

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:13,640

2
00:00:13,640 --> 00:00:15,470
In my own way, I
could add to that.

3
00:00:15,470 --> 00:00:16,710
We were about to continue.

4
00:00:16,710 --> 00:00:20,090

5
00:00:20,090 --> 00:00:21,770
I'd like you to
talk a little bit

6
00:00:21,770 --> 00:00:27,530
about General Eisenhower or
later President Eisenhower's

7
00:00:27,530 --> 00:00:30,390
feelings about Jews.

8
00:00:30,390 --> 00:00:35,960
Do you think that perhaps
his attitude toward Patton,

9
00:00:35,960 --> 00:00:41,120
which you described before,
regarding the mistreatment

10
00:00:41,120 --> 00:00:45,350
or neglect of prisoners,
may have had anything

11
00:00:45,350 --> 00:00:50,990
to do with Eisenhower's own
feelings regarding Jews?

12
00:00:50,990 --> 00:00:56,000

I think that may
very well be so.

13
00:00:56,000 --> 00:00:59,870
You know that Eisenhower
himself twice,

14
00:00:59,870 --> 00:01:04,129
at least twice and
more often, undoubtedly

15
00:01:04,129 --> 00:01:08,060
was called a Jew by the Nazis.

16
00:01:08,060 --> 00:01:13,610
They also called
President Roosevelt a Jew.

17
00:01:13,610 --> 00:01:18,860
And Nazi propaganda had
it that the Jew Rosenfelt

18
00:01:18,860 --> 00:01:27,780
sent the Jew Eisenhower to
torment the Jews of Germany.

19
00:01:27,780 --> 00:01:31,220
But Eisenhower
himself, and I heard

20
00:01:31,220 --> 00:01:35,540
him say this, he said that
when he was a little boy,

21
00:01:35,540 --> 00:01:38,840
he and his brothers were
raised by their mother

22
00:01:38,840 --> 00:01:41,495
on the stories of what he
called the Old Testament,

23
00:01:41,495 --> 00:01:46,130

what we Jews call our
Bible, and that the figures

24
00:01:46,130 --> 00:01:50,990
in the Old Testament,
Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses

25
00:01:50,990 --> 00:01:56,060
and David and Solomon, were all
figures with whom he was quite

26
00:01:56,060 --> 00:01:59,360
familiar because of these
stories told him when

27
00:01:59,360 --> 00:02:02,330
he was a child by his mother.

28
00:02:02,330 --> 00:02:05,210
And that he also
said at one time

29
00:02:05,210 --> 00:02:08,300
that actually, he believed
that the Jews were

30
00:02:08,300 --> 00:02:11,330
the chosen people, that
the Jews were closer to God

31
00:02:11,330 --> 00:02:14,330
than were other peoples.

32
00:02:14,330 --> 00:02:18,680
Some of these things he said
publicly when after the war,

33
00:02:18,680 --> 00:02:22,190
he served as president
of Columbia University.

34
00:02:22,190 --> 00:02:26,660
And during that time, he was

given an honorary doctorate

35

00:02:26,660 --> 00:02:29,180
by the Jewish Theological
Seminary of America,

36

00:02:29,180 --> 00:02:33,830
a neighbor of Columbia, and
he said these things publicly.

37

00:02:33,830 --> 00:02:41,530
So I have a strong feeling
that Eisenhower, if not

38

00:02:41,530 --> 00:02:46,400
a philo-Semite, at
least felt sensitive

39

00:02:46,400 --> 00:02:52,600
about the sufferings of Jews,
that once a situation was

40

00:02:52,600 --> 00:02:57,320
called to his attention,
he acted upon it speedily.

41

00:02:57,320 --> 00:02:59,050
Yes, yes.

42

00:02:59,050 --> 00:03:02,590

43

00:03:02,590 --> 00:03:05,500
There is a book
that was recently

44

00:03:05,500 --> 00:03:10,960
published by, I
believe, a Canadian,

45

00:03:10,960 --> 00:03:21,820
in which Eisenhower is accused
of deliberately mistreating

46
00:03:21,820 --> 00:03:30,580
German POWs who were captured
at the end of the war.

47
00:03:30,580 --> 00:03:33,010
You've heard about this?

48
00:03:33,010 --> 00:03:36,760
I haven't heard about this.

49
00:03:36,760 --> 00:03:38,140
I mean the book itself.

50
00:03:38,140 --> 00:03:40,120
I heard about the book.

