

23 The Crusade Chronicle of Solomon Bar Simson

In this cycle we expected redemption!

The spring months of 1096.

Jer. 31:6. The first word of the verse is Ranu, the numerical value of which is 256.

Isa. 35:10, 51:11.

See 1, esp. v. 61.

Ps. 114:1.

Hab. 1:6.

Ezek. 7:22.

Ps. 74:4.

supports the
referred to
Prov. 30:27.

Ps. 83:5.

This is the three-part formula that dominates the liturgy of Yom Kippur.

Gen. 3:24.

Esther 4:16.

Lam. 4:8.

Lam. 3:8.

Lam. 3:44.

Ps. 78:67.

2 Kings 17:18.

Exod. 32:34.

Ps. 103:20.

April 10, 1096.

April 25-26,

1096.

May 3, 1096.

Now I shall recount the development of the persecution in the rest of the [Jewish] communities that were killed for the sake of his unique Name and how they cleaved to the Lord God of their ancestors and declared his unity unto death itself.

It came to pass in the year 4856,^o the year 1028 of our exile, in the eleventh year of the two hundred and fifty-sixth cycle, during which we had hoped for salvation and comfort according to the prophecy of the prophet Jeremiah: "Cry out in joy for Jacob, shout at the crossroads of the nations!"^o Instead it was turned into "agony and sighing,"^o weeping and crying. Many evils designated in all the [passages of] rebuke—written and unwritten^o—passed over us. For then rose up initially the arrogant, "the barbaric,"^o "a fierce and impetuous people,"^o "both French and German. They set their hearts to journey to the Holy City, which had been defiled by "a ruffian people,"^o in order to seek there the sepulcher of the crucified bastard and to drive out the Muslims who dwell in the land and to conquer the land. They put on their insignia^o and placed an idolatrous sign on their clothing—the cross^o—all the men and women whose hearts impelled them to undertake the pilgrimage to the sepulcher of their messiah, to the point where they exceeded the locusts on the land—men, women, and children. With regard to them it is said: "The locusts have no king."^o

It came to pass that, when they traversed towns where there were Jews, they said to one another: "Behold we journey a long way to seek the idolatrous shrine and to take vengeance upon the Muslims. But here are the Jews dwelling among us, whose ancestors killed him and crucified him groundlessly. Let us take vengeance first upon them. Let us wipe them out as a nation; Israel's name will be mentioned no more."^o Or else let them be like us and acknowledge the son born of menstruation."

Now when the [Jewish] communities heard their words, they reverted to the arts of our ancestors—repentance, prayer, and charity.^o The hands of the holy people fell weak and their hearts melted and their strength flagged. They hid themselves in innermost chambers before "the ever turning sword."^o They afflicted themselves with fasting. They fasted three consecutive days—both night and day,^o in addition to daily fasts, until "their skin shriveled on their bones and became dry as wood."^o They cried out and gave forth a loud and bitter shriek. But their Father did not answer them. "He shut out their prayer"^o and "screened himself off with a cloud, that no prayer might pass through."^o "The tent [of prayer] was rejected"^o and he banished them from his presence."^o For a decree had been enacted before him from [the time when God had spoken] of a day of accounting,^o and this generation had been chosen as his portion, for they had the strength and valor to stand in his sanctuary and to fulfill his command and to sanctify his great Name in his world. Concerning them David said: "Bless the Lord, O his messengers, mighty men who do his bidding, ever obedient to his bidding."^o

That year Passover fell on Thursday^o and the new moon of Iyyar on Friday.^o On the eighth of Iyyar,^o on the Sabbath, the enemy arose against the [Jewish]

M/F

Bishop John of Speyer (1090-1104). May 18, 1096. Jer. 5:6; Zeph. 3:3.

Isa. 9:11.

May 25, 1096.

Hos. 10:14.

Deut. 6:4.

Isa. 10:25, 16:14, 29:17.

Lam. 4:5.

Pun on Ezek. 38:4, 39:9, with Magenza, the Hebrew name of Mainz. Josh. 7:5. Ezek. 11:13.

Judg. 6:13.

Ps. 22:12.

community of Speyer and killed eleven saintly souls who sanctified their Creator on the holy Sabbath day and refused to be baptized. There was a notable and pious woman who slaughtered herself for the sanctification of the [Divine] Name. She was the first of those who slaughtered themselves in all the communities. The rest were saved by the bishop^o without baptism, as has been written above.

On the twenty-third of Iyyar,^o they rose up against the [Jewish] community of Worms. The community divided into two groups. Some stayed in their homes and some fled to the bishop. Then "the wolves of the steppes"^o rose up against those that were in their homes and pillaged them—men, women, and children; young and old. They tore down the stairways and destroyed the houses. They plundered and ravaged. They took the Torah and trampled it in the mud and tore it and burned it. "They devoured Israel with a greedy mouth."^o

Seven days later, on the new moon of Sivan,^o the day of the arrival of Israel at Sinai in order to receive the Torah, those who still remained in the chambers of the bishop were subjected to terror. The enemy assaulted them, as they had done to the earlier group, and put them to the sword. They [the Jews] held firm to the example of their brethren and were killed and sanctified the [Divine] Name publicly. They stretched forth their necks, so that their heads might be cut off for the Name of their Creator. There were some of them that took their own lives. They fulfilled the verse: "Mothers and babes were dashed together."^o Indeed fathers also fell with their children, for they were slaughtered together. They slaughtered brethren, relatives, wives, and children. Bridegrooms [slaughtered] their intended and merciful mothers their only children. All of them accepted the heavenly decree unreservedly. As they commended their souls to their Creator, they cried out:

"Hear O Israel! The Lord is our God; the Lord is one."^o The enemy stripped them and dragged them about. There remained only "a small number"^o whom they converted forcibly and baptized against their will in their baptismal waters. Approximately eight hundred was the number killed, who were killed on these two days. All of them were buried naked. With regard to them [Jeremiah] laments: "Those who were reared in purple have embraced refuse heaps."^o I have mentioned their names above. May God recall them beneficently.

