



**LAUSANNE
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ON JEWISH
EVANGELISM**

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**LAUSANNE CONSULTATION
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BULLETIN**



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"Good News: There Is Still Room at the Inn"

Under that heading the magazine *Christians and Israel* (October 1999) writes that even if the number of visitors in the year 2000 will greatly exceed the projected 2½ - 3 million, hotel rooms are still available for next year in Israel, Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert promises.

Addressing a gathering of 5,000 Christians who had come to participate in this year's Feast of Tabernacles, Olmert is quoted for the following in another article in the same magazine:

"This is the last year before the end of a millennium and the beginning of a new one, and I already am excited when I think of how this Feast will be next year. What a Feast it will be! I think - I don't know for sure but I feel very strongly, and I am sure many of you do too - that God wants you to be here next year with enormous presence, enormous power, enormous love, enormous emotion for this extraordinary year, the year 2000, here in Jerusalem."

In a statement issued by the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ) this year's Tabernacles celebration was hailed as "an exceptional opportunity for Israel's leaders to reach out through us to the entire Christian world with the message that Israel is ready to welcome all who share our faith on the eve of the new millennium. We deeply appreciate Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert coming to deliver just such a stirring invitation last night."

Of course it is fine that Israel invites Christians from abroad to visit Israel in the year 2,000. But it is hardly surprising. Israel needs the support of foreign Christians. It is of much greater importance to point to the fact that the majority of Israeli people have no room for the Gospel of Jesus the Messiah and that the biggest challenge for local believers in 2000 is to continue to deliver an invitation to Israel to accept Jesus as her Messiah.

If Christians from abroad can help them with this with enormous power, enormous love and enormous emotion in the year 2000, there is room for rejoicing. What a year it will be!

There is less room for rejoicing if we keep quiet about the fact that Israel - as well as everybody else - need Jesus for salvation.

Kai Kjær-Hansen

Living Straight in a Crooked Generation

By Theresa Newell, North American LCJE Coordinator

Ruth is a favorite book of the Bible for me. This autumn I have been teaching it again to a church group reflecting on how similar the challenge of being a believer today is to the time of Ruth's day. I have learned four major things from this book:

1. It is possible to live a godly life in a time of moral corruption.

2. God uses people from all places and backgrounds for His purposes if they choose to trust Him and His ways.

3. God can turn my emptiness, pain and grief into fullness and joy.

4. God has a plan much bigger than I can imagine when I follow Him.

First, Ruth could be subtitled "Living Straight in a Crooked Generation." I love Ruth, Boaz and Naomi because they show me that it is possible to be a righteous God-worshipper in the midst of a culture which minimizes or ignores the things of God. The opening verse sets the scene: "In the days when the Judges ruled . . ." On the page before, the last verse of Judges reads: "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes" (Jud. 21:25). The country was in a state of moral bankruptcy and ethical chaos.

Secondly, Naomi's husband Elimelech took his family in this time out of



Theresa Newell

Bethlehem into Moab to escape a famine. Now, any Israelite might well ask: Can anything good come out of detestable Moab? It was the established eternal enemy of the Israelites, a nation born of incest. And yet there is the young widow "Ruth the Moabite" (1:22; 2:2, 6, 21). There must have been a sting in that title, but Ruth had made her commitment as a Yahweh believer in Chapter one, and her actions show nothing but loyal love to the Lord and to her mother-in-law, Naomi. Having been a good teacher of Torah in Moab, Naomi continues to instruct Ruth in the details of the laws of gleaning and of levirate marriage. Ruth responds in obedience. She has come under the "wings" of God's covenant and love.

Thirdly, these two widows are empty and bereft, having lost husbands and sons with no promise of hope. In making aliyah (can you see the shadow of the earlier

great Exodus as they enter the land?), their fortune begins to turn for "it is the beginning of the barley harvest" (1:22). From this point Naomi is enriched through Ruth more and more - a bushel of grain from a first day's gleaning, an overflow "doggy bag" from lunch, a full-time job in Boaz's fields for the remaining spring harvests, six measures of grain from the threshing floor, then a marriage and a baby! God can bring me from leanness to fullness beyond measure.

Finally, could they have known that the genealogy of the Messiah was being written with the happy birth to Ruth and Boaz of Obed? That kings would spring from the line of this incredible pair - one a Moabite and the other the son of Rahab of Jericho (cf Matthew 1:5)? How amazing our God is who decrees that this Messiah who would come through this line of the tribe of Judah would be "a light of revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to thy people Israel" (Luke 2:32). A bigger picture indeed!

LCJE North America

The next meeting will be held in Atlanta, 13-15 March, 2000.

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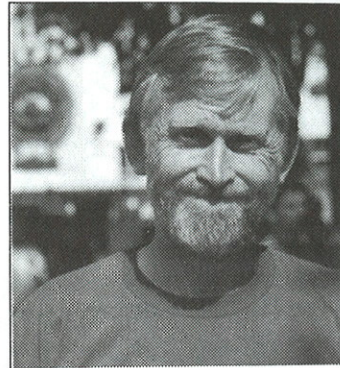
This is not the time

By Paul Morris, Christian Witness to Israel, United Kingdom

When it comes to doing the difficult work of building God's kingdom there has never been any shortage of people ready to say, "Now is not the time." Haggai was a prophet who had to contend with this attitude. In his day the building of the Temple by the returned exiles from Babylon had slowed down to something like a stone a day, or less, and the LORD gave him the unenviable task of stirring the people back into action. The initial reply he received was a confident, "The time has not come." On what the people based this conviction we are not told, so presumably it was little more than a feeling they had.

None of his hearers could have been unaware that their prime responsibility was to rebuild the temple, for only sixteen years had elapsed since they had begun the work with such enthusiasm. So what had happened? They had been worn down by opposition, gradually slowing to a halt, and now they were occupied with beautifying their own homes. But this reality was covered over with the pious excuse, "This is not the time." It is not difficult to fall into this trap today.

Spare a thought, and your prayers, for the missionary who receives a lot of opposition from "the Church", Synagogue and



Paul Morris' article, which appeared in the CWI Herald, Autumn 1999, is reprinted here with permission.

individual Jews, as well as such persistent whisperings of Satan as "Why bother?" Thank God that Jewish people are being saved, but a lot of opposition has to be braved in the process.

Now such pressures are not so difficult to resist when the suggested alternative is as carnal as "Relax, take a trip down to the Supermarket." They are slightly more difficult to discern when the suggestion is "Rest a bit, read a book on Judaism", but when the suggestion is "Now is not the time" it seems that the subtlety has caught many off guard. I am referring to Christians who think they know this is a special time in God's purposes for the Jews, so they hold back from evangelism and engage in something more

comfortable for Jewish people (and themselves.)

One of history's greatest missionaries to the Jews, John Wilkinson, who worked for the British Jews Society in the 19th century, made the mistake of thinking that God would soon send all the Jews of London back to Palestine, so he wanted the Mission to focus on evangelising them. He was wrong, but it did not matter greatly because he got on with evangelising the Jews of London. He was mistaken about the details of God's purposes, but correct in his evangelistic strategy. People today are making the same mistake about the details of the Lord's purposes; they believe they know the timing of God's plans for Israel, but they are doing what Wilkinson would never have done, they are holding back the Gospel.

