



**LAUSANNE
CONSULTATION
ON JEWISH
EVANGELISM**

President: Rev. Ole Chr. M. Kvarme
International Coordinating Committee
International Coordinator: Dr. Kai Kjær-Hansen
Committee Members: Mr. Tsvi Sadan
Miss Susan Perlman

Area Coordinators:

Australia / New Zealand

Lawrence Hirsch, P.O. Box 105, South Melbourne 3205,
Australia

Europe:

Rev. John Ross, Christian Witness to Israel, 166 Main Road,
Sundridge, Sevenoaks, Kent TN14 6EL, United Kingdom

Israel:

Mr. Arthur Goldberg, Rh. Laish 401/19 Gilo, Jerusalem,
93853 Israel

Japan:

Rev. Kenichi Nakagawa, c/o Harvest Center, Susono City,
Shizuoka Ken, Japan 410-11

North America:

Rev. Fred Klett, Box 133, Glenside, PA, 18976, USA

South America:

Rev. Peter Clarke, Pedro Morán 4414, 1419 Buenos Aires,
Argentina

South Africa:

Mr. Andrew Barron, Jews for Jesus/South Africa,
P.O. Box 1996, Parklands 2121 Johannesburg, South Africa

International Coordinator & International Mailing Address:

Kjær-Hansen, Ellebækvej 5, DK-8520 Lystrup, Denmark
Tel: (45) 86 22 64 70 Fax: (45) 86 22 95 91

Directory Information.

Perlman, P.O. Box 424885, San Francisco, CA. 94142-4885,
USA Tel: (415) 864-2600 Fax: (415) 552-8325



**LAUSANNE CONSULTATION
ON JEWISH EVANGELISM
BULLETIN**



Issue No. 42 (Nov. 1995)



LCJE Bulletin
Issue no. 42
November 1995

© Lausanne Consultation on
Jewish Evangelism

Editor: Kai Kjær-Hansen
Editorial assistant: Birger Petterson
Designed by Flemming Markussen

Printed by LB offset,
8471 Sabro, Denmark

Published February, May, August and
November
Dead-line of no. 43: 1 January 1996

Individual membership 25 US \$
annually; subscription 15 US \$,
payable to LCJE

Our bankers are:
Den Danske Bank
SWIFT-address: DABADKKK
Reg. no. 3652
Account no. 4803086338
or cheque drawn on a Danish bank,
and sent to LCJE/Kjær-Hansen
(address on back cover)

CONTENTS

From the Coordinator	2
Christofascists?	3
Report from Japan	4
LCJE in Japan	5
A Visit to Korea	7
Reaching Intermarried Couples	10
Mission Impossible	16
New Beginnings in Australia	18

From the coordinator

I Cry for Thee, O' Israel

"The heart is bleeding, the mind is reeling, the brain refuses to believe. The thousands of years of a people's legacy, the century-long Zionist dream, and the 47 years of the rebuilding of a nation - all are dwarfed and shadowed by the abhorrent, insane act of a monstrous individual.

... I cry for the loss of our values, inherited by others, abandoned by us; for confusing democratic and humanitarian principles with violence and anarchy, replacing civilized debates with hatred and contempt.

... I am ashamed on behalf of those who gave their lives and those who dedicated a lifetime to make the State of Israel a true light unto all other nations. I cry for thee, O' Israel."

These are the words of Yehuda Levi, President and Publisher of The Jerusalem Post, on the front page of the paper the day after the murder of Yitzhak Rabin.

In the magazine *The Jerusalem Report* an article, published in the days prior to Rabin's death, begins in this way: "Yitzhak Rabin does not have long to live." The article is about the curses which ultra-Orthodox Jews have pronounced over Rabin because of his "heretical" policy.

While the majority of Israel are in shock - and mourning - a minority group of extremist Jews feast and dance at Rabin's death. He got his deserts, they sing. And the assassin regrets nothing - he performed his deed with the help of God.

Others give expression to self-reproach. In *Kol Israel*, a religious student said at Rabin's coffin:

"I have come to do penance. I feel responsible. I heard the extremists speak of hate and violence at their demonstrations. I remained silent. If more of us had spoken up against them, this might never have happened."

The murder of Yitzhak Rabin must also lead Messianic Jews and Christians who make common cause with Israel to consider, once more, how we use God and the name of God as an argument in the Middle East conflict. The last fanatic is not dead. They are everywhere. Among Muslims, Jews and Christians.

Kai Kjær-Hansen

Christofascists?

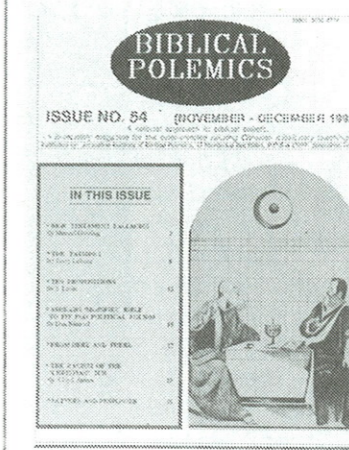
International Coordinator of LCJE Kai Kjær-Hansen regularly receives telefaxes from Jewish organisations whose declared aim is to counteract the spread of the gospel among Jews. Immediately following the TV transmission of Yitzhak Rabin's funeral on 6 November 1995 a fax with the following message came in:

A spiritual version of the Germanen Order?

The Germanen Order was founded in 1912. Its principle aim was the monitoring of the Jews and their activities by the creation of a center to which all antisemitic material could flow for distribution.

The Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism was founded 1980. Its aim was the monitoring of the Jews and their activities by the creation of a center to which material useful to anti-Jewish proselytisers could flow for distribution.

