

Ashkenazic start

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. So we have come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

In a sense we have come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this

nation. So we have come to cash this check — a check that will give us
upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice.

Septimic start

The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our
nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

We cannot walk alone.

As we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march
ahead. We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking the
devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be
satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors
of police brutality. We can never be satisfied, as long as our bodies,
heavily with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of

the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating "For Whites Only". We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little

white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and

mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and

the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall

be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with a

new meaning, "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I

sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from

every mountainside, let freedom ring."

And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it
ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every
city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children,
black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and
Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old
Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free-at-last! thank-God-Almighty, we are
free at last!"

Excerpts from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's

'I Have A Dream' Speech

excerpted + set to Haftarah tune by Naam Weiss