Our Lord had some very pertinent words to say on this issue. When the Apostles asked Him a question which showed a desire for an insight into the details of God's purposes they were rebuked: "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father has put in His own authority." (Acts 1:7) And that was rapidly followed by a clear statement of their responsibility to be witnesses to Jew and Gentile. The message could not have

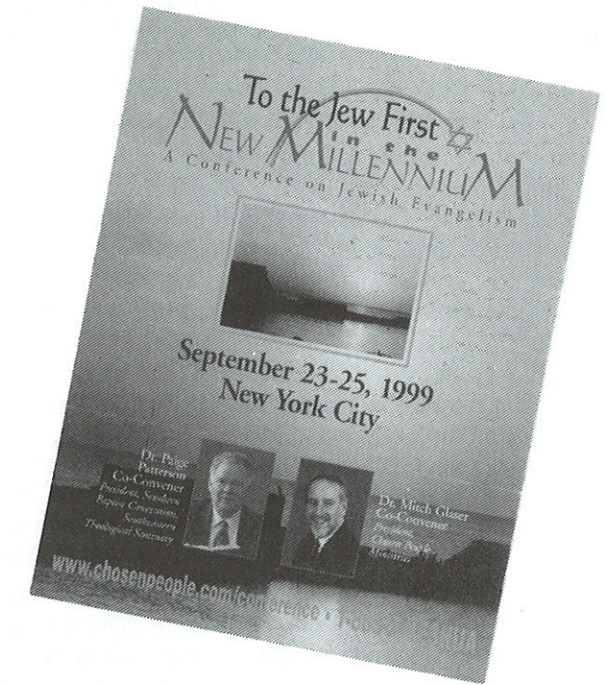
been clearer – God is not revealing to anyone in advance such a detail as the timing of His purposes for Jew and Gentile, but He is commanding us to evangelise. "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things

which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this Law." (Deuteronomy 29:29) When the secret purposes of God unfold we shall know and marvel, but He is not charging us with the

responsibility of forwarding them other than by the work of evangelism and mission. By God's power let us be doing just that, and giving our support to those who do it, and not to those who do not.

Open Letters

"To the Jew First in the New Millennium" was the theme for a conference on Jewish Evangelism convened by Chosen People Ministries in New York City at the end of September 1999. Co-Convenor was Dr. Paige Patterson, who is President of Southern Baptist Convention. Before as well as during the conference there was an exchange of letters between Dr. Patterson and representatives of the Jewish community. We reproduce a few of them below.



From Abraham H. Foxman, Anti-Defamation League
To Paige Patterson, Southern Baptist Convention
8 September 1999

Dear Rev. Patterson:

We are shocked and deeply offended by the recent call for members of the Southern Baptist Convention to pray that Jews will convert to Christianity during the High Holy Days. The invitation is an arrogant way of denigrating the Jewish religion and the sacredness of our High Holy Days of reckoning and repentance. It also projects a message of spiritual narrowness that invites theological hatred. This was the

atmosphere that pervaded European Christianity for centuries and prepared the way toward the pagan anti-Semitism of the Holocaust. We strongly denounce this religious fanaticism that does harm to the peace and spiritual welfare of the country.

Sincerely,
Abraham H. Foxman, National Director

From Paige Patterson, Southern Baptist Convention
To Abraham H. Foxman, Anti-Defamation League
15 September 1999

Dear Mr. Foxman:

Your letter of September 8, 1999, is in hand. Let me begin by saying that I think I can speak for most Southern Baptists in saying that we always regret it when someone else is offended or hurt about something we do. It is our joy to make people happy and our sadness to make them unhappy.

On the other hand, Mr. Foxman, we have a significant problem. One Jew has told us that we are to pray that all men everywhere, especially His own ethnic people, would come to Christ and that we should tell the message of His sacrificial love as demonstrated in the cross to every single person. Still another Jewish theologian, whom we greatly respect, has stated that the gospel is "for the Jew first and then also to the Gentile." Another Jew now tells me that we ought not to do these things and that they are offensive. Therefore, I am caught in a terrible bind between Jewish groups. In this case, Mr. Foxman, I really have no alternative except to follow the advice of the Jew who died for me on the cross that I might have life abundant in the present time and eternal life in the days to come.

Furthermore, the Anti-Defamation League needs to do its homework a little more thoroughly and attempt to discern who is friend and who is not. Baptists alone through the years, among all the denominations of Christendom, stood against religious coercion or deception of any kind. We are still prepared, if necessary, to stand with drawn sword by your side to protect you and any others who wish to have absolute religious liberty, free from coercion. But while we stand there beside you in what hopefully we can agree is mutual commitment, we will have to understand that we are standing in an open marketplace of religious ideas where it is perfectly permissible for all people to share their most cherished ideas as long as they do not coerce anyone else to a position. If persons change their minds upon hearing the evidences, that happens to be okay in a free world also.

Finally, your charges of arrogance and of denigrating the Jewish religion and the sacredness of High Holy Days, as well as of spiritual narrowness, theological hatred, propagation of anti-Semitism, and participation in the Holocaust are all patently false when they are applied to your Southern Baptist friends.

However, if you would like an example of the kind of "religious fanaticism" that you claim is so harmful, you might try reading Abraham Foxman's letter of September 8, 1999, to Paige Patterson. False accusations and innuendos void of evidence and replete with the refusal to honor genuine religious liberty, which like genuine economic liberty means a free marketplace of ideas with the best and truest concept emerging as the likely victor, is not a particularly becoming position for Jewish people in general nor for the Anti-Defamation League in particular. Thank God most of my Jewish friends have a very different attitude.

By the way, Mr. Foxman, instead of railing against the kindness of friends, why don't you send out a letter to all of your Jewish friends listing Christian Holy Days and decide to pray

for all of us on those days? We welcome prayer in our behalf from any source. I pray that you will reach that point also. Thank you for writing. God's blessing upon you.

Until He Comes,
Paige Patterson

From Dr. Philip Abramowitz, Task Force on Missionaries and Cults
To Paige Patterson, Southern Baptist Convention
23 September 1999

Dear Rev. Patterson,

The Jewish Community Relations Council of New York vigorously protests your role as co-convenor of "To the Jew First in the New Millennium Conference on Jewish Evangelism", scheduled to begin in New York City today.

Your participation as President of the Southern Baptist Convention represents an embrace of a conversion modality that is deceptive and highly offensive to the Jewish community. We understand that Southern Baptists believe in an obligation to convert all peoples including Jews. Fulfilling religious mandates, however, must be done with the highest level of integrity.

The Southern Baptist Convention has been increasingly vocal in its support of not just Jewish evangelism, but deceptive tactics to convert Jews. These tactics include the misappropriation of some of Judaism's most sacred and meaningful rituals and symbols for the purpose of creating a setting more conducive for Jews to engage in Christian worship. The claim is made that one can embrace Christianity and still retain one's religious identity as a Jew. The official news service of the Southern Baptists (Sept. 10, 1999) went so far as to attempt to let Christian converts define the boundaries of Judaism.

All the movements with Judaism have jointly averred that conversion to Christianity removes one from participation in Jewish communal life and that the Christian belief in and worship of Jesus is incompatible with any authentic form of Jewish practice. The Jewish community does not seek to define the parameters of Christianity, we ask from Southern Baptists the same courtesy.

With this in mind we must inform you that the Conference that you are co-convening is deeply disturbing to the Jewish community. This gathering promotes the misuse of our most sacred themes and symbols to the cause of conversion. Since theologically it is irrelevant to Southern Baptists whether converts maintain any sort of association with Jewish rituals and symbols, these deeply sacred and meaningful objects and customs are essentially being used as props to make it more comfortable for Jews to accept Jesus. The use of our High Holyday season, especially the Days of Awe, to promote both a nationwide conversion as well as a local New York effort (done in conjunction with this conference) was particularly distasteful.

