

PRICE ONE DOLLAR

ISRAEL

THE ROAD TO FULL REDEMPTION

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Israel Eldad (Scheib) was born 1910 in Poland. He graduated from the Rabbinical School in Vienna, Austria, and received his PH.D. degree from the University of Vienna. After completing his academic studies, he decided on a teaching career; teaching Bible in various schools. At the same time he joined the Bethar-movement, founded by the leader of the Zionists-Revisionists, Vladimir Jabotinsky. He also pursued journalistic work in Hebrew and Yiddish. In 1938 he first met Abraham Stern, the founder of the underground organisation LEHI (Fighters of Freedom for Israel). In March 1941 Dr. Eldad arrived in Palestine together with his wife Bathia, and joined the above movement, being appointed one of its three member secretariat. In 1944 he was imprisoned by the British. After two years of imprisonment he escaped from jail and resumed his activities in the underground. Until the British quit the mandate over Palestine and their military units evacuated the country, Dr. Eldad was the ideological mentor of the LEHI-movement and editor of its underground propaganda publications.

With the emergence of the State of Israel the LEHI-movement split into two factions, and Dr. Eldad, as the leader of the right wing, concentrated solely on ideological activities, editing for the last 12 years a literary monthly by the name of "Sullam," devoted to the cultural and social problems of the State of Israel. He also published a volume of memoirs from the underground "Maaser Rishon" (The First Title), as well as a series of historiosophical studies on the Bible, named "Hegyonei Mikra," and edited an historical periodical in English—"Chronicles." Now Dr. Eldad is one of the editors of the "Rabbi Kook Institute" Publishing House in Jerusalem and is a contributor to the daily "Haboker" in Tel-Aviv.

This booklet was published originally in Hebrew and contains the principles of the "Sullam"—ideology.

THE STATE OF ISRAEL AS THE BRIDGEHEAD OF MALKHUT ISRAEL

by DR. ISRAEL ELDAD

SULLAM

This pamphlet is devoted to a statement of the ideological foundations of "Sullam," the organ which advocates *Malkhut Israel*.

"Sullam" was established in the first year of the State of Israel. The name is taken from the dream of Israel who was the Patriarch Jacob, Father of the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

Each of those Tribes had its own particular quality, from the vengeful Brothers Simeon and Levy to Issachar the broad-boned ass; from Reuben who mounted his father's bed to regal Judah. But as the legend says, they were all enfolded in the stones of that place which Jacob set underneath his head; he the simple man. Similarly this country as a whole was enfolded under his body when he lay there, with its Lebanon and its Sharon. Jacob the Patriarch lay with all the Tribes beneath his head and the entire country underneath his body as he dreamt the dream of the Ladder.

There are many deep symbols in our soul. There is the binding of Isaac, there is the Burning Bush and there is the Golden Calf. All of these are concrete and specific instances, which have been transformed into elemental truths. Yet the most philosophical of them all, the most statutory, so to say, of them all, is the Dream of Jacob.

If the theory of consciousness is known as "the Philosophy of Philosophy," then Jacob's Ladder is our symbol of symbols. It depicts the key to the entire Jewish approach and outlook.

A union with the soil but no permanency therein, and a Torah which is from heaven but not in heaven. "Know where you come from and whither you go," and do not enquire about what is beyond your capacities.

The soul of the Israelite is extended between physics and metaphysics. Yet this tension is not fixed and static. It is dynamic and creative, it fights. The earth with its attractive force, with the nature within it, makes us heavy. It shackles us, it binds us as to an altar. And the heavens above with their infinity, with all that is unknown about them, repel and enchant, mystify and attract. A man feels very sure indeed when he stands with his two feet firm on the ground; yet he feels himself very small indeed. He wishes to mount aloft. The foot of the ladder is very clear to see. Its head is invisible. Only the bottom rungs can be perceived. But anybody who is entitled to the name of Israel, anybody who has contended with God, anybody who has fighting and creative strength within him does not seek the final and ultimate ends, does not indulge in metaphysics, and does not surrender before physics. He mounts the ladder.

