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ON JEWISH
EVANGELISM**

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ON JEWISH EVANGELISM
BULLETIN**



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From the coordinator

Jerusalem 95

Slightly delayed, all individual and agency members of LCJE should by now have received program and registration form for next year's International Conference in Jerusalem. Additional programs can be obtained from the conference office at the Caspari Center, Jerusalem. People who are positively interested in Jewish evangelism, but not members of LCJE, are also welcome.

The conference will be in Jerusalem, 18-23 June 1995.

Registration and full payment are to be made by 1 April 1995.

As we have to furnish a considerable deposit to the conference centre already in January it is very important to have the registrations as soon as possible.

For people living in or in driving distance from Jerusalem it will be possible to participate without having accommodation at the conference hotel, but participation must include lunch, all coffees, and dinner.

For others, we strongly advise that they use the conference hotel.

All correspondence should be sent to

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The Jerusalem March and the Name of Jesus

By Kai Kjær-Hansen

Again this year a group of Messianic Jews participated in the so-called Jerusalem March, which takes place in connection with the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles. There were hundreds of big and smaller groups from Israel and abroad. The different groups with all kinds of banners and ensigns marching through the streets of Jerusalem are a festive sight.

The group of Messianic

Jews numbered about 200 persons, easily recognizable in their T-shirts which make no secret of the fact that they are Messianic Jews who believe in Jesus. Also with signs with quotations from Tannakh it was proclaimed that the Messianic Jews' Messiah is the redeemer: "He bore the sin of many" (Isaiah 53:12 NIV).

Not only is it strange to contemplate that - as far as

I know - it is only the Messianic Jews who dare to acknowledge the name of Jesus openly at this Jerusalem March. But it is also a strange experience to see Messianic Jews with signs bearing the name of Jesus in Hebrew pass the picture of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the late leader of the Habad Movement, who many considered - and still consider - the Messiah.



The text on some of the banners is: "The purpose with the whole creation is to praise the Creator" and "Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens" (Psalm 119:89 NIV).



From mid September and some weeks thereafter there were big posters of Schneerson at some bus stops in Jerusalem – and elsewhere in Israel. He has not been forgotten. As will be known, he died on 12 June this year.

Back to the Jerusalem March and the name of Jesus. It is true that not every shout of Jesus is necessarily an expression of genuine mission. And it is true that a Christian testimony may be expressed through one's presence, through the mere being what one is and through solidarity with the people in which one is placed.

But that should not prevent Christians of non-Jewish descent to ask

themselves some pertinent questions, e.g.: If Messianic Jews dare to use the name of Jesus, we non-Jewish believers are not afraid of it either, or are we? Also when we want to express our solidarity with Israel as such. Sometimes the Christian is placed in a situation where he has to choose between his solidarity with the word God or with the word Jesus. By choosing the word Jesus one has alienated some "friends".

In Jerusalem – the Sabbath supplement to *The Jerusalem Post* – had two very significant letters to the editor after the Jerusalem March. Sarah Kops begins her letter (14 October 1994) in the following way:

"I eagerly awaited the

viewing of the annual Jerusalem March. For me it was the first. The sight was most impressive and exhilarating, as group after group marched – singing their songs of brotherhood and peace. Then, to my dismay and disbelief, a contingent of Jews for Jesus appeared, singing their songs of salvation and their perverse message via a megaphone."

On 21 October A.R. Moses writes the following: "I fully agree with Sarah Kops' letter last week in which she asked why the missionary Jews for Jesus are included in the Jerusalem March. If they are included, so should neo-Nazis, the Ku Klux Klan and Louis Farrakhan. They all share a wish to destroy Judaism. The only difference is that Jews for Jesus and other Christian missionaries want to do it bloodlessly."

I hasten to add that I do *not* take these letters with their highly offensive tone to be representative of a general Jewish attitude to Messianic Jews – who are here called "Jews for Jesus". But that such Jewish voices are also heard makes it legitimate to cite them. Not in order to make Messianic Jews martyrs, but to support and encourage them to continue to hold high the name of Jesus and to challenge people who are sympathetic to Israel to dare to use the name of Jesus themselves.

LCJE Israel Seminar

By Bodil F. Skjøtt
Caspari Center, Jerusalem

On 21 October 1994 the Israeli chapter of LCJE had invited its members and friends to a one-day seminar where issues related to the concept of the Messiah according to Habad were presented and discussed.

The one-day seminar took place at the Immanuel House in Jaffo and about 20 people participated.

The seminar was led by Israeli LCJE coordinator Joseph Shulam, who used the opportunity to mention the next international conference in 1995 and the need for prayers and for planning for that on the part of the Israeli chapter.

The international coordinator, Kai Kjær-Hansen, who happened to be in Israel and therefore

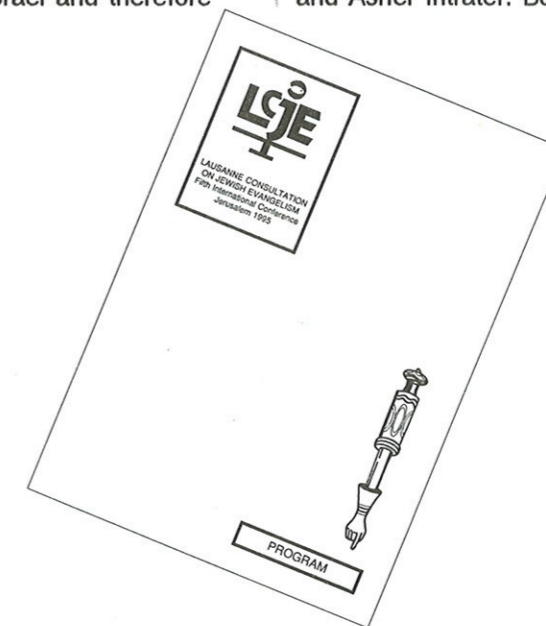
took part in the seminary, mentioned the need Jewish and Gentile believers have for each other in their common work for Jewish evangelism, a work where encouragement, honour and support for the work each one does are important. Only so can we hope to place Jewish evangelism on the agenda of the whole Church. LCJE has a contribution to make towards world evangelization: to say the Jews need Jesus as much as everybody else does.

The planned theological conferences in 1995 within the LCJE framework were mentioned and so was the up-coming international conference.

The two main speakers for the day were Tsvi Sadan and Asher Intrater. Both of

them addressed the main topic: The Habad Movement's conception of the Messiah. A collection of materials published within the Habad framework was distributed to all participants as a basis for the two presentations.

From both presentations it became clear that the important thing is not so much what is said about the Messiah as *who* is saying it. In the following discussion the idea was presented that an apologetic statement be made in which it should be spelled out what we mean when we say that Yeshua does not replace but renew and fulfil the Torah. We need to be ready to give examples of that and not only to present the concept in our discussion with others.



Jerusalem 95 is going to be a major event. Don't miss it!

Additional programs can be obtained from the Caspari Center, Jerusalem.

The Death of Messiah

By **Kearney Frantsen**
 Director of Good News for Israel
 Richfield, MN, USA

I'm glad Kai Kjær-Hansen got the idea for this book and had the motivation to get it into print. Twenty short-and-to-the-point articles by eighteen writers explore the reality and importance of Messiah Jesus for our time. Chapters 1,2,10 deal with the Messianic fervor surrounding the life and death of the late Rabbi Schneerson of Brooklyn. Other chapters refer to this phenomenon, too. At the beginning of the book we are reminded, "On 12 June 1994 Rabbi Schneerson died. Jesus of Nazareth is still alive."

The editor begins the book by showing how poignant are the parallels between Schneerson and Jesus. When a Messiah dies his followers find explanations. This leads inevitably into the sphere of faith. Jesus rose from the dead to transform his grieving disciples. *Kai Kjær-Hansen* says, "As a believer in Jesus, there is every reason to go on dating one's life from Jesus the Messiah and to go on saying to the living Messiah: 'Welcome

King Messiah!'"

Susan Perlman gives an update on what the press wrote about Schneerson. Responses of Schneerson's followers to his death ranged from concluding that this generation wasn't good enough, to this being a test of faith. *Noam Hendren* deals with the theme of "God's Messiah in the Tanakh". Yeshua 'fills the shoes' of the Davidic type and even surpasses it by being God's perfect King-Priest.

