

How 500 Children Were Returned to the Jewish People After the Holocaust

Letters discovered by chance in the National Library archives document Yitzhak Halevi Herzog's historic mission to redeem Jewish children taken in by Christian institutions and families

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27.08.2019

- https://blog.nli.org.il/en/rabbi_herzog/

Yitzhak Halevi Herzog, the David B. Keidan Collection of Digital Images from the Central Zionist Archives

There is a legend told of Rabbi Yitzhak Halevi Herzog.

One day in 1946, Rabbi Herzog arrived at a large monastery which was known to have taken in Jewish children sent away by their parents to protect them from the Nazi terror which had ravaged Europe. Now, the time had come for the children to return home.

The Rabbi turned to the Reverend Mother, thanking her for saving the lives of the children and requesting to receive them back to the Jewish People, now that the war was over. The nun was happy to agree, but asked the Rabbi – “How can you know which of the hundreds of children here at the monastery are Jewish?” After all, it had been many months since their parents had sent them there, and many had been mere infants at the time.

Rabbi Herzog assured the Reverend Mother that he would know. He asked to gather all of the children in a large hall, ascended the stage, and cried in a loud voice:

Sh'ma Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Ehad! (Hear, O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord is One)

Immediately, dozens of children rushed to the stage, shouting “mama!” and “papa!” as tears filled their eyes. Many were sobbing uncontrollably. Though few of the children remembered much of their early lives, the sound of the *Shema*, the most famous prayer in the Jewish faith, instantly brought back memories of reciting these Hebrew words with their parents before bedtime.

When Yitzhak Halevi Herzog embarked on his famous tour of European orphanages and monasteries, with the goal of locating and retrieving thousands of lost Jewish children, he was serving as the Chief Ashkenazi Rabbi of Mandatory Palestine. He was recognized as an authority on issues of *Halacha* (Jewish religious law) and was held in great esteem by both religious and secular leaders around the world.



Yitzhak Halevi Herzog as Chief Ashkenazi Rabbi during the British Mandate period, Jerusalem, September 1945. Photo by Zoltan Kluger, GPO.

Herzog absorbed a variety of different cultures during his early life. Born in Łomża, Poland in 1888, his family moved to Leeds, England in his youth and then Paris, France, where Herzog attended the Sorbonne before continuing to the University of London. His groundbreaking doctoral thesis on the nature of the ancient blue dye known as *Tekhelet*, used during the Second Temple period, was what first made him a public figure.

In 1915, Herzog was appointed Rabbi of the city of Belfast and would later go on to serve for 14 years as the Chief Rabbi of Ireland. He became a supporter of the struggle for Irish independence and the Irish Republican Army. Eamon de Valera, a leader of the revolt against the British and a future President of Ireland, was a personal friend who at times used the Rabbi's house in Dublin as a hiding spot.

Rabbi Herzog would also become a supporter of the *Irgun Zvai Leumi* (a.k.a the *Irgun* or *Etzel*), the Jewish underground group which fought against the British authorities in the Land of Israel, to which he finally arrived in 1936.



Rabbi Herzog speaks at a pilot certification ceremony at Lydda Airport, in April of 1939. Source: Library of Congress.

The plight of Europe's Jews during the Holocaust tormented Yitzhak Halevi Herzog, and he devoted those years of his life to attempts to prevent the unfolding disaster. In April 1941, Rabbi Herzog was granted an audience with U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, whom he hoped he could convince to act, before it was too late.

According to Herzog's biographer, Shaul Mayzlish, the Rabbi told FDR the following during their meeting:

I call upon his honor, as someone in a position of power, in the name of human conscience, in the name of human liberty, in the name of justice, to prevent the butchering of the Jews and allow the survivors the possibility of reaching safe havens[...] Mr. President, I am not the person who will advise you on how to deal with this terrible problem. I come only with a plea and also a warning. The plea – save what can be saved. The warning – those who stood by will be held accountable in the future.

(“The Rabbinate in Stormy Days”, Shaul Mayzlish, Gefen, 2017)

Though the President promised Herzog he would hold a special meeting on the subject with his advisors, the Rabbi came away disappointed. He felt that FDR was much more concerned with other matters.

After the Allied victory in Europe in May 1945, Rabbi Herzog maintained his focus on the rescue of the continent's surviving Jews. By his own estimate, at the end of the war, some ten thousand Jewish children were held in secret by Catholic institutions and non-Jewish families who had bravely taken them in for their own safety.

In 1946, Herzog embarked on a six month journey throughout Europe, with the goal of returning the Jewish children to their own families. Before he began the search, he stopped at the Vatican, where he sought the help of Pope Pius XII. The Rabbi came with a message of thanks for the crucial intervention of Catholic institutions in saving young Jewish lives, but also insisted that the

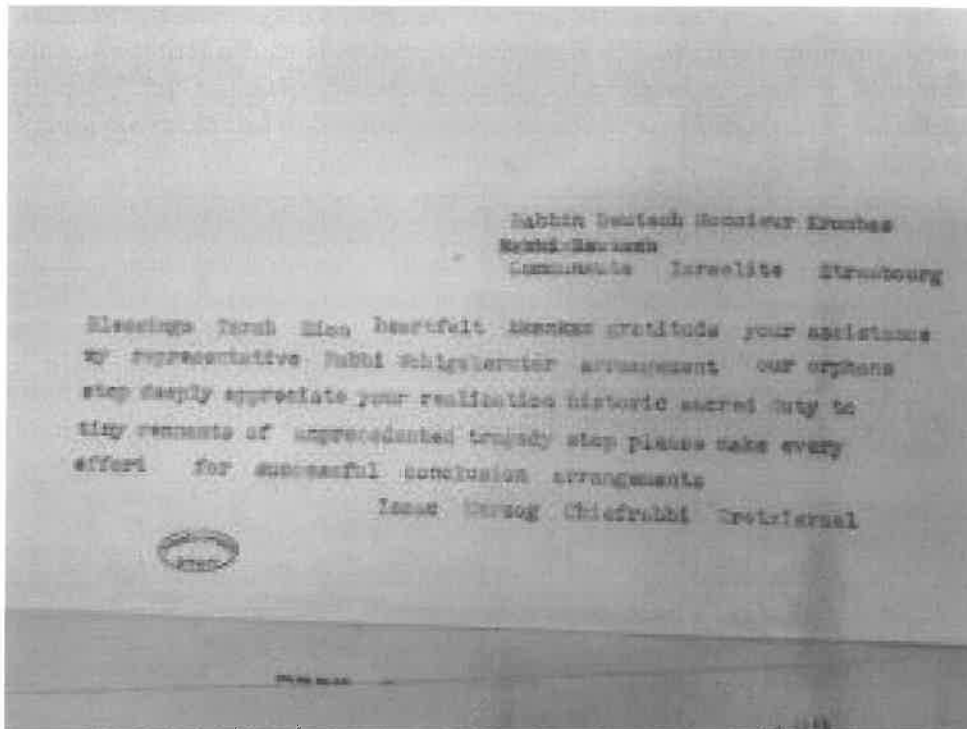
children now be released, “Each child is like one thousand children, following this great tragedy,” he told the pontiff.

Pope Pius XII did not issue the papal bull that Rabbi Herzog was hoping for, but the Vatican did assist the Rabbi’s efforts.

While Pius XII did not issue the sweeping public declaration the Rabbi was hoping for, the Vatican was indeed helpful in obtaining the release of many of the children.

During his European trip, Herzog visited France, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, England, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Ireland. Much of the work he and his team faced was bureaucratic: They drew up updated lists of children with the help of the respective governments and local community institutions, and went about seeking Jewish organizations with the authority to assume legal guardianship.

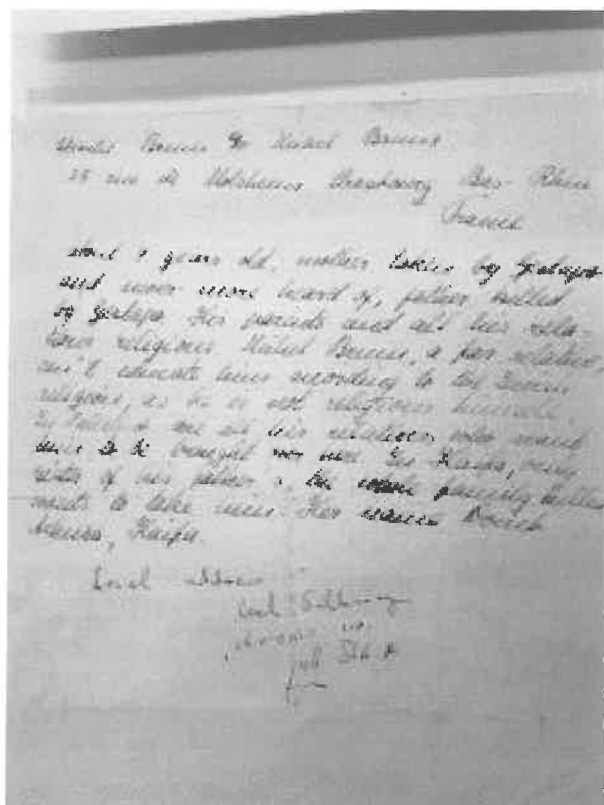
Once the initial information was collected, it was often a matter of searching through individual villages and monasteries, while using the lists as guides. Volunteers from sympathetic organizations, both Jewish and non-Jewish, were instrumental in this effort.



“...deeply appreciate your realization historic sacred duty to tiny remnants of unprecedented tragedy...” – A telegram from Herzog thanking a contact in Strasbourg for his assistance. The National Library of Israel collections.

There were many cases in which Christian families

had formed strong bonds with the adopted children, and they understandably did not want to give them up. “Rescuing the children is difficult when the one you are contending against comes as a brother,” the Rabbi said in one of his speeches.



“...about 9 years old, mother taken by Gestapo and never more heard of, father killed by Gestapo...” A description of one of the many orphans Rabbi Herzog attempted to redeem. The National Library of Israel collections. [Click to enlarge.](#)

Much of Yitzhak Halevi Herzog’s correspondence from this period is preserved today in the archives of the National Library of Israel. The Library’s archivists were surprised to discover these letters and telegrams among the personal archives of the well-known Jerusalem attorney Alexander Amdur, an associate of Rabbi Herzog’s. Amdur’s archives were donated to the National Library in 2015.

Herzog’s efforts were not limited to children. In this telegram, Rabbi Herzog sought to obtain a French visa for a holocaust survivor by the name of Sonia Friedberg.

replied

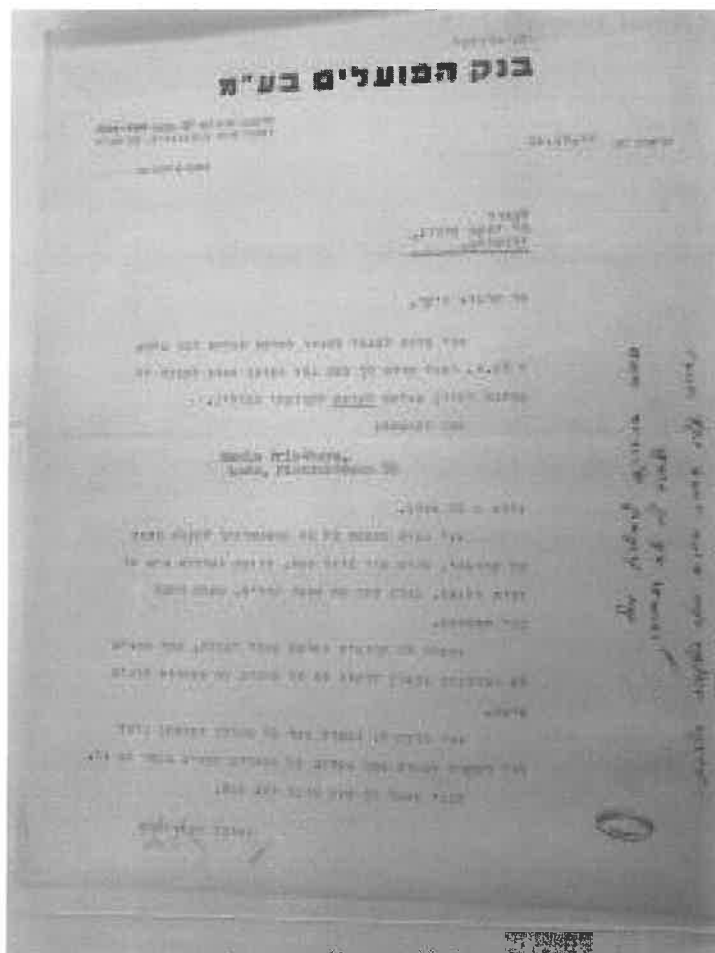
Maitre Miller
1 Avenue de l'OPERA
PARIS

Please inform put Sonia Friedberg Piotrkowska 80 Lada
placed on list for French temporary visa of five
thousand category guest cable confirmation greetings

Issac Herzog Chief Rabbi

The National Library of
Israel collections.