The entire doctrine of dialectics is to be found in Jacob's Ladder, the entire doctrine of the struggle for liberty.

Throughout the period of the exile we have been ruled by schizophrenia. We were suspended between heaven and earth. On the one side the body lived its earthly life in submissive abjection, in poverty and contempt; a bodily life without perspective or prospects because it had no balancing point, no centre of gravity. The feet of the national ladder were dispersed, not firmly fixed, insecure. Yet on the other hand somewhere on high the fragments of the Ladder joined onto its upper portion without any basis on the ground, without any hold on history; sometimes physical to the point of disgust, sometimes metaphysical to the point of hallucination. They were materially static and spiritually so much cobweb. And these fragments of the Ladder were what was harmful for Zionism. What the Zionist leaders saw in reality was less real than what Jacob saw in his dreams. For an entire dream is more real than a fragmentary reality—the great and mighty Malkhut Israel is far more *Messianic* than all the messianic dreams which hung upon nothing concrete. The exile made us exceedingly philosophical in spiritual matters, and very practical indeed in material affairs. Yet that is not how it is with Jacob's Ladder. On Jacob's Ladder angels go up and down, *up and down*. We have to be very philosophical in our practical and material life and exceedingly practical in the world of the spirit. Vision is needed by the soldier in the Host of Israel, no less than soldiers are required for the vision of the Hebrew Malkhut—the Hebrew realm.

What is the strength of Jacob's dream? Its strength is twofold. First, the Ladder is set on the earth which is the element of stability, the force of realism. It is not in heaven. And earth means Eretz Israel, as the sages

expounded. Jacob stretched his body out upon the stones thereof. There is no rest to Israel saving therein. And "on this ground" comprehends within it not only the geographical and territorial aspect. "On the earth" includes the entire material and flesh-and-blood element, the stones and the body; natural wealth, and manufactured wealth; the social order, the society, the laws and the economic structure. All this is included in the term "on the earth." Yet this is only the non-vital, the mineral element, the footstool beneath the Ladder. But as for the second element, the *Ladder* which stands on the earth—that is the dynamic element, the force of idealism. That is what man has and which is lacking in the beast. Man is called upon to raise a ladder and to mount aloft by it: To mount the ladder of values, values of science and values of art, values of morality and values of justice; all of which are comprehended in that value of creativity which is the peculiar gift of Man.

That was why we chose the name "Sullam," the Ladder; for it is simple and great. For it is real, and one of the loftiest concepts of the Hebrew language. For it is the earthly and the philosophical. For it is the concrete concept of Hebrew.

There is no basis for Jacob's Ladder in the Partition State. The ladder's base, our sages of blessed memory declared, was in Jerusalem. And this bygone conceit of our sages is less legendary than the "simple" reckoning of many wise contemporaries. If indeed we are anything more than the beasts of the field, if indeed the will to collective achievement has awakened within us, we must understand our function not in being dragged along after events as most Jewish writers see it, but by way of spaciousness and loftiness.

And it is from this point of view, from the ladder viewpoint which is the vision of entire redemption as envisioned by prophets and sages and as was dreamt by all Jews in all ages, that we test everything that happens in the State of Israel. All the other struggles raging here between parties, between classes, between viewpoints, are irrelevant; for this State has a meaning, the right to exist and the possibility of existence, solely and exclusively if it is a stage towards the realization of Malkhut Israel, the Realm of Israel.

MALKHUT ISRAEL IS INEVITABLE

Heaven and earth conspired together to bring about this unbelievable restoration of the People of Israel to their own soil and the re-establishment of its sovereign frame in part of Eretz Israel. Rational and irrational factors were involved; Nature and miracle, economic and ideal urges,

will and necessity, faith and history, logic and a combination of political circumstances, the pioneer work of the halutzim and simple inertia, organised bodies and the disruption of organised bodies. True and deep research is necessary in order to analyse all these factors and the share of each one of them, the part it played in aiding in achieving a decision or on occasion in interference. For that too is among the phenomena of this tremendous and unique process: a factor that begins as a blessing may become a curse, an implement may become an obstacle.