When the saintly ones, the pious of the Almighty, the holy community in Mainz—"a shield and buckler"^o for all the [Jewish] communities, whose reputation spread throughout all the provinces—heard that some of the community in Speyer had been killed and that the community in Worms [had been attacked] twice and that the sword had reached them, their hands fell weak and "their hearts melted and turned to water."^o They cried out to the Lord with all their heart and said: "Lord God of Israel, are you wiping out the remnant of Israel?" Where are all your awesome wonders about which our ancestors told us, saying, "Truly the Lord brought you up from Egypt and from Babylonia?" How many times have you saved us? How have you now abandoned and forsaken us, O Lord, leaving us in the hands of wicked Christendom that they might destroy us? Do not distance yourself from us, for tragedy is near and there is none to aid us."^o

The notables of Israel gathered together to give them good counsel, so that they might be able to be saved. They said to one another: "Let us choose of our elders and let us decide what we shall do, for this great evil will swallow us up." They agreed on the counsel of redeeming their souls by spending their moneys and bribing the princes and officers and bishops and burghers. The leaders of the com-

Archbishop
Ruthard of Mainz
(1089–1109).

Eccles. 9:12.
B. Bava Batra
138a.

Prov. 11:4.

Hos. 4:12.

Josh. 8:22; Jer.
42:17.
Isa. 58:12.

A designation for
the leader of the
community.
In point of fact,
Emperor Henry IV
was in northern
Italy from
1090–1097.
Esther 1:22.

Isa. 45:7.

Num. 23:10.

Jer. 11:20.

Ps. 124:5 referring
to baptism.
2 Kings 17:9.
Cf. Acts of the
Apostles 5:30.
Cf. Matthew
27:25.

Exod. 32:9, 33:3
and elsewhere.
Job 37:1.

munity, notable in the eyes of the archbishop, then rose and came to the archbishop and to his ministers and servants to speak with them. They said to them: "What shall we do about the report which we have heard concerning our brethren in Speyer and in Worms who have been killed?" They said to them: "Listen to our advice and bring all your moneys to our treasury. Then you, your wives your sons and daughters, and all that you have bring into the chamber of the archbishop until these bands pass by. Thus will you be able to be saved from the crusaders." They contrived and gave this counsel in order to gather us and to surrender us into their hands and to seize us "like fish enmeshed in a fatal net" and to take our moneys, as they ultimately did. The end result proves the original intention. In addition, the archbishop gathered his ministers and servants—exalted ministers, nobles—in order to assist us. For at the outset it was his desire to save us with all his strength. Indeed we gave him great bribes to this end, along with his ministers and servants, since they intended to save us. Ultimately all the bribery and all the diplomacy did not avail in protecting us "on the day of wrath" from catastrophe.

At that time a duke arose, Godfrey by name—may his bones be ground up—harsh in spirit. "A fickle spirit moved him" to go with those journeying to their idolatrous shrine. He swore wickedly that he would not depart on his journey without avenging the blood of the Crucified with the blood of Israel and that he would not leave "a remnant or residue" among those bearing the name Jew. His anger waxed against us. To be sure, "a protector" arose—the exemplar of the generation, the God-fearing, offered up on the innermost altar, R. Kalonymus the parnas of the community of Mainz—who immediately sent an emissary to Emperor Henry in the kingdom of Apulia, where he had tarried for nine years. He told him of all these events. Then the anger of the emperor was aroused, and he sent letters throughout all the provinces of his empire, to the princes and bishops, to the nobles and to Duke Godfrey—messages of peace and [orders] with regard to the Jews that they protect them so that no one harm them physically and that they provide aid and refuge to them. The wicked duke swore that it had never occurred to him to do them any harm. Nonetheless we bribed him in Cologne with five hundred silver *zekukim*. They likewise bribed him in Mainz. He swore on his staff to behave peacefully toward them. But [God] "who truly makes peace" turned away from them and hid his eyes from his people and consigned them to the sword. No prophet or seer nor any man of wisdom or understanding can fathom the essential issue—how could the sin of "the innumerable people" be so heavy and how could the souls of these saintly communities be so destructive, as though shedding blood. Except that surely [God] is "a just judge" and we bear the shortcomings.

