



**LAUSANNE
CONSULTATION
ON JEWISH
EVANGELISM**

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ON JEWISH EVANGELISM
BULLETIN**



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Who to side with?

Each day has its horrific and frightening pictures from Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. It has been like that the last couple of months. People are asking: Who should we side with?

My *personal* answer is: those who want the peace.

This means, in the present situation, that the conflicting parties must both make concessions. What these concessions should be is not for me to say. The solutions cannot be achieved with a snap of your fingers. Only if the moderates in both camps prevail, will the hope of peace have a chance.

I still cling to that hope.

But is what is happening in the Middle East right now not a sign that the return of Christ is imminent – and a sign that the peace process with the attendant concessions from the Israeli side is against God's will? This is what some Christians and Messianic Jews think.

But I do not have the courage to say so. As Christians we confess our belief in the imminent return of Christ. It is an integral part of our confession. But this does not mean that we should just sit back. Peace and justice in the world are goals which must be fought for as long as it is called "today". Not least by those who look forward to the return of Christ.

In a book published by Musalaha at the beginning of this year – mentioned on p. 8 – Lisa Loden wrote, among other things, the following about the relationship between Messianic Jews and Palestinian Christians: "Being in the Body of Messiah means more than any ethnic or national identity. Issues of love and reconciliation, ethical behavior and morality are of greater importance than territorial considerations regardless of one's status as occupier or occupied. However important, when taken in light of the implications of Jesus's love, territorial considerations are secondary."

As LCJE's International Coordinator, who is far removed from the hot spot in the Middle East, I am pleased to note that there are members of LCJE who support the reconciliation efforts between Messianic Jews in Israel and Palestinian Christians. We are all created in God's image. God loves us all. In Messiah.

Kai Kjær-Hansen

We cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard (Acts 4:20)

By Hartmut Renz, LCJE Coordinator for Europe

It was a strange situation indeed, in which Peter and John found themselves. In the name of Jesus they had healed a lame man who had been suffering from this disease for decades, and they had not concealed in whose name and on whose order they had been acting. Now Israel's highest representatives at the time called them to account for this healing. They had been convinced that with the death of Jesus his case could be filed away for ever. But in this they were thoroughly mistaken. The one ignominiously crucified proved to be more alive than ever.

It was clearly impossible to deny the miracle that had happened at their doorstep. However, if the fact could not be denied, it should at least be hushed up. In the eyes of the Jewish rulers a new flaring up of the Jesus-movement was neither good nor salutary. This could all too easily end in a political and national disaster. The Romans surely would not take it as a joke if they felt their power was threatened by a Jewish Messiah. They had also very serious theological objections to the man from Nazareth. In their eyes he had not been the promised Messiah but a dangerous seducer and blasphemer. All publicity for him had to stop. So they ordered Peter and John not to speak about Jesus.

With all due respect for this august committee, Peter and John could not obey this order. Neither of them could have healed the lame. Therefore it would have been a sin and disobedience against God to conceal the name of him who in fact revealed his healing and saving power on the sick. And moreover, Israel had to know that in the person of Jesus the long promised savior and redeemer had come. Peter was absolutely convinced: "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). This was and is true also for the Jews; indeed for the Jews first of all (Acts 13:46; Romans 1:16). The apostles had therefore no other choice but to confess: "we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Today the task, to which the followers of Jesus of that time felt unreservedly obliged, is highly controversial not only among Jews but even among Christians. Down the centuries, unfortunately, a lot of good reasons for Jews to mistrust the gospel have piled up. But as Christians we should realize that it was not obedience but disobedience toward the word and will of our Lord which so much discredited the gospel. The answer to the failure of many Christians to prove themselves true followers of Jesus toward Israel cannot be to conceal the truth about the salvation revealed in Jesus. This would only be another form of disobedience and unkindness. If indeed the fire of the love of Christ is burning in us, we too cannot keep from speaking of the great gift God gave us in Jesus, and we cannot keep from making Israel jealous through love (Rom. 11:11-15).