The Germanen Order catered for political antisemites. The LCJE caters for those spiritual antisemites better known as *Christofascists*. These are people who behave in matters of the spirit in the



Biblical Polemics is a magazine published in Jerusalem and edited by a Mr Shmuel Golding, who presents himself as an ex-Baptist minister and missionary who "left the darkness of Christianity and returned to Judaism". The aim of the magazine is to fight Christian mission.

same way as other fascists do in political life. They are in essence the *Nazists of the spirit*.

Christofascists believe in the superiority of their own faith in the same way that political fascists believe in the superiority of their own "race". In the same way that the political fascists set out to destroy or subjugate

peoples not sharing their supposed "racial" superiority, the *Christofascists* set out to do the same to those peoples not sharing their supposed spiritual superiority. They are the spiritual supremacist members of the so-called "faith race" of Christianity. These are just a few of the similarities between the antisemitic Germanen Society and the equally antisemitic LCJE.

If you want to know more you will need to subscribe to "Biblical Polemics", the only magazine that gets to the real heart of the crucial issues troubling people today

Then follows the address from where the magazine may be obtained.

There are at least two lessons to be learned from this. First, it shows something of the difficulties that Jesus-believing Jews have to struggle against, for the target of this volley of abuse is not only mission organisations but also Messianic Jews. Second, this is a textbook example of how not to refer to those who believe differently from oneself.

Birger Petterson

When it is said that mission to Jews is anti-Semitic, it is worth mentioning what the Jew Peter said to his Jewish compatriots about the Jew Jesus:
"Salvation is found in no-one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

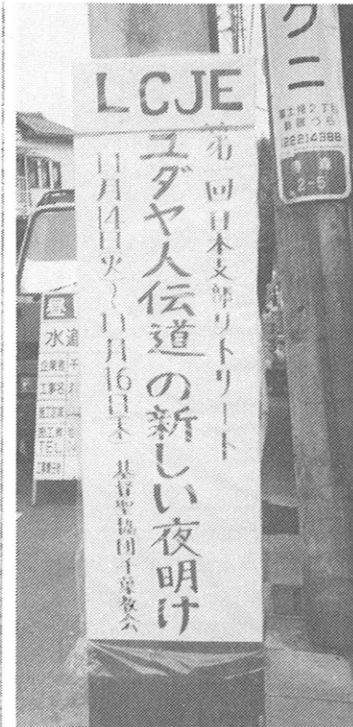
Report from Japanese LCJE Chapter

By Area coordinator Kenichi Nakagawa

Praise the Lord! The first retreat on Jewish Evangelism sponsored by the LCJE Japanese Chapter was held from Nov. 14 through 16 in Tokyo. It was attended by about one hundred Japanese Christians, of whom about 30% were pastors. It was the first retreat of its kind in the history of the Japanese Christianity and has certainly become the watershed event for the development of Jewish evangelism in Japan.

Kai Kjær-Hansen presented three expository messages from Acts 1 through 3, which laid a Biblical foundation for the retreat. His messages were very well balanced, the emphasis being the centrality of Christ. There is a tension between the Evangelical and the Charismatic in Japan as is often the case with other countries. Kai, by presenting reconciliatory messages, succeeded in making it clear that the whole theme of Jewish evangelism is for every Christian.

Bodil brought a report from Israel on two occasions. Most of those who attended the retreat were not informed of the present conditions of the Messianic Jews in Israel. She led us through a brief history of the Messianic movement in Israel in this century and explained what are some of the problems that the Messianic



community are faced with today. The report was very informative and practical. Our prayer for Israel will become more effective by focusing our attention on major issues.

Benjamin Berger gave us three inspirational messages from the point of a Messianic believer. His personal testimony of his encounter with Yeshua was not only a moving story but also an eye-opening experience for the Japanese Christians, since some of them have never seen a Jewish person who has come to faith in Yeshua. In my estimation, his treatment of the theme of Election and Suffering was excellent.

We set aside one afternoon for discussion time. After listening to short reports from three Japanese pastors, the people were given an opportunity to ask questions related to this subject and the three foreign speakers answered these questions from their own perspective. To my surprise, the discussion time went better than I had expected. It was obvious that people were very much concerned about the political situation in Israel. The topics that we dealt with ranged from the whole issue of eschatology to "Japanese Israelism", which, in Japan, is one of the factors that confuse the biblical understanding of the role of Israel in God's salvation plans. All the answers to these difficult questions were very balanced and edifying.

To make a summary statement, I feel that the retreat was very successful and that the Japanese LCJE has successfully declared to the body of Christ in Japan what we believe and where we stand. Please pray that the Lord will save us from the confusion which has been prevalent among the Japanese Christians who are interested in Jewish people, and that He would guide us to the right way to make His glory shine upon the Japanese people even as He does upon His chosen people.

LCJE in Japan

By Bodil F. Skjøtt, Caspari Center, Jerusalem

Only three years ago the idea of LCJE and of networking for Jewish evangelism was introduced to Japan through a seminar arranged by Pastor Kenichi Nakagawa, who had met LCJE during the LCWE conference in Manila in 1989. Through the determined work of Pastor Nakagawa and others that participated in the first seminar arranged by Harvest Time Ministry an LCJE Chapter was formed in Japan in 1994 and Jerusalem 95. A year later the Chapter, which now has about 100 members, was ready to hold its first Japanese LCJE conference and invite both members and others to a three-day

conference on Jewish evangelism.

Those of us who came from outside, International Coordinator Kai Kjær-Hansen from Denmark, Benjamin Berger and myself from Jerusalem, were impressed with the number of participants in such a meeting in Japan, where Christians are a small minority and the idea of LCJE still so new. The coordinating group impressed us with their commitment and organisation of their work. They have done a lot to introduce the idea to others not yet involved in ministry to Israel and are determined to enlarge their network and make an impact in other

circles.

