



**LAUSANNE  
CONSULTATION  
ON JEWISH  
EVANGELISM**

**President:** Bishop 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. Fax: +61 03-98192437. e-mail: cmessiah@ozemail.com.au

**Europe:** Rev. John Ross, Christian Witness to Israel, 166 Main Road, Sundridge, Sevenoaks, Kent TN14 6EL, United Kingdom. Fax: +44 1959 565966. e-mail: johnoaks@msn.com

**Israel:** Mr. Arthur Goldberg, R. Emek Ayalon 26/1, Modeiin, 71700 Israel. Fax +972 8 9720670 e-mail: azgold@actcom.co.il

**Japan:** Rev. Kenichi Nakagawa, c/o Harvest Center, Susono City, Shizuoka Ken, Japan 410-11. e-mail: fwke4580@infoweb.ne.jp

**North America:** Rev. Fred Klett, Box 133, Glenside, PA, 19038, USA. e-mail: LCJE-NA@juno.com

**South America:** Rev. Peter Clarke, Pedro Morán 4414, 1419 Buenos Aires, Argentina. Fax: +54 1501 4629

**South Africa:** Mr. Eliyah Gould, Jews for Jesus/South Africa, P.O. Box 1996, Parklands 2121 Johannesburg, South Africa. Fax: +27 880 7732. e-mail: jfjsa@iafrica.com

**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  
e-mail: lcje-int@post3.tele.dk

**Directory Information:** Perlman, P.O. Box 424885, San Francisco, CA. 94142-4885, USA. Tel: (415) 864-2600  
Fax: (415) 552-8325. e-mail: supersu1@aol.com



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## LCJE New York 99

In April 1927 no less than two conferences on Jewish evangelism were held, one in Budapest and one in Warsaw. Many new possibilities for the work of the missions were presented for further discussion. Professor Frederik Torm, then chairman of the Danish Israel Mission, took part in the Budapest conference. On his return he wrote about the discussions which had taken place. He concludes his article about this with some reflections which are relevant for Jewish evangelism as well as for all other mission. Professor Torm wrote:

"But of course all participants fully realized that our discussions would only be of value and be blessed if the Lord himself would pour out richly his Spirit on his church and in it awaken a love for Jewish evangelism. One did not forget to emphasize that without spiritual power everything would be futile and that the fullness of the Spirit would only come about through prayer and humbling of oneself. Everything depends on whether or not the workers and friends of the mission are willing to walk that road."

Enclosed with this issue of the LCJE Bulletin is the program for the Sixth International LCJE Conference, which is held in New York, 12-17 August 1999. The countdown has begun - for our conference on the eve of the third millennium.

As in connection with the previous international conferences we do not spend large sums on producing brightly coloured programs to attract attention to this conference.

As leaders we need each other. We need to remind each other about the commitment, about the challenges, about cooperation, and about humility in Jewish evangelism.

In the program it appears that there is room for quite a lot of interaction from the audience in connection with the papers (unlike our last conference in Jerusalem, someone might say). And it is true for this - as for all other conferences - that the important things are not just those which are said in plenary sessions; it is also important to use the intervals for informal talks and mutual inspiration.

The countdown for LCJE New York has begun. Please do what you can to make it known.

*Kai Kjær-Hansen*

## Jesus and Hanukkah

It was the feast of the Dedication at Jerusalem ... Jesus was walking in the temple ... the Jews gathered round him and said to him ... "If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly" (John 10:22-24).

What is happening here? Jesus is in the temple; there is nothing particularly surprising in that. It is not his mere presence that provokes the interest of the people, and the hostility of their leaders, but the content of his teaching.

Before the reference to Hanukkah, Jesus is teaching about himself as the Good Shepherd. After the reference to the feast, he continues to talk about sheep, and about his own flock. It is reasonable to suppose that it is this teaching which produces the strong reaction.

The occasion adds a special dimension to the teaching. The festival of Hanukkah commemorates a deliverance of the Jewish people from an oppressive foreign power. Although Judas the Maccabee did not see himself as a messianic figure, what he achieved was one factor in the creation of the popular image of the messiah as a political deliverer.

The shepherd is a "comfortable" figure to most of us, particularly if we know little about the realities of caring for the sheep! Psalm 23 presents this image: God is a shepherd who provides for his sheep, and protects them from danger. However, there is a more challenging side to the image.

What did those who were listening to Jesus think when they heard him speak of himself as the Good Shepherd? The caring image drawn from Psalm 23 would have undoubtedly been one aspect of their thinking. If they thought of the stories about David killing a lion and a bear they would have also realised the dangers of being a shepherd. More than this, however, they would have thought of the words of Ezequiel (chapter 34) about the shepherds of Israel. Ezequiel condemns leaders who had failed in the responsibility which they had received from God, leaders who were corrupt, leaders who had put their own interests before those of the people. God condemns them, and says that he himself will be the shepherd of Israel.

Indirectly, Jesus is making a claim to authority, to a right to leadership. More than this, he is claiming an authority which God himself has promised to assume. He is challenging the authority of the leaders of his own day. It is not surprising that he aroused their enmity by speaking of his own sheep, those who hear his voice, and follow him. They are his sheep, and the Father's also: "*I and the Father are one.*" The claim to divine authority implicit in the earlier verses becomes clear, and the record continues, through the story of Lazarus, to further opposition, and the death and resurrection of the true Messiah.

At Hanukkah, we should do well to spend our energies in matters concerning him, who he is, and what he has done for us, rather than a sparsely documented miracle!

*Peter Clarke*

## Hear, O Israel!

By Joann Cooper, Trans World Radio - Europe

The piercing sound of the shofar introduces a unique radio program with a fascinating history. *Kol HaYeshua—Voice of Salvation*—launched on 1 August 1998, is a joint effort of Messianic Jews in Israel and European and North American Gentile Christians. Produced in Israel, the daily 30-minute Hebrew program is aired by missionary broadcaster Trans World Radio from a powerful medium wave (AM) transmitter in Central Asia. The signal from this transmitter covers the entire nation of Israel, as well as surrounding areas.

### The Land

Throughout history, Israel—like no other place on earth—has captured the imaginations and emotions of king and commoner alike. Today, Israel continues to exercise great influence in world events. Part of Israel's mystique is that she and her people are key players in God's divine plan for mankind. According to Scripture, the pinnacle of the human story took place on a Cross on a Jerusalem hillside. The closing scenes will resolve in an Israeli valley.

This small parcel of land lies in the 'cradle of civilization' that gave birth to three world religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. All three claim rights to the land God promised to Abraham, thus sparking emotions which can flare unexpectedly or brood for generations.

A vast array of diverse cultures and religions inhabit Israel's 28,251 square kilometers. Within the population of 4.5 million there are religious Jews, secular and atheist Jews, Muslims, Druze, Baha'i, Catholics, Orthodox (Greek [Monophysite]), Anglicans, Protestants, and Messianic Jews (Hebrew Christians).

### Messianic Jews

The Messianic Jewish movement in Israel—which includes approximately 5,000 believers in 50 known congregations—reflects the richness and variety of Christian and Jewish history. Representing less than one-half percent of Israel's population, Messianic Jews show genuine love and unity in their desire to reach out to fellow Jews. Many, however, are becoming increasingly

concerned with the challenges facing their ministry to Israeli Jews.

Because of the increasing restrictions for ministry within Israel, Trans World Radio (TWR) is in a unique position to facilitate the on-going work of Israeli believers by broadcasting the Good News of Yeshua Messiah from outside the turmoil.

### Trans World Radio

Established in 1954, international broadcaster Trans World Radio broadcasts more than 1,200 hours of Christian programming weekly in over 140 languages. These programs, all but a few of which are produced in-country by nationals, are broadcast from 12 primary transmitting sites and by satellite to three continents. Each year more than 1.4 million letters are received from listeners in over 160 countries in response to the programs.

TWR has a rich history of broadcasting to the complex, volatile, yet intriguing, Middle East. The first Hebrew broadcasts went on the air in 1966. There were other efforts on and off through the years, most of them

broadcast by shortwave and with little or no response from Israel itself. The last Hebrew shortwave transmissions to Israel were discontinued in March 1996 because independent research had shown a sharply declining use of shortwave receivers, except by Russian- and English-speaking immigrants. Additional research, on the other hand, had revealed that a significant number of Israelis tune in daily to medium wave (AM) radio.

Thus, a year before the shortwave broadcasts would end, Trans World Radio and Messianic groups began exploring ways to work together to produce and air a nightly program on an AM band that would cover the whole country of Israel with a strong signal.

### Joining Hands for Israel

While the Messianic Jews in Israel looked for speakers and follow-up personnel, TWR began modifying the transmitter in Central Asia to reach and cover Israel, and sought sponsorship for the new Hebrew ministry.

Three years later—on the first day of August 1998—the result of this joint effort, *Kol HaYeshua*, burst onto the airwaves. It can be heard across Israel nightly at 10 p.m. (Israeli time) on the frequency 1350 kHz.

Netivvah Bible Instruction Ministry, a Messianic organization in Jerusalem directed by Joseph Shulam, oversees the production of



From the Jerusalem studio where the *Kol Ha Yeshua* programmes are produced

*Kol HaYeshua*. Speakers for this unique initiative are Messianic Jewish leaders who display a passion to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to fellow Israelis in a culturally relevant and engaging manner. Various Israeli Messianic Jewish leaders and artists contribute messages and music.

Scripts radiate Israeli Jewish culture. One program includes a biblical series from the Book of Daniel, which presents "the God of Israel as the loving Father of the Jewish people." Another surveys current events and Orthodox Jewish themes to "introduce Jesus as the Messiah and Prince of Peace." Still another explores the Messiah in Talmudic literature.

The broadcasts are also personal. One features interviews with Israeli believers as they share how Jesus became their personal Savior and how He could

become Israel's Redeemer, too. All program production, promotion, and listener follow-up work is being handled by Messianic congregations in Israel.

Support for the broadcast has come from TWR partners or affiliates in Europe and North America. When *Kol HaYeshua* began, there were only enough funds to air the program through the end of 1998. Though a few new sponsors have come onboard since then, more committed funds are needed to keep the project going.