And in the Hebrew letter below, one of her relatives in Israel thanks the Rabbi's son Yaakov for
for their efforts on her behalf, noting her difficult personal circumstances.



The National Library of Israel collections. Click to enlarge.

The letter reads:

"...I thank you very much for your goodwill in helping me obtain an entry visa to France for my relative from Poland.

Her name and address:

*Sonia Friedberg,
Lodz, Piotrkowska 80*

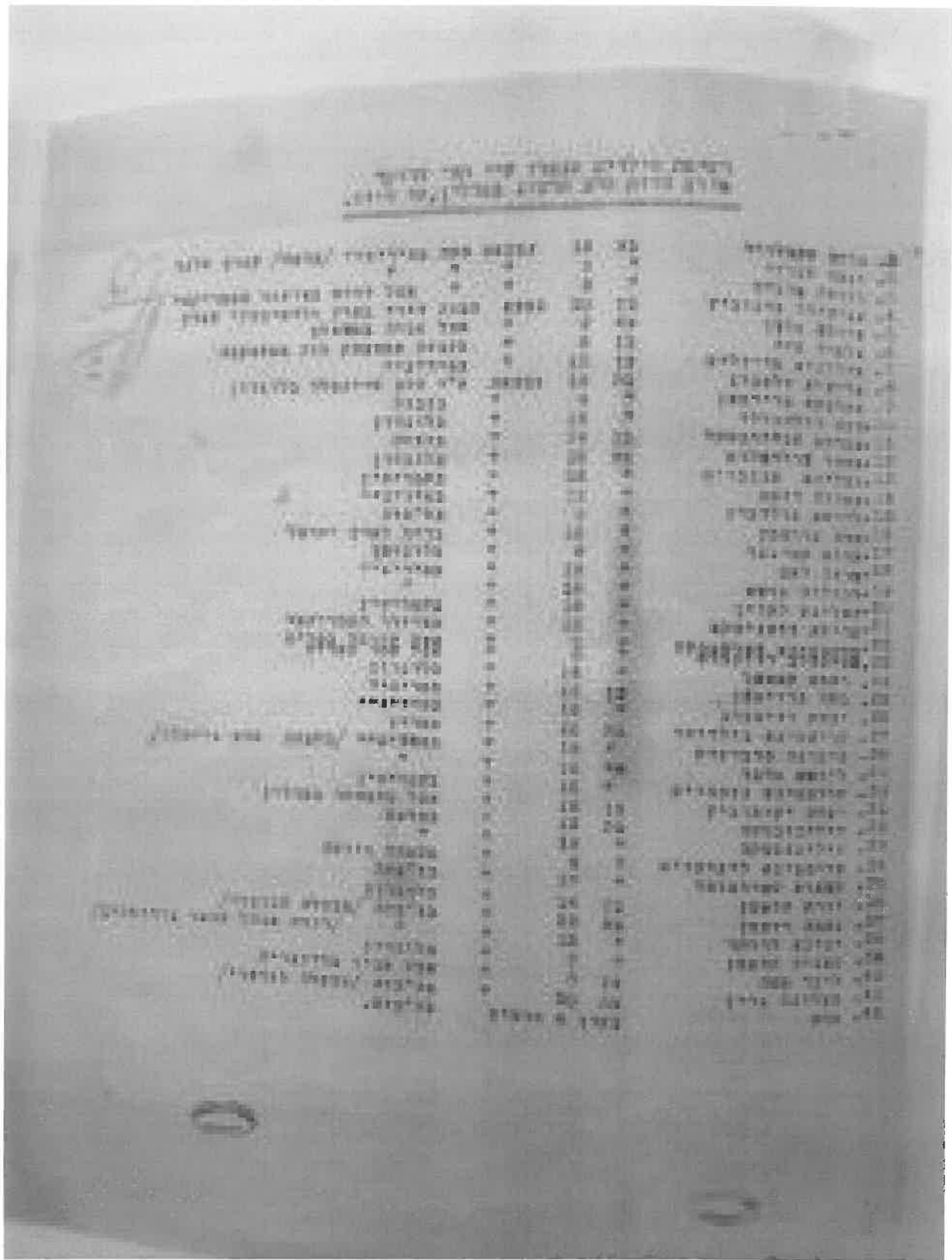
Her age – about 35.

I am certain that you will do everything in your ability to ease my relative's situation. She was snatched from the fire, and she is lonely and desolate in a foreign sea of hatred, in the land where her parents, husband and other relatives perished..."

One of Herzog's most effective partners in the effort to retrieve Jewish children was the Polish-Jewish activist Yeshayahu Drucker, who would approach families and institutions who

had taken in Jewish children, often offering money and gifts in exchange for their release. Rabbi Herzog's political connections were critical in raising these funds.

This Hebrew document contains a partial list of the names, ages and locations of children redeemed by Yeshayahu Drucker.



The National Library of Israel collections. Click to enlarge.

The letter below was addressed to Yaakov Herzog from the “Zionist Coordination Committee for the Redemption of Jewish Children”. It concerns one of the children redeemed by Yeshayahu Drucker.



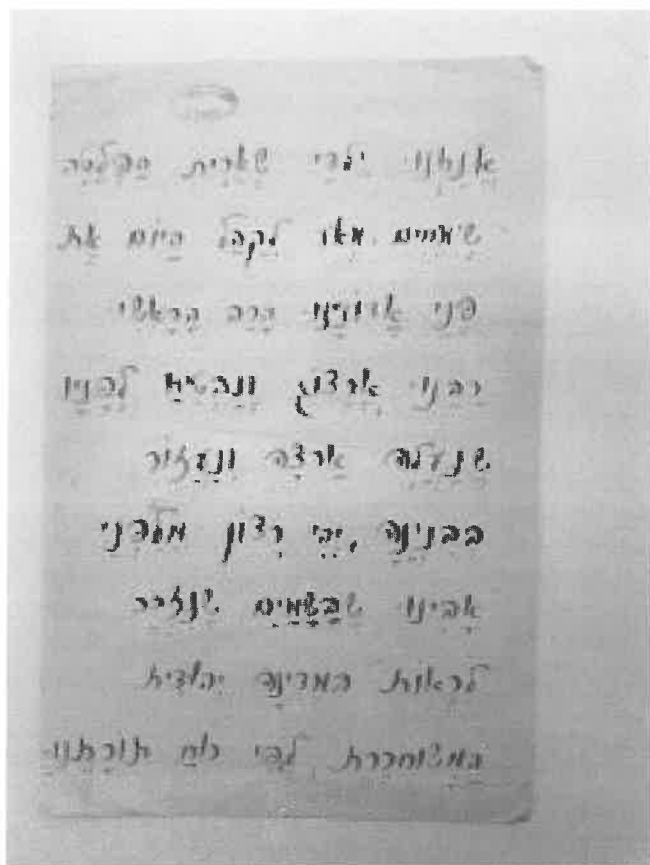
The National Library of Israel collections.

The letter reads: “...As per your request, the girl Naomi Barter, born in Lodz in 1937, was redeemed from the foreigners by Rabbi Drucker and is now at the sacred communities’ orphanage [...] As the expenses of this matter reached a sum of three hundred and twenty thousand zloties and you in your letter write that your American friends committed to participating in the expense of one hundred, we request that you inform us of the method by which we can receive the above sum...”



Naomi Barter, the National Library of Israel collections.

The Hebrew words below were addressed to Rabbi Herzog on behalf of a group of Jewish children who survived the Holocaust. The exact date and origin is unclear, but they were likely read in his presence.



The National Library of Israel collections.

“We the children of the surviving remnant (Sh’erit ha-Pletah) are very happy to receive our distinguished Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Herzog [sic] and we promise to him that we shall make Aliyah and help build the Land. God willing, we shall live to see the liberated Jewish State, in the spirit of our Torah.”

In October of 1946, over 500 of the redeemed Jewish children boarded a train in Katowice, Poland, which then made the long journey all the way to Mandatory Palestine. These children would soon become citizens of the State of Israel, founded 19 months later.

Upon the declaration of independence in 1948, Yitzhak Halevi Herzog became Israel’s first Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi. His son Chaim Herzog would later become President of the Jewish State. His grandson Isaac Herzog is

today the Chairman of the Jewish Agency and the former Head of the Opposition.

You can find more of Rabbi Herzog’s correspondence from his famous rescue mission, [here](#).

Hagit Zimroni of the Archives Department at the National Library of Israel assisted in the preparation of this article.

"The Vatican and the Custody of Jewish Child Survivors after the Holocaust" Michael R. Marrus

Holocaust &
Genocide Studies
Vol. 21 Issue 3
Winter 2007

trying to persuade the priest otherwise. "It isn't possible," Montini insisted, adding that "they probably emigrated."

Finally, after about twenty minutes of apparently heated argument, Riegner broke through: "I think that it was only at that moment that he grasped, for the first time, the extent of our catastrophe." Riegner went on: "I remember that he seemed much moved. But that does not mean that he was prepared to help us. He told me, in effect: 'Let me know where to find the children and I will help you get them back.' I responded, more or less, 'If I knew, I wouldn't need your help.'" Riegner wrote at the conclusion of this section: "I have no doubt about Montini's good faith. But the reaction means that during the whole of the war neither he nor the upper reaches of the Catholic Church understood what had happened. Even after the war, ignorance of the scope of the tragedy persisted. That's the plain truth of the matter [*c'est une constatation*]." ⁵⁸

Riegner's discussion ends at this point. To my knowledge, he did not take up the issue of Jewish children again at the level of Catholic leadership until 1953, during the so-called "Finaly Affair" in France (see below). ⁵⁹

Rabbi Isaac Halevi Herzog

The third appeal on behalf of the Jewish children was made in March 1946 by Rabbi Isaac Halevi Herzog, who was at that time the Jerusalem-based Chief Rabbi of Palestine. Heavily bearded and garbed in the traditional dress of Eastern European Orthodox Jews, the Polish-born Herzog was an outstanding Talmudic scholar and an imposing personality, renowned for his own learning as well as for his descent from famous rabbis and scholars. Brilliant and erudite, he had immigrated to Palestine in 1936 following a remarkable career: educated at the Sorbonne and the University of London, he served as Rabbi of Belfast, then Rabbi of Dublin, then as Chief Rabbi of Ireland. In the latter post he was closely associated with both Eamon de Valera, the champion of Irish independence and eventual Irish president, and Cardinal Joseph MacRory, archbishop of Armagh and primate of Ireland. Throughout the war, Herzog appealed ceaselessly for assistance to Jews. He worked closely with Angelo Roncalli in Istanbul on behalf of the Jews of Transnistria and sought to use Roncalli's good offices to relay messages to the Vatican. In 1944 he took up the cause of the Jews of Hungary, though he did not succeed in his effort to meet the pope; apparently the Vatican feared that such an encounter would provide grist for German propaganda about the Vatican being under Jewish influence. ⁶⁰

Immediately after the war, Herzog toured Europe for six months with his son Yaacov as his aide and secretary. His tour began with a visit to the Vatican, where he hoped to persuade the pope to provide assistance to Jewish survivors and, in particular, to support the return of Jewish children. ⁶¹ Herzog saw Pacelli on Sunday, March 10—an exceptional scheduling given the Vatican's general

practice of refraining from doing business on Sundays. It seems that Herzog was accorded this honor in recognition of the urgency of his case.⁶² The meeting was private and continued for close to an hour. The men spoke in three languages: English, French, and Latin. According to Herzog's version, the conversation began with what must have been an unprecedented moment of high-level Jewish-Catholic hermeneutics based upon Pacelli's citation of the Lord's promise ("I will give you a new heart") from the book of Ezekiel in a recent public address. Herzog told the pope that in the biblical passage, the phrase concerning the offering of "a new heart" used the Hebrew letter *lamed* to signify that a new heart was not simply handed over, but was given "in the way that one gives a present to a friend . . . out of sympathy and goodwill on the receiver's part."⁶³ There is no record of whether Pacelli agreed or added his own learned interpretation.



Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Palestine Isaac Herzog (right) leaving the private office of Pope Pius XII after a March 10, 1946 audience. Herzog is accompanied by his son, Yaacov (center), in British Army uniform. USHMM, courtesy of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis.

Having taken each other's measure, the two men got down to business. According to a pamphlet issued by the trip's rabbinical organizers, Herzog outlined the catastrophic impact of the Holocaust on the Jewish people, who had suffered "the torments of humanity."⁶⁴ The rabbi then "called upon [the pope] to repent for the sins of Christianity towards the people of Israel throughout the generations by getting to the heart of the Jewish problem."⁶⁵ Referring to Jewish orphans still

in Catholic hands, Herzog expressed heartfelt thanks for their rescue on behalf of the “nation of Israel.” But he noted that Jews could not reconcile themselves to the possibility of the young ones remaining “cut off completely from their origins.” He explained: “As of today every child for us signifies one thousand children . . . while for the Christian church, which has millions of believers, such numbers are petty in comparison.” He sought the pope’s help for the children’s return, and in particular sought a papal appeal to all priests to reveal the presence and whereabouts of Jewish children in Catholic custody. Herzog then went on to describe the terrible conditions prevailing in post-Holocaust Poland, including the continuing presence of antisemitism and the despondency of that country’s remnant Jewish community.

According to this account, Pacelli “was moved upon hearing of the enormity of the Jewish people’s disaster,” and expressed both his astonishment at the persistence of antisemitism and “his deeply-felt participation in the sorrows of [the Jewish] people.” The pope requested from Herzog a “detailed memorandum” on the subject of the children, and “promised to deliberate with the gravity appropriate to such matters.”⁶⁶ Herzog seems to have felt that Pacelli was being overly careful: “I asked him to issue a decree [on the matter] but he hesitated to give this to me. They say he is a diplomat. In this regard, it was once said of a certain rabbi that he was clever and I said: ‘a rabbi should not be clever, he should be wise.’ The pope is clever; he promised to help me if I ran into difficulties.”⁶⁷

Two days later, Herzog reappeared at the Vatican accompanied by Rabbi David Prato, the recently named Chief Rabbi of Rome. The purpose of this meeting was to deliver the “memorandum” and to hold additional discussions with the Vatican’s secretariat. This document, with its effusive expression of gratitude to the Holy See and to Pius personally, has been cited often in the polemics associated with the question of the Jewish children, and more generally to support the view of Pius XII as a rescuer of Jews during the Holocaust.⁶⁸ “In accordance with the wish expressed by you at the conclusion of the audience which you graciously granted to me,” Herzog began, the memorandum was to serve as a “petition on behalf of the entire people of Israel.” Then followed the thanks: “The Jewish people will remember eternally with profound gratitude the help rendered to so many of its suffering brethren during the Nazi persecution by the Holy See generally and by tens of Catholic bishops and priests throughout Europe.” Herzog went on to appeal again for papal assistance in seeing that “these children be all restored to our people”; that they be “returned to the rock from which they were hewn.”

As with both Kubowitzki and Riegner, the Vatican requested details, and in this as in the other two cases, the petitioner was hard-pressed to provide them. The best that Herzog could do was to refer in his communication of March 12 to “great numbers” of children that “have yet to come back.” He wrote that “it is



Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Palestine Isaac Herzog (center) discusses the problems of displaced European Jews with Chief Rabbi of Rome David Prato (left) and Arthur Greenleigh of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (1946). USHMM, courtesy of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

estimated that at least three thousand Jewish children [in Poland] are still in Catholic monasteries and even private homes of Catholics.” Herzog’s main effort, like that of the two preceding Jewish intercessors, was to obtain a favorable hearing for a recovery effort that had yet to be planned and organized; hence the urgency conveyed in the letter, but also the lack of specificity. Notably, the memorandum does not contain a request for a papal communication to the entire Church on the matter.

According to the account published in 1947, Herzog was again told, on his second visit, that the Vatican would consider the request for a general papal instruction. The pope had promised Herzog that if, in his forthcoming travels, the rabbi learned of Jewish children in Catholic institutions and had difficulty in removing them, he could request the Vatican’s intervention. “However, a condition was given,” the report went on, “that the rabbi himself would investigate the incidents. . . . This gave [Herzog] the permission to refer to the pope’s words in his encounter with members of the faith. It should be noted in sorrow that the request for the publication of a letter to the leaders of the churches was never granted.”

Immediately following this visit with the pope, Rabbi Herzog set out on his tour of the shattered Jewish communities. In his efforts to persuade Catholic

authorities to assist him in recovering Jewish children, he occasionally invoked the pope's supportive statements. "Father and son's journey in 1946 through devastated Europe searching for remnants of perished Jewry was a frightening experience," writes Yaacov's biographer, Michael Bar-Zohar.⁶⁹ According to Yaacov, the mission resulted in the rescue of 1,000 children—thanks to his and his father's own efforts and to the assistance of many high officials, including heads of government and senior cabinet ministers. This is where our account returns to the documents mentioned at the beginning of this paper, and the controversy that they continue to generate.

Herzog's first stop was Paris, where he met with his old friend Roncalli, now the papal nuncio to France. "He was really glad to see me," the rabbi reported; "he almost said the *Shehechyanu* [a Jewish prayer of thanksgiving] and then hugged me in joy. I told him everything and he promised to help." But even Roncalli had to act cautiously, according to Herzog: "He is afraid to go out in the open currently with this matter but will make a diplomatic action through which he promised me that he would convene [the French episcopacy] and demand that they each act on the matter in their own regions."⁷⁰ Apparently, Roncalli then collected views on the matter from his episcopal colleagues, and in late August asked the Vatican's Secretariat of State how to respond.⁷¹ Tardini's reply to Roncalli of September 1946, following a consultation with the Holy Office for a theological reading of what to do about baptized Jewish children, contained the requested instructions. This letter was the basis for the originally published draft memorandum for French bishops. Tardini began, it will be recalled, by noting that "the Eminent Fathers decided that if possible there should be no response to the Grand Rabbi of Palestine."

Conclusions

Tardini's unhelpful words from Rome were, happily, neither the whole nor the end of the story. My own sense is that the encounter between Catholics and Jews concerning Jewish children in the aftermath of the Holocaust was one small element that helped define the relationship between the two groups in a period of transition between the sometimes unsatisfactory meetings during the Second World War and the vast improvements of the Second Vatican Council fifteen years later. And no doubt the Holocaust, even when it was not mentioned explicitly, was at the center of this change. "After the hurricane of the war," Gianni Valente writes, "and in the face of the . . . uncontrollable jumble of feelings, of pain, of wounded affections, of exasperated identity crises that marked the aftermath of the war," the high churchmen and the Jews discussed here struggled to define their priorities in their relationship to one another.⁷² None of the personalities involved in the discussions of children was fully in command of the facts, or capable of reaching across a religious and cultural divide that had existed for centuries. A closer examination of

this issue, however, suggests that there were efforts on both sides to bridge the gap. The postwar issue of Jewish children reveals, in the end, not two unresponsive or intransigent communities, but some goodwill, continued misunderstanding, and certain interests still tragically at odds with each other.

For the Jews, the question of the children was simply desperate, dominating their concerns for their gravely wounded people. "What destruction, what solitude, what desolation!" wrote Yaacov Herzog of his journey with his father in 1946. Coming to terms with this, he continued, "could overturn the accepted scale of human values, and a man can only avoid plunging into the abyss of total despair by holding on to the eternal Rock in whose shadow we have made our journey through history."⁷³ Although better informed than almost any of their Jewish counterparts, none of the three Jewish leaders discussed here had a firm grasp of the situation of child survivors. None of them knew how many there were, where they were located, how many were in Catholic hands, how many had been baptized, and what kind of obstacles had to be cleared away to bring about their return to the Jewish people. In the aftermath of the greatest Jewish catastrophe that any of them could imagine, it was all they could do to sound a cry of alarm about the recurring Jewish nightmare that Christians would take their children away. All three petitioners viewed the Vatican and Church decision-makers with suspicion, but also with a measure of hope. Neither Riegner nor Herzog even raised the issue of baptism, which they must surely have known was highly sensitive for the Church. Kubowitzki did do so, as we have seen, but only to deny Jewish claims over those children who had been baptized "with the agreement of their parents." All three, we should note, believed that their Catholic counterparts were acting in good faith. However, they seem also to have believed that the Church failed to grasp the scope the Jewish tragedy and needed to be prodded to do something about it.

The appeals of the Jewish petitioners appear to have awakened some sympathy within the Vatican. That sympathy came belatedly, to be sure, in the case of Montini, who despite all that he had seen and heard in the preceding years, seems to have required the forceful confrontation with Riegner finally to acknowledge that there had been a holocaust. Even so, the fact that Vatican representatives evinced sympathy and good faith did not mean that the Church was prepared to act as the Jews hoped it would. The Vatican had real reservations both about the return of baptized Jewish children and about custody claims being advanced on behalf of Jewish institutions. The documents suggest that if the two issues had come together in specific instances, the Church might have dug in its heels.

With respect to the issue of baptism, the instructions from the Holy Office relayed by Tardini did not differ appreciably from those presented in the draft circular to the French bishops: the Church would examine the circumstances on a case-by-case basis on the principle that validly baptized children were supposed to

receive a Christian education. It would be “another matter” if the parents had survived—although it was left unsaid precisely how this other matter would be settled, and for that matter whether what was meant was *parents* or *relatives*. The Church made no effort—certainly no public effort—to allay this widespread Jewish fear.

Custody claims by Jewish institutions were the source of the reservations outlined in Tardini’s memorandum. The Vatican was not alone in failing to appreciate fully that the claims were being made as a national imperative. Moreover, the declared intent of some of these institutions was to take the children to Palestine, which was widely considered a dangerous proposition at the time, and was certainly inimical to the Vatican’s own perceived interests in the region. Notwithstanding the desperate appeals from Jewish organizations, therefore, the Vatican was cautious: each case should be examined on its own merits. The Holy Office had to review the question theologically, and in the end the children could not be given to institutions that had “no right to them”—whatever that meant. And of course, nothing was to be put into writing. No concessions were to be made on paper to this wounded people.

As during the Holocaust itself, Church officials were extremely reluctant to direct local Catholic institutions on matters having to do with Jews. Tardini’s message to the French Church, it has been pointed out, left wide areas open to local interpretation. But a broad appeal to local churches to assist Jewish aid workers looking for Jewish children was apparently out of the question. To the Vatican, which was deeply conservative on matters of its own authority to say the least, the Jewish visitors’ request that the pope issue an instruction on such a matter to the entire Catholic Church must have seemed outlandish. No Church leader discussed here—not even Roncalli—was willing to step outside his traditionally prescribed sphere of authority to urge the faithful to help assuage the continuing effects of the Jewish tragedy. Catholic officials knew well that many clerics and laypeople were unsympathetic to the Jewish cause, and so they were reluctant to define a bold, new relationship with Jewish religious authority or “the Jewish people.” The result was that all three petitioners were treated courteously, but seem also to have felt that their appeals were not fully or enthusiastically answered.