Several pastors to whom the idea of Jewish roots, the role of Israel in salvation history and the obligation to Jewish evangelism was new participated in the conference. Many of the other participants have been praying for Israel and her salvation for a long time. One could not help being impressed with the interest in the topic. Although the language barrier was high for some of us, the question and discussion sessions revealed a sincere interest and a wish to know more.

Below are some comments from participants in the first Japanese LCJE conference:



Kenichi Nakagawa calls an assembly by blowing the shofar.

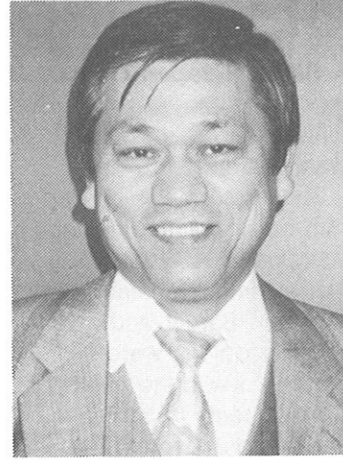
A visit to Korea

By Bodil F. Skjøtt, Caspari Center, Jerusalem



Pastor Takashi Manabe, Ph.D., President of Evangelical Biblical Seminary.

I come from a tradition where we believe in the special plan God has for his people and also that the Jewish people need Jesus for salvation. But this was never given any emphasis by my church, neither in the teaching nor in the preaching ministry. It has really been an eye-opener for me to meet this through LCJE and the Japanese pastors I have met, already involved in ministry to the Jewish people. I am very encouraged and inspired by this new LCJE Chapter in Japan.



Pastor Teichiro, Director of The Voice of Mission, Sakai:

I have been involved in the LCJE Japanese Chapter since our establishment a year ago, and I am convinced that God will use this network to talk to Japanese Christians about the role and place of God's people. I am encouraged by this our first conference and by the message that was presented here. The Japanese church is small, but God has blessed us in many ways and is calling on us to use his gifts for his glory. I believe that the LCJE Network in Japan can be instrumental in this.



Miss Tashie Sasada, working for YWAM, Tokyo:

I was fortunate to participate in the seminar on Jewish evangelism here in Japan three years ago arranged by Pastor Nakagawa at the Harvest Time Center. It prepared me for my visit to Israel the following year when I had the chance to live and study in the land for some time. It was natural for me to set aside time again this year and participate in the first LCJE Japanese conference. I have found that my interest and knowledge about Jewish evangelism really help me in my own work for YWAM.



Pastor Soon-Woonk Hong from South Korea took part in the conference in Japan. He accompanied the LCJE representatives from Tokyo to Seoul.

On our way back from Japan Kai Kjær-Hansen and I had the opportunity to stop over in Korea and meet groups and individuals interested in Israel and mission to the people of Israel. One of the participants in the conference in Japan was Pastor Soon-Woonk Hong. He is minister of Boo-Pyung Suh-Boo Methodist Church in Inchun outside Seoul. Together with his congregation he has, for some time, taken a keen interest in mission to the Jewish people. Together with his daughter and a Korean pastor from Tokyo they were the only other non-Japanese participants in the conference.

We travelled together with him to Seoul where he and others from his group had arranged for us to meet people that they knew were already interested in Jewish evangelism. Prior to our arrival in Korea we had only met Pastor Hong in Japan and had no idea of what to expect from our visit to Korea. All we knew was that he wanted to introduce us to a few people and wanted us to preach and talk to his own congregation about Jewish evangelism. From what we had been told it was difficult to have any specific expectation to the outcome of the visit. Back in Jerusalem trying to assess



Ho-Jin Chung - new contact person between LCJE and the South Korean Israel Missions.

our visit I am convinced that these five days were only the beginning for LCJE in Korea.

We arrived in Korea on Friday 17 November and spent altogether five days in the country. It was five days that challenged and encouraged us through what we saw and heard and through the people we met.

Our main guide and contact person for the five days was Mr Ho-Jin Chung. Mr Ho-Jin Chung is the director of a foundation for rural culture and society and he has spent several years in Israel studying agriculture. During that time he developed an interest in mission to Israel and in the Messianic movement in the country, an interest he kept

up after his return to Korea. He is one of the key persons in a small loosely organised group calling themselves "Israel Mission in Korea". This group served as our host group during our time in Korea. For several years the group has met weekly to pray for the Jewish people, but they have also organised informal lecture evenings where different people have lectured on the country and the situation among Messianic believers. Several members in the group have, in various capacities, lived in Israel for quite a long period of time and therefore have a lot of information to share.

The first evening we were informed about the schedule for the next five days. It soon became clear that Pastor Hong had not exaggerated when he had told us about the program in Japan. Our first meeting was already at 6.00 the next morning! As time went by more was added to the program. From our informal talk the first evening we could understand that even though the work and the purpose of LCJE was not well known to most of the people, there was a keen interest among many Korean Christians to move forward with their interest and involvement in Israel and desire to bring the gospel to the people of Israel.



An atlas and a globe are part of the decor of a church building or an office in Korea. They are signs of missionary zeal. - Here from a meeting in the Shelter, right Pastor Paul Geumho Seok, the founder of the Shelter.

A meeting with the Korean church itself is impressive, and one cannot help but being put to shame. The first morning on leaving the Torch World Mission Center, where we were staying, we met a stream of people, mostly young, coming to the big chapel at the mission centre to participate in the morning prayer meeting. It was only 5.30 a.m. The first thing we noticed in any office, church or Christian centre was a big world map on which was marked the places each group was praying for or had its missionaries. Church is mission and mission is

church. What a world view to have for a young church! A five-day visit was long enough for us also to understand that there are difficulties and problems among Korean Christians, but it cannot erase the encouragement and the challenge the visit left us with.