### Commendations

Strongly supporting the broadcast is Ole Chr. M. Kvarme, president of the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism. He explains: "In our relations with Jewish people it is important that we take as a starting point the face that God's message of salvation

## Trans World Radio

Broadcasting the Gospel worldwide

was first expressed in word and deed on Jewish soil, in Jewish dress. But we also need to take seriously that the Christian Church carries a heavy, historical burden of anti-Jewish attitudes."

Kvarme adds, "For these reasons it is today compelling that we share the Good News with Jewish people is such a way that they experience its Jewish flavor and sense a genuine love for the Jewish people. This is very much what the *Kol HaYeshua* project and its Messianic Jewish co-workers want to do. Therefore, this project and the current efforts of Trans World Radio to reach out to Jewish people deserve our support and our prayers."

Dr. Daniel Juster, director of Tikkun Ministries, a Messianic Jewish ministry, readily endorses the *Kol HaYeshua* program. 'Tikkun' means return or restoration in Hebrew, referring to Israel's physical and spiritual restoration. "How exciting to have a Messianic Jewish radio broadcast to Israel, especially one which puts forth capable exposition of the Word of God and shows forth the meaning of Yeshua, Jesus, the Messiah!" Dr. Juster says. "The Jewish biblical context for more accurate understanding for all will certainly be a significant part of this broadcast."

Well-known American author Max Lucado says, "Any effort to reach the nation of Israel with the

grace of Christ deserves our attention—*Kol HaYeshua* is one of these."

Also commending the broadcast is Dr. John McRay, professor of New Testament and Archeology, Wheaton College Graduate School in Wheaton, Illinois, USA. "I am personally excited and encouraged by the announcement of the creation of the *Kol HaYeshua* radio broadcast. It will be a significant step toward alleviating some tensions that have long existed between the Jewish and non-Jewish seed of Abraham. More significantly, it will be a voice for God, broadcasting over an extensive geographical area the love of God manifested in the Good News of *Yeshua ha Meshiah*, to the people who gave Him to the world."

#### Listener Response

A phone call from Tel Aviv went down in history as the first response to *Kol HaYeshua*. It was the beginning of what is now daily response from listeners all across Israel. That first caller said: "It is a very important step to start this broadcast. Since I am blind, it is the only way to hear more about the Messiah. I am very happy to listen to you. Speaking about love and understanding between Arabs and Jews and showing how to love each other in the love of Yeshua is important. Only in Him is the solution for the relationship between Arabs and Jews.

Be brave and bold to speak more about Yeshua and His goodness to bring salvation to the people of Israel!"

Not all listeners are so positive; some calls have come from 'the opposition.' However, the program producers are delighted with the response they are receiving to the new program. Feedback is coming from listeners in many different parts of Israel, most of whom are grateful for *Kol HaYeshua*, or want to know more about Christianity. When the latter happens—as in the case of an invalid man who asked for more information about faith in Jesus—they refer the seeker to local believers who contact him.

In a recent report on the listener response, one of the *Kol HaYeshua* producers ended with these words: "From all this, we know that our programs are heard and that people are responding. Shalom from Jerusalem!"

*Shalom*—this is the reason believers from different ethnic and geographical backgrounds and varied areas of expertise have come together to produce *Kol HaYeshua*. It is our desire that God's Chosen People will hear and know the true peace that can be found in Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

*Hear the Word of the Lord, O house of Jacob, all you clans of the house of Israel!* (Jeremiah 2:41).

## ANOTHER VOICE BY AN ANTI-MISSIONARY: AND A SEEMING EVANGELICAL CONCURRENCE

By Louls Goldberg, Th.D., Scholar in Residence, Jews for Jesus, New York

With the presence of so many Messianic Jews in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a number of Jewish people have written essays and books, counteracting the claims of Messianic Jews, insisting we are no longer Jews and that our beliefs are in sharp contrast to the Jewish positions.

One such book was written by Michoual Drazin, *Their Hollow Inheritance: A Comprehensive Refutation of Christian Missionaries* (Safed Israel: G. N. Publications, 1990, distributed by Feldheim Publishers, Spring Valley, NY 10977).

Our objective in this paper is not to counteract all the arguments Drazin uses in every chapter, but rather be selective with his assertions concerning the "son of G-d" myth (chapter 6) and sin and atonement (chapter 12). At the same time, we will also note that some evangelicals are also present today, who while not engaging in outright denial of basic Biblical theology, waffle on specifics concerning interpretation of key Messianic passages, and also raise questions on the deity of the Messiah, and His atonement.

#### The "Son of G-d" Myth of Chapter 6

*Proverbs 30:4*  
Drazin's intends to demolish



this concept of Yeshua as "the Son of God," and tackles first the Proverbs 30:4 passage as to who is this person on every line of this verse. In a chapter riddled with enigmas, Agur asked one of the most difficult of all and Drazin responds as to why ask for his name. For example, "Does any adult not know the Creator's Name in his own language?"<sup>1</sup> But, granting that G-d is indeed the subject, he then suggests that many candidates can be the "son," as for example, King Solomon, (1 Chron. 22:9, 10), the angels (Job 1:6), David (Ps. 2:7), Israel (Ex. 4:22) and so on. Drazin observes, however, in none of these proposals do we note a "son of G-d" in the familial sense: "Each merely enjoyed a special relationship to G-d, like

those called 'sons' in the New Testament, as for example, where peacemakers are called the sons of G-d" (Matt. 5:9).

But this spokesman for Judaism misses the entire point of the argument. The subject of the passage describes God involved in the creation but none of the suggestions Drazin offers is the son involved in the creation process. Interestingly, wisdom is the one involved in the creation (Prov. 8:22 ff), "I was there when he set the heavens in place," (vs. 27), and a case can be made for the mysterious individual, Yeshua, related organically to the person of God, as present and involved in the creation. At least that makes more sense than what Drazin suggests.

#### A Further Comment on the Jewish Explanation of Proverbs 30:4

From the Jewish point of view, this passage in Proverbs is also a difficult one. With the passage set before the reader:

"Who has gone up to heaven and come down?  
Who has gathered up the wind in the hollow of His hands?  
Who has wrapped up the waters in His cloak?  
Who has established all the ends of the earth?"

What is His name, and the name of His son? ..." - Prov. 30:4

One popular response has been:<sup>2</sup>

- 30:4a Refers to Moses
- 30:4b Refers to Aaron
- 30:4c Referring to Elijah's act
- 30:4d Father Abraham
- 30:4e What is his name, referring to the Lord, the Warrior - Lord is his name (Ex. 15:3)
- 40:4f and the name of his son, of Israel, as it is said, Israel is my first born son (Ex. 4:22)."

Rosenberg follows Rashi in his interpretation,<sup>3</sup> who suggested that Proverbs 30:4a-d refers to Moses, while the last two lines, 30:4e and f, is interpreted by Rashi as a poetic device, "If there was anyone like him, tell me his name, or, if you have forgotten his name, tell me his son's name, if you know there was ever one like him." But more important, because of the increasingly strong rabbinical emphasis that God is unique and the only one because of the deanthromorphizing effort, the interpretation of the Proverbs passage could not have any mysterious enigma in it whereby God has a son in any ontological sense.

#### *Yeshua Never Saw Himself as Deity*

Most interesting is Drazin's observation: "Jesus never proclaimed himself Divine, nor did he instruct his followers to worship him. It is obvious that he knew himself to be nothing more than a mere mortal being,"<sup>4</sup> and he cites a number of passages where Jesus is seen in His sole humanity; Jesus did not know the day or the hour concerning the inception of the kingdom (Matt. 24:36); the rich young ruler had addressed Jesus as good teacher and his reply was why did he call him good because no one is good except God alone (Mark 10:17-18); to sit at Yeshua's right or left hand was not his to grant but only for those for whom it had been prepared (Mark 10:40); and finally, He died as any human being (Mark 15:34), citing Psalm 22:1, where He asked God why he was being forsaken.

Why Did Yeshua Take the Title, Son of Man? -- A good question can be asked why Yeshua took the title "Son of Man" at the inception of His ministry. Drazin does not seem to relate to any knowledge of a New Testament theology, examining reasons as to why Yeshua insisted upon his humanity at the inception of his ministry and then what he attempted to do through His teaching and works. Never does this advocate of Judaism relate to Yeshua's

motive in his teaching ministry in the Sermon on the Mount: For example, on a number of occasions, God had communicated to the fathers in the past; but several times, Yeshua declared, "I say to you." (Matthew 5:22, 27, 31, 33, 38). Did rabbis ever use such a formula, "I say to you!" Teaching is a compendium, combining the best of what rabbis, current and deceased, have said about a particular subject. No wonder the people immediately picked on this formula, declaring at the end of the Sermon, "He taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law" (Matt. 7:29).

In his teaching, Yeshua demonstrated He is more than a mere human being, but never does Drazin relate to his works which mark Yeshua with a mysterious element about him, as when He demonstrated his control over nature (Matt. 8:26), His control over the unseen world, even the demons (Matt. 8:30), His power to forgive sin (Matt. 9:2, 4-6), and His power to bring the twelve year old girl back to life again, indicating His display his power over life and death (Matt. 9:25). In all of these self-attesting signs, He demonstrated He was doing the work of God; in particular, the raising of the girl back to life again was not the only occasion of calling anyone back from the dead. The son of the widow (Luke 7:14) and Lazarus

(John 11:43, 44) were also raised from the dead, with witnesses present to publicly testify to his acts and mystery about him. In all of these self-attesting signs, Yeshua demonstrated that He indeed is more than human. He is also deity and everyone understood there is something mysterious and unique about who He is.

#### Yeshua's Challenge to His Disciples as to His Identity

-- Finally, Yeshua asked His disciples on one occasion as to what people thought of Him and they suggested a number of individuals, John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or even one of the prophets. Upon further challenge by Yeshua, Shimon Bar Yonah asserted, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God" (Matt. 16:16). Because of Yeshua's teaching and deeds, it had already been impressed upon the disciples that he indeed is not only human but also "the Son of God" or, deity.

Yeshua never went around announcing on every occasion that He is divine, but He left no question mark in the minds of people who really desired to know that He is indeed someone unusual, in a mystery, deity. Drazin never considers this facet of examining carefully Yeshua's teaching and deeds, the purpose in it, and why He had a large following of Jewish people.

