

the little sins and failings in our lives that need to be eradicated if we are to glorify our heavenly Father by bearing much fruit (Jno. 15:8). A further interpretation is based on a figurative understanding of Lamentations 5:18, equating the foxes and jackals walking about on desolate Zion with the scavenging nations that took advantage of the Babylonian invasion to further their own interests (Lam. 2:16; Ps. 137:7; Obad. vv. 12-14; Ezek. 25:3,6,8,12,15). In this view the little foxes are those antagonistic nations who will be driven out of the land of Israel, God's vineyard, in the springtime of the new age.

The common jackal is also most likely to have been the creature used by Samson in his strata-

gem for destroying the Philistines' crops (Judg. 15:4,5). In the past the fox has been relatively rare in that area, but "jackals are concealed by hundreds in the gardens, and among ruins and tombs".<sup>4</sup> The brands would be attached some distance from the tails, and the jackals would not be fastened too tightly together, so that they could run together as accustomed and so constitute a very effective incendiary device.

(To be continued)

4. Volney, quoted by Carpenter, p. 305, *Scripture Natural History*, 1836, SPRK.

## The Holocaust

### When the world passed by on the other side

Dennis M. Elliott

**W**ITH THE passing of time the veil has been lifted from what was previously classified as secret information in national archives, and it has been made accessible in the public domain. National and international leaders have as a consequence been put under the microscope, having their lives and actions analysed and exposed in the cold light of historical perspectives.

#### Roosevelt and the Jews

Franklin D. Roosevelt, four times President of the United States during the crucial years 1933-1945, has been scrutinised in this way and is adjudged to have been one of America's great presidents. He is remembered principally for his effective social programmes and his New Deal policy, which put Americans back to work after the disastrous depression, moving the country forward towards economic recovery. He liked to use the expression, "The only thing to fear is fear itself", as he endeavoured to rally the nation to a new sense of patriotism and belief in its destiny for greatness and prosperity.

But historians, in scrutinising the highs and lows of his political career, agree that he failed to support the cause of the Jews in Nazi-dominated Europe during their terrible ordeal in World War 2 when they lived in continual fear of their lives. At this time the prophetic Word of

God, conveyed to the Israelites through His servant Moses and warning of the misfortunes that would overtake them if they were disobedient to His laws, came to pass with stark reality: "and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life" (Deut. 28:66).

Roosevelt's prevarication and indecision at this critical time was highly detrimental to attempts to extricate Jews from Nazi-occupied Europe, whereas Swedish diplomat and humanitarian Raoul Wallenberg and others were moved to action by the gravity of the situation, and succeeded in rescuing many Jewish people from German-controlled Budapest and other places. When war broke out, Zionist youth initiated rescue missions in German-occupied Europe, but in America the exercise lost its momentum. Jewish leaders in the US were not, as a group, inclined to radical reaction, and were under the impression that the administration of President Roosevelt was as disturbed as they were about the plight of European Jewry.

#### Fatal delay

The concern expressed above is shown in the autobiography of New York Jewish leader Rabbi Stephen Wise, and also in the diaries of the US Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau. On 28 August 1942 Wise received information

that the Nazis were about to embark upon the mass extermination of Europe's six million Jews. US Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles advised Wise to defer release of the information pending its confirmation. American Jewish leadership complied with this request until November 1943, only to be told by Welles that more than two million Jews had perished already.

The US Administration's prevarication and inaction in a fast-deteriorating situation was appalling. That first report of the Nazi genocide had come to Wise via the British Foreign Office, but the US Legation in Bern, Switzerland, after the lapse of three weeks, returned the message to the sender on the grounds that its diplomatic protocol did not allow transmission of such information. A directive from Sumner Welles instructed the Legation to pass on all messages for Dr. Wise as expeditiously as possible. When weeks elapsed without having received them, Welles contacted Bern, only to be informed that the messages were not forthcoming in accordance with Welles' cabled directive not to pass on any more accounts of atrocities, which could initiate more mass meetings and inflame public protests.

The US State Department seemed strangely neutral, even indifferent, regarding the German atrocities against the defenceless Jewish people of Europe. It had made known to Jewish delegations its displeasure at anti-Nazi demonstrations in America, and had no compunction in apologising to Berlin in regard to New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia's scathing condemnation of Hitler.

It has been said that the great impediment to action was Franklin Roosevelt himself, who was not only anti-Semitic but also ill-informed concerning the nature of the Nazi genocidal atrocities in Europe. At the Casablanca Conference of the Allies in January 1943 he sympathised with the resentment of Germans who complained about the prominent positions attained by Jewish academics, scientists, lawyers and doctors, and also in other areas of public life. Roosevelt had been unduly influenced by political expediency in the knowledge that he already possessed ninety per cent of the Jewish vote and thus felt no desire to act on behalf of the Jews. He did nothing about the reports coming from Europe for fourteen months.