We met a small house group, The Shelter, a fellowship of about 70 people who were responsible for four missionaries.

We met an early-morning prayer group for Israel - just one of the many big or small prayer groups that meet every morning in the big

Onnuri Church in Seoul.

We met a big congregation of several thousand people and we met students from the Hansarang Bible School - just to mention some of the different groups our Korean coordinators introduced us to. In all these places we were asked to talk about three things: 1) a biblical argument for Jewish mission, 2) the Messianic movement in Israel and elsewhere, and 3) what LCJE is and how to become involved in the network. Many of those we met were already involved in Jewish evangelism in one way or another and were

keen to know more about the current situation in Israel and how to coordinate their efforts with other people. Others had a burden and a love for Israel and the Jewish people and were looking for ways to translate their burden into action. Others, again, wanted to know how best to direct their prayer ministry.

Those we met already had an interest in the Jewishness of faith in Jesus the Messiah. It was however made clear to us that this was not shared by all or even most Korean Christians. Those we met had a burden that this aspect of the Church could be better known and understood among Korean Christians, and they were looking for ways to promote teaching on the Jewish roots of the Christian faith among other Korean Christians.

One morning our hosts had arranged a meeting with three journalists, one from a Christian daily newspaper, the other two from Christian magazines, of which there are many in Korea. Especially one of the journalists impressed us with his good questions afterwards. All of a sudden we found ourselves pushed aside as a discussion developed between the Koreans. And this is what it is all about: that Korean Christians among themselves relate to the questions of the role of the Jewish people, their own involvement in Jewish evangelism and the importance of the

Messianic movement for the church also in their country. When we left Seoul to return to Denmark/Israel, we had a list of people who wanted more information on either LCJE or Jewish evangelism and the Messianic movement. The need for more informative and inspirational literature on such topics became clear once more. We also had with us addresses of a few groups or individuals who already now want to become members of LCJE, to receive the Bulletin and be part of the network. Whether or not these can later on come together to form an LCJE Chapter as they have done in Japan remains to be seen. What is sure is that some of those already involved in their own ministries to the Jewish people now know of each other because our visit brought them together. They were encouraged to continue and strengthen this relationship in whatever way they see fit for their situation. Until it becomes clear how those groups can network for the sake of Jewish evangelism, our guide, Mr Chung, agreed to serve as contact person for LCJE in Korea. He is doing so in his capacity as coordinator for his own group, but through our visit he has already made contact with the other groups which expressed a wish to join the international LCJE network. In his capacity as International Coordinator Kai Kjær-Hansen over and over

underlined that the focal point of LCJE is our commitment to Jewish evangelism. When it comes to other questions concerning Israel we can have different answers and still be together in Jewish evangelism and network here. The strength of LCJE is that we do not have to agree on all details. It was also said repeatedly that LCJE is not a ministry in itself but a network that is there to serve and strengthen other ministries. It was our impression that a network would indeed enhance what is already being done for Jewish evangelism in Korea, but pushing for the formation of a Korean LCJE Chapter could prove counter-productive. It should happen only when the time is right. Until then we can wait and than God for what Korean Christians are already doing for Jewish evangelism. It is no small thing.



Professor Myungduk Choi announces that Ho-Jin has been made LCJE contact person in South Korea.

Reaching Intermarried Couples: A Marketing Plan for Messianic Congregations

By Michael Rydelnik
Professor at Moody Bible Institute

At the LCJE North America Meeting in Las Vegas, March 1995, professor Michael Rydelnik read this paper:

Introduction

Jewish people are marrying non-Jews as never before, leading to an unprecedented opportunity for the advance of the gospel among Jewish people. This assertion is based on the receptivity principle of the Church Growth movement. As initially articulated by Donald McGavran, the receptivity principle states that evangelism ought to be stressed among people groups who are most responsive to the gospel.¹

McGavran recognized that there would continue to be resistant people groups and that Missions ought only to occupy those fields until greater responsiveness developed.² However, he maintained that among some resistant groups there were population segments that were more open than the general populace.³ Efforts at evangelizing these resistant groups ought to be directed to these more responsive segments.

This leads directly to the relationship of Jewish

evangelism and intermarried couples. Jewish people who marry non-Jews seem to be more responsive to the gospel than many other elements within the Jewish community. My evidence is purely anecdotal, based on my experience in Jewish ministry for some twenty years. Consistently, Jewish people who are considering intermarriage or have actually married a non-Jew, have demonstrated a greater openness to accepting Jesus as the Messiah. This article will seek to examine the reasons for this phenomenon and suggest a marketing strategy for Messianic Congregations that wish to take advantage of this opening.

The Facts of Intermarriage
Intermarriage, a practice which formerly was rare in the Jewish community has currently become commonplace. According to a major study sponsored by the Council of Jewish Federations, fifty-two percent of Jewish men and woman who married between 1985 and 1990 have taken non-Jewish spouses. The same study found that three quarters of the children of interfaith marriages are not raised as Jews; forty-one percent are

raised in other religions, and thirty-one percent with no religion.⁴ These figures contrast sharply with the eleven percent of Jewish people who intermarried prior to 1965.⁵

Despite this movement away from intra-Jewish marriage, the majority of intermarried couples still seek to maintain some form of Jewish identity. For example, sixty-two percent of intermarried couples attend an annual Passover Seder and fifty-nine percent still light Chanukah candles.⁶ Thus, there is an unexpected phenomenon of increasing liberalization concurrent with a desire to maintain some Jewish identity.