Ole Andersen does a nice concise job of separating Jesus from the Dead Sea Scrolls, even though two popular books attempt to make 'sensational identification' based on no scholarly support. *Ole Andersen* debunks them. *Torleif Elgvin* makes the surprising point that crucifixion was indeed a very 'Jewish thing to do' in Jesus' time.

Sam Nadler raises the question, and then deals effectively with it: Is the message of the suffering Messiah authoritatively Jewish? *Barry Rubin* is

inciteful in showing the connection between the two festivals of firstfruits – the first foretells the latter. The ultimate harvest of the resurrection of all mankind begins with the firstfruits of Messiah's resurrection.

Arthur Glasser writes about first-century Jewish Christianity – its achievements, disunity, unprecedented growth, and the Jewish 'advantage'. *Louis Goldberg*, writing on the Messianic idea in Judaism, describes the attempt to make the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 refer to the nation and not to a personal Messiah.

Carol Calise explains the Habad Movement and its claims for Schneerson's messiahship. By the way, the excellent Glossary shows that HABAD is 'an acronymic abbreviation' of the Hebrew words for wisdom, understanding, and knowledge.

Tsvi Sadan says, "the death of Habad's Rebbe revealed once again the inadequacy of the prevailing Jewish understanding of the identity of the Messiah". *Ray*

Pritz has an interesting chapter on date setting in history – and, no, he doesn't set a date for Messiah's return. *Arnold Fruchtenbaum* explores Jewish objections to Jesus, and he insistently keeps the focus on the real questions involved. *Walter Riggans* describes Jesus as a 'people person' who brought near God's love and rule.

Kai Kjær-Hansen in "The Triune God and the Jew Jesus" gets into the biblical language for God's threeness, and underscores the belief of the early Jewish believers in the divinity of Jesus. *David Sedaca* provides an overview of the developing Messianic movement the past 200 years. He notes that "by the end of 1993 165 independent Messianic Jewish congregations had been established worldwide, and a similar number of Jewish ministries and fellowships". *Bodil F. Skjøtt* tells about the two to three thousand Messianic believers in Israel. She reports that as a group they are causing Israel as a whole to reexamine the question of who is a Jew.

Tuvya Zaretsky's topic is "Jesus, Israel's Messiah – a Messiah for Israel. The proof and affirmation of Jesus' messiahship was in His resurrection in accordance

with the Hebrew Scriptures. *Stan Telchin* gives a shortened version of his powerful testimony. Study of the scriptural evidence was the key to his receiving Jesus as Messiah, Savior and Lord.

The editor ends the book with the topic of Jesus' return. He says, "The coming Messiah can only be the returning crucified and risen Jesus. Therefore, it is out of the question that anyone should look for a person on this earth who might seem suited to be Messiah – no matter what qualities such a person might possess."

I hope that I have whetted your appetite to read this book yourself. It is safe to say that you will not let this practical volume stagnate on your bookshelf, but will find yourself reaching for it again and again. Believer and unbeliever alike are challenged here to deal with the fundamental question of all time: Is Jesus the one and only Messiah for all time, or is He not? Let's get this book out to the Jewish people.

I've studied these various topics for 38 years, and I admit that I learned a lot from this book. This is a strong recommendation – as strong as I can make. You can effectively use this book personally and in your life of

witness.

The Caspari Center in Jerusalem deserves credit for this initiative and for the speed with which they published the book, in cooperation with Lederer Messianic Publications, Baltimore, MD, USA.

The Death of Messiah has been published in English, Ivrit, and Danish. A German translation is being prepared.

The English version (USD 7.95) can be obtained from Lederer Messianic Publications, Tel (410) 358-6471

The Handsel Press, Scotland, Tel 031 665 3488

Caspari Center, Jerusalem, Tel +972-2-251-933

The Ivrit version from the Caspari Center.

Evangelization on the sea front

By Kai Kjær-Hansen

It is Friday evening. The Sabbath has come. The Sabbath peace still pervades the Jewish part of Jerusalem – although it has been broken in some places: some restaurants and a few shops have been permitted to keep open in the Holy City.

One warm summer evening we drive down to Tel Aviv, and there it is different. The restaurants on the Mediterranean sea front are all open. And a lot of people are out at 9 in the evening when the heat is no longer so oppressive and the breeze from the sea makes

the temperature agreeable.

On Friday, 9 September, quite a few Messianic Jews are also out on the sea front or other places in Tel Aviv where people gather. They are easily recognizable in their white T-shirts with the Hebrew inscription on their backs: Yeshua is Messiah. They are getting ready to embark on an evangelistic outreach stretching over two days – or rather two evenings. The Christian bookshop *Dugit*, which is only 8–10 minutes away, is also open and invites people to a cup of coffee or a cold drink and a talk about Jesus.

A group of four stand up and sing on the sea front. They cause some to stop and listen. A couple of Jesus-believing Jews hand out tracts to people in the periphery of the audience. Passers-by take the tracts, some stick them in their pockets, others smile patronizingly when they realize that it is about Messiah, others, again, throw them away while the environment conscious part of the audience place them in the waste baskets. Apart from a few contemptuous remarks, nobody tries to interfere with the song group.



A heated discussion about whether Jesus is the Messiah.

A little further down the sea front, another group is performing a drama while others try to make contact with fellow-Jews about the Jew Messiah. The front of the tract which has been handed out provides the cue for the talk: "When the Messiah comes, how can you know that he is the Messiah?"

One is squatting beside a portrait painter who has no customers at the moment. They communicate in Russian. There is a group of seven or eight gathering around a couple of Messianic Jews. They speak Ivrit. The young man who is asking questions is occasionally interrupted by others who also have comments. The discussion is heated – Israeli, if you like. It is certainly in a way that I do not have gifts to discuss in if it is to be about Jesus. Yes, I suppose I am a little envious.

The Messianic Jew who acts as spokesman argues, repeatedly, that even if we did not have the New Testament, we would have to conclude on basis of the Hebrew Scriptures, the so-called Old Testament, that Jesus was, and is, the Messiah. He opens his Bible and asks the young man to read from it, the Bible which is the Bible of the Jewish people. And he points out that he is not the only one who believes that Jesus is the Messiah and that there are thousands of Jews all over the world who share

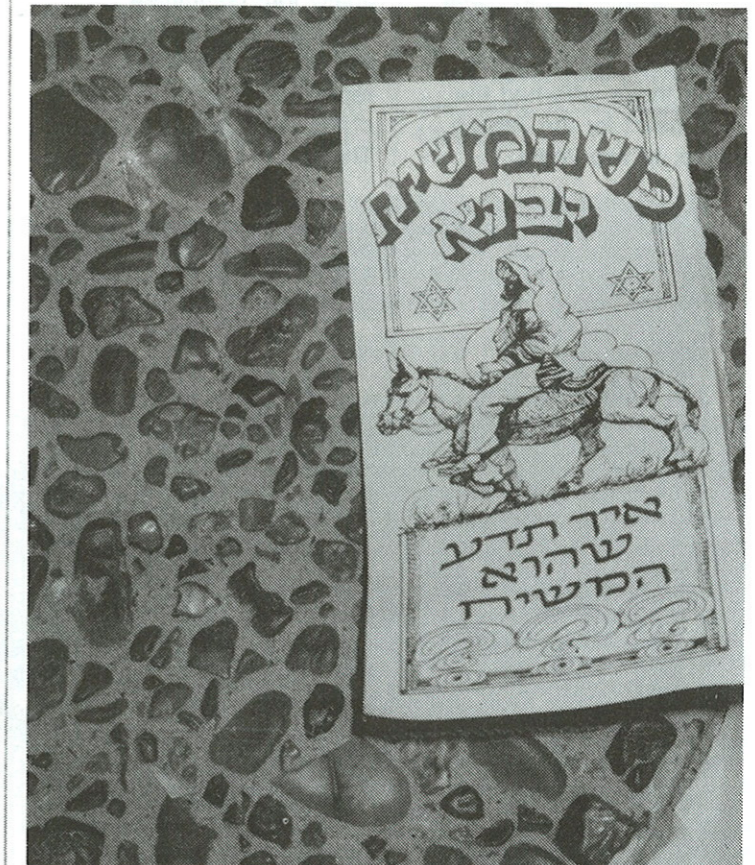
this belief.