An Anglo-American conference about the Nazi genocide took place in Bermuda in April 1943, and it was decided that nothing could be

done to help the Jews in the terrible circumstances in which they found themselves. Ultimately, a War Refugee Board was formed with little assistance from the US Administration, ninety per cent of the funds coming from Jewish sources.

The *New York Times* called the Holocaust, "probably the greatest mass slaughter in history", but allocated it only two inches. It was under-reported in the recording of all the tragic events that happened in World War 2. Even when American forces entered the death camps and saw for themselves the shocking condition of emaciated Jewish survivors, there was still disbelief in the stories that they brought back with them.

### Truman succeeds Roosevelt

Historian Paul Johnson writes: "In his [Roosevelt's] last weeks he had turned very anti-Zionist following a meeting with King Ibn Saud after the Yalta Conference. The pro-Zionist presidential assistant, David Niles, later asserted: 'There are serious doubts in my mind that Israel would have come into being if Roosevelt had lived'. F.D.R.'s successor, Harry S. Truman, had a much more straightforward commitment to Zionism, part emotional, part calculating. He felt sorry for Jewish refugees. He saw the Jews in Palestine as underdogs. He was also much less sure of the Jewish vote than Roosevelt".

Winston Churchill, known for his sympathetic view of Zionist aspirations, considered that there should be a larger Jewish intake into Palestine, but his Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, contended that to allow greater Jewish entry would be resented by Britain's Arab allies and imperil her strategic military position in the Middle East. When Rabbi Wise asked Eden to support an Anglo-American plan persuading Germany to allow Jews to leave occupied Europe, Eden replied that the whole idea was "fantastically impossible". Privately he confessed the feasibility of the proposal. The Foreign Office was not in favour of taking Jews and showed its dislike of requests in this regard. "A disproportionate amount of time of this office', minuted one senior official, 'is wasted in dealing with these wailing Jews'".

Johnson further says: "Once the British renounced their mandate, Truman pushed for the creation of a Jewish State. In May 1947 the Palestine problem came before the UN. A special committee was asked to submit a plan. It produced

## One who did not pass by

Shortly after editing “The Holocaust: When the world passed by on the other side”, I received an email directing me to an article on a Website about the efforts of a young American politician, Lyndon B. Johnson, later to become president, to save Jews from the Nazis.<sup>1</sup> His actions provide a refreshing contrast to the lamentable story outlined in Brother Elliott’s article.

Lyndon Johnson was born in Texas in 1908 and was elected to the House of Representatives in 1937. As early as 1934 he became concerned about the rise to power in Germany of the Nazis under Adolf Hitler. In 1937 he voted in favour of America accepting Jews from Poland and Lithuania who had arrived with false passports, although other congressmen from the south had voted against this.

The episode which the article draws attention to began in 1937, when a Texan newspaper proprietor, Charles Marsh, and his fiancée, Alice Glass, returned from a visit to Germany much concerned about the Nazi menace and determined to help Jews to take refuge from the fate that loomed ahead if they stayed in Germany. In particular, the next year they desired to help a brilliant young Jewish musician from Austria, Erich Leindorf, who was in America when the Nazis invaded Austria and desired to stay. They enlisted the help of Lyndon Johnson, who devised a complicated scheme to circumvent the immigration laws, which resulted in Leindorf being accepted as a permanent resident.

This was but the beginning of a scheme referred to as ‘Operation Texas’, whereby, through various means, legal and illegal, Johnson contrived to get hundreds of European Jews into Texas. Operations were funded by wealthy Jews of his acquaintance, and the Jewish immigrants, quite illegally, were incorporated into programmes run by the Texas National Youth Administration, the director of which, Jesse Kellum, was an old friend of Johnson. The story of Operation Texas only came out into the open when, at the dedication of a new Jewish synagogue in Austin, Texas, in December 1963, attended by Lyndon Johnson, who had recently become president following the assassination of John F. Kennedy, the leader of the local Jews, Jim Novy, revealed what had happened.

Towards the conclusion of his article Smallwood says:

“Today, Lyndon Johnson is still reviled by many laymen and historians. He has been stereotyped as a crude, ignorant Texan who had few serious beliefs, who was an opportunist only out for personal political gain. ‘Operation Texas’ belies that image. The ‘hidden history’ of Texas reveals that Johnson saved hundreds of Jews from the Holocaust and did so because he cared for the ‘People of the Book’ and because he revered human life”.

