

## Holocaust Remembrance Day (יום השואה) Yom HaShoah

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Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-41636-0002  
Foto: o. Ang. | 1943 April - Mai

Yom HaShoah, also called 'Yom Zikaron laShoah v'laG'vurah' { יום הזיכרון לשואה ולגבורה } (Holocaust and Heroism Remembrance Day), commences at sundown in Israel and in all the nations of the world. In Jerusalem the Memorial Day begins with a ceremony at Yad Vashem ( יד ושם ) the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Jerusalem. The name, "Yad Vashem" is taken from a verse in the book of Isaiah, "**Even unto them will I give in my house and within my walls a place and a name (yad vashem) better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off" (Isaiah 56:5).**

During this time, the Israeli flag stands at half mast, a sign of mourning and terrible loss. All public entertainment is suspended for this time by Israeli law.

*Israeli flags at half mast*



The next morning at 10:00 A.M. a loud siren sounds across the nation and all people stop wherever they are and whatever they are doing to recall, once again, the memory of victims of the Holocaust. Motorists exit their cars and the whole nation comes to a stand still for two full minutes of silence in order to recall this tragic time in our people's history.

It is a silence which, without even a word, speaks of the unspeakable.



Jews on selection ramp at Auschwitz



Hungarian Jews are selected by Nazis to be sent to the gas chamber at Auschwitz concentration camp, May 1944



The Hall of Names containing Pages of Testimony commemorating the millions of Jews who were murdered during the Holocaust



Jewish children during deportation to the Chelmo extermination camp

It seems to me that many people ask, “Why can't we just *'forgive and forget'*? Why do we have to look at all these terrible old photos? Why construct a whole museum with the purpose of preserving evidence of this darkness and evil? Why must we have a memorial day just to dredge up all these painful memories of sadness and loss”?

There is an important reason why we must remember and ‘never forget’.

THE HOLOCAUST IS NOT A PAST ISSUE. We are deceived and do not know our Bibles if we think that the spiritual forces responsible for the Holocaust have been defeated once and for all time. No, the principalities and powers of wickedness that possessed the souls of the Nazis to commit such atrocities against their fellow human beings are still alive and well today as we have witnessed in the inhuman brutality and evil being committed by ISIS (ISIL) and other radical Islamic groups.



This memorial of the Holocaust is called in Hebrew, **Yom Hashoah**. This word, **Shoah**, means ‘calamity, devastation, or ruin.’ Will such a terrible ‘shoah’ ever happen again? The prophet Zephaniah tells us it will! **“The great day of the Lord is near;... That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation (yom shoah) and desolation (m’shoah)”** (Zephaniah 1:14-15)

According to Biblical prophecy, what happened to the Jewish people in the Holocaust during World War II will likely come again upon the earth; but this time on a global scale during the reign of the anti-Christ before the great day of the Lord’s return.



As the number of Holocaust survivors is sadly diminishing, it become even more important for us to speak the truth of what actually happened. The Nazis, under direction of Adolph Hitler, tortured and murdered six million Jewish men, women and children – called the ‘apple of God’s eye’.

**“...whoever touches you touches the apple of His eye.”** (Zechariah 2:8)

The Nazis and their collaborators also murdered many other people – whomever they considered inferior to the ‘Aryan race’. The Nazis may have considered the Jews to be ‘vermin’ to be exterminated; but God calls the Jewish people his own ‘segulah’ (special treasure), holy and set apart for Him:

**“For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be His people, His treasured possession [segulah].”** (Deuteronomy 7:6)



Germany's [Führer Adolf Hitler](#) (left) with Ustaše [Poglavnik Ante Pavelić](#) (right) at the [Berghof](#) outside of [Berchtesgaden](#), Germany

## The Story of One Holocaust Survivor – A Tribute to Uncle Oscar

My own Uncle Oscar (of blessed memory) was a Holocaust survivor who has since passed away (may his soul rest in peace). As a tribute to his courage, I would like to share his story.

Born in Poland in 1925, he and his sister Rachel were only two of nine children in his family who miraculously survived the concentration camps of the Nazis until liberated by the Russian army in 1945.

Oscar came to Canada in 1948 aboard the General Stewart, alone and a war orphan. The war had cost him terribly; but it became obvious that he did not focus on what he had lost, but on the new beginning ahead of him.



Uncle Oscar married Auntie Louise (that's me on our right)

In 1963, Oscar married my mom's sister, Louise, with whom he shared his life for 48 blessed years! With no formal schooling and virtually nothing to his name upon his arrival in Canada; but by the grace of God plus a lot of hard work and determination, Oscar and Louise built a wonderful life together in Canada.