In the car, on our way back to Jerusalem, we discuss the value of such evangelistic outreaches. It was quite surprising how easy it was to get in touch with other Jews in this way. Among Messianic Jews – as well as among Christians elsewhere in the world – opinions of the value of such efforts vary. Some think that it is a waste of resources and money. They will doubtless point to the tracts which end up in the waste

baskets as proof of their claim. Others will maintain that the preaching of the gospel is always connected with waste. In any case, such an outreach helps to show that today there are Jews who believe in Jesus as the Messiah. It also shows that it is *not* forbidden to evangelize in Israel, as it has sometimes been said.

I for one – as an anonymous spectator on the sea front – rejoiced.

Kai Kjær-Hansen



"When the Messiah comes, how will you be able to know that he is the Messiah?" Here the tract has ended on the pavement of the sea front.

LCJE Japanese Chapter Established

By Japanese Chapter Coordinator Kenichi Nakagawa

Since the Gulf War broke out, there has been an increasing interest among the Japanese Christians as well as the secular people concerning the Jewish people. I myself was prompted to speak for Israel after hearing an extremely anti-Semitic seminar by a well-known Japanese speaker just before the Gulf War.

As I continued to speak and write for the cause of Israel, the Lord began to gather those who had the same heart for the Jewish people. In two years, I

became convinced that the Japanese Christians should be more informed about the need of Jewish evangelism and that we now have enough pastors and organizational leaders to organize the LCJE Japanese Chapter.

Several preparatory meetings were held to discuss the procedures for establishing the chapter and finally four committee members were chosen. We wanted the committee to represent different segments of the Japanese Christianity. These are the four:

Kenichi Nakagawa, Evangelist and Pastor (President of Harvest Time Ministries and J & J Ministries)

Teiichiroh Koroda, Evangelist and Pastor (He has been ministering both in Japan and in Europe and Russia.)

Masami Ishida, Pastor (Baptist)

Tokio Tanaka, Pastor (His denomination, Seikyo-Dan, has a special burden for Israel. Some pastors from that denomination have been

praying for the salvation of Israel for over 50 years.)

The founding meeting was held on Oct. 23rd, 94 at Pastor Ishida's church in Yokohama. Before the meeting we sent out invitations to the meeting to those who had already shown some interest in LCJE and encouraged them to become members. There were about 70 attendants, of whom about 50 per cent were pastors. As of Oct. 23rd, 94 we have about 60 members including both individuals and organizations. We project the number to reach at 200 by the end of 1996.

God providentially

provided a speaker from England, Mr. Charles Middleton, who has been working among the Jews in Siberia for the last fifteen years through an organization based in Poland. He happened to be in Japan in Oct. In his lecture, he first laid a biblical foundation for the Jewish evangelism, and expounded the responsibility of the Gentile Christians for the Jewish people. Toward the end he shared how the Lord called him to this particular ministry. His lecture was very well planned and was full of insights for those who are yet new in the area of Jewish evangelism.

Then, I delivered a short

message titled "Blessings of Jewish Evangelism", in which I pointed out five major blessings that we the Gentile Christians will receive when involved in Jewish evangelism. It was aimed to encourage those who are not well versed in this topic to take a definite step to bless the Jewish people.

I am very happy to report that the whole atmosphere of the meeting was very enthusiastic and joyful. We are expecting that God will do new and mighty things in the land of the rising sun through those who love Israel.

We covet your prayer for this young LCJE Japanese Chapter.



Charles Middleton and Kenichi Nakagawa



The founding meeting of the Japanese Chapter of LCJE was held on Oct. 23rd, 94 in Yokohama.

A Survey of the History of Missions to the Jews in New York City 1900-1930

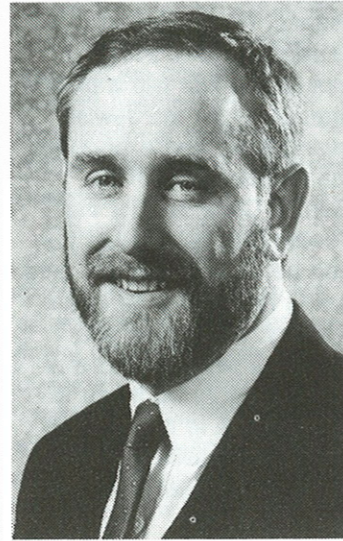
By Mitchell Glaser, Branch leader, Jews for Jesus, New York

Mitchell Glaser's article was presented as a paper at the North American LCJE meeting in New York in April. Notes and references to printed sources have been left out. The original manuscript can be obtained from Fred Klett, Box 133, Glenside, PA 19038, USA.

I. Introduction

The Purpose

The research will present an overview of missions to the Jews in New York City from the year 1900 until 1930. Jewish missions went through extensive changes during this thirty-year period; and whereas missions to the Jews was affected by World War I, the impact of the war upon the work in New York City was not as severe as it was upon Jewish missions in Europe. On the other hand, missions to the Jews were totally reshaped by World War II. The intent of this present research is to survey the character and work of missions to the Jews in the earlier part of our century, as after 1930 the Jewish community in Europe began a slow march towards destruction which did affect missions to the Jews in New York City.



The Limitations

The research is limited to the efforts of missions to the Jews, both denominational and non-denominational. This is not a history of fellowship groups or of Jewish believers in general except as that history affects missions to the Jews in New York City.

The efforts described will be limited to the five boroughs of New York City and once again the time period will be limited to the first thirty years of the century.

The sources for information are available on a limited basis, as many missions in the United States, unlike their British and European counterparts, did not keep very good

records. Therefore, any insights to the presentation will be regarded as helpful.

The Literature

The literature in the field consists mostly of books, testimonies and reports of particular missions and individuals associated with those missions. The Chosen People Ministry, a. k. a. The American Board of Missions to the Jews, has produced two "self histories," one by Leopold Cohn and another by his son, Joseph Hoffman Cohn.

A general summary of missionary work among the Jews of New York City in this century has not yet been written. The most significant effort produced in recent days which presents a corporate picture of missions to the Jews in America during the twentieth century is the dissertation by Daniel Evaritt entitled *Jewish-Christian Missions to Jews, 1820-1935*. Evaritt focuses on the United States as a whole, but emphasizes mission work in New York City. He limits his research to a few of the major missions and concludes the majority of his research prior to World War I. There have been a few books written on particular aspects of Jewish Christian history in this

century, but none focus on the evangelization of the Jewish people through mission work.

Another volume that is especially helpful in understanding and evaluating missions to the Jews in general during this period is the summary of the Atlantic City Conference on Jewish Missions, sponsored by the International Missionary Council's International Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews in 1931. This is the same group that sponsored conferences in Budapest (1927) and Warsaw (1928) which focused on European missions to the Jews during this same pre-World War II period. Material from the Atlantic City conference has bearing on mission efforts among the Jews of New York City mostly in the area of theology, motivation and a philosophy of ministry.

The volume that specifically described the efforts of the missionaries and the attitudes of the Jews towards the church and of the church towards the Jews was the unpublished manuscript by Charles Fahs, the Director of the Missionary Research Library located at Union Seminary in New York City. This was written in 1930 and designed for use as background material for the Atlantic City conference sponsored by the International Missionary Council's Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews in 1931.

II. The Status of the Jewish Community 1900 - 1930

According to Alfred E. Thompson in *A Century of Jewish Missions*, 60,000 Jews per year were emigrating to the United States, mostly from Central Europe, at the time he wrote his book in 1901.

This is plausible, as according to the American Jewish Yearbook of 1930-31, there were 230,257 Jews in the United States in 1880, 3,600,800 in 1920 and 4,228,029 in 1927.

The impact of this population shift from Europe to the United States, with New York City receiving the highest number of immigrants, would shape missions to the Jews in New York City during this period. (American Jewish Yearbook, 1931).

