

# Passover Message

By MRS. SAMUEL W. HALPRIN  
(Past President of Hadassah)

Who has not quoted or heard the oft-repeated truth that "each generation must fight anew for freedom." The very repetition has given it the character of a worn-out cliché instead of a militant call to action. Still, we live at a time when in every country voices are heard calling for a rededication and commitment to the cause of freedom and of human rights for all men wherever they may live. This has been designated Human Rights Year and no mere lip service can answer the need of those for whom even the barest human rights are still a hope and not a reality. For the Jew and the Jewish people, the defense of freedom and the promotion of human rights never ceases, nor will they until persecution and the denial of human rights also cease.

Each year as the Spring season awakens the dormant life forces of nature and with it man's hopes for a better life, Jews the world over celebrate the Passover. They

## LAS VEGAS ISRAELITE

rejoice in the freedom attained. They rededicate themselves to securing those not yet attained for themselves and their fellow men. The dominant theme of the Hagaddah is liberty, the physical and spiritual liberation from bondage and enslavement.

Wherever the Hagaddah is read this year, Jews will be thinking of their brethren who cannot read it and who cannot celebrate Passover, or teach it to their children. Many governments can ill afford to permit the celebration of a festival of freedom. It might give people ideas not welcome in totalitarian regimes. It might stir emotions in prisons where so many Jews in Iraq, Syria and Egypt will, unhappily, spend this Passover.

It is no accident that so many Jewish festivals focus on the fight for freedom -- Purim, Hannukah and Pesach. At the core of each is the Jew's commitment to be free, to fulfill God's command, to pursue the quest for universal liberty. It is no accident, either, that Jews have been in the forefront of every liberal movement throughout history, designed to enable man to fulfill this high destiny.

This is the real secret of Jewish survival, tenacity and confidence. And this is the secret of Israel's extra-

ordinary, incredible successes, successes at developing a democratic society with one hand on the sword and one hand on the plough. THE Israelite does not preach, he acts. Human rights, the dignity of labor, equality of education and economic opportunity are interwoven into the very fabric of Israel's society. Israelis know that full freedom is an open-end pursuit and they pursue it in every aspect of their communal, social and economic life.

The Passover injunction that each generation must look upon itself as though it had personally experienced the redemption from slavery to freedom is a living reality in Israel. Every man, woman and child is determined that no modern-day Pharaoh will ever again enslave the Jewish people. Peace and freedom are the twin objectives of Israel. Its people can live in freedom without peace if it be necessary. Peace without freedom they will never accept. Impelled by Jewish history, by the ethics of Jewish teachings, the people of Israel pursue their quest for a society dedicated to social justice, human dignity, peace and freedom. The State of Israel will be 21 years this Spring. Its valor reawakens our people; its courage gives new meaning to Passover.

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