Then "the seething waters" gathered. "They heaped up unfounded charges" against the people of God. They said: "You are the descendants of those who killed our deity and crucified him." Indeed he said: "A day will surely arrive when my children will come and avenge my blood." We are his children and it is our responsibility to avenge him upon you, for you are the ones who rebelled and transgressed against him. Indeed your God was never pleased with you. While he sought to do well by you, you did evil before him. Therefore he has forgotten you and no longer desires you, for you have been "stiffnecked" with him. He has separated himself from you and has shown favor to us and has taken us as his portion." When we heard this, "our hearts quaked and were distressed." "We

סוכו מוכין
עם תפלתו

God his
Mence if

Ps. 39:3.
Ps. 143:4; Lam.
3:6.
Lam. 3:50.
Job 2:1.
Pope Urban II at
Clermont on
November 27,
1095.
I.e., Christians.
Isa. 57:14.
Words missing in
the manuscript.
Gen. 22:17; 1
Kings 5:9.
Isa. 29:6.

Gen. 45:26.
Josh. 2:11.
Isa. 19:1.
Jer. 40:3.
Ps. 78:60.
Ezek. 11:16.
I.e., the
synagogue.
Lev. 26:33.
Isa. 30:17.
Ps. 78:61.
Lam. 2:20.
Isa. 42:22.
Lam. 1:21.
2 Kings 21:12.
Jer. 48:17.
Lam. 4:2.

Albert of Aix, in
his closing
pejorative note on
the popular
crusading bands,
cites the
veneration of a
goose that was
seen as inspired by
the Holy Spirit.

Exod. 16:3, there
uttered by the
rebellious Israelites
seeking to return
to Egypt.

were struck silent." "We sat in darkness "like those long dead," until "the Lord might look down and see from heaven."

"Then Satan also came"—the pope of wicked Rome—and circulated a pronouncement among all the gentiles who believe in the offshoot of adultery, the children of Seir, that they congregate together and ascend to Jerusalem and conquer the city "on a way built up" for pilgrims and that they go to the sepulcher . . . whom they accepted as a deity over them. Satan came and mingled among the nations. They all gathered as one man to fulfill the commandment. They came "as the sand on the seashore," with a noise like the rumbling of "a storm or a tempest." It came to pass that, when the embittered and poor had gathered, they took evil counsel against the people of God. They said: "Why are they occupied with doing battle against the Muslims in the vicinity of Jerusalem? Indeed among them is a people which does not acknowledge their deity. What is more, their ancestors crucified their god. Why should we let them live? Why should they dwell among us? Let our swords begin with their heads. After that we shall go on the way of our pilgrimage." "The hearts of the people of God went numb" and "their spirits departed."

They came and pressed their entreaty before the Lord. They fasted and diminished their blood and flesh. "The hearts of Israel melted inside them." Indeed "God did as he had said, for we sinned before him." He forsook "the tabernacle of Shiloh," "the diminished sanctuary," which he had placed among his people in the midst of the nations. His anger waxed against them and "he unsheathed the sword against them," until "what was left of them was like a mast on a hilltop, like a pole upon a mountain." "He let his might go into captivity" and trampled it underfoot. "Look O Lord, and behold, to whom have you done thus?" Is not Israel, "a people plundered and despoiled," your special portion? Why have you lifted the shield before his enemies? Why have they become mighty? "They hear how I sigh." All those who hear about me . . . "both their ears will tingle." "Alas the strong rod is broken, the lordly staff," the saintly congregation "valued as gold," the community of Mainz. For there was a divine edict in order to test those who fear him, that they suffer the yoke of his pure awe.

It came to pass on a certain day that a gentile woman came and brought with her a goose that she had raised since it was a gosling. This goose went everywhere that the gentile woman went. She said to all passersby: "Behold this goose understands that I intend to go on the crusade and wishes to go with me." Then the crusaders and burghers and common folk gathered against us, saying to us: "Where is your source of trust? How will you be saved? Behold the signs that the Crucified does for them publicly in order to take vengeance on their enemies." Then all of them came with swords to destroy us. Some of the high-ranking burghers came and stood opposite and would not allow them to harm us. At that moment the crusaders stood united against the burghers and one side smote the other until they killed one of the crusaders. Then they said: "All these things the Jews have caused." Then they almost gathered against us. They spoke harshly, [threatening] to assault and attack us. When the saintly ones saw all these things, their hearts melted. When they heard their words, they said, both great and small: "If only we might die by the hand of the Lord," rather than die by the hands of the enemies of the Lord. For he is a merciful God, unique in his universe."

They left their houses empty and came to the synagogue only on the Sabbath

Though our sins could not possibly have merited such punishments, we do not question God's ways.

May 24, 1096.
Deut. 26:5, 28:62
(1).

mystical
portent

Ezek. 11:13.

Ps. 119:137.
May 25, 1096.
Count of
Leiningen.

2 Kings 13:7.
2 Kings 8:12.

Political Narrative

1. figures of pol. authority in Jew. & Christian power structure - (M)
2. Action this - worldly
3. Conventional Jew strategies for dealing w/ Christian power

before the new moon of Sivan,⁹ the last Sabbath prior to our destruction, when "a few"¹⁰ entered to pray. Rabbi Judah ben Rabbi Isaac entered there to pray as part of that quorum. They wept copiously, to the point of exhaustion, for they saw that this was the decree of the King of all kings and that no one might annul it. There was there a venerable scholar, Rabbi Baruch ben Rabbi Isaac, and he said to us: "Know truly and surely that a decree has been enacted against us from heaven and we will not be able to be saved. For tonight we—I and my son-in-law Judah—heard the souls which were praying at night in the synagogue loudly, like a cry. When we heard the sound, we thought that perhaps some of the community came from the courtyard of the archbishop to pray in the synagogue at midnight, in anguish and bitterness. We ran to the door of the synagogue to see who was praying. The door was closed. We heard the sound and the loud wail, but we could comprehend nothing of what they were saying. We returned home shaken, for our house was close to the synagogue." When we heard these words, we fell on our faces and said: "You, O Lord God—are you wiping out the remnant of Israel?"¹¹ They went and recounted these events to their brethren in the courtyard of the burgrave and in the chambers of the archbishop. They too knew that a decree had been issued by the Lord and they wept copiously and accepted divine judgment and said: "You are righteous, O Lord, and your rulings are just."¹²