Louis Meyer, a missionary to the Jews, pastor, and early researcher in the field, describes at length the condition of the Jewish people, especially in New York. In an article that appeared in the *Missionary Review of the World* in 1907, Meyer notes the following immigration figures:

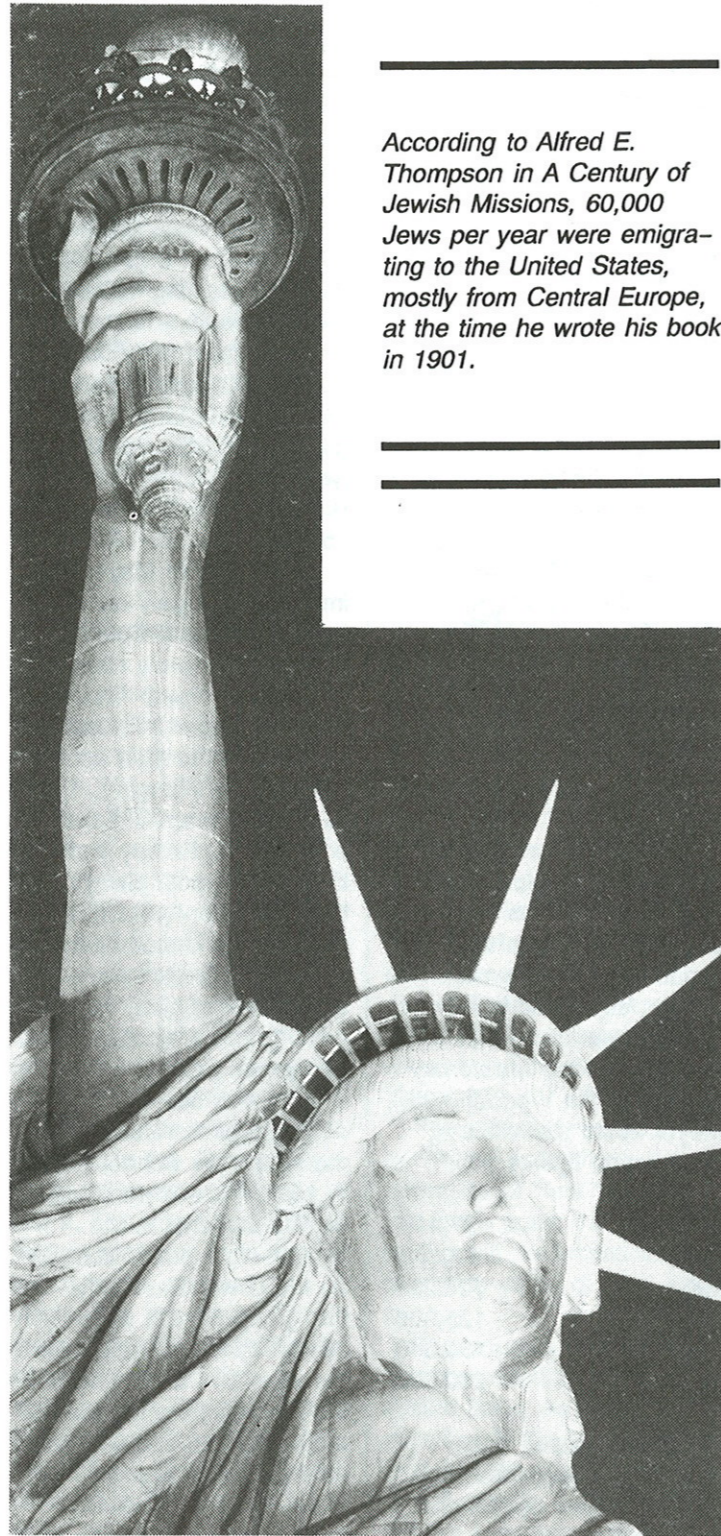
1899	37,415
1903	76,203
1904	106,236
1905	125,000
1906	150,846
1907	200,000

His claims, based upon articles that appeared that year in secular and Jewish publications, delineate that

there were two million Jews in the United States, more than one million of which resided in New York City. He states that there were four large Jewish quarters in New York, the largest a one-square-mile area on the lower East Side of Manhattan containing 400,000 Jewish people. There was a large group of 200,000 on Manhattan's Upper East Side; another large community in Williamsburg, Brooklyn of 150,000; and one in Brownsville, Brooklyn of 75,000.

According to Meyer, the immigrants largely came from Russia and Poland. In 1908, 72.6% were classified as Russian Jews. The next largest group, 13%, came from Austria and an additional 6% from Hungary. These immigrants were often uneducated and many were illiterate. Almost always, they were very poor. They came to the United States in search of a better life, as well as to get away from the poverty and prejudice of the European ghettos.

Meyer writes that according to figures released by the New York School Board in 1903, there were a total of 64,605 students in the twenty-eight public schools on the Lower East Side. Of this group 61,103 were Jewish children! These were the sons and daughters of the immigrants and most of these children spoke Yiddish as their first language. There were eighty-two Jewish periodicals published in the



According to Alfred E. Thompson in *A Century of Jewish Missions*, 60,000 Jews per year were emigrating to the United States, mostly from Central Europe, at the time he wrote his book in 1901.

United States and five daily Yiddish newspapers in New York City in 1907.

Whereas the new immigrants were poor and in great need of help, the Jewish people, according to Meyer, settled quickly. In 1907, 75% of the students at the City College of New York were Jewish, as were 50% of the students at Columbia University. By 1907, there were already 3,000 Jewish lawyers in New York City and five State Supreme Court Judges. Jewish firms employed more than 175,000 individuals in the apparel trade in New York City by the year 1907. By this time, the trade had moved into the present garment district. The Jewish people had also already become entrenched in other fields of commerce as well.

Religious life in New York City had already declined by the year 1910. According to Meyer, reporting on a committee chaired by Mordechai Kaplan, only 30% of the boys and 12% of the girls in New York City were attending one of the 580 religious schools (inclusive of *cheders*, institutional, congregational and Sunday schools) in New York City. The reasons for the decline are not given, but it may be suggested that the transition between European and American life tended to weaken the religion and religious training of the Jewish people.

The Jewish community would undergo significant

changes within the next two decades, but essentially, the two most important changes were the slowing of immigration and the assimilation of the Jewish community into American life. The period from 1930 until the war continued these same trends, but slowly the Jewish community of New York became dominated by events in Europe. These changes greatly affected the strategy approach and deployment of the Jewish missions.

III. Missions to the Jews in the Nineteenth Century

The story of missions to the Jews in New York City during the nineteenth century is best told in the book, *A Century of Jewish Missions*, by Alfred E. Thompson. This volume, produced in 1901, is the only volume dedicated to providing an overview of mission work among the Jews during the last century. Thompson's section on missions to the Jews in New York City is brief, but does relate how missions to the Jews began there and how they operated until the turn of the century. He also compiles a list of missions to the Jews which includes efforts in New York City.

Daniel Evealitt's work provides some insights as well into the early beginnings of missions efforts among the Jews in New York City. He dedicates a portion of his dissertation to this subject.

The father of missions to the Jews in the United

States and in New York City in particular was Joseph Samuel Christian Frederick Frey. Frey left England in 1816 and set sail for the United States after beginning the London Jews Society. The Jewish population of New York City was small, but growing; and after starting a general missions work in New York City, Frey began the Society for Evangelizing the Jews in 1819. The New York State legislature would not permit Frey to operate as a mission as they said that proselytizing was against the Constitution of the United States.

Frey worked around these problems and re-named the organization the Society for the Ameliorating the Condition of the Jews and they received their charter in 1820. Frey resigned after leading the organization for six years. The mission continued, but went out of existence in the mid-1850s.

The Episcopal Church began work among the Jews of New York in 1842 in association with the London Jews Society. An independent American work emerged in 1859 and was named the Church Mission to the Jews. The society was reformed in 1878 and renamed the Church Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews in America. They had more than 700 baptisms recorded since their inception and the turn of the century, with New York as their chief station.

The Baptist Society for the Evangelization of the Jews was organized in New York in 1845. G. R. Lederer, who became a believer through the Scottish Missions to the Jews in Budapest, was its most notable missionary in New York City, serving from 1855-1876. The first person he led to the Lord was Joseph Schererschewski, who later became an Anglican Bishop and the translator of the Bible into Mandarin. Schererschewski had been in dire straits on the streets of New York when Lederer led him to the Messiah.

