

Levinthal

BY RABBI SAMUEL SILVER

If you were to take a galloping poll among the rabbis of America, asking them to name our greatest preacher, chances are that the result would be almost unanimous.

"They would all chime in with the name, Levinthal."

Rabbi Israel Levinthal is indeed a master homiletician.

Not only is he a pulpiteer of the first water, but his ingenuity in extricating from Jewish sources lessons that illuminate our daily life is almost startling.

Who is Levinthal? Ask your nearest rabbi and he will tell you that he is the rabbi-founder of that bulwark of Brooklyn Judaism, the Brooklyn Jewish Center on Eastern Parkway.

One of the originals of that type of edifice known as the "shul with a pool," Brooklyn Jewish Center, since 1919, has been an example of the kind of all-embracing institution conceived by Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, who said the Jewish community should be "reconstructed" so that every phase of Jewish civilization should be centrally engendered from one democratically elected body.

Rabbi Levinthal, himself the son of an equally legendary Rabbi Levinthal, of blessed memory and of Philadelphia, recently turned 85.

Still vigorous, he is getting compliments on his latest book called "The Message of Israel", a collection of his perspicacious messages and some nostalgic reminiscences.

In one sermon Rabbi Levinthal opines that the most beautiful word ever uttered is Hinaynee, Hebrew for "Here Am I," and he reminds us of the times it was spoken by Biblical personages and how important it is for all of us to respond in this way when nobility calls.

In another sermon he tells us why a message in the prayer read on the Sabbath before Rosh Hashanah ends, "Chaverim kol Israel," comrades are what all Jews should be to one another. Why, he asks in the manner of our ages, doesn't it say that all should be achim, brothers? Because, brothers are born, but friends we must become. Mankind must surge beyond blood kinship and understand it is linked together by spiritual ties.

I am happy to add my tribute to this superb preacher. He has edified millions by his preaching; he continues to inspire, and we pray that the Lord whom he has interpreted so brilliantly will continue for many years to bless him.

US WANTS ISRAEL TERRITORIES AS IS

WASHINGTON (WNS) -- The State Department has objected to proposals by Israel's governing Labor Party that would alter the status of Arab territories seized by Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War.

Department spokesman Paul Hare reiterated U.S. opposition to any change in the territories.

The Labor Party has proposed that after the October elections additional land be acquired by the Jerusalem municipality, that Jewish settlements in the occupied areas be established and that private individuals and companies be permitted to buy land there. Meanwhile in Tel Aviv, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan said he was satisfied with the Labor party's recommendations on the territories.

SOVIET JEWS ARRIVE IN US

NEW YORK (WNS) -- Sixty-one Soviet Jews arrived at Kennedy Airport from Rome to be followed shortly by 200 more, it was announced by United Hias Service, the worldwide Jewish migration Agency.

Gilbert I. Jacobson, the agency's executive vice-president, said this marked increase in the rate of arrival of Soviet Jews can be attributed in great measure to Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson's decision to invoke his parole in behalf of 800 Soviet Jews awaiting American visas in Rome, thus speeding up paper work.

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