It came to pass on the new moon of Sivan that Count Emicho,¹³ the persecutor of all the Jews—may his bones be ground up between iron millstones—came with a large army outside the city, with crusaders and common folk in tents. The gates of the city were locked before him. He also had said: "It is my desire to go on the crusade." He became head of the bands and concocted the story that an emissary of the Crucified had come to him and had given him a sign in his flesh indicating that, when he would reach Byzantium, then he [Jesus] would come to him [Emicho] himself and crown him with royal diadem and that he would overcome his enemies. He was our chief persecutor. He had no mercy on the elderly or on young women; he had no pity on the infant and the suckling and the sickly. He made the people of the Lord "like dust to be trampled."¹⁴ "Their young men he put to the sword and their pregnant women he ripped open."¹⁵ They camped outside the city for two days.

At the time when the wicked one came to Mainz on his way to Jerusalem, the elders of the people came to their archbishop, [Ruthard] and bribed him with two hundred silver zekukim. It had been his intention to go to the villages which belonged to the archbishops. But the [Jewish] community came, when they bribed him, and begged him, so that he stayed with them in Mainz. He brought all the community into his inner chambers and said: "I have agreed to aid you. Likewise the burgrave has said that he wishes to remain here for your sakes, to assist you. You must therefore supply all our needs until the crusaders pass through." The [Jewish] community agreed to do so. The two—the archbishop and the burgrave—agreed and said: "We shall either die with you or live with you." Then the community said: "Since those who are our neighbors and acquaintances have agreed to save us, let us also send to the wicked Emicho our moneys and our letters, so that the [Jewish] communities along the way will honor him. Perhaps the Lord will behave in accord with his great loving-kindness and will relent against us. For this purpose we have disbursed our moneys, giving the archbishop and his ministers and his servants and the burghers approximately four hundred silver

Gen. 18:23–32.
May 27, 1096.

Exod. 19:15.

2 Sam. 1:23—
David's dirge for
Saul and
Jonathan.

Ps. 106:23.

Lam. 1:6 (4).
Jer. 25:34.
Isa. 28:6.
Dan. 12:3.
Jer. 49:25.
Jer. 17:1; Job
19:24.

Zech. 14:13.

1 Sam. 5:6.

2 Kings 18:21;
Isa. 36:6.

zekukim." We gave the wicked Emicho seven gold pounds so that he might assist us. It was of no avail, and to this point no balm has been given for our affliction. For we were unlike Sodom and Gomorrah. For them ten [righteous] were sought in order to save them.¹⁶ For us neither twenty nor ten were sought.

It came to pass on the third day of Sivan,¹⁷ which had been a day of sanctity and setting apart for Israel at the time of the giving of the Torah—on that day when Moses our teacher, may his memory be blessed, said: "Be ready for the third day"¹⁸—on that day the [Jewish] community of Mainz, the pious of the Almighty, were set apart in holiness and purity and were sanctified to ascend to God all together. "Cherished in life, in death they were not parted."¹⁹ For all of them were in the courtyard of the archbishop. The wrath of the Lord was kindled against his people and he fulfilled the counsel of the crusaders and they were successful. All wealth was unavailing, along with fasting, self-affliction, wailing, and charity. There was no one "to stand in the breach"²⁰—neither a teacher nor a prince. Even the holy Torah did not protect those who study it. Gone from Zion are all that were her glory,²¹ namely Mainz. The sound of "the lords of the flock"²² ceased, along with the sound of "the valorous who repel attacks,"²³ "who lead the many to righteousness."²⁴ The glorious city, the citadel of joy,²⁵ which had distributed untold sums to the poor. One could not write with "an iron stylus"²⁶ on a whole book the multitude of good deeds that were done in it of yore. In one place [were found] Torah and power and wealth and honor and wisdom and humility and good deeds, taking innumerable precautions against transgression. But now their wisdom had been swallowed up and turned into destruction, like the children of Jerusalem in their destruction.