In practical terms, the public discussion of the return of the Jewish children after the war died down in most countries after a few years. Notably, it flared up in France in the early 1950s with the Finaly Affair, a case involving two orphaned Jewish brothers. In that case, baptism figured for a time as an argument for keeping the children in Catholic hands.⁷⁴ In the end, the Church did not insist and the children were returned to their family. Apart from the Finaly brothers, there were few, if any, conflicts over the custody of baptized Jewish children in France, leading Nazi-hunter and historian Serge Klarsfeld to claim that the entire issue of these children was something of a “tempest in a teapot.”⁷⁵

During 1945 and 1946, many Jewish children in Catholic hands were turned over freely to Jewish institutions. Some, of course, were not—but as far as I can tell the decisions taken there were local and the issues turned on specific circumstances. We have seen that Kubowitzki came to believe that Jewish authorities had no continuing issue with the Catholic hierarchy over the question. Rabbi Herzog may well have been rebuffed when he sought to define limiting cases in France; but on his European journey in 1946 he referred to the pope's support for the children, and this probably did some good.⁷⁶ There was no campaign at the very highest levels of the Catholic Church to “kidnap” Jewish children in 1945 and 1946. But neither was there a clear call from that quarter to come to terms with the suffering Jewish people. A breakthrough would come in the mid-1960s with the Second Vatican Council. The discussions described here were a step along that path.

Notes

1. For assistance with Israeli archival sources, my thanks go to Ohad Abrahami, Shulamit Eliash, Dan Heller, Shira Herzog, and especially Sara Palmor. For their comments on an earlier draft of this paper I am also grateful to John Conway and Fr. Gerald P. Fogarty, as well as to the anonymous reviewers for *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*.
2. “Pio XII a Roncalli: Non restituite i bimbi ebrei,” *Corriere della Sera*, December 28, 2004.
3. Angela Doland, “1946 Letter: Church Should Keep Baptized Kids of Jews,” *Chicago Sun-Times*, January 2, 2005.
4. Elaine Sciolino and Jason Horowitz, “Shelter for Jewish Children in Wartime, but at What Cost?” *New York Times*, January 9, 2005. The *Times* quoted Melloni as saying that the document “shows the very bureaucratic and very icy attitude of the Catholic Church in these types of things.” For an early French evaluation see also Henri Tincq, “En 1946, le Vatican a demandé de ne pas rendre à leurs familles les enfants juifs baptisés,” *Le Monde*, January 11, 2005.
5. Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, “If This Is a Saint. . .” *The Forward*, January 7, 2005; idem, “Questions for the Vatican: Hide and Seek,” *The New Republic*, January 31, 2005; and idem, “Non, Pie XII n’était pas un saint,” *Le Monde*, January 15, 2005.
6. Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, “Pius XII: Collaborator and Kidnapper,” *WorldNetDaily*, January 13, 2005, http://www.wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=42363 (accessed September 20, 2005).
7. “New Bid to Smear Pope Pius XII Fails,” Catholic League News Release, January 14, 2005. http://www.catholicleague.org/05/press_releases/quarter%201/050114_piusxii.htm (accessed September 12, 2005).
8. “Rabbi threatens law suit against Vatican,” *NDTV.com*, January 27, 2005. <http://www.ndtv.com/convergence/ndtv/story.aspx?id=NEWEN20050002550> (accessed September 9, 2005).



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Recommended Citation

Saperstein, Marc, "From Dublin to Jerusalem: Sermons of Rabbi Isaac Herzog." Paper presented at the Conference on Sermon Studies: "", October 2019.

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**Rabbi Isaac Herzog: From Dublin to Jerusalem –
Conference September 6, 2019
Marc Saperstein**

Some of you may be aware that I have recently published a rather large book (1160 pages, including all the various indices), entitled *Agony in the Pulpit: Jewish Preaching in Response to Nazi Persecution and Mass Murder, 1933-1945* (Hebrew Union Collect Press, October 2018). I referred to this project this two years ago in West Virginia, when it was still in process, but at that time I did not imagine that the final production would be as long as it turned out to be. It's not the kind of book that needs to be read cover to cover – one can choose years or dates of interest, or the countries or rabbis of interest, and select the texts that seem to be most compelling.

Ever since I finished my final responsibilities with that book, I have been working on another collection of clearly dated rabbinic texts presented in chronological order. This collection, covering the years 1947 to 1949, focuses on rabbinic sermons responding to Zionism and the State of Israel during this period. This material is a bit broader, as it includes not only passages from sermons, but also from rabbinic lectures and addresses delivered at gatherings outside the synagogue, and occasionally even magazine articles that strike me as if they may indeed have been based on a sermon. Here the second largest group of rabbis represented is not the UK (as it was in the previous book), but rather Palestine/Israel, and that has required a lot more translation of Hebrew texts on my part. What the books have in common is that they are intended to illustrate the importance of sermons, and the texts in which they have been preserved, as historical sources.

But because this session is entitled “Sermons in an Age of Holocaust,” I will say no more about the current project; perhaps I will have an opportunity to speak about this at another conference. I therefore turn to *one major figure* whom I have chosen for obvious reasons, linked with our location and environment, beginning with a brief biography.

Isaac Herzog was born in Lomza, Poland, on December 1, 1888, to a rabbinic family. As part of the large wave of relocation both to England and to the United States following the anti-Jewish riots in eastern Europe beginning in 1881, his family moved to Leeds in 1898, when he was 10 years old. In addition to his traditional Talmudic training, Herzog earned an MA at the Sorbonne, and received a PhD in literature from the University of London. Having been ordained as a rabbi in 1910, he served as rabbi in Belfast, northern Ireland, from 1916-1919, where also became one of the founders of the Mizrahi Religious Zionist movement in 1917. He then moved to Dublin, where he supported the movement for Irish Independence, becoming known as “the *Sinn Fein* Rabbi.” In 1922, he was honored with the position as Chief Rabbi of Ireland, a position he held until moving to Palestine in 1936, where he served as Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi until his death in 1959. His son and grandson have held significant political positions in the Israel Government.

I begin now with passages from sermons delivered by Herzog in Dublin between 1933 and 1936. In the introduction to my book I devoted several pages to the issue of the sermon as usually a one-time act of oral communication from preacher to listeners, perhaps analogous to the first public performance by Beethoven of a new sonata, a unique one-time event that can never be precisely replicated. What the listeners heard and saw and remembered may be as important evidence for the sermon as any written text. And of course there are various kinds of written texts: pages written or typed by the preacher before delivery and preserved in archival collections; books published by the rabbi—or by an academic—in which written

texts appear (though perhaps some editorial changes); articles in newspapers, some of which include considerable direct quotations, and reveal not necessarily what the rabbi deemed most important but what the editor thought; occasionally stenographical transcriptions of the spoken word written by a professional and then printed and made available by the following to those interested. My citations from sermons delivered by Rabbi Herzog in Dublin are all taken from the *Irish Press*.

Obviously, what follows are passages from much longer discourses that reflect what I myself thought to be most important. I warn you in advance that most of what follows will be the texts; I am of course very interested in hearing your reactions and analyses in the discussion to follow.

Isaac Herzog, Address at Morning Service including appeal for funds for the relief of German Jews, Adelaide Road Synagogue, Dublin (opened 1892, closed in 1999); *Irish Press*, June 1, 1933, p. 7 (5 months after Hitler came to power).

“Before Germany can speak of wrongs inflicted upon her [referring to the Treaty of Versailles], before she can speak of justice, she must first and foremost cease to trample under foot 600,000 of her most faithful and creditable citizens.

A veritable hurricane of criminal madness, of savage race-hatred, of internal anti-Semitism, or rather anti-humanism, unparalleled in any modern State, is sweeping over Germany and is working the destruction of German Jewry, of the intellect, the flower and pride of world-Jewry, of that part of the German citizen-body which, although forming barely one percent of the population, has actually contributed more than forty percent of Germany’s cultural wealth in medicine, science, mathematics, philosophy, literature, art, music, etc.

The position is going from bad to worse. Numerous measures of anti-Jewish persecution are springing up daily and are being put vigorously into force by the German Government. The Jew is being brand-marked by the ruling powers, and is thus made a ready target for cruel hatred and savage brutality.

The Irish race, whose record even in the Middle Ages is free from anti-Jewish persecution—that ancient historically venerable race whose soul seems specifically attuned, by racial temperament, by historic trial and tribulation, to respond to the cry of a helpless, down-trodden people—[the Irish race] will assuredly join the mighty chorus of protest in the name of the most sacred cause of religion, of justice, of humanity!”

What seems so striking here is the power of the rhetoric, given our knowledge of how relatively moderate were the anti-Jewish policies 5 months of the regime. But a far larger number of German Communists had been imprisoned than Jews. A one-day boycott of Jewish businesses had been imposed on April 1, and Jews were excluded from the Civil Service a few days later, and of course there was the public book burnings of May, but there was as yet no organized anti-Jewish violence. It makes one wonder: With rhetoric like what we have heard at the outset, how could Herzog and other rabbinic preachers possibly do justice to what was to come?

Isaac Herzog, Sermon at Adelaide Road Synagogue, Dublin. *Irish Press*, Monday, April 2, 1934, p. 14 (Nazis in power for 14 months)

In an appeal for the relief of German Jewish refugees, Herzog referred to attempts made to associate Jews with Communism – which was certainly still a greater threat to Germany than were Jews.

“This is one of the most groundless and most outrageous libels ever invented by human wickedness. Its sole object is to discredit the Jewish community and pave the way for anti-Semitism. There are men and women born of Jewish parents who happen to be Communists, or who are sympathetic towards that dangerous atheistic creed, but their Communism or Communistic sympathy has as much to do with the fact of their Jewish birth as the Communism or Communistic sympathy of the members of other races has to do with the fact that they were born into the Christian faith of Russian, English, American, French or Irish parents.

The Jewish religion, in fact, is suffering in Soviet Russia as much persecution as Christianity, and even more, and the future of Judaism in Communist Russia is a matter of the gravest concern to Jews all over the world. Judaism in that part of the globe is, alas! threatened with utter extinction. To associate the Jewish name with Communism or Communist sympathies is the height of falsehood and wickedness!”

Isaac Herzog, Adelaide Road Synagogue, Dublin. *Irish Press*, Friday September 18, 1936, p. 2

“Think of Germany, think of Poland, and think of a country nearer home. Could it have ever entered into our minds that in free, democratic England there would arise a tide of anti-Semitism, which threatens to widen and deepen and which gives our brethren over there cause for very grave anxiety?

And what is the position in the land of Israel—in that little land of ours, thousands of miles away, for which we have been praying and hoping and shedding torrents of tears for nearly two thousand years?

The Israelite has lived by his faith for thousands of years, and he will continue to live in that faith to the end of his days.”

Note the very different kind of rhetoric than that in the earlier sermons.

Isaac Herzog, Sermon at Adelaide Road Synagogue, Dublin (Kol Nidre) and New Synagogue, Dolphin's Barn, Dublin (Yom Kippur morning). *Irish Press*, Sept. 28, 1936, p. 3

A week later, on September 25 and 26, Herzog delivered a powerful sermon on the evening of the Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, in his own synagogue; then on the following morning he walked to another large synagogue to deliver the same sermon there. This is the final sermon I will cite that was delivered in Dublin.

"In Poland, the plight of three and a half millions of Jews is appalling in the extreme, from the economic standpoint, and in addition to their dire poverty, they were made to suffer from the poisonous darts of Jew-hatred and Jew-baiting. [here is something totally new: internal persecution in Poland, perhaps inspired by but not organized by Nazi Germany]

In Germany, the Jewish position is going from bad to worse, and systematic efforts are increasingly being made to make existence impossible for the 500,000 Jews still remaining there. About 70,000 have already emigrated, and the greater part of them are in a distressful condition. Whither should they flee? Alas! the plague of Jew-hatred, the most wicked, and at the same time the most senseless, phenomenon in this age of enlightenment, is spreading.

Thank God, this country [Ireland], geographically small, but morally, culturally, and historically very great, has been proof against that wicked craze. Unfortunately, in a country so near home as England, anti-Semitism is beginning to become a source of disquietude to Anglo-Jewry.

