



of idolatry, as it is said: *And he said: This is wickedness.*<sup>1</sup> As they took hold of him a hair of his beard fell out, he raised his voice and it went [was audible] four hundred *parasangs*. Thereupon they said: How shall we act? Perhaps, God forbid, they might have mercy upon him from heaven!—The prophet said unto them: Cast him into a leaden pot, closing its opening with lead. Because lead absorbs the voice, as it is said: *And he said: This is wickedness. And he cast her down into the midst of the measure, and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof.*<sup>1</sup> They said: Since this is a time of Grace, let us pray for mercy for the Tempter to evil.<sup>2</sup> They prayed for mercy, and he was handed over to them. He said to them: Realize that if you kill him, the world goes down. They imprisoned him for three days, then looked in the whole land of Israel for a fresh egg and could not find it.<sup>3</sup> Thereupon they said: What shall we do now? Shall we kill him? The world would then go down. Shall we beg for half-mercy?<sup>4</sup> They do not grant 'halves' in heaven.<sup>4</sup>—They put out his eyes and let him go. It helped inasmuch as he no more entices men to commit incest.<sup>5</sup> In the West [Palestine] they taught it thus: R. Giddal said: [*And Ezra praised . . . the great [God]:*<sup>6</sup> i.e., he magnified Him by pronouncing the Ineffable Name. R. Mattena said: *He said: The great, the mighty, and the awful God.*<sup>7</sup> The interpretation of R. Mattena seems to agree with what R. Joshua b. Levi said. For R. Joshua b. Levi said: Why were they called men of the Great Synod? Because they restored the crown of the divine attributes to its ancient com-

(1) Zech. V. 8. (2) The evil desire, for idolatry is also the evil desire for immorality. The two were found to go hand in hand. (3) Whereas there is no good in idolatry there is at least some good in the desire for sex indulgence. Perpetuation of the race depends upon it. So does human food. The people who found themselves with the opportunity to destroy the temptation of flesh-love discovered that, when the genius of sex-love is cancelled, no eggs are available. (4) To ask that temptation or the tempter should live, but not tempt, is to ask a thing that Heaven will not grant. The tempter lives to tempt. But by depriving its flame of its major glare, by keeping it within lawful limits, one promotes domesticity and prevents depravity. (5) Lit., 'against relatives'. (6) [On the variant given *supra* p. 327, n. 6, the reference is to 'great' mentioned in Neh. IX. 4.] (7) *Ibid.* 32.

pleteness.<sup>1</sup> [For] Moses had come and said: *The great God, the mighty, and the awful.*<sup>2</sup> Then Jeremiah came and said: Aliens are destroying His Temple. Where are, then, His awful deeds? Hence he omitted<sup>4</sup> [the attribute] the 'awful'. Daniel came and said: Aliens are enslaving his sons. Where are His mighty deeds? Hence he omitted the word's 'mighty'. But they came and said: On the contrary! Therein lie His mighty deeds that He suppresses His wrath,<sup>6</sup> that He extends long-suffering to the wicked. Therein lie His awful powers: For but for the fear of Him, how could one [single] nation persist among the [many] nations! But how could [the earlier] Rabbis<sup>7</sup> abolish something established by Moses?—R. Eleazar said: Since they knew that the Holy One, blessed be He, insists on truth, they would not ascribe false [things] to Him.<sup>8</sup>

AND HE READ: 'AFTER THE DEATH' AND 'HOWBEIT ON THE TENTH DAY': A question was raised: One may skip in reading from the Prophets, but one may not skip in reading from the Torah!<sup>9</sup>—That is no difficulty: The one [prohibition] applies where [the passage skipped is] sufficiently long to interrupt the interpreter, the other where it is not sufficiently long to interrupt the interpreter.<sup>10</sup>—But surely it is in connection therewith that it was taught: One may skip in reading from the Prophets, but one may not skip in reading from the Torah; and how much may be skipped [in the Prophets]? So much as is not sufficiently long to

(1) The crown, i.e., the praise of the Lord. By re-embodiment the attributes, which Jeremiah and Daniel had omitted. (2) Deut. X. 17. (3) Or, reveal in. (4) In his prayer, Jer. XXXII. 17f. (5) In his prayer, Dan. IX. 4ff. (6) So MS.M. cur. edd. He subdues his inclination. (7) Jeremiah, Daniel. (8) Since to them the circumstances indicated that He desired to hide His mighty or awful deeds. (9) Meg. 24a. (10) The interpreter would follow immediately the reader. If the rolling did not involve so much time that, at the end of his interpretation of the passage just read, the interpreter would have to stop to await the reading of the new Hebrew passage, well and good. For to keep the congregation waiting for the continuation of the service is unseemly. But 'Howbeit on the tenth day' is so near Lev. XVI, that before the interpreter would have concluded his Aramaic interpretation of the last Hebrew passage, the new passage would have been started and read, for him to interpret without loss of time.

