

RADIO PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 1973
JEWS MUST SURVIVE

O grant peace, happiness, blessing, grace, kindness, and mercy to all of us and to all thy people, Israel. Bless us alike our G-d with the light of Thy countenance. Indeed by the light of Thy countenance, Thou hast given us, Lord our G-d, the Torah of life, loving kindness, charity, blessing, mercy, life, and peace. May it please Thee to bless Thy people, Israel, with peace at all times and hours. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Who blesses Thy people, Israel, with peace.

Every prayer in Judaism concludes with the prayer for peace. There is not a prayer that you can find in all the liturgy of Judaism which does not stress the overwhelming importance of peace. In fact, this ends and seals in the holiest expressions of faith that the Jewish people have.

May He Who creates peace in the celestial heights, may He create peace for us and for all Israel and say ye, amen. This is the seal of the kaddish, the special prayer which the Jewish people repeat over and over again at every auspicious occasion, at every sad occasion and also at every happy occasion. It is the vision which marks different prayers in the services as well, and this prayer is repeated many times in the synagogue.

I had a friend of mine who, knowing this and knowing how much the Jews want peace and desire peace, once asked me, "Why do you Jews continue to make trouble? Why do you Jews continue to exist? After all, haven't you given your message to the world? Hasn't the world based their entire ethical and moral and religious system on your views? The western world is indebted for most of their religious heritage to you, you the people of the Bible, so why do you prevent peace in the world? Why do you prevent peace by still existing?"

This is a problem which many times is not consciously stated but which is unconsciously inferred even by people with good intentions. I have only to look back a few issues in Time magazine to read how after the

RADIO PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 1973
JEWS MUST SURVIVE
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky
PAGE TWO

Yom Kippur War, the war of this past October, broke out in Israel, how Time magazine, in describing the war and in describing what its results may be, said in a very snide way, "You know, if Israel feels itself threatened it may even use atomic weapons." It said it in such a way as to question the right of Israel to use atomic weapons to perpetuate her existence, yet I never heard Time magazine write anywhere that the United States would not have the moral authority or even the moral right to use nuclear weapons if she was attacked by a power which threatened to annihilate her. In other words, what is thought to be all right for everyone else is not thought to be all right for the Jews. Why should this be?

I think that the reason for this is that an underlying basis of western civilization is that the Jews are a superfluous people. In fact, Toinbee, in a very famous book that he published more than 15 years ago, made precisely this thesis. He said that the Jews are just a fossilized people, a people who at one time gave great things in the world, but they really only exist today as sort of a living museum, a testimony to what they did contribute to society, but, really, they have nothing much left to contribute to the world. Because I think that this is really an underlying basis of much of western thinking, I think this can explain why even today in western Europe a major concern on them is not whether or not a sovereign nation like Israel will survive, but whether or not its survival will cause them any trouble, and if it does cause trouble, then Israel really should not survive. You only have to think of what the western European countries did when Israel was threatened, when she was attacked. There was no moral indignation because Israel was attacked by the Arab army on their holiest day of the year when there are almost no men on the front line, when 90% of the people were in the synagogue and the other 10% were meditating.

RADIO PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 1973

JEWS MUST SURVIVE

Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

PAGE THREE

When the radios didn't work and all forms of communication were closed and there was almost no traffic on the streets of Israel, but, yet, there was no cry of moral indignation that a country was attacked in this sneaky fashion. There was no moral indignation that it was attacked period. The response was, this is going to endanger our oil supplies. We had better stay neutral. We had better stay even more than neutral. This is, of course, exactly what the western European countries did. When Israel's ammunition ran low and the United States offered to resupply Israel, which was, of course, greatly appreciated, the western European countries did not permit the U.S. planes to fly over their territory. In fact, they would not even let the United States load ships in their harbors with supplies to Israel. The only country which allowed the United States to ship, to tranship material from and to even have her big air force carrier planes land was Portugal. Of all the countries she was the only one which allowed the U.S. just to land at her airports on the way to Israel. On the other hand, several of the countries that are associated with NATO allowed Russia to overfly their airspace and provided them facilities in order for them to resupply the Arabs. This seems utterly incomprehensible that the western European countries could take this position knowing that it very well could mean the annihilation of Israel and the death of many, many thousands, perhaps millions, of people. Yet, it did not seem to concern them too much. I think they were under the misconception that the Jewish people are nice and we really do not want to do anything bad to them, but they really do not have nothing much left to contribute to the world and if they get in our way and hinder us from preserving those things which we think are worthwhile, then they should step aside. If they will not step aside, then they should be pushed aside, the same attitude

RADIO PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 1973
JEWS MUST SURVIVE
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky
PAGE FOUR

that perhaps one would take to a retired gentleman who tried to intrude himself into the affairs of the company. He has no business being there anymore. He is retired. He should stay out in the pasture and let us young fellows, let us people who know world politics and world history conduct our affairs.

This is really the crux of much of the problem of understanding the existence today of Israel and the existence of the Jewish people, because the Jewish people do not look upon themselves as a fossil, as a museum piece. They heartily deny this allegation that they were once good and once gave the world many important things. For example, Christianity acknowledges that almost all her early leaders, all the apostles, just about were Jewish, that most of her early leaders were Jewish, that much of what she believes comes from the Jewish sources. Of course, Mohamedism is the same way. Mohamed's wife was a Jew and his secretary was a Jew, the one who actually wrote the Koran down because Mohamed could not read nor write. His early followers were Jews, although many Jews, of course, do not accept Mohamedism. This, of course, is true throughout world history where you find other leaders who contributed greatly to the Reformation and people who contributed throughout the ages and even in our day, but, yet, for most of the world Jews and Judaism is really a relic of the past. The world has gone beyond it. This, of course, the Jews would vehemently deny. We say our existence in this world is important, not just for ourselves. It is important not just that Jewish people should exist in the world, because, after all, in many countries of the world it is very easy for Jews to assimilate. They can disappear in one generation, at most, perhaps two. To most believing Jews this would be a terrible calamity because then the world would lose something. We must remain Jews not for ourselves, but we must remain

RADIO PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 1973

JEWS MUST SURVIVE

Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

PAGE FIVE

Jews for the sake of the world. This, of course, is an idea that is very similar to the American idea, that when Abraham Lincoln would say that our country is the last best hope of the world. When we Jews in America ascribe to ourselves a certain sense of mission, it is very important that America survive in the world because if America does not survive in the world, then certain ideas, certain ways of people's self-expression would be lost. Certain basic ethical, cultural, and moral precepts would be unalterably altered, and the world would be much poorer for it, and the world, in a certain sense, would feel this loss tremendously, not just the loss of population or area, but the loss of a vibrant way of looking at life. Of course, we Jews in America are Americans, too, and we subscribe to this nation as well that America has something unique to give to the world and it would be a shame if it were lost. In fact, we have an obligation to the world to show the world what these ideas are, not to make people Americans. America has never sent missionaries overseas to make people Americans, but we have offered to share our knowledge and our ethical appreciation and our way of organizing our lives with the rest of the world so that they, too, can learn and can improve their lives. Of course, we have sent the Peace Corps overseas. We have done many other things. We feel that it is our way to show the American way to the other nations of the world, not that they should become American. Of course, we do not condemn anyone who wants to become an American for becoming an American. That person can come, of course, to this country if he likes, and after studying for five years he can take a test and if he passes that test, then, of course, he becomes an American just like every other American after appearing before a judge. This is very similar to the Jewish conception. The Jews feel that the world has not learned everything that we can teach the world about our perception of man, our perception

RADIO PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 1973
JEWS MUST SURVIVE
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky
PAGE SIX

of G-d, our perception of ethics, how people should interrelate. Judaism has already given much to the world, but we feel that we can still give much more. It is our responsibility to keep ourselves alive and to keep Judaism alive, not for ourselves but for the world because the world can benefit by what we have to say. This really explains the terrific drive that the Jews have to remain a unique religion and a unique people, not that we do not allow other people to join us. We Jews, like America, though, have no missionaries because we do not believe that it is necessary for a person to be a Jew to be what Christianity calls "saved", to get any reward that a Jew gets, to participate in any type of arrangement or future life or after life that G-d has in store for us. It is not necessary to be a Jew. It is necessary only to lead an ethical life, to obey the seven commandments of Noah, which are basically the Ten Commandments but not as difficult. One does not have to worship G-d or keep the Sabbath, but one cannot kill or steal or commit adultery, cannot be a false witness, cannot covet. One must support courts of justice and one cannot be excessively cruel. If one is a moral person then that person gets every reward that a Jew gets. If someone wants to become a Jew, he can, of course, come to a rabbi and say he wants to become a Jew. The rabbi will ask him why and tell him he will be judged harder and not easier because you should know better if you do things that are wrong, that the concept of the chosen people in Judaism means that you are chosen for service, which means that if you do something wrong it is a lot harder on you and it should be a lot harder on you than people who were not chosen for this service. It is just like we are much harder on our elected representatives than we would be on an ordinary businessman or working man or labor union leader. The important thing is that when a person is chosen for service then he must have even more rigid standards that an ordinary person must adhere