51
00:03:40,120 --> 00:03:47,590
I've read about the book, but
I cannot conceive that this has

52
00:03:47,590 --> 00:03:52,930
any truth in it whatsoever,
first of all because I know

53
00:03:52,930 --> 00:03:55,670
Eisenhower so well.

54
00:03:55,670 --> 00:04:00,760
I know that he was a
man of strong character

55
00:04:00,760 --> 00:04:05,170
without bigotry,
without prejudice.

56
00:04:05,170 --> 00:04:13,870
He in addition was molded
by the military form,

57
00:04:13,870 --> 00:04:20,230
and he was the kind of army

officer who lived by the rules.

58

00:04:20,230 --> 00:04:27,840

He would never himself
transgress military regulations

59

00:04:27,840 --> 00:04:31,710

which say very clearly
that prisoners of war

60

00:04:31,710 --> 00:04:36,000

are not to be
maltreated, and I'm

61

00:04:36,000 --> 00:04:40,080

certain he would not
permit any officer serving

62

00:04:40,080 --> 00:04:45,900

under his command to
mistreat prisoners of war.

63

00:04:45,900 --> 00:04:53,850

I myself played a little role in
the prisoner of war situation.

64

00:04:53,850 --> 00:04:56,580

You see, in addition
to the fact that I

65

00:04:56,580 --> 00:05:03,240

was in charge of Jewish
affairs as a chaplain,

66

00:05:03,240 --> 00:05:08,100

I was also G3 on the staff of
the theater chaplain, which

67

00:05:08,100 --> 00:05:11,580

means I was in charge of
all religious supplies

68

00:05:11,580 --> 00:05:14,970

for the American
army, for our priests,

69
00:05:14,970 --> 00:05:19,410
for our Protestant
ministers, for our rabbis,

70
00:05:19,410 --> 00:05:27,000
that mass wine or mass kits,
or crucifixes or rosary beads,

71
00:05:27,000 --> 00:05:31,680
or wine for the Kiddush,
the Jewish services,

72
00:05:31,680 --> 00:05:35,070
were all shipped
through my office

73
00:05:35,070 --> 00:05:37,140
to all the American
Army Jewish chaplains

74
00:05:37,140 --> 00:05:39,420
in the European theater.

75
00:05:39,420 --> 00:05:42,870
Now, one of the interesting
responsibilities

76
00:05:42,870 --> 00:05:49,260
I had during that time was
to supply religious materials

77
00:05:49,260 --> 00:05:53,760
for German prisoners of war
held in prisoner-of-war camps

78
00:05:53,760 --> 00:05:56,390
in France.

79
00:05:56,390 --> 00:05:58,590
And one of the

things I had to find,

80

00:05:58,590 --> 00:06:02,820

and ultimately, I found
them, were New Testaments

81

00:06:02,820 --> 00:06:07,440

printed in German for
German prisoners of war

82

00:06:07,440 --> 00:06:10,170

and other religious
supplies in German

83

00:06:10,170 --> 00:06:13,050

for those German
prisoners of war

84

00:06:13,050 --> 00:06:15,780

in American military
prisoner of war camps

85

00:06:15,780 --> 00:06:18,410

who wanted to study religion.

86

00:06:18,410 --> 00:06:22,140

Now, if Eisenhower and
the officers under him

87

00:06:22,140 --> 00:06:25,920

were so concerned
that I, a rabbi,

88

00:06:25,920 --> 00:06:28,980

should find New
Testaments printed

89

00:06:28,980 --> 00:06:31,410

in German for German
prisoners of war,

90

00:06:31,410 --> 00:06:34,020

I can't bring myself

to believe that there

91

00:06:34,020 --> 00:06:38,580
was any kind of mistreatment
of German prisoners of war

92

00:06:38,580 --> 00:06:39,330
under Eisenhower.

93

00:06:39,330 --> 00:06:41,925
I think that is an
out-and-out lie.

94

00:06:41,925 --> 00:06:45,970

95

00:06:45,970 --> 00:06:48,940
Thank you for
giving your comment

96

00:06:48,940 --> 00:06:52,030
on that, because I think
the book is certainly

97

00:06:52,030 --> 00:06:58,600
a disturbing one and one that
is getting some currency right

98

00:06:58,600 --> 00:07:00,350
now, or notoriety.

99

00:07:00,350 --> 00:07:01,250
Well, that's too bad.

100

00:07:01,250 --> 00:07:02,118
Yeah, yeah.