The growing waves of immigration from Central Europe gave impetus to a movement of new missions to the Jews. This massive immigration of Central European Jews to the United States had some effect on missions to the Jews in Europe. It had a profound effect upon missions in the United States, especially in New York City, which was the first home for many of the immigrants.

It is a missiological principle that immigrants show a high degree of openness to the Gospel. The Church, unfortunately, rarely stays ahead of social trends and usually has to "catch up" with the events of the day. The churches in New York City were unprepared for the massive number of immigrants arriving in New York City and were also unprepared for their surprising openness

to the Gospel. As a result, missions to the Jews in New York City emerged at the end of the nineteenth century and continued to proliferate into the early part of the twentieth century.

According to Thompson, the Church Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews was the only mission organization in operation prior to 1880, which marked the beginning of the massive immigration of Eastern European Jews to the United States. The new movement of Jewish missions began with the arrival of a second generation Jewish believers from Montreal.

Jacob Freshman, the son of a Jewish Christian Methodist minister from Quebec, arrived in New York City in 1881 and began the Hebrew Christian Mission. In 1885, the mission moved into quarters at 17 St. Marks Place. Eventually the facility on St. Marks Place was incorporated as part of the New York City Mission and a new worker was employed who had been trained in Scotland: Herman Warszawiak. Warszawiak preached at De Witt Chapel, at 280 Rivington Street on the Lower East Side, and drew hundreds and thousands to hear him preach. He also held forth at a preaching center at 424 Grand Street. Ultimately, he would lead Leopold Cohn and Benjamin Schapiro to the Lord. Bernard Angel, formerly of the Chicago Hebrew Mission took over for him in 1895.

Additional works, sponsored by Lutherans, Methodists and non-denominational groups, continued to emerge during this period. Between 1880 and the First World War approximately eighteen missions to the Jews began work in New York City. The majority of these began before the turn of the century in response to the growing immigrant Jewish population in New York. Another dozen began between the Wars.

IV. The Missions

Lists of Missions

There were a number of lists identifying the various missions to the Jews worldwide and in the United States in particular. These lists note the missions operating in New York City during the period from 1900 until the early 1930s and will guide this study.

Alfred Thompson produced a list in 1901 which detailed the missions operating up until that year. Thompson collected a list of missions to the Jews operating throughout the world as of the turn of the century and included this material in his appendices. He estimates that there were forty-seven missions or centers in the United States at the turn of the century, employing eighty workers and utilizing a combined budget of \$54,950.

Approximately thirty of these workers served among the eleven missions in New York with a combined budget

of \$25,000. Thompson concluded that at the start of the twentieth century there were ninety societies worldwide, employing 648 missionaries, working on 213 mission stations with a budget of \$673,000.

By way of comparison, according to a table of figures compiled by S. B. Robold in the *Missionary Review of the World* in December of 1913, there were 107 Jewish missionary societies worldwide, employing 825 workers, with a combined income of \$738,000. Of these, forty-five were working in the United States, employing 124 workers with a combined income of \$102,000. There were perhaps as many as one dozen societies working in New York City.

Another list was produced by Louis Meyer and is entitled *The Directory of Protestant Jewish Missionary Societies and Centers Throughout the World*. This booklet was published by the Chicago Hebrew Mission in 1912. Meyer's list includes missions to the Jews in New York City.

Meyer presents figures much higher than Thompson. He claims that there were 119 missions operating around the globe at the close of the century, employing more than 800 missionaries on 246 mission stations. Of these societies, according to Meyer, there were thirty-seven in Great Britain, eighteen in Germany, five in Scandinavia, four in

the Netherlands, two in France, seven in other parts of Europe, two in Africa, six in Asia, four in Australia and again thirty-four in the United States. The reasons for the differing figures between Meyer and Thompson are difficult to determine.

According to Meyer, there were thirty-four missions to the Jews and two auxiliary groups operating in the United States in the fall of 1901. These thirty-four groups had forty-two missionary centers in the United States as of that date. New York City, according to Meyer, had nine mission groups and two adjunct agencies working within the five boroughs.

Another extensive list, compiled twenty years later, was produced by the Secretariat of the International Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews for their meeting in Digswell Park, England, June 13-14, 1932. This list also included missions operating in New York City which, according to the committee, numbered thirteen.

Another list was produced by Charles Fahs. His list follows closely to the Digswell list, but focuses on North America. Fahs lists sixty-two centers and fifty different agencies operating in the United States in 1932. Ten of these are noted as active in New York City.

The Appendix contains a combined list of the missions serving the Jewish people of the New York City during the

period under consideration. There were approximately thirty missions to the Jews or branches of missions to the Jews operating in New York City during the thirty-year period under consideration. Not every work continued through the period. There was, however, a quickening in the establishment of missions both at the end of the century and in the mid- to late 1920s.

Unfortunately, not every list contains equal information and the story of some missions is more readily available than others. Where the information is known, it is listed; where it is not, let it be noted as questions to be answered in further research.

The Character of the Work

The character of missions to the Jews changed significantly during the thirty-year period under consideration. There were really two major periods within the thirty years: the years of massive immigration and the years of assimilation. It is difficult to pinpoint the exact year that immigration slowed, but 1920 is the usual date suggested by demographers.

The First World War temporarily halted the immigration of Jews from Europe, but it picked up its rapid pace once again after the war. The first twenty years of the century were a time of rapid missions growth and saw the development of ministries primarily directed at

immigrants. There is no compiled overview of Jewish missions work during this first period, nor are there surveys of the work in general. This makes compiling a complete picture of what occurred during these two decades to be all the more difficult. Most of what may be reported is found in sources provided by each particular ministry.

In contrast, work from the 1920s through the early 1930s is easier to review, as a rather extensive survey of the work was done. Charles Fahs surveyed sixty-five Jewish missions and centers in North America, both denominational and independent, as part of his preparation for the International Missionary Council Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews conference held in Atlantic City in 1931.

Of this group, ten missions to the Jews in New York City responded; or, if they were part of a national movement, the director of that group answered on their behalf.

Two significant non-responders were the American Board of Missions to the Jews and the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Evaritt suggests that the reason they did not respond was because the survey was suspected as being backed by the wing of the church which was more sympathetic to theological Liberalism. The Fundamentalist-Modernist

controversy was in full swing and affected missions to the Jews as well. The International Missionary Council and its related groups were considered more liberal by the more fundamentalist groups like the American Board of Missions to the Jews.

In the case of both the American Board and the Alliance works, Fahs sent individuals to do "on sight" visits and record their results.

The missions which responded were:

Christian Witness to Israel
East New York
Neighborhood House
Hermon House
Holy Comforter House
New York Gospel Mission
Rainbow Institutional Mission
Zion Society

Both Beth Dor'she Emet (an Alliance work) and the American Board of Missions to the Jews are included in the survey as a result of the information gathered in personal visits.

Fahs' survey reflects the character of the work among the Jews of New York City during the late 1920s and early 1930s. Unfortunately, there is no known survey of the earlier parts of the century and thus the information presented regarding the first twenty-five years is sketchy and gathered from the reports of the various missions operating in the New York area. The conference material from Atlan-

tic City itself is also helpful in determining the character of the work during this period.

A Ministry to Immigrants

The work among the Jews of New York City was essentially a ministry to immigrants. The majority of the immigrants resided in Lower Manhattan and Brooklyn and therefore the missions to the Jews located mostly in these two regions of New York City.

Jewish missions in the United States and in New York City in particular were built upon a ministry to immigrants. Most of the Jewish Christians who rose to prominence in the work were immigrants when they accepted the Lord. These would include Leopold Cohn and most of his contemporaries.

The Jewish population grew by 3.25 million people between 1880 and 1920. Between 1920 and 1930 an additional 750,000 Jewish people came to the United States, mostly from Eastern Europe. Most of these people found their port of entry in New York City and many stayed. This wave of immigration gave the missionaries unprecedented opportunity as they found the immigrants ready to escape the ghetto and explore the new world. This attitude of openness to the new world, along with the difficulties of immigrant life, caused the new Americans to be open as well to the Gospel message.

Meyer wrote in 1911, "God is bringing multitudes of Jews to our shores. What is the purpose? We doubt not that it is His purpose to give us the opportunity and privilege of offering unto them the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jews first and also to the Greek".

