

this passage: "In the scriptures of the old covenant, a new and better covenant was spoken of, which . . . our Lord himself declared was ratified in his blood, which was shed to redeem not a single nation only, like the Jews, but the whole world (Matt. 26:28)" (second edition, p. 162).

Similarly, how can anyone possibly limit Isaiah 59:20,21 to natural Israel: "the Redeemer shall come to Zion . . . this is My covenant with them . . . and My words . . . shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed"? This surely applies to the Lord Jesus Christ and the saints. A few verses later we read: "the Gentiles shall come to thy light" (60:3); then of the Arabs (vv. 6,7), then of the Gentiles again (vv. 11,16). Paul, in quoting Isaiah 59 (as the leaflet says), does not limit the words ". . . shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" to Israel, but expressly writes: "And so all Israel [Jews and Gentiles, spiritual Israel?] shall be saved" (Rom. 11:26). And surely we are not expected to believe that God's promises to David in 2 Samuel 7:12-16 are limited to natural Israel?

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Author's reply

I thank Brother Bartholomew for his careful reading of the insert and for his letter. I agree that the insert did not anywhere state explicitly that the Gentiles are included in the new covenant. This should have been said in the section headed, "The new covenant". As the subject of the insert was the *new* covenant, I assumed that readers would understand that this covenant applies to all believers, both Jews and Gentiles, in distinction to the old covenant which, with some exceptions, applied only to Israel after the flesh.

It could perhaps also have been said under the section, "The new covenant is to be fulfilled in the nation of Israel", that the bringing in of the Gentiles is a secondary fulfilment of the new covenant, which has, however, preceded in time the primary application of the new covenant to the nation of Israel. The fulfilment of that primary purpose awaits the coming of the Lord. In the meantime the (mostly) Gentile believers enjoy the blessings of the new covenant today, having their sins forgiven, and awaiting the promised "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 1:4).

John Nicholls

Reflections on Theodor Herzl

Nigel Bernard

IN EZEKIEL 38 God portrays Israel at the time of the end as dwelling "safely" (v. 11), or "confidently" (AV mg.), and having "gotten cattle and goods" (v. 12). This is a picture, not of a godly nation, but of a nation which puts its trust in wealth and is confident in its own strength. Moses warned of the danger of Israel becoming self-confident once they entered the Land after their forty-year sojourn in the wilderness. They would be tempted to say: "My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth" (Deut. 8:17). These words also accurately reflect the nation of Israel today.

This year marks the hundredth anniversary of the death of Theodor Herzl. It was his determination to establish a Jewish homeland that provided a key impetus to the later development of the State of Israel. Moreover, his secular and self-reliant perspective helped to form the self-confident attitude later manifested in the nation. In this article we will briefly consider the

influence of Herzl and the role he played in the development of events in the time of the end.¹

Early life

On 2 July 2004 a square in Vienna, Austria, was renamed "Theodor Herzl" in honour of the man who had played such a significant part in modern Jewish history. Herzl was born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1860, but moved to Vienna in 1878. He studied law and became a lawyer, but soon resigned to pursue a career as a writer.

Although he wrote various plays, it was as a correspondent that he made his name, being appointed the Paris correspondent of the leading Vienna newspaper, the *Neue Freie Presse*, in 1891. At the ceremony to mark the renaming of the

1. The information relating to Herzl in this article is taken from Finkelstein, N. H. (1987), *Theodor Herzl*, New York, Franklin Watts.

square, the Israeli ambassador to Austria, Avraham Toledo, commented that the square that had been chosen was appropriate because of its proximity to the office of *Die Presse*, the modern-day counterpart of the *Neue Freie Press*.²

Dreyfus

While working in Paris, Herzl became increasingly aware of the anti-Semitism that existed in that country. He began to think of ways in which anti-Semitism could be removed. His initial ideas were bizarre and far-fetched. For example, he contemplated challenging a leading anti-Semite to a duel on the basis that if he succeeded it would show the justice of his cause, but if he were killed then he would be honoured as a martyr. Another idea involved converting Jews to Christianity. However, it took the impact of the notorious trial of Alfred Dreyfus to convince him that the solution lay elsewhere.

Alfred Dreyfus was a French Jew who was a captain in the French army. On 15 October 1894 he was arrested and accused of spying for Germany. His trial initiated an outburst of anti-Semitism in France. He was not a spy, and was condemned essentially because he was a Jew. He was sentenced to imprisonment on Devil's Island (a penal settlement off the coast of South America) and sent there in 1895. Following an international outcry he was eventually retried in 1899. Despite the lack of evidence he was once more found guilty. However, he was spared further punishment by being granted a pardon by the French President. It was not until 1906 that he was officially declared innocent.

On January 5, 1895, Herzl, together with other reporters, had been in the courtyard of the French Military Academy to witness the humiliating ceremony in which Dreyfus was stripped of his military rank prior to his departure to Devil's Island. Herzl was shocked by the blatant anti-Semitism of the crowds outside as they jeered Dreyfus. After this experience he decided that there was only one way in which anti-Semitism could be eradicated. The solution, he reasoned, was for Jews to have their own homeland.

Zionism

Later that year Herzl resigned as the Paris correspondent of the *Neue Freie Presse* to concentrate on his Zionist aspirations, although he remained as an employee of the newspaper in a less lucra-



Coin commemorating the centennial of the First Zionist Congress, and portraying Herzl

tive role in order to maintain an income. He looked for support from wealthy Jews, but it was the poorer Jews who were more enthusiastic. Those who were well-established in society tended to prefer the status quo. In 1896 he published a book called *The Jewish State* which set out his ideas for a Jewish homeland. This immediately established him as the leader of the Zionist cause.