After the Resurrection and when the disciples had

already met with Yeshua on one occasion, the Messiah appeared again and singling out Thomas, He asked him to put forth his hands to examine His own body to see he was none other than the Messiah Himself. Obviously, Thomas did not dare do so but declared instead, "My Lord and My God" (John 20:28). Yeshua never rebuked him for what would be considered the height of blasphemy; instead, the Messiah commended him but said further that many in the future would not be able to see Yeshua with their own eyes but would be blessed simply because they reached the same conclusions by believing in the account itself.

This writer has a saying that the Jewish people of Yeshua's day indeed saw many of the deeds He did and heard many of the great lessons He taught. Instead of believing what they had heard and seen, they argued as to his identity and thereby missed the entire point concerning Yeshua as both human and divine. And in most instances, the same response occurs today. But, Drazin does not consider seriously this testimony of the New Covenant regarding the deeds and message of Yeshua.

#### Questions as to the Deity from An Evangelical Source?

While we can expect Drazin to seriously question the deity of Yeshua from of his

background, what can one say concerning a statement by Brad Young, an evangelical, in his recent book, *Jesus the Jewish Theologian* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1995, xvi + 308 pp., n.p.). The work explores the Jewish backgrounds of Yeshua the Messiah, setting the record straight that to properly understand his life and ministry, He must be examined from within the context of Jewish history, culture and thought. His book joins a number of other volumes by Christians and Israeli Jews who seek to rectify the dejudaising trend in Christendom and bring Jesus back to his Jewish roots.

But difficulties surface when Young overlooks facets Yeshua taught that mark Him as unique, for which no parallel exists in Jewish sources. In Peter's great confession (Matt. 16:16), Young understands Peter statement, "Jesus is the Messiah of God,"<sup>5</sup> and no comment is ever suggested that this disciple actually had proclaimed that Yeshua is the Messiah, *the Son of God*, a belief for which no parallel exists in Jewish thought. In another chapter discussing whether Yeshua is human or divine, great emphasis placed on him as the son of man, who is also an elevated person, someone supernatural, one who even sits at the right hand of God, but nowhere does Young state he is also,

specifically, deity.<sup>6</sup>

Young skirts quite close to what Drazin wants as well, and when this is the case, what message from this passage will he have, as an evangelical, when sharing with Jewish peoples? The proclamation of a Biblical Christology becomes compromised.

### Sin and Atonement of Chapter 13

#### *We All Do Sin*

Drazin opens with the statement that "the Hebrew Bible does not conceal the shortcomings of Israel's greatest men and concerning mankind in general."<sup>7</sup> Certain passages underscore his assertion, as in Isa. 64:5 and Ps. 143:2. The Talmud likewise goes to great pains in innumerable passages to remind man he can fall into sin but also indicates how to avoid these detestable practices.

*Repentance and a Sacrifice*  
But then Drazin declares that "sins can be 'erased' through sincere repentance and the firm resolution never to repeat them."<sup>8</sup> While the Scripture calls upon a person to repent, but nowhere is such a notion entertained that repentance leads to atonement, even though Drazin cites passages that proclaim how God accepts the sacrifices of a broken spirit and a broken heart (Ps. 51:19); the Lord requires obedience more than sacrifice (1 Sam. 15:22); and He takes no

pleasure in the death of the wicked but that they should turn from their way (Ezek. 33:11). But these statements reflect only half the truth necessary for forgiveness of sin.

The Hebrew Scriptures are quite plain in how a atonement for sin is attained:

#### **Atonement = Repentance + the Sacrifice**

The point of the equation is that neither repentance nor sacrifice *by themselves* are sufficient for God's forgiveness of sin. The last voice of the Sophrim of the men of the great synagogue, Shimon HaZaddik at about 200 B.C.E., made the following statement:

"By three things is the world sustained: by the Law (Torah), by the [Temple-]service (sacrifices), and by deeds of loving-kindness."

-- Pirke Avot 1:2<sup>9</sup>

Shimon understood quite well the Biblical picture of what atonement necessitated: Repentance of wrongdoing, as well the need for covering sins, cared for through the sin offering.

Drazin does admit that "during the first and second Commonwealths, there was an additional form of atonement, which relatively few sins required. This was the offering of an animal sacrifice on the Temple altar. Since the destruction of the Second Temple, however, sincere repentance alone has secured total expiation."<sup>10</sup>

#### *The Decision by the Council of Yavneh*

The answer for this statement is found among the decisions by the Council of Yavneh which met between 70-90 C.E. Primarily, the crisis affecting mainline Judaism was what would be the worship experience of Judeans without its main sanctuary. At this council meeting, realizing that something had gone awry with the Mosaic covenant, the leading architect, Yohanan Ben Zakkai, then restructured Judaism into a religion with no substitute atonement. Traditional belief and practice would now teach that atonement for sin was by means of self effort. But this decision also became a direct challenge vis-a-vis the testimony that Yeshua's death is the basis for atonement for sin.

Some subsequent statements concerning this self-utilization are indicated: Atonement is now possible through the study of Torah,

"The very study of the passages that commanded and detailed the sacrifices in the Torah came to be regarded as a *substitute* for their performance (*Pesitka de Rab Kanahah 54ab*)."

"Rabbi Simeon said: 'The words of the Torah are more precious to me than burnt offerings and sacrifices.'" (*Avot de Rabbi Natan 8*).

In quick succession across the centuries rabbis

have pointed out that prayer, repentance, confession, fasting, and the service of "doing charity" or following the means of a godly lifestyle became the means of atonement,<sup>11</sup> a far cry from what Yeshua Himself said that He is the only one through whom people can come to God (John 14:6), and that He indeed "... bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness ..." (1 Pet. 2:24). Only through His death as a sin offering do we have the atonement for our sins.

#### *The Death of Jesus is Unacceptable*

But Drazin insists in a number of refutations that the death of Yeshua cannot be considered as the atonement for our sins, as made use of the New Testament Scriptures. Only a few of the arguments will be answered:<sup>12</sup>

#### Why is Jesus' Death Unique?

The first argument is why should Christians make Yeshua unique when actually he was just one of thousands crucified by the Romans. He was never any victorious world conqueror.<sup>13</sup>

In reply, while it is true that Yeshua was one of thousands crucified by the Romans during the first century, nevertheless, His death was quite unique. He had already predicted that He would be turned over to

the leaders of the nation, who in turn would turn Him over to the Gentiles to be put to death (Matt. 20:18, 19). Six or seven times Yeshua had made this announcement to His own disciples who had great difficulty listening to it; in fact, they ignored it, as any good Jew would have done in that day. Because of the peculiar way in which the Isaiah Targum chapter 53 had interpreted the Biblical text of Isaiah 53, no concept existed of a Messiah who was supposed to suffer.<sup>14</sup> Only after the Resurrection of Yeshua did the disciples fully understand why it was necessary for the Messiah to die. But, He had already predicted His death, he was born for the purpose of being the sin offering of the sins of the world, and this marks him different from the many other thousands who were crucified by the Romans.

#### Jesus Died Against His Will

Furthermore, this defender of Judaism tries to demonstrate that "the New Testament depicts Jesus dying against His will:" "Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud crying and tears" (Heb. 5:7); Yeshua's struggle with the cup of sin was so traumatic "that there appeared an *angel* to him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in agony he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat were as great drops of blood falling down to the ground (Luke 22:42-44); and finally, "Jesus cried

out with a loud voice," and citing the words from Psalm 22: "E-li, E-li, lama sabachthani," that is: "My G-d, my G-d, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46).

Drazin now asserts from these passages that the real Jesus is now

"... exposed for all to see, desperately praying that G-d would save Him from imminent death. So weak was he that this divine being needed an "angel" to strengthen him. And when he was on the cross, knowing that his prayers were not answered, he accused G-d of deserting him!"

Drazin's considered assessment is that this Jesus saw no reason why He had to die. But does he really have a conception of who Yeshua is?

When it came time for Him to face His own death as the atonement for sin, the Scripture says very clearly, "Yeshua resolutely set out for Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51), suggesting quite clearly that Yeshua knew what would happen to Him and He was not afraid to face up to what God had called Him to do. Furthermore, to argue that He died against His own will because of the prayers He offered in the garden before His capture completely misses the point. Yeshua as the Son of man knew what He faced, as did as any other human being would when confronted with a dire crisis. He or she resorts to

prayer, asking God for help, sometimes crying out from the depths of the soul, with tears. But Yeshua also fully committed himself to God, saying, "Not My will, but Yours be done" (Luke 22:42).

To say that the prayers of Yeshua were never answered also flies against the testimony revealed in other portions of Scripture. Yeshua spent much time in prayer to His Father, once all night when he selected his apostles (Luke 6:12), when he instructed His disciples how to pray (Luke 11:1-4), and on many other occasions as he prayed alone. One can only say that when He faced the greatest crisis of His life, He also spent time in intense prayer.

#### Yeshua's Death Has No Future Significance

A further so-called evidence against Jesus as the atonement for sin is that is that animal sacrifices can only atone for past sins and that no offering can be replaced by Jesus that would bring atonement for future sins.

But what does the totality of the Word teach? Peter violently reacted against Yeshua's announcement that He was going to die (Matt. 16:22). Afterward, Peter's objection was changed when he described how Yeshua Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness (1 Peter 2:24),

deriving the basis for his statement from Isaiah 53:6.

Even more important is the connection between the Mosaic sacrificial system and how the New Covenant writers related to it. All five Levitical sacrifices are subsumed in the one death of the Messiah. And, certain writers of the New Covenant each treat these offerings in such a way that they have relevance for today as people accept it for themselves. The point is that the New Covenant takes seriously what Moses said in connection with the sacrifices as they apply to the Messiah, while the Council of Yavneh took a step which God never sanctioned: Ignoring altogether the necessity of the sacrificial system, and then introducing a system of repentance and pious lifestyle as the means for atonement. Did God sanction this action?

While this anti-missionary uses a lot of New Covenant passages to prove all his points, he does not take into account the entire Biblical fabric. He is only content to choose proof texts to prove his point, or lift passages out of their contexts to demonstrate that Yeshua was never the one for whom Israel was looking.

#### **A Concluding Statement**

We can conclude that Drazin is only seeking to defend the more identified Jewish position, which he certainly is free to do. But he also

seeks to stop any inroads into the Jewish community by those interested in reaching Jewish people.