Each branch of Judaism has taken different approaches to what is perceived as a threat to the continued existence of the Jewish Community in the United States. At a 1992 Northeast regional conference of the orthodox Rabbinical Council of America, Rabbi Walter Walzburger strongly condemned intermarriage and the enrollment of non-Jewish spouses and children of gentile mothers into synagogue life. While the RCA is seeking new ways of dealing with the problem, it

remains committed to discouraging intermarriage strongly and accepting only Gentiles that have undergone Orthodox conversion.⁷

The Conservative movement, represented by the Rabbinical Assembly, has called for new approaches to dealing with intermarriage. Rabbi Irwin Groner, in his presidential address to the assembly, said the movement's "first aim is to transform an interfaith marriage into a conversionary marriage." But "even if we cannot bring about the conversion of the non-Jewish spouse, we seek to persuade the family to affiliate with a congregation, to raise their children as Jews and to provide them with a Jewish education." Although children of non-Jewish mothers still would ultimately be required to convert to Judaism, it is the Conservative movements hope that by allowing enrollment into Jewish life and practice, non-Jewish spouses and children of non-Jewish mothers would ultimately desire to become Jews by choice.⁸

The Reform movement has opposed intermarriage but accepted intermarrieds. It generally allows non-Jewish spouses participation in synagogue life and accepts children of non-Jewish mothers as Jewish. In Reform congregations, eighty-eight percent provide some form of membership for non-Jews. With regard to

leadership, eighty-seven percent allowed participation on all or most committees, but only twenty-seven percent permitted non-Jews to serve as officers.⁹

The various approaches to dealing with intermarriage by the Jewish community reflects an uncertainty that is evident among intermarried couples as well. Many have found the balance that they desire by embracing Jesus as their Messiah in a Messianic setting. Why is it that intermarried Jewish people are more open to believing in Jesus than other segments of the Jewish community? The answer is that the same factors that caused them to intermarry, also cause greater receptivity to the gospel. This will be examined in the following section.

The Reasons for Receptivity

There are several factors which apparently cause greater receptivity to the gospel on the part of intermarried Jewish people. First of all, Jews who intermarry are more willing to break with family tradition. Although family pressure against intermarriage has lessened in recent years, there remains significant disapproval from parents and grandparents. Jews who intermarry are willing to endure this in order to follow their own conscience and convictions. McGavran noted that freedom from control is a cause of receptivity.¹⁰

Jewish people who break from the control of their family's desires with respect to intermarriage might very well be willing to do so when it comes to faith in Jesus.

Secondly, Jews who intermarry are less likely to have strong religious commitment. For example, according to the CJF study, sixty percent of those raised Reform Jews, fifty percent of those raised Conservative Jews, and twenty-five percent of those raised Orthodox, are intermarried.¹¹ It is apparent that the more liberal a Jewish person's upbringing, the more likely they are to intermarry. The rise in intermarriage is also attributed to the majority of American Jews believing that being Jewish means being part of a cultural or ethnic group not a religious group.¹² Obviously, intermarriage by Jews is directly related to loss of religious commitment.

McGavran identified religious change as a cause of receptivity.¹³ Just as the general demise of Confucianism as an active faith in China led to gospel responsiveness among the Chinese, so also, Judaism's loss of influence among American Jews is producing greater response to the gospel. Although Jews who intermarry still identify ethnically, they are affected by religious change and thus more spiritually open.

A third factor in the receptivity of intermarried

Jews is that they face special difficulties. It is common for intermarried couples to experience stress and conflict as a result of the clash of cultures within the marriage. It may be related to different communication styles or to differences in raising children.¹⁴ Whatever the cause, the stress is likely to produce greater spiritual receptivity. The Jewish partner is more willing to consider Jesus as the Messiah if worshipping Him in a culturally Jewish setting is possible. It is viewed as a satisfactory compromise for both partners. This certainly conforms to McGavran's concept that people under stress and trauma have greater receptivity.¹⁵

There certainly could be other factors which make Jewish people who intermarry more open to the Messiahship of Jesus. However, identifying the reasons is not as important as seizing the opportunity this openness creates. The following section will suggest some marketing strategies for reaching intermarried couples.

The Strategies for Outreach

The phenomenal increase in intermarriage provides a wide open door for outreach to these couples. Several messianic congregations have noted a positive response by those who have intermarried. Although various congregations have made sporadic attempts at

reaching out to these couples, no messianic congregation has yet to develop a coordinated, consistent marketing strategy.¹⁶ It is imperative for messianic congregations that wish to reach intermarrieds to become systematic and proactive in marketing for this unique segment. The following are some steps that can be taken.

Community Intermarriage Seminar

It is common for Jewish Community Centers to sponsor seminars on intermarriage. Since the basic Jewish solution to intermarriage is conversion, this is generally the emphasis of these seminars. This generally has an alienating effect on couples for whom conversion is not an option. Having noted these trends, Olive Tree Congregation of Plainview, Long Island offered a community seminar on Intermarriage. The intent was to offer a messianic solution to the issue.

The first step in holding this event was to form a team which would oversee and organize the seminar. They worked with the elders in obtaining a limited budget and proceeded to plan the seminar.

Next, the intermarriage outreach team selected a date and location for the seminar. It was decided that holding it in the congregational building

would inhibit attendance so a community meeting room in the town library was reserved instead. This neutral location would make potential attenders feel more comfortable. Furthermore, the cost for rental was only a minimal fee of \$25.

Thirdly, the team began to advertise the event. Rather than pay huge fees for major Newspaper ads, the team opted to advertise in small community papers. They also posted notices of the upcoming meeting in local stores. All advertising specified that the seminar was sponsored by "the Interfaith Committee of Olive Tree Congregation."

A fourth step was that for the month previous to the seminar the congregation held regular prayer times for the event. Furthermore, each congregant was encouraged to invite two intermarried couples to the seminar.

A fifth element in the planning was to organize a refreshment committee to provide coffee and cake after the seminar. This was done to encourage conversation and meeting new people.