The American Board of Missions to the Jews became the strongest of the missions. This organization began as a ministry to immigrants as Leopold Cohn was a Hungarian immigrant himself. He began work in Brownsville and moved to Williamsburg, following the demographic shifts of the Jewish immigrant population.

According to Fahs' survey, the majority of those to whom the missions ministered were from Poland, Russia and Romania, with some coming from Hungary as well. By 1930, more than half of the missions in New York City were conducting ministries to the children of immigrants, although this was obviously not the case in the earlier part of the century. By way of comparison, apart from modern missions to Russian Jews, the missions in New York City today are mostly speaking to second, third and fourth generation Jewish immigrants.

A Ministry to the Social Needs of the Jewish People
The missions in New York

City evidently modeled their works on the British and Scottish missions. They started English classes, distributed food, and provided the immigrants with medical services and vocational training along with preaching the Gospel and teaching the Scriptures.

A report in 1904 by Louis Meyer describes the work of the New York Mission and Tract Society. He mentions that a Miss Schabka ran a sewing school for girls out of De Witt Memorial Church on Rivington street and that "crowds of girls were attending the class and learning the story of the cross". The missions usually made it clear that they offered all social and vocational services in the name of the Messiah.

The missions involved themselves in meeting the social needs of the Jewish immigrants. The New York Church Extension and Missionary Society employed Dr. Harry Zeckhausen as Director of their mission. He was a medical doctor and established a medical dispensary.

Leopold Cohn also began a dispensary and attempted to meet the vast social needs of the immigrants. According to reports of the Chosen People magazine, the doctors at the dispensary were seeing 20,000 individuals per year. In the Chosen People magazine, Cohn describes his work on behalf

of the needy immigrants: *A free medical dispensary is maintained to assist the poor Jews who need such care. The Poor Fund enables the workers to relieve the distress and poverty of deserving Jews, and in this way we give to the Jews a practical demonstration of Christian love, of which they see so little.*

Cohn also maintained children's classes, sewing classes, and even taught English himself a number of evenings a week at the start of the mission. By 1913, Cohn had a faculty of seven volunteer workers in the sewing school in Williamsburg and another five in Brownsville.

As the Jewish population became more integrated into the American culture, these ministries became less and less important, but a number of the missions continued to meet the needs of the immigrants.

According to Fahs, Beth Dor'she Emet had an active training school with five instructors and 183 students as of the 1930 survey. They also had an active language school in the evenings.

The East New York Neighborhood House had three teachers and 317 students and was still conducting industrial classes and providing money for the poor. They also had extensive camping programs and clubs for young people, which gained the workers entrance to the homes.

The Holy Comforter mission had 45 students enrolled. Children's ministries and classes were also a large part of the outreach and a few mission schools were established (as the British were fond of doing in other parts of the world).

By the beginning of the 1930s, due to the decline of Jewish immigration, not many English classes or medical dispensaries were in operation among the missions of New York City. These ministries slowly disappeared as the social services in New York City improved and as the Jewish community took upon more of the social burden. The Jewish community also became less and less needy as they assimilated.

A Forthright Gospel Testimony

The immigrant believers were not afraid of the more entrenched German Jews who were at the heart of the opposition to the work of the missionaries. The immigrant Jewish believers were willing to proclaim the Gospel publicly. Literature ministry was important to the work in New York City. Door to door visitation, auditorium meetings, outdoor preaching and the distribution of Bibles were also a major part of the outreach.

Numerous evangelistic meetings were held both on a large and small scale in New York City throughout this period. Bernard Angel, serving with the New York

City Missions and Tract Society, had three Gospel meetings each week at De Witt Chapel with increasing attendance, according to a report of Meyer in 1904.

Leopold Cohn published his meeting schedule in almost every issue of the Chosen People magazine:

Sunday night
Russian meeting
Meeting for Girls
Gospel service

Monday night
New Converts' Meeting

Wednesday
Mothers' Meeting

Friday night
Gospel Service

Saturday
Young People's Society

By the 1930s, according to Fahs' survey, most of the missions and centers focused on evangelistic work, literature distribution and the publication of literature. As mentioned above, only a few missions continued to maintain English classes, citizenship classes or medical dispensaries. The missions, however, placed a heavy emphasis on educational work and the operating of social clubs for the purpose of fellowship and outreach.

The missions understood the value of house-to-house visitation. For example, Fahs lists the number of workers and the number of persons visited in 1930:

East New York
Neighborhood House
two workers, 1,446 homes

Beth Dor'she Emet
five workers, 6,579 homes

Holy Comforter House
two workers, 1,500 homes

Figures for most of the other missions were unavailable from Fahs.

A Ministry in Yiddish

The language of evangelism was Yiddish. Most tracts were written in Yiddish, although a fair amount were written in English, especially in the years after World War I. According to Fahs' survey, even in 1930, the language mostly used in the home of Jewish people was Yiddish. Therefore, most missions, to be effective, conducted their ministry in Yiddish. This was especially true of the missions in New York City.

By 1930, mission services were held primarily in English, although Yiddish Bible studies and services were still available.

A Ministry through Literature

The writing, production and distribution of Christian literature for the Jewish people was important to the missions operating in New York City. The American Board of Missions to the Jews produced the *Shepherd of Israel*, which was both an English and Yiddish language evangelistic publication. This effort was well

supported for many years and they sent out more 50,000 every other month at the height of its circulation. According to Fahs, the New York missions and most others in the United States were eager to sell Bibles and Scripture portions. Other Christian materials as well were sold among the Jewish community.

The mission centers also distributed large quantities of literature. Whereas in the earlier portion of the century almost all of the literature was composed in Yiddish, by the 1930s this figure had dropped to between 25 and 50%. This reflects the changing demographics of the New York Jewish community.

A Ministry of Both Denominational and Independent Missions

The mainline denominations were interested in work among the Jewish people and of the thirty missions and centers operating in New York City during this period, a dozen were under the auspices of a mainline Protestant denomination.

At the turn of the century there was no large mission which dominated the landscape. By the start of World War II, the majority of missions in the United States and in New York City were small, "mom-and-pop" missions and were local in their focus. The American Board of Missions to the Jews was comparatively a large mission, both in its

New York ministries and in ministries in other areas. The Presbyterian work was also growing larger.

By the 1930s the "Good Will" movement began to gain a foothold in missions to the Jews through the Presbyterians and others. This movement was more of a "friendship" and "dialogue" approach than a direct evangelistic effort. This method was appreciated by some Gentile missionaries to the Jews and many of the Jewish believing missionaries saw it as reflecting a weakened commitment to evangelism.

A Ministry to and through the Church

The missions were active raising funds among the churches. The denominational missions received much of their support from their denominations. Both the East New York Neighborhood House and Beth Dor'she Emet received 76% and more from their sponsoring denominations. The independent missions had to raise their own support.

Most of the missions in Fahs's survey declared that they had some viable means of raising support. In 1930, the missions raised the following levels of support:

Holy Comforter House \$6,000

The New York Gospel Mission \$14,074

Hermon House \$19,934

The Christian Witness to Israel \$20,071

The American Board of Missions to the Jews \$30,000 for the first six months of the year in 1931.

A number of the American missions, including the American Board of Missions to the Jews, were active in soliciting bequests as well. *A Ministry in Conflict Within* The missions to the Jews were at times in conflict with one another. One of the classic cases involved Leopold Cohn and Rev. Spievacque of the Brooklyn Christian Mission to the Jews. The incident is described in a most interesting book, *The Strange Case of Dr. Cohn and Mr. Jozzovic* written in 1919, by Alexander Bacon. Alexander Bacon, a prominent New York lawyer and a Christian, was the attorney for Mr. Spievacque and was on the Board of Directors of the Brooklyn Christian Mission to the Jews founded by Benjamin Schapiro. Bacon was convinced that Leopold Cohn was a fraud, in that he was never a Rabbi and that he fled Hungary because he had been convicted of land theft. Bacon believed that the Christian public needed to be warned of Cohn's alleged deceptions.

