

barren way of life. They will remain restless, even if the state takes over all industry, until such time as they find responsibility in work. They are tired of working as instruments in spite of technical efficiency achieved, tired of working with no purpose but profit, tired of the Song of the Wheels:

King Dives he was walking in his garden all alone,  
 Where the flowers are of iron and the trees are turned to stone,  
 The hives are full of thunder and the lightning leaps and kills,  
 The mills of God grind slowly, but he works with other mills.  
 Dives found a mighty silence and he missed the throb and leap,  
 The song of all the sleepless creatures singing him to sleep,  
 And he said, some screw has fallen or some bolt has slipped aside,  
 Some little thing has shifted; and the little things replied:  
 Call upon the Wheels, Master, call upon the Wheels.  
 We are taking rest, Master, finding how it feels,  
 Strict the law of mine and thine, theft we ever shun,  
 All the Wheels are *thine*, Master; tell the Wheels to run,  
 Yea the Wheels are mighty gods, set them running, then,  
 We are only men, Master; have you heard of men?

Were there space to quote any more of Chesterton's 'Song of the Wheels' it would show more eloquently than any argument the evils arising not from the machine but from its control by people other than those who live and work with it.

PAUL DERRICK

---



---

## DESTINIES OF ISRAEL

*Anti-Semitism is the most horrible blow our Lord has received in his Passion; it is everlasting, it is the most bloody and unforgivable, for he receives it on the face of his mother and from the hand of Christians.*—Léon Bloy.

**D**ESTINEES D'ISRAEL<sup>1</sup> was written during those war years when anti-Semitism reached a greater degree of virulence than Léon Bloy anticipated even in his most pessimistic prophecies; and he has foretold only too accurately the great disaster of our time. The Abbé Journet's book which completes and corrects the ideas set forth in the *Salut par les Juifs* offers an exhaustive theological explanation of the destinies of the chosen people.

'Salvation is of the Jews.' These are the words of Christ to the Samaritan woman. This race has been preferred to others by a mysterious choice, incomprehensible to human intelligence; consequently

<sup>1</sup> *Destinées d'Israel*, par M. l'Abbé Charles Journet. (Fribourg, Switzerland, 1946.)

its spiritual and temporal destinies are for ever dependent on the great mystery of the Redemption. This dependence is made clear in the course of history in a manner always supernatural but varying according to the three successive attitudes of Israel towards its Messiah, first expectation and preparation, then denial, finally acceptance. (This last has not yet taken place, but we know by divine revelation that it cannot fail to come about.)

At this present time we are in the second period, that of the refusal, initiated with the coming of the Saviour among his people. This refusal still holds good and with it the punishment consequent upon it: exile and tribulation. We must not, however, forget that a 'remnant in Israel' has been found faithful. From them has arisen the Christian Church; in them are found the supreme examples of saintliness of all time; they are like a pledge of the future restoration of the whole race of the chosen people.

The fault that has plunged Israel headlong into disaster is that which theologians call *perfidia judaica*. The Jews were without question guilty of deicide, that is, of the greatest sin against love. But it is called a sin of infidelity, because they denied God before daring to put him to death. Since this abuse they have formed a 'precipitated' church. God still loves them as a people and his grace is shed on each of them considered as individuals. But he has repudiated them as a church because their communion is not a truly spiritual communion, it is that of earthly hopes, which has made them reject a humble crucified Messiah. The fall of Israel inaugurates a double mystery: that of its dispersal throughout the whole world and that of the immediate substitution of countless nations of Gentiles for the chosen people. It seems that the divine mercy, spurned by those it had chosen, is forced to embrace the rest of the world. Thus, by a kind of supernatural recovery, from a vast evil has sprung a greater good. St Paul does not fear to affirm that the time of Israel's unbelief is necessary. It is necessary as regards the provocation of what the Abbé Journet calls the first stage of the conversion of the world, which will be brought about by means of this mysterious compensation which we have just mentioned. Perhaps it is also necessary in that Israel, having tasted the bitter fruits of exile like the prodigal son, may discover for itself the worth of its first calling.

