

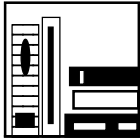
have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Lk. 24:25,26). Thanks be to God, the resurrection of the Lord did not depend on the disciples' perception of how things seemed at the time.

3. The return of the Jews to the Promised Land in unbelief. Brethren of the nineteenth century looked forward to this because they saw it foretold in Bible prophecy, not because it appeared likely at the time. Indeed, humanly speaking, it could hardly have been less likely, as Brother Thomas implies in a well-known passage in *Elpis Israel*, which is worth repeating: "I know not whether the men, who at present contrive the foreign policy of Britain, entertain the idea of assuming the sovereignty of the Holy Land, and of promoting its colonization by the Jews; their present intentions, however, are of no importance one way or the other, because they will be compelled, by events soon to happen, to do what, under existing circumstances,

heaven and earth combined could not move them to attempt" (Fourteenth Edition, p. 442). Our brethren were ridiculed for holding these views, but subsequent events seem to me to have vindicated their understanding of this part of Scripture at least.

Our understanding of Bible prophecy should be based on a careful and consistent exposition of the whole of God's Word, with recourse to whatever external material can usefully increase our understanding of historical and geographical details. If we begin instead to judge only after the sight of our eyes, we build on a most unreliable foundation, as the above examples show, and we increase the risk of being taken by surprise. Prophecy needs to be spiritually discerned, because "the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance" (1 Sam. 16:7).

Jeremy Thomas
Sale



Reviews

EDITOR: John Nicholls, 17 Upper Trinity Road, Halstead,
Essex, CO9 1EE. Tel. 01787 473089;
e-mail: jgmicholls@classicfm.net

The British Empire and Israel's restoration*

Chris Carmody

THE BOOK ANZACS¹ *Empires and Israel's Restoration* provides an overview of the restoration of Israel from 1798 to 1948, putting this in a religious and social context that many Christadelphians, especially some of the younger brethren and sisters, will not be aware of in the twenty-first century. Our faith is strengthened as we read how the nations have been manipulated, often by zealous individuals, to fulfil our God's revealed purpose with Israel.

The book is extremely well researched, with footnotes on almost every page plus four pages of bibliography. The back cover of the book, reproduced in the [panel](#) opposite, provides an interesting overview of this 390-page publication. This review deals predominantly with the first half of the book, covering the period up to 1918,

as much of this material may be less familiar to the reader.

* ANZACS, *Empires and Israel's Restoration 1798-1948*, Kelvin Crombie, Bookland, Perth, ISBN 0-646-35298-9. Price \$A25.00. Available from Bookland Printing Ltd., 190 Stirling St., Perth 6000, Western Australia. E-mail address info@bookland.com.au. Website <http://www.bookland.com.au/bookland.htm>.

1. The term 'ANZACS', often 'Anzacs' today, is an acronym for 'Australia and New Zealand Army Corps', and refers particularly to soldiers from those countries serving in the First World War, especially in the Middle East, where they played a very prominent part in the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire.

“ Napoleon’s invasion of the Eastern Mediterranean in 1798 provoked a battle between the European empires for control of that strategic region, placed as it was between Europe and the wealth of the Far East, especially India.

This battle also resurrected Jewish hopes of a return to their ancient homeland—the land of Israel, a hope strongly supported by countless Bible-believing Christians.

It witnessed too the active involvement of soldiers from Australia and New Zealand (ANZACS) in the region—at Gallipoli in Turkey, in the Sinai, at Gaza, Beersheva, Jerusalem and Jericho in Turkish Palestine, in Syria, in Transjordan, at Tobruk in Libya, in Greece, Crete and at El Alamein in Egypt.

Their contribution, alongside other soldiers of the British Empire, played a significant role in enabling Israel’s restoration, as part of Britain’s imperial ambitions. But Britain’s role ended when the state of Israel was founded in May 1948—150 years after Napoleon’s invasion.

Kelvin Crombie lived in Israel for fifteen years, partly as a guide, researcher and writer. Using archival material, including Cabinet Minutes, as well as original sources, diaries, interviews, and numerous secondary works, he has endeavoured to bring together these varied aspects of that fascinating period between 1798-1948, a period which significantly altered the destinies of Israel, New Zealand, Australia, Britain—and indeed the world. ”

The book is broken up into four major parts. Part 1 leads up to 1798, and is a short section of only fifteen pages. Part 2 covers the period from 1798 to 1914. Part 3 is about the period 1914 to 1918, covering the effects of World War 1 upon the Holy Land, and Part 4 covers 1918 to 1948, dealing with the establishment of Israel as a modern nation.