It came to pass at midday that the wicked Emicho, persecutor of the Jews, came—he and all his army—to the gate. The burghers opened the gate to him. Then the enemies of the Lord said to one another: "Behold the gate has been opened before us. Now let us avenge the blood of the Crucified." When the children of the holy covenant—the saintly ones, the God-fearing—who were there saw the huge multitude, the army as large "as the sand on the seashore," they cleaved to their Creator. They donned armor and strapped on weapons—great and small—with Rabbi Kalonymous ben Rabbi Meshullam the parnas at their head. But from their great anguish and from the many fasts undertaken, they did not have sufficient strength to stand up before the enemy. They then came in battalions and companies, sweeping down like a river, until Mainz was filled completely. The enemy Emicho made an announcement to the citizenry that they surrender and remove the enemy [the Jews] from the city. "A great panic from the Lord fell upon them."²⁷ The men of Israel strapped on their weapons in the innermost courtyard of the archbishop and all of them approached the gate [of the courtyard] to do battle with the crusaders and the burghers. They did battle against one another at the gate. Our sins brought it about that the enemy overcame them and captured the gate. "The hand of the Lord lay heavy"²⁸ upon his people. Then all the gentiles gathered against the Jews in the courtyard, in order to destroy them totally. The hands of our people wavered, when they saw that the hand of wicked Edom had overcome them. Indeed the men of the archbishop, who had promised to help them, fled immediately, in order to turn them over to their enemies, for they were "splintered reeds."²⁹ Even the archbishop himself fled from his church, for they intended to kill him as well, since he has spoken up on behalf of Israel.

Political option failed: There will be no Purim in Mainz

115
116

Greatness
of
Mainz

punishment

Self-
defense

Transition to Martyrological narrative: Liturgical outburst

May 27, 1096.
Zeph. 1:15.
Job 3:5.
Job 3:4.
Gen. 22:17.

The enemy entered the courtyard on the third of Sivan, on the third day of the week, "a day of darkness and gloom, a day of densest clouds." "May darkness and day gloom reclaim it"; "may God above have no concern for it; may light never shine upon it." "Woe for the day when we saw the anguish of our souls. Stars, why did you not cover your light—was not Israel compared to the stars?" The twelve constellations, like the number of the tribes of Jacob, why did you not extinguish your light from shining on the enemy that intended to blot out the name of Israel?

When the children of the sacred covenant saw that the decree had been enacted and that the enemy had overcome them, they entered the courtyard and all cried out together—elders, young men and young women, children, menservants and maidservants—to their Father in heaven. They wept for themselves and their lives.

They accepted upon themselves the judgment of heaven. They said to one another: "Let us be strong and suffer the yoke of the sacred awe. For the moment the enemy will kill us, but the easiest of the four deaths is by sword." We shall, however, remain alive; our souls [shall be] in paradise, in the radiance of the great light forever." They said unreservedly and willingly: "Ultimately one must not question the ways of the Holy One, blessed be he and blessed be his Name, who gave us his Torah and the commandment to put to death and to kill ourselves for the unity of his holy Name. Blessed are we if we do his will. Blessed are all those who are killed and slaughtered and die for the unity of his name. They are destined for the world to come and shall sit in the circle of the righteous, Rabbi Akiba and his associates, 'the pillars of the universe,' who were killed for his Name." What is more, a world of darkness will be exchanged for a world of light, a world of pain for a world of happiness, a transitory world for a world that is eternal and everlasting." Then they all cried out loudly, saying in unison: "Now let us tarry no longer, for the enemy has already come upon us. Let us go quickly and sacrifice ourselves before the Lord. Anyone who has a knife should inspect it, that it not be defective. Then he should come and slaughter us for the sanctification of the unique [God] who lives forever. Subsequently he should slaughter himself by his throat or should thrust the knife into his belly."

The enemy, immediately upon entering the courtyard, found there some of the perfectly pious with Rabbi Isaac ben Rabbi Moses the dialectician. He stretched out his neck and they cut off his head immediately. They had clothed themselves in their fringed garments and had seated themselves in the midst of the courtyard in order to do speedily the will of their Creator. They did not wish to flee to the chambers in order to go on living briefly. Rather, with love they accepted upon themselves the judgment of heaven. The enemy rained stones and arrows upon them, but they did not deign to flee. They struck down all those whom they found there, with "blows of sword, death, and destruction."

Those in the chambers, when they saw this behavior on the part of those saintly ones and that the enemy had come upon them, all cried out: "There is nothing better than to offer ourselves as a sacrifice." There women girded themselves with strength and slaughtered their sons and daughters, along with themselves. Many men likewise gathered strength and slaughtered their wives and their children and their little ones. "The tenderest and daintiest" slaughtered "their beloved children." They all stood—men and women—and slaughtered one another. The young women and the brides and the bridegrooms gazed through the windows

dialectical
response

understanding
themselves
for KN, not
bottle

exhausting
all religious
possibilities
Absolute
faith

justification
for suicide

נפשו

לפי דברי ר' אבהו
אמר

The four modes of
capital punishment
in Jewish law are
by stoning,
burning,
strangulation and
sword.

See 23.

הקדוש ברוך הוא
אמר

lists of
martyrologies

Esther 9:5.

Deut. 28:56 (1).
Jer. 31:20.

Martyrological Narrative

- 1) Individ. members of Jew. community, regardless of sex, rank; (F)
- 2) Action: Between Man/God; eternal reward in World to-Come
- 3) Acts of cultic homicide: utterly NEW

History as Liturgy in Ashkenaz 81

Lam. 4:2.
Mishnah Avot
5:3.
9.
Gen. 22:1-19.

Isa. 14:19; i.e.,
Christ.

Isa. 66:8.
Jer. 30:6.

Akedah

Isa. 33:7.

Joel 2:10.
Isa. 5:30.

Isa. 64:11.
Ps. 44:23.
Ps. 79:10.

Lam. 2:1 (4).

Isa. 58:12.
Isa. 59:15.

