



## Conferences on the Holocaust

### Religious Freedom after Auschwitz: The Impact of the Holocaust on Theology and Jewish-Christian Relations

Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan  
1 & 2 May 2000

On the occasion of *Yom Ha-Shoah*, Holocaust Day, Andrews University hosted a symposium entitled "Religious Freedom After Auschwitz." This event was co-sponsored by the Institute of Jewish-Christian Studies at Andrews University and the International Religious Liberty Association of Seventh-day Adventists. Eleven speakers discussed the ecclesiastical and cultural roots of the Holocaust and such post-Holocaust issues as its impact on Christian-Jewish theology, religious freedom, and Jewish-Christian relations.

A moving high point was the special Chapel Service and Holocaust Liturgy. Marvin R. Wilson, author of *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith*, presented the challenging address "Thinking the Unthinkable: Why Christians Must Never Forget the Holocaust." He urged the audience (1) to refer to the past as witness so that the lessons for the present and future will be learned; (2) to create, as responsible educators, compassion and courage to care; (3) to develop relationships with people of other religious and ethnic groups; (4) to not live a dual life in which work and worship are separated; (5) to examine our theology and correct it if it is faulty, also to watch terminology in theology; and (6) to reach out to each other and to overcome apathy.

One important goal of the Symposium was to create awareness of how the Holocaust has affected and should still affect religion. By way of example, Doukhan provided "a first attempt to propose a post-Holocaust Adventist theology" along the traditional lines of systematic theology—God, man, covenant. For him, Adventists have more reason than others to engage in a theology after Auschwitz, because they are Christians and thereby share the responsibility in the Holocaust, because of their historical and

theological association with the Jews, and because "post-Holocaust theology fits very well the specific parameters of Adventist theology." For instance, "supersessionist theology in both forms, ecclesiastical and theological, is in essence incompatible with Adventist theology," Doukhan pointed out. "I call Adventist theologians (from all disciplines—historical, theological, philosophical, practical) to include

debate the latest developments in Holocaust studies and their impact on future scholarship.

The specified aim of the conference has been "to provide a forum for the evaluation of the Holocaust in an age of genocides; to assess the impact of new material and research, particularly in the post-Communist era; to reassess the Jewish-Christian dynamic in the light of the Holocaust and provide a unique opportunity for eye witnesses and scholars to work together; to disseminate new findings using new technologies, especially the Internet."

This international, inter-disciplinary, interfaith forum drew some 700 of the best minds in the field from all over the world exploring the themes of the conference for our contemporary world, especially in the areas of history, religion and ethics, Holocaust education, and politics. The seminar discussions were supplemented by practical, artistic and cultural seminars. Opening presentations were given by Sir Martin Gilbert, Elie Wiesel and Samuel Pisar (International lawyer and Auschwitz survivor). Key contributors included Yitshak Arad (Yad Vashem, Jerusalem), Israel W. Charney (Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide, Jerusalem), Annegret Ehmann (Berlin), Yaffa Eliach (Brooklyn College, USA), Radu Ioanid (United

States Holocaust Memorial Museum), Rabbi Israel Meir Lau (Chief Rabbi of Israel), Suzanne D. Rutland (University of Sydney), Stephen Smith (Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre, UK). On this occasion, Jacques Doukhan (Andrews University) presented a paper in which he outlined principles of how we should read the Scriptures in awareness of the Holocaust. He pointed out as imperative that "the lessons of the post-Holocaust reading should be heard and received beyond circles of the theologians or the Bible exegetes, and reach the public domain through liturgy, homiletics and lectionaries, and catecheses and adult education." The plenary lectures and some 200 conference papers will be published in three volumes early 2001 by Macmillan Press.



and imply the reference to the event of the Holocaust in their theological thinking," was part of Doukhan's call for an Adventist response to Auschwitz.

The panel discussion gave room for the presenters' personal reflections on the Holocaust Symposium. To assure that the educational effect of the Holocaust Symposium will continue the presentations will be published soon.

### Remembering for the Future 2000: The Holocaust in an Age of Genocide

Oxford and London  
16 - 23 July 2000

Remembering for the Future 2000 was a major international scholars' conference on the Holocaust and a gathering of survivors and their descendants, rescuers and liberators, together with an important series of related meetings and events. Scholars from different backgrounds joined with a significant number of eyewitnesses to present and