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Continuing to Build in Times of Trouble

By Lisa Loden, Member of LCJE's Coordinating Committee

Living as a Messianic believer in Israel is always a challenge. This is a time of tremendous upheaval accompanied by high passions. For a number of years, there has been a sense among many believers that we are living on borrowed time and that the tensions and the long unresolved issues between Israel and the Palestinian Authority could no longer continue to be sidelined. The Oslo peace process has been a disappointment to many and it was only a matter of time before radical elements would take action and disrupt the precarious balance of co-existence. Very few are surprised at the current eruption of violence. Although there was hope that the peace process would bear fruit, it was always tentative and hesitant. The events of the last few weeks have brought about a rapidly deteriorating political and security situation with the result that armed conflict has become a daily reality in many parts of the country.

This situation should be grievous to all who claim the Prince of Peace as Lord of their lives. As a people whose lives are bordered by the Bible, there is a clear mandate to be those who seek and pursue peace with all men, especially with those who are fellow



believers in the Messiah. For some years now, bridges of trust, love, and understanding have been being built between Messianic Jews and Arab, Palestinian Christians. These bridges are yet fragile structures. It has been a lengthy process of investment of time, prayer and effort to see relationships develop across lines that in the world would be impossible to cross. To our sorrow, it is easier to damage and destroy bridges than to build them. This is the test that faces Israeli and Palestinian, the Jewish and the Arab believer today. Can we continue not only to stand together in this time of crisis but to also carry on with building bridges of fellowship, prayer and witness?

Trouble has a way of eliciting radical response and in the Messianic community of which I am a part, there have been a variety of reactions to the current crisis. There are those who are fearful of escalating conflict and have left the country to escape the very

real possibility of war. Many simply do not watch or listen to news reports, while others have become obsessed with them. It is impossible to escape discussions of the conflict and possible scenarios. Being a part of a people can be, at the same time, both blessing and pain.

The sides are being pushed farther and farther apart as time passes and the conflict continues. I repeatedly hear ugly words used to describe the behavior and intentions of each side by the other. A very real process of dehumanization leading to demonization is occurring and the believer is by no means immune to this phenomena. Seeing and describing 'the other side' as inhuman, barbarian, or animal-like has become common-place. The experience of your own pain can too easily block out any possibility of perceiving the pain of the other, even if he is your brother. Unfortunately, even in prayer, this mass classification of 'the other side' in the conflict as enemies is all too common.

On the other hand, an encouraging aspect of this current situation is the way in which large portions of the Messianic community have gone to prayer. Prayer for the situation and for the leadership of the nation has become a regular part of

The present crisis in the Middle East also influences the Messianic Jews and Arab Christians. We have asked Lisa Loden and Salim Munayer to comment on this.

many congregational meetings. As we are continually bombarded with words and images of the most violent nature from the media, we are increasingly galvanized to prayer.

Just this week there was a call to the leaders of the Messianic congregations to gather together for prayer. An excerpt from the invitation reads, "In light of the present crisis and deteriorating security and political situations, and with the threat of potential regional war on the horizon, we believe that the Lord is calling the Messianic leadership from across the land to take a united prayer posture.... The Body must be encouraged, envisioned, and prepared to stand firm in the coming days of turmoil, becoming a stronghold of peace, hope, and purpose for our nation. The Arab/Christian portion of the Body especially needs our prayer and support." Representatives from congregations all over Israel attended this day of prayer.

Many are confused as to the spiritual meaning of the conflict. This affects prayer. Understanding the times is a difficulty for many who want to fit current events into an eschatological frame. Is this

the beginning of 'the time of Jacob's trouble?' Is this the time when 'all nations will come against Jerusalem?' Is this to bring the Jewish people to their knees in repentance and to bring judgment for the sin of the people?' I have heard all of these questions discussed among Messianic Jews in the past weeks. The issues are not clear and confusion is the result. When these questions become ascendant, it is easy to lose track of the larger issues of peace, cessation of violence and the salvation of souls.

It is now impossible for a Jew to go into the areas under Palestinian control and for much of the time there are closures in force that prevent Palestinians from entering Israel. This means that I cannot visit my brothers and sisters who live in the greater Bethlehem area, nor can they come out and meet with me. But we can call one another and this is happening.

Efforts are continuing to be made by individuals, who in more quiet times had built relationships, to reach out to one another. There is a small but growing sense of solidarity between some Jewish and Palestinian believers as we call one

another when the conflict reaches into the areas where we live. After the lynch of two soldiers in Ramalla, a Palestinian sister from the West Bank called me to express her horror at the incident and to ask me not to even try to come and visit anyone in the areas under Palestinian control. When the Beit Jalla homes of two of the daughters of a Palestinian Christian friend of mine were blown up by the Israeli military, I telephoned her with the desire to somehow comfort her in her loss. One Palestinian believer who lives in the West Bank made a special effort to come out to a congregational meeting in the heat of the conflict simply because he "wanted to pray with the brothers."