Allusion to Deut.
31:17.
Num. 22:26.
Isa. 51:13.

and cried out loudly: "Behold and see, our God, what we do for the sanctification of your holy Name, rather than deny you for a crucified one, a trampled and wretched and abominable offshoot, a bastard and a child of menstruation and lust." "The precious children of Zion," the children of Mainz, were tested ten times, like our ancestor Abraham and like Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. They offered up their children as did Abraham with his son Isaac. They accepted upon themselves the yoke of the fear of heaven, of the King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be he, willingly. They did not wish to deny the awe of our King or to exchange it for [that of] "a loathsome offshoot," a bastard born of menstruation and lust. They stretched forth their necks for the slaughter and commended their pure souls to their Father in heaven. The saintly and pious women stretched forth their necks one to another, to be sacrificed for the unity of the [Divine] Name. Likewise men to their children and brothers, brothers to sisters, women to their sons and daughters, and neighbor to neighbor and friend, bridegroom to bride, and betrothed to his betrothed. They sacrificed each other until the blood flowed together. The blood of husbands mingled with that of their wives, the blood of parents with that of their children, the blood of brothers with that of their sisters, the blood of teachers with that of their students, the blood of bridegrooms with that of their brides, the blood of cantors with that of their scribes, the blood of infants and sucklings with that of their mothers. They were killed and slaughtered for the unity of the revered and awesome Name. At such reports "the ears of those who hear must surely tingle." "For who has heard the like? Who has ever witnessed such events?" "Ask and see." "Were there ever so many sacrifices like these from the days of Adam? Were there ever a thousand one hundred sacrifices on one day, all of them like the sacrifice of Isaac the son of Abraham? For one the world shook, when he was offered up on Mount Moriah, as is said: 'Hark! The angels cried aloud!' The heavens darkened. What has been done [this time]? 'Why did the heavens not darken? Why did the stars not withdraw their brightness?' ... and light—'why did they not darken in their cloud cover,' when one thousand one hundred holy souls were killed and slaughtered on one day, on the third day of Sivan, a Tuesday—infants and sucklings who never transgressed and never sinned and poor and innocent souls? 'At such things will you restrain yourself, O Lord?' 'For your sake they were killed'—innumerable souls. 'Avenge the blood of your servants that has been spilled' in our days and before our eyes speedily. Amen.

That day the crown of Israel fell. Then the students of Torah fell and the scholars disappeared. The honor of the Torah fell, as is written: "He threw down from heaven to earth the glory of Israel." Those who fear sin ceased. Men of good deeds disappeared, along with the splendor of wisdom and purity and abstinence and the splendor of the priesthood and men of trust and "those who repair the breach" and those who turn back evil decrees and the anger of their Creator. Those who give charity in secret diminished. "Truth was absent" and preachers ceased, along with the revered and the luster of old age. [Woe for] the day upon which many troubles befell us. "There was nowhere to turn, either right or left," "because of the rage of the oppressor." For from the day that the Second Temple was destroyed there were none like them in Israel and after them there will be no more. For they sanctified and declared the unity of the [Divine] Name with all their heart and with all their soul and with all their might. Blessed are they and

לפי
דברי
ר' אבהו
אמר

blessed is their portion, for all of them are destined for the life of the world to come. May my portion be with them.

24 Pour Out Thy Wrath

Passover Haggadah

Over the third cup of wine:

Blessed art thou, Lord our God, King of the universe,
who createst the fruit of the vine.

The door is opened:

(According to the Italian rite)

Ps. 79:6. Pour our Your fury on the nations that do not know You,
upon the kingdoms that do not invoke Your name.

(According to the Sephardic and Yeminite Rites)

Ps. 79:6-7. Pour out Your fury on the nations that do not know You,
upon the kingdoms that do not invoke Your name,
for they have devoured Jacob
and desolated his home.

(According to the Ashkenazic rite)

Pour out Thy wrath on the nations that do not know Thee,
upon the kingdoms that do not invoke Thy name,
for they have devoured Jacob
and desolated his home.

Ps. 69:25. Pour out Your wrath on them;
may Your blazing anger overtake them.

Lam. 3:66. Oh, pursue them in wrath and destroy them
From under the heaven of the Lord!

25 Commemoration of Martyrs

(Sabbath Prayer Book, Ashkenazic Rite)

May the Merciful Father, who dwells in heaven, in his abundant mercies remember
compassionately the pious and righteous and pure, the sacred communities, who
sacrificed themselves for the sanctification of the Divine Name. "Beloved and cher-

2 Sam. 1:23.
David's dirge for
Saul and
Jonathan. King
Saul's heroic
suicide thus
becomes a
martyrological
paradigm.
Deut. 32:43.
Joel 4:21;
translation
modified to fit
the usage.
Ps. 79:10.
Ps. 9:13.
Ps. 110:6-7.

ished in life, they were not parted in death."⁹ They were swifter than eagles and
stronger than lions in doing the will of their Creator and the desire of their Pro-
tector. May God remember them beneficently along with the other righteous of
history. May he avenge the blood of his servants which has been spilled, as is
written in the Torah of Moses, the man of God: "O nations, acclaim his people!
For he will avenge the blood of his servants, wreak vengeance on his foes, and
cleans the land of his people."¹⁰ By your servants the prophets it has been written:
"When I establish innocence, I shall not excuse the shedding of their blood, and
the Lord shall dwell in Zion."¹¹ In the Writings it is said: "Why should the nations
say: 'Where is their God?' Before our eyes let it be known among the nations that
you avenge the spilled blood of your servants."¹² It is likewise said: "For he does
not ignore the cry of the afflicted; he who requites bloodshed is mindful of them."¹³
It is likewise said: "He works judgment upon the nations, heaping up bodies,
crushing heads far and wide. He drinks from the stream on his way; therefore he
holds his head high."¹⁴