But what about evangelicals today who, without realizing it, are accomplishing the same objectives of the anti-missionaries? How shall their statements of the denial of Yeshua as deity, and emptying the Messianic prophetic content of the Hebrew Scriptures, be assessed? This writer does not question whether these people are believers or say that in their hearts they no longer acknowledge the supremacy of Yeshua in his deity. But if in our Christological pronouncements, we come to the same position as the anti-missionaries in their assessment of the *Tanak* Scriptures, what has then happened to our witness to Jewish people?

In addition, what of those evangelicals who hold to basic truths of the *Tanak* and New Covenant but do not share their faith because the mention of Yeshua will demean Jewish dignity! This lack of responsibility of witness to one's faith is a serious challenge to a sound missiology.

The first step away from the Biblical position is a crucial one. The last step will shipwreck the faith of believers, and at the worst, pseudoChristians can become the worst Anti-Jewish people. The believer has to have a keen sense of

what is that first wrong step and avoid it!

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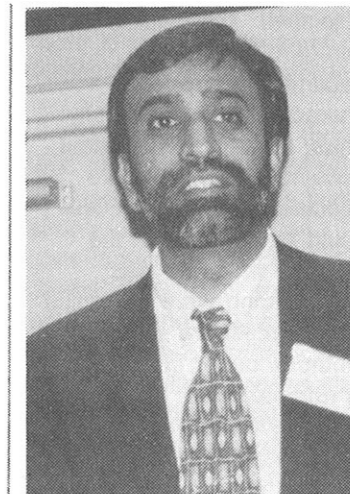
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## Does Messianic Jewish Outreach Today Address the Needs of Postmodern Judaism?

By Dr. Boaz Johnson Ph.D.

President, Tsemakh Institute for the Study of Judaism and Christianity

This article is an attempt to explain the importance of a new movement in society called Postmodernism. I will try to show that postmodernism is spreading very widely, in various areas of the world. Significantly, it is Jewish academics and practitioners who are at the forefront of postmodern theories and directions. We will also see that most of the Jewish outreach methods which have been developed in what is termed as a "modern" society are, by and large, obsolete. We are neither faced with a "pre-modern" society, for whom the Bible, and so Bible prophecies had some meaning. Nor are we facing a "modern" society, for



whom rational logic provided meaning. We are facing a Postmodern society. In the light of the above, in order to communicate with this postmodern society, we need answers to questions

like, what is postmodernism? What areas does post-modernism effect? How does postmodernism effect the Jewish society today? . . . and so on.

#### **What is Postmodernism?**

If *modernity* represents progress through science, *postmodernity* has lost confidence in any such progress. *Modernity* talked in terms of human beings reaching a utopian society through industrialization. Postmodernity sees no such thing happening.

While the talk about postmodernism has grown exponentially in the last ten years, it is also true that it is very difficult to define what postmodernism means. It is

a subject which pervades almost all the realms of education and society. In Economics one talks about the kind of production which will take place in late capitalism. For example, a postmodern society is said to be a ultra-consumer oriented society. The goods are not defined by their pragmatic usefulness, but rather by the image of the good. This image of the "good" will not be societal utilitarian, but rather individually utilitarian. What may be good for one individual, will be harmful for another individual. Yet, from a postmodern perspective that would be alright. Thus priority in the postmodern society is given to highly individualized advertising, image, and style. Humanistic ideals no longer give the meaning of a product. Thomas Pangle describes postmodern times thus, "It is a nebulous, diverse, and even contradictory in its meanings . . . has different connotations in different literature, in architecture and fine arts, in political theory, and in history."<sup>1</sup>

Postmodernism touches a whole range of areas. In art and architecture, it refers to a new way of looking at art and architecture. In politics, economics and ethics, it affirms all values and thus considers no value as valid.

#### **How did the Postmodern World Emerge?**

Those of us who have been

involved in Jewish evangelism have, of course heard the opinion that this belief in a Messiah is passé. It is generally considered to be an outdated, pre-modern perspective on life. Reason, since the time of Descartes, has reigned supreme. It has been the hallmark of what is called a modern society.

The modern era was born during the time of the Enlightenment. René Descartes provided the philosophical groundwork for modernity, with the rational autonomy of man. The rational man sought to improve human existence through technology. He sought to bring any and every area under the scrutiny of reason. Knowledge was not only certain, but was also objective. The dispassionate pursuit of knowledge became the nuclear characteristic of modernity. Thus, an astronomer could become a very objective specialist in his field. One could be certain that the theories which he was propounding were the result of very objective scientific methods under the scrutiny of rational man.

However, in more recent times, especially in the last decade, educational circles have come to the stark realization that the so-called "modern" world-view is resting on very shaky grounds. Indeed, Diogenes Allen one of the great Princeton thinkers of our time has pronounced

"modernity" as dead. He writes,

"A massive intellectual revolution is taking place that is perhaps as great as that which marked off the modern world from the Middle Ages. The foundations of the modern world are collapsing, and we are entering a postmodern world. The principles forged during the Enlightenment (c. 1600-1780), which formed the foundations of modern mentality, are crumbling."<sup>2</sup>

On the ashes of modernity a new world view has arisen, which is not quite a systematic world view. To have a systematic world view would be, in fact, modernistic. Instead, the new world views, which penetrate every sector of the academic world, and will soon pervade every aspect of human society is called postmodernism.

It is a culture which is pluralistic, consumer-oriented, and taken up with therapeutic approaches to life. The manufacturing sector is on the decline. The service sector is increasingly on the rise. The society has merely become a network of individuals who do not seem to follow any rules. The Internet seems to be a good symbol of the postmodern society. One can dialogue with a Buddhist, or a Moslem regarding deep issues of religion. One can dialogue with gay or lesbian activist. At the same time, one can download smutty pornographic material. Each

of these dialogical phases forms the new postmodern human. Modern logic does not play any role in discerning whether their could be any contradictions between these various world views.

In modernism "Reason" provided a set of rules and criteria about correct thinking about "Reality." The philosophers of the modernistic period had laid the groundwork for assessing Truth. Modernity offered the hope that human reason could understand the nature and substance of the cosmos. Modernism offered the hope of global peace. In contrast to the above, in postmodernism, there is not appeal to "reality" or "truth." The modernistic modes of meta-narratives or belief systems which defined reality, it is proposed, leads only to "totalitarianism." Modernistic notion of universal humanism is dissolved. Instead, one is left with relativism. There are two major factors in postmodern thinking. One is the autonomous "Self," and second the communication and interpretation of this "Self." Yet, none of this "Selves" can proffer a truth statement which could become a meta-narrative. Rather, each of the truth statements of the "selves" are equally valid. In other words, postmodernism does not allow for a belief system (a meta-narrative) which may be universally acceptable.

According to philosophers of postmodernism any thing can be interpreted to be "good" or "evil." There are no objective grounds of evaluating this. In other words, "evil" or "good" is in the eyes of the beholder. Thus, in postmodernism "Deconstructive interpretation" is very crucial. A new interpreter, whether he be an interpreter of literature or of history, whether he be an interpreter of secular or religious texts, is bound to "Deconstruct" the text he is interpreting. The post-modern person, in general, always interprets a new reality for himself/herself. He/she always interprets a new history for himself/herself. He/she always interprets a new conception of society and self for himself or herself. Thus there is an infinite amount of fluidity to conceive reality in the postmodern world.

The question before those who of us who are involved in Jewish outreach is a fairly simple one: Does postmodernism effect the Jewish society? If so, in what way and in what areas of Jewish life? Perhaps, we can begin with a very crucial area. How does postmodernism interpret history? More specifically, we may ask, how does postmodernism understand the holocaust?

#### **Does Postmodernism effect one's understanding of the holocaust?**

Among recent students of the holocaust there is a

growing general agreement that the Nazi holocaust and Auschwitz is a shocking indictment of the "pretense of new creation, the hatred of tradition, the idolatry of self" which characterized "modernity." It is modernity, especially its intense passion to break with the past that gave rise to movements like Nazism and Stalinism. Descartes' "reason" failed miserably to provide the moral fiber to prevent such horror from taking place in human society. Therefore, the Jewish academia is looking elsewhere to look for precisely this moral fiber, or at least moral fibers which will deter any such horror from happening again. The answer is found in postmodernism.

The latest theories in postmodernism, especially in French literature is spearheaded by Jewish scholars like the Talmudic scholar Emmanuel Levinas, and others like Theodore Adorno and Jacques Derrida. These studies seek to go beyond the realm of literature to politics, economics, sociology and the sciences. Further, as is pointed by several scholars, the locus of postmodern theories is generally Judaism and the study of Jewish people.<sup>3</sup>

In the course of these studies, the Jewish experience of the holocaust e.g. is deconstructed to mean something other. A good example is Jean-Francois Lyotard.



Commenting on his Heidegger and "the jews", Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg write,

"Lyotard deliberately writes, "the jews" in quotation marks and lower case to distinguish them from the real Jews, the followers of the Mosaic faith. For Lyotard, "the jews" are the embodiment of alterity, the Other, scorned as such, murdered as such, exterminated as such, who are sometimes real Jews, as in Nazi occupied Europe, and sometimes not. In Germany today, the Turks are "the jews"; in France, it is the Arabs; in Iran, it is the Bahai or emancipated women; in Hindu India, it is the Muslim and Sikhs; in China it is the students and the 'cosmopolitans'."<sup>4</sup>

This is one example of a growing number of scholars who seek to explain the horrors of Nazism in postmodern terms. Meaningfulness of history, and the experience the Jewish people, in these writings becomes secondary to the new meanings which can be given for humanity, "the Other," in general. This history as it happened does not carry any meaning. It carries meaning only in so far as, it can create new meaning for a postmodern society.

