

## Editorial

### *A message from the Bible*

The Jewish religion is a religion of reason, founded upon reverence for natural law. Organizations such as the Jewish Defense League and the Anti-Defamation League of the masonic B'nai B'rith have falsely assumed the mantle of defenders of the Jewish faith, while in reality they are the shabbiest of criminal enterprises. It is useful in this connection to ponder the coincidence of the atrocious Feb. 25 massacre of Muslim worshippers in the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron by Benjamin Goldstein, with the Jewish holiday of Purim.

On Feb. 28, the *Washington Post* incorrectly represented the Biblical tale which comes from the Book of Esther. They described it as an account which commemorates the victory of the Jews of Persia over Haman, a king who had sought to destroy them.

If we consult the Holy Book, we see that Haman was not a king, but rather the evil counselor to the king—the Henry Kissinger of his day. Perhaps this error by the *Post* signifies a psychological truth—that the editors wish themselves to play the role of modern-day Hamans to Presidents and other heads of state.

Haman, for his own advantage, played on the emotions of the suggestible king, who was not a proper man of reason and calm reflection. He lied to the king, telling him that he was being defamed and slighted by the Jews.

This so enraged the king that he adopted Haman's plan to kill numbers of Jews in retribution. Fortunately, his wife, Queen Esther, herself a Jew, told him the truth, and instead of killing innocent Jews, the king ordered that Haman be hanged.

What, then, is the lesson which the Bible is trying to teach us? That the unjust will in the end be punished by our wreaking retributive justice on their own heads? We think not. Rather it is that wisdom should prevail—and this is the only hope for preserving the fragile peace negotiations between the state of Israel and the Palestinian people.

We should beware the Hamans, those who calculate and play upon the feelings of proud and frightened people, and trick them into doing evil in the name of good. This is a lesson for kings and common folk alike, and failure to heed it is the stuff of all great tragedy.

We cannot say that William Shakespeare modelled his great play *Othello* only on this Biblical story; but certainly Iago is another Haman, and England then, just as today, had more than its share of Hamans.

Clearly, Goldstein did not practice the Jewish religion, whether or not he followed ritual traditions. Nor can he have understood the Book of Esther. He sought to perpetrate Jewish "ethnic cleansing" of the West Bank, by triggering a new wave of violence which will be wreaked on innocent Jews as well as Arabs.

He had hoped to manipulate Jews and Arabs alike, just as Haman tried to play with the emotions of the king. He wished to turn them into beasts who would act under the impetus of blind rage. And so Goldstein played the beast, and dragged the Holy Book into the mud in his shameful crime.

A less violent, but still atrocious abuse of the Jewish religion appears to have been perpetrated by New Orleans attorney and Anti-Defamation League National Commission member Donald Mintz, who is running for the position of mayor in that city. It appears, according to an interim report prepared by the city's Human Rights Commission, that Mintz, a professed Jew, was secretly causing inflammatory racist literature to be circulated. His racist and anti-Semitic fliers were sent to Jews along with a request for funds to finance the Mintz campaign.

Mintz has come under attack by a black columnist writing for *USA Today*, and the Jewish daily *Forward* has carried a scathing attack on him by the Jewish Community Board. But we see another example of Haman's method, perfected by the JDL and the ADL to prey upon the credulity of Jews while pretending to defend them.

The message of Purim is that justice based upon wisdom must prevail, if we are not to witness an era of slaughter—pitting nation against nation, people against people, and turning neighbors into snarling animals. There are many Hamans today. Some are disguised as Jews, some as Christians, and some as Muslims. There are many in Brooklyn, and in Washington, London, Moscow, and Jerusalem. It is most important that the public should get the Purim story right.