Here for the present we shall draw attention to one aspect of this revival movement of the Jewish People; an aspect which is found from its beginnings and which is common to almost all its stages; those, at least, which preceded the great Hebrew Revolution which is still taking place before our eyes:

The vision of the few, the appeal of deeds done by a handful which appeared ridiculous, crazy, or at the least illogical, impractical and impossible in the eyes of the many sober realists,—this vision and this appeal have always proved to be exceedingly logical, exceedingly practical and entirely possible in the long run. On the other hand, the calculations and considerations of the supposed "realists" have always proved to be a mirage, to be irrelevant and to have no bearing on the ultimate situation. Let us give a few, but decisive, examples of this revolutionary process:

a. The revival of Hebrew as a spoken language. There were only a handful, and according to some it was only a single person, who developed the idea and began with the actual revival of the Hebrew language in daily speech and use for all requirements, and not exclusively as a Holy Language for prayer and literature. There is not a single enterprise in the world that resembles this. For the past thirty years and longer the Irish in their own Republic of Eire have been trying to re-establish their ancient Erse; yet with little success. Even good Zionists at first regarded the revival of Hebrew as superfluous and unfeasible. It was the zeal of a handful which brought it about.

Yet that is not all. Nobody can create something out of nothing. If this language had not been preserved throughout the ages as the language of heart, prayer and poetry; if there had not been Jews in every generation who, on Sabbaths and festivals, insisted on speaking the Holy Tongue only, no matter how highflown their phraseology and poverty-stricken their actual vocabulary—had it not been for this faithfulness during a thousand years and longer, it would have been impossible to bridge the abyss of two thousand years and more.

b. The return to the soil of the Homeland in order to settle there,

to till it and inherit it. Even before there was any political Zionism, successive waves of "lunatics" arrived with the resolve of becoming farmers on the soil of the Land of Israel. Yet this too was not a creation of something from nothing. Throughout the ages there had been Jews who tilled the soil in various exiles, insofar as they were not prohibited from doing so; and during the past five or six generations attempts had actually been made to establish close agricultural Jewish settlement in areas ranging from the Crimean Peninsula to the Argentine in South America. In Soviet Russia one such attempt was actually given an official stamp at Biro Bejan. Yet all these attempts proved to be failures. The only one that succeeded was the one which was not based simply on rational economic calculations of productivisation, the one which was linked with spiritual roots that appeared to many people as irrational, as absolutely impossible.

c. The renewal of Jewish military life. We do not know who the two "crazy people" were who came to Herzl, as he records in his Diary, and proposed the establishment of a force to conquer Eretz Israel. The great majority of Messianic Movements were linked with a belief in the strength of Jewish fighters, even though these were usually sought among the lost Ten Tribes. Even a mystical movement like that of Sabbethai Zvi awaited the appearance of those tribes, who would conquer the Land of Israel. Yet all these expectations never assumed actual form. Jewish bravery never disappeared entirely from among the Jewish People. It revealed itself in self-defense against rioters and pogromists, or in the participation of Jews as individuals in armies and revolutions. Yet in spite of this the first to suggest the restoration of the Jewish military spirit, romantic figures like Michael Halperin or Avshalom Feinberg, were viewed as fantastic dreamers. When the "fantasy" assumed organised and planned form in the educational movement of Betar and subsequently in the Irgun Zevai Leumi, the great majority of Zionists still regarded it as irregular, unnecessary, impossible and even harmful. If only part of the things that were said and written by Zionist leaders and writers against the military spirit in general, and the use of force in particular, were to be quoted nowadays, it would make every reader who loves the Israel army, and knows how important it is burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter.

These examples of the Hebrew language, Jewish settlement and the Jewish military revival are quoted at the beginning of these remarks in order to stress the fact that the overwhelming majority of the national values, which are the foundations and keystones of the restored Jewish sovereignty, were regarded by the majority as trifling fantasies. Yet thanks

to the obstinacy, faith and readiness of a handful to realise their desires, the absolute contrary was demonstrated, and what was impossible was transformed into the only possible way.

