Antithesis in the Time of War David Arnow, Ph.D. Congregation Knesset Israel October 27, 2023

1~ Amos 8: 9. And it shall come to pass in that day, says the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day; 10. And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and tonsures upon every head; and I will make it like the mourning for an only son, and its end like a bitter day.

ט וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא נְאֵם אֲדֹנִי יְהֶוֹה וְהַבֵּאתִי הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בַּצְּהָרָיִם וְהַחֲשַׁכְתִּי לָאָרֶץ בִּיוֹם אוֹר: י **וְהָפַּרְתִּי חַגֵּיכֶם לָאֵבֶל וְכָל-שִׁירֵיכֶם לְקִינָה** וְהַעֲלֵיתִי עַל-כָּל-מָתְנַיִם שָׂק וְעַל-כָּל-ראשׁ קַרְחָה וְשַׂמְתִּיהָ כְּאֵבֶל יָחִיד וְאַחֲרִיתָה כִּיוֹם מָר

2~ Lamentations 2:21 Prostrate in the streets lie both young and old. My maidens and youths are fallen by the sword... 5:3. We have become orphans and fatherless, our mothers are like widows. 5:15. The joy of our heart is ceased; **our dance is turned into mourning**.

כא שָׁכְבוּ לָאָרֶץ חוּצוֹת נַעַר וְזָקֵן בְּתוּלֹתֵי וּבַחוּרֵי נָפְלוּ בֶחָרֶב הָרַגְתָּ בְּיוֹם אַפֶּּךְ טָבַחְתָּ לֹא חָמֶלְתָּ. ה:ג יְתוֹמִים הָיִינוּ וְאֵין אָב אִמֹּתִינוּ כְּאַלְמָנוֹת ה:טו שבת משוֹשׁ לבנוּ נהפּדְ לאבל מחֹלנוּ

3~ Lamentations 1:1 How?! Lonely sits the city that was full of people! She has become like a widow!

א אֵיכָה | יָשְׁבָה בָדָד הָעִיר רַבָּתִי עָם הָיְתָה כְּאַלְמָנָה

4~ Lamentations: 5:21 Take us back, to you God to Yourself; and let us come back; Renew our days as of old! That last phrase now sung after Torah reading when we return the Torah to the ark 5:22 For truly, You have rejected us, bitterly raged against us.

ה:כא הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ יְהֹנָה אֵלֶיךּ וְנָשׁוּבָה חַדֵּשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם: ה:כב כִּי אָם-מָאֹס מְאַסְתָנוּ קָצַפְתָּ עָלֵינוּ עַד-מְאֹד 5~ Jeremiah 31:13 Then shall maidens dance gaily, young men and old alike. I will turn their mourning to joy, I will comfort them and cheer them in their grief... 15Thus said YHVH, A cry is heard in Ramah. Wailing, bitter weeping— Rachel weeping for her children. She refuses to be comforted for her children, who are gone. 16 Thus said YHVH restrain your voice from weeping, your eyes from shedding tears... They shall return from the enemy's land. 17 And there is hope for your future—declares YHVH. Your children will return to their borders.

יג אָז תִּשְׂמַח בְּתוּלָה בְּמָחוֹל וּכַחָּרִים וּזְקֵנִים יַחְדָּו וְהָפַּ**רְתִּי אֶבְלָם לְשִׁשׂוֹן** וְנָחַמְתִּים וְשִׂמַחְתִּים מִיגוֹנָם: ...טו פֹה אָמַר יְהֹוָה קוֹל בְּרָמַה נִשְׁמַע נְהִי בְּכִי תַמְרוּרִים רָחֵל מְבַכָּה עַל־בְּנָיהָ מִאְנָה לְהַנָּחֵם עַל־בָּנֶיהָ כִּי אֵינֶנוּ: טז פֹה אָמַר יְהֹוָה מִנְעִי קוֹלֵךְ מִבֶּכִי וְעֵינַיִךְ מִדְּמְעָה ... נְאָם־יְהֹוָה וְשָׁבוּ מֵאֶרָץ אוֹיֵב: טז וְיֵשׁ־תִּקְוָה לְאַחָרִיתֵךְ נְאָם־יְהֹוָה וְשָׁבוּ בַנִים לֹגְבוּלָם:

6~ Esther 9:22. Like the days when the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned to them from **from sorrow to happiness**, **and from mourning to celebration**; that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor. 23. And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written to them; 24. Because Haman the son of Ham'data, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast Pur, that is, the lot, to consume them, and to destroy them; 25. But when Esther came before the king, he commanded by letters that his wicked plot, which he devised against the Jews, should return upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

ט:כב פַּיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר-נָחוּ בָהֶם הַיְּהוּדִים מֵאוֹיְבֵיהֶם וְהַחֹדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר נֶהְפַּךְ לָהֶם מִיּגוֹן לְשִׂמְחָה וּמִשְׁלוֹחַ מָנוֹת אִישׁ לְרֵעַהוּ וּמַתָּנוֹת וּמֵאֶבֶל לְיוֹם טוֹב לְעֲשׁוֹת אוֹתָם יְמֵי מִשְׁהֶּה וְשִׁמְחָה וּמִשְׁלוֹחַ מָנוֹת אִישׁ לְרֵעַהוּ וּמַתָּנוֹת לָאֵבְיוֹנִים: כג וְקְבֵּל הַיְּהוּדִים אֵת אֲשֶׁר-הָחֵלוּ לַעֲשׁוֹת וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר-כְּתַב מְרְדֵּכֵי אֲלִיהֶם: כד פָּל-הַיְּהוּדִים חָשַׁב עַל-הַיְּהוּדִים לְאַבְּּדָם וְהִפִּיל פּוּר הוּא הַגוֹרְל לְהַמְּם וּלְאַבְּדָם: כה וּבְבֹאָה לְפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ אָמֵר עִם-הַסֵּפֶר יָשׁוּב מַחָשַׁבְתּוֹ הָרָעָה אֲשֶׁר-חָשֵׁב עַל-הַיְּיִם עַל-רִאשׁוֹ וְתָלוּ אֹתוֹ וְאֶת-בָּנֵיו עַל-הָעֵץ

7~ Midrash on Psalms (22:15) "The people walking in darkness (*choshekh*) have seen a great light (*or gadol*)" [Isaiah 9:1]. This verse applies to the generation of Mordecai; No day was evil and dark (*afeilah*) for the people of Israel than the one at the Shushan the castle, when it was decreed "to destroy, massacre and exterminate all the Jews ... in one day" (Esther 3:13). But they saw a great light (*or gadol*): A redeemer rose up and saved them. And who was he? Mordecai. Of him it is written "Mordecai left the king's presence..." (Esther 8:15). And what follows? "The Jews enjoyed light (*orah*) and gladness, happiness and honor' (Esther 8:16)."

וזה שאמר הכתוב (ישעיה ט א) העם ההולכים בחושך. מדבר בדורו של מרדכי. שאין לך שעה של אפילה שהיתה להם לישראל כשושן הבירה שנגזר עליהן להשמיד להרוג ולאבד. וראו אור גדול שנצמח להם גואל וגאלם זה מרדכי שנאמר (אסתר ח טו) ומרדכי יצא מלפני המלך. ומה כתיב אחריו (שם טז) ליהודים היתה אורה.

8~ Esther 9:16. But the other Jews who were in the king's provinces gathered themselves together, and stood for their lives, and had rest from their enemies, and slew of their foes seventy five thousand, but they laid not their hands on the plunder.