Because I have been involved in reconciliation efforts between Jewish believers and Palestinian Christians for some years, I have received calls from some of my Jewish brethren asking me, what can I do? How can I encourage the Palestinian Christians?

Reconciliation is a biblical priority for the life of the believer. It is not an abstract concept but rather it means restoration of the bonds of friendship and affection

when there is division by strife, enmity or even crime and conflict. It means transformation of relationships, normally linked to a change of feelings, attitudes and opinions. These are things that need to become priorities in the life of the believer in Israel today. Where there is conflict and strife, it is critically important that the life and love of the Messiah be seen through relation-

ships of love and support between Jewish and Palestinian believers.

There is an enemy in this current conflict and it is a spiritual enemy. This is the same ancient enemy who is seeking to destroy the witness of Messiah's love. He is today working at high speed to radicalize as many people as possible, to separate brothers in the Messiah, and to deface or

erase the witness of Messiah's life and salvation. As the body of Messiah expresses unity and love across all ethnic, national, and political barriers, His love will be seen, the common enemy of us all will be vanquished and God's salvation will become the solution to the problems in the Middle East.

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reactions towards Arabs. Also Palestinian students at the Bethlehem Bible College in my Comparative Religion class expressed strong anger towards Jews. Questions arose about Biblical teaching regarding war and hatred, and how should Christians respond in the face of violence.

These pictures and experiences of bloodshed have had a strong impact on people. There is a sickening fear in the stomach. In Jerusalem there was a sense of lawlessness, that something terrible could happen to anyone at anytime on any side. In the Galilee, an unprecedented scenario erupted. The violence that used to be on TV was now happening in Israeli Jewish and Arab towns. People living in mixed neighborhoods suddenly became fearful that their neighbor might lash out at them; in some cases their fears were confirmed. In the beginning of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the troubles were concentrated in the West Bank and Gaza, suddenly they happened at home.

The clashes strongly affected daily life everywhere and in different ways. People are staying at home, afraid to use public transport, and avoid travel in general. The impact of the clashes has another dimension on the Palestinian side, where there the area was under closure and the confrontations were in close proximity to homes. We, along with other

believers, have kept in contact with people who are near the troubled areas. Many have asked us how to pray for one another, and through emails we have been able to share how to pray and help each other. One woman who has been involved in Musalaha activities responded.

"Thank you very much for your concern and prayers. It is so nice to know that friends and believers are praying for us. It means so much for me to hear that especially during this difficult time.... We hear stories that happening with believers that God has protected them during the shooting. We also were very close to losing one of us. The other day people from our youth group from the church were down by the church painting and bullets missed them by just a little. I was in the house with my parents and we were terrified. It sounded just like it was in our house. Just in the same moment a man on the other street loading goods was shot in the back."

Even those who are not involved in the violence have become victims of it. The sad situation of nightly shooting between Gilo and Beit Jala is an example. Many believers live in both communities, and they are not taking part in this exchange of fire. How, then, do they begin to relate to each other? When two Palestinian believers' homes were severely damaged, Jewish believers have called

them and sent money to help the families!

One Messianic Jewish pastor wrote, "Within our congregation, the task is enormous. The national tension affects everyone. It seems to have added fuel to the fire of those that have unresolved conflicts in their lives and to those who suffer from fear, anxiety and depression. But on a positive side, the present situation of tension and uncertainty has caused an awakening....of intercession and personal dependency upon God."

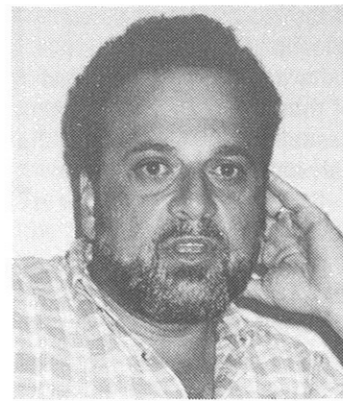
The good news is that believers are involved in reaching out to each other, calling each one another and praying for each other. Another Messianic pastor wrote to us,