Along with all this planning, the congregational leader was asked to prepare a lecture and discussion of intermarriage from a Messianic perspective. He, in turn, prepared seminar notes and a handout for attenders.

On the night of the seminar, no one knew what to expect. The community meeting room could only

hold fifty people. To insure that it would not be empty, fifteen congregants were asked to attend. Most team members felt that if the event would draw only five couples it would be a success. However, the response was far better than expected. Thirty-six came in addition to the congregations fifteen. They were composed of 18 intermarried or engaged couples. The discussion was friendly, fun, and well received. Two couples began attending the congregation regularly as a result.

It was decided that better follow-up would have enhanced the effectiveness of the seminar. Moreover, the impact would be greater if the congregation would repeat the program twice a year, a month before Chanukah/Christmas and Passover/Easter.

Direct Mail

Another messianic congregation, Joy of Israel, in Southern Connecticut, sought to minister to newly married interfaith couples via the mail. Stew Weinisch, the congregational leader at the time would comb the local newspapers for wedding announcements that were obviously intermarried. If no address was listed in the paper, the couple information was found through phone books or directory assistance. This is the letter that was sent:

Mazal Tov and

congratulations on your wedding!

We at Joy of Israel want to wish you blessings and happiness in your recent steps into matrimony.

We are aware that marriage often presents new challenges and religious concerns. These issues may even grow in importance when children come along. Then the question of how to raise the children arises. In many cases, families may choose to ignore the problem by neglecting religious instruction.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to our congregation. Joy of Israel is a congregation of both Jewish and non-Jewish people who have come to believe in the Messiah of Israel, Jesus. We offer an enriching alternative to religious dilemmas.

Enclosed is a brochure with more details regarding our congregation. Feel free to visit Joy of Israel or to call me. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding intermarriage and other religious matters.

Again, may I wish you the heartiest blessings in your new marriage.

Sincerely Yours,

Stewart Weinisch
Congregational Leader

Although this approach did not receive a very strong response, it is not because of ineffectiveness. Rather, it failed to address the issue it raised in the letter, namely children. Newly married couples do not have the same concerns in this area as do new parents. To deal with this issue, different letters should have been sent regularly (2-3 times per year) for up to five years. This would have given time for children to be born, and perhaps elicited greater response. Children in intermarriages have a way of eliciting religious interest in their parents.

Advertising

Advertising in local papers is an effective way to establish the identity of a messianic congregation as a home for intermarried partners. It is not always necessary to pay for the ads, For example, in Essex County, New Jersey the local paper invited Beth Messiah Congregation of Livingston, NJ to write an article about intermarried couples at the congregation. The headline read, "Intermarried Couples Find a Home a Beth Messiah" and the article detailed the experience of intermarried couples who found harmony at Beth Messiah. Although some in the Jewish community objected to the

content, several intermarried couples came to investigate.

If a congregation desires to focus on these couples, it would be wise to commit some of the congregations resources to advertising the special programs designed for intermarrieds. It should also pursue free coverage as the Livingston congregation did.

Programming

Messianic congregations can not only attempt to draw intermarried couples, they must also seek to meet their special needs with appropriate programming. One programming suggestion is to offer counseling for the unique difficulties that intermarrieds face.

A second programming suggestion is to provide small group Bible studies specially designed for intermarriage issues. Subjects such as unity in Messiah, raising children, dealing with family, and understanding culture, to name a few, can help intermarrieds cope with their problems. These Bible studies would also be excellent as a follow-up for those who attend intermarriage seminars.

Since intermarrieds continue to participate in Jewish Holy Day observance, programming should also include holiday services which include both Jews and non-Jews as active participants. Another programming suggestion is

to have the children's program specifically address the concerns of growing up in a mixed household.

Finally, messianic congregations ought to facilitate an atmosphere conducive to accepting intermarried couples. The worship services and messages should regularly address the unity, harmony, and peace that Messiah brings. Care should be given not to make services excessively heavy in traditional Jewish liturgy so as not to alienate non-Jewish spouses. Equal participation by Jews and non-Jews should be pursued aggressively.

The only word of caution to congregations is that they should be careful to apply the plan comprehensively because a sporadic approach will not be as effective.

Whether it is through community seminars, direct mail, advertising, or programming designed for intermarrieds, the ultimate aim must remain clear. That is to enable intermarried couples find the peace and harmony they seek by uniting them through faith in Jesus, the Messiah of Israel and the world.

Conclusion

Shortly after I left seminary and entered into leadership of a Columbus, Ohio messianic congregation, I met Don and Leslie. They had been engaged for two years and had delayed

getting married because they were uncertain of how to work out their prospective intermarriage. Don, a Jewish computer programmer, and Leslie, a Catholic medical technician, sensed they would have family difficulties if they were to go through with their wedding.

At a friend's suggestion, they decided to visit Beth Messiah to see if the Messianic faith could unite their prospective marriage. They both became regular attenders. Within two months Don had trusted in Messiah; at six months Leslie had as well. They became the first couple I ever married. Today they have a solid marriage with two kids and a strong testimony as a believing couple.

As I look back on this true story, I recognize that Don and Leslie's experience did not come about because of any strategic plan on my part. But it would not be accurate to view their story as a random event either. Rather, it demonstrates that messianic congregations are uniquely capable of reaching intermarried couples. If these congregations can serve intermarrieds without a marketing plan, how much greater success can they have if they apply an effective one.