For many years, Uncle Oscar never openly spoke about the pain he suffered, the fear he experienced and the atrocities he witnessed in the Holocaust - not even with those closest to him. It was simply too hurtful to delve into those traumatic memories.

But all that changed in 1984 when Jim Keegstra was charged with promoting hatred for teaching his Social Studies students that the Holocaust was a fraud. Oscar realized that he could no longer remain silent about his experiences but must speak up and tell people the truth of what happened.

He began to share his true life story in a video for Mount Royal College and later for the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation.

It was certainly not easy for Uncle Oscar to share his painful experiences; all the emotions he had kept buried for 40 years came pouring out once again with vivid recall. But Oscar persisted... and overcame.

He then began to speak at the annual Holocaust Education Symposiums, which he continued to do for the next 26 years. He was one of the first survivors to do so and also one of the last survivors to speak there. Also upon request, he spoke at high schools in Calgary and Southern Alberta.

Each time he spoke, it was never easy. All the painful memories and emotions came flooding back. But Uncle Oscar kept pressing on...because he became passionate about the need for people to hear the truth before it was too late. Altogether, Oscar spoke in front of about 20,000 students in his lifetime.

And he always conveyed the same message: *"Don't hate. Love one another."*

He was truly a messenger of peace and understanding.

Uncle Oscar never received any awards of public recognition. He was content to do what he felt called to do without the praise of men; but we who knew him, understand that Oscar changed the world in a big way.

Although I could not attend his funeral, this is what I wrote for Uncle Oscar's eulogy.

*"He was not afraid to tell the truth, and even though he went through a very difficult and painful experience in the Holocaust, he had the courage to share it publicly, so that people would hear the truth about what really happened. Because he was not afraid to tell the truth, even about hard things, the truth will be preserved for future generations. And most of all, I think that Uncle Oscar showed the courage to forgive - and to live the rest of his life in peace. And that takes a great deal of courage. Such a man of courage and honesty will be deeply missed."*

As the remaining Holocaust survivors pass away, let us keep their memory alive by telling their stories.

## Replacement Theology

The question that burns in our hearts is, “*How could ‘good Christians’ have allowed the Holocaust to happen?*” One of the explanations may be that some Christians believe in ‘replacement theology’, which claims that the Church is the ‘*New Israel*’; and that the Jews are blind, lost, irrelevant to God and cursed by Him because of their ‘rejection of Jesus Christ’. Whatever happened to them in the Holocaust was, therefore, apparent ‘evidence’ of God’s judgment upon the Jews for their “stiff-necked, sinful ways.”

This is what the Word of God says about this accusation:

**“I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great jealousy. I am exceedingly angry with the nations at ease; for I was a little angry, and they helped – but with evil intent.”**  
(Zechariah 1:14-15)

Yes, God may have been angry with His people and may even have judged them for their sins; but the goyim (Gentile nations), thought they’d help God out – with a malicious (evil) intent.

This is what the Word of God also says to address the lie that God is finished with the Jews:

**“If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, says the Lord.”** (Jeremiah 31:37)

## Spirit of Laodicea in the Church

Doctrinal error is only a partial explanation, however, for how a horror such as the Holocaust could have been allowed to happen in a modern, democratic country. Perhaps another partial answer could be the prevalence of a ‘spirit of Laodicea’ in the Church and in people in general.

This is what the spirit of God said to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans:

**“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.”** (Revelations 3:14-16)

One meaning of the word, Laodicean, means ‘*governed by the group*’. What is the connection to Yom HaShoah – Memorial day of the Holocaust?

The Bible warns us “**not to ‘follow the crowd (\*group)’ to do evil;**” (Exodus 23:2). However, we know from history that this is exactly what many people do.

For a Biblical example, we may look at the rebellion of Korach in the wilderness.

“Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took *men*; and they rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, representatives of the congregation, men of renown.

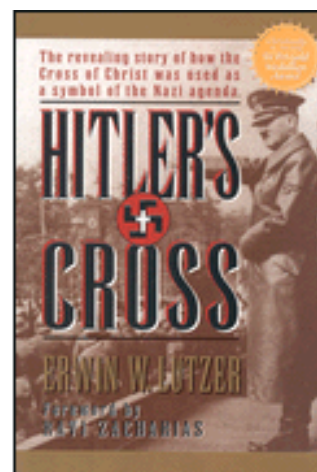
They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, “*You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?*” (Numbers 16:1-3)

This mutiny spread like wildfire as many –even the very elect, the ‘princes’ of the congregation, (not the riffraff but people in high position in the congregations) were deceived into joining the rebels against the authority of Moses. .

