

# YOM KIPPUR



## HOW FAR HAVE WE GONE

RABBI CH. U. LIPSCHITZ

*Cong. Ohev Shalom, Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Before we take leave of the synagogue tonight, we will recite the first four chapters of Psalms. For my sermon this evening will be based upon two of these Psalms.

In the second chapter of Psalms we read the deeply significant and prophetic words of "King David."

למה רגשו גוים ולאומים יהגו ריק. יתיצבו מלכי ארץ ורוזנים  
נוסדו יחד על השם ועל משיחיו.

King David, speaking to his flock of Israel comforts them in their great struggle for existence. He offers them rays of hope in their hour of conflict. He assures them that even when "all the governments of the world will rise to annihilate the Jews even their G-d and His Anointed One" — the Jew is not to worry but rely on G-d, for He will redeem them because, "the one who sits in Heaven Laughts, G-d Makes Fun of Them."

How happy and content is Israel when he reads such heavenly-inspired words. He is ready to go forth and meet his enemy with the strongest confidence of subduing and conquering him. It is the words of this nature that help the Jew in his hour of dilemma.

## TORAH & SERMON MANUAL

Now let us turn to the very next chapter of Psalms. Here we are completely bewildered; we read with great amazement.

ה' מה רבו צרי רבים קמים עלי רבים אומרים לנפשי אין  
ישועתי באלקים.

G-d, how many have my adversaries become. Many are they that rise up against me. Many are they that say to my soul, There is no help for him, in G-d.

In the preceding chapter we read of the wonderful optimistic attitude that King David so beautifully exclaims to his fellow Jews in the name of G-d. How inspired we were with his sacred message of hope and consolation.

Now suddenly we read of a drastic change in attitude. What, we ask, caused this sudden change? The answer to this paradox is my message tonight — when all men women and children are assembled here in this house of G-d. Now, at one of the holiest moments of the year, now, when we stand at the threshold of a New Year and have gathered here to beseech the Almighty for a year of happiness and contentment, now, when we come to our "Maker" and give an account of last years deeds and sins, now is the time to delve into this most earnest message.

The first chapter of Psalms depicts the struggles of the Jews with their outer enemies. Their is a continuous struggle between the Jew and the Non-Jew. When Jews have a conflict concerning the ideology of our sacred Law and tradition with non-Jews, then they can wage this war with full confidence that the One who sits in Heaven laughs, "ישב בשמים ישחק", the Jew will always emerge triumphant. Whenever and wherever the Jew shall come face to face with a non-Jew in an

## Y O M K I P P U R

ideological conflict, he will meet with great success, for "*The One Who Sits In Heaven Laughs!*"

The second chapter was written when "David had to run from Absalom, his son." When we fight our outer enemies we have nothing to fear, but when a father has to run away from a son because the son wishes to kill his father — when the son considers the teachings of his father as old fashioned dogma, when a son looks down upon his parents by saying, "They are of the Old World, I have no relationship with them," then (G-d forbid) even G-d cannot help. Our greatest catastrophe is only when a son forsakes the teaching of his parents.

During the reign of Eli Hakohen, Eli, the High Priest, our Scripture relates to us, that once Eli was sitting near the door anxiously awaiting the news from the front. The Israelites were then waging a war with the Philistines and the old Eli Hakohen, not being able to participate in the war (due to his old age) sat impatiently awaiting for some news about this conflict.

Then at once, Eli noticed, from afar, a man running. His heart was full of anxiety and anticipation. His only two sons were among the thousands of Jews combatting the Philistines. The Holy Ark where the Sacred Ten Commandments were placed, was also at the battle front and the aged Eli Hakohen looked forward anxiously for a good tidings.

This man came forward, with his clothing ripped, with a look of fear in his face and with a faltering voice. He fell at the feet of The Old Priest, Eli and exclaimed, "Thousands of Jews were captured and killed." The sage Eli sat silently and broken heartedly listened further. "Your only two sons

## TORAH & SERMON MANUAL

were killed," still the Kohen Gadol sat silently and listened. But as soon as the Kohen Gadol heard, "And the Holy Ark was confiscated by the Philistines" then the old Kohen Gadol fell back, broke his spine and died instantly.

My friends, do you know when the Old Goen and Sage dies? When there are G-d forbid, deaths or where whole segments of Israel are annihilated, it is painful beyond expression but the Jew lives and will continue to live.

When does the Jew really die? — when Judaism, G-d forbid, dies; when the Holy Ark, our most sacred and dearest possession, is confiscated by the secular trends in our lives.

We are living through a tragic era today. Our Torah, our traditions are in the hands of those who wish to obliterate it. They are literally trampling on everything that is sacred and dear to us.

My friends, now is the time to take stock of ourselves. Now is the time to ask ourselves the painful question, "How far have I strayed from the path and teachings of my parents?"

Let us resolve in the presence of G-d this holy congregation to approach closer to Him and to His teachings, to pattern our lives in the spirit of our Lord and His Law.