Similarly, Max Silverman argues that the Dreyfus affair was a result of "ambivalent modernity." He writes,

"The Jews were more often than not only too

willing to play the modernistic republican game. They accepted the idea that the Republican stands for truth, justice, civilization, culture and enlightenment. They gladly accepted this chance to enter the world of light, progress, and modernity. Some said: 'We will continue to practice our faith. But we will do it in the privacy of our own homes, or discreetly in our community.' Others wanted nothing more than to rid themselves of the traditional and ethnic baggage which, given the modernistic rules of the game, they themselves see as backward, pre-modern and culturally inferior."<sup>5</sup>

As it turned out, he adds, "Racism is not the opposite of modern egalitarian republicanism; it is instead very much its product."<sup>6</sup> Therefore, both the congenial aspects of modernity, as well as the ugly aspects of modernity turned out to be very harmful for the Jewish people, and for man in general. Modernity failed to safeguard the rights of human beings. However, he adds that in today's postmodern world the issues are far different, "the Dreyfus Affair saw the birth of the human rights association, the Ligue de droits de l'Homme. Today there is a problem of how to formulate rights . . . the Dreyfus affair also saw the birth of the modern, politically committed intellectual, armed with the

weapons of truth and justice . . . what role can the intellectual play today when values and concepts of truth are in crisis . . . the same words- antisemitism, rights, values, and so on- no longer have the same meanings."<sup>7</sup> In the postmodern environment, increasingly so, none of these words have any meaning. Meaning will be given by the deconstructing receptor.

Jewish writers are seeing a sense of hope in this kind of an environment. Yet, it seems clear there are more dangers than hope. When the postmodern society is able to deconstruct history, then the painfulness of history is not faced squarely. Postmodern deconstructionism, instead tends to become a reductionary force which truncates the pains of history. The new values which are developed are not formed on the basis of lessons which society learns from history, but rather they are based on no values at all. In many senses postmodernism is used as a tool for escapism.

#### **Does Postmodernism effect Judaism Today?**

In the rest of the paper, it would perhaps be worthwhile to briefly outline the effects of postmodernism on Judaism today. We will underline a few representatives of contemporary Jewish thought. We will note that each of these

representatives are calling for a new form of Judaism called Postmodern Judaism, in the light of the failure of Modern Judaism. It is worthwhile also to note that Postmodern Judaism depends quite heavily on the inquiries of Jewish existentialists Martin Buber, Franz Rosenzweig, and Emmanuel Levinas. These existentialists are given postmodern garbs for conducting theological and textual inquiry. Postmodern methods of studying Jewish texts are very different from the historical-critical studies of the *Wissenschaft des judentums*, which is followed by modernistic scholars like Jacob Neusner. Pre-modern Judaism was influenced by Jewish Aristotelianism and neo-Platonism of the Arabic speaking Jewish thinkers of medieval Spain. This is where most of the famous Rabbis of medieval times developed their thinking. Modern Judaism is ingrained in Jewish Kantianism of German thinkers of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe.

Postmodern Judaism is an interesting amalgam of pre-modern mysticism and postmodern philosophies, and New Age thinking. Postmodern Jewish thinkers, of instance, would dwell much on the thought of Hasidic masters like R. Zadoq ha-Kohen of Lublin, who said,

"we-khakh qibalti ki ha-'olam kulo hu sefer she'asah ha-shem yitbarakh we-

sheha-torah hu perush she'asah we-hibber 'al 'oto ha-sefer,"

Thus I have received that the world in its entirety is a book that God, blessed be He, made, and the Torah is the commentary that he composed on that book" (Zadok ha-Kohen 1912, 44b)<sup>8</sup>

On the basis of thinking like this, the postmodernists posit that the Torah is actually just a commentary on humankind and the universe. It is an interpretation. The Torah is not primary. Rather, human beings and the creation is primary. The task set before the postmodern man, is similar to what it was for the ancient mystics, i.e. to use postmodern tools to come up with ones own interpretation. This interpretation may vary with the interpretation of the Torah. But, that is alright. Further, multiplicity of postmodern interpretations, which are at variance with the Torah, is also alright.

It is my hope that this brief overview of postmodern Jewish thought would enable us to discuss the preparedness of Messianic Jewish Outreach movements for a postmodern Jewish society.

I. One of the clearest statements of this call is found in the introduction to a very stimulating series of internet philosophy conferences called *The Postmodern Jewish Philosophy BitNetwork*. The people involved in this philosophy conferences are

the foremost thinkers of Judaism, teaching at major Universities of the world. Introducing the nature and purpose of the conference the chairman, Steven Kepnes, Director of Jewish Studies at Colgate University writes,

"Post-modern Jewish Philosophy is philosophy in search of itself, a philosophy in search of its beginning, its community, its text. It is Jewish thinking that is done after the failure of modern varieties of Judaism. It is Jewish thinking after the failed experiment with Kantian and Hegelian Jewish philosophy. It is Jewish thinking after Jewish Existentialism and Jewish Phenomenology, after Zionist philosophy, after Holocaust theology and after Jewish Feminism. It is the Jewish thinking after the failed modern movements of Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, and Reconstructionist Judaisms. It is thinking done after failure and in deficit. Yet it is thinking that so easily falls into complacency, falls back into taking the forms of its failed predecessors, that it must be constantly reminded its deficit situation, its lacks and of the bankruptcy of modern Judaism. To say that modern Judaism in its communal and philosophical expressions is bankrupt is to speak ironically. For never before have Jews had so much material wealth . . . As postmodern Jewish thinkers we might ask ourselves a

simple question. What does Judaism mean for the American Jews that we can teach and tell about the results of our thinking? The answers are not encouraging. Judaism has become either a form of entertainment or therapy, a political ideology or a witch hunt for anti-semites, a diet of bagels, lox, gefilte fish or a trip to Auschwitz or Israel . . . For most American Jews, Judaism competes with professions, country clubs, sports teams, music concerts, T.V.. And hobbies and usually comes in close to last in the amount of time, energy and spirit devoted to it. If postmodern Jewish philosophy has to begin, it must begin with postmodern ground rules. The greatest sin of modern Jewish philosophy is its acceptance of the starting point of modern philosophy, the autonomous thinking subject . . . We will be lead astray if we take David Blumenthal's suggestion to put "God at center." What we need to do is to put a text (texts) at center. This is what the rabbis did and what modern Jews forgot. Putting Reason, putting the Land of Israel, putting the Holocaust, putting Feminism, putting Jews, even putting God at center of Jewish thinking does not engender vibrant Jewish education, community and though . . . If we put the texts at the center in postmodern Jewish philosophy, not only will we have a common starting

point, but we will also find that our ranks will swell. With Jewish texts at the center, we will find that we will suddenly something in common with "non-philosophers," with biblicists, Talmudists, kabbalists, and Hebrew literature scholars . . . How should we begin as post-modern Jewish thinkers? We should collectively choose a Jewish text and do speech thinking with it. Let it be any Jewish text: Bible, Midrash, Mishna, Gemara, Siddur. Let it be a text from modern Jewish thought: Jerusalem, I and Thou, the Star . . ."<sup>9</sup>

I have quoted Kepnes at great length because he sets the direction of postmodern Judaism in very clear light. While Orthodox Judaism saw God and the Torah at the center, he suggests that postmodern Judaism cannot return back to that. Similarly, modern Judaism, as it is found in various forms of non-Orthodox Judaisms, dwelt on "man" and "Reason" rather than on God. These forms of Judaisms centered, for example, on modern Jewish issues in particular, like holocaust or the Land of Israel. Or they centered on issues like Feminism etc. Or they centered around non-supernatural theological issues like the "death of God" movement. Kepnes suggests that these are not the issues facing the postmodern Jew. Instead, he suggests that Postmodern Judaism ought

to focus on something he calls "texts" of Judaism. A closer examination of the term "texts" will reveal that it does not merely mean the Torah, Talmud etc. Ultimately, it is the experiences of the Postmodern Jew which become the "new texts." These "new texts" supplant or Deconstruct the old texts. The postmodern experience and interpretation is the "postmodern texts."

Kepnes suggests that it is not merely Postmodern Jewish thinkers who are proposing this. Rather, "modern" thinkers like Buber and Rosenzweig provided the groundwork for postmodern Judaism. He suggests that Buber's hermeneutics and narrative theology represents the beginnings of what is now called the postmodern revival of the Jewish "midrashic imagination. In Buber's dialogical approach, when a Jewish person comes to a text, that text or his experience becomes the "Thou" for him/her. The individual is not looking for a transcendent God. Rather, he/she is looking for an existential encounter with the text or the experience, which becomes the "divine Other" for the postmodern Jew. This, Kepnes suggests ought to be the focus of postmodern Judaism.<sup>10</sup> Further, Oppenheim suggests that this "Other" should also be seen in "other" human beings, world views and religions in

society. Postmodern Jews ought to enter into a dialogue with other religions, which ought to be treated as the "divine Other" too. Thus, while Buber talked about the "I-Thou" existential relationship between God and man, postmodern Jewish thinkers talk about an "I-Thou" relationship with anything but God. It is with any text or experience or religion.

It is clear from the above that postmodern Judaism is governed by religious and social relativism. The "Thou" in others soon takes the shape of New Age Pantheism. First, the "any text" or "any experience" becomes the "Thou." Then "other" humans, societies or religions in a pluralistic age become the "Thou." This train of thought gives rise to the thesis that every individual and postmodern experience is also the "Thou." Oppenheim describes the goal of a postmodern Jewish society well when he says, "We develop and mature by saying "Thou" to others, and also through ourselves being called "Thou."<sup>11</sup> This would give rise to the new postmodern Utopia.

2. The second representation of postmodern Judaism which I would like to underline is found in the works of Eugene B. Borowitz. Borowitz is the most influential theologian of the Reform Movement of

American Judaism. He is also a member of the Postmodern Philosophy Bitnetwork. He has written perhaps the definitive work on postmodern Judaism in a book entitled *Renewing the Covenant: A Theology for the Postmodern Jew*.<sup>12</sup> In this work he suggests that there is a spiritual crisis caused by a "disillusionment with the modernists' messianic humanism"<sup>13</sup> and a "rejection of the meaningfulness of secularized reality."<sup>14</sup>

He further writes regarding modernism, "modernity has also created new and intense forms of human misery . . . drugs, violence, loss of meaning . . . pollution terrorism, or nuclear destruction." Consequently, a critical pillar of modernism collapsed: the belief that secular enlightenment will make people self-correcting . . . secular ground no longer supplies a secure ground of value."<sup>15</sup> This kind of an environment has given birth to postmodern Judaism. This Judaism, he describes, is one in which the Jewish self has turned to "passion, depth, diversity, and endurance of the religious quest of the late 20th century." This quest is essentially characterized by, "self-realization movements, cults, . . ."<sup>16</sup> He does not see anything wrong in this trend, rather he asks postmodern Jewish theologians to meet the needs of this tenor.