אמר רבי עקיבא פרק תשיעי שבת

פח רבינו הגאון

לרבנן ח' חמרים עבוד. ולא היו בין פסח דאשחקך לפסח דהאידנא אלא ב' ימים ונתמלא דאשחקך בע"פ: כעני עולם מפס. וזמנו וחלום האו לי וירד ואידי: כג' עולם. ושמע אבבלה וירד ואידי: כד' צפ"ק דמס' ע"ז (דף ג'): כלום כפיט עליה דרבי כניגיה דמקמנע ולא ירד. להפרישם: וטוב לא עולם. עד קבלה הדבחות שעלו טלס: וזמנא עלא עולם מטיין ירד. דלמא' תורה אור

לרבנן ח' חמרים עבוד ת"ש דתניא בסדר עולם ניסן שבו יצאו ישראל ממצרים בארבעה עשר שחמו פסחיהן בחמשה עשר יצאו ואותו היום ע"ש היה ומדריש ירחא דניסן ערב שבת ריש ירחא דאייר חד בשבא וסיון בתרי בשבא קשיא לר' יוסי אמר לך ר' יוסי הא מני רבנן היא ת"ש רבי יוסי אומר בשני עלה משה וירד בשלישי עלה וירד בד' ירד ושוב לא עלה ומאדיר שלא עלה מהיכן ירד אלא ברביעי עלה וירד בחמישי בנה מוזהב והקריב עליו קרבן בשש לא היה לו פנאי מאי לאו משום תורה לא משום מורה שבת דרש ההוא גלילאה עליה דרב חמא בריך רחמנא דיהב אוריין תליתיא לעם תליתיא על ידי תליתיא ביום תליתיא בירחא תליתיא כמאן כרבנן: יוסי יצבו בתרתיה דהר א"ר אבדימי בר חמא בר חמא מלמד שבפח הקב"ה עליהם את ההר כניגיה ואמר להם אם אתם מקבלים התורה מוטב ואם לאו שם תהא קבורתכם א"ר אחא בר יעקב כמאן מודעא רבה לאורייתא אמר רבא (א) אעפ"כ הדרו קבלוה בימי אחשורוש דכתיב קימו וקבלו היהודים קיימו מה שקיבלו כבר אמר חוקיה מאי דכתיב משמים השמעת דין ארץ יראה ושקמה אם יראה למה שקמה ולא שקמה למה יראה אלא בתחילה יראה ולכסוף שקמה ולמה יראה בדריש לקיש דאמר ר' ייש לקיש מאי דכתיב ויהי ערב ויהי בקר יום הששי ה' יתירה למה לי מלמד שהתנה הקב"ה עם מעשה בראשית ואמר להם אם ישראל מקבלים התורה אחם מתקיימן ואם לאו אני מחויר אחכם לחורו ובוהן דרש ר' סימאי בשעה שהקרימו ישראל געשה לנשבע באו ששים ריבוא של מלאכי השרת לכל אחד ואחד מישאל קשרו לו שני כתרים אחד כנגד געשה ואחד כנגד נשבע וכיון שהמאו ישראל ירדו מאה ועשרים ריבוא מלאכי השרת חבלה ופירקום שנאמר ויתנצלו בני ישראל את עדים מהר החרב א"ר חמא בר' חנינא בחורב מענו בחורב פרקו בחורב מענו כראבין בחורב פרקו דכתיב ויתנצלו בני ישראל וגו' א"ר יוחנן וכולן זכה משה ונטלן דמפך ליה ומשה יקח את האהל אמר ר' עתיד הקב"ה יתחווין לנו שנאמר ופדונו ה' ישוהבן ובאו ציון ברנה ושמחת עולם על ראשם שמחה שמעולם על ראשם אמר רבי אלעזר בשעה שהקרימו ישראל געשה לנשבע יצחה בת קול ואמרה להן מי גילה לבני רז זה שמלאכי השרת משתמשין בו דכתיב וברכו ה' מלאכיו גבורי כח עושי דברו לשמוע א"ר חמא ברבי חנינא מ"ד כחפוח בעצי היער וגו' למה נמשלו ישראל לחפוח לומר לך מה תפוח זה פרוי קודם לעלו אף ישראל הקדימו געשה לנשבע והוא צדוקי דהויה לרבא דקא מעיין בשמעהא ויתבה אצבעתא דידיה רוחי כרעא וקא מייץ בהו וקא מבען אצבעתיה רבא \*א"ל עמא פויוא דקדמתו פומימי לאודנייכו אכתי בפחותייכו קיימיתו ברישא איבעי' לכו למשמיי אי מציתו קבליהו ואי לא קבליהו א"ל אנן רבנן