Notes

1. See McGavran' *Understanding Church Growth*, third edition, revised by C. Peter Wagner, 1990, pp. 179-92, for a full discussion of the receptivity principle.
2. McGavran, pp. 190-91
3. McGavran specified Muslims when making this assertion, but it would be true of other resistant people groups as well, cf. p. 189.
4. Council of Jewish Federation 1990 National Jewish Population Study, cited in "The Intermarrying Kind," NEWSWEEK, July 22, 1991, pp. 48-49.
5. Cited by Stewart Ain, "Reaching Intermarrieds" in THE JEWISH WEEK, January 10-16, 1992, pp. 4, 36.
6. Cited by Stewart Ain,

"Jews in the U.S." in THE JEWISH WEEK, p. 3.

7. Meryl Ain, "Re-examine Intermarriage, Orthodox Rabbis Urged," in THE JEWISH WEEK, Feb. 7-13, 1992, p. 4.

8. Jonathan Mark, "Deal with Intermarriage, Conservative rabbis told" in THE JEWISH WEEK, May 3-9, 1991, pp. 4, 43.

9. Nina Mizrahi, "Non-Jews in the Synagogue" in REFORM JUDAISM, Summer, 1992, pp. 5-8

10. McGavran, p. 186.

11. "The Intermarrying Kind," p. 49.

12. David Firestone, "Most Jews Marrying Non-Jews" in NEWSDAY, June 7, 1991, p. 4.

13. McGavran, p. 185.

14. Judy Petsonk and Jim Remsen, *The Intermarriage Handbook: A Guide for Jews and Christians*, Quill, 1988, pp. 85-104 gives an overview of potential culture clashes which includes issues of childrearing.

15. McGavran discusses the trauma produced by conquest. Nevertheless, as he says, "a traumatic experience...has great meaning for church growth," p. 183.

16. Marketing for religious organizations should not be viewed as shifty sales techniques but rather as "meeting needs profitably." For further study of this very responsible approach, see, Norman Shawchuck, Philip Kotler, Bruce Wrenn, Gustave Rath, *Marketing for Congregations*, Abingdon, 1992.

Booklets

Everybody has praised the high quality of the papers, Bible expositions and reports at the *Jerusalem 95* conference.

It is still possible to get the five conference booklets, altogether 264 pages. It is a unique collection of material for further study and reflection.

The price per set is USD 18 (+ postage).

For more than 10 sets: USD 12 per set (+ postage).

Please indicate whether you want it sent by Prioritaire or Economique mail.

Please order from

Caspari Center, P.O. Box 116, Jerusalem 91000, Israel. Fax + 972 2 251 933

Mission Impossible?

In a major article in *In Jerusalem* – a Sabbath supplement to *The Jerusalem Post* – Gail Lichtman reports, on 26 May 1995, on mission in Israel and the danger of it. One of her sources is Judy Ze'evi, director of Yad L'Achim's antimissionary activities: "For 40 years we have been active against missionaries. And believe me, it is a real danger. All of us are potential targets."

Another source is Torah Foundation founder Mordechai Israel, "whose organization is currently conducting more than 60 investigations into missionary activity around the country". On the so-called "antimissionary" law passed by the Knesset in 1976 (Penal Amendment – Enticement to Change Religion) he says: "... the law has never been successfully upheld and the police don't even want to bother opening files ... This law has no teeth. It has never once been used even when the sums of money been found to have changed hands ..."

Also Shmuel Golding, director of the Jerusalem Institute of Biblical Polemics, and Dr Joshua Adler, the dean of the same institute, are quoted.

Below we quote the last part of the article where Mordechai Israel describes his own organization and its methods.

"First, I document and prove the case. I have a team of investigators. We make both video and audio tapes. I know how to prepare a case. I had 120 people working for me," Israel states. "Then I notify all the neighbors that Mr X is a missionary. I put letters in the mailboxes. I cannot be sued because I have documentation," he continues.

"I then go to the employer and ask that the missionary be fired. I've done this in half a dozen instances. One missionary worked in a fruit store in Mea She'arim. I had a thick file on him. I confronted the owner with the information. He said he didn't want to fire this man. I then asked if he had a kashrut certificate. I told him a complaint would be filed with Beth Din that the produce was not kosher. I said there would be protests outside his store. He fired the missionary. I bring peer pressure to bear," Israel avers.

"We've been extremely effective. We have a proven track record. We never close a file on a missionary. They will all be brought to justice.

"We have many sources in Jerusalem and around the country. Reports come to us constantly. We are now drawing up a veritable who's who list of missionaries," he concludes.

"Christian missionaries are winning souls because secular education in this country teaches our children nothing about Judaism," Adler claims. "Our secular education system has created a spiritual vacuum into which Christian missionaries come with their message of the New Testament. These kids are brainwashed with a few verses."

Mordechai Israel.

Mission Impossible? – Reactions

The article elicited an overwhelming response. Here are two letters to the Editor by LCJE related persons; the letters were printed in *In Jerusalem*, 9 June 1995.

On The Missionary Trail ...
As a Danish Christian and theologian on sabbatical leave in Jerusalem, I am challenged by Torah Mitzvah Foundation founder Mordechai Israel's methods. I would like to add the following to *Mission Impossible?* (IJ March 26), pretending I were an anti-Semite in Denmark using Mr Israel's methods and terminology:

* I and 120 people make video and audio tapes of the Jews, especially Danish converts to Judaism. I notify all the neighbors that Mr X is a Jew. I put letters in mailboxes.

* On several occasions I have gone to X's employers and asked that the Jew be fired. In one instance the employer didn't want to fire the Jew. I told him that there would be protests outside his store. He then fired the Jew.

