

VNÍMÁNÍ HOLOCAUSTU Z HLEDISKA JUDAISMU

Perception of Holocaust from The Point of View of Judaism

Summary

Vnímání holocaustu z hlediska judaismu

Perception of Holocaust from The Point of View of Judaism

Mgr. Alžběta Nováková

The thesis " Perception of Holocaust from The Point of View of
Judaism" presents an overview of the Holocaust theology of Judaism.

Holocaust brought up many burning questions that can torment a religious
person and does not allow him to be at peace. We are unable to answer the
question why Holocaust happened upto day. According to Judaism we will
know the truth only after the arrival of Messiah.

The work is divided into two sections. First section takes a look at
possible individual theology models of Holocaust, both those based on
Bible directly or those based on mysticism and also at new theories
formulated as the outcome of Holocaust. There are fourteen models
presented here all commented on by the Chief Rabbi of Prague and the
Czech Republic Karol Efraim Sidon. The following theories belong to the
possible theological models of Holocaust:

1. Theory of reward and punishment. There is number of opinions what was
the cause of Holocaust. For some it was caused by secular Jews, for some
by Zionists and third group puts the blame on Jews who did not want to
move to the Sacred Land of Israel
2. Israel, cast by the World in the role of "suffering servant"
3. Holocaust as *akedat Yitzhak* or " binding of Isaac", Holocaust as the test
of our belief
4. Holocaust as a period of *hester panim*, "the hiding of G-d's face"
5. Holocaust as "the time of G-d's death"
6. Holocaust as a result of free will of human beings
- 183
7. Holocaust as a G-d's revelation.
8. Nazism viewed as a new "Amalek"
9. Holocaust as an unpredictable mystery, which cannot be comprehended
by humankind
10. Holocaust as a *gilgul* - Kabala's teaching of reincarnation of souls.
11. Holocaust as a *chevlei Mashiach*, "the birthpains of Messiah"
12. Hitler as "a servant of G-d"
13. Holocaust as a *jissurim shel ahava* - "suffering of love"
14. Holocaust as a *sitra achara* – "the other side"

The second part of this thesis presents the works of ten Post-Holocaust
theologians who are looking for answers to the questions resulting from
Holocaust. After the end of the Second World War silence prevailed and
theologians were not willing to put into words their opinions on what
happened. That changed at the beginning of 70's after the trial of Adolf
Eichmann in Jerusalem when media daily brought a lot of testimonies of

survivors to get them with the Six-day war between Israel and Arabs in 1967 when citizens of Israel were in danger of a second Holocaust. After these events we can find first theological reactions to Holocaust. This happened only almost 20 years after the Holocaust.

The choice of theologians cited in this thesis was based on their contribution to Post-Holocaust Judaism. Their theories differ from each other, each of them contributing something new to the Holocaust theology or confirming the interpretation of Holocaust in accordance with the school of thought they belong to. Parts of their theologies are also models that were introduced in the first part of this work. Often a combination of number of models may be found therefore one theological explanation of Holocaust can be based on three separate models. The aim of this thesis was to find out whether such catastrophe as the Holocaust did influence the

184
theology of Judaism, this demonstrated in the frame of important schools of thought and movements within Judaism such as Ultra Orthodox, Orthodox, Religious Zionism, Reform Judaism and Conservative Judaism.

It can be said that the biggest change happened in the Conservative and Reform Judaism when the idea that human being is a moral being was refuted. Conservative Judaism modified in its theology the longing of a human being to understand the World and humankind with the help of science and technology. The Conservative Judaisms came to the conclusion that a human being can hardly comprehend the will of G-d even though using modern implements. The Reform course in the frame of Judaism lost all illusions about the modern human being as the Holocaust brought on a cognizance that assimilation with other nations is not possible. It stems out of this that Jews have to close their ranks in defense. The newly founded State of Israel is the best way do this and therefore the stand point of the Reform Judaism and its theology towards Israel changed and strengthened positively. A certain change also happened in the terms of Orthodox Judaism where the position of the Religious Zionism strengthened too. I hope that this work will be a valuable addition to the understanding of Holocaust from the Perception of Holocaust from The Point of View of Judaism view in both extending the already known models of Holocaust as well as by the commentary of Rabbi Karol Efraim Sidon and lastly by a comprehensive review of influence of Holocaust on the theology of Judaism.