אחר מלא ואחר חסר דרו' שלמי ושבת חסין ורוי וימי דשבת שרד דנאכלן ש"ט טנחון בשבועי ומשחירין ד' אכל כדדו בה' חסין ורוי אולין שבעי משחירין ריש טפן דשניתי יום אחר בשבת והנה בראשונה ח' חסין היו טפן בראשונה בחמשה וסיון בהר בשבא כ"י יום וזו הוי בשבת ראשונה שנת חסין והו' יוסא ע"ב שחירוי מינה תרין וכד הוי ראשון שניתי בהר בשבא דיי ראש טפן שנה ראשונה בטעלי שבתא וראש טפן תרין בשבא כרבנן. ותני אין פתחין סאדבעה חדשים דמערבין בשנת ובר' חסין ד' סנוברין וזו' חסורין וא"י טפן דפריש ולא נראה להכניס להר אתר על שנתו: ח' ע"ש רבי יוסי אומר כעט עלה וירד פי' שני לחניןן בפדור סיני ובשלישי עלה וירד וברביעי כי תדענה עלה וירד ובחמישי בנת טובה ותקייב עליו קרבן בשש לא היה לו פנאי ורוי לאו דהוא יום שבת והנהו בו תורה. ומיעתא לרבנן ורוי ר' יוסי לא אלא ר' יוסי ופריש בהר דשבת לא היה לו פנאי: דר' ויהיה גלילאה עלי' וירד חסין בריך רחמנא דיהב אוריין תליתיא ע"י תליתיא לעם תליתיא ביום תליתיא בירחא תליתיא ויחיד רבנן דטרוחין ורסין כמאן כרבנן ויסייעא דרבנן סן ביום תליתיא יום ג' לפרישה. דא"ל א"ל בחמשה עובי להו פריש כמאן כרבנן ותרין כשבא דת"ר טפן ובשש בו נתנה תורה ומפריש פלוגתא נמי כעט דשבעת ימים. צליחתא בלשון ישמעאל א' שקיק. פ' זילת תוורד שערין סצור נפוצטבען וירד וקורין אותו וירד וכן אפרו (כסותה) לענין יצאת וראשה פרועת ומחא בשוק כמות וירד כעט פניה. ובלשון פרס נקרא טלפן טרע בכלל:

פ"ו קודם לעלו. הקשה ר"ח שהרי אט רואים שגדלשאר חילנות ומפרס דתפוח היעי לחמוג וריח חפך כתפוחים מהמגמין ככריחא דלחמוגא ודחמוג פרוי קודם לעלו שרד באלין משנה לטסה ודחמוג טנה עשרין עליו וז' אשחקך ובאלין עליו חמרים הוי פרוי קודם לחמוג עלים אך תינה שנוביח קרא כחפוח בעלי הערד דכתיב קרא לא נמשט ישראל לתפוח אלא הקב"ה כדכתיב קן דודי בין הננים וקרא דריח חפך כתפוחים (פיר' ו) הוא ליה לחמוג טפי: ואל

דכניגין לחפוח לומר לך מה תפוח זה פרוי קודם לעלו אף ישראל הקדימו געשה לנשבע והוא צדוקי דהויה לרבא דקא מעיין בשמעהא ויתבה אצבעתא דידיה רוחי כרעא וקא מייץ בהו וקא מבען אצבעתיה רבא \*א"ל עמא פויוא דקדמתו פומימי לאודנייכו אכתי בפחותייכו קיימיתו ברישא איבעי' לכו למשמיי אי מציתו קבליהו ואי לא קבליהו א"ל אנן רבנן

תורה אור

פ"ו כ"י ע"ט

פ"ו כ"י ע"ט

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a leap year, five [days].<sup>1</sup> Hence the first of Iyar must have fallen on the eve of the Sabbath [Friday], and the first of Siwan on the Sabbath, which is a difficulty according to both R. Jose and the Rabbis?—In R. Jose's view, seven months were declared defective;<sup>2</sup> [88a] in that of the Rabbis', eight months were declared defective.<sup>3</sup>

Come and hear: For it was taught in the Seder 'Olam:<sup>4</sup> As to the Nisan in which the Israelites departed from Egypt, on the fourteenth they slaughtered their Passover sacrifices, on the fifteenth they went out, and that day was the Sabbath eve. Now, since the first of Nisan was the Sabbath eve, the first of Iyar was on a Sunday, and [the first of] Siwan on a Monday. This is a difficulty according to R. Jose?—R. Jose answers you: This agrees with the Rabbis.

Come and hear: R. Jose said: On the second day Moses ascended and descended;<sup>5</sup> on the third he ascended and descended;<sup>6</sup> on the fourth he descended and ascended no more.<sup>7</sup> But since he did not go up,<sup>8</sup> whence did he descend?—Rather [say.] on the fourth he ascended and descended; on the fifth he built an altar and offered a sacrifice thereon; [but] on the sixth he had no time. Surely that was on account of [the giving of] the Torah?<sup>9</sup>—No: it was on account of the preparations for<sup>10</sup> the Sabbath.<sup>11</sup>

A certain Galilean lectured before R. Hisda:<sup>12</sup> Blessed be the

(1) An extra month of twenty-nine days being intercalated. (2) So there was a difference of *three* days, not four, that year consisting of three hundred and fifty-three days, which makes the first of Siwan fall on a Sunday. (3) Hence the year consisted of three hundred and fifty-two days, and the first of Siwan fell on a Monday. (4) The Seder 'Olam is the earliest extant post-exilic chronicle in Hebrew, and is a chronological record extending from Adam to Bar Kochba's revolt during the reign of Hadrian. Most scholars are agreed in assigning its authorship to R. Halafta, a Tanna of the first century, on the strength of a statement by R. Johanan in Yeb. 82b. V. J.E., art. Seder 'Olam Rabbah. (5) Hearing, 'and ye shall be . . . a kingdom of priests' and telling it to the people. (6) Being given the order to set boundaries. (7) Until the Revelation. (8) On the fourth (9) Which supports the Rabbis that the Torah was given on the sixth of the month. (10) Lit., 'trouble of'. (11) The sixth of the month being Friday, the eve of the Sabbath. (12) In the public lectures or sermons the scholar sat and whispered his statements to a speaker, who conveyed them to the people; this Galilean was probably R. Hisda's speaker (generally referred to as 'meturgeman').