He suggests that postmodern Jewish theology has to be developed around a thorough re-evaluation of basic concepts like self, God, and community. One must always be aware that these concepts should not be based on modernistic presuppositions. Postmodern theologies ought to developed on the basis of floating concepts.

Regarding the "concept" of God, he writes, from a postmodern perspective, "it is so heavy with question and misconception that I have mostly avoided using it."<sup>17</sup> In today's postmodern world view a Jew cannot, "objectively make the assertion of the reality of God."<sup>18</sup> In postmodern terms the "theological metaphor" of transcendence does not make much sense.<sup>19</sup> The postmodern Absolute, instead is "weak," because (1) it is non-relational, (2) it creates free agents, and (3) it makes covenants. This weak Absolute has no attributes because of "our limited ability to specify its nature or its exact entailments."<sup>20</sup> Thus, Borowitz suggests that postmodernism has no room for either the interventionist God of modernism, nor the equally modernistic, demythologized God of Kaplan or William Kaufman. Instead, it opts for a "non-rational God."<sup>21</sup> This God creates. However, the postmodern conception of creation is that of a continuous process. In its

deconstructed form it is found in the experience of the prayer book. This God is the one "who renews daily in his goodness the work of creation."<sup>22</sup>

The kind of Jew who emerges from these floating concepts is "a non-orthodox self that is autonomous yet so fundamentally shaped by the covenant that whatever issues from its depths will have authentic Jewish character."<sup>23</sup> It may be noted that Borowitz's concept of the covenant also is not based on the Torah, rather it is a "relational term." Covenant is almost like the nirvana experience of Buddhism, or the *Brahman* experience of monistic Hinduism. Yet, this experience is given Jewish clothing. In many senses, he is not talking about a Jewish covenant, but rather a multiplicity of covenants.

Borowitz claims that this postmodern Jewish identity will not be a "person-in-general" who happens to be a Jew. But, rather he is a "Jew/person at once."<sup>24</sup> Thus the postmodern Jew-self while being very different for each individual, will not be a "schizoid" person. This is quite different from most modern Jewish thinkers who present the Jewish self as an autonomous, unsituated self. These are Jews who are emancipated and universalized. And of course, it is very different from Orthodoxy which refuses to acknowledge the

legitimacy of autonomous self, and has urged Jews to think of themselves as heteronomous selves, that is selves who must define themselves as obedient to the *halakha*, the Jewish law. Borowitz suggests that the modernistic view of self is built on individualistic, humanistic, highly secularized, philosophic universalism. All the modern Jewish thinkers from Hermann Cohen, the German Jewish philosopher to Richard Rubenstein, the author of the pioneering *After Auschwitz* seek to deny the covenant of faith and build the Jewish self on memory, ritual and community. However, he suggests that the postmodern Jew is less confident of the promise of emancipation, less trusting in the goodness of God's creation, and the humanness of the world. The postmodern Jew/person is whatever he sets himself to be in the light of this ethereal postmodern experience.

Further, he suggests that the Orthodox self is also based on a pre-modern concept of divine revelation of the Torah. This Torah needs to be deconstructed. As a result of this, the concept of the covenant needs to be deconstructed. So why does he use the word "covenant" at all? He claims that modern Jews have avoided the use of the term "covenant" because of its Christian connotations, as well as, the exclusivistic

denotations of choice of an exclusive God. Instead of this he proposes the postmodern God is a Weak Absolute who chooses all humanity. In pre-modern and modern Judaism the choice of the Gentiles was expressed in the Noahic covenant and the choice of the Jews is expressed in the Sinaitic covenant. Postmodern theology puts both of these conceptions on a equally deconstructionist footing. Both, the "Torah," as well as the "covenant" for the postmodern Jew are indeterminate concepts. The new "Jew/person at once" seeks to have the Torah revealed to him in mystical experiences. This Torah becomes the framework of covenant relationships with a "Absolute weak" God.

Borowitz claims that any theology which is based on the presuppositions of modernistic world view will not be valid for a postmodern theology or theologies. For example, he claims that in the postmodern world of "our more global, more class-, more gender-, more race conscious pluralism,"<sup>25</sup> the modernistic assumptions of universalism no longer carry any weight. Universalism, as it is defined from the perspective of the modernistic era will no longer be the guiding principle. For example, he suggests that Hans Küng's search for a "general ethical criterion" which "differentiates "between the

true and the false religion in all religions" no longer holds any water. Thus, the ethics and the theology of pluralism also will need to be redefined from a postmodern perspective or from postmodern perspectives.

#### **Is Messianic Jewish/ Evangelical Outreach Communicating with the Postmodern Jewish Society?**

It seems very clear from the summary given above that Borowitz, Kepnes and others in the Postmodern Bitnetwork, get to the core of few very essential questions. These are questions which are asked in any society, premodern, modern, or postmodern. It seems to me that we ought to be aware of these questions, and address these questions for a postmodern Jewish society, if we seek to make any impact:

1. Who am I? Who is humankind? Who is a Jew in this pluralistic society?
2. Who is God? Is He transcendent? Is He immanent?
3. What is the destiny of humankind? What is the destiny of Judaism?
4. What is Truth? Is there any Truth in other religions and societies? How can one discern between Truth and Falsehood?

The answers which they give clearly describe the postmodern Jewish society. The postmodern Jew-self is whatever one describes

himself/ herself to be in the light of the existential encounter with the "Other." God is anything or anybody: a "Other text," the "Other" human being, or Oneself. The destiny of the postmodern Jew-self is finding this existential encounter between the "I" and the "Thou" at the societal level. Truth and falsehood in religion cannot be evaluated on the basis of "modernistic" logic, or the law of non-contradiction. That is employing a modernistic meta-narrative method. Truth and falsehood are floating concepts. Therefore, the postmodern Jew, instead of seeking to differentiate between "truth" or "falsehood" in religion must seek an "I-Thou" encounter with the "other religion."

The question before us, of course, is how does the Messianic Jew reach out to this postmodern Jewish society. One thing is clear, a cursory reading of outreach material will reveal that much presupposes a "pre-modern" or, at best a "modern" Jewish community. The paradigm is rapidly shifting. Indeed, in the eyes of many students of society it has shifted already. Modernism is "completely dead" in the academic world. Modernism will soon be "completely dead" in the rest of society. Unless we are adequately prepared to handle the concerns raised by this dramatic paradigm shift, we will be caught

napping beyond recovery. It is very crucial for the Messianic Jewish society to develop an adequate theology of history, economics, society etc. to deal with the concerns raised by postmodern Judaism. One of the areas which needs a good response is the postmodern philosophy of the holocaust. Similarly, Messianic Judaism will need to develop an adequate response to postmodern theologies addressing the above four vital issues which postmodern Judaism has raised.

#### **NOTES**

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- 2 Diogenes Allen, *Christian Belief in a Postmodern World* (Louseville: Westminster, 1989), 2.
- 3 See e.g. Michael Weingrad, "Jews (in Theory): Representations of Judaism, Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust in Postmodern French Thought." *JUDAISM* 45, 1 (1996), 79-100.
- 4 Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg, "The Unlearned Lessons of the Holocaust," *Modern Judaism* 13 (1993), 179.
- 5 Max Silverman, "The Dreyfus Affair: One Hundred Years On," *Patterns of Prejudice* 28 (1994), 32.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 33.

7 Ibid., 35.

8 See Elliot R. Wolfson, "From Sealed Book to Open Text: Time, Memory, and Narrative in Kabbalistic Hermeneutics," in *Interpreting Judaism in a Postmodern Age*, ed. Steven Kepnes (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 145-80.

9 Steven Kepnes, *The Postmodern Jewish Philosophy Bitnetwork*, *Interim Newsletter*, November 8, 1991.

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Perspectives on Jewish Studies (New York: New York University Press, 1996).

10 Stephen Kepnes, *The Text as Thou: Martin Buber's Dialogical Hermeneutics and Narrative Theology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).

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12 Eugene Borowitz,

*Renewing the Covenant: A Theology for the Postmodern Jew* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1991).

13 Ibid., 20.

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15 Ibid., 21, 23.

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17 Ibid., 114.

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19 Ibid., 100.

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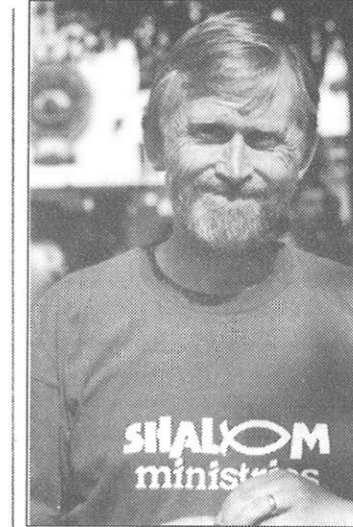
## THE JEWS, CHRISTENDOM, AND TRUE CHRISTIANS Coming to terms with the past

By Paul Morris, CWI, England

There will be few who read this article who are unaware of the great sufferings of the Jews, sufferings which go back to their very origins in Egypt. However, what is in the forefront of the minds of most Jews today is their experience in Europe over the last 1,500 years; an experience which they have described as 'the longest hatred'. By which they "mean the hatred of Christians against Jews; an attitude which is often described as Christian anti-Semitism.

There is no doubt that Christians must make some form of response to this history, but it is clear that widely different views are held even among those who are actively involved in Jewish evangelism. This article is written as a brief but to the point exploration of the different approaches. To come to a correct view i.e. important for its own sake, but also for its effects on others. To get it wrong can hinder the spiritual questioning of those who have yet to come to faith, and it can dampen interest in the Jews among those who are already believers.

The effect on any Christian when he contemplates this history of suffering for the first time should be one of shock. That there is actually a nation on the face of the



earth which sees Christianity as the agency primarily responsible for the sufferings and death of millions of its people must be deeply alarming. That this people should be the Jews is doubly appalling; as Belloc put it, "How odd of God to choose the Jews, but odder still for those who choose the Jewish God to persecute the Jews." But how to respond? We know that the first response of many Christians is to declare that the perpetrators could not have been true Christians. In this they are surely right. The vast majority who have harboured or expressed anti-Semitic feelings were not Christians at all, just Gentiles (and sometimes Jews) with a veneer of some form of the Christian religion. However, the fact remains that those who are true

Christians are called by the same name as such people - "Christian". Whether true Christians like it or not they are identified with them and some form of response is necessary. This is so whether their background is Gentile or Jewish. There are a number of possible responses.

