

yeshivoh will be felt in the entire Johannesburg community, as has been the case in the other areas where Adaas Jeshurun has pioneered higher standards of Torah life.

Earlier this year, a historic step forward was taken. Spearheaded by Adaas Jeshurun, but with the support of others, a Kollel was opened which will serve the entire community. Although the Kollel has its own characteristics suited to local conditions—it will for the time being function only several evenings of the week—renowned Roshei Yeshivos who have visited South Africa regard this venture as a spiritual revolution. Rabbi Wolpe of Yeshivas Ashkelon and Rabbi Brode of the Chevron Yeshiva were the first guests from Eretz Yisroel to deliver *shiurim* within the framework of the Kollel.

Chief Rabbi Bernard Casper, in his Kollel dedication address noted that the word “Kollel” means “all embracing,”

and quoting from a responsa of the *Netziv*, he pointed out that study of Torah is *the* unifying factor which transcends all political differences and petty disagreements. He expressed his pleasure that the Kollel was the work of the Congregation Adaas Jeshurun, which has nurtured other religious facilities.

This brief sketch of the achievements of a small group of Jews who maintained their loyalty to the principles of Torah Judaism, is further indication of what can be done by dedicated individuals. Fortunately, there are today other positive forces working within Johannesburg Orthodoxy, a portent of better days ahead for Torah on the dark continent.

Jews from abroad who visit Johannesburg find a warm welcome in the Adaas Jeshurun Kehilloh. You too are welcome to enjoy the sunny side of life in South Africa when you visit our country.

J. SCHOEMANN

Must We Still Mourn?

A Prophetic Message by Samson Raphael Hirsch

The following is abstracted from: JUDAISM ETERNAL, *Selected Essays From the Writings of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch*, translated by DAYAN DR. I. GRUNFELD and published by the Soncino Press, London, 1959. The original article appeared in 1855, seventy odd years before the Nazi plague appeared in Germany and spread throughout the European continent.

IT IS NOW SOME SIX OR SEVEN AND TWENTY YEARS AGO since one evening of the ninth of Av, the Rabbi of a small town in South Germany had his synagogue brilliantly lit up and invited the members of his congregation to attend in their best clothes. This was the night when over the whole face of the earth, wherever a small group of Jews form a congregation and come together for prayer in the House of G-d, light and cheerfulness and festive mood are banished from the gathering, and every man who calls himself a Jew sits mourning on the ground, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah over the orphaned city of G-d find an echo in every Jewish breast. And it was on this evening that the preacher mentioned mounted the pulpit and raised a loud protest against this sadness and this mourning and this yearning for Palestine. He accused the millions of his mourning brethren in the whole world around him of treason and enmity towards State and Fatherland, and he called on his dismayed congregation, in

contrast to these millions, to show by means of a festal celebration their repudiation of the out-of-date yearning for Palestine, and to give proof of their patriotic attachment to the Fatherland in which they lived and worked, and from which they at least hoped to obtain full civic freedom and equality. Jerusalem, he said, was here. Palestine was now situated on German soil . . .

. . . Only in that state in which almost three decades ago the mourning of the ninth of Av was to have been abolished does grim Jew-hatred luxuriate, only here does it invent ever-new restrictions, forge ever-new chains, generate ever-new scorn and more than any other impel its Jewish children in droves to seek a new Palestine across the ocean . . .

WE WISH NOW, HOWEVER, TO CONSIDER THE QUESTION whether there is after all a spark of truth in the whole outlook and mode of thought underlying the protest of that Jewish minister against the mourning of Tisha be-Av . . .

No doubt to the progressive outlook of a modern Jewish preacher ancient Palestine is no different from the other oriental states; under the ruins of Jerusalem nothing of more consequence lies buried than is covered by the remains of Nineveh or Babylon or Carthage; in one place as in the other it was only a political structure which flourished and only a political structure which fell. If that is the case, then indeed the mourning for Jerusalem's downfall and the yearning for Jerusalem's revival would have only political motives and

meaning; it would be a mourning for the loss of political independence, it would be a yearning for the sceptre of David and the sword of Joab and the decorations of Ahithophel, for the inventory of Adoram, the archives of Jehoshaphat and the treasury keys of Eliakim. It would be a yearning for our own fields and our own sickle and our own hearth, with the oppression and scorn swept away.

Then indeed such a mourning and such a yearning would have had meaning and justification only during the dark centuries of the Middle Ages. Then the modern Jewish view would be perfectly right, that in the century of hopes of emancipation this old mourning and this old yearning should grow ever fainter, and that they should at last completely disappear when these hopes should be realized, and the children of Israel should have found on European soil equality of civil rights and a homeland which should secure to them along with the rest of mankind a solid footing and equal opportunities for treading the path to sustenance, and to office and dignity.

The modern view is that the Jewish state, both of the past and of the future, is to be regarded as belonging to the same class as all other political phenomena. It has lost all consciousness of the quite peculiar nature of the Jewish state and its difference from all other states. In that state, too, it sees only an institution in which the development of the political elements mentioned above is the goal to which everything else, including Temple and Torah, is to be subordinated as mere means and instruments.