101

00:07:02,118 --> 00:07:05,260

102

00:07:05,260 --> 00:07:12,730
What has this experience

with the camp, the DP camps

103

00:07:12,730 --> 00:07:15,820
and what you saw, what
you encountered there,

104

00:07:15,820 --> 00:07:21,160
how has that changed your life
or shaped your later life,

105

00:07:21,160 --> 00:07:25,000
both as a rabbi and as a person?

106

00:07:25,000 --> 00:07:27,530
Well, I must tell you
that first of all,

107

00:07:27,530 --> 00:07:32,070
what I saw in the
concentration camps

108

00:07:32,070 --> 00:07:36,000
completely colored my
thinking to such a point

109

00:07:36,000 --> 00:07:39,840
that I was convinced I could
never again serve as a rabbi.

110

00:07:39,840 --> 00:07:42,900
I had personal
theological problems.

111

00:07:42,900 --> 00:07:49,440
How could I continue preaching
about God and his beneficence

112

00:07:49,440 --> 00:07:53,590
and his kindness after
what I had witnessed

113

00:07:53,590 --> 00:07:57,210
in the concentration camps?

114
00:07:57,210 --> 00:08:00,270
And it took a long
time before I was

115
00:08:00,270 --> 00:08:04,440
able to make peace with myself.

116
00:08:04,440 --> 00:08:06,630
During that period
of time, immediately

117
00:08:06,630 --> 00:08:10,980
after I returned home
after the war, fortunately,

118
00:08:10,980 --> 00:08:14,220
I did not have to
serve as a rabbi.

119
00:08:14,220 --> 00:08:16,590
I had agreed while
still in Germany

120
00:08:16,590 --> 00:08:20,540
at my desk at American Army
headquarters in Frankfurt.

121
00:08:20,540 --> 00:08:27,300
I had agreed after a visit
by Major Edward Warburg, who

122
00:08:27,300 --> 00:08:33,000
was president of the JDC, the
Joint Distribution Committee,

123
00:08:33,000 --> 00:08:36,299
that I would be employed
by that committee,

124
00:08:36,299 --> 00:08:39,360
that after a month at
home in the United States,

125
00:08:39,360 --> 00:08:42,870
upon my return, I would
come back to Germany

126
00:08:42,870 --> 00:08:47,760
and serve as head of the
JDC operations in Germany.

127
00:08:47,760 --> 00:08:51,270
In December of 1945
when I came home,

128
00:08:51,270 --> 00:08:55,530
I was asked to speak at the
annual meeting of the JDC,

129
00:08:55,530 --> 00:08:58,230
and I did.

130
00:08:58,230 --> 00:09:03,720
And I spoke with great anger
and great disappointment

131
00:09:03,720 --> 00:09:07,950
that the American Jews
had done so little,

132
00:09:07,950 --> 00:09:11,670
not that they could
have done very much.

133
00:09:11,670 --> 00:09:13,610
But the difference
between what I

134
00:09:13,610 --> 00:09:17,280
had been living with
for the past four years

135
00:09:17,280 --> 00:09:20,580
that I was in Europe and what
I found among the American Jews

136
00:09:20,580 --> 00:09:25,570
was so great that I was
filled with indignation.

137
00:09:25,570 --> 00:09:30,150
Well, after I spoke at that
JDC annual meeting in New York,

138
00:09:30,150 --> 00:09:33,010
I was asked to speak
again the following week

139
00:09:33,010 --> 00:09:36,120
at the UJA Annual
Conference which

140
00:09:36,120 --> 00:09:39,780
was to proclaim
an as yet unheard

141
00:09:39,780 --> 00:09:41,880
of goal of trying to
raised \$100 million

142
00:09:41,880 --> 00:09:47,160
to help the survivors
in Europe as well

143
00:09:47,160 --> 00:09:50,360
as the Jews of Palestine.

144
00:09:50,360 --> 00:09:54,747
And I spoke with that
conference in Atlantic City,

145
00:09:54,747 --> 00:09:56,330
and the following
morning, I was asked

146
00:09:56,330 --> 00:09:58,990
to have breakfast with the
leaders of the UJA and the JDC.

147
00:09:58,990 --> 00:10:02,060

148
00:10:02,060 --> 00:10:07,820
They then told me that
breakfast that I was transferred

149
00:10:07,820 --> 00:10:12,440
from the JDC to the UJA,
that they wanted me,

150
00:10:12,440 --> 00:10:16,070
both organizations, to
speak in the campaign

151
00:10:16,070 --> 00:10:20,750
for the \$100 million that was
to be operated by the UJA,

152
00:10:20,750 --> 00:10:22,720
the United Jewish Appeal.