The fact that you are scheduled to give the concluding address as a Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot) celebration in a church only underscores our deep concerns.

The JCRC [Jewish Community Relations Council] calls on the Southern Baptist Convention to repent of its embrace of deceptive tactics and conduct itself in a spirit of honesty and respect.

Sincerely,
Dr. Philip Abramowitz, Director

From Paige Patterson, Southern Baptist Convention
To Dr. Philip Abramowitz, Task Force on Missionaries and Cults
24 September 1999

Dear Dr. Abramowitz.

Your letter of September 23, 1999, arrived today. In response, I, too, "vigorously protest" (1) your attempts to interdict by intimidation the religious liberty that the founders of this country sought to guarantee; (2) your false and reckless accusations that "tactics" are being employed that are in any way deceptive; (3) your attempts to intimidate those sons and daughters of Abraham who wish to acknowledge Jesus as the long awaited fulfillment of God's riches promises to Abraham.

Now, my friend, let us lay aside such "protests", which accomplish nothing, and get down to business. First, you need to make a realistic assessment of who your friends are. Evangelicals in general, and Southern Baptists in particular, recognize their indebtedness to Judaism and to Jews as no other group on earth. Furthermore, evangelicals in general, and Southern Baptists in particular, are about the only groups on earth who fight for and pray for absolute religious liberty and freedom from coercion in religious matters for all men and women. Given the paucity of such groups who are true friends of religious liberty in our world, your organization would do well to quell the shrill rhetoric and be grateful for every adherent of religious liberty.

Dr. Abramowitz, we do regret when we are offensive to anyone, especially to our Jewish neighbors. We, like most other people, want to be loved, and we gain no joy in causing offense to any. But your charges of "deception" are simply false, belonging to the genre mentality that says, "If you cannot debate the facts, disparage the witness." There is nothing deceptive about our message that Jesus is the fulfillment of all messianic prophecy, that He is God incarnate who was virgin-born, sinless, crucified as a vicarious, substitutionary atonement for the sins of all men, raised from the dead and coming again to receive every born-again Jew and Gentile to Himself. These are our well known convictions. We conceal them from no one.

While I respect your view that a person ceases to be a Jew when he comes to Christ, I disagree if that means that he would cease to be the offspring of Abraham. That reality is, I would suppose, genetically unalterable. But while I respect your views I also must respect the views of Jewish friends who have embraced Jesus as Messiah and still claim to be Jews. After all, this is precisely the claim of the apostle Paul, who said after having trusted in Jesus the Christ, "I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today. I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women" (Acts 22:3-4).

Finally, my friend, you have me in a bit of a dilemma. One group of Jews insists that I must desist from praying that my Jewish friends will understand that Jesus loves them, died for them, and is the fulfillment of all messianic prophecy. Another Jew has told me that I must do these very things out of the love of gratitude of my heart. Dr. Abramowitz, if it is all the same with you, I believe I will follow the instructions of the Jew who died for me on a Roman cross somewhere around A.D. 33 and with whom I now enjoy a most holy and rewarding daily walk.

Until He Comes,
Paige Patterson

A Blessed Sabbath of Baptism

Everything was ready

Everything was ready: the eight candidates for baptism had undergone the pre-baptismal course, been interviewed and given very clear testimony to the saving grace of God in their lives. The Elders had determined who of the four of us will conduct the baptism and who will distribute communion in the course of the service which always follows a baptism. The deacons had, as a matter of course informed the police that we would be conducting baptism and that trouble could be expected. The fact, times and routes of the buses were given to the police so they could take whatever measures they saw fit in advance. The buses had been hired, the Baptist village booked and the whole church informed.

In Ashkelon, the site of previous violence, there was no trouble of any kind. The bus made its way through the city and on to the Baptist village. The pickups in Ashdod also went through without a hitch. Last time the local Orthodox has blocked the way, forced a bus to stop and insisted that their leader be allowed to lecture the passengers about the error of their ways in following "that man" - only to discover that they had stopped the wrong bus and that the bewildered and then angry workers protested being held

This article and the next are from MaozNews, edited by Baruch Maoz, Grace and Truth Christian Assembly, Rishon Letzion, Israel.

MaozNews is an "electronic periodical on the Jewish Christian scene in Israel, written from a Reformed point of view."

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up on their way to work.

An encounter with the orthodox

As we made our way to the congregational hall in Rishon LeTzion, where another bus was to collect more passengers, Baruch received through his mobile telephone the "all's fine" notices from Ashkelon and Ashdod. A few minutes later notice came from the hall that a group of Orthodox was beginning to gather at the entrance to the hall, that the bus was soon to arrive and that the many awaiting the bus were comfortable in the congregational building or enjoying the bright sun outside. We pulled up at the entrance, where some 15 black-garbed young men led by a slightly older man awaited us.

"Here's their priest!", one of them exclaimed as Baruch alighted from the vehicle and

went to greet the congregants and to ensure that everything was in order. The Deacons had everything under control and everything was in order. No one was intimidated by the scowling faces of the men in black at the entrance, and no one seemed to care that they were there. The bus arrived, so Baruch made his way back to his car and witnessed the quiet, orderly exit of the congregation from the hall as it made its way through a gauntlet of protesting young men in black, some using less than pleasant language. It was a joy to see the quiet confidence with which the congregation responded to the protests.

The leader turned to Baruch. "Excuse me, are you responsible for these people?"

- "No, they are

responsible for themselves. I simply serve them as a teacher".

- "I would like to ask you, aren't you ashamed to baptise good Jews into Christianity?"

- "Ashamed? No at all! But you have got it all wrong. For one, four of those who are about to be baptised are Arab..." - a look of complete astonishment spread over his face. What on earth were Jews and Arabs doing together??! "For another, we do not baptise people into Christianity but into Christ, the Messiah. It is not religion that saves them but God by his mercy through the promised Messiah".

Overcoming his initial surprise, the gentleman asked again "Do these people know what they are doing, or have you brainwashed them, or perhaps offered them money?"

- "We do not brainwash anyone. Each person who is about to be baptised has made his own conscious and responsible choice before God - and we do not offer money to anyone. To do so in order to get them to be baptised is contrary to everything we believe in".

- "But they will no longer be Jewish!"

- "No so. We are the true Jews. You and the rabbis have hijacked Judaism and completely changed it nature. No Old testament prophet would recognise himself in you, in

your gab or in what you represent."

- "I'll tell you what. You tell me these people know what they are doing. Stop the bus, get the people off and let me address them. Then they can go to do whatever they want".

- "I'm sorry, but we can't let you disrupt today's plans. However, I'll tell you what: call me in the next few days and we'll arrange for you or anyone of your choice to come and address the congregation". With the conversation ended and we all made our way to the service.

The baptism and the service which followed

Four Arabs, one Nigerian and three Jewish people were baptised that day - a picture of the church in micro. Before the baptisms were performed, the congregation were asked: Are you ashamed to do what you are about to do? "No!" was the resounding answer. Immediately after the baptisms, the congregation made its way from the pool to the hall and broke out in hearty singing the praises of God. Those who had just been baptised sat on the front row, holding the bouquets of flowers the young people of the church had given them, their faces beaming with joy. The mother of one of the young people baptised sat behind her 17 year old, her face streaming with tears of joy.

Following the singing and

earnest prayer, a short message relating to the Lord's supper was delivered, reminding everyone of the wonder of God's sacrifice to save sinners. Those baptised were invited to stand before the congregation while the Elders laid hands on them and prayed that God would preserve these new believers, strengthen their faith, sanctify them and use them to his glory.