26 There Is None Like You Among the Dumb

ISAAC BAR SHALOM

B. Gittin 56b on
Ps. 86:8, reading
illemin for the
text's elim (gods).

There is none like You among the dumb,⁹
Keeping silence and being still in the face of those who aggrieve us.
Our foes are many; they rise up against us,
As they take counsel together to revile us.

"Where is your King?," they taunt us.

But we have not forgotten You nor deceived You.

Do not keep silence!¹⁰

Ps. 83:2.

Job 30:5.

Those driven from the midst of men⁹ became proud.
They crushed Your people with rigor.
Your enemies lifted up their head,
Those seekers of ghosts and of idols.
Our foes would judge us, and are saying:
"How now, you hapless Jews!"

Do not keep silence!

"Be receptive to advice,
Lest you turn into disgrace.
Yea, to quarrel and to strife,
But, if you will be like us,
Turning to us, coming close,
One people we shall be."

Do not keep silence!

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In answer cried the smitten ones:
 "From our God we turn not, nor shall we worship yours!
 'You shall utterly detest, and utterly abhor it.'^o
 Alive and enduring is our Redeemer,
 Him we shall serve, and Him we praise.
 In time of trouble, He is our salvation."
 Do not keep silence!

They made ready to slay their children,
 Intending the blessing of sacrifice.
 "Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God,
 The Lord is One."^o Let us proclaim His Unity!
 For His Name's holiness are we slain,
 Our wives and children are falling by the sword.
 Do not keep silence!

As priests for the slaughter of their holocaust,^o
 They bound the children and their mothers;
 And, in the fire, they burned their skins,
 Sprinkling the blood of sisters and brothers,
 Offering as sweet savored sacrificial portions
 The head and severed parts of flesh.
 Do not keep silence!

A charred and overflowing pile,
 Like an oven both uncovered and unswept;^o
 All Israel weeps for the burning.^o
 But those falling in God's fire
 Are destined for His initiates' abode,
 Like Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.
 Do not keep silence!

As refuse they treated Moses' Law,
 The Talmud of Rabhina and Rabh Ashi.^o
 Can You, at this, restrain Yourself and keep Your peace?
 Pages and parchments destroyed by flailing sword,
 Yet holy letters flying up on high—^o
 God's writing on the tablets is engraved.^o
 Do not keep silence!

The foe was strutting with his sword,
 Destroyed my precious ones, made them to nought.
 And he slew all who did my eye delight.
 The year: four thousand nine hundred and seven,
 When trouble closely followed trouble,
 And, for my feet, they set a snare.
 Do not keep silence!

The day when Nahshon hallowed God,^o
 The foe struck at the apple of His eye;^o
 On the twentieth day of the first month,^o

Deut. 7:26 in
reference to the
Canaanite cult.

Opening words of
the Shema' Deut.
6:4.

Terminology of
animal sacrifice in
Leviticus.

Terminology of
Sabbath laws.
Lev. 10:6. Nadav
and Avihu.

According to
tradition, the final
redactors of the
Talmud.
12, par. 12.
Exod. 32:16.

According to the
Mekhilta
Beshallah 5,
Nahshon ben
Amminadav
jumped into the
Sea of Reeds even
before it parted.
Israel, after Deut.
32:10.
Nisan.

25

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65

They were dashed to pieces, the expounders of weighty
 And light matters of the Law, and of analogous reasoning,
 Of statutes, ordinance and teachings.

Do not keep silence!

70

Almighty God, be zealous for Your Law.
 Put on Your vengeance and Your zeal.
 Arouse Your mighty power—^o
 As You once rebuked the swinish beast^o
 With destruction and havoc and breaking.
 Him and his people You smote with the plague.

Do not keep silence!

75

Ps. 80:3.
Reference to
Amalek-Rome.

Egypt.

Isa. 47:8.
Conflation of Song
of Songs 5:10 and
Isa. 63:1-3. Seir-
Edom.

Your right hand once smote the monster of the Nile.^o
 Crush now with a hammer the skull of her
 That sits securely to her pleasures given.^o
 Bright and ruddy as You came from Seir,^o
 Scatter with destructive storm the one who now does rule.
 Like a tested warrior, do arouse Your zeal!

Do not keep silence!

80

Make our remnants Your own once again.
 Among crowds show us Your wonders.
 Establish peace upon us!

85

Ps. 51:14.
Ps. 44:27.

Pity, O our Holy One, those whom You have dispersed;
 Let a willing spirit uphold us.^o
 Arise for our help, and redeem us!^o

90

Do not keep silence!

ca. 1147

27 O Law, Consumed by Fire

MEIR OF ROTHENBURG

In the Land of
Israel.

Isa. 50:10.