The superficial response, one with which we are all too familiar, is a Christian declaring he or she is innocent in the whole matter and therefore it has little or nothing to do with him. Undoubtedly such a Christian wishes it had never happened, but he will usually reason that so many evils have been done in the name of Christianity that their consequences can never be rectified; our work is to get on with preaching the Gospel and God will bring in His elect regardless of such hindrances. Such an approach sounds reasonable, but I wonder if they would take that approach with a Christian parent grieving over a teenage daughter who has turned away from the Saviour with the words, "Just look at the Christians in our church, Dad!" The father cannot just dismiss their bad behaviour as insignificant because he knows it has caused his loved one to stumble and he believes

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program!**

something should be done. Like the daughter the Jews too are beloved, and if God's affections are involved then ours should be too. No true Christian can adopt a detached view of the effect on the Jews of their sufferings at the hands of people called Christians. When such a detached view is expressed it must be challenged, and it may be appropriate for the person holding it to check for any anti-Semitic feelings of their own.

At the other end of the response scale would be that of repentance for the sins of others. The number of those who advocate the response appears to be on the increase today and therefore we need to think carefully about it. For example, the BBC1 *Everymen* programme in England recorded a group of Christians expressing feelings of repentance for Christendom's behaviour towards the Jews in the presence of a Jewish Rabbi. Such an approach raises important issues. To repent because of the sins of others called Christian implies there is such a thing as collective guilt; but Scripture denies this, other than in the case of our relationship to Adam. In Deuteronomy 24:16 Moses writes "The fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall the children be put to death for their father; a person shall be put to death for his own sin". Ezekiel gives us an

inspired commentary on this issue in chapter 18 including the significance of repentance. There is no doubt that there is such a thing as collective consequence in a fallen world but that does not imply collective guilt.

I wonder if any of the Christians on that BBC programme would agree that the Jews are collectively guilty of Jesus' crucifixion because some of their leaders initiated it? I doubt it somehow. Then again, would they expect all the Jews to repent of other shameful episodes in Jewish national history? I doubt that too. I also wonder if they considered how hurtful their approach could be to Christians who, in the name of Jesus, suffered to save Jews from persecution, or to many others who suffered bereavement in opposing tyrannies which have persecuted Jews, in World War II for example? As we consider the failures of Christians or professing Christians towards the Jews we must never forget that Christians and lands deeply influenced by Christian belief have many times been a safe haven for them. This has been forgotten in the design of the new Holocaust museum in Washington, and it is rightly causing anger. The very meaning of the term repentance also demonstrates the error of this approach. Repentance involves a change of mind, and a person who has never

been anti-Semitic can hardly repent of it, and to speak of having a change of mind on behalf of another is nonsense. However, there is an apparent difficulty here. We have the Biblical example of a godly man, Daniel, identifying with the sins of his people, confessing them and repenting of them (Dan.9: 4-19). Should we not therefore do the same? Some would certainly say so, but I believe Daniel can only be an example to us if there is a genuine sense in which the people at fault can be called our people. Daniel was a member of the covenant people then, and as they suffered God's judgment he suffered with them. However exemplary his personal life may have been it was nevertheless impossible for him to divorce his own personal sins from their experience and so he identified with them in confession. In New Testament times it might be said that the equivalent covenant community is all who worship God in Spirit and truth, but when it comes their life as a community, and particularly the rebuking of sin, the New Testament approach is to address individual churches (Revelation 1,2). That is because their nature is such that the responsibility of the members for each other can be a practical one. If there is sin in any such church then the sinner is guilty and the others are responsible to

act against it; they sin if they fail to do so (e.g. 1 Corinthians 5:1-8). Anti-Semitism would be one such sin. We do not read anywhere in the New Testament of the sins of one church, say Corinth, being charged on any other church.

It is possible to extend this responsibility for acting against sin to a group of churches when they have bound themselves in some form of disciplined fellowship. However, it cannot be extended to Christendom as a whole because as that term is commonly understood it is an entity which has no spiritual or practical reality. Therefore I would say that the response of repentance can only be expected of a Christian if he or she has been personally anti-Semitic, or of a Christian church if it is failing to deal with anti-Semitism in its own midst.

At the beginning of this article I mentioned the danger of unhelpful effects being produced by wrong responses. It was interesting to note that the *Jewish Chronicle*<sup>1</sup> response to the above TV programme was to be nauseated. They did not say why, but considering that they are always concerned to see responses of repentance there we obviously something which did not ring true to them. The reaction of many Christians to the whole approach, especially

those from a Gentile background, is to sense it is asking something of them which Scripture does not, and so they become cautious about all things Jewish. I have seen this response too often to remain unconcerned at the growing influence of this approach of repentance for the sins of others.

There is another possible response, and this is the one which I believe applies to the vast majority of Christians and churches, the response of both sorrow and shame. Sorrow should be stirred in all Christians from a feeling of common human compassion because the Jews have suffered so much. Such sorrow should be deepened by the knowledge that so much of that suffering has been at the hands of those who in some way owned the name of Jesus, the One who said He had not come to destroy men's lives but to save them.

There should also be shame, because of the association that true Christians have with the perpetrators. Those who have agreed with me and rejected the idea of repentance when they have no personal guilt will perhaps find this difficult to understand or accept. Why should they feel ashamed? Others who support the approach of repentance on behalf of others may think I am contradicting myself; does not shame imply guilt and does not that require

repentance? I agree that this is frequently the case, but Scripture also has examples of the experience of shame where there is no personal failure in the one feeling it. For example in Ezra 9:5,6 we read of Ezra's shame at the marriages taking place between Israel's leaders and Canaanite women. In 2 Corinthians 7:14 and 9:4 Paul writes of how he would have been ashamed if the Corinthians had failed to behave according to his expectations. Neither Ezra nor Paul had personally committed the sins or failures in view, but they felt shame by association. This is the sort of shame I am referring to.

Maybe an illustration would be helpful to show the contrast between this response of shame for the actions of others and that of repentance. If a nation's football supporters should go on the rampage while abroad and lives are lost we will see a threefold response from within their nation: repentance, apology and shame. The ones who repent in such a situation are those who were violent, and also any who expressed hatred so as to inflame feelings. Who should apologise? Leaders of some description will do so because there is a sense of identity and responsibility which demands it. They will also condemn the evil. Who feels sorrow and shame? All of that nation should do so

to a degree. If heads can be held high at the good behaviour of those with whom they are identified then shame should be felt at their failure. This is because people strive for integrity and good behaviour in their national life, and they feel that somehow the nation has failed when such events take place. No one suggests that they are all personally responsible, but they feel that somehow, somewhere, something has gone wrong in their national life; they are a part of that, and they feel ashamed. In a similar way, whether they like it or not, those who are true Christians are identified with all who call themselves Christians, and particularly with the influence of Christianity in world history. Their response to the fact that so many who have taken that name have hated Jews must include some degree of shame. Somehow, somewhere, something has gone wrong in the spread of Christianity into the world, and they should feel ashamed. That all this has happened to the nation in whose history Christians have their spiritual roots, and who are beloved of God for the father's sakes, must deepen such feelings. Finally it needs to be considered how this should be expressed. For most Christians it is enough that they are conscious of these failures, both in history and today, that they are humbled by them, and that when the

issue is raised by a Jewish person they are ready to condemn such behaviour and to express sorrow and shame that such things have happened in the name of Jesus. However, I believe this will usually need some qualification. I say this because it seems to me that many unsaved Jewish people have little interest in mentioning such Christian failure other than to pressure Christians not to evangelise them. They are rarely interested in expressions of regret for their own sake. For example, a comment in the *Jewish Chronicle* dismissed a major Christian work on this theme of "Christian" anti-Semitism as having little to contribute because it also upheld the task of the church to win Jews to faith in Jesus. Hence I believe that any expression of sorrow and shame should normally be accompanied by some clarifying remarks by which the true Christian distances himself from the sinful behaviour of nominal Christians. For example, I think that believers should explain that the vast majority of those who have expressed anti-Semitic feelings were not true Christians, and that none who were physically violent against them could have been followers of Jesus. They should also make clear that none of this alters the fact that Jesus is the Messiah and the Saviour of sinners.

Are there ever any circumstances in which repentance or apology, shame and sorrow should be expressed formally and publicly? I believe there are. However, the circumstances are usually complex and therefore all the various possibilities cannot be covered here, but a general point can be stated. When hostility to Jews has been publicly and officially encouraged in a community, and a publicly recognized church or church body in that community has either kept silent or even approved such official anti-Semitism then some form of public statement is surely necessary. Such statements have been made in the past, and are still being made by churches who have only recently had the opportunity to come to terms with failures in their past. I would elaborate this by saying that the idea of well-meaning individual Christians, or even churches, formally and publicly expressing general feelings of regret on behalf of Christendom or on behalf of church group who have not authorised them or with whom they have no formal connection, is out of place, possibly presumptuous, and must ultimately be unsatisfactory to the offended. If they wish to express such regret on their own behalf it should be done in a way proportionate to the circumstances. As stated above, I believe that will

usually be in informal one-to-one or group conversation; the arranging of special meetings is disproportionate because it gives the impression of the participants being personally guilty, or of somehow representing those who have been personally guilty when neither is the case. I want to make one final point concerning the connection some make between the church's response and the blessing of God on her witness to the Jewish people. Some urge the Church to this sense of sorrow etc. on the basis that it is essential if there is to be any significant turning of the Jews to Messiah Jesus, especially in our day. I believe that it is always a mistake to be looking for the ingredient which will precipitate a mass movement among the Jews in the days of the remnant, or even to claim to have the key that in the purposes of God will move us from remnant days to the times of fullness. Many who have claimed to have found it have ended up disappointed and sometimes given up Jewish evangelism altogether. But to make such great events turn on our attitudes and actions presents God as one with His hands tied. But is it not true that He often allows everything to be against the desired result simply to bring greater glory to His name? The fruitfulness of Jewish evangelism at the end of last

century, when many Jews came to faith after fleeing lands where they had experienced "Christian" anti-Semitism first hand, shows that God is not tied by wrong attitudes and can save many when He chooses to do so. We should strive for proper attitudes not with an eye to results but for their own sake. However, there is no doubt that if there was a greater sensitivity among Christians to how unsaved Jews see Christianity then there would at least be a better hearing for the Gospel among them. There is no doubt in my mind that all Christians and churches must give thought to this issue, and especially those of us involved in Jewish evangelism. All who trust and follow Jesus have a unique relationship with the Jewish people, and their sufferings at the hands of those called "Christian" is not something which can be ignored. For those of us involved in Jewish evangelism to try and pressure Christians with false guilt can only produce a negative reaction, but to graciously point out their spiritual connection with the Jews and the problem created because of their connection by name and in history with those who have persecuted Jews should have a sensitising effect which will be blessed of God in their witness and prayers.

