAUSE IT HAS NEVER FOUND  
EVIDENCE THAT TURNING THE CHEEK OR  
BARING THE BREAST WILL CONVERT  
AGGRESSORS INTO SAINTS. UNFORTUNATELY,  
IN REAL LIFE IT RARELY HAPPENS THAT  
ANY GROUP OF SOLDIERS HAVE BEEN MOVED  
TO LAY DOWN THEIR ARMS BECAUSE THEIR  
ENEMY WAS UNRESISTING.



IN OUR HISTORY YOU WILL FIND THAT  
WE HAVE NOT GLORIFIED MILITARY ACTION;  
BUT NEITHER HAVE WE SHRUNK FROM SELF-  
AND NATIONAL DEFENSE. OUR WAY HAS BEEN  
TO LOOK BEYOND THE SOLDIER TO THE CAUSE.

OBVIOUSLY, I DO NOT TEACH A TRADITION WHICH JUSTIFIES WAR. JUDAISM NEVER HAD A CODE OF JIHAD, A CODE OF HOLY WAR, WHICH SANCTIFIES AGGRESSION AND MILITARY ACTION. WE HAVE NEVER HAD ECCLESIASTICS WHO TOOK MILITARY ORDERS LIKE THE KNIGHT TEMPLARS OR THE KNIGHTS OF MALTA. NEITHER HAVE WE VENERATED THE SOLDIER, BUT SOMETIMES HE WAS AND IS NECESSARY. LOOK AT MODERN ISRAEL.

IN OUR HISTORY YOU WILL FIND THAT WE HAVE NOT GLORIFIED MILITARY ACTION; BUT NEITHER HAVE WE SHRUNK FROM SELF- AND NATIONAL DEFENSE. OUR WAY HAS BEEN TO LOOK BEYOND THE SOLDIER TO THE CAUSE.

IF THERE HAD NOT BEEN A JUDAH MACCABEE  
OR HIS ARMY, MUCH OF WHAT STANDS AT  
THE VERY BASIS OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION—  
THE BIBLE, THE IDEA OF THE ONENESS OF  
GOD, THE PROPHETIC VOICES INSISTING ON  
SOCIAL JUSTICE—WOULD HAVE BEEN  
SILENCED BECAUSE JEWS, AND JUDAISM  
ITSELF, WOULD HAVE BEEN ERADICATED.



REDEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE. WE TELL THE  
STORY OF THE CRUSE OF OIL WHICH  
SUPPOSEDLY HAD ENOUGH OIL IN IT TO LAST  
FOR ONLY ONE DAY, YET BURNED FOR THE FULL  
8 DAYS REQUIRED TO PREPARE NEW OIL FOR  
THE SHRINE. IN THAT LITTLE MIRACLE WE  
CAPSULED THE MIRACLE OF THE FEW SOMEHOW  
OUTLASTING THE MANY, THE WEAK OUTFIGHTING  
THE POWERFUL.

WE LIGHT HANUKAH LIGHTS NOT IN HONOR OF JUDAH'S DEEDS, BUT IN RESPECT FOR THE MIRACLES WHICH GOD PERFORMED FOR US IN THOSE TIMES. SMALL GUERRILLA BANDS DO NOT ALWAYS, OR GENERALLY, OVERWHELM IMPERIAL LEGIONS. WHEN IT HAPPENS, JUDAISM FINDS THE HAND OF GOD AT WORK; AND SO WE MADE THE CENTRAL THEME OF THE HANUKAH STORY NOT THE BATTLES WITH THE GREEKS BUT THE REDEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE. WE TELL THE STORY OF THE CRUSE OF OIL WHICH SUPPOSEDLY HAD ENOUGH OIL IN IT TO LAST FOR ONLY ONE DAY, YET BURNED FOR THE FULL 8 DAYS REQUIRED TO PREPARE NEW OIL FOR THE SHRINE. IN THAT LITTLE MIRACLE WE CAPSULED THE MIRACLE OF THE FEW SOMEHOW OUTLASTING THE MANY, THE WEAK OUTFIGHTING THE POWERFUL.

PEACE STANDS AS THE BASIS OF EVERY  
COMMANDMENT. GREAT IS PEACE; THE COMING  
OF THE MESSIAH WILL ESTABLISH WORLD  
PEACE. WE ARE NOT TO BE BELLIGERENT.  
WE ARE NOT TO TAKE VENGEANCE. WE ARE  
NOT TO WAGE WAR SIMPLY FOR POSSESSION,  
FOR LAND, FOR POWER, FOR COMMERCIAL  
ADVANTAGE, FOR MARKETS.