These are only three details in the entire nexus called "Jewish sovereignty" which itself, was a subject of mockery to large numbers who regarded it as entirely unnecessary or absolutely impossible.

There is a special prayer recited at Hanukka and Purim "on account of the miracles." In this prayer we thank God for putting many in the hands of few. This refers, of course, to the victory of the few Jews over the vast gentile armies who exceeded us numerically. Yet it is equally possible to speak of the miracle of the victory of the few, in the midst of the Jewish people itself, over the many unbelievers among us.

And on the basis of this past experience we are entitled to commence by saying:

Malkhut Israel, the Realm of Israel from the Euphrates to the River of Egypt, is not only possible but also necessary and inevitable. And on the other hand the present State of Israel with its regime, frontiers and objectives, is not a long-term possibility. If it does not serve as a real basis for achieving the objective of *Malkhut Israel*, it is not a reality at all.

THE MESSIANIC AND THE ANTI-SEMITIC FACTORS

Of all the revolutions which have occurred in modern history, that through which the Jewish people is at present passing is indeed the greatest, qualitatively speaking. The future may prove that this is the case not only in respect of the Jewish people but equally for the entire cultural world.

In general it is the habit to explain this wonder of a people returning to their own country after fifteen hundred years, and to their own sovereignty after two thousand years, as due to two factors:

a. The Messianic faith which never ceased among the Jewish People throughout its existence. The constant hope, accompanied by the fact of constant prayer and the singular religious life, were a tremendous spiritual bridge over the abyss of exile to the longed-for redemption. Without that faith and hope not only would the redemption have been impossible, but Jewish existence itself would have been terminated.

b. Hatred of the Jews. The religious hatred of the past, and the racial animosity of our own times, have compelled the Jews to find a solution for their problem. After other experiments which proved to be failures they reached the conclusion, the clearest and most practical ex-

pression of which was given by Herzl, that there was no alternative save to provide a State framework for the Jewish People which is evacuating the exile either voluntarily or compulsorily, and is gathering afresh in its ancient homeland.

In proof of our claim that the present State of Israel is nothing more than a bridgehead for *Malkhut Israel*, it is important to consider the mutual relationship of these two factors. The present discussion about the functions of Zionism in the light of the restoration of the State of Israel, the "dual allegiance" of United States Jewry, the Jewish self-awareness of the younger generation in Israel, are in the last resort the outcome of a misapprehension regarding these two factors.

Furthermore, a thorough and careful examination will prove that these factors are actually not two but one only.

This very phenomenon of Jew-hatred throughout the ages among other peoples is closely and deeply linked with the singular character of the Jewish people. No other people in world history has been hated or persecuted like them; yet although the enemies and persecutors have been so many and varied, it cannot be claimed that the Jewish people was undoubtedly worthy of hatred and persecution. For with all that hatred, and in spite of the persecution, the Jewish people is very much alive and is establishing new values for itself and the world. Without a faith in its singular character, without a belief in its future purpose, in Redemption, the Jews would never have been able to continue existing in the world; for then they would not have been hated would have been swallowed up in the absence of an internal compulsion and external opposition, and resistance.

This external factor of Jew-hatred, which helped to maintain the Jewish people and is helping to bring about its redemption, is therefore involved of necessity in the interior, positive factor.

Yet on the other hand the Messianic vision, the vision of Redemption, would not in itself have been capable of inducing the Jewish masses to return to their own country were it not for the auxiliary factor called hatred and persecution. Even the first Redemption, the exodus from Egypt, which has served ever since as the archetype of every redemption from slavery, every departure to liberty, was entirely and completely the outcome of animosity and persecution far more than it was the fruit of positive yearnings for liberty, independence, or the land of their fathers. Even the Torah tells us no more than the outcry of the Children of Israel by reason of their rigorous toil and sufferings; while the Reprobations of the Torah, in which Moses prophesies of the exile into which Israel will

be driven from their homeland, also presents this aspect of the distresses and tribulations of Exile.