A main strategy of Herzl was to attempt to persuade the Sultan of Turkey to allow some land in Palestine to be given to the Jews. At this time Palestine was under the control of the Ottoman Empire. Herzl developed contacts with Constantinople in an attempt to influence the Sultan. In addition, he also sought contacts with Germany. At one stage he hoped that German intervention with the Sultan might lead to a Jewish State being established under German protection.

The culmination of this strategy came in 1898 when, following an informal meeting with the Kaiser, Wilhelm II, in Constantinople, Herzl then had a more formal meeting with him in Jerusalem. However, although Herzl had previously been encouraged by the German reaction to his plans, the Kaiser showed little interest and the meeting proved unproductive. Despite the lack of German interest, Herzl made several more attempts in subsequent years to persuade the Sultan to agree to a charter for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, but to no avail. From a Biblical perspective we can see how such an approach was doomed to failure. The Ottoman Empire's control of Palestine would be dealt with, not by cooperating with it, but by it being "dried up" (Rev. 16:12).

2. <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=JPost/JPostArticle/ShowFull&cid=1088745246460>



David Ben-Gurion reading the Declaration of Independence in the Tel Aviv Museum on 14 May 1948. Note the portrait of Theodor Herzl on the wall behind him.

British involvement

In 1897 Herzl organised the First Zionist Congress in Basel in Switzerland. Here the World Zionist Organisation was formed. This provided a focal point for Jews across the world as they began to think seriously about having their own homeland. In 1903 the Sixth Zionist Congress took place. By now Herzl was suffering from ill health, but he attended the conference armed with an extraordinary proposal. Following the failure of his initial strategy he had turned his attention to Britain. In discussion with officials, various locations were considered where Jews might be settled. These areas included Cyprus and a part of Egypt near the border with Palestine called El-Arish, but both of these were rejected.

However, an area which was considered more of a possibility was Uganda, which at that time was under British control. The British Government wrote to him inviting a Jewish delegation to visit Uganda to investigate the possibility. Although not near Palestine, Herzl thought this

was at least suitable as a stopgap before more suitable land was found. When he announced this to the Congress, however, there was pandemonium. Many objected, and it was only Herzl's assertion that the ultimate goal remained Palestine that prevented a major split occurring. The British later backtracked from their proposal, but the seed had been sown. Britain would eventually play a key role in the establishment of a homeland for the Jews in Palestine itself.

Herzl was not a religious Jew. He viewed the prospect of the Jews establishing a Jewish State in humanistic terms. As Finkelstein states: "The religious aspect of a return to the Jewish homeland was not his primary concern. He was laying the groundwork for a Jewish land that would be established by human hands and not by an act of God".³

Many of those who responded to Zionism, itself encouraged by the nationalist movements

3. *Op. cit.*, p. 57.

“... we are not political Zionists or nationalistic Jews. We are strangers and pilgrims for a kingdom yet to come. This simple truth must not be overlaid by our natural favour for the renascent Israel. We cannot look with pleasure upon the godlessness of many of Israel’s people, nor do we admire her Judaistic humanism, and we deplore the absence of the true Messianic hope from the hearts of the majority of the people of the land. Israel is not waiting for Christ: he is waiting for her to repent. Her true salvation will come through repentance, and not by the military success of her Christless aspirations”.

Harry Tennant, “Are we Zionists?”, *The Testimony*, Jan. 1975, p. 15

in general in nineteenth-century Europe, were doing so as a means of self-emancipation with the aim of strengthening their Jewish identity. Writing of the Jewish identity of British Jews in the 1930s and during World War Two, Bolchover described Zionism as “‘the hopeful image’ of the Jew resurgent, the fighting Jew”.⁴ The formation and defence of the State of Israel was the manifestation of the self-confident “fighting Jew”. The self-confidence portrayed in Ezekiel 38 has



The grave of Theodor Herzl in the military cemetery on Mount Herzl in southwest Jerusalem

its roots in Zionism and the work of Theodor Herzl.

Conclusion

Many likened Herzl to Moses. However, “Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated” (Deut. 34:7). By contrast, Herzl died aged forty-four, an exhausted and ill man. Today, many Jews regard him in high esteem. Not all Jews share this view, however. When the square in Vienna was named in his honour, some Orthodox Jews protested. They argued that the State of Israel is not legitimate, and that Jews should wait for the coming of the Messiah before establishing a homeland.

Of course, although the current State of Israel is more in tune with the philosophy of Herzl than with the ways of God, nevertheless its very existence is a sign that Christ is soon to return. And its existence owes much to the work of Herzl, an unwitting tool in the ways of providence.

4. Bolchover, R. (1993), *British Jewry and the Holocaust*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 143.

The Zionist Programme

The aim of Zionism is to create for Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law. In order to attain this object the Congress proposes to adopt the following means:

- 1 The systematic furtherance of the settlement of Palestine with Jewish agriculturalists, artisans and craftsmen.
- 2 The organisation and union of all Jewry by means of suitable local and general institutions according to the laws of the country.
- 3 The strengthening of Jewish national sentiment and national consciousness.
- 4 Preparatory steps for obtaining the Government assents that are necessary for achieving the object of Zionism.

Programme adopted at the First Zionist Congress