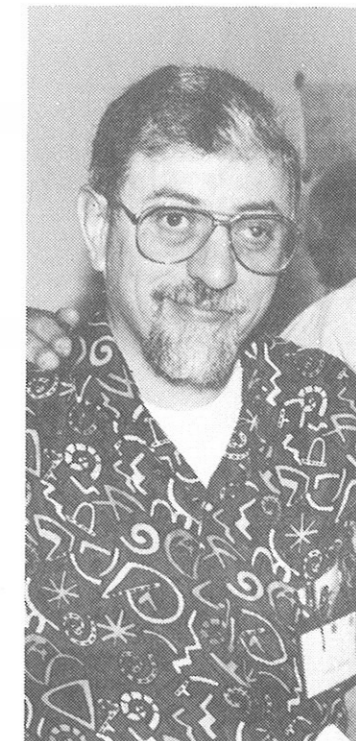
* I have been extremely effective. We never close a file on a Jew. They will all be brought to justice. We are now drawing up a veritable who's who list of Jews in Denmark.

Now I am *not* Mordechai Israel. If I were acting like him in my country, I would be brought to court. In my country it is against the law to fire people on religious grounds. Is that really allowed in Israel, the only

democratic country in the Middle East?

Does Israeli law allow someone like Mordechai Israel to incite an employer to fire a worker on religious grounds? And even if it is within the law, is it in the spirit of the declaration of independence?

Dr Kai Kjær-Hansen



Joseph Shulam, then Coordinator for LCJE Israel.

Mission Impossible? reflects a religious prejudice and bad taste reminiscent of the dark days of the Spanish Inquisition.

In a democratic country, anyone who confessed that he or his organisation "go to the employer and ask that the missionary be fired" and threaten to take away his kashrut certificate, would be considered to have committed criminal action. If the Israeli population stands silent and does not reprimand such attitudes and actions, this dark spirit will not stop with Christians and Messianic Jews.

Zionist Christians and Messianic Jews have a great love and support of the Jewish people and the State of Israel. The people and organisations who fight against Messianic Jews and call for vigilante action ought not to imagine that their cause is a blessing. Much to our regret, there are still anti-Semitic Christians in the world. When they read articles like this their hate towards all Jews is fuelled. I appeal to Jews everywhere not to allow the same prejudice and hate that we have suffered for so many centuries to become our daily bread in the Land of Israel.

Joseph Shulam

New Beginnings in Australia

By Lawrence Hirsch

Theodor Herzl was a man who dared to dream of something new. This giant of a man who lived from 1860 to 1904 dared to dream of the reestablishment of a Jewish State when his peers, religious leaders and fellow Jews scorned the idea as ridiculous. His tireless and unwavering work for which he had so much passion drove him into an early grave just nine years after he had begun. However, the State of Israel was born forty-four years later and what Herzl dared to dream came true. New beginnings can be hard.

Celebrate Messiah Australia also has a dream! A dream to see the Gospel of Messiah Jesus shared with Jewish people in Melbourne and also the other major centres around Australia. This dream, of sharing Jesus with our Jewish people, had been placed on our hearts by the Holy Spirit not long after Louise and I came to faith.

For five years between 1989 and 1994, my wife and I worked with Jews for Jesus in the city of Johannesburg, South Africa. Our time with Jews for Jesus was the most valuable and exhilarating experience who could have hoped for. During the most crucial period of the history

of that country, in the events leading up to the birth of the New South Africa, over two-hundred Jewish people came to faith in Jesus.

One year ago, Louise and I returned from South Africa to take up that dream that God placed on our hearts years before, to share the Gospel with Jewish people in Melbourne. We have been joined by another Jewish believer and his wife, Gavin

and Rachel Brown in this new venture. This year, Celebrate Messiah, was able to be very useful training, especially for Gavin, and now he is far more equipped as we go out and do street evangelism in strategic areas around the city.

Our ministry involves personal, evangelistic visits, street evangelism, evangelistic presentations and we also plan to plant a



Celebrate MESSIAH



Lawrence Hirsch, Melbourne, Australia

Celebrate Messiah is a new LCJE agency member. Its leader, Lawrence Hirsch, has become new LCJE Coordinator for Australia \ New Zealand.

messianic congregation. The beginnings of a congregation has been initiated with a regular Friday night fellowship. Currently 20% of the regular attendants are Jewish. Obviously our objectives are to increase this percentage as we do more evangelism.

In recent times, the number of Jewish people in Melbourne has dramatically increased with the flood of Russian Jewish immigrants.

We estimate that there are now 65,000 Jewish people in Melbourne. Yet, we know of only around fifty Jewish believers (about 1%). This represents an unreachd people group right in our own backyard. **It is evident that the people who took the Gospel to the nations of the world almost two thousand years ago need the Gospel of the Messiah brought back to them.**

Who are we to take on such

a mammoth task? Just ordinary people wanting to be available and obedient. I think that too many people are so concerned about being successful that they fail to be obedient. We should fear disobedience more than we fear failure. It is true that God calls us to obedience, not necessarily to success.

Would you pray with us to see this dream become a reality for the glory of God.

MEETINGS

LCJE Europe

The next meeting to be held by the European LCJE chapter will be in Germany, 28-30 October, 1996. More details later.

LCJE North America

The next North American LCJE meeting will be in Chicago, 15-17 April 1996.

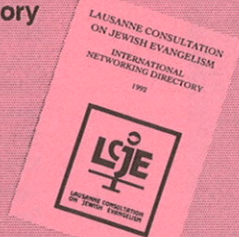
The Messianic Connection!

Messianic Jewish identity... gentile Christianity and Messianic Judaism... the gospel of Messiah and the Jewish people... these and related issues facing the Christian all covered in the only theological journal of its kind...

MISHKAN

Subscriptions and information available from: MISHKAN, P.O.B. 116, Jerusalem 91000, Israel

International Networking Directory



Additional copies may be ordered from LCJE's International Office, Denmark. Price US \$ 10 + postage (Europe, Prioritaire: \$ 4, Economique: \$ 3; Outside Europe, Prioritaire: \$ 6, Economique: \$ 5). Please state whether you want it sent as a Prioritaire or an Economique letter.