Merciful One who gave a three-fold Torah<sup>1</sup> to a three-fold people<sup>2</sup> through a third[-born]; on the third day<sup>4</sup> in the third month. With whom does this agree? With the Rabbis.<sup>5</sup>

[And they stood under the mount:<sup>6</sup> R. Abdimi b. Hama b. Hasa said: This teaches that the Holy One, blessed be He, overturned the mountain upon them like an [inverted] cask, and said to them, 'If ye accept the Torah, 'tis well; if not, there shall be your burial.' R. Aha b. Jacob observed: This furnishes a strong protest against the Torah.<sup>7</sup> Said Raba, Yet even so, they re-accepted it in the days of Ahasuerus, for it is written, [the Jews] confirmed, and took upon them [etc.];<sup>8</sup> [i.e.,] they confirmed what they had accepted long before. Hezekiah said: What is meant by, 'Thou didst cause sentence to be heard from Heaven; The earth feared, and was tranquil;<sup>9</sup> if it feared, why was it tranquil, and if it was tranquil, why did it fear? But at first it feared, yet subsequently it was tranquil.<sup>10</sup> And why did it fear?—Even in accordance with Resh Lakish. For Resh Lakish said: Why is it written, And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.<sup>11</sup> What is the purpose of the additional 'the'?<sup>12</sup> This teaches that the Holy One, blessed be He, stipulated with the Works of Creation and said thereto, 'If Israel accepts the Torah, ye shall exist; but if not, I will turn you back into emptiness and formlessness.'<sup>13</sup>

R. Simai lectured: When the Israelites gave precedence to 'we

(1) I.e., the Torah (Pentateuch), Prophets and Hagiographa. (2) Israel consisting of Priests, Levites, and Israelites. (3) St. Moses, born third after Miriam and Aaron. (4) Of their separation from their wives. (5) For according to R. Jose it was on the fourth day of their separation, Moses having added a day [supra Syria]. (6) Ex. XIX. 17. The translation is literal. E. V. *neither part*. (7) It provides an excuse for non-observance, since it was forcibly imposed in the first place. (8) Esth. IX. 27. (9) Ps. LXXVI. 9. (10) It feared lest Israel would reject the Torah, and became tranquil when Israel accepted it. (11) Gen. I. 5. (12) In the case of the other days it is simply stated, a second day, a third day, etc., 'a' being altogether unexpressed in Hebrew. (13) He thus translates homiletically; and the continuance of morning and evening was depended on the sixth day, *sc.* of Siwan, when Israel was offered the Torah. The general idea is: Without law and order as exemplified by the Torah the world must lapse into chaos and anarchy.



of two [evil] things that prevailed there, immorality and contemptuous treatment of sanctified objects. [Proof that] immorality prevailed because it is written, *Now Eli was very old, and he heard all that his sons did unto Israel, and how that they lay with the women that did service at the door of the tent of meeting.* Notwithstanding R. Samuel b. Nahmani who said in the name of R. Johanan: Who-soever says, 'The sons of Eli sinned' is but mistaken; it is [9b] because they delayed offering up their sacrificial<sup>2</sup> birds Scripture accounts it to them as if they had lain with them. The [sacred] offerings were treated contemptuously, as it is written,<sup>3</sup> *Yea, before the fat was made to smoke, the priest's servant came and said to the man that sacrificed: 'Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw.'* And if the man said unto him: 'Let the fat be made to smoke first of all, and then take as much as thy soul desireth'; then he would say: 'Nay, but thou shalt give it me now, and if not, I will take it by force.' And the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord; for the men dealt contemptuously with the offering of the Lord.

Why was the first Sanctuary destroyed? Because of three [evil] things which prevailed there: idolatry, immorality, bloodshed. Idolatry, as it is written: *For the bed is too short for a man to stretch himself and the covering too narrow when he gathereth himself up.*<sup>4</sup> What is the meaning of 'For the bed is too short for a man to stretch himself'? R. Jonathan said: It is: This bed is too short for two neighbours to stretch themselves. And [what is the meaning of] 'the covering too narrow when he gathereth himself up'?—R. Samuel b. Nahmani said: When R. Jonathan [in his reading] came to this passage, he would cry and say: To Him, concerning Whom it is written, *He gathereth the waters of the sea together like a heap,*<sup>6</sup> the cover became too narrow!

(1) As the text indicates. The same apologetics are elsewhere used to defend Reuben, the sons of Samuel, David, Solomon. (Shab. 53b). (2) Lev. XII, 8. (3) I Sam. II, 15-17. (4) Isa. XXVIII, 20. (5) Manasseh the faithless king, introduced idols into the very Sanctuary. There was no room for the God of Israel, together with an idol, in his one Sanctuary. (6) Ps. XXXIII, 7. The ad hoc exposition here is either: 'On his cover (the idol) became His rival,' or 'The cover itself, used for idolatrous purposes, thus became His rival,' the cover here standing for the Sanctuary.