Communion was then first served to them, and then to the congregation at large. It takes some 15-20 minutes to distribute the bread and the wine to everyone who may partake. A hush fell over the congregation. Then the Elders and Deacons who distributed the bread and the wine were served by the pastor, who was in turn served by the Elders. A prayer of thanksgiving and praise was offered, followed by more congregational singing. Then the word of God was preached. We heard of the glory of Christ's Godhood, which renders his sacrifice effectual, and of the awesome wonder of the cross, which renders Christ a saviour from sin. The service ended with prayer and a benediction. For the next 2-3 hours the congregation spent time in fellowship as we opened our picnic meals and shared with everyone else.

Ashamed? Of what exactly?

New anti-Christian legislation discussed

From MaozNews 1.33, November 10, 1999

Latest development after a blessed Sabbath

On July 10 this year, under strenuous protest and nation-wide efforts to obstruct the event, Grace and Truth of Rishon LeTzion conducted a baptismal service for 12 new believers (see MaozNews No. 24). The religious press was incensed and responded with a barrage of "reports from the field" which enumerated the number of those who were to be baptized. Each report vied with the other for the most extravagant information. One such quoted the number 20 baptizees, another 36 and yet another 60. HaTsofeh topped all the reports with its quote of 400 - all but 12 of whom "had been saved from the clutches of the mission". In fact, 12 had completed the congregational pre-baptismal course all of whom were baptized. Following this event, Grace and Truth has coordinated with local police departments whenever special events took place, including another baptismal service.

On Wednesday, Nov. 10 1999, the Internet Affairs Committee of the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) met to discuss two subjects: 1) The efforts on the part of missionaries to baptize 400 Jews, and, 2) Police obstruction of efforts to restrict missionary activity in

Israel. The undersigned was invited and was joined by a representative of the United Christian Council in Israel and of the Messianic Action Committee.

The meeting was scheduled for two hours but went on for just over 2 1/2. The Chairman of the committee is MK (Member of Knesset) David Azoulai, representing Shas, the largest of the religious political parties in the country. A majority of the members of the Committee represent various religious parties. Those present at the Committee meeting described in this report numbered over 30, including "specialists in anti-missionary activity" from the two major groups engaged in what they describe as "the war against the mission", Yad LeAchim and Lev LeAchim (in Israel, "missionary" is equal to "evangelical"). The chairman commenced the meeting by stating that the Committee had gathered to study, discuss and find ways to deal with the "missionary menace threatening our people".

Most of the speakers were accorded 7-10 uninterrupted minutes and more to described the purported activities of "the missionaries" and repeated police failure to deal with them: The missionaries

offered bribes in order to obtain conversions, they preyed on the weakest elements of society, they took advantage of the innocence of children, their activities are an extension of the Nazi concentration camps, they threaten the fabric of the nation. The police appear to be completely indifferent, as they have consistently failed to find evidence of cases in which bribes were offered or children approached. It apparently never occurred to the those participating in the discussion that repeated failure to find evidence could actually mean that no bribes were ever offered. Nor did it occur to them that the police was merely upholding the laws of the land, which secure freedom of speech, of worship and of the dissemination of ideas. When the police representative said as much to the Orthodox MKs present, they were taken aback and expressed their disappointment.

Two of the three evangelical/Messianic representatives were allowed 5-7 minutes between them, but were interrupted repeatedly and their statements were left unheeded. Wild accusations were made, based on newspapers reports, on misrepresentations and on poor information. Mr. Daniel

Yahav, Pastor of Peniel Fellowship in Tiberias, was described as the General manager of a firm he left over seven years ago. Dugit bookshop was spoken of as offering bribes in the form of free cups of coffee as an incentive for conversion. In all, it was a sad performance, unworthy of a

parliament in the remotest parts of the globe, let alone that of a people as sophisticated as the Israelis. Following the discussion it was agreed 1) to bring concerted pressure on the police in order to secure prosecution, 2) to create in the Knesset as wide a lobby as possible, composed of

Knesset members from all sides of the political divide, in order to promote legislation that will restrict freedom of religious speech in Israel, 3) to instigate legislation specifically aimed at blocking evangelical/Messianic witness in the land.

The Jerusalem March

By a marcher anno 1999

The National Evangelism Committee was founded by the fellowship of the leaders of the Hebrew-speaking congregations. Once again this year it had the privilege of sponsoring the participation of believers in the Jerusalem March, which took place during Succoth (Feast of the Tabernacles), in October. The march, an annual event, is hosted and organized by the Jerusalem municipality. Banks, Factories, Firms, Scout groups, plants, etc., send their representatives to participate in the March (no charge).

Since its phenomenal growth, the Messianic movement also sent a group to march.

Jerusalem March
Approximately a hundred participants donned T-shirts and marched with Israeli Messianic believers the

length of Jaffa Rd. in Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles celebrations. They marched, danced and openly praised the Messiah Jesus in song in the streets of Jerusalem. They sang songs the length of the march and the spirit of celebration was expressed in the lovely work of the dancers and tambourinists. We were received with applause for most of the way. The Jerusalem March was also a time that brought together believers from all over the country. During that day of sharing, we learned more about each another, heard news of how God is working within the congregations across the country, prayed for one another and to gave thanks to the Father for the Family of believers we have in Israel. Many thousands of viewers as well as hundreds of cameras were witnesses to the fact that the movement is alive, well, and

growing in numbers in this our land.

However, because the movement is growing so fast, opposition is growing just as it did in the days of the disciples. Then, the Pharisees attacked the followers of Jesus. Today believers are attacked by the modern day equivalent of the Pharisees. Therefore, the march turned to be a time of open persecution. The anti-Messianic Yad L'Achim organization heard about the messianic participation after being informed by paid spies in the congregations. They decided to organize their own event parallel to that which was planned by the messianic believers. Forty-three orthodox extremists gathered from around the country with the sole purpose of harassing the believers as much as possible as they participated in the march.

The orthodox had the audacity of walking among



Group of Jewish believers in Jesus at an earlier Jerusalem March.

the rows of the believers marching and trying to persuade some of the believers to drop out and seek to study at the many schools they have. They shouted "traitors" and curses almost the whole way of the march. One of the men who tried to protect the group was kicked. The city sent border guards to accompany the marchers almost the entire route of the march. These guards evicted those who became too violent. The believers were not allowed by the city to hold signs with Bible verses on them but the anti-Messianic groups penetrated the ranks and waved signs warning the public about the Messianic Jews.

After the march the believers congregated in the park for a meal and fellowship. All 43 of the opposition also came and parked alongside of the believers. So a contingent of

soldiers was stationed to protect the believers. However, when the believers left, the orthodox surrounded 3 guys left to guard the equipment used in the parade while one went to bring the van back. Unfortunately, that person was delayed by traffic jams. So the three appealed to the soldiers who were about to leave, to wait awhile and give protection until the van arrived. The soldiers refused to stay. So the 3 were subjected to yelling and screaming in intense verbal harassment. The situation became especially tense when the orthodox began threatening to burn the van. About that time the driver arrived with the van and the 3 escaped with some kicks to their legs.

Despite the harassment it is hard to describe adequately the joy involved when marching through the streets of Jerusalem, singing

praises and blessing the Lord before all the multitudes. Sometimes it seems incredible that we could publicly proclaim the praises of Messiah Yeshua, all to the applause of the inhabitants of the City! By and large, the testimony of Our Lord Jesus went out strongly in Jerusalem on that day and the people of Jerusalem heard. In some small way, it brought to mind the account of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem two thousand years ago, with the hosannas from the rejoicing crowds in Jerusalem!