"I believe we need to really put our love into practice at this time. We have been praying for you and others of our own personal and very dear Arab brothers and sisters. We talk a lot about reconciliation, but usually the situation is stable and quiet, with only a few incidents once in a while. Now is when all the teaching and training of Musalaha must be put into practice. Many injustices are being committed by unsaved Jews and unsaved Arab Moslems and Christians. No one has anything to gain from the present crisis, except the one 'enemy' of all our people everywhere. Satan would love to see all of us destroy ourselves. We are praying

Extending Hands across a Widening Gap

By Salim J. Munayer, Ph.D., Musalaha

It was a question of time before violence would erupt. Knowing that there had been little progress in the peace process, and seeing the inability of political leaders from both sides to reach an agreement, many of us living in the Middle East sensed that this crisis was imminent. But when it did erupt, in as much as we knew, we were not fully prepared for the strong feelings that would rise in each of us: depression, anger, rage, hatred, and fear. Dehumanizing language such as "barbarian," "uncivilized" and "animal" crept into our vocabulary, when terrible images of violence were played repeatedly on our television screens. Some began to take the law into their own hands. The media, playing the most tragic pictures again and again, served only to feed



hatred and disintegrate the fragile trust that had grown between the two sides. The rapid, widespread escalation of the situation was shocking and disturbing. Suddenly each side was speaking of 'our wounded, our injured;' leaving the impression that 'we' are good, and 'they' are terrible animals; that 'we' want peace, and 'they' want war.

Believers in the region have not been immune to the effects of the crisis.

Among many, the fear, anger and frustration has turned into accusations and blaming. I received emails blaming one side for the situation, resorting to old cliches about the conflict, using theology to preach political agendas, finger-pointing, trying to inform and educate but instead feeding the propaganda machine. Naturally people want to defend themselves, but blame and accusations only further alienate and divide.

Saturday in my own Hebrew-speaking congregation, I was teaching a Bible Study to youth and the subject was how Biblical love involves meeting needs and loving the "other." The question came up, "Who is the 'other'?" The young people started with brothers, sisters, neighbors. "Who is my neighbor?" I was amazed at the hatred present in their

for an outpouring of love on our peoples and I believe that many are praying similarly. I personally am trying to challenge anyone I talk to and especially my Messianic brothers and sisters, to be very careful not to allow any sense of injustice to develop into anger to develop into hate to develop into rage."

We rejoice in seeing leaders in congregations take stands from the pulpit against hatred and enmity, reaffirming that the only way to reconciliation is the Messiah.

One Palestinian Christian leader shared his great concern for the situation. He shared that although Christ-

ians love their county and people, they do not see violence as a solution to the current crisis. "The only thing we can do here as Christians is to be there for the people and to seek the Lord in this situation. Please pray that we would know His wisdom in how to respond."

A Palestinian pastor calls for prayer "against the spirit of killing and retaliating ... Pray that God will be glorified in our midst, pray for revival of the Christian communities here, pray for Palestinian Christians and Messianic Jews as well, both of us can make a difference in our nations."

Recent events show the centrality and urgency of the

work of reconciliation more now than at any other time.

"If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother" (1 John 4:20-21).

Our joy, in spite of the difficulties of recent events, is that people who have been involved in reconciliation have responded by extending a hand across the widening gap between the peoples of this land.

Salim Munayer
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The participants in the ICC-meeting in Jerusalem. From left: David Loden, Arthur Goldberg, Theresa Newell, Bodil F. Skjøtt, Lisa Loden, Kai Kjær-Hansen and Tuvya Zaretsky.

From the ICC meeting in Jerusalem

On 12 September 2000 LCJE's International Coordinating Committee met in Jerusalem. Present were Tuvya Zaretsky (President), Lisa Loden (ICC member), Theresa Newell (Coordinator, North America), Arthur Goldberg (Coordinator, Israel), David Loden (Assistant Coordinator, Israel) and Kai Kjær-Hansen (International Coordinator). Bodil F. Skjøtt served as secretary. ICC member Pirkko Säilä, Finland, was absent.

LCJE's new ICC was elected at the Sixth International Conference in New York, August 1999, and serves until the next international conference, planned to take place in 2003.

Business

Since ICC only meet a few

times between the international conferences, there is quite a lot of business to deal with at their meetings: an evaluation of the membership situation, the financial status and the new budget. Over the years LCJE has acquired a sound economy. The area coordinators were encouraged to take up the challenge and recruit new members and get in touch with suspended members.