RADIO PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 1973
JEWS MUST SURVIVE
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky
PAGE SEVEN

to. This, of course, is the Jewish belief. If someone does come to a rabbi and say he wants to become a Jew, the rabbi will tell him to read a bunch of books and at the end of a year he can come before a group of rabbis, a board of three, who will ask some questions and if he is of good moral character, he will become a Jew. Jews are not a race just as Americans are not a race. America has all sorts of people of varying backgrounds who have come to her and so does Judaism. In fact, if you go to Israel you can see Jews of all sorts of sizes and shapes and colors. Judaism is not a race but it does have within it a certain way of life, a certain way of looking at history and G-d and ethical values and how people should behave. We believe that the world has not learned everything that it can from us, that there is still much that the world can learn from us. Therefore, we owe it to the world to stay alive.

This, of course, explains Jewish tenacity. That's why we Jews cannot just say we will assimilate and disappear, because then the world would suffer. The world would be poorer. The world would not be what it should be. This is, of course, the reason why we Jews throughout the world have more or less tried to help each other stay alive, because we feel that it is important for the world that we help each other, that we Jews help each other, not just that we are helping each other but that we help each other so that the world can benefit from our message. There are many people who, perhaps, look at the Bible, which the Christians call the Old Testament. Of course, we Jews do not believe in the New Testament. We consider it just like a book by Shakespeare or Milton or any other book. They look at the Old Testament and ask why we Jews do not believe what they believe. Why don't we accept Jesus? Why don't you? After all, it is from your own literature. I would have to answer them and say that really we Jews read the Bible, the Old Testament, differelty

RADIO PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 1973
JEWS MUST SURVIVE
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky
PAGE EIGHT

than you do. We make different assumptions about man. Many people do not understand why Jews cannot accept certain propositions which seem to flow so naturally from their own Bible. After all, one and one makes two. If you just go down the line you will see that if you take this principle and that principle it has to all add up to what Christians consider Christianity or what Mohamedans consider Mohamedism, that Jews seem to be either stubborn or not able to read their own literature.

This, of course, is a misconception and it flows because Judaism and Christianity make different basic assumptions about the nature of man, and not only do we make different assumptions about the nature of man, but we make different assumptions also as to what the role of the Messiah should be. The real reason why the Jews never accepted Jesus as the Messiah was because Jesus never did anything that the Jews said the Messiah should do. In order for a Messiah to be recognized in Judaism, he has to, first of all, bring world peace, and he has to end all evil in the world. According to the Jewish conception of things there are two different types of evil in the world. There is moral evil and physical evil. Moral evil is the evil that one man does to his fellow neighbor, when we cheat, when we would harm someone with our fists or our words, when we would act in an inappropriate way for a human being to act toward another human being, then we have committed moral evil. But even if we would all be angels, even if none of us would commit any type of crime or indiscretion against a fellow human being, there would still be evil in the world, because how does one animal live? One animal lives by eating another animal. The very basis of the animal world, of the universe, is violence. Not only that but we have the ravages of time. As people get older their powers weaken and their minds even slip as well as their physical faculties,