Pray for the crowds who saw us that they may begin to think differently about the Messiah Yeshua and realize that Jews DO believe in Him. Pray for the orthodox men who harassed the believers, that their eyes may be opened just as was the case of that greatest of the Pharisees, Paul.

Projects Year-2000 – News from the Bible Society in Israel

Bible Experience Exhibition

The Bible Society in Israel is planning, designing, and preparing for the year-2000 and beyond to the third millennium. One project, the Bible Experience Exhibition, is an exhibit, at our location in Jerusalem, telling the fascinating story of how the Bible came to us. The exhibit will walk visitors (pilgrims and locals) through three particular areas of the development of the Bible as follows:

The development of Biblical languages – Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Display of materials used in recording the Word of God from generation to generation from early times when stone, ceramic, papyrus, and skin scroll manuscripts were used. Then, with the industrialization of printing, the Gutenberg press was used to print the first Luther Bible until the new technology of today.

2. Introduce, as an integral part of the exhibit, a selection of the first Bible or facsimile of a Bible published in a language. They will be displayed so that pilgrims and locals visiting the Holy Land will be able to see the first Bible published by their local Bible Society. This would give the pilgrim a new interest in their own Bible

Society and, hopefully, a renewed interest and thirst for the Lord and His Word.

A Biblical resource multi-media program that will provide the visitor with an opportunity to look at selections from the Bible in 2,200 languages.

Mobil Bible Exhibition

The Bible Society in Israel will construct two transportable exhibits in Hebrew and Arabic showing the history of how the Bible came to us pointing to its relevance today. The target audience is young people in schools, community centers, and churches. The schools, not normally open to participating in Christian events, are expected to allow some Christian presence in the year-2000. A van is needed to transport these exhibits around the country.

Galilee "Peace Portion" Project

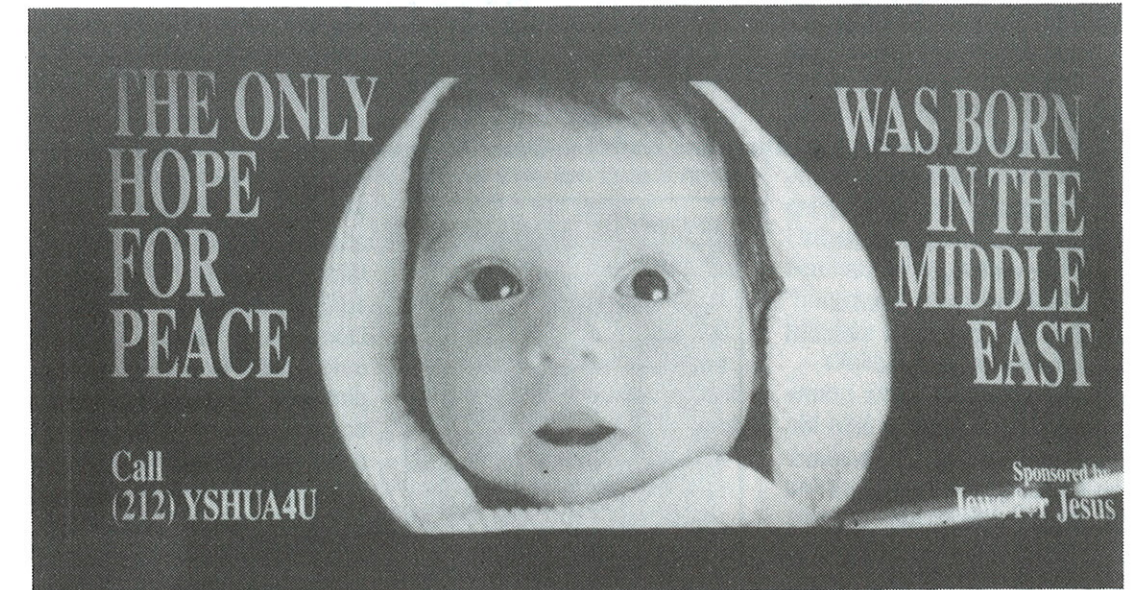
The peace portion is a photograph essay called "The Only Lasting Peace" published in cooperation with the Bible Societies in Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine with funding primarily from the Nordic countries. It will be printed in English, Hebrew, and Arabic. There are four sections in the book: The Loss of Peace; the Way to Peace;

the Result of Peace; and The Way for You. The aim of the book is: 1) To give the Biblical message of peace, specifically that peace between nations can never come unless people in those nations first have peace with God through Christ and 2) Although the book was produced for the Israeli/Palestinian situation, it was planned that the final product could be easily adapted to other language groups in conflict.

The idea of the peace portion project was born after a consultation with representatives from Israel and Palestine in Oslo a few years ago and then discussed with Bible Society leaders in the Middle East. The Norwegian Bible Society committed itself to coordinate the funding of the project and the Foreign Ministry in Norway promised to fund the preparatory work on the portion.

The peace portion is a book of about 48 pages with Biblical texts (including pictures) on peace from the Old and New Testament – peace with God, peace among men, and peace among nations.

The objective of the project is to revitalize the churches and Christian communities with regard to the religious, moral, and social-ethical aspects of



A few years ago a neon sign could be seen in New York City's subway. It announced: The only hope for peace—was born in the Middle East. The ad was sponsored by Jews for Jesus.

peace and renew the Christian ministry of reconciliation, faith, and hope in the churches at this time in history. Since the portion will be read by Christian communities in Arab countries, Palestine, and Israel and shared with Muslims and Jews alike, it should also be an instrument fostering coexistence on the grass-root level.

In Israel, we will be distributing the book in Hebrew and Arabic throughout the country. In the Galilee region, we plan a mass distribution of a new millennium package, including the peace portion in Arabic, an Arabic New Testament, and an evangelistic video.

The current status of the project is the artwork and translation from English to

Hebrew has been completed and the proofreading is in the final stage. The Arabic translation has almost been completed. The book will be printed in Egypt. We plan to print 30,000 copies in Hebrew in 1999 (10,000 to be distributed in 1999 and 20,000 in 2000). Specifically for the Galilee Peace Portion campaign, we plan to print 30,000 copies in Arabic in 1999, 40,000 in 2000, and 30,000 in 2001 (10,000 to be distributed in 1999, 40,000 in 2000, 30,000 in 2001, and 20,000 in 2002).

Concordance for the Modern Hebrew New Testament

The editorial work and proofreading have been completed on the concordance for the modern Hebrew New Testament. We

are examining printing options. We are also evaluating the possibility of making a CD containing the modern Hebrew New Testament and the new concordance.

New Millennium Brochure

In a joint project with the Ministry of Tourism in Israel, United Christian Council in Israel (UCCI), and BSI, a new millennium brochure was published that includes a millennium message and greeting from the BSI. This brochure will be distributed worldwide through the Ministry of Tourism to pilgrims and tourists. In addition to English, the brochure will be translated into five other languages.

Preaching in the 21st Century as in the First Century!