New LCJE coordinator for South America

At the meeting in New York in 1999 the ICC was asked to find another LCJE coordinator for South America. We are pleased to be able to announce that Yosef Koelner, Florida, has accepted the challenge. He

introduces himself on pages 12-13.

The Seventh International Conference

A lengthy discussion was held on the venue for the Seventh International LCJE Conference in 2003. We have received invitations from Finland and Germany. The ICC listed pros et cons with regard to finances, practicality and theological atmosphere. But no decision was reached. Since neither Pirkko Säilä, Finland, nor Hartmut Renz, Germany, attended the meeting it was decided to postpone the decision and ask these two to come up with details concerning venues for the conference in their respective countries. A final decision will be made before

The Bible and the Land

At the beginning of this year Musalaha - the Ministry of Reconciliation - published a book entitled *The Bible and the Land: An Encounter*. After the violent episodes in the autumn of 2000 in the Middle East the book has not become less relevant - to say the least.

Editors of the book are Lisa Loden, Peter Walker and Michael Wood. It is based on material from three consultations in 1997, 1997 and 1998. Salim Munayer, Director, Musalaha, says:

"Theology of the Land is an emotionally charged subject, laden with controversy that can color cultural perceptions and personal relationships. The range and diversity of opinions on this issue is profound, not only within Israel and Palestinian areas but also worldwide. For this reason, Musalaha, the Ministry of Reconciliation, is pleased to offer this collection of articles, giving voice to an encounter between people, the Bible and the Land. It is our hope that this book will further understanding and the work of reconciliation."

The book expresses different views: Christian Arab Palestinian, Israeli Messianic Jewish and Western Christian. It really is no surprise that Messianic leaders have diverse views on the current issues and the peace process. It is for the future to show in what direction the Messianic movement in Israel is heading. This is something the book does not and cannot answer - of course. But it is well worth studying and reflecting on in an attempt to avoid simplistic "biblical" solutions to a complex problem.

I give the book my warm recommendations.

Kai Kjær-Hansen

The 202-page book can be ordered from Musalaha, PO Box 52110, Jerusalem 91521, Israel. E-mail: musalaha@netvision.net.il

the end of 2000.

The time for the conference will be either August or June 2003.

The conference committee consists of Tuvya Zaretsky, Bodil F. Skjøtt and Kai Kjær-Hansen. Their first planning meeting will be in March 2001. Suggestions for themes for the conference are welcomed and must – in order to be considered – reach the International Coordinator before 1 February 2001.

Proposed Actions

From the Sixth International Conference there are four proposed actions for ICC to work with. As to the two of them, "LCJE and Coordination of strategies" and "The Purpose Statement of the LCJE", work was set in motion, so that they may be treated at the next ICC meeting.

As to "LCJE link with LCWE and denominations" we can say that LCJE has now strengthened the ties to the LCWE in that LCJE's president, Tuvya Zaretsky, is attempting to participate in as many LCWE meetings as possible. ICC recommends its area coordinators to do the same at a local level and be alert to the importance of Jewish evangelism having good relations to missiologists and the leadership of denominational churches.

As to "LCJE and Youth", ICC rejoices in the growth among young people with a calling to Jewish evangelism, which is reflected in their

involvement as speakers at the annual North American meetings, which will also be the case at the upcoming European meeting in March 2001. They will also be involved in the planning of the next International Conference. According to the ICC a young leader track at the 2003 conference should however not run parallel to the main conference program, rather issues related to young leaders should be part of the main program, as should the tools and programs used by the young leaders. The ICC is open to the idea of having a Young Leaders Conference in 2004 or 2005. – The ICC had asked Derek Leman to write a contribution, which was discussed by the ICC meeting and which is printed in this issue of the Bulletin on pages 14–15.

Celebrate Messiah

In connection with the upcoming Celebrate Messiah Conference in Jerusalem, December 27, 2000 – January 2, 2001, which is organized by AD 2000 in cooperation with the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE), Tuvya Zaretsky informed the committee about the steps he has taken to place Jewish Evangelism on the conference program. It is ICC's opinion that it can cause a problem for LCJE – as a member of LCWE – if a world conference on evangelism, which even takes place in Jerusalem,

does not integrate Jewish evangelism in its program. We still hope that this our efforts will bear fruit.

Networking

Networking is one of the marks of LCJE, and the importance of networking for Jewish evangelism should be underlines at conferences as well as in articles in the