Immorality [prevailed] as it is written: *Moreover the Lord said: Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and make a tinkling with their feet.*<sup>1</sup> 'Because the daughters of Zion are haughty', i.e., they used to walk with proud carriage. 'And wanton eyes' i.e., they filled their eyes with kohl.<sup>2</sup> 'Walking and mincing as they go', i.e., they used to walk with the heel touching the toe. 'And make a tinkling with their feet', R. Isaac said: They would take myrrh and balsam and place it in their shoes and when they came near the young men of Israel they would kick, causing the balsam to squirt at them and would thus cause the evil desire to enter them like an adder's poison.

Bloodshed [prevailed] as it is written: *Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another.*<sup>4</sup> They were wicked, but they placed their trust in the Holy One, blessed be He.<sup>5</sup> For it is written, *The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord and say: 'Is not the Lord in the midst of us? No evil shall come upon us.'*<sup>6</sup> Therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, brought them three evil decrees as against the three evils which were their own:<sup>7</sup> *Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.* But why was the second Sanctuary destroyed, seeing that in its time they were occupying themselves with Torah, [observance of] precepts, and the practice of charity? Because therein prevailed hatred without cause. That teaches you that groundless hatred is considered as of even gravity with the three sins of idolatry, immorality, and bloodshed together. And [during the time of] the first Sanc-

(1) Isa. III, 16. (2) A powder used for painting the eyelids, stibium (fastrow). (3) Baḥ<sup>1</sup> interpolates here: and walking around in the streets of Jerusalem and when they came near etc., v. D.S. (4) II Kings XXI, 16. (5) The text as it stands is in need of correction. The present rearrangement based on text in parallel passages (v. D.S.) is adopted by Baḥ<sup>1</sup>. [Cur. edd. insert: 'This refers to the first Sanctuary'. This, on the rearrangement of the text adopted (v. n. 5), is evidently superfluous. V. D.S.] (6) Micah III, 11. (7) Ibid. 12.

tuary did no groundless hatred prevail? Surely it is written: *They are thrust down to the sword with my people; smite therefore upon my thigh,*<sup>1</sup> and R. Eleazar said: This refers to people who eat and drink together and then thrust each other through with the daggers of their tongue!—That [passage] speaks of the princes in Israel, for it is written: *Cry and wail, son of man; for it is upon my people,*<sup>2</sup> etc. [The text reads] *Cry and wail, son of man*. One might have assumed [it is upon] all [Israel], therefore it goes on, *Upon all the princes of Israel*.

R. Johanan and R. Eleazar both say: The former ones whose iniquity was revealed<sup>3</sup> had their end<sup>4</sup> revealed, the latter ones whose iniquity was not revealed have their end still unrevealed. R. Johanan said: The fingernail of the earlier generations<sup>5</sup> is better than the whole<sup>6</sup> body of the later generations. Said Resh Lakish to him: On the contrary, the latter generations are better,<sup>6</sup> although they are oppressed by the governments, they are oppressing themselves with the Torah.—He [R. Johanan] replied: The Sanctuary will prove [my point] for it came back to the former generations, but not to the latter ones.

The question was put to R. Eleazar: Were the earlier generations better, or the later ones?—He answered: Look upon the Sanctuary! Some say he answered: The Sanctuary is your witness [in this matter].<sup>7</sup>

Resh Lakish was swimming in the Jordan. Thereupon Rabbah b. Bar Hana came and gave him the hand.<sup>8</sup> Said [Resh Lakish] to him: By God! I hate you. For it is written: *If she be a wall, we*

(1) Ezek. XXI, 17. (2) 'Who did not hide their misdeeds' (Rashi). (3) I.e., the end of their captivity. Jer. XXIX, 10: *For thus saith the Lord: After seventy years are accomplished in Babylon, I will remember you and perform My good word to you, in causing you to return to this place.* (4) The earlier generations are, of course, those of the first Temple, the later ones Israel since the second destruction. (5) Lit., 'the belly'. (6) Or 'better off'. There is a slight shift in the argument. R. Johanan had referred to their value, Resh Lakish to their political and moral condition. (7) It came back to them after the first destruction, it has not come back to us as yet. There is only a slight difference in Hebrew between the two versions *נראה* and *נראה*. (8) [To help Resh Lakish out of the water. V. D.S. a.l. n. 100.]

*will build upon her a turret of silver; if she be a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar.*<sup>1</sup> Had you made yourself like a wall and had all come up in the days of Ezra, you would have been compared to silver, which no rottenness can ever affect. Now that you have come up like doors,<sup>2</sup> you are like cedarwood, which rottenness prevails over. What is *erez* ['cedar']?—'Ulla said: It is *sasmagor*.<sup>3</sup> What is *sasmagor*?—R. Abba says it is the divine<sup>4</sup> voice as it has been taught: After the later prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi had died, the Holy Spirit<sup>5</sup> departed from Israel, but they still availed themselves of the *Bath Kol*.<sup>6</sup>—But did Resh Lakish talk with Rabbah b. Bar Hana?<sup>7</sup> Even with R. Eleazar, who was the master of the land of Israel, Resh Lakish did not converse<sup>8</sup> [for anyone with whom Resh Lakish conversed in the street could get merchandise without witnesses]<sup>9</sup> would he engage in conversation with Rabbah b. Bar Hana?—R. Papa said: 'Throw a man between them'.<sup>10</sup> It was either Resh Lakish and Ze'in or Rabbah b. Bar Hana and R. Eleazar.<sup>11</sup> When he [Resh Lakish] came before R. Johanan, he said to him: This is not the reason.<sup>12</sup> Even if they had all come up in the time of Ezra, the Divine Presence would not have rested over the second Sanctuary, for it