Israel’s strategic position

Part 1 begins by providing an overview of the geographical importance of the Land of Israel, with a page discussing the shaky hold the Israelites had upon the Land due to their disobedience (the writer has obvious Bible-based beliefs). Because of its vital geographical position, the Greeks and Hasmoneans, followed by the Romans, took an active interest in the Land.

Then the area came under the control of the Byzantine (Eastern Roman) Christian Empire, until this was removed by the Islamic invasion. For a short while the Christian Crusades won control of the Land before it returned to Islamic control. This theme of a land desired by various world powers runs through the whole book; many powers have controlled or tried to control this area of the world for their own economic advantage.

Chapter 2 of the book further develops the economic theme, showing how from the fifteenth

century to our day trade has been the great driving force for control over the Land of Israel. The strategic position of Israel made it important to Portugal, Spain, Holland, Great Britain and later France to position themselves in the area to control the routes to the Spice Islands and India. By the late seventeenth century the competition was mainly between the French and the English.

It was the French who first proposed establishing a link between the Red Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean. They envisaged opening trading warehouses at Suez and transporting produce over the Isthmus of Suez to the Mediterranean, either via the Nile or directly overland. When they proposed this to the Turkish authorities in 1665 it was turned down. It became increasingly clear to the French and British authorities that access to the wealth of the Far East could be hastened by access through the Middle East region. But it was not until the Turkish Empire began to start crumbling that rivalry for this strategic area of the world could commence in earnest.

Belief in a restoration

During this same period of history Britain was breaking away from the influence of the Roman Catholic Church. The Catholic Church at this time taught that the promises made to Israel in

the Scriptures were now to be applied to the Catholic Church since the Jews had rejected the Messiah. The Puritans rejected this doctrine as another example of erroneous Catholic doctrine, and in their writings developed an interest in the establishment of the Jews in their ancient homeland. In 1590 Andrew Willett wrote a treatise entirely devoted to the Jewish question, the title being, *Calling of the Jews*.

Perhaps it was Thomas Brightman who laid the firmest foundation of a belief in Israel's future restoration. In his book *Apocalypsis Apocalypseos*, published in 1609, he predicted the future overthrow of the Antichrist (whom he and many others equated with Rome), to be followed by the overthrow of Turkey, then the calling of the Jews and their restoration to the Land of Israel. So, as early as the seventeenth century, the British people were having their minds prepared for accepting the idea that the Jew would be restored to the Land of Israel.

In the eighteenth century, as the importance of trade increased the competition between Britain and France, France supported the American independence revolution and uprisings in India against British control. Eventually Britain lost its American colonies, but retained control over India. At this time the British were experiencing huge social problems due to the Industrial Revolution moving people away from a rural to a city life style. The prisons were becoming crowded and America was no longer available as a place to dump criminals. Also, Britain was still concerned about France extending its influence in the Far East.

Finally a decision was made in 1787 to establish a convict settlement on the east coast of what was then called New Holland, later renamed New South Wales. Captain Arthur Philips led the first convoy of convicts to this remote place. This became the beginning of the new British society in the South Seas, an extension of the British Empire to the uttermost ends of the earth.

The effect of the French Revolution

In Chapter 3 Crombie makes the point that, while the British Empire was being established in the East, foundations for Israel's restoration were being laid in France and the homeland. The stimulus for Israel's restoration was the French Revolution of 1789. A number of evangelical Christians in Britain had come in contact with the writings of French Protestant theologians such as Pierre Jurieu about the restoration of

Israel. These publications also predicted the downfall of the French monarchy, to be followed by the fall of the pope. Other church ministers, influenced by these writings, began to look closely at what was prophesied in the books of Daniel and Revelation.

By 1796 many within the British establishment were becoming unsettled by the increasing interest in the Jewish restoration. There was concern that it could undermine the solidity of British society. The Jews themselves at this time started to become liberated from their squalid ghettos and their forced wearing of yellow badges. Almost the first Jews to be liberated were those liberated in Italy by the young Napoleon Bonaparte.

Crombie makes the point that the restoration of Israel was further enhanced by Napoleon's desire to take Egypt. This would have shut off access to India for the British. Napoleon appreciated that the conquest of Britain would depend upon the possession of Egypt. This action stirred up the hearts of some Jews in Europe to believe that they would be restored to their ancient land. From this period on, the great world powers closely watched each other's movements in the area of the Middle East.

