

CHILDREN

My Family's Exodus Story

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Source: Rebecca P.

My Grandma Reni was born in Berlin, Germany. Because of the Nazi persecution, she was forced to leave in late 1940 and escape with her parents and older sister to Shanghai, China. Grandma's stay in Shanghai was long and difficult. She and her family did not have much food, heat, or clothing. My grandma and her family were forced to stay there for seven years!! Because of World War II, Shanghai was under Japanese occupation, and the Jews were forced to live in the poorest sector of the city. It was very hard to earn money and the Jews became extremely poor. Fortunately, "The American Jewish Joint Distribution" organization was able to provide food which prevented my grandma's family and many others from starving. After the end of the War, most foreigners left China to go to many different countries. Finally, Grandma and my Great-Grandmother were able to travel by ship to the United States. My grandma was very happy to come to the United States and become a citizen.

My grandmother's exodus from Nazi Germany is similar to the Exodus for several reasons. My grandma's family realized that Hitler was not going to allow Jews to live in Germany anymore, and that he wanted to kill all of them. Soon Hitler made it impossible to leave Germany. The Pharaoh did not want to let the Israelites leave Egypt either, and was "working them to death" as slaves. After escaping Germany, and traveling to China, it took my Great-Grandfather over one and a half years to get his family to Shanghai, China. For seven long years, Shanghai represented safety to my Grandmother and her family from the terrible things happening in Nazi Germany, even though things were very harsh in China as well; just like the desert represented safety from the Pharaoh to the Israelites when they wandered for forty years. Eventually, when my Great-Grandmother and my grandmother were able to come to America, it represented religious freedom just like the Israelites that were able to escape, with the help of God, from the terrible treatment of the Pharaoh.