If we look at the European Church, the majority followed Adolph Hitler, even displaying the swastika on the platform right next to the cross. Can you imagine how grieved and infuriated the Lord, Yeshua, *Himself a Jew*, must have felt to see people who call themselves His disciples embracing the very symbol of His brethren’s executioners??

And yet this is the unbelievably sad truth, which has been extensively verified, photographed and documented, is displayed at Yad Vashem (The Holocaust Memorial Museum in Jerusalem) and in a book by Edwin Lutzer called Hitler’s Cross as well as numerous other sources.

How could this have happened? First of all, the roots of anti-Semitism run deep within the Christian Church right back to the Church Fathers. Anyone reading Martin Luther’s words about the Jews should cringe to hear such vile words coming out of a so-called Christian’s mouth. In fact, Hitler took much of his doctrine and strategy to annihilate the Jews directly from Church literature!



We cannot underestimate the power of peer pressure. We think of it primarily in regards to teenagers but it affects us all – the tendency to be ‘governed by the group’, to follow the crowd, to give in to the fear of man.

In a book called, Ordinary Men by Christopher Browning, a true story is told of an exchange that took place between an interviewer and a group of European men who, during the Holocaust, systematically slaughtered whole villages full of Jewish men, women, and children.

The murderers were not deranged or on a vendetta; they were not paid killers, not even military men; they were just ordinary men off the street – regular men you would buy your groceries from at the local store, or who would come in to fix your dishwasher.

But these men were enlisted to kill Jews. They were explicitly told they didn't have to; there would be no penalty to those who chose not to participate. They were given the option to decline right in the beginning. Few did.

Most of the men simply lacked the courage and strength to step apart from the group and to take a stand for righteousness – to say no to killing innocent people just because ‘everyone else is doing it’.

When the interviewer asked the men, “*Why did you do it?*” They answered, “*Peer pressure*” – they didn't want to be thought of as different than the others. They thought, since the others were doing it, it must be okay. After all, these were ‘*only Jews*’!

Most of the Christian church was also ‘*governed by the group*’ and so they kept silent and continued to hold their church services. They carried on with their programs, lifting their hands in worship while the blood of the Messiah dripped down their arms. How so?

Yeshua said that whatever we did to the the least of His brethren, we did to him. “The King will reply, **‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’**” (Matthew 25:40)

And who are Yeshua's brethren? On one level, we are all, Jew and non-Jew, members of Yeshua's family. However, while He walked on this earth, he considered his brethren to be the ‘lost sheep of the house of Israel.’ “But He answered and said, **‘I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.’**” (Matthew 15:24)

There were, however, a few brave souls with the courage to risk their lives in order to help Yeshua's brethren in their time of desperate trouble. We must never forget these ‘righteous Gentiles’. They believed Yeshua meant it when he said, **‘He who tries to save his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.’** (Matthew 10:39)

The Ten Boom family, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and others like them, gave their lives to be ‘set apart’ from the group. This is actually the meaning of the Hebrew word for holy. It is ‘kadosh - set apart’.

These **righteous (holy) Gentiles**, whose names are honored at Yad Vashem (Holocaust Memorial Museum in Jerusalem), dared to stand with the Jewish people in the Holocaust and to resist the evil forces that were trying to destroy them.

To them, I am quite certain that Yeshua must have said, **‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’** (Matthew 25: 34-36)



*Righteous Certificate*



Will we have the courage, in the ‘time of Jacob’s trouble’<sup>1</sup>, to be ‘*kadosh (holy), set apart from the group*’ followers of God rather than followers of the crowd?

Refusing to teach our children the truth about the Holocaust will not make these issues disappear. What happened in Nazi Germany on a national scale may soon be coming upon the world, globally, under the rule of the anti-Christ.

**“It will be the time of Jacob’s trouble – but he will be saved out of it.”** (Jeremiah 30:7)

Like in the book of Esther, we have another ‘*Haman*’ on the scene today in the modern - day state of Persia (Iran) calling for the complete destruction of the Jewish people and Israel.

Deliverance will come for the Jews – but if the Church remains silent again this time – she will perish.

The Christian church is tragically deceived if they think that Islam will stop at annihilating the Jews and Israel. Just because the queen is in the King’s house, she is not safe from the forces of destruction and terrorism that threaten the Jews.