153
00:10:22,720 --> 00:10:24,230
So over the
following six months,

154
00:10:24,230 --> 00:10:30,530
I spoke in 40 different
states of our country trying

155
00:10:30,530 --> 00:10:33,770
to raise money, and as
a result of the meetings

156
00:10:33,770 --> 00:10:38,120
at which I spoke, I was told
that \$20 million was raised.

157
00:10:38,120 --> 00:10:40,250
Then they asked me to
go to South Africa,

158

00:10:40,250 --> 00:10:42,890

first to go back to
Germany and Italy

159

00:10:42,890 --> 00:10:47,330

to visit the DP camps
again to be brought up

160

00:10:47,330 --> 00:10:51,110

to date as it were, and
then to go to South Africa

161

00:10:51,110 --> 00:10:54,500

and what were then called
Southern Rhodesia and Northern

162

00:10:54,500 --> 00:10:57,410

Rhodesia, and to speak
to the Jewish communities

163

00:10:57,410 --> 00:11:00,890

there under the auspices
of the South African Jewish

164

00:11:00,890 --> 00:11:07,520

War Appeal, again to raise
funds for the Jewish survivors.

165

00:11:07,520 --> 00:11:10,910

I spent four months
speaking in those countries

166

00:11:10,910 --> 00:11:15,470

and then came back to
the States, got married,

167

00:11:15,470 --> 00:11:19,910

and spoke for six months in
the New York City UJA campaign.

168

00:11:19,910 --> 00:11:23,660

By this time, having worked
out my own personal problem

169
00:11:23,660 --> 00:11:27,860
as to whether I could
again serve as a rabbi,

170
00:11:27,860 --> 00:11:34,430
and being tired of having
no address of my own

171
00:11:34,430 --> 00:11:40,640
for so many years since
the beginning of 1942,

172
00:11:40,640 --> 00:11:47,660
I accepted in 1947, in the fall
of that year, a congregation

173
00:11:47,660 --> 00:11:51,270
in Brookline, Massachusetts,
Kehillath Israel,

174
00:11:51,270 --> 00:11:54,860
where I served for 10 years,
and then came to the Park Avenue

175
00:11:54,860 --> 00:12:03,236
Synagogue in New York in 1957.

176
00:12:03,236 --> 00:12:08,430
This is, I'm sure, a kind of
personal question which I hope

177
00:12:08,430 --> 00:12:11,230
is not too intrusive,
but let me ask you this.

178
00:12:11,230 --> 00:12:15,030
How do you deal
with the question

179
00:12:15,030 --> 00:12:19,020
of God in the Holocaust in
speaking to people about it

180
00:12:19,020 --> 00:12:21,420
today, in speaking
to your congregations

181
00:12:21,420 --> 00:12:25,620
and to people who might ask you
where was God when all of this

182
00:12:25,620 --> 00:12:27,500
happened?

183
00:12:27,500 --> 00:12:31,140
Well, I think that
if anybody tries

184
00:12:31,140 --> 00:12:34,410
to give an answer
to that question,

185
00:12:34,410 --> 00:12:38,880
that person is presumptuous.

186
00:12:38,880 --> 00:12:42,510
There are questions
that we cannot answer,

187
00:12:42,510 --> 00:12:45,270
and this is one of the great
questions that we cannot

188
00:12:45,270 --> 00:12:46,230
answer.

189
00:12:46,230 --> 00:12:48,360
Where was God?

190
00:12:48,360 --> 00:12:50,040
Of course, in Jewish
theology, there

191
00:12:50,040 --> 00:12:53,630

is the concept of
hastarat panim,

192
00:12:53,630 --> 00:12:57,090
that there are times
when God is absent.

193
00:12:57,090 --> 00:13:00,570
Perhaps that was a time
when God was absent,

194
00:13:00,570 --> 00:13:06,540
but I know that if I
reject my belief in God,

195
00:13:06,540 --> 00:13:11,270
there are more questions that
I won't be able to answer,

196
00:13:11,270 --> 00:13:12,320
many questions--

197
00:13:12,320 --> 00:13:14,890

198
00:13:14,890 --> 00:13:19,390
questions like why should a man
have sacrificed his own life

199
00:13:19,390 --> 00:13:24,440
to save another man in
a concentration camp,

200
00:13:24,440 --> 00:13:31,430
and why should there be love
and such beauty in the world.