And indeed the second Redemption, the return to Zion from the Babylonian Exile, was so restricted in scope that some outstanding Jewish thinkers of bygone days claimed that it could not be regarded as Redemption. Only a few returned from Babylon and settled down in the vicinity of Jerusalem, whence life centered almost entirely on the miserable little temple which had been rebuilt. And why did the Movement fail? Because it was sustained by the yearnings of a handful only, and was not impelled by the powerful urge of persecution, as the situation of the Jews in Babylon was satisfactory.

Study the course of the Messianic Movements at all times, and you will invariably find the two factors interlinked: Men of vision, imbued with longings and a will to Redemption, succeeded in bringing a Movement into being at times of persecution and distress.

Now the problem which was faced by our own generation was the following:

To fashion and direct national instruments that could fulfil the vision of the full redemption, with the aid of the pressure resulting from Jewish distress in the Exile.

If the Zionist Movement had followed this course, as was envisaged and demanded by Herzl, Nordau and Jabotinsky, a third of the Jewish People would not have been destroyed and the Land of Israel would not have been partitioned. If the political instrument, the Zionist Organisation, had not regenerated, and if the military instruments had been prepared in good time without barren palaver and the "self-restraint" of the later thirties (*havlaga*), we would have been capable of evacuating the millions from Europe before the decision to exterminate them was finally taken in Germany (nor was that decision reached until after the Second World War had begun). With those vast quantitative and dynamic forces it would have been no problem at all to conquer the country and occupy it, without any apprehension of or danger from the millions of Arabs round about. If less than two millions now stand firm within the present absurd frontiers, anybody can clearly see what the strength of six millions would have been within more spacious boundaries.

The other factor of Jew-hatred, and the pressure of Jewish distress, did exist. But as against it the second factor, that of Full Redemption, was choked back and diminished; even though it did not involve the vision of *Malkhut Israel* from the Euphrates to the River of Egypt but the more

restricted vision of the "Jewish State." The factor of the fighting, military force was ridiculed as immoral and impossible. The vision of Full Redemption did not fail for lack of opportunity. On the contrary, it was not implemented because it was not allowed to operate as central and decisive among the auxiliary forces of the pressure of persecution in Europe. And if a minority of the Zionist Movement had not seceded, if that minority had not commenced the campaign to expel British rule—the campaign of a minority within a minority, which also was commenced far too late—the present State of Israel would never come into being either.

THE FACTORS THAT MADE FOR DELAY

The major defect of the Jewish Messianic vision—and in speaking here of the Jewish Messianic vision we are not thinking of its polemical misrepresentation, on the part of some Jews, as implying the Redemption of the world or of Man, but the plain and simple meaning of the Redemption of the Jewish People through the sovereignty of the House of David—the defect lay in the absence of any view covering the methods of actual implementation. At first, to be sure, the opinion of the prophets and sages who meditated upon and developed the idea—the last of whom was Maimonides—was that someone chosen of God would appear and, by means of his spirit, understanding and daring, would exploit a historic opportunity ("the War of Gog and Magog") and would redeem the people. In the course of time, however, this vision assumed an increasingly mystical cast, and the process was envisaged as a series of miracles which would be performed by Divine means only. The first person who set out to transform the vision into a reality by realistic measures was David Reubeni four hundred and fifty years ago. The second was Dr. Herzl.

Yet those who followed Herzl lost the vision on account of too much "realism." What should have been a means became an end. The instruments overshadowed the goal.

Still worse: The national vision of full Redemption for the entire people in the entire Land of Israel and the return to the God of Israel and the Torah of Israel, which is the content of the Messianic vision, was supplanted by new nineteenth-century European ideals. The dogmas of Progress, whether in the form of a Socialist regime or of a liberal system, were the subject of contention between various Zionist parties and became factors making for delay both in theory and in practice. The redemption of the entire people, it was argued, is no longer so urgent since both Democracy and Socialism weaken Jew-hatred. At the same time it was