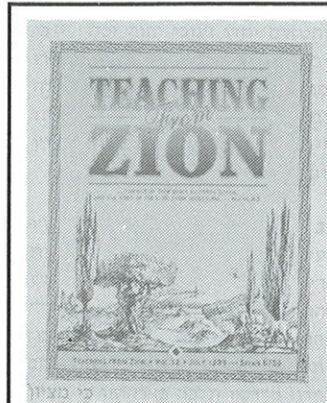
By Joseph Shulam,

Roeh Yisrael Congregation and Netivyah Bible Instruction Ministry, Jerusalem

Mass Media Evangelism through festivals, radio, and television

The idea of mass-media evangelism is also a western import into messianic Judaism. Mass-media evangelism is based on some of the same principles as street evangelism and passing "broadsides." The idea is to reach as many people and as quickly as possible with a "short" and "basic" message of the saving power of Yeshua. The basics of this idea seem at first glance sound. You bombard an area from the air, soften the population, and send in the ground troops to do the "mop-up" work and gather in the sheaves. Netivyah has been engaged since August of 1998 in radio broadcasts to Israel and Russia in Hebrew and Russian. We broadcast one hour each day – seven days per week. I consider this work important – just like the rest of the mass media outreach that is being done by the Jewish believers around the world. However, here again as we go into the 21st century we need to ask ourselves the hard questions that are demanded by both Scripture and common sense.

Since mass media is an expensive ordeal we must



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ask whether the results from such outreach are worth the effort and the expense. From observation of this phenomenon in Jewish evangelism it seems to me that the value of these campaigns for evangelism is still not totally clear.

Even when there are good results and lists of people who are willing to study the Word does the Body of the Messiah have the human resources to do a good job

with the follow-up work and actually bring people to the faith and to the congregations? Does mass media evangelism give a true picture of what is the community of faith – and does it promote a true Biblical faith? The reason I ask this question is the following. We have an ancient message that deals with the very universal and basic aspects of the human soul. Is it right to take this very simple and basic idea of faith and package it in the aluminum-foil of modern corporate culture? Obviously I am not against mass-media outreach. We do have a radio broadcast from Netivyah Bible Instruction Ministry. But I do feel that the question is valid and it might be that we need to ask the question in another way: "Do we have a mandate from God's Word to use any other tools and instruments of our culture to achieve the goal of evangelism?" The events of Pentecost that are recorded in Acts 2 have been a model for many of those who have organized mass evangelism both in local campaigns and through radio and television. There is one thing that they have often overlooked in what happened in Pentecost. The

events there were a fulfillment of prophecy. When we talk about Acts 2, it should be clear in our mind that the public that was present there was a different public than is available to most evangelistic efforts today. The public gathered for the feast of Pentecost in Jerusalem was a Jewish religious public. It was a mass of people who were primed with religious expectations. They had come for a pilgrimage to the Holy City and they were expecting to hear the Word of the Lord. When Peter and the others stood up to speak it was the Holy Spirit speaking through them, just like he spoke through Moses at the foot of Mt. Sinai. Today when we do a campaign we do not have either the prophetic realm nor the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Oh, yes! I do know that some claim to have that same inspiration. I have heard these claims in the Shavout '88 feast in Jerusalem. I have also seen the results of these claims and the damage that such false claims have brought to innocent and honest new believers in Israel.

Evangelism through Humanitarian Aid
Evangelism through humanitarian aid has become very popular in the ministries that work in Russian and the former Soviet Union. Some of these good works seem to be bona fide humanitarian operations

conducted out of a true desire to help people who are in need. Of course any time Christians, or Jews, or anyone, wants to help people who are in real need for help it will bring a blessing to the kingdom of God. However, humanitarian aid is used today in Jewish evangelism for reasons that are not purely humanitarian. In the former Soviet Union it is a "door opener." It is used slightly for humanitarian aid but much more to "make friends and influence people." In Israel it is a little more complicated, or shall I say much more complicated. The people who claim to do "humanitarian aid" in Israel also claim in Israel that they are not doing it for evangelistic reasons. The impression that they leave when they travel the world over to raise funds, however, is that they do evangelism. When I was in Japan last year (November 1998) a newspaper article of an interview with one of the leaders of such "love Israel" organizations was shown to me in Japanese and translated into English verbally. In the interview the pressman asked the representative of one of the large humanitarian aid ministries in Israel the following question: "How many Orthodox Jews has your ministry converted to Christianity?" The person answered: "Almost every day we have Orthodox Jews come to our ministry and receive help." The

newspaper man, and at least the people that spoke to me about this article, were all convinced that this ministry that does not "evangelize Jews" is actually doing a great job evangelizing Orthodox Jews and even Rabbis, through the "humanitarian aid" that they bring to Israel.

While there is nothing wrong in giving humanitarian aid and helping people who are in need a number of points need to be made clear in relationship to the present practices of some of these non-Jewish pseudo-missions to the Jews.

If money is given for aid to needy people as humanitarian aid it should be used for such aid only. It is not right to raise funds under the flag of humanitarian aid and use the majority of these funds for the mechanics of these organizations.

Aid is given only to those who need this aid and not for ulterior motives and to "officials" who receive this help with ulterior motives. Giving humanitarian aid is a wonderful thing to do but it is not "evangelism" – the faith and "hearing of the word of God" which transmits the Good News of Yeshua. Muslim charity organizations abound today in the whole world. These do millions and millions of dollars of "charity" and "humanitarian aid." No one can call just giving a blanket or a sack of food evangelism if the word of God does not go out with the food or blanket that is given.

The state of Israel has a law that is called "The Abramowitz Law" which Christian missionaries call "The anti-missions law." This law stipulates that giving money or anything equal to money (services) in order to convert a person is a crime punishable by a financial fine and/or a prison sentence of one year. I was glad when Israel passed this law because up until this time the major accusation that was levelled against Christians and Messianic Jews was that they give bribes and financial benefits to people to convert to Christianity. The impression was among most Israeli Jews that missionaries would give you money to convert to Christianity. I am sure that there were cases in which this kind of thing might have happened, but from my experience only very few such cases have actually occurred in the 37 years that I have been a believer in Israel. In fact, I cannot recall one case in which the evangelist did such an abominable thing as to give money or some other benefit to a person in order to convert the person to Christianity. For this precise reason I was happy that such a law was passed.

One of the major accusations against the "missions" in Israel and in Jewish communities has been and still is that "missions" give "financial help" as a way of "buying souls." It is a common

misconception that Jews become believers for financial help or gain. This is an ancient concept that finds its sources in the days of the Spanish Inquisition of the 14th and 15th centuries. When the Christians of Spain passed laws against the Jews – laws very much like the Nuremberg Laws that Hitler passed in Nazi Germany before World War II – Jews converted to be able to keep their jobs, or their lands and homes. This conversion of Jews to Catholicism was not a sincere conversion for most of them. While they promised the Catholic Church that they will no longer be Jews and they even changed their names, in secret they continued to practice the Jewish feasts and customs. This is precisely what the Inquisition was fighting. They were attempting to find "secret Jews" among the "New Christians." And when the Church found such secret Jews they brought them to tribunal of the Church and stretched them on the rack, or hung them by their feet, or cut them to pieces. So, in the Jewish community the idea that one only becomes a "Christian" for money is very deeply ingrained.

Because of these historical feelings "humanitarian" work among the Jewish people should be done with great care. "Humanitarian" work should be done for humanitarian reasons and not used as a spring board

for "evangelism." As Yeshua said: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." What the Jewish community needs to see from the Christian is "good works" and leave the rest of the work to our "Father in heaven." But of course the denominations and the missions cannot allow this to happen because without reports of Jews becoming Christians they cannot raise funds to continue their work.