O [Law], consumed by fire, seek the welfare of those who mourn for you,
 of those who yearn to dwell in the court of your habitation.^o
 Of those who yearn for the dust of the earth, who grieve
 and are horrified over the conflagration of your parchments.
 They grope in the dark, bereft of light,^o
 indeed, they long for the daylight to shine upon them and upon you.
 [Seek too] after the welfare of one who sighs and weeps with a broken heart;
 who always bewails the pangs of your agony—

5

And who howls like jackals and ostriches,
and cries out bitter lamentation for your sake. 10

How was it that [the Torah] given [by God], the Consuming Fire, should be
consumed by fire of mortals, and that the heathens were not singed through
your burning coals?

How long will you lie [resting] in profound tranquillity, O, Edom,
while the faces of my young ones^o are covered with nettles? 15

You sit in arrant haughtiness to judge the sons of God in every cause,
and to bring [us] before your tribunal.^o

Moreover, you [O Law,] even decreed the burning of the edicts and the statutes
[which were given] with fire,^o

therefore, blessed be he, who shall requite you.^o 20

O [my Holy Law,] was it for this that my creator delivered you with lightning
and fire,

that at the end fire should blaze upon your skirt?

O Sinai, is it for this that God, rejecting the loftier [peaks], has chosen you,
and [his glory] has shone in your confines?^o 25

[Was that] to be an omen, that the Law would [one day] be humiliated
and descend from its glory?^o Behold, I will tell you a parable.

The parable is of a king who wept at his son's wedding feast,
[for] he foresaw that he would die;^o such was your fate, foretold in your own
words.^o 30

O Sinai, instead of putting on a [noble] mantle, cover yourself with sackcloth,
change your garments [and] put on widow's clothes!

I will shed tears until they swell as a stream,
and reach the graves of your two noble chiefs.

And I will enquire of Moses and Aaron, [who were] on Mount Hor: 35
"Is there then a new Law, is that why they burnt your scrolls?"

In the third month [Israel was exalted] and the fourth turned conspirator
to destroy your objects of delight,^o and all the perfection of your beauty.

[Moses] mutilated the Tablets of stone and even repeated his folly
by burning the Law in fire.^o Is this [the fulfillment of] the double reward?^o 40

My soul is amazed—How can ever again food be sweet to my palate
after beholding what your plunderers have gathered?

Men whom you have rejected from entering the assembly, burnt the Law
of the Most High in the midst of the market-square, like [the spoils of] a
condemned [city].^o 45

I can no more find any paved way,

for the straight course of your highway is obscured.

For tears that shall be mingled with my drink shall be sweeter than honey,
indeed would that your shackles be tied on to my own feet.

It would be pleasant for my eyes to draw the waters of my tears, for all 50
who clung fast to the hem of your skirt.

But they would dry up [as soon] as they run down my cheeks,
for my heart burns over the absence of your Divine Master.

*The righteous
whose good deeds
protect the rest of
Israel.*

Jer. 15:8.

He took his treasure with him,^o

[and when] he went far away did not your [protecting] shade vanish? 55

And as for me, alone without your great one, I remain bereaved and forlorn,
like a sole beacon on top of the mountain.

No more do I hear the voice of singing men and singing women,
for the strings of your [wind] instruments are snapped.

I will clothe and cover myself with sackcloth, for your slain ones, 60
whose lives were so very dear to me, have multiplied more [numerous] than
the sand.^o

I am indeed astonished that the day's luminary shines [bright]
to everyone, but to me and you it grows darkness.

O cry to the Rock with a bitter voice, for your catastrophe 65

and your anguish; O that he would remember the love of your betrothal-day!

Gird on garments of sackcloth for that devouring [fire]
that burst forth to divide you [into many portions], and has utterly swept
away your heights.

May the Creator comfort you according to the days of your affliction, and 70
may he restore

the captivity of the tribes of Yeshurun, and raise your meek ones [from their
lowliness].

You will again adorn yourself with ornaments of scarlet;

you will take up timbrel and lead the circling dance, and rejoice in your 75
revels.

Then shall my heart be uplifted at that time when your Creator will afford you
light,

will brighten your darkness and illuminate your [sorrowing] gloom.

ca. 1242

28 The Martyr's Prayer

ISAIAH HALEVI HOROWITZ

The Martyr's Prayer

You are holy and your name is holy and the holy martyrs of Israel have sanc-
tified and will again sanctify your name. They will suffer all manner of death and
torture for the sanctification of your name and for the deliverance of the nation
of Israel.

God, O Holy One, if it is your will to bring this test upon me, sanctify me and
purify me; make my thoughts and my mouth proclaim the holiness of your name

My priests.

*I.e., God caused
us to be judged by
the enemy.*

Exod. 17:18.

Ps. 137:8.

*Midrash on Ps.
68:17.*

*When the Temple
was destroyed.*

On the same day.

*When the
Israelites
proclaimed: "We
will faithfully do
and obey!" (Exod.
24:7).*

*Moses smashed
the tablets of the
Law on the
seventeenth of
Tammuz.
Isa. 61:7.*

Deut. 13:17.

in public, as did the Ten Martyrs and the thousands and myriads of martyrs of Israel. . . .

Be near me so that the pain not confuse me and my thoughts continue to cleave to you, joyful in the hour of suffering.

Strengthen my power of speech that I may proclaim your holiness clearly and consciously and manifest to all.

Purify me of my sins, iniquities, and transgressions and let my portion be with the martyrs who cleave to your holiness.