201
00:13:31,430 --> 00:13:37,130
How can life be explained
if I don't believe in God?

202
00:13:37,130 --> 00:13:40,690
Therefore, I still

retain my belief in God.

203

00:13:40,690 --> 00:13:43,300

That there are lacunae
here and there,

204

00:13:43,300 --> 00:13:49,930

yes, I freely admit that,
but I live with those lacunae

205

00:13:49,930 --> 00:13:51,390

and with my faith in God.

206

00:13:51,390 --> 00:13:56,830

207

00:13:56,830 --> 00:14:07,210

Do you think that the
displaced persons camps where

208

00:14:07,210 --> 00:14:12,190

you found yourself in
the days after the war

209

00:14:12,190 --> 00:14:17,020

have been sufficiently
studied for their own sake?

210

00:14:17,020 --> 00:14:21,480

Do you think people know
enough about those camps,

211

00:14:21,480 --> 00:14:24,730

or do you think that
more effort needs

212

00:14:24,730 --> 00:14:32,350

to be invested to learn
about that phase of the War

213

00:14:32,350 --> 00:14:40,170

and the Holocaust for
future generations?

214

00:14:40,170 --> 00:14:46,250
I'm strongly convinced that
there has to be much more study

215

00:14:46,250 --> 00:14:48,980
about the Holocaust
to begin with,

216

00:14:48,980 --> 00:14:55,010
and about the whole era of
the displaced persons camps.

217

00:14:55,010 --> 00:14:57,950
The Holocaust has to be
studied in much greater depth

218

00:14:57,950 --> 00:15:03,510
than it has been because for
the first time in human history,

219

00:15:03,510 --> 00:15:08,120
It shows the depths
of human depravity,

220

00:15:08,120 --> 00:15:14,990
how far human beings can
go in practicing evil

221

00:15:14,990 --> 00:15:17,700
toward other human beings.

222

00:15:17,700 --> 00:15:23,870
And if we are to learn
how to face evil,

223

00:15:23,870 --> 00:15:29,360
how to try at least to
eliminate some parts of evil

224

00:15:29,360 --> 00:15:35,960
in the human being, we have
to study that time in history

225

00:15:35,960 --> 00:15:39,950
when evil was at its
worst, when human beings

226

00:15:39,950 --> 00:15:43,320
were at their very worst.

227

00:15:43,320 --> 00:15:48,290
We have to study the
period of the DP camps

228

00:15:48,290 --> 00:15:53,630
in order to learn how
human beings can resist,

229

00:15:53,630 --> 00:15:56,900
how human beings can
overcome the worst

230

00:15:56,900 --> 00:16:01,460
that other human beings can
do to them, the strength

231

00:16:01,460 --> 00:16:04,460
of the human personality.

232

00:16:04,460 --> 00:16:06,470
All of that needs
much more study.

233

00:16:06,470 --> 00:16:10,110

234

00:16:10,110 --> 00:16:14,580
To end on a somewhat lighter
note, we have a picture of you

235

00:16:14,580 --> 00:16:19,920
here as a young soldier,
and I'm glad to say

236

00:16:19,920 --> 00:16:21,970
you haven't changed too much.

237
00:16:21,970 --> 00:16:22,890
You're very kind.

238
00:16:22,890 --> 00:16:24,630
You're very kind indeed.

239
00:16:24,630 --> 00:16:27,030
I know when I look in
the mirror each morning

240
00:16:27,030 --> 00:16:30,550
to shave that I
have indeed changed,

241
00:16:30,550 --> 00:16:32,100
as is quite understandable.

242
00:16:32,100 --> 00:16:36,330
That picture incidentally
was taken in London in 1942

243
00:16:36,330 --> 00:16:37,850
by the Army Signal Corps.

244
00:16:37,850 --> 00:16:40,380

245
00:16:40,380 --> 00:16:42,030
Rabbi Nadich, I
want to thank you

246
00:16:42,030 --> 00:16:45,900
for sharing your
experiences with us.

247
00:16:45,900 --> 00:16:50,910
I think you've added
appreciably to our understanding

248

00:16:50,910 --> 00:16:53,520
of the aftermath
of the Holocaust,

249

00:16:53,520 --> 00:16:58,110
and your remarks have
certainly come home to us.

250

00:16:58,110 --> 00:17:00,310
Thank you very much
indeed for asking me.

251

00:17:00,310 --> 00:17:00,810
My pleasure.

252

00:17:00,810 --> 00:17:02,660
Very good.

253

00:17:02,660 --> 00:17:13,000