Britain realised how vulnerable it was to being cut off from its trade with India, and Turkey appreciated how easily it could be invaded. The French, British, Russians and Turks wrestled with each other over control and influence in the Middle East, and prior to World War 1 Britain had occupied Egypt.

The First World War

Part 3 of the book covers the period 1914 to 1918. The first chapter of this section has the heading "The ANZACS are Coming". Even before the war began, the Australian Government offered the British Admiralty control of Australian vessels, and offered to raise an Australian force of 20,000 men. The same mood was in New Zealand, where a force of 8,000 men was raised.

After war was declared by Britain on 5 November 1914, a member of the British Cabinet, Herbert Samuel wrote:

"I spoke to Sir Edward Grey today about the future of Palestine. In the course of our talk I said that now that Turkey had thrown herself into the European War and that it was probable that her empire would be broken up, the question of the future control of Palestine was likely to arise. The jealousies of

the great European Powers would make it difficult to allot the country to any one of them. Perhaps the opportunity might arise for the fulfilment of the ancient aspiration of the Jewish people and the restoration there of a Jewish state”.

In 1914, Turkey controlled the two most strategic waterways in the world, the Dardanelles-Bosphorus and the Suez Canal. Although the ANZAC troops were en route to England, they were instead used to stop the advancement of the Germans and the Turks upon the Suez Canal, and used in the ill-fated attack upon the Dardanelles (the Gallipoli campaign). At this time the world powers saw Turkey soon becoming dismembered. France wanted Syria and part of the territory now incorporated in the State of Israel, and Britain was seen as the main opponent. Russia desired Constantinople as the rightful heirs of the Byzantine Empire.

Jewish forces join the fight

While the nations were jostling for control of the Middle East, two brilliant and colourful Jews, Zev Jabotinsky and Joseph Trumpeldor, came up with one of the most controversial Jewish proposals for some years: the formation of a Jewish Legion to help liberate the Land of Israel. Trumpeldor helped to establish the Zion Mule Transport Corps, a Jewish legion comprised almost entirely of Palestine refugees, from the 85,000 Jews living in Palestine at the beginning of the First World War. Never before had Britain been known to depart from its policy of only admitting British subjects into its army.

A British officer, John Patterson, an Irish Protestant with a deep love of the Jewish people, their history, laws and customs, was appointed to lead the Jewish legion. Action on the beaches and hills of Gallipoli in 1915 was a baptism of fire for the troops from New Zealand and Australia; it was the same for this Jewish legion. Although John Patterson's troops provided transport, rather than being front-line infantry, they too had to endure the terrible conditions of landing.

Despite the lack of immediate success at Gallipoli, the campaign itself had stimulated Britain to formulate her long-term goals within the region of the Ottoman Empire. It was with this reason in mind that a scheme was developed to decentralise the Ottoman Empire into five largely autonomous provinces: Palestine, Syria, Armenia, Anatolia (the Turkey of today) and Mesopo-

tamia (modern Iraq). The committee putting forward the scheme proposed that the northern part of Palestine be under British control. The sacred places of Palestine were to be dealt with as a separate question. The committee felt that any French claim on the Land of Israel should be rejected.

By the time the Gallipoli campaign was ended by withdrawal in December 1915, Britain had lost 21,255 soldiers, France 9,874, Australia 8,907, India 7,594 and New Zealand 2,701. The Zion Mule Corps lost only eight men, with fifty-five wounded. The participation of a Jewish unit from Israel was a major psychological and political turning point for the Zionists. Trumpeldor had proved that Jews could fight.

In the context of the restoration of Israel, Gallipoli was even more important for the British Government. Britain had been humiliated by a second-rate Oriental army. This humiliation could only be compensated by a future victory over the same foe, to be followed by substantial strategic and political gains. This occurred later in the war, when Britain, with the help of her colonies, drove Turkey out of much of the Middle East and (in 1917) took Jerusalem from her control.

Many of the historical details from this time on are more familiar to Christadelphians, although much of the detail, like for example the fact that the last cavalry charge in modern warfare, by the ANZACS to take Beersheva (Beer-sheba), was pivotal to the British victory in Palestine.

Conclusion

Although many readers may find reading about wars and battles not to their taste, this book is written in such a lucid manner that a potentially dry and uninteresting topic is made to come alive, the account at times almost leaving one breathless.

Readers cannot fail to have their faith strengthened as they read about the various conflicts in which God has been there all along, the Master Player behind the moves made by a number of different nations over hundreds of years of time. With the conflicts currently occurring in the Land of Israel, this highly recommended book can help to strengthen our faith that God has complete control of the situation and that all things will ultimately work to His glory and honour, regardless of how the present situation may look.