The Jewish people present an exceptional case (the Church is another such instance) of the direct and constant intervention of the supernatural order into the natural order. But, since their denial, their destiny appears as a kind of reversed miracle, in virtue of which the efforts of this people to find a normal national life must inevitably fail. Nor will political solutions brought to bear on this problem

ever be adequate, because it is of the meta-political order. Here the author reviews the 'solutions' which various epochs in history have tried to put into practice. We will linger only on the most recent. Modern times have proposed two contradictory 'solutions' to the Jewish problem, known as Liberal and Zionist. The French Revolution gave birth to a very powerful movement of liberalism and assimilation which strove to absorb Jews as French, German, etc., citizens with equal rights. They were to remain of 'Mosaic confession', but that, duly rationalised, was to be reduced to a vague philosophic deism. It was to demand a double suicide: that of the Jewish people and that of the Jewish religion. Fortunately a violent reaction set in, which was to check this attempt. The desire not to die out as a race is expressed in the Zionist policy as it was defined at the first Congress of Bâle in 1917 and consecrated by the Balfour Declaration in November 1917.

Is this effort for political restoration legitimate? At all events there is nothing in the Christian prophecies to doom in advance any attempt to create a Jewish state. Doubtless this offers grave problems of right and justice, but they could not lightly be dismissed as insoluble. However, even if the possibilities and advantages of a return in Palestine are considered, it must be clearly stated that this alone could not constitute true deliverance from exile; at the most it would be the prelude to it.

Quite unconsciously the Zionist policy is only one of the manifestations of the irresistible desire, latent in every Jewish soul—the desire for the Messianic deliverance. Israel knows with certainty that Jehovah's promise will be fulfilled, as at the time of the return from Babylon. But its eyes are not yet opened: instead of beholding the spiritual city, the true messianic kingdom which is the Christian Church, it persists in fixing its gaze on the earthly Jerusalem.

When the author speaks of the Jewish question as insoluble, he looks at it from a political and temporal point of view, and indeed in this respect it cannot be solved, since it is of the meta-political and spiritual order. But, as he says so well, no problem is insoluble to Christian love, and the more hopeless a situation may appear according to the nature of things, the more love must find a supernatural way to act. Thus at the periods in history when anti-Semitism is most bitter, that is, when materialised humanity, feeling painfully the pricks of the spiritual, tries by every means to eliminate it, the task of Christian charity is to summon back into the world the laws of justice and humanity. Still more, whatever the errors of the Jews, it must declare that anti-Semitism is the twin brother of anti-Christianism—that they are two forms of one hatred, that of the super-

natural. Its mission will be constantly to invent temporary solutions on the plane of political reality.

How are we to visualise the future restoration of Israel? It will be a mass return, a return of the whole Jewish people to its Messias. On this point the prophecies are clear and unmistakable. As to the circumstances in which this will come about, they are less easy to determine. The most difficult point to elucidate is that concerning the time when it will take place. It is upon our conception of this that all our conjectures as to the restoration of Israel depend.

Will this herald the Last Judgment or will it occur, on the other hand, in the course of historical evolution, well before the end of time? Both opinions are freely upheld in the Catholic Church. The first has been more popular up to recent times and is that which Léon Bloy has adopted. The Abbé Journet defends the second as more in keeping with the texts; it permits the reconciliation of the various essential points of the Scriptures concerning the end of time.

The return of the Jews, according to St Paul, must be the signal of a great spiritual revival. Then will begin what the author calls the second phase in the conversion of the nations. The world, stimulated by the conversion of Israel, will witness an extraordinary blossoming of saintliness; it will be the great manifestation of the catholicity of the Church. The time of the great apostasy which some believe has already occurred will not take place until later according to the Abbé Journet. Then it will be the triumphant appearance of Antichrist followed by the second coming of our Lord and the transfiguration of the world.

From this point of view the restoration of Israel, far from putting an end to the development of the world, opens up vast historical perspectives.

This return will signify the death of the Jewish religion as a national religion, the death of Israel as a messianic people. It will be a genuine rending of its soul, an agonising purification of its memory as of its hope, a renunciation of itself which will enable it to be reborn spiritually, to enter the Church which is above nations and cultures, which alone is messianic.