Bacon's book includes actual court transcripts from six different legal actions involving Leopold Cohn, founder of the Chosen

People Ministry, a. k. a. The American Board of Missions to the Jews:

Abraham Feinberg vs. Leopold Cohn (1910)
Sheffield vs. Leopold Cohn (1912)
People vs. Neuowich and Spievacque (1913)
Neuowich vs. Leopold Cohn (1913)
Spievacque vs. Leopold Cohn (1917)
Neuowich vs. Leopold Cohn (1917)

Cohn tells his side of the story in the *Chosen People*:

From the many letters which have contained expressions of sympathy for us in the persecution going on now, I perceive that you are interested to know further about the matter. Perhaps few believe that Satan's devices are just as keen nowadays as in the time when the apostles referred to them, but we find them so.

As I told you in the last issue, after a number of the persecutors had been arrested, they ceased from their methods of disturbing the meetings, and laid new plans to reach Christian people by circulating false stories against me. This was rumored, but we did not know what special form it was to take. About three months ago the offices of the Mission were one night broken into by unknown persons, some money left in a locked desk was stolen, and a number of the names

and a number of the names and addresses of our friends and supporters were copied. Although not known to us at the time, this was but a preparation for darker works.

Then a band of five or six Jews went to different Jewish girls in this city asking them to join with them to ruin my character, and the mission, because that through converting the Jews I broke the hearts of so many persons. When the girls asked how they could help destroy the mission they were told substantially the following story: We will give you a lawyer without charge, if you will tell him that you want to sue Mr. Cohn for breach of promise. We will get four or five other Jewish girls to do the same, and when the case is brought up in court, it will be published in all the papers, and then Christians will leave Mr. Cohn severely alone. Now come, do this service for God.

Some of these girls who had attended the Mission, and confessed faith in Christ, utterly refused to have anything to do with such a scheme, and sent me word of the plot. After prayerful consideration and consultation it was concluded, for the sake of the work and as a loyal citizen, whose duty it is to expose such wickedness for the good of the country, to take legal steps to prevent such a Satanic act. Warrants were therefore taken out and two men arrested, the others having fled the

city or being in hiding. The two arrested were Philip Spievacque, who claims to have a mission to the Jews in Brooklyn, and A. H. Neuowich, who had professed to be my friend and a Christian.

At an examination before a Jewish magistrate in the Essex Market Court, of New York, one girl who had been in this country only a year, confessed on the witness stand that these men had been her advisers. The judge was very fair and just and held the case for the court of Special sessions, also increasing the amount of the bail of the accused men.

These details will show you, what powers of darkness a missionary to the Jews has to encounter if he is earnest and sincere, and means business, even the business of the great King, our Lord Jesus Christ. False brethren have existed in every generation and will continue until our Saviour comes.

Two years later, Cohn continued to warn his donors about giving to other missions that he felt were competing with him:

In response to our warnings we have received numerous inquiries from our friends concerning individuals who claim to be conducting Jewish missionary work or to be Jewish evangelists. Some have sent us literature which they received from

such individuals and in one case where the individual in question is a rank wicked fraud, our correspondent remarked, "I cannot see how he can be a fraud when he writes such beautiful things, and his literature sounds so holy!" In these days of deceiving and being deceived, will you not bear in mind that the devil himself puts on the garb of a saint and tries to deceive the very elect. Let us give you one or two suggestions how you yourself can detect a fraud in Jewish work. The first thing for you to find out is whether the person claiming to do Jewish work has a group of responsible Christian men who are vouching for him; if he has, you ought to write to them and find out for yourself just exactly what they think of him. Secondly, you should search diligently to see if he gives an honest report of all moneys received and spent, or if he keeps these things hidden. We are told by the apostle to provide things honest in the sight of all men and this is one of the relentless tests upon which you should insist. It is an easy matter for a fraud to print an account of expenses and receipts, but you should find out whether some responsible people have vouched for that account. You will also find that a fraud is usually vague in his statements and often extravagant in his claims; of such be very, very careful. Find out exactly where such a one is doing his work and

whether he really does have meetings for Jews. If there is the least suspicion in your mind it will be far safer for you not to give, than for you to encourage deception.

All these things we, as a mission, have faithfully tried to observe; we have, through God's grace, done our part in building up a work which can command the confidence of every thinking man and woman, a work which is carried on openly, concerning which you can find out every detail whether it be in matters spiritual or in matters financial; our books are open to any contributor to our work at any time. Any friend of our work or any prospective friend may write at any time to any representative Christian leader anywhere in this country and will receive a word of commendation concerning our work; this rule is almost invariable. We take great pains in things financial to acknowledge publicly through the columns of *The Chosen People* every dollar that is received, and this we do in spite of the protest of some friends who feel that we are wasting space in doing so; it is simply in accordance with our policy to provide things honest in the sight of all men. You can realize therefore what a disappointment and grief it is to us and to others, who like us have striven faithfully to maintain an honest work, to see our friends sometimes led astray and in their earnest zeal to do God's will become

deceived by someone who ought not to have a bit of their confidence.

We are grateful to the many friends who have already made use of our Investigation Department and we want again to urge you, do not give to any Jewish mission appeal until you know absolutely that such appeal is worthy. Write us freely concerning any inquiries you wish to make; we shall be glad to serve you.

Along with the competition between missions, there were also attempts to produce unity among the workers. The Department of Immigration of the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions held an all-day conference on Thursday, December 10th, 1908 at their facility on 156 Fifth Avenue. About thirty workers in the field of Jewish missions from the New York area and beyond attended the meeting. The topics of discussion that day were listed in the *Missionary Review of the World*:

- * The Training Needed for Successful Work Among the Jews
- * The Best Method of Approach in Personal Word Among the Jews
- * The Conservation of Results in Jewish Missions
- * What Should be the Relationship of the Jew to the Gentile Christian Church?
- * What Should be the Relationship of the Jew to

the Mosaic Laws and Ceremonies?

* How to Create a More Brotherly Feeling Among Jewish Workers and Converts

* Are Jewish Ethical Conceptions a Barrier in Christian Work?

* The Present Outlook for Jewish Missions Considered Prophetically

* The Present Outlook for Jewish Missions Considered from the Practical Conditions of the Work

The Atlantic City Conference itself was an attempt to gather workers involved with the International Missionary Council Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews. There were many participants in the Atlantic City Conference who were not formally a part of the group, but had a desire for unity and involvement with one another's ministries. The sense of need for active cooperation among workers is as old as missions to the Jews itself.

A Ministry in Conflict Without The Jewish community at large leveled attacks against the missionaries in many different ways. They mobbed street preachers, tore up tracts, and hurled charges against the missions in the Jewish press. Cohn provides an illustration of the opposition he received regarding his medical dispensary:

As already reported once

before, a movement was started a while ago among some Jewish meddlers to stop our dispensary. They stirred up influential Jews who are among the most prominent men in the Jewish community of Brooklyn to oppose us. But they did not succeed. Until about a year ago we used to have Jewish doctors in our dispensary because of the language and because of their thorough knowledge and intimate acquaintance with the

