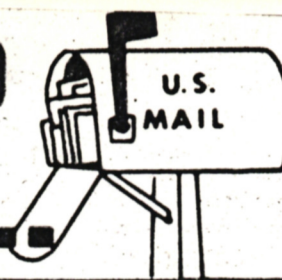


# Letters to the Editor...



(Note: Letters, in order to be considered for publication, must be typed and double-spaced. All letters must be signed, although names will be withheld upon request. Due to the large volume of mail, we regret that we cannot acknowledge or return any letters.)

## Replies To Dr. Lamm On "Face Of G-D"

You recently published a number of articles by the distinguished Rabbi Dr. N. Lamm based on a lecture given by him at Stern College. I have read these articles concerning the "Face Of G-D" in connection with the Holocaust with great interest and would like to make a few remarks.

Rabbi Lamm quotes three opinions with regards to the Holocaust, that is, it was a punishment either for assimilation, for a godless nationalism represented by the Zionist movement, or for not doing sufficient for the rebuilding of the Holy Land.

Rabbi Lamm rejects these three explanations as they contradict each other, therefore none of these can be right. It also seems to him abhorrent that G-d Almighty should send such a terrible punishment to

the Jewish people. I beg to differ. Is it not possible that all three opinions are justified? Can they not refer to three different wrong attitudes by three different groups in Jewish life. There was one group centralized mainly in Western Europe that tried to assimilate individual Jews to their unJewish environment. Do we not all know the explanation of the *Meshesh Chochmo* on Vayikro Ch-27 V.44 in which he predicted that from Berlin, the cradle of Reform, Antisemitism would spread all over the world, and that this *sefer* was published in 1928. It had been written many years before, when no one thought of Hitler as a menace to the Jewish people and as a threat to the world.

And who can overlook the prophecy of Ezekiel (Ch-20, V.32,33) "And that which enters your mind shall not happen to pass,

that which you say let us be like the nations and the families of the earth to serve wood and stone. As I live say the L-rd G-d if I will not reign over you with a Strong Hand and Outstretched Arm and outpoured fury."

And then there were the socialists as represented by the Bund and others in Eastern Europe who thought that socialism would bring salvation to the Jewish people and the world. How bitterly disappointed they were.

It was the late Rav Elchanon Wasserman, himself, a victim of the Holocaust, who in his *sefer B'ikvos DiMeshicho* showed how Hitler who combined in his National Socialist Party these two false ideas and used it to fight an all-out war against Jews all over the world.

And then there were groups of all parts of Jewry

who could have done more to promote the rebuilding of *Eretz Yisroel*, especially after the Balfor Declaration. It is difficult to decide what more could have been done, and whose fault it was, but there was a sin of omission.

Rabbi Lamm gives us an explanation of the Holocaust the fact of *Hester Panim*, the hiding of G-D's face. But the hiding of His Face, in itself, was a punishment, as it is clearly stated in Deuteronomy, ch. 31 V.17,18. He tries to explain that this *Hester Panim* started with the destruction of the Second Temple and, somehow, was alleviated by the founding of *Medinas Yisroel*. It is very hard to believe that *Hester Panim* should last for nearly 2000 years and that the Jewish people could survive such a long period of G-D forsaking them. Rabbi Lamm thinks this was possible because "Oud Yodo Ntuyo", His Hand was still outstretched over the Jewish nation. But this expression does not fit in because in scriptures it means that punishment has not yet been finished. Rather the expression, "He peereth through the lattice" ("Song of Song 2,9) has been applied to such a situation, and we have seen it during the Holocaust when, in spite of all the troubles and suffering, ways were found, with the help of G-D, to save at least some of the Torah leaders and laymen who were able to rebuild new fortresses of Torah life all over the world.

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