

Binyamin Zev Herzl, the visionary of the Jewish state, didn't mourn many people in his life, especially not on the podium of the Zionist Congress. This was a special event, but it was only natural that he would do so for Tzvi Herman Shapira, who passed away days before the second congress.

## What made Tzvi Herman Shapira such an important figure in the story of Zionism?

Tzvi Herman Shapira, is the entrepreneur, encourager, and executioner of the huge project we call KKL, the JNF, the Jewish National Fund. He designed nature and purpose of the organization. He was the one who suggested reaching out to the Jews around the world, for one central Jewish foundation. Two thirds were meant for purchasing land, and a third for preserving the land already owned by Jews. The land was always kept by the foundation, and never owned by only one person.

Shapira, who was born and raised in different countries In Europe, was a scholar, an ordained Rabbi, and won many awards from a young age. But he was never satisfied with the honor he received in Europe, and worked many years for the recognition of Zionism, back in the days when no one believed in those ideas.

Thanks to his unwillingness to give up, buying land in Israel became a reality. Until then, most of the Jews who came to Israel were poor and could not afford to buy land. The Jewish settlements wanted to expand but did not have the means. Thanks to the establishment of the JNF Tzvi Herman Shapira created a new concept called "The Blue Box", this was a blue money box, which was sent to Jewish communities around the world. It became in nickname for the boxes which collected money for the JNF. The boxes used as a way of collecting money from all around the world, and as a tool for education. On the boxes they would print pictures and sentences which feature the Zionist Ideology. The blue box was, and still is, a symbol of the JNF and Zionism.

Shapira, also worked to spread the Hebrew language and culture to Jews around the world and helped establish The Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The University is still open today, and is considered one of the most important and high quality in the world.