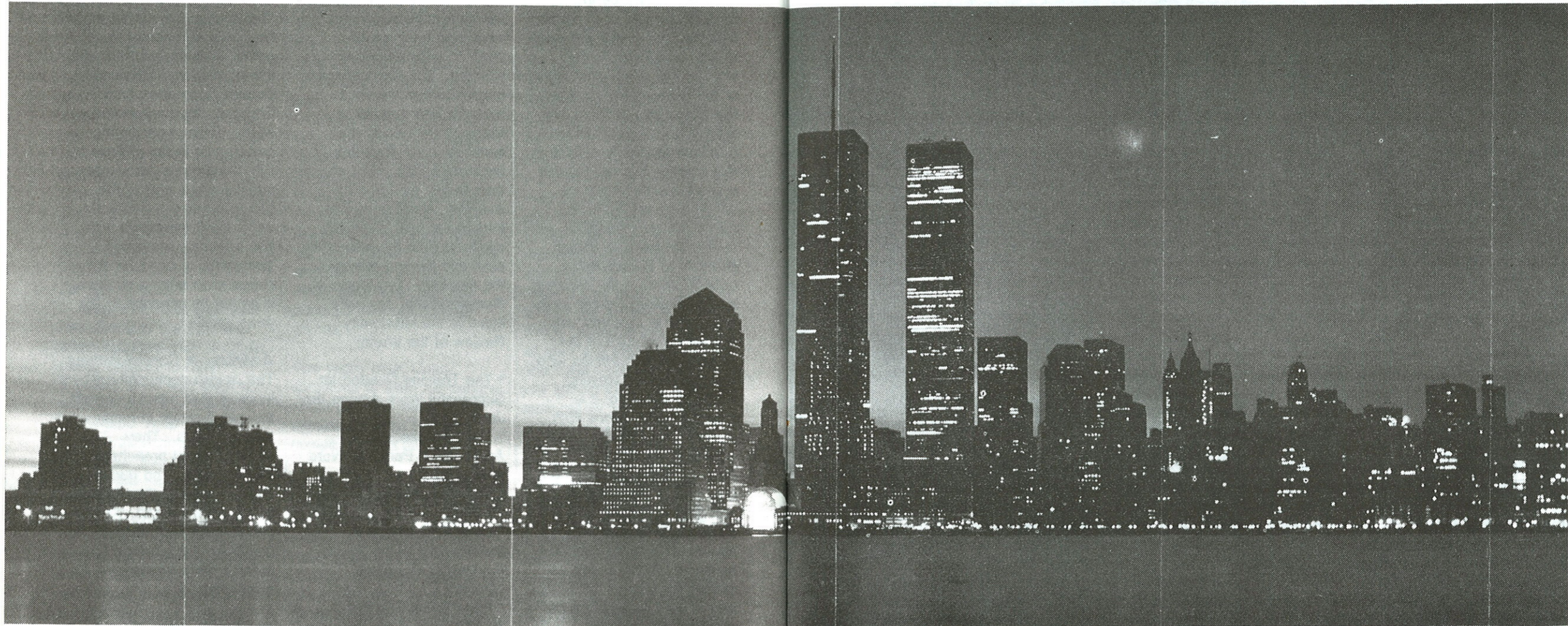
peculiarities of the Jews. These physicians at first agreed not to interfere in any way with our mission work. On the contrary, one of them promised to study up the claims of Christ and to speak to the patients favorably of the mission in case any questions should be asked by them. But about a year ago these doctors began to show symptoms of having been infected with the bitterness of the opponents of the mission. They

objected chiefly to our large signs with the announcement both in English and Yiddish that this work is carried on in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that Christians who believe and love the Lord had sent of their means to carry on the work in order that the Jews too might find the light in their own Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. At last we had to dismiss the Jewish doctors and place three Christian physicians in their stead.

One of those Jewish doctors became very indignant and threatened revenge, boasting he would destroy this dispensary. Consequently he opened a place just down the street from our building and put out a sign announcing his medical treatment, etc. The opposing band of young Jews who, as you know, put forth strenuous efforts to stop people coming to our meetings, rejoiced at this opportunity. When our dispensary opened they

waylaid every patient and told them to go to the new place, praising up the doctors and telling them that the Jewish doctors left the mission because they did not want the Jews to be apostatized and now they are treating patients at as low a fee as that in the mission dispensary. A good many were persuaded to go there but many preferred to continue with us. They say invariably that they have more confidence in the doctors

who are working in the mission than any others. Thus all the plans that blind prejudice could invent in order to defeat the purpose of God in this mission have fallen through. But it is a most remarkable fact that the crowds of men and women flocking to our meetings and to our dispensary have the moral courage and strength to stand all the threats and taunts and opprobrious names that are hurled at them by those



opposing Jews. There was a time when Jewish zealots were absolutely indifferent toward the mission. They said, "Let them alone, they cannot do us any harm. Jews will never accept the Christian religion." But in the last few years they have begun to rub their eyes and see Jewish converts to Christianity by the hundreds and thousands and they now are awakening from their indifference. They see that the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is a wonderful power and has taken hold of many Jews in Brooklyn and that it is impossible to stem its mighty tide.

The opposition was most active in the Jewish periodicals writing articles against the missionaries. The list of articles is endless and the acrimonious charges against the missionaries have not changed in more than a hundred years.

Dedicated to Maintaining a Jewish Identity

In the earlier part of the century, the Hebrew Christian Alliance had not yet made its way across the ocean. According to the *Missionary Review of the World*, in 1905, a group which called itself The Hebrew Christian Association of New York was formed. Of its fifty-seven members, twenty-two were active Christian workers and six others were volunteers. The group held a joint weekly Gospel meeting and

a sewing school for Jewish working girls as well. According to one report, they also formed the First Hebrew Church of the Messiah in New York. A covenant, a confession of faith, and rules for church discipline were approved and the congregation began meeting on a weekly basis. They were open to both Jews and Gentiles.

In the 1920s and 30s, large group meetings of Jewish believers were usually held on Sunday afternoon or evening; only some met on Friday or Saturday. Week nights were usually reserved for prayer meetings and Bible studies. The majority of the missions had one or more of these types of meetings each week. Most of the missions celebrated the Jewish holidays with special services and outreach events. The relationship of the Jewish High Holidays to the person of Jesus was the subject of a considerable amount of literature produced during the era.

Though the missions did not call themselves congregations, they had programs which resembled church life: they involved the believers in worship, witness, education and social activities. The Jewish believer may or may not have been part of a conventional church, but his or her everyday spiritual life was focused on the mission. For many, the mission was the hub of their lives. It was their community, where they

could be with other Jews and believers in Jesus and speak Yiddish, a language with which they were comfortable.

It would be a mistake to suggest that missions to the Jews in the first thirty years of our century did not care about Jewish believers maintaining their Jewish identities. This was as important to them as it is today to us. Perhaps they were so certain in their identity as immigrants that they did not choose to emphasize the matter. The expression of their Jewish identity was more natural to them than to us who are living in a more assimilated and non-immigrant Jewish society.

V. Lessons for the Present and Future

Missions to the Jews must remain mobile to meet the challenge of shifting Jewish geography.

Missions to the Jews need to follow the population shifts and demographic trends of the Jewish community.

Missions to the Jews should pay special attention to Jewish immigrant communities as they are usually more open to the Gospel.

People are usually more open to the Gospel when they first emigrate. This is significant because the Jewish community is often constantly in motion. The missions under consideration

in this study were either created by or arose to meet the needs of recent immigrants.

Missions to the Jews must stay abreast of the ideological changes within the Jewish community and plan strategies that are in sync with the community.

The importance of mobility and flexibility on the part of missions and missionaries to the Jews is linked to the ever-changing nature of our Jewish people. We must stay current and relate our strategy and materials to the contemporary Jewish scene.

Missions to the Jews should consider purchasing properties in central locations rather than in Jewish neighborhoods, which tend to be unstable. Missions to the Jews should prepare literature for the various Jewish language groups, now that Yiddish is no longer a common Jewish tongue.

Missions to the Jews should be prepared to meet the needs of the whole Jewish person.

The early missionaries met the social needs of the immigrant community and found that meeting these needs was a gateway for the Gospel. Today we do not see the Jews as a socially needy people, but history has taught us that this can quickly change.

VI. Conclusion

Missions to the Jews in New York City are a microcosm of missions to the Jews worldwide. If a person understands and appreciates missions to the Jews in New York City, he or she will be prepared to minister to Jews globally. New York continues to have Jews from numerous nations within the borders of its five boroughs. New York City is still the best place on the globe to train missionaries to the Jews. The need in New York remains as well for intensified efforts to reach the Jewish people who remain in this city. It is still true that if we win the Jews of New York City, we will be in a far better position to reach the Jews of the world. The words of Leopold Cohn nearly a century ago still ring true today:

The real solution of the Jewish problem in America is to centralize and focus on New York City; this is the storm center of Judaism not only for America, but for the whole world. What we do here, the Jew knows at one all over the world; ... The Jewish people of New York are drifting westward all the time, and if we can reach the individual Jew before he leaves New York, he will come to your city in a receptive mood for the Gospel, and you will find your task more easy than it is today.

Meetings

LCJE Europe
Next meeting in London:
28-30 November 1994

LCJE North America
Next meeting in Las Vegas: 27 Feb - 1 Mar 1995

Next International meeting

The next International LCJE Conference in Israel: 18-23 June 1995.

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