ח:טז וּשָׁאָר הַיְּהוּדִים אֲשֶׁר בִּמְדִינוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ נִקְהַלוּ וְעָמֹד עַל-נַפְשָׁם וְנוֹחַ מֵאֹיְבֵיהֶם וְהָרֹג בִּשֹׂנָאֵיהֶם חָמִשֵּׁה וְשָׁבִעִים אֲלֶף וּבַבִּזַּה לֹא שֵׁלְחוּ אֶת-יַדַם

9~ The Maharal of Prague (c.1520-1609), *Or Chadash* (1600)

It was not to fight for their lives because "to fight for their lives" (paraphrasing Esther 9:16) means the Jews were afraid that they would be killed and they needed to save themselves. And this was not so, it was not saving themselves only taking revenge on their enemies.

לא בשביל לעמוד על נפשם, כי "לעמוד על נפשם" משמע שהיו יראים היהודים שיהרגום, והיו צריכים להצלת נפשם, וזה אינו, שלא היה זה הצלת נפשם, רק להנקם מאויביהם

10~The Passover Haggadah We must therefore thank... the One who did these miracles for us and for our ancestors, and who brought us **from slavery to freedom, and from subjugation to redemption, and from sorrow to happiness, and from mourning to celebration, and from darkness to great light.** So let us sing (a new song) before ... [God]: "Halleluyah!"

לְפִיכָךְ אֲנַחְנוּ חַיָּבִים לְהוֹדוֹת... לְמִי שֶׁעֲשָׂה לַאֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְלָנוּ אֶת־כָּל־הַנָּסִים הָאֵלוּ: הוֹצִיאָנוּ מֵעַבְדוּת לְחֵרוּת, וּמִשִּׁעְבּוּד לֹגְאֻלָּה, מִיָּגוֹן לְשִׁמְחָה, וּמֵאֵבֶל לְיוֹם טוֹב, וּמֵאֲכֵּלָה לְאוֹר גַּדוֹל. וְנֹאִמֵר לְפַנֵיו שִׁירַה חַדֵּשַׁה: הַלִלוּיַה

11~The Passover Haggadah And it is this that has stood for our ancestors and for us; since it is not only one [person or nation] that has stood against us to destroy us, but rather in each generation, they stand against us to destroy us, but the Holy One, blessed be He, rescues us from their hand.

וְהִיא שֶׁעָמְדָה לַאֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְלָנוּ. שֶׁלֹּא אֶחָד בִּלְבָד עָמֵד עָלֵינוּ לְכַלּוֹתֵנוּ, אֶלָּא שֶׁבְּכָל דּוֹר וְדוֹר עוֹמְדִים עָלֵינוּ לְכַלוֹתֵנוּ, וְהַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא מַצִּילֵנוּ מִיֶּדָם.

12~A prayer of Israel at a time of anguish

For all our family of the House of Israel, fellow Jews who face anguish and captivity, whether on sea or land: May the Divine have compassion upon them, and bring them **from distress to relief, from darkness to light, from subjugation to redemption**, now, speedily, soon, and let us say: Amen ("May we enjoy YHVH Your faithful care because we have put our hope in You" Psalms 33:22.)

אַחֵינוּ כָּל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, הַנְּתוּנִים בְּצָרָה וּבַשִּׁבְיָה, הָעוֹמְדִים בֵּין בַּיָם וּבֵין בַּיַבָּשָׁה, הַמְּקוֹם יְרַחֵם עֲלֵיהֶם, וְיוֹצִיאֵם **מִצְּרָה לִרְנָחָה, וּמֵאֲפֵלָה לְאוֹרָה, וּמִשִּׁעְבּוּד לִגְאֻלָּה**, הַשְׁתָּא בַּעֲגָלָא וּבִזְמַן קָרִיב, וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן: (יְהִי־חַסְדְּדְ יְהֹוָה עֲלִינוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר יִחַלְנוּ לָדְ:)

Acheinu kol beit yisrael, han'nutunim b'tzarah uvashivyah, ha'omdim bein bayam uvein bayabasha. Hamakom y'racheim aleihem v'yotziem mitzra lirvacha um'afaila l'orah umishi'abud lig'ulah, hashta ba'agalah uvizman kariv. V'nomar: Amen