#### A Vision ...

On 29 August LCJE Israel held a meeting at Beit Yedidia, Haifa. The subject of the meeting was "A vision for eveloping the next generation of Israeli believers".

Arthur Goldberg, coordinator for LCJE Israel, reports that there was a good and lively discussion in the three groups into which the participants were divided.

Arthur Goldberg sums up the discussion in the following points:

1. We all need to work together as a national body, despite our theological differences, to build a strong Israeli infrastructure for the next and coming generations.

2. We need to pour ourselves into the next generation. Our goal for the next generation is that they do even more blessed service for the Lord than we, and that they far surpass our hard work for Yeshua.

3. We need to press forward in the good work Yeshua has accomplished through us over many years of hard work, and disciple the next generation to continue this good work, even though they may do things a bit differently. The key is that we be careful we are not being possessive about the great things the "Lord Alone" has done through and by us in Israel - and not we ourselves.

## LCJE's President New Bishop in the Church of Norway

On Sunday, 20 September 1998, LCJE President Ole Chr. Kvarme was installed as a bishop in the Lutheran Church of Norway. At a gathering on the eve of the consecration day Kai Kjær-Hansen extended a greeting to him on behalf of LCJE in which he expressed the hope that the new bishop would still be able to find time for Jewish evangelism.

The consecration service in Frederikstad Cathedral in southern Norway was held before an attendance of almost 1000 people, among them the Norwegian King and representatives from the Norwegian government. The diocese in which Ole Chr. Kvarme is now bishop is the second largest in Norway.

Since 1991 Ole Chr. Kvarme has served as President of LCJE. Internationally, he has made a remarkable effort for The United Bible Society, which was also accentuated in a speech on behalf of the guests from abroad by Fergus Macdonald, now General Secretary of UBS and until last year Chairman of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE).

In connection with the consecration of the new bishop a symposium was held the next day with the title *Fanaticism, Reconciliation – and the*



*The new bishop is interviewed by Norwegian television and radio immediately after the consecration service.*

*Churches in the Middle East.* The symposium was held on the very same premises where the negotiations which led to the Oslo Accord were held. Whether the symposium will lead to similarly epoch-making decisions is questionable. Speakers from the Arab/Palestinian side were Riah Jarjour, General Secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches, and Riah Hanna Abu El-Assal, Anglican Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East. Representatives for Messianic Jews in Israel were Doron Even-Ari, Executive Secretary of the Bible Society in Israel, and Lisa Loden. In her paper Lisa Loden reached out the hand to reconciliation

between Palestinian Christians and Messianic Jews. It is difficult to say whether or not that invitation was accepted. In their own contributions the Arab representatives had not with one word hinted at the existence of Jesus-believing Jews in Israel.

*Kai Kjær-Hansen*

## Book Review

### God's Special People

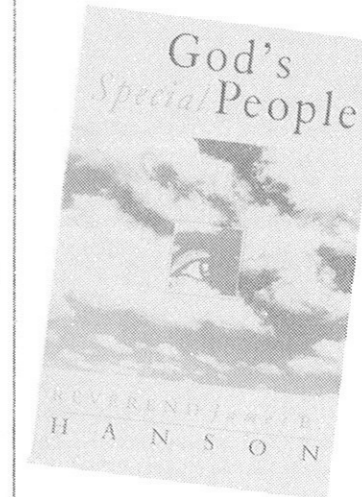
By James E. Hanson

Reverend James E. Hanson, executive director of the Ministry of Hope and over many years a member of LCJE, has written a highly readable book entitled *God's Special People*. Just as the Israelites were instructed to bring a light to the Gentiles, so Christians today are given a mission to bring everyone into this fellowship of love and obedience to God. Only in this way can all God's people recognize their uniqueness and eternal destiny.

In the Preface James E. Hanson writes:

"There is a tremendous loss in our understanding of scripture when we fail to see the unity of all sixty-six books of the Bible. Christians think that God used to save Israel by the law, but now we are saved by grace. Unfortunately, many Christians are left with doubts about grace because they remember God as a God of law and punishment. Many struggling souls have been comforted when I showed them that God always saved by grace, whether in the Old Covenant or the New Covenant.

There is a terrible loss when Christians fail to see the continuity of scripture, which always originates from



*Minerva Press, London – Atlanta – Montreux – Sydney, 1998.*

God. We need to get over the pitiful arguments on how God arranged to have Moses, the prophets and apostles write what He wanted us to know. That is God's domain just as the sacrament of communion must be. Moses, the prophet, Jesus and the apostles all claimed that they spoke what God gave them to speak ...

How can we be effective evangelists if we fail to realize the authority of Gods Word, the faithfulness of God's covenant relationships

and the plan God revealed concerning Israel? There is no denying that Jewish believers brought the pagan Gentiles into their New Covenant, which was promised to them back in Jeremiah. This is covered in some depth in the second chapter.

Hopefully, you will discover the excitement of learning about God's faithfulness as He works the miracle of salvation in the life of Israel. This is the God you will share with all those you meet as an evangelist."

The book has 174 pages, costs GBP 5.99.

In the UK is can be ordered from Unity Distribution, fax 011 – 44 – 1536 741766, and in the USA from Ministry of Hope, fax 941-792- 1364.

*kk-h*

## Book Review

### Witnessing to Jews Practical ways to relate the love of Jesus

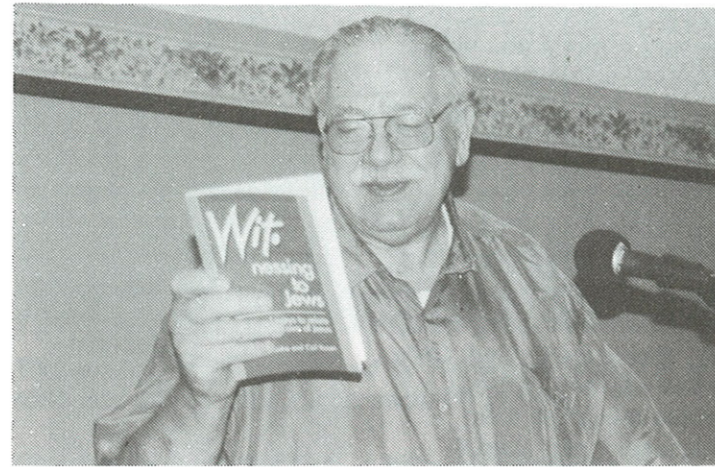
By Moishe and Ceil Rosen

Jews for Jesus founder Moishe Rosen and his wife Ceil have written an essential guide for witnessing to the Jewish people. In this book one finds a wealth of wisdom and experience from decades of personal witnessing to Jews. As always when Moishe Rosen speaks, it is direct and without beating about the bush. Here are a few extracts:

"Let people know right away that you believe in Jesus as Messiah and Savior, and that you intend to tell them about Him. To fly under a false flag is wrong. As a Jewish believer, I also mention my Jewishness at the outset of a budding relationship. If people don't want to be friends with me because I'm Jewish, they don't have to. Likewise, if they don't want to be friends with me because I'm an evangelical Christian, they don't have to.

Don't crave acceptance so much that you water down your message. That leaves the person to whom you want to witness with a fuzzy image of what Christ is.

You need to make clear your intent to evangelize. If you allow people to think that you will not witness to



Moishe Rosen at the LCJE meeting in San Diego, March 1998, with his and his wife's newly published book.

them, it diminishes their perceived value of a relationship with Jesus Christ.

It's better that people think of you as a friendly "fanatic" who seeks every opportunity to bring Christ into a conversation than a friendly person who just happens to believe in Jesus. Will such eagerness to share the gospel isolate you from others? No. I have found that such a stance actually draws unbelievers."

Moishe Rosen finds that one should present Jewish unbelievers directly with the claims of Christ. The Gospel of John is the clearest and most powerful way to accomplish that, he argues.

And he continues:

"Contrary to previous widely used evangelistic methods, I have come to believe from a personal experience that the deity of Christ should be the first matter to be addressed rather than the last. John 1:1 immediately establishes the deity of Christ.

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'

Don't be afraid to assert that doctrine from the start. Then continue ..."

The 138-page book can be ordered from Purple Pomegranate Productions, 80 Page Street, San Francisco, CA 94102. *kk-h*

## Book Review

### The Voice of the Lord Messianic Jewish Daily Devotional

Edited by David J. Rudolph

Messianic Jewish Publisher, a division of The Lederer Foundation, has published a devotional with dates provided through the year 2004. Each devotional takes up one page and concludes with a short resolution beginning "Today I will .." and below it there is an empty space with the heading *Prayer Focus*, where the reader can write his or her own prayer requests.

22 persons have among them written the devotionals.



Steffi Rubin comments on this in *Messianic Jewish Life* (the new name of the magazine which is published by International Messianic Jewish Alliance): "To list all the names of the

contributors to this devotional would be like reading a list of Who's Who in Messianic Judaism. Here is something that Messianic Jews have long been awaiting - words that encourage and give insight into the Jewish Scriptures - the Old and New Testaments."

The 416-page book costs USD 19.99. It is distributed by Messianic Jewish Resources International, e-mail: [MessJewCom@aol.com](mailto:MessJewCom@aol.com)

### MEETINGS

#### LCJE North America

The next meeting will be held in St. Louis, 8-10 March, 1999. Further information, Fred Klett: [lcje-na@juno.com](mailto:lcje-na@juno.com).

#### LCJE E-MAIL

LCJE International's e-mail address: [lcje-int@post3.tele.dk](mailto:lcje-int@post3.tele.dk)

### The Messianic Connection!

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### MISHKAN

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

### Next International LCJE Conference

The Sixth International LCJE Conference will be held in New York, 12-17 August 1999.