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GRAPEVINE

• By GREER FAY CASHMAN

■ AFFILIATES OF the World Zionist Organization are gearing up for the World Zionist Congress, which is held every five years, and will again be held in October of this year.

The Zionist movement has grown considerably since the First Zionist Congress in 1897, though Zionist visionary Theodor Herzl was not the first to found a Zionist organization, and Eliezer Ben-Yehuda was not the first to revive Hebrew as a spoken language.

Rachael Risby Raz, the COO of Kol Israel (the political party, not the broadcasting network), notes that, in the Bible, the word “Zion” first appears in 2 Samuel 5:7 as a namesake for Jerusalem (and by extension the Land of Israel): “And David conquered the stronghold of Zion which is the city of David.”

The name is then repeated in the Prophets and Scriptures over 150 times.

The term “Zionism,” she continues, was actually coined in 1890 by Austrian Jewish activist Nathan Birnbaum. The term reflects the link between Zion and the Jewish people and their yearning to return to their historical homeland.

First came the World Zionist Organization, which was founded at the First Zionist Congress and has ever since served as the overseer and coordinator of the Zionist movement.

Second came Keren Keyemeth LeIsrael-Jewish National Fund, which in 1901 was tasked with purchasing land in Eretz Yisrael to settle Jews.

The third was United Israel Appeal, which in 1920 became the main fundraising branch of the Zionist movement.

The fourth, in 1929, was the Jewish Agency for Israel, which first served as the “gov-

ernment” of the Jewish people pre-state, and then became the main proponent of aliyah.