What will be the role of the converted Jewish people in Christianity? In the Epistle to the Romans it is a question of the holy jealousy which will arise in Israel when it realises that its Messias has become the property of other nations because it, the legitimate inheritor, had refused him. Is it not a possibility that this discovery will provoke in it a spirit of emulation which will drive Israel to renew the enthusiasm of the Apostolic conquest? A commentary on the Book of Kings, attributed to St Gregory the Great, prophesies

that the Jewish nation will one day openly preach the faith it had denied in the time of its unfaithfulness. Not content with proclaiming in love the Redeemer, it will force itself to imitate him by participation in his Passion, by exposing itself for him to humiliation and persecution; by covering itself with the blood of his death. 'How can we fail to imagine the anxiety of Israel baptised and from that moment on no longer turned to the pursuit of temporal salvation but to the fulfilment of the spiritual ends of the messianic kingdom, other than as an insatiable desire for apostleship which even in the purest and holiest of his children will never give repose to body or soul, or respite from intercession and action?' (p. 359).

If the relationship of the Jewish people to the evangelical order must be such, is it not within the bounds of supposition that it will also have a special part in the application of this order to temporal problems? And if with Jacques Maritain we admit that on our earth at the time of the manifestation of the catholicity of the Church which we have already mentioned, a new revival of Christian culture will set in, may we not suppose that Israel regenerate will have a place of honour there? Thus it will be thanks to its co-operation that Christianity will attain to the 'fullness of its heroic pilgrimage' without abandoning however the wandering and crucified condition which is its lot in this world.

Now a few words must be said of *Le Salut par les Juifs*, by Léon Bloy. M. Journet refers to it throughout his book to stress its profound vision and its poetic perfections, and also to point out the theological errors and the arbitrary statements which make this book so perplexing.

Bloy's intention is of the noblest, for his desire is to bring the greatest testimony in favour of the Jews since the *Épistle to the Romans*. He does this, however, in a manner so paradoxical that the Jews who read it might well wonder if they have not to deal with a more bitter enemy than the others. This is partly explained by Bloy's taste for antithesis—here between the disgrace of Israel and the divine mercy—and also because he has not succeeded in ridding himself of the medieval conception which saw in the Jews a people entirely and eternally deicide. On the other hand, although he has so well shown that the essence of the Jewish question lies in the mystery of the Redemption, he is above all haunted by the mystery of the end of the world and makes every question bear upon this point. According to the interpretation mentioned above, he rejects the conversion of Israel to the end of the world. Thus it is the Jews and they alone who keep the Lord on his cross and delay this second coming of Christ which Bloy desires so ardently. If he has a grudge

against the Jews it is not for anti-semitic reasons. He has attacked the anti-Semites so severely that none of them would feel inclined to claim him as a partisan. He had the merit of putting the Jewish problem back on its true plane, the spiritual, and of announcing this truth to the contemporary world, deep in merely political and literary considerations, at a time when most Christians kept silent. And his voice, stifled at first, takes on, in our age so sorely in need of it, an ever greater resonance.

As a whole, concludes M. Journet, the great passages in Bloy's book cancel his faults and we can only admire it, thankful to have the sure guidance of theology to help us progress towards the dim truths revealed to us by the great French author.

E. ZUM BRUNN.

---



---

## ROMAN AFTERNOON

WHEN Vespers are over, the afternoon sun and the keen air are themselves an invitation to walk. Today it shall be one of the other six hills of Rome that lie to the north of our convent on the Aventine. As I pass along the road which curves gently down the hillside I see the Palatine; and the heavy ruins of the imperial palaces catch the late sunshine, giving their brickwork a mellowing of gold, in contrast with the dark pines that group themselves along its low hilltop. Away to the right the Alban Hills still carry a covering of snow; and the wind that blows from them has a bite in its breath. The *Circus Maximus* lies below; and on its far side a tram jolts noisily on its iron track, where formerly the chariots drawn by their racing horses sped along the course beneath the watching eyes of Virgil:

*Ut cum carceribus sese effudere quadrigae,  
Addunt in spatia, et frustra retinacula tendens  
Pertur equis auriga, neque audit currus habenas.*

As when the chariots have poured out of their starting-pens, they add lap to lap; and the driver, tugging vainly at the bridles, is carried forward by his horses; nor does the team give heed to the reins. *Georgics*, I, 512-514.

The smooth expanse of the old race course is now heaped untidily; for the map has shown me that it recently contained the gasworks, until its retorts and reservoirs were removed by those, who had more reverence for the past, but less time granted them to leave the place clean and level: