Compass Life Adult Sunday School

Pastor Pete

March 10, 2019

**“The Battle for Berlin and the Holocaust”**

**I. The Race for Berlin**

Following the failure of Hitler’s Ardennes offensive, both the Western Allies and the Russians resumed their inexorable march toward \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The Soviets advanced on Germany from the East during 1943 and 1944. The Red Army assumed the offensive against the Germans with the battle of \_\_\_\_\_\_ in July 1943—the largest \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ battle in history. This battle ended Germany’s ability to launch \_\_\_\_\_\_ offensives. In November 1943 the Soviets recaptured Kiev, and in January 1944 they reached the prewar frontier of Poland. The Red Army’s summer offensive of June 1944 was directed against German Army Group Center and resulted in a bigger defeat for Germany than Stalingrad. Serious tensions emerged in mid-1944 between Hitler and the German \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. In a foretaste of the coming Cold War, in August 1944 the advancing Red Army halted outside of Warsaw as the Germans crushed the Polish underground insurgency. As the Red Army pushed into \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in September 1944, Germany’s satellite states began to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the Axis. Hitler refused pleas from his military commanders to withdraw German troops from the Baltic states and form a new defensive line against the Soviets. In January 1945 the Soviets moved through \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. German forces were heavily outmatched. By February the Red Army was just \_\_\_\_\_\_ miles from Berlin. Meanwhile, British and American forces drove toward Germany from the West. The invasion of Germany began when Anglo-American forces crossed the \_\_\_\_\_\_. The Allied plan called for three-pronged advance to clear the Rhineland. The British and Canadians proceeded slowly against bitter German resistance. They did not reach the Rhine until February 21, 1945. Montgomery understood that his troops would have priority to cross the Rhine first. Cologne fell to the U.S. First Army on March 5. Two days later, the U.S. Third Army crossed the Rhine at Remagen. On March 23, Montgomery launched what was to have been the main offensive across the Rhine. By March 25, all organized resistance west of the Rhine had \_\_\_\_\_\_. By March 27, all seven Allied armies had crossed the Rhine. The Anglo-American forces then raced toward Berlin. The Allied forces’ next objective was the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, which was encircled in April. German forces resisted fiercely, even though they had already effectively lost the war. On April 11, Simpson’s Ninth Army reached the Elbe, where Eisenhower ordered him to \_\_\_\_. By April 16, the Russians were poised at the Oder River. The Big Three had agreed at Yalta that Berlin would be part of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of occupation. The Allies were unsure of Hitler’s whereabouts. They were fooled by German plans to construct an “Alpine redoubt.” Eisenhower directed the main thrust of the Allied assault at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The final Soviet drive for Berlin began on April 16, 1945. The Soviets unleashed a huge artillery barrage against the city. Russian units linked up west of Berlin on April 25 and then invaded the city. Hitler \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in his bunker on April 30. The Soviets lost more casualties in the Battle for Berlin than American troops had suffered \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Europe. If U.S. forces had seized Berlin and incurred similar casualties, it would have been very difficult for them to have subsequently turned the city over to the Soviets per the Yalta agreement. In his “last testament,” Hitler blamed the Jews for provoking the outbreak of war in 1939. V-E Day was declared in the West on May 8, 1945.

**II. Arbeit Macht Frei**

Hitler’s wars against the Allied powers and against the Jews must be viewed together. This is because in many ways the Holocaust, the systematic destruction of the European Jewish community, is inconceivable without the \_\_\_\_\_ itself. Nazi racial policy evolved during the \_\_\_\_\_. In 1933 and 1934 the Nazi regime issued anti-Jewish legislation. Jews were eliminated from the civil service and certain professions. The anti-Jewish policy seemed to lose momentum in 1934 and 1935. The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the citizenship of Jews. Marriage and sexual relations between Jews and “Aryans” were \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. In November 1938, Goebbels’ propaganda ministry orchestrated the Reichskristallnacht (night of broken glass) throughout Germany. This was the first instance of violence against the Jews clearly directed by the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the regime. The policy of forced emigration was instituted in 1938. In January 1939 Hitler threatened the destruction of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Europe, and he linked Bolshevism with “world finance Jewry.” In November 1939, Heinrich Himmler became responsible for Nazi racial policy. He delegated this work to Reinhard Heydrich, who designated \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as the concentration point for Jews in preparation for their deportation to the east. The Einsatzgruppen (SS commando units) were responsible for rounding up the Jews. Various solutions to the “Jewish question” were discussed within the SS leadership during 1940 and 1941. These included the settlement of all Jews in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The “Commissar Order” informed the German Army on the eastern front about the SS “special tasks,” which included the massacre of Russian and Ukrainian Jews behind German lines. In late summer 1941, Hitler issued a verbal order to Himmler regarding the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Heydrich developed a plan for systematic mass murder of Jews, which he presented at the Wannsee Conference on January 20, 1942. The system of death camps was established during 1942. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the inmates would be put to work, and the rest would be killed. European Jews were deported to the east. The Allies faced difficult choices in considering how to respond to the Holocaust. They were aware of SS activities but did not have extensive knowledge about the death camps. There was considerable skepticism and even disbelief within the Allied camp about these reports. Many of the information sources were regarded as suspect. To prevent further death, to save more lives, the Allied governments argued, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ had to be brought to a speedy conclusion, that anything that detracted from that would only protract the war and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Various factors worked to discourage a vigorous Allied response. The Allies discussed bombing either the camps or the rail lines leading to them. It was feared that such bombings might inadvertently kill numerous \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and that they might detract from the broader military effort. Latent anti-Semitism in official circles contributed to a reluctance to publicize accounts of Nazi atrocities against the Jews. In sum, Allied policy held that the best way to save the Jews was to rapidly win the war against Nazi Germany.

**III. Justice in Nuremberg**

The best-known of the Nuremberg trials was the Trial of Major War Criminals, held from November 20, 1945, to October 1, 1946. The format of the trial was a \_\_\_\_\_\_ of legal traditions: There were prosecutors and defense attorneys according to British and American law, but the decisions and sentences were imposed by a tribunal rather than a single judge and a jury. The chief American prosecutor was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1892-1954), an associate justice of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Each of the four Allied powers supplied two judges–a main judge and an alternate. Twenty-four individuals were indicted, along with six Nazi organizations determined to be criminal (such as the “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”). One of the indicted men was deemed medically unfit to stand trial, while a second man killed himself before the trial began. Hitler and two of his top associates, Heinrich Himmler (1900-45) and Joseph Goebbels (1897-45), had each committed suicide in the spring of 1945 before they could be brought to trial. The defendants were allowed to choose their own \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and the most common defense strategy was that the crimes defined in the London Charter were examples of ex post facto law; that is, they were laws that criminalized actions committed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the laws were drafted. Another defense was that the trial was a form of victor’s justice–the Allies were applying a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ standard to crimes committed by Germans and leniency to crimes committed by their own soldiers. As the accused men and judges spoke four different languages, the trial saw the introduction of a technological innovation taken for granted today: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ translation. IBM provided the technology and recruited men and women from international telephone exchanges to provide on-the-spot translations through headphones in English, French, German and Russian. In the end, the international tribunal found all but three of the defendants guilty. Twelve were sentenced \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, one in absentia, and the rest were given prison sentences ranging from 10 years to life behind bars. Ten of the condemned were executed by hanging on October 16, 1946. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1893-1946), Hitler’s designated successor and head of the “Luftwaffe” (German air force), committed suicide the night before his execution with a cyanide capsule he had hidden in a jar of skin medication.

**IV. An American Holocaust**

Jews and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are “sub-human”

Jews and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are “parasites”

Jews and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are a “mass of tissue”

Jews and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are simply an “evacuation”

Torture is “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”

**3/17 “Little Boy and Fat Man”**