RADIO PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 1973
JEWS MUST SURVIVE
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky
PAGE NINE

so we see that there is evil even besides the evil that man does against his fellow human being, plus there are the ravages of nature, storms, tornadoes. On top of that, there is frustration. If you marry one woman you cannot marry another. If you live in Seattle you cannot live in Florida. If you decide to be a lawyer you cannot be a doctor. No matter what we do we are going to have a certain amount of frustration. Someone who is able to feel that the decision he has made is 60% right and only 40% wrong is a lucky man. Most of our decisions are, of course, 51-49%, etc. Therefore, the job of the Messiah, according to the Jewish view, is that He will end all evil, that after we have done our job and ended as much moral evil as we can, then G-d will send a Messiah Who will then end all evil, both physical and moral evil. That is why it says in Isaiah that "they will beat their swords into plowshares and they will beat their spears into pruning hooks". It also says that the lamb will be able to live with the wolf, that a baby will stick his hand in the viper's nest. After Jesus came, this was not possible, so the Jews said he could not be the Messiah because he did not do what, according to our tradition, the Messiah is supposed to do. But the Christians said of course he is the Messiah because he has come to save us from evil. Of course, here there is another concept on which Jews and Christians differ. Jews do not accept the principle of original sin, this concept that says that since the time of Adam that if man is given a choice, 6 times out of 10, he will do the evil thing, and, therefore, he needs some saving power in order to do the right thing is a concept which we Jews have never accepted. Jews believe that man has all the power right now to do good if he will only want to do good, that he is born, so to speak, neutral, that if he wants to do the right thing G-d will help him by giving him the opportunity, and if he wants to do the wrong thing, G-d will also help him by giving

him the opportunity. It is all up to him, that he has all the power within him. G-d will help him if he wants to do good, and if he wants to do bad, G-d will give him the opportunity so that he can do bad, but it is all up to him, and man can never sink so low that he does not have the power within him to rise and to do the right thing. Therefore, we do not feel any need for a saviour to come and save us from sin, as, of course, is felt in different other cultures and is felt in the Christian world. Therefore, when you talk to a Jew about "Jesus saves" he will not know what you are talking about, because he has no conception of needing extra power in order to save him from sin. As G-d said to Cain, "Sin crouches at the door, but you have the power over it. You have the power to be a good person if you want to be a good person." It is not always easy and many Jews do not succeed, just as many Christians do not succeed, but we have the power if we want to. If we do not want to, then, of course, that is a different story.

The prime problem in Judaism has always been, not where do I get the power to be good, which, it seems to me, is the prime problem in Christianity, and, of course, I am simplifying here, but the prime problem in Judaism has always been, what is good? That is why Jews and Judaism have always stressed learning because it is sometimes very difficult to determine what is the right and moral and ethical thing to do in every situation because most of the time we do not have a choice between good and evil. We have a choice between two goods. We have the demands of our family and our job and our parents, and it is all conflicting. What is the right thing in that given situation? This is a very difficult determination. That is why we have to study and learn and understand what and how we should act in the world. That is why Judaism has always stressed study. That's they have said that without study, without learning the Bible,

RADIO PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 1973

JEWS MUST SURVIVE

Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

PAGE ELEVEN

without learning various things about life and people, people cannot make moral decisions because they will never be aware of all the issues that are involved. We must always study and try to improve ourselves in a moral way, not a study of just facts or technology, but a study of how to be right given various conditions and pulls on us so that we can choose between varying goods. Unfortunately, most of us are never given the choice of absolute good against absolute evil. If we were, I think that most of us would always choose good, but the problem has always been, what is good?

The Jews have always been interested in peace and they always want peace, and they still today will utter in all their prayers, peace, peace, peace but they do not want peace that requires their suicide, that requires that they completely are destroyed and effaced from the world. In the Holocaust that happened not even 30 years ago, many Jews resisted with prayer and they resisted in a non-violent way, but this, of course, did not work against Hitler and they were swept off the world with not even a memory of their non-violent resistance written down in the books of the terrible oppressors because they did not want to give any dignity at all to the Jews. They wanted to say that he was like an animal and did not even know how to pray in the face of death. He did not even know how to confront his oppressor with dignity, which, of course, most Jewish communities did. As they went to their deaths, they went singing hymns. They went as martyrs and not as sheep. But the Jew knows that because there was a person like Hitler and a Nazi movement the world has not learned everything that it could from Judaism and from the Jewish people.

O rock of Israel, O G-d, arise and help Israel and redeem Judah in Israel as Thou hast promised. Our Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts is His name, the

RADIO PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 1973

JEWS MUST SURVIVE

Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

PAGE TWELVE

Holy One of Israel. Blessed are You, O G-d, Who redeems Israel.

It is a prime Jewish belief that G-d wants Israel to survive and the Jewish people and Judaism will survive.