(1) Cant. VIII, 9. (2) A wall is of one piece, a door, a gate at least of two. Had Israel come from Babylon, not in parts, but at once, Jewry in Palestine may have been found worthy of a restoration of the Sanctuary. (3) Perhaps a comp. of *sas* and *magor-magorath* i.e., a sawing worm. BaH reads: The worm destroys and saws it off from within. (4) *Beith Kol* (v. Glos.). Just as some part of the cedar is unaffected by the worm, surviving the ruin, so was the gift of the divine voice a remnant of God's grace, even after the destruction. V., however, Cant. Rab. VIII, 11. (5) Of prophecy. (6) V. Sot. 48b. (7) [In the street, v. *infra*.] (8) Tosaf. a.l. suggests that he would not address R. Eleazar, but would, of course, offer him the courtesy of a reply, when addressed by him; an example is cited from Zeb. 5a. (9) One would trust the honesty of a man whom Resh Lakish honoured by engaging him in public conversation. (10) Change the account by substituting one other man for one of the persons mentioned in the original account. (11) If Resh Lakish was the swimmer, make Ze'in the other man; or Rabbah b. Bar Hana offered the hand and R. Eleazar was the swimmer (Rashi). [*Aliter*: Or Rabbah b. Bar Hana (who was a Palestinian) was the swimmer, and R. Eleazar (who was a Babylonian) offered the hand, v. Hyman, *Toledoth*, p. 1076.] (12) Your complaint was unjustified.

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the world—for the crime of being. In 1941 the phase of mass murder began.

As the attack developed, the Nazis unleashed all-out violence against the covenant as well. The values and affirmations of the covenant were totally opposed, indeed reversed, even as the covenant people were killed. Jewish holy days were violated with roundups, *Aktionen*, selections and evil decrees. The Warsaw Ghetto was enclosed on Yom Kippur, 1940. Deportations from Warsaw to Treblinka death camp at the rate of 6,000, then 10,000 a day were begun on Tisha B'Av, 1942. The final destruction of the Ghetto was scheduled for Passover, 1943. Public prayer was prohibited in Warsaw in 1940. Keeping the Sabbath became impossible because forced labor was required on that day. Education was forbidden; newspapers were closed; libraries confiscated.

The assault on Jewish life and values became total. Einsatzgruppen (shooting squads) were deemed too slow, too costly, too problematic. The search for cheaper, swifter killing methods led to use of zyklon B gas, an insecticide, in the Auschwitz gas chambers. To bring the cost down, the amount of gas used was cut in half the summer of 1944. This doubled the time of agonizing death, a death marked by asphyxiation, with damage to the centers of respiration, accompanied by feelings of fear, dizziness, and vomiting. Jews were impressed into service to round up other Jews for transport. The alternative was death or being sent themselves. Parents were pitted against children and children against parents for survival. A food ration of 800 calories per day was established in the ghettos, in a climate where working people need 3,000 calories per day. But the amount of food needed to supply even the official caloric standard was never delivered. Kosher slaughter was banned.

The degree of success of this attack constitutes a fundamental contradiction to the covenant of life and redemption. In Kovno, pregnancy was prohibited on pain of death. In Treblinka and Auschwitz, children were automatically selected for gassing upon arrival (except for some twins and others selected for medical experimentation). The Jewish covenant pledges that human life is of infinite value. As the killing frenzy intensified, thousands of Jewish children were thrown directly into the crematoria or burning pits in Auschwitz to economize on gas. Still another time, the gas chambers were full of adults, so several thousand children were gathered and burned alive. The sonderkommando prisoner testified about this as follows:

When one of the SS sort of had pity on upon the children, he would take a child and beat the head against a stone before putting it on the pile of fire and

wood, so that the child lost consciousness. However, the regular way they did it was by just throwing the children onto the pile. They would put a sheet of wood there, then sprinkle the whole thing with petrol, then wood again, and petrol and wood and petrol—and then they placed the children there. Then the whole thing was lighted.<sup>51</sup>

"Could there be a more total despair than that generated by the evil of children witnessing the murder of other children...being absolutely aware that they face the identical fate...there is now a Godforsakenness of Jewish children that is the final horror."<sup>52</sup> Does not despair triumph over hope in such a moment?

Since there can be no covenant without the covenant people, is not the covenant shattered in this event? In Elie Wiesel's words: "The Jewish people entered into a covenant with God. We were to protect His Torah, and He in turn assumes responsibility for Israel's presence in the world...Well, it seems, for the first time in history, this very covenant is broken."<sup>53</sup> Or as Jacob Glatstein put it: "We received the Torah at Sinai/and in Lublin we gave it back/Dead men don't praise God/The Torah was given to the Living."<sup>54</sup> In response to the Destruction of the Temple, the Talmudic Rabbis said: "*Mi Kamocha ba'ilmin HaShem?*" ("Who is like you among the silent, O God?") instead of "*Mi Kamocha ba'elim HaShem?*" ("Who is like You among the mighty, O God?")<sup>55</sup> Today would they not say what Glatstein said?