With these modern western methods of evangelism much has been done since the 1960's in Israel. Many hundreds of Jewish people have been reached and brought to repentance to give their lives to God by faith in the Messiah. I say this not to disparage all those brave souls who love G-d and dedicated their lives to teach that Yeshua is the Messiah to the people of Israel, but to commend them. On the other hand we need to look both backwards and forward into the future and see how we can improve and do more to bring the Messiah to the Jewish people. The Messiah belongs to Israel – He is Israel's Messiah and because of this He is the savior of all mankind. God is like the father in the parable of the prodigal son. He is waiting for the son that left home to return. The promise is that "all Israel shall be saved." What should we do, and how should we do it, to make this

promise a reality before the Messiah comes back? This will be the subject that I would like to deal share with you in the next few pages.

What can we learn about Jewish Evangelism from the New Testament?

By taking the examples of the New Testament and especially from the book of the Acts of the Apostles I would like to study with you some things that might have gone unnoticed about evangelism. The greatest mass turning of Jews to the Messiah was on the Feast of Shavuot in Jerusalem. Shavuot is the Hebrew name for Pentecost. Pentecost means fifty. It is the counting of fifty days between Passover and the bringing of the first fruit of harvest to the Temple in Jerusalem. We read: "Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the Lord" (Lev. 23:16). What really happened on that day of Pentecost in Jerusalem?

Peter and the Apostles spoke in their native language: God made their language understood by all present. The point that I am attempting to bring here is that Peter might have been able to speak in Greek since Greek was the lingua franca of the time; Greek was very similar to English today. It is much easier for a person to be touched emotionally in his own mother tongue. The only time that I breakdown and cry in a theater is when

the tragedy is in Hebrew. Emotionally I do not communicate very well in English, although I do speak English well and for a long time. It is imperative for Messianic Jews to learn Hebrew, and learn it well if they want to reach out to the Jewish Community in Israel. Right now we have in Israel a situation that is very sad. We have people who are in leadership many years and their language is "Hebrish." Peter addressed issues that have a Jewish national and individual importance. The things that Peter addressed, the same that are recorded in Acts 2, are not very complicated. The message that Christians preach to Jews in Israel is often not relevant at all – and even if a Jew would agree with you that Yeshua is the Messiah it is very likely that he would turn and say, "AZ MA" – So what?" Those who would like to talk to Jews about the Messiah – please – learn what is important to Jews and address those issues first. Do not start with the teaching that Jesus is God! This is often the way that some of those Gentiles who call themselves "Messianic Jews" in Israel start to speak to Jews about Jesus. We must learn to scratch where we itch. And where Jews are concerned, learn first that they itch before you offer to scratch them, and please ask first where is it that they itch! Peter was not afraid of his audience: he spoke very

directly and substantiated his points from the Word of God. There is nothing more embarrassing than for the audience to feel that the speaker is afraid of them. It is like waving a red cloth in front of a bull. Courage is an essential ingredient for those who preach that Yeshua is the Messiah to Jews. Peter's message was effective because he spoke in the language of the people and on issues that interested the people and touched their hearts. He did not present the Good News like some great foreign scheme of redemption being imported from a far away country. I think that this point is of great importance. What missions and missionaries bring with them to Israel is often presented as a foreign religion – not as Judaism. There is a negative attitude towards Judaism that comes as part and parcel of western Christianity. Although we can learn many more things from Peter's presentation in Acts 2 the size of this magazine does not allow us to expand on this right now.

Peter's sermon in Acts 4 is another great example of preaching to the Jewish people. This teaching of Peter is still in Jerusalem and it takes place after the healing of a lame man near the Beautiful Gate at the eastern side of the Temple. Peter's audience is filled with the rulers of the people of Israel. There are in front of Peter elders of the people of

Israel and the scribes, Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, all who were of the high-priestly family. This point alone is worthy of mention in this lesson. When it comes to evangelism in Israel, most missionaries and missions, if they do any evangelism at all, do it in secret, under the table, hiding, or even denying that they are engaged in evangelism. Many of these organizations hide under the disguise of humanitarian aid organizations because they are afraid that their visa to stay in Israel will be revoked if they speak of Yeshua or are connected to the local Jewish believers. But Peter, he stood up in front of the leaders and rulers of Israel to speak of the Messiah. Peter starts his speech by a clear proclamation of the power of Yeshua the Messiah from Nazareth, who was crucified by you, and who was raised from the dead by God. I have heard so many "Christian" leaders come into the land of Israel, stand with Israel's dignitaries on the same stage and sing the praises of Israel for hours – and not even mention Yeshua or Jesus or Yeshu or by any other name the Messiah. So, lesson number one from the evangelists in the Book of Acts is: Do not fear the people with whom you are attempting to share the Good News.

The second thing that we see Peter doing in his

presentation to the elders and leaders of Israel is bringing proof from what is commonly called the "Old" Testament. He brings proof from sources that the people are familiar with – not from some Greek poet. To the Greeks Paul brings examples and proofs from a Greek poet, and that is legitimate. Peter brings a text from Psalm 118:22: "The stone which was rejected by you builders, has become the head of the corner." The small addition that Peter added in his speech – the word "you" in the middle of the text – has a great significance. He identifies the leaders and the elders of the people of Israel with those who rejected the "stone" that became the head of the corner. In other words Peter points a finger at the people with whom he is speaking and makes a direct relationship between the text and his audience. The third thing that Peter does to make the name of Yeshua the Messiah the only source of salvation available to mankind. Most western evangelicals would be offended by such an extreme fundamentalism, narrow-mindedness, and lack of love that Peter's words in Jerusalem carry in today's culture. Peter would be quickly condemned for this kind of exclusivity. Many "friends of Israel" these days are finding it convenient to hesitate on the question of the One Way of Salvation through Yeshua the

Messiah. There is a strong trend among liberal Christian theologians to say that Jews as the elect people of God have to be considered as "saved" because they have the promise of salvation in Romans 11:25–26. Well, we do have the promise of salvation, but there is in the front of this promise the word, "thus." This indicates, in my opinion, the way through which Israel will be saved. This "thus" means "in the same way." That "same way" of salvation is the way in which Abraham and Moses and David and all men kind are being saved – the way of hearing the Good News and believing it. In Acts 8 we find the story of the Samaritan revival and the Ethiopian eunuch. In Samaria it says: "Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did." Note that Philip preached the Messiah – the Christ. It is my opinion that we must return to this very simple method of evangelism – preaching, preaching, and preaching. The fancy methods to attract crowds and bring into the congregations a form of entertainment in the name of the Messiah that will avoid anything controversial or pointed or critical of anyone can fill the building, but can

they bring souls to the Kingdom of God? Does the new method of Psycho-Gospel preaching make disciples for Yeshua the Messiah? I am not saying this in a condemning voice, but I am asking these hard questions that might cause us all to think and evaluate. I can honestly say that from the over one hundred Jewish people that I have discipled for the Messiah – every one of them was reached through much study and much personal relation and a whole lot of listening.

