

77 Longhill St.
Springfield, Mass.
April 17, 1969

Dear Rabbi Lamm:

I am taking the liberty of sending you a copy of the introduction to the R. Kook translation which I am doing for Judaism. Dr. Schwarschild already has the translation itself; as I have only my own copy, I am not sending that herein. Are there any mis-statements or misinterpretations of the message? Any comments would be welcome.

Hoping this note finds all well, I remain

Respectfully,

Morton J. Merowitz
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Born in the small Latvian town of Grieve in 1865(?), Abraham Isaac Kook studied in the yeshivot of Lutzin and Volozin. A distinguished student of the Law and of mysticism, R. Kook served as rabbi in Zimel and Boisk. In 1904 he settled in Palestine to serve as Chief Rabbi of Jaffe. In 1909, the shemittah problem, which had troubled the new agricultural community of the Second aliyah, was approached with boldness and erudition by Kook in his Shabbat HaAretz (Jerusalem, 1909). While attending a rabbinic conference in Europe in 1914, R. Kook was forced to remain in England for the duration of the War. Returning, in 1919, to serve as Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem, R. Kook remained in the presence and at the core of the Palestinian society so dear to him. Despite a mystical view of the nature of Jewish history and a rather unsystematic philosophic terminology, R. Kook, who served as the first Chief Rabbi of Ashkenazic Jewry from 1921 until his death in 1935, was beloved by all factions and persons.

One of the more noteworthy cultural milestones of ^{the} pre-State yishuv was the long awaited opening of the Hebrew University. The event, held on Wednesday, April 1, 1925 attracted more than seven thousand persons to the 'campus' of the school which consisted of a remodeled house, "a copper-domed wing" and a specially constructed amphitheatre. Present were Dr. Chaim Weizmann (who had laid the cornerstone on July 24, 1918) President of the World Zionist Congress, Sir Arthur Balfour who delivered the main address, Chayim Nachman Bialik and others. Among the less noted speeches of the day was that of Rav Kook.

The opening prayer delivered by the rabbi expounds a difficult Biblical passage deriving from it moral guidelines for the new school located on the historic Mt. Sion. In words reverberating with meaning and with the apprehension born of prophetic forthrightness, R. Kook directed his remarks to the future of the University. The product of Jewish modernity, the school, Kook saw, bore within it both the seeds of secularism at

its most dangerous level and the positive and organic/^{values}which exists
(with proper moral discipline) in the non-Jewish world. R. Kook hoped
that with knowledgeable selectivity and with the dynamics of a vibrant
yeshiva in the back-ground, the new school would help ^{actualize} realize redemption
for all involved in and affected by the new society in Eretz Yisrael.
In an age of many 'secular cities', the post-Holocaust silence of a generation
scarred by ^{which are} its memories/not shared by its acculturated and well-fed youth,
the words of the rav may offer hope. In a time of proliferation of
rabbinic well-wishes and admonishment, the following words may offer new
meaning.

The translation is based upon the text in "Fragments," Hazon Lamoed
(Jerusalem:1941)pp.465-469. The speech also appears / / —