"Modern" Judaism

... If we have genuinely imbibed the spirit of modern Judaism, we certainly do not fast on the day of Zion, we do not say any more סליחות or קינות. We should even be ashamed to catch a surreptitious tear in our eye or a sigh in our breast for the fallen Temple, a yearning in our heart for the home of the "bloody sacrificial cult." We have reduced all this to a myth. Our feelings have been "disinfected" by the cooling waters of real knowledge. Our minds have been cleared of illusions by science. We understand, and we value, all this quite differently. Moses and Hesiod, David and Sappho, Deborah and Tyrtæus, Isaiah and Homer, Delphi and Jerusalem, Pythian tripod and Cherubim-sanctuary, prophets and oracles, psalm and elegy—we pack them all peacefully together in our minds in the same box, they all rest peacefully in the same grave, they all have one and the same human origin, they all have one and the same significance, human, transitory, and belonging to the past. All the clouds have dissolved.

The tears and sighs of our fathers fill no longer our breasts, but our libraries. The warmly pulsating heart of our fathers has become our national literature, their glowing breath of life has become the dust of book-

shelves. We let the old Jews fast on תשעה באב, we let them say סליחות and weep over קינות. But in return we know far better than they do in which century one of these "poets" flourished, in what metre another one composed, who it was that nursed them when they were infants. We cherish in our hearts such reverence for this Jewish antiquity that we rummage through all the dust of libraries and collections in order to find out the date of an author's birth and death and to record correctly the inscriptions on their tombstones. Now that the old Judaism is visibly sinking into its grave, we are at great pains to see that at least the memorial of it is preserved in the histories of literature, and that a few leaves from the evergreens that peacefully surround these graves should encircle the brows of our scholars . . .

Do these departed spirits rejoice in the literary gratitude of our present generation? Whom do they recognize as their true heirs? Those who repeated their prayers but forgot their names, or those who forget their prayers and remember their names?

LET US SEE NOW. THIS OLD JEWISH MOURNING AND Jewish yearning—for whose sake is it, what is its meaning and object? It is for the Temple, for the sanctuary of the Torah, for the seat of G-d and of the Divine word that this mourning and this sorrow is observed. It is for the Temple where, in a casket of fragrant cedar wood overlaid with gold, the Torah should find its resting place on earth under the protecting wings of the Cherubim, where this Torah and it alone should with its right hand dispense light and life and with its left hand well-being and enjoyment; where this earthly existence flowing from the Torah and wedded with light and life should consummate itself in a manner pleasing to G-d and raise upon earth a center round which the labors of man can build a wall of cedar-fresh right living and golden steadfastness, round which the Cherubim of G-d can lie encamped, and on which they may smilingly waft down the blessing of G-d from heaven . . .

It is for this "Galuth Shechinah," this "Exile of the Majesty of G-d," as our ancestors with true insight called it, it is for this sad disfigurement of the Torah that Jewish tears are shed and Jewish hearts grieve. Not for *his own Galuth*, but for the *Galuth of the Torah* does the Jew mourn. And must this mourning die away, must this sorrow disappear, must these tears dry up if the nations become more humane and just, if they loosen the chains on the hands and feet of Galuth-weary Israel, and an emancipated Israel steps into the company of non-Jewish states as a fully-privileged member? Will the Torah be any the less in exile for this? Will the "Galuth of the Majesty of G-d" be brought to an end by this? Will the Torah have found its own soil again, will it be more at home on earth, will it now strike deeper roots and will it put forth blossoms and bring to ripeness all the fruits of blessing and salvation

for which it should serve as the everlasting tree of life? Or has it to endure new and harder trials, is it faced with new Galuth sufferings, is it threatened with a new and more painful and bitter exile? In the darkest centuries of the Galuth, when the Roman sword rent the curtain of the Temple and the Shechinah left the Jewish state and with it this Jewish state itself vanished from the earth, the majesty of G-d and the holiness of the Torah found refuge in the Jewish family life, the Jewish home, and every Jewish dwelling remained a sanctuary and every Jewish table remained an altar and every Jewish breast preserved like a priest the "light of G-d" and the striving for "Divine perfection." The barriers are falling, the chains are being struck off, Jewish homes are emerging from night and shadow into the light of open day, the children of Israel are being received into the bosom of the nations. Will Israel be able to carry over its intimacy with G-d from the ghetto into the court, from the hovels into the mansions, from the *cheder* into the *salon*, from the corner-shop into the bureau, from the *shools* into the "Temple?" Is Israel equipped to take over with it into the new civic life the old allegiance to G-d, the old sanctity of the Torah? Or do the Shechinah, the kingship of G-d, the Torah, face the last and sternest stage of their exile? Are they now to be exiled from the Jewish family life, from the Jewish home, from the Jewish heart, as they were once exiled from the Jewish state? Oh, that these questions were still questions! . . .

One day men will yearn for this law, and then to fulfill this yearning they will turn to Zion. Then, then—

"The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and peoples shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the G-d of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge between many peoples and shall decide concerning mighty nations afar off, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree and none shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken." (Micah 4, 1-4.)

But until then:

*Mourn Zion, mourn ye cities
Like a woman in her travail,
Like a bride girt with sackcloth
For the bridegroom of her youth.*

The Jewish Observer / June, 1966

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