Note the Ethiopian Eunuch at the end of Acts 8. Philip meets him on the Gaza road and enters into a discussion of God's Word. He starts where the man was reading. He does not take the man directly to the Words of Yeshua – but right in the text that the man was reading, in Isaiah 53, Philip apparently speaks to him of Yeshua the Messiah. A few hours later the Ethiopian Eunuch himself asks Philip, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" There is no pushing here, no buying of souls, no financial aid. In fact Philip made himself dependent on the Ethiopian eunuch. Philip was a guest on this gentleman's chariot. In Philippi Paul meets a woman by the name of Lydia a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira. This woman was a guest in the city and so she went out of the city by the river to worship God on the Sabbath day. She

was a Jewish woman who was faithful enough to find a quiet place to worship God even when she was a stranger in a strange city. All we know about the method by which Paul used to convince her that Yeshua is the Messiah is that "The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul." In the same city of Philippi, Paul and his partner Silas were put in jail. During the night God caused an earthquake to shake the jailhouse and open the doors. Paul and Silas do not run away. The jailer comes and sees them there. He says to them: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized." Note that Paul and Silas did two things. First, they answered the jailer's question with a firm positive answer of what he must do to be saved – he must believe that the Lord Yeshua is the Messiah. The second thing that they did that night was "they spoke the word of the Lord to him." I know all these examples seem so simple and so plain. In fact to most evangelists these examples seem too plain and too simple. But most cannot do this simple thing like

proclaim and speak the word of the Lord with simplicity and the force of love and the Holy Spirit. You see most evangelists – and I am speaking only about those who work in the Jewish context – do not know how to speak the word of the Lord in such a way that Jews will want to hear them. It starts with little things like putting the Bible on the floor and often ends with some anti-Jewish remark that is supposed to be cute.

There are many other examples in the book of Acts from which we can confirm and learn these same principles. All of the examples and principles in the word of God are simple. They involve the message, the messenger, and the open heart that is willing to hear the word of God.

It is my opinion that the methods that "work" in the West have not worked well in Israel and in Jewish evangelism. We ought to give a chance to the plain and simple truths of God's word. If what we tried did not work – why not go back and try what worked in the first century? This is a question! Menashe ben-Israel and Uriel Acosta, who lived in the 17th century, and R. Daniel Zion, who lived in the 20th century, are among those who did not give up their Jewishness and openly confessed Yeshua as Messiah.

The Christian Mission in Israel: A New Covenant Perspective

A revised version of an article published in *Teaching from Zion*, July 1999, by Menahem Benhayim, Jerusalem

It's a fact of life that the word "mission" has a negative ring to most Israeli Jews, secular or religious. To some, it's simply "theological anti-Semitism," a continuation of centuries-old attempts by the Christian Church to destroy Judaism and Jewish peoplehood; some would even link it to pagan Nazi genocide, as a bloodless attempt to destroy the Jewish people.

"Do you want a world without Jews?" the well-beloved Jewish theologian and interfaith leader, Abraham Heschel once questioned his Christian friends. Following the Holocaust, many Christian churches have responded with a resounding negative, and called a halt to evangelism directed towards Jews. Among these were the Roman Catholic and mainstream Protestant churches like the Presbyterians and the Methodists. Even the fundamentalist Billy Graham Crusades will not "target" Jews specifically.

Some Jewish believers in Yeshua, sensitive to our people's suffering at the hands of Christians of many kinds, will protest, "but these

persecutors weren't really Christians!" They would logically have to reject Martin Luther as a Christian; he wrote one of the most vicious and obscenely anti-Semitic books in history, 'The Jews and Their Lies'. This book was widely disseminated by the Nazis for promoting their racist anti-Jewish program. There were plenty of other "real" Christians to provide justification for anti-Jewish hatred from the days of the Church Fathers, to our own.

Yet, there were real Christians by any biblical standards, doctrinally and morally, who combined a lively faith and works of love for the Jewish people. Until very recently, however, they could do little to stem the tide of the assimilation of Jewish converts into Gentile churches where their Jewish identity was soon lost. At the same time, there have also been Jewish missions which have imported all the denominational divisions of Protestantism into the Jewish and Israeli context, which have hindered the development of a truly indigenous New Covenant Israeli community.

Pioneer evangelists like John Wilkinson with a strong faith in Israel's future glory, and Jewish believers like Joseph Rabinowitz, founder of the "Israelites of the New

Covenant," were unable to overcome the hidden "conspiracy" of mainstream Jews and Christians who insist that Jewish believers in Yeshua are no longer part of the Jewish people.

Most Jewish missions have believed that there is a national future for the Jewish people in Yeshua, and that Jewish believers should constitute a remnant within Israel, like the "Elijah remnant" of the apostle Paul's day (Rom 11:1-5). This Jewish remnant must remain a distinctive component within the Church, even as husband and wife united in marriage remain distinctive persons with that unity (Ephesians 2:11-22; 5:21-35).

Certainly, what happened in Chinese evangelism, which the pioneer evangelist, Hudson Taylor observed and denounced, happened in Jewish evangelism and is still happening today in many areas of Jewish evangelism. "The chief objection that prince and people have against Christianity," wrote Taylor, "is that it is a FOREIGN religion, and that its tendencies are to approximate believers to foreign nations."

Nevertheless, we can only commend those genuine evangelists and missionaries who have left their home communities to

share the Gospel with the few Jewish people willing to give them a fair hearing. We can only admire their willingness to bear not only the offence of the Gospel, but also the stumbling block of Christian history and theology, so marred by satanic invasions of the Church; to this day it casts a long shadow over their work. Surely we owe them a debt of gratitude and love for laying the foundations of much good work which has endured.

We all should pray and labor for that day when the work will truly be indigenous, led by local believers to whom any who join us from outside our community are willing to submit fully. Many who would like to see all missionaries, evangelists, and other ministers depart, or turn over their work and property to local believers immediately, forget that there are those among us who are immature and even abusive in the exercise of authority. The Book of Proverbs warns about situations where servants become masters and can be worse than tyrants and fools (30:21-23).

Meanwhile, the work of missionaries, evangelists and all other ministers should be focused on raising up a responsible servant ministry to our people in the spirit of Yeshua's words to his disciples, "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave" (Matt. 20:25-27).

In the renewed challenge to all believers who would take part in ministry to the Jewish people and the existing remnant it is necessary to consider basic realities. We are here, by God's grace, to help restore the Gospel message as a Jewish proclamation to the Jewish people, to evangelize and not to "evangelicalize." We must remove unbiblical additions and unhelpful traditions to the message while seeking New Covenant solutions to the gaps between Jewish practice and thought and the Christian "halakha" (walk) we have received from our Gentile brethren. We must learn to communicate to the kind of Jewish people Yeshua and the apostles reached, "the common people who heard him gladly," (Mark 12:37), and "the poor, the maimed, the blind and the lame." (Luke 14:12-24) We must also recognize that rejection and living "outside the camp" are still a part of messianic reality in this age (Heb. 13:11-13). We are a community with little worldly power, which is the way the early New Covenant community was; and in order to flourish, we must develop good will and spiritual service from the heart (Rom.12:1)

As in Zechariah's day, our community must not despise the day of small things(4:10), in order to be ready for the day of great revival, when an "all Israel" saved by the Lord shall be a visible reality. (Deu. 33:29; Rom. 11:26)

New LCJE Brochure

With this issue of the Bulletin you will find the new LCJE brochure produced by Susan Periman and Theresa Newell. Additional copies are available from Theresa Newell or the International Coordinator. For addresses, see back cover.

Operation Ezekiel Wants You!

In the latest Bulletin (September 1999) Bill Bjoraker wrote about "Israelis in America". He has asked us to bring this advertisement.

Operation Ezekiel wants you! We are an evangelism and congregation planting ministry to the 40,000 Hebrew-speaking Israeli Jewish emigres of Greater Los Angeles, CA. We have planted a Hebrew-speaking congregation of 20-25.

We are doing Hebrew-language cable TV programming reaching into the Israeli community.

We are impacting the State of Israel for Messiah Yeshua by reaching Israelis in LA, many of whom return to the Land as believers.

We are looking for workers - full time and "tent-makers" and Assistant Director position.

Contact:

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