By every logical standard, Weisel and Glatstein are right. The crisis of the covenant runs deep; one must consider the possibility that it is over. Had the Holocaust stood alone, would not affirmations of the covenant of redemption appear to be mockery or illusion?

A. Roy Eckardt was pointed to yet another dimension of the crisis. In retrospect, the divine assignment to the Jews was untenable. In the covenant, Jews were called as witness to the world for God and for a final perfection. In light of the Holocaust, it is obvious that this role opened the Jews to a murderous fury from which there was no escape. Yet the Divine could not or would not save them from this fate. Therefore, morally speaking, God must repent of the covenant, i.e., do *teshuvah* for having given his chosen people a task that was unbearably cruel and dangerous without having provided for their protection.<sup>56</sup> Morally speaking, then, God can have no claims on the Jews by dint of the covenant.

The fundamental shift in the nature of the covenant can be put yet another way. It can no longer be commanded. Covenantally speaking, one cannot *order* another to step forward to die. One can give an order like this to an enemy, but in a moral relationship, one cannot demand the giving



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of the other's life. One can ask such a sacrifice, but one cannot order it. To use another image of Elie Wiesel's: when God gave us a mission, that was all right. But God failed to tell us that it was a suicide mission.<sup>57\*</sup> One cannot order another to go on a suicide mission. Out of shared values, one can only ask for volunteers. Similarly, God can no longer enforce or educate for the covenant by punishment. The most horrifying of the curses and punishments threatened in the Torah for failing to live up to the covenant pale by comparison with what was done in the Holocaust. All Jews now know that by being Jewish they expose not only themselves but their children and even grandchildren to ultimate danger and agony.<sup>58\*</sup> No divine punishment can enforce the covenant, for there is no risked punishment so terrible that it can match the punishment risked by continuing faithfulness to the covenant. If the Jews keep the covenant after the Holocaust, then it can no longer be for the reason that it is commanded or because it is enforced by reward or punishment.

#### The Assumption of the Covenant

But do the Jews keep the covenant? There were a significant number of suicides among survivors who so despaired that they could not live on without their lost loves, lost families, lost faith. Still others converted or ran away from the Jews to assimilate and pass among the Gentiles and so tried to shake off the danger and pain of being a Jew. But the overwhelming majority of survivors, far from yielding to despair, rebuilt Jewish lives and took part in the assumption of power by the Jewish people. For many of them, refusal to go anywhere but Israel meant years of waiting in DP camps, or a miserable risky trip in crowded, leaky, and unseaworthy boats to Israel or internment in refugee camps in Cyprus and Mauritius. Was there ever faith like this faith?

The Jewish people overwhelmingly chose to recreate Jewish life, to go on with Jewish testimony after the Holocaust. What is the decision to have children but an incredible statement of hope, of unbroken will to redemption, of belief that the world will still be perfected—so that it is worth bringing a child into this world. When there was no hope, as in Kovno or Warsaw in 1943-44 the birth rate dropped precipitously to a ratio of less than 1 to 40 deaths. Logically, assimilated Jews should have gone even further with assimilation once they heard about the Holocaust for thus they could try to rid themselves of the dangers of being Jewish. Instead, hundreds of thousands of them opted to become more Jewish. Committed Jews have responded by the largest outpouring of charity and concern for other Jews in history. Observant, learned Jews have recreated *yeshivot* and Torah study so that

today more people study *Torah/Talmud* full time than ever before in Jewish history, and that includes the Golden Age of Spain and the heyday of East European Jewry.

By every right, the Jews should have questioned or rejected the covenant. If the crisis of the First Destruction was whether God had rejected the covenant, then the crisis that opens the third stage of the covenant is whether the Jewish people would reject the covenant. In fact, the bulk of Jews, observant and non-observant alike, acted to recreate the greatest Biblical symbol validating the covenant, the State of Israel. "The reborn State of Israel is this fundamental act of life and meaning of the Jewish people after Auschwitz... The most bitterly secular atheist involved in Israel's upbuilding is the front line of the messianic life force struggling to give renewed testimony to the Exodus as ultimate reality."<sup>59</sup>

What then happened to the covenant? I submit that its authority was broken<sup>60\*</sup> but the Jewish people, released from its obligations, chose voluntarily to take it on again. We are living in the age of the renewal of the covenant. God was no longer in a position to command, but the Jewish people was so in love with the dream of redemption that it volunteered to carry on its mission.