BUT WE ARE ALSO TAUGHT THAT IF A  
MAN COMES TO KILL YOU, YOU MUST KILL  
HIM. WE ARE NOT BORN TO BE THE VICTIMS  
OF THE WORLD. WE ARE TRAINED TO SERVE  
GOD WITH LOVE, SYMPATHY, AND  
UNDERSTANDING--AND WITH ACTIVE COURAGE.

I AM SAYING THAT IT'S NOT WAR PER SE WHICH IS EVIL, AND THAT NOT EVERYONE WHO ENGAGES IN WAR IS A SINNER. THERE ARE CERTAIN WARS, MOST WARS, WHICH ARE FUTILE, FOOLISH, IMMORAL AND UNNECESSARY.

BUT IF YOU ARE AN ISRAELI, YOU LOOK ON WAR FROM A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE. YOU'RE NOT UNDER ARMS BECAUSE ANYONE IN JERUSALEM WANTS YOU TO CAPTURE AMMAN OR BEIRUT. YOU'RE UNDER ARMS BECAUSE MANY IN BEIRUT AND AMMAN ARE PLEDGED TO DESTROY YOU, YOUR FAMILY, AND YOUR COUNTRY. I CANNOT LOOK UPON THOSE WHO TAKE UP ARMS IN SELF-DEFENSE AS IMMORAL.

THERE IS NO GOOD WAR, BUT THERE ARE SOME THAT THE BIBLE CALLS "MILHOMET HOVAH" — WARS WHICH ARE FORCED ON US AND TO WHICH WE MUST REACT. THERE ARE WARS WHICH MUST BE FOUGHT/ AND THERE ARE WARS WHICH NO POWER ON EARTH CAN MAKE US FIGHT. THERE ARE WARS WHICH ARE WARS OF GREED, THE TYPICAL WARS BETWEEN NATIONS, AND THERE ARE WARS WHICH ARE FORCED UPON US BY THE GREED AND HATREDS OF OTHERS WHO DENY OUR RIGHT TO EXIST; AND THESE WE MUST OPPOSE.

LAST  
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I AM DELIGHTED TO SEE SO MANY FAMILIES FOR PEACE. I PRAY THAT WE CAN BEGIN TO REIN IN ALL THOSE WHO WOULD BUILD UP THE ARSENALS OF WAR. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I WAS DELIGHTED WITH THE NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT TREATY <sup>BUT</sup> I THINK IT WRONG TO LOOK UPON ALL DEFENSE PREPARATIONS, ALL MILITARY ARRANGEMENTS, AS UNNECESSARY, AS IMMORAL.

WE HAVE LIT THESE LIGHTS FOR 2200 YEARS IN THE HOPE THAT THE TIME WILL COME WHEN THE ULTIMATE MIRACLE WILL TAKE PLACE AND PEACE WILL COME TO ALL THE FAMILIES OF MEN. THAT TIME IS NOT YET HERE. UNTIL IT ARRIVES, WE MUST MAINTAIN CRITICAL JUDGMENT AS WELL AS PASSIONATE CONCERN. WORLD PEACE MUST NOT BE ONE OF THOSE INNOCENT NOSTRUMS WHICH LEAD GOOD AND SAINTLY MEN TO THEIR DEATHS.

END

12/5/88 THIS LETTER SENT TO THE ATTACHED LIST.

# The Temple

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER - RABBI

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BRANCH: 26000 SHAKER BLVD. • BEACHWOOD, OHIO 44122 • 831-3233

December 5, 1988

Michael Adelstein,  
31849 Chestnut  
Pepper Pike, OH 44124

Dear Michael:

Yesterday's service was a beautiful event enhanced immeasurably by your cantata. It was well done, carried off like pros, and I want to congratulate you on it.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mt

Temple  
Religious School  
Choir

✓ Adelstein, Michael 318 49 Chestnut

✓ Colton, Joyce - 2452 Charney 44118

✓ Federman, Lesley 3662 Tolland Dr  
SH 22

✓ Folkman, Mollie 22275 E. Byrne Rd SH 22

✓ Green, Nancy 3545 Winchell Rd 122

Hayman, Jacob 19406 Leonard ✓✓

Hirsh, Stephanie 516 v Chennich Dr. Solon  
44139

Hughes, Kalle 5967 Centwell M#W

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Kahn, Nicole 2706 Rocklyn Rd SH 22

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