*Hamas poster with Israeli hostage*

As Mordechai said to Esther,

**“Do not think that because you are in the king’s house you alone of all the Jews will escape. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish.**

**And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”**  
(Esther 4:13-14)

Will the Church recognize her privileged position to come into the presence of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords? Perhaps, like Esther in the Bible, faithful Christians have come into the Kingdom for such a time as this to plead for the salvation of the Jewish people.

Biblical prophecy tells us that all nations will come against Israel in the future. **“On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves.”**  
(Zechariah 12:3)

In our day we see more and more anti-Israel sentiment in the nations of the earth, especially after the last Gaza war (summer 2014) when much of the media gave out ridiculously biased reports showing Israel as the aggressor against the so-called ‘poor oppressed Palestinians’. This

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 30:7

is so far from the truth that it would be laughable if it wasn't being swallowed, 'hook, line and sinker', by gullible people – even in the Church!

There is a saying that *'if you speak a lie often enough then people will begin to believe it as truth'*. It was this kind of false propaganda that helped pave the way for the Holocaust in the past. It began with boycotting Jewish businesses and acts of anti-Semitism. Today the language has changed to become 'anti-Israel' instead of 'anti-Jew'; but the message is the same.

Nations are calling for boycotts of Israeli products and businesses; and acts of violence against Jews are again on the rise in Europe and other nations. It seems that the lessons of history have not been sufficiently learned.

Where will the Church stand at this time? Only those precious few who have drawn close enough to God to lean upon His breast and hear His heartbeat will find 'The Way' that leads to life. Perhaps the God of Israel will give His people one more chance to show who will place themselves 'set apart' from the crowd and actively seek out ways to stand with Israel and the Jewish people, even if it costs them their very lives?

The Church is being called to repentance – for being lukewarm toward God and as a result - blind toward His end time plans and purposes. Being far from God means not understanding His heart for Israel and the Jewish people in this hour as we stand on the brink of the time of Jacob's trouble.

Pray for salvation for the Jewish people; pray for revelation for the Church in the nations and get ready to take a stand, to be kadosh, set apart, holy – for His sake – and as Esther declared, "If (we) perish (we) perish...." (Esther 4:16)

Coming face to face with such evil, we need to remember also that our lives are in God's hands and that He sent His Son to save the world. One day, perhaps soon, He will destroy all evil and wickedness such as those dark forces who perpetrated the horror of the Holocaust.

On that day, He will rule and reign with **righteousness and justice**; peace will be restored on this earth.

**"...but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist."** (Isaiah 11:4-5)

Amen v'amen. Come Adonai Yeshua....

## Where was God in the Holocaust?

Some may ask, “*Where was God in the Holocaust?*” We need to remember that although God permits people the freedom of choice - to choose good or evil - He still brought forth something amazing out of this terrible time. Out of the filthy ashes of the Holocaust was birthed the glorious beauty of the nation of Israel.



**Am Yisrael Chai! (The nation of Israel lives!)**

Thank you so much for standing with us in faithfulness and in truth - with your fervent prayers for our survival and for your generous support.

Thank you for praying for us like Esther and standing with us through thick and thin like Ruth. We owe you a huge debt of gratitude and trust the God of Israel to grant you your full reward!

**"May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."** (Ruth 2:12)

## Holocaust Memorial Day (Yom HaShoah) Study Questions

1. How is Yom HaShoah commemorated in Israel and the nations?
2. Do you think it is important to remember the Holocaust every year? Why or why not?
3. What would you say to someone who believes that the Holocaust is a hoax?
4. Why is the issue of the Holocaust still relevant today? Why should it concern non-Jews?
5. What does the word Shoah mean? Where is it found in the Bible and what is the significance of this prophecy for the world?
6. Does the Holocaust prove that the Jews are cursed by God and His covenant with the Jewish people is broken? What scriptures would you use to prove your viewpoint?
7. Why do you think that more people, especially Christians, did not try to help or intervene?
8. How do you think that the Holocaust could have happened in a modern, democratic European country? Do you see parallels to the situation in Europe today?
9. What did Yeshua say is to be our response to our enemies? Are you willing to obey His command to love our enemies and pray for them?
10. Have you ever experienced negative peer pressure (even as an adult) that tempted or caused you to do something you knew was wrong or violated your conscience?
11. What can we do, as the Body of Messiah, to strengthen ourselves for the coming 'Time of Jacob's trouble'?
12. How is the Christian church called to be an 'Esther' or a 'Ruth' to the Jewish people?

P.S. Help spread the Word of Truth through this DVD, “Where is Your Brother Jacob”, recorded on location at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

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