But the most interesting part of the article is where Smallwood discusses Lyndon Johnson’s interest in the Jews. He attributes this to his Christadelphian background, his grandfather, Sam Ealy Johnson, and several other relatives being Christadelphians. Sam Johnson apparently told his grandson: “Take care of the Jews, God’s chosen people. Consider them your friends and help them any way you can”. One of Johnson’s aunts, Jessie Johnson Hatcher, was a Christadelphian, and throughout his political career spoke to him about the Jews and their place in God’s purpose. Smallwood in fact cites an article in *The Christadelphian* regarding this, and Johnson’s Christadelphian background has also been the subject of articles in *The Testimony*.<sup>2</sup>

Tony Benson

1. “Operation Texas: Lyndon B. Johnson’s attempt to save Jews from the German Nazi Holocaust”, James M. Smallwood, <http://www.texancultures.utsa.edu/hiddenhistory/Pages1/SmallwoodLBJ.htm>.

2. “President Lyndon B. Johnson”, Joseph Banta, *The Christadelphian*, Jan. 1964, p. 25; “‘Cyrus, My servant’”, Hubert W. Craddock, *The Testimony*, Mar. 1964, p. 90; “From the sheeppcote to be ruler”, Hubert W. Craddock, *The Testimony*, Jun. 1964, p. 196; “Lyndon Johnson and his support of the Jews”, George Booker, *The Testimony*, Jan. 1992, p. 29.

two. A minority recommended a federated binational state. The majority produced a new partition plan: there would be Jewish and Arab states, plus an international zone in Jerusalem. In November, thanks to Truman's vigorous backing, it was endorsed by the General Assembly by 33 votes to 13, with 10 abstentions".

When the Kingdom of God is established upon the earth, however, the Jewish people, so often discriminated against and persecuted in the turbulent history of mankind, will become the head of the nations, a people respected and emulated

as the people of God: "Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you" (Zech. 8:23).

#### Sources of information

*The Jews: Biography of a People*, Judd Teller, pp. 171-2, 287-8.

*A History of the Jews*, Paul Johnson, pp. 503-4, 524-5.

## Elijah versus Baal

Tony Benson

THE MINISTRY of Elijah was set against the background of the introduction of Baal worship into Israel as a result of Ahab's marriage to Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Phoenician city of Zidon (1 Kgs. 16:31-33). In the north of Syria, on the coast, at a site known today as Ras Shamra, the remains of an ancient Phoenician city called Ugarit was discovered between the two world wars. Excavations unearthed a whole library of cuneiform tablets consisting of religious and poetic texts, which have given a much clearer understanding of the Baal worship practised in Phoenicia, and provide some interesting background to the ministry of Elijah, whose name, meaning 'Yah is God', sums up what his mission was intended to show.

Baal was regarded as the storm god, and one of the tablets depicts him as descending into the underworld for a prolonged period of time, causing a drought. The ministry of Elijah showed that it was Yahweh the God of Israel Who could withhold rain and bring rain. Thus the recorded ministry of Elijah began with him declaring to Ahab, the Baal worshipper: "As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before Whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word" (17:1); and his confrontation with the Baal worshippers ends with him predicting an "abundance of rain", which soon came to pass (18:41,45).

So Israel were taught the lesson that it was Yahweh, the one true God, Whose worship they had abandoned, Who was the giver of the rain on which their crops depended, not Baal, for whom they had deserted Yahweh. As an interesting side issue, one tablet from Ugarit speaks

of a ritual of boiling a kid in its mother's milk in order to bring rain for the crops, hence such a practice was forbidden in the Law of Moses (Ex. 34:26; Deut. 14:21).

During the drought Elijah was commanded by God to go and stay with a woman of the southern Phoenician city of Zarephath, the very territory of Baal worship. Ugaritic texts refer to Baal as providing an abundance of olive oil and honey, yet the widow to whom Elijah went had but enough oil left for one small meal. Only through Elijah, the prophet of Yahweh, was she able to continue to survive, with flour and oil miraculously provided day by day for the needs of the woman, her son, and Elijah himself.

While he was with the woman, Elijah restored life to her son, stretching herself upon him till God gave him life again (1 Kgs. 17:19-22). Elisha later did the same, actually putting his mouth upon a dead boy's mouth till life returned (2 Kgs. 4:33-35), which perhaps Elijah also did. Texts from Ugarit speak of Baal giving people the kiss of life, and Baal worshippers kissed his image to have blessing imparted to them (1 Kgs. 19:18). The actions of Elijah and Elisha were not in order to restore life by mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, as some suppose today, seeking to explain away the miracle, but were designed to show that Yahweh alone could give life, not Baal.

1 Kings 18 records a direct confrontation between Elijah, as the solitary prophet of Yahweh, and 450 prophets of Baal, not to mention 400 prophets of Asherah ("the groves", AV), the wife of Baal in Phoenician mythology (vv. 19,22). It took place on Mount Carmel, regarded by the Phoenicians as a sacred mountain, and at times