When the Jewish people accepted the covenant, they had no way to measure what the cost might be. The *Midrash* repeatedly praises the Israelites' response to the offer of the covenant, "We will do and we will listen,"<sup>61</sup> as amazing. As the cost of faithfulness increased, the Jews might have withdrawn and cut their losses. In fact, in this era, their faithfulness proved unlimited. Their commitment transcended all advantages of utilitarian considerations. They had committed their very being.<sup>62\*</sup>

In Soloveitchik's words, the covenant turned out to be a covenant of being, not doing.<sup>63</sup> The purpose of the Jewish covenant is to realize the total possibility of being. It is not like a utilitarian contract designed to achieve limited ends where, if the advantage is lost, the agreement is dropped. The Jewish covenant is a commitment, out of faith, to achieve a final perfection of being. Faith sees the risks but knows that without the risks the goal can never be realized. Covenanted living, like marriage or having children, is an open ended commitment, for the risks are great and one never knows what pain, suffering, danger or loneliness one is taking on. Faith in the final perfection involves seeing what is, but also what could be, precisely because life is rooted in the ground of the Divine and we do have a promise of redemption. Out of this faith comes the courage to commit.

The crisis of the Holocaust was that not in their wildest dreams did Jews imagine that this kind of pain and

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destruction was the price of the covenant. Nor did they realize that the covenant might unfold to the point where God would ask them to take full responsibility and unlimited risks for it. Yet, in the ultimate test of the Jews' faithfulness to the covenant, the Jewish people, regardless of ritual-observance level, responded with a reacceptance of the covenant, out of free will and love. For some, it was love of God; for others, love of the covenant and the goal; for others, love of the people or of the memories of the covenantal way. In truth, it hardly matters because the three are inseparable in walking the covenantal way.<sup>64</sup>

If the covenant is not over, then what does the Holocaust reveal about the nature of the covenant? What is the message to us when the Divine Presence was in Auschwitz, suffering, burning, starving yet despite the most desperate pleas, failing to stop the Holocaust?

The Divine Presence need not speak through prophets or Rabbis. The Presence speaks for Itself. If the message of the Destruction of the Temple was that the Jews were called to greater partnership and responsibility in the covenant, then the Holocaust is an even more drastic call for total Jewish responsibility for the covenant. If after the Temple's destruction, Israel moved from junior participant to true partner in the covenant, then after the Holocaust, the Jewish people is called upon to become the senior partner in action. In effect, God was saying to humans: you stop the Holocaust. You bring the redemption. You act to ensure that it will never again occur. I will be with you totally in whatever you do, wherever you go, whatever happens, but you must do it. And the Jewish people heard this call and responded by taking responsibility and creating the State of Israel. Thereby, the people took power into its hands to stop another Holocaust as best it could.

The decision to create a Jewish state is also a decision to create a society and social reality in which Jews and Jewish values direct the fundamental decisions. For two thousand years, the Jewish witness to the world could only operate on the verbal level, indirectly, influencing the forces which moved the world such as Christianity, Islam, Western culture. Now Jewish actions can directly affect the historical destiny of the world. Now Jews can construct a society that can affect others by example. Israel, as a Jewish-run reality, can exemplify the joint process of human liberation and redemption. For example, Israel represents an agricultural society that utilizes limited resources, transforming desert into fertile, productive land, thus offering the way for the world to overcome poverty and hunger. Israel serves as a model of an open, educational society taking a population from pre-modern poverty and passivity and creating from it a people that assumes responsibility and increases its dignity without losing its past and its values. This is what Israel has done in

part with its Oriental Jewish immigration. Both these models are particularly significant for the Third World where the bulk of humanity struggles with the problems of poverty, fatalism and renewal of social institutions.

Of course, the politics of oil and world rivalries have isolated Israel and reduced its influence. Also, Israel itself is far from perfect and has only partially succeeded in these models. However, these limitations are congruent with the shift from powerlessness and ideal existence to exercise of power and the conquest of reality. Reality is recalcitrant and flawed, and all triumphs are partial and equivocal. It is also true that many Israelis accept the call to prevent another Holocaust, but do not accept the commitment to create a redemptive model society. In a situation of voluntary covenant, there cannot be one goal imposed from above. Rather those who accept the calling must persuade and influence the others to take part in the process.

The Jewish tradition itself has been less helpful than it could be because traditionalists have not fully taken up the challenge of the new covenantal role for Israel. Religious leaders have spent much energy trying to rebuild the pre-Destruction reality rather than sanctifying the new every day. Sometimes people say that they would respond if only they were to receive clear prophetic instruction.<sup>65</sup> But the revelation of our lifetime is so veiled and ambiguous that there is little certainty and few clear, unassailable responses. This very lack of clarity is consistent with the voluntary nature of the covenant and the new maturity of the people Israel. Anything clearer might be coercive. The redemption will become obvious only retrospectively when the Jewish people recognize it as such. Jews must take a more active role in discerning the covenant's presence and in realizing its goals. Then will the Jewish people truly have come of age in the covenant.

### Was the Holocaust Necessary?

The recognition that consciousness of the voluntary covenant grows out of the experience of the Holocaust may lead to misunderstanding. This insight may be interpreted as an affirmation of the Holocaust.<sup>66</sup> Some have argued; without the catastrophe, there would have been no State of Israel. Therefore, the Holocaust is a necessary sacrifice or blood-letting that paves the way for redemption. Similarly, some may think that since the maturation of the covenant comes out of the Holocaust, the disaster was necessary. Some may also believe that this unfolding of the covenant is an explanation of why the Holocaust happened or even some rationale for it. I reject these possibilities.

There can be no rationale for the Holocaust. If anyone