The position in Palestine is far from satisfactory. The prophetic cradle-land of the Jewish race, for which Israel has been shedding torrents of tears during two thousand years of exile, is still in the claws of savage terror. The fate of Zion, and with that the fate of Jewish history, is hanging in the balance. [Reference here is to anti-Jewish riots by Arab population]

And yet, despite all that, Yom Kippur brings a message of light and hope...".

In December of 1936, elections for the position of Chief Rabbi of the Land of Israel were held in Jerusalem, and Herzog was invited to serve in this role. He arrived in Haifa on January 14, 1937.

As Chief Rabbi

In his important new position, Rabbi Herzog delivered many sermons as well as addresses, speeches and joint statements with the Chief Sephardi Rabbi, Ben-Zion Uziel, all intended for various audiences on differing occasions. . I will now share some of these passages delivered in the “Promised Land.”

January 1, 1939 (Sunday, Day of Prayer and Intercession throughout Palestine for Victims of Nazi Brutality). Isaac Herzog, Jeshurun Synagogue, Jerusalem. *Palestine Post*, January 2, 1939, p. 1

Here too, as with the Irish texts, I cite not Herzog’s own text of the sermon but rather a newspaper report; in this case, however, there is much direct quotation.

“The Chief Rabbi, Dr. Isaac Herzog, preached the sermon, taking as his text Joel 1:14 [“Solemnize a fast, proclaim an assembly, gather the elders—all the inhabitants of the land—in the house of the Lord your God, and cry out to the Lord.”] He said that they had assembled to invoke divine mercy on their stricken brethren [in Europe] and to signalise the great spiritual movement of Repentance, the return to God and Divine Law and the return to the age-long hope of Israel which centres in Zion.

Dr. Herzog voiced the feeling of gratitude of Jewry towards the friends of Israel in Europe and America, who had raised their voices in protest against the inhuman atrocities and against destruction of the synagogues and the Scrolls of the Law [a reference to Kristallnacht, 2 months earlier]. The Chief Rabbi called on the congregation to pray to Him in whose hands are the hearts of Kings and Rulers, to incline the hearts of the Democratic countries, particularly Great Britain, in whose hands providence had placed the keeping of the Holy Land, to throw the Gates of Zion open to their German and Austrian brothers and sisters and to the young children who had no alternative left to them but migration.”

The article reported that sermons were also delivered on this day by Chief Rabbi Amiel at the Great Synagogue in Tel Aviv, and Chief Rabbi Uziel, at the *Ohel Mo’ed* in Tel Aviv. Note the very different rhetoric than we found in the sermons by Herzog in 1933, when the situation of Jews was so much *less* disastrous. It seems that as the reality becomes worse, the preacher comes to the realization that the rhetoric simply cannot keep pace, and must be transformed.

November 30, 1942 (Monday) – the significance of this date in late November is clear. Less than two weeks earlier, public announcements had been authorized by the American Government and Britain pertaining to a Nazi policy of systematic mass murder for Jews. For the first time, the reference to Nazi “concentration camps” was being changed to “death camps.”

This is no longer from a magazine; it is from Herzog’s own archival collection, published some time later. The rhetoric here is reminiscent of 1933, though the tragedy is far greater. This and the remaining texts by Herzog were sermons delivered in Hebrew, with my own translation.

November 30, 1942, Isaac Herzog, Address at the Special Session for Mourning of the Assembly of Representatives (*Asefat haNivharim*), Jerusalem.” *Masu’ah leYitzhak*, pp. 131–32, translated by MS

“Wolves of the steppe (Zeph. 3:3), wild beasts of the forest, demons of the pit have arisen against us. They have prepared a slaughter for our brothers and sisters in the Diaspora. Almost all of Europe has turned into the valley of Tophet (cf. Isa. 3:33, Jer. 7:31).

*Our Heavenly Father, Rock of Israel and its Savior in times of woe: are You putting an end to the remnant of Israel? Let the groans of tens of thousands of Jews come before You: Jews who have been killed with cruel modes of death: slaughtered, strangled, burned, buried alive. Let the outcries of infants and babies who have been tossed into the water in sacks come before Your throne of glory; O Father of Mercy, let there come before you the wailing of parents and children, aged and young, young men and maidens; let the scream of the surviving remnant, exposed to the danger of destruction, Heaven forbid!, reach You, so that You may say to the destroyer, **Stop!**”*

Here is a kind of rhetoric different from even the strongest language of the earlier sermons. The second paragraph raises critically important theological questions. Is God indeed aware of what is happening to the Jews? If so, “are you putting an end to the remnant of Israel?” Perhaps implied is the question, “Is God fully in control of all the events that are occurring on earth?” Obviously these are rhetorical questions, but they seem to reflect realities that were troubling not only to the listeners, but to the preacher himself. I continue:

“O land, land: do not cover up the blood of our brothers in Poland and in the other conquered countries under the control of the wicked of the world who know no compassion. O House of Israel: proclaim a fast, with weeping and mourning; let your voice be heard on high. Rend your hearts and pierce the heavens with the sound of your wailing. All inhabitants of the world: be aroused to respond to this drama of horrors that is truly unprecedented. . . . Let heaven and earth resound with a terrifying protest against the horrible slaughter of the Jewish people, the people that has given you the principles of justice and mercy, the people that has given you the Book of Books. . . . Do not be satisfied with protests, important as they are. Do whatever you can quickly to save! Remove our children from the valley of Tophet, and not just the children alone, but whoever can be saved from there!

April 19, 1944, Isaac Herzog, “Address at the Meeting of Solidarity with the Fate of European Jewry, Technion, Haifa, Palestine. *Masu’ah leHerzog*, pp. 145–47, translated by MS

(145:) “We do not have the ability to bring to life the millions that have been destroyed, but we do have the ability to sustain life for those still alive. We do have the ability, for example, to sustain the lives of 55,000 who are imprisoned in the valley of the shadow of death called Transnistria, who are disintegrating in the starvation and diseases described in the biblical passages of rebuke [Lev. 26, Deut. 28], walking about like shadows, swollen with hunger, naked without clothing, covering themselves with sheets of newspapers. We have the ability to hasten the deliverance of the living refugees who are terrified day and night. We can indeed bring the refugees to the land of Israel, and as it appears in the information that was published in the newspapers yesterday, this possibility is now developing and expanding,

thanks to an easing in the process of transfer that will be given by the government of Turkey, the government which [once] opened its gates widely before the exiles from Spain.¹ [in 1492]

Here of course the rhetoric is quite different from in the sermon delivered a year and five months earlier. God is not directly involved, there is recognition of what is beyond the control of any of those who were listening, but also a recognition that there were still elements of hope that some of the surviving Jews may be brought to the land of Israel.

In March and April 1944, more than one thousand Jewish orphans from Transnistria were permitted by the Turkish authorities to land in Istanbul, and by the British authorities to enter Palestine (Martin Gilbert, *The Holocaust*, p. 637).² The rest of Herzog's address was a powerful fundraising appeal for contributions to facilitate this process.

My final example returns to the media, this time not a newspaper but a "Radio Appeal to the Nations of the World on the eve of the Fast. It was delivered by Rabbi Herzog on **March 14, 1945** (Wednesday, Day of Fast and Mourning for Victims of Nazi Mass Murder in Europe); Jewish Telegraphic Agency, March 15, 1945

*"Deploing the serious cleavages **within** the nation which are weakening the Jewish position just now when the day of decision is rapidly approaching, the Chief Rabbi declared that the present tragedy is far more grievous than the destruction of the Temple [by the Romans in 70 CE].*

Speaking of the miracle which saved Palestine from the ravages of war and destruction [by Germans under Rommel], Dr. Herzog said: "By the mercy of Providence we have been left with the foundation on which we may rebuild our national life." He appealed to the nations of the world to "repair a two thousand-year-old wrong" by returning to [the people of] Israel the land of its fathers, so that it may establish therein its national life."

The Chief Rabbi then addressed a message of comfort to the Jews in the Diaspora emerging from the crucible of affliction, and called upon the remnants of the people to pray to God and have faith in their redemption, which will come soon, when they will be brought to the land of their fathers. He concluded by appealing to Jewry all over the world to "return to our sacred religion, which alone can give us inspiration and strength to march forward to our redemption."

I doubt that any of us here can imagine the challenges confronting even an ordinary rabbi, or for that matter, a Christian clergyman, during this period of mass annihilation of innocent people, and to have been expected to present a message to congregants week after week, first as things continued to get worse, and then as the full reality of the devastation became known. How does one continue to believe in a God who is both loving and powerful, yet allows such atrocities to occur, especially atrocities devastating the people of the Bible? How

¹ The newspaper report was apparently the announcement by an American official, Ira A. Hirschmann, that arrangements had been made for a Turkish passenger ship to take 1600 refugees from a Romanian port to Haifa. Herzog himself had been sent by the Yishuv to Turkey, together with Isaac Ben-Zvi, to help arrange for Jewish refugees from the Balkans (*American Jewish Year Book* 5705, vol. 46 (1944–1945), pp. 271–72; Shulamit Eliash, *The Harp and the Shield of David*, pp. 66–67).

² Martin Gilbert, *The Holocaust*, p. 637.

does a preacher continue to try to convince congregants that faith is justified? Studying the texts of these sermons, we learn something more about the historical realities of the times, as well as the unimaginable challenges faced by those who stood in the pulpit.

[I did not include the following in my address:]

I conclude with a sermon relevant to my current project, in order to follow a very traditional homiletical principle—that no matter how painful and even appalling the subject of a sermon may be, the preacher—and one might say the academic as well—should conclude his address with a positive message.

**December 6, 1947, Isaac Herzog, sermon delivered at Yeshurun Synagogue, Jerusalem, in Shaul Mayzlish, *The Rabbinate in Stormy Days*, pp. 160-61, transl. by Tanhum Yoreh
Situation: response to UN decision (November) supporting establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine**

“This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it” (Ps. 118:24). Today is a great day, a day in which all Jews, from one end of the world to the next, are rejoicing and offering praise and thanksgiving. Today is the day on which the collective heart of Jews from all generations, from the day we were exiled from Israel until this day, beats as one, overwhelmed by reverence and rejoicing, in preparation for the imminent redemption of Israel. In the language of the rabbis, today is considered to be “the beginning of redemption;” all of Israel is rejoicing and the land is rejoicing as well.

The souls of six million of our best and brightest, among them one and a quarter million children and infants, who were martyred with cries of “Hashem echad” [God is one] and “Ani ma’amin be-vi’at hamashiach” [I believe in the coming of the messiah], cries that rose to the very gates of heaven, to God’s throne, rejoice with us today. And the earth in which tens of thousands of pure souls were buried is shaking to its foundations. The earth which refused to hide the blood, she too is rejoicing today.

My brothers and sisters, we are called upon to recognize the Hand of God, and His munificent acts on our behalf. We are called upon to establish a Jewish state in Zion, based upon the firm foundations of the Torah. The Jewish state will be democratic and adhere to the just laws of our Torah, which many great nations have drawn upon.

And now, with steadfast faith in the Rock and Redeemer of Israel, and by uniting under the triple flag of Torah, of Israel, and of Zion, graced by the spirit of God, we will joyously march toward a complete redemption. Amen and amen.

(Masich le-Yitschak)

משואה ליצחק

ספר זכרון

למרו הגאון הרב יצחק אייזיק הלוי הרצוג זצ"ל
הרב הראשי לישראל
במלאות חמישים שנה לפטירתו

2008

בהוצאת

"יד הרב הרצוג"

מכון האנציקלופדיה התלמודית
ומכון התלמוד הישראלי השלם

ירושלים, תשס"ט

הרב שמואל כ"ץ

ביבליוגרפיה לכתבי הגר"א הרצוג זצ"ל

ברשימה להלן תבאנו רק ספרים, וכן מחקרים ומאמרים שהתפרסמו בקבצים ובכתבי-עת, מהם שהופיעו בהמשכים. לא תבאנו כאן נאומים, מכתבים, הסכמות, כרוזים, הדעות, תפילות וכו', וכל מה שהתפרסם בעיתונות, כי רבים מהם ועוד חוץ למועד לנכנס לרשימה אחת. כל המעיין ברשימה זו יוכל לעמוד בנקל על החיפוף הרחב של דיעותיו של הרב הרצוג. הספרים והמאמרים מופיעים כאן לפי סדר פרסומם.

הרשימה להלן מבוססת גם על הרשימות שהכינו בזמנו: ט' פרשל, אור המזרח, שבט תשכ"ב; ושי' מיזליש בספרו רבנות בסערת הימים, תשי"א.

ספרים

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3. **תורת האהל**, חי"א [כולל שיעורים על הרמב"ם ז"ל הלכות סנהדרין שנאמרו בשיבת "אהל תורה" בית דוד], ירושלים תשי"ח.
4. **שו"ת חיבל יצחק**, אבן העזר חי"א [כולל תולדות חיים והערכה למותו], ירושלים תשי"ד; אבן העזר חי"ב, ירושלים תשכ"ו; אורח חיים [בעריכת הרב זלמן דרוק], ירושלים תשל"ב.
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7. **פסקים ותבנים** [בעריכת הרב שלמה שפירא], ט' חלקים: א-ב, שו"ת אורח-חיים; ג, מצוות התלויות בארץ; ד-ה, שו"ת יורה-דעה [כרך ד בעריכת הרב צבי הופמן]; ו-ח, שו"ת אבן-העזר [כרך ו בעריכת הרב יעקב פלס, כרך ז בעריכת הרב שפירא והרב פלס]; ט, שו"ת חושן-משפט, ירושלים תשמ"ט-תשנ"א.
8. **תחוקה על פי התורה** [בעריכת הרב איתמר ורהפטיג], ג' חלקים: א, סדרי שלטון ומשפט במדינת היהודית; ב, הצעת תקנות בירושות; ג, חוקה, חוקים ותקנות הרבנות הראשית, ירושלים תשמ"ט.

לויים ובין שהיו ישראלים - היו פטורים ממלחמת הרשות; אבל שהיו פטורים ממלחמת מצוה, של כרובש הארץ, ואצ"ל של עזרת ישראל מיד צר, אינו במשמע.

ומכ"מ מן התימא על רבינו הגדול ז"ל, שאינו מזכיר בפירושו בהלכות מלכים שתלמידי חכמים פטורים ממלחמת הרשות, ואם סמך על [מה שכתב בסוף] הלכות שמטיו וויבלין, הנה שם איננו אומר שתלמידי חכמים פטורים ממלחמה, אלא ענין אחר, כמו שביארנו לעיל, וצ"ע. ואולם אם לא תאמר כך, צא למאמר ז"ל שאשא נענש על שעשה אנגורא בתלמידי חכמים וכו', וברמב"ם צ"ע. שי"מ שאסור לגייס תלמידי חכמים למלחמת הרשות, וכמו שביארתי לעיל [שולחן] לא היה בבחינה שתמא זו מלחמה של מצוה על היסוד של עזרת ישראל מיד צר.

3. ת"אם סמך אברהם על ה"ח הקדוש:

ובנוגע למה שצפה אברהם ברוח"ק שעתיד בית דוד לצאת מלוט, כבר דיברתי [לעיל סוף פרק ו] על זה. ועתה אני אומר, שאפילו כך לא משום זה היה יכול לגייס תלמידי חכמים, שמכיון שעפ"י ההלכה אין זו מלחמת מצוה, לא בשמים היא לשנות את הדין, והיה אפשר לו [להשיג] תחתייהם שכירים, כי אבינו אברהם היה כבד מאוד בכסף וכו', וזו היתה הטענה נגדו. והיינו, אם תחלוק עיני ותדון שבתור הוראת שעה יכול היה אברהם לסמוך על רוח"ק ולשנות את הדין, יש לעיין, שהנה חז"ל מנו המקומות שצריך לברך עליהם "כשם שעשה נס לאבותינו במקום הזה", ומנו את סדרם שכתוב בה "ויזכור אלוקים את אברהם", כלומר שזכותו של אברהם עמדה לו ללוט ובני ביתו להציל מסדום. ויש לדקדק כאן:

א. למה לא תיקט לברך "ברוך זוכר הצדיקים" כשזואים את סדום וכו', ולא "שעשה לנו נס", כי אלמלא ניצל לוט ושני בנותיו לא היה לנו בית דוד?

ב. למה לא תיקט חז"ל לברך כשזואים את המקום שבו ניצח אברהם את המלכים שנעשה לו נס גדול כמו שדרשו רי"ל [תענית כא, א] מהפסוק "יתן כעפר הרב, כקש נדף קשתו ירדפם יעברו שלום וגו' [ישע' מא, ב-ג] כדוע?

ג. הלא על נס שנעשה לאדם כגון יואב בן צרויה מברכים "שעשה נס לצדיקים" [ירושלמי ברכות פ"ט ה"א], ומי יותר מסויים מאברהם אבינו, והיה ראוי לתקן ברכה זו לרואה את מקום המלחמה הנ"ל?

ד. למה לא הזכירו שצריך לברך כשזואים את המקום של אור כשדים, כשם שתיקנו לברך על ראיתו בבשן האש של חניגה מישאל ועזריה וגוב האריות של דניאל?

קושיה א' יש לכאורה [לתוך] בפשטות שאין מברכים אלא על תנס בשעתו, אבל לא על מה שהסתבב בעתו. קושיה ב' לכאורה יש לתוך על פי מה שביארנו, שאברהם לא היה מחוייב להכניס עצמו בסכנה זו, שלא היתה בסוג מלחמת מצוה. אך יש לתרץ גם עפ"י מה שכתב המג"א ז"ל [ריה, א], שאין מברכים אלא כשחש ניכר מתוך מקומו, ולפיכך אין מברכים על הנס שנעשה לאבותינו במלחמת סנהריב סביבות ירושלים. ועפ"י מתורת קושיה ג', וגם קושיה ד'.

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- 73. 'ישראל ואוריות', תלפיות, שנה ה, חוב' ג-ד, טבת תשי"ב, עמ' 447-450.
- 74. = פסקים וכתבים, ירושלים תשמ"ט, ח"י"ב, סי' קי"ז.
- 75. על דרכי שמירת הבטחון המנימי במדינה בשבת ויום טוב, התורה והמדינה, קובץ ה-ו, תשי"ג-תשי"ד, עמ' כה-לג [= שו"ת הוכל יצחק, אודה חיים, ירושלים תשכ"ב, ח"יא, סי' לב; פסקים וכתבים, ירושלים תשמ"ט, ח"יא, סי' ט; בצומת התורה והמדינה, ירושלים תשנ"א, ג, עמ' 7-15].
- 76. 'אישור גידול חזירים', קול תורה, שנה ז, חוב' ה-ו, שבט-אדר תשי"ג, עמ' א-א-פסקים וכתבים, ירושלים תשמ"ט, ח"י"ב, סי' קכ.
- 77. 'פתרון חדש לחידת ספר יחזקאל', סיני, שנה טז, חוב' ו, אדר תשי"ג, עמ' שכא-שכב [נוספה - קול תורה, שנה ז, חוב' ז-ח, ניסן-אדר תשי"ג, עמ' א].
- 78. 'ידן הפלך בישראל', מצפה, שנתון 'הצופה' לשנת תשי"ג, תל-אביב אדר תשי"ג, עמ' קלב-קמא.
- 79. 'גלוי דעת על חידוש הסנהדרין בישראל', תלפיות, שנה ו, חוב' א-ב, ניסן תשי"ג, עמ' 89-91.
- 80. 'על ביאור הגר"א לאגן העזר', ספר הגר"א (בעריכת הרב י"ל מימון), ירושלים תשי"ד, ח"יד, עמ' א-י.
- 81. 'על דבר החלב והבגנה של הקדאים', קול תורה, שנה ז, חוב' ט-י, סיון-תמוז תשי"ג, עמ' א-ג, עמ' א-ג; שנה ח, חוב' ג-ד, כסלו-טבת תשי"ד, עמ' א-ב [=פסקים וכתבים, יורה דעה, ירושלים תשי"ג, ח"יד, סי' לב].
- 82. 'מקצת סגוריה לכהנים המשתטחים על קברי צדיקים', קול תורה, שנה ה, חוב' ה-ז, שבט-אדר תשי"ד, עמ' א-ז [= פסקים וכתבים, ירושלים תשי"ג, ח"יד, סי' קמ].
- 83. 'פירות חו"ל שנכנסו לארץ', קול תורה, שנה ח, חוב' ה-ט, ניסן אייר תשי"ד, עמ' א-ז. [נראה: פסקים וכתבים, ירושלים תשי"ג, ח"ג, סי' כח].
- 84. 'דברים על הספרה', הספר (בעריכת צי הרב), שנה א, קונטרס א, אייר תשי"ד.
- 85. 'ביאור בירושלמי בהלכות מעשר שני', קול ירושלים, שנה ב, חוב' ד, אייר-סיון תשי"ד; שנה ב, חוב' ה, אב-אלול תשי"ד.
- 86. 'אם אין אישור במנחת שבעה קנים בשער הכנסת', קול תורה, שנה ח, חוב' י-יג; סו"ן-אלול תשי"ד; שנה ט, חוב' א-ב, תשמ"ו [=פסקים וכתבים, יורה דעה, ירושלים תשי"ג, ח"יד, סי' מג].
- 87. 'צעני יום בלא עדים', ברכה למנחם: ספר היוכל לכבוד הרב מנחם צבי אייכנשטיין (בעריכת הרב נחמן פריז), סי' לאו"ס תשמ"ו, עמ' 51-55.
- 88. 'Six Talks on Maimonides', Department for Torah Education and Culture in the Diaspora World Zionist Organization "Maimonides - His Education and Culture in Jerusalem 1955 pp. 11-16.

- 89. 'משנת תורה - ח"י"ד החוקה' פון רמב"ם, קובץ 'ידעו רמב"ם - באוליוטונוען וועגן זיין דענקען, זיין לערע און זיין ווירקען - מקסיקו 1955, עמ' 31-35.
- 90. 'התחיקה והמשפט', ישראל החדשה, תל-אביב תשי"ד, עמ' 3-5.
- 91. 'גדלים בזמן המלכות', ישראל החדשה, תל-אביב תשי"ד, עמ' 3-5.
- 92. לקראת מדינת יהודית, בתומת התורה והמדינה, קובץ ז-ח, תשמ"ו-תשי"ז, עמ' ט-כח [= על צורת המגורה שבמקדש והמגורה בשביל הכנסת', סיני, שנה יח, חוב' א, תשרי תשי"ז, עמ' כח-לט [נראה עוד תמונה ב עמ' 167-168].
- 93. 'בזין כלאי אילן', הפרדס, שנה כט, חוב' ב, חשוון תשי"ז, חוב' ג, כסלו; חוב' ד, טבת; חוב' ט, סיון; חוב' י, תמוז תשי"ז. [= 'קיום כלאי אילן', תחומין, ה, תשמ"ד, עמ' 99-131; פסקים וכתבים, ירושלים תשי"ג, ח"י"ג, סי' יא].
- 94. 'הרמב"ם בהלכה', סיני, שנה יח, חוב' ה, שבט תשי"ז, עמ' תלט-תמו.
- 95. 'קטע מתשובה בענין עגונה', קול תורה, שנה ט, חוב' ה-ו, שבט-אדר תשי"ז [= שו"ת היכל יצחק, אבן העזר, ירושלים תשי"ד, ח"יא, סי' לב].
- 96. 'בענין מחילת אשה על מזונותיה', קול תורה, שנה ט, חוב' ז-ח, תשמ"ו, עמ' א-ה.
- 97. 'אנא זקוקים לרמב"ם חדיש', אור המורה, שנה ב, חוב' ב, ניסן תשי"ז, עמ' 4-6.
- 98. 'הפקר בית דין לייסוד לתקנות בי"ד', תלפיות, כרך ו, חוב' ג-ד, אייר תשי"ז, עמ' 637-654; כרך ז, חוב' ג-ד, תשרי תשכ"א, עמ' 272-281 [= תחוקה לישראל על-פי התורה, ירושלים תשמ"ט, ב, עמ' 7-64].
- 99. 'בזין ירושה בכספי בטוח', קול תורה, שנה ט, חוב' ט-י, תשמ"ו, עמ' א-ג, חוב' יא-ב, אב-אלול תשי"ז, עמ' א-ב [= פסקים וכתבים, ירושלים תשי"א, ח"י"ט, סי' סו].
- 100. 'הרמב"ם ושלטון השכל', המורה רבינו משה בן מיימון: לקט דברים עליו ומשמנתו (בעריכת צבי קפלן ומאיר חובב), ירושלים תשי"ז, עמ' 97-100.
- 101. 'צורת המגורה שבקשת סיטוס', קובץ לתולדות יהודי ארץ-ישראל: ספר זכרון לשלמה ד' מאיר, ירושלים תשמ"ו, חלק עברי, עמ' 95-98 [= מחניים: מסכת לחייל לחג החנוכה, חוב' לו, תשי"ט, עמ' 12-9 (חוב' מוקדשת ליובל ה-70 של הרב הרצוג); ספר יובל לכבוד שמואל קלמן מירסקי (בעריכת שמעון ברנשטיין וג"ח חורגין), ניו-יורק תשי"ח, עמ' 220-221; פסקים וכתבים, יורה דעה, ירושלים תשי"ג, ח"יד, סי' מז].
- 102. 'אומות פסקה התכלת בישראל', שי לישעיהו: ספר יובל לישעיהו וולפסברג (בעריכת י' תירוש), תל-אביב תשי"ז, עמ' 81-85 [= אור המורה, שנה ז, חוב' א, כסלו תשי"ז, עמ' 5-8; התכלת במקדש ובציצית (בעריכת הרב מנחם ברנשטיין), ירושלים תשמ"ד, עמ' יט-כ].
- 103. 'ראיה לשיטת הרמב"ם בתוספות יום טוב', לכבוד יום טוב (בעריכת הרב י"ל מימון), ירושלים תשמ"ו, עמ' טו-טז.

126. 'בדון חובב קבלת פני רבו ברגל', קול תורה, שנה ג, חובב א-ב, תשרי-חשוון תשס"ז.
 חובב א, ניסן-אייר תשי"ט [=שו"ת היכל יצחק, אורח חיים, ירושלים תשכ"ב, ח"א, סי' ט, פסקים וכתבים, ירושלים תשמ"ט, ח"ב, סי' צב].
127. 'תשובה לשאלה למעשה בהלכות עבודה זרה ושכרה', קול תורה, חובב יא, תשי"ח.
128. 'יחיס בין התורה והמדינה', אור המורה, שנה ה, חובב ג-ד, אלול תשי"ח.
129. 'בדון קבורת מומר', נועם, כרך ב, ירושלים תשי"ט, עמ' א-ג.
130. 'שנת השמיטה וערכיה המוסריים', עלונים, כה, תמוז-מנחם אב תשי"ט, עמ' 4-5.
131. 'בדון ביטול ע"י נוכרי בשבת', נועם, כרך ג, ירושלים תשי"ד, עמ' א-ב [=שו"ת היכל יצחק, אורח חיים, ירושלים תשכ"ב, ח"א, סי' ל; פסקים וכתבים, ירושלים תשמ"ט, ח"א, סי' מז].
132. 'צירוף אזהרות לענין בתיבה בשבת', נועם, כרך ג, ירושלים תשי"ד, עמ' ג-טו [=שו"ת היכל יצחק, אורח חיים, ירושלים תשכ"ב, ח"א, סי' מז].
133. 'אומדנה דרבי אליעזר מורדון ועגונות ביתר', הליכות תו שין קה, ירושלים ערב ראש השנה תשי"ד, עמ' 67-70 [=שו"ת היכל יצחק, אבן העזר, ירושלים תשי"ד, ח"א, סי' כג].
134. 'תשובתו בשאלת "מיחו יהודי", תשובות גדולי ישראל לראש ממשלת ישראל בשאלת "מיחו יהודי", גז-יורק תשרי תשי"ד.
135. 'אחרית הימים מתחילה כבר', אור המורה, שנה ז, חובב ג-ד, תמוז-אלול תשי"ד, עמ' 3-5.
136. 'בענין הפרשת תרומות ומעשרות', ספר יובל מוגש לכבוד הרב פדרבוש (בעריכת הרב י"ל מימון), ירושלים תשכ"א, עמ' ריג-רב.
137. 'אין סמיכה אלא בארץ ישראל', קול ירושלים, שנה ו, חובב ב, כסלו-טבת תשכ"א.
138. 'תשובה בענין מנוי רב נוסף במקום שנתרבו בני העדה הספרדית או להיפך', קול תורה, שנה טו, חובב י-כ, תמוז תשכ"א [= אור המורה, שנה ט, ג-ד, שבת תשכ"ב, עמ' 13-14].
139. 'שאלה בדבר עירוב', מוכרת לזכר הגרי"א הרצוג (בעריכת הרב ש"י זיון וז' ורחהטיג), ירושלים תשכ"ב, עמ' 43-47 [הערכה על הרב ואישיותו, שם, עמ' 39-9]. [=שו"ת היכל יצחק, אורח חיים, ירושלים תשכ"ב, ח"א, סי' מט].
140. 'שאלה בדבר גידות', שם, עמ' 48-62.
141. 'על משפט התורה בישראל', הלכה פסוקה, ירושלים תשכ"ב, עמ' יא-טו [=התורה והמדינה, קובץ ז-ח, תשט"ז-תשט"ז, עמ' ט-יב; הליכות תו שין קה, ירושלים תשי"ד, עמ' 60-67; המשפט העברי ומדינת ישראל (בעריכת י' בוק), ירושלים תשמ"ט, עמ' 15-19; שנה בשנה, תשי"ל, עמ' 138; תחוקה לישראל על-פי התורה, ירושלים תשמ"ט, א, עמ' 210-214; בצמות התורה והמדינה, ירושלים תשכ"ב, ח"א, סי' ט, עמ' 214-215; שבעים שנה ליסודתה, ירושלים תשנ"א, עמ' 125-128; הרבנות הראשית לישראל: 70 שנה לייסודה,

104. 'יחוש על חדישי', קול תורה, שנה ג, חובב א-ב, תשרי-חשוון תשס"ז.
105. 'עבודת הכהן', מנחה לר' יהודה ליב הכהן מיימון בבכורות (בעריכת ל קופרשטיין), תל-אביב כסלו תשס"ז, עמ' 41-42.
106. 'קצת מפרט של סוכות', קול תורה, שנה ג, חובב ג-ד, כסלו-טבת תשס"ז.
107. 'אי שרי לאבד עוקר שנוצר באישור', קול תורה, שנה ג, חובב ז-ח, תשט"ז, עמ' א-ג.
108. 'שאלת הגבינה הלפנה', קול תורה, חובב ט-י, תשט"ז.
109. 'בענין קבלת גרים', הפרדס, שנה ל, חובב י, תמוז תשס"ז, עמ' 3-4; חובב יא, אב תשס"ז, עמ' 3-7.
110. 'בענין עונות', אוצר המוסקים, כרך ד, ירושלים תשי"ז, עמ' 351-353.
111. 'שיטת הבבלי והירושלמי בענין דמאי', קול ירושלים, שנה ד, חובב א, תשרי תשי"ז.
112. 'טבילת במדחצאות סווימינג פול', הפרדס, שנה ל"א, חובב א, תשרי תשי"ז.
113. 'קבורת מת ספק יהודי ספק נוכרי', קול תורה, שנה יא, חובב א, תשי"ז.
114. 'ענינים בדיון פדיון מעשר שני על מטבע של נחושת', קול תורה, שנה יא, חובב יא, תשי"ז [= פסקים וכתבים, ירושלים תשי"ז, ח"ג, סי' מא].
115. 'בסוגיא דדבר שיש לו מתירין', קול ירושלים, שנה ד, חובב ג-ד, כסלו-טבת תשי"ז.
116. 'בענין חשש לגז מפעושה', הדרום, שנה א, חובב א, שבת תשי"ז, עמ' 28-3.
117. 'העברת מת לקבורת משפחה', קול תורה, שנה יא, חובב ו, אדר תשי"ז.
118. 'זינו של פשתמש בצניור חזקה לגבי ברכות תמלילי', קול תורה, שנה יב, חוברות ב-ג, תשי"ח [= שו"ת היכל יצחק, או"ח, ירושלים תשכ"ב, ח"א, סי' ד].
119. 'בדיון כל תחנם', התורה והמדינה, קובץ ט-י, תשי"ח-תשי"ט, עמ' די-ז, ושם עמ' ה-י: לדמותו].
120. 'קצירה ובצירה ע"י ב"ד' (תוספת מילואים לקונטרס "דבר השמיטה" משנת תשי"א), התורה והמדינה, קובץ ט-י, תשי"ח-תשי"ט, עמ' רעז-רפד.
121. 'דיון המלך ודיון התורה', תלפיות, כרך ז, חובב א, תשרי תשי"ח, עמ' 4-32 [ראה: תחוקה על-פי התורה, ירושלים תשמ"ט, ב, עמ' 65-89].
122. 'למידותיו של חזקיהו מלך יהודה', ספר היובל של "סיני", ירושלים תשי"ח, עמ' כז-כח.
123. 'התורה והמדינה', על עשור: דברי תורה מחקר וספרות מוגשים ליום העצמאות העשירי למדינת ישראל (בעריכת הרב י"ל הכהן מימון), ירושלים תשי"ח, עמ' יג-טו [= סיני, שנה כא, חובב ז-ח, ניסן-אלול תשי"ח, עמ' יג-טו; תחוקה לישראל על-פי התורה, ירושלים תשמ"ט, ג, עמ' 254-257].
124. 'בענין פסיגי בבית הגונות', קול ירושלים, שנה ה, חובב א-ב, כסלו-טבת תשי"ח; חובב ג, ניסן תשי"ח.
125. 'יחד למסוד ספר תורה שלו לרבים', קול תורה, שנה יב, חובב ה, תשי"ח [= (הלקיט) שו"ת היכל יצחק, אורח חיים, ירושלים תשכ"ב, ח"א, סי' יז].

142. 'רשיות שעורים בשבת', בתוך: עמוד הימיני (מאת הרב שאול ישראל), תל-אביב תשכ"ו, סי' כו.
143. 'אי אריך להאביל תרומה ותרומת מעשר לחיות טורפות בן החיות', כרם ציון השלם (בעריכת הרב יצחק רוזנטל, ירושלים תשל"א, עמ' קו-ק"ז).
144. 'זכר להקחיל', הקהל: זכר למקדש (בעריכת הרב בנימין רבינוביץ-תאומים), ירושלים תשל"ג [= פסקים וכתבים, ירושלים תשמ"ט, ח"ב, סי' צח].
145. 'חקמת מדינה קודם ביאת משיח', ספר הציונות הדתית (בעריכת י" רפאל ושי"ז שרגאן, ירושלים תשל"ז, א, עמ' 60-71) [= פסקים וכתבים, ירושלים תשמ"ט, ח"ב, סי' קטו].
146. 'שלטון נשמת האומה', מחשבת, חוב' מד, תשל"ח, עמ' 3-4.
147. 'המרשת תרומות ומעשרות בשדה שלא הופקדה בשביעיות', תחומין, א, תשי"ב, עמ' 151-152 [= פסקים וכתבים, ירושלים תשי"ג, ח"ג, סי' נו].
148. 'זכויות המיעוטים לפי החלכה', תחומין, ב, תשמ"א, עמ' 169-179.
149. 'על הקמת המדינה ומלחמותיה', תחומין, ד, תשמ"ג, עמ' 13-24 [= תחוקה לישראל על-פי התורה, ירושלים תשמ"ט, א, עמ' 121-133].
150. 'חיוב ממון בענין הליצה', תחומין, ד, תשמ"ג, עמ' 426-427.
151. 'חיוב ממתה בנשואין וחברת אבחות', תחומין, ד, תשמ"ג, עמ' 428-430.
152. 'משחק השחמט', תחומין, ו, תשמ"ה, עמ' 311-313 [נדפס ללא הערות אצל שי' חון, פתיחות בשחמט, תל-אביב תשכ"ח, עמ' 21-23].
153. 'איסור ספיחין במאכל בהמה', תחומין, ז, תשמ"ו, עמ' 11-17.
154. 'תורמות ומעשרות לאחר היתר המכירה', תחומין, ז, תשמ"ו, עמ' 18-22 [= פסקים וכתבים, ירושלים תשי"ג, ח"ג, סי' ד].
155. 'בני חזין בישראל, תחומין, ז, תשמ"ו, עמ' 277-294 [= תחוקה לישראל על-פי התורה, ירושלים תשמ"ט, ג, עמ' 282-300].
156. 'זכויות המיעוטים במדינה יהודית בהלכה', שנה בשנה, תשמ"ו, עמ' 136-140.
157. 'התכלת בישראל', בתוך: התכלת (מאת הרב מנחם בורשטיין, ירושלים תשמ"ו, עמ' 347-435).
158. 'המשפט והמוסר ביהדות', תחוקה לישראל על-פי התורה (בעריכת הרב איתמר ורמבסין, ירושלים תשמ"ט, ג, עמ' 218-225).
159. 'ואהבת לרעך כמוך' למי חלל, שם, עמ' 226-228.
160. 'על תיאוקרטיה דיימוקרטית', שנה בשנה, תשי"ט, עמ' 233-234.
161. 'הפעלת ספינה בשבת', תחומין, יג, תשי"ב-תשי"ג, עמ' 127-129.
162. 'שיעור פליחה', מסורה, טו, תשי"ס, עמ' סב.
163. 'מרגרינה שיש חשש שמעורב בה שומן מן החי', תחומין, כד, תשי"ד, עמ' 419-425.

עלין

THE RABBINATE IN STORMY DAYS

*The Life and Teachings of
Rabbi Yitzhak Isaac HaLevi Herzog
The First Chief Rabbi of Israel*

Shaul Mayzlish

Translated from the Hebrew by Tanhum Yoreh



must counter them with the sword and prayer of our father Jacob.” Rabbi Herzog agreed, and together with the rabbinical council determined a list of Psalms to be recited daily in synagogues.

A Trip to the Communities of the West

Toward the end of 1940, Rabbi Herzog left the Land of Israel for a seven-month trip to the United States and South Africa. The purpose of the trip was medical treatment, but Rabbi Herzog also intended to secure financial support for the yeshivas from American and South African Jewry. The rabbi’s expectations for the trip were high, a sentiment shared by Rabbi Berlin. The goal was to raise \$1 million, which would fund the immigration to the Land of Israel of fifteen hundred yeshiva students and two hundred rabbis. The money was also intended to support the 130 religious institutions in the Land of Israel where the immigrants would be received. He hoped that American Jewry would “rise to the occasion in this hour of emergency.” The rabbi, however, failed to secure the funds, due to lack of organization. Rabbi Herzog’s disappointment is palpable in a letter from May 1941:

Were it not for my firm belief that everything comes from heaven, I would be awash in sorrow. I endured everything with love, with a firm belief that it was all for the best in the final reckoning, and that perhaps these troubles were atonement for our sins.

Our financial success was negligible. The modest funds we did manage to procure were thanks to Mizrachi and Young Israel.

There is no end to my disappointment. It was all a dream; I found neither a committee nor an organization, neither a manager nor a plan of action. The person we put our trust in did not do anything. He could not or would not help us for twisted and loathsome political reasons. I, and the other rabbis, will be sure to chastise him orally.

Despite his complaints, Rabbi Herzog did receive donations. The United Jewish Appeal for Israel, chaired by Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, who knew the rabbi personally, put funds at the rabbi’s disposal, but these funds were earmarked for the extant yeshivas in the Land of Israel, and not for a new cause. Rabbi Mordechai Kirshblum, vice president of Mizrachi, together with Rabbi Stephen Wise and Judges Louis Brandeis and Felix Frankfurter, all assisted the rabbi in the United States.

From a practical perspective, Rabbi Herzog’s trip was not crowned with success, but the receptions in his honor were impressive. The New York newspapers reported on the reception in his honor at the large synagogue Tifereth Israel. The committee overseeing his visit even organized a reception for him at Carnegie Hall. The highlight of the rabbi’s travels, however, was his meeting with President Roosevelt. The American labor leader Sidney Hillman (a

relative of Rabbanit Herzog) facilitated the meeting. At first, Hillman refused to mediate, claiming that the president had tasked him with organizing American industry for siege conditions that might prevail during the war. Rabbanit Herzog, however, reminded him of their family connection, and Hillman promised that a meeting with the president would take place shortly.

The Meeting with President Roosevelt

On April 25, 1941, a telegram arrived at Rabbi Herzog's hotel inviting him to the White House in Washington for a brief meeting with the president on April 29.

Upon entering the president's chambers, Rabbi Herzog made the blessing "Blessed is the One Who gave from His honor to flesh and blood" and translated it for the president. The president replied, "May His Holiness be seated." The president expressed his hope that the rabbi's visit to the United States was proceeding smoothly and with the utmost respect and honor due to the rabbi. The rabbi stated that ever since his childhood, he had admired the American spirit of liberty: "God's covenant is present in America, and I am confident that it will be a stronghold of freedom and human liberty for many years to come."

After a few moments of silence, the rabbi summarized the condition of European Jewry and the terrible Holocaust they were enduring. Adopting a preacher's tone, the rabbi stated:

He who stands by while another's blood is being spilled and does nothing to prevent it is an accomplice to murder. I am aware that there are many delays, but I am not convinced that the people of the free world

RECEPTION COMMITTEE for RABBI DR. I. HERZOG CHIEF RABBI OF THE HOLY LAND

38 PARK ROW
NEW YORK, N. Y.

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April 8, 1941

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On Tuesday evening, April 15, 1941, second day of Chol-Hamose Pessach, New York Jewry warmly and joyfully welcome the venerable Chief Rabbi of Eretz Israel, Rabbi Dr. Isaac Herzog, at a Public Reception in Carnegie Hall, 57th Street and 7th Ave., New York, N. Y.

We take great pleasure to invite you to participate in this historic assemblage in honor of our most distinguished Torah scholar and outstanding spokesman of the Palestine Yishuv.

We are sending you, enclosed, one complimentary ticket. It is our sincere hope that you will find it possible to make use of them and enjoy a spiritual evening. If, however, you cannot make use of the tickets, kindly return them to us without delay.

With best wishes for happy holidays, I am

Sincerely yours,

Aaron Tittelbaum

Rabbi Aaron Tittelbaum
Executive Chairman

P.S.— No appeal for funds will be made.

have done all they can to save as many as possible. Every day innocent men, women, and children are being slaughtered in Europe. All of humanity will be held accountable for this.

I call upon His Honor, as someone in a position of power, in the name of human conscience, in the name of human liberty, in the name of justice, to prevent the butchering of the Jews and allow the survivors the possibility of reaching safe havens. Throughout Europe there are those who are trying to escape the claws of the devil. I plead with the President to use his connections with neutral countries to provide aid to the refugees.

Mr. President, I am not the person who will advise you on how to deal with this terrible problem. I come only with a plea and also a warning. The plea – save what can be saved. The warning – those who stood by will be held accountable in the future.

President Roosevelt took interest in the measures Rabbi Herzog had taken to save the refugees, and added that he would conduct a special meeting with his aides on the matter. When silence once again descended upon the chambers, the rabbi understood that the meeting had come to an end. He exited the president's chambers escorted by his secretary. The meeting with President Roosevelt left the rabbi morose and disappointed. He was convinced that in spite of all the honorifics, the president was cold and apathetic to his demands, and that saving European Jewry was for him only a distant concern.

Despite the fact that the meeting with the American president did not bear fruit, it was important. In time, the rabbi summarized the meeting in the following way: “The president displayed considerable awareness of the situation in the Land of Israel. He appreciates our achievements. We discussed the destitute condition of our nation. I was convinced that he was well acquainted with the Jewish problem.” Rabbanit Herzog was more pointed. She described the meeting in her journal: “The president shook my husband's hand and promised he would do all in his power to help the Jews of Palestine. Roosevelt, however, had met with Faisal, on the other side of the Jordan River, and given him the same promise. Regretfully, the president was not an honest man.”

Rabbi Herzog could not succeed in his endeavors while the Yishuv's leadership resignedly accepted their fate. In his opinion, the heads of the Yishuv behaved as if they had all the time in the world. The rabbi saw that “the city was burning,” and would always find one more door to knock on, one more avenue to pursue, never compromising and never flagging. Zionist leaders the retired Supreme Court judge Louis Brandeis and Judge Felix Frankfurter advised him to meet with the British ambassador to the United States, Lord Halifax.

Rabbi Herzog won over the ambassador by explaining verses from Isaiah on the perseverance of the human spirit even after the flesh has endured terrible suffering. These verses were used as an analogy to the situation in Europe. Rabbi Herzog then gave the ambassador details of his plans to save Jewish individuals and groups from the

conflagration in Europe. He raised the possibility of acting through the assistance of neutral countries such as Turkey and Switzerland. Lord Halifax agreed with the rabbi's opinion that in spite of the war raging throughout the world, it was still possible to save Jews from the valley of death. He agreed to the raise the issues of the European refugees wandering throughout Russia with the British government, but emphasized that it was difficult for Britain to act in these trying times. At the end of their conversation, Ambassador Halifax requested that the rabbi send him written material on the issues at hand, and promised him to deal with the matter expeditiously. "The rabbi filled me with the spirit of life," Lord Halifax said of their meeting later on.

The rabbi then met with the Japanese ambassador to the United States. The latter promised him that temporary residence would be granted to Jewish immigrants in Japan. The rabbi was also received warmly by the Turkish and Egyptian envoys. He managed to convey the feeling of impending doom to all. The rabbi then went to South Africa. Despite his failed attempt to fundraise in April 1940, the rabbi asked the Zionist Federation for assistance. He claimed that if they did not help him, he would attempt to fundraise directly from South African Jewry. Consequently, the rabbi was allotted a certain amount of money.

Rabbanit Herzog also helped raise awareness among the Jewish women in the communities the rabbi visited, and secured generous donations for the needy. The women of Cape Town and Johannesburg were impressed with the rabbanit, who politely turned down invitations to participate in the cultural events held in her honor and instead shared her thoughts on life in the Land of Israel, the place of the Jewish people, and the importance of helping those in need. In South Africa the rabbi continued to develop the idea of "independence over reliance," of which he had already spoken during his travels in the United States.

"Tomorrow," said the rabbi, "our generation will fall into mist, into the darkness and the shadow of a terrible holocaust. At the same time, a great light shines on Zion, the return of the nation to its land and the beginning of the Third Kingdom of Israel." The rabbi saw in this the fulfillment of the eternal promise of the prophet. Years later, the prime minister of Israel, Levi Eshkol, would quote Rabbi Herzog's words in a speech he delivered after the Six-Day War: "The prophets prophesied regarding two destructions, not a third."

December 27, 1940.

THE ZIONIST RECORD

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Johannesburg Jewry Greet's Rabbi Herzog

Animated Scenes on Arrival of Palestine's Chief Rabbi

Special Interview with "Zionist Record" Representative

The profound interest aroused in Jewish circles by the announcement last week that Dr. Isaac Herzog, Chief Rabbi of Palestine, and Mrs. Herzog, were coming to Johannesburg was evidenced by the large crowds which assembled

is confronted with the task of practically transplanting the Yeshivah to Palestine."

The Yishav's Support.

ASKED about the attitude of the Yishav towards the project, Dr. Herzog replied that it had its whole-hearted support. Already the Jewish Agency had arranged for fifteen

"The Government of Palestine is considering our application for certificates," added Dr. Herzog, "but it is necessary for us to guarantee the maintenance, at least for a year, of each Yeshivah refugee. The Government is actually asking for a guarantee for two years, but would, I think, agree to reduce this period to a year. Generally, I think I can say that the scheme will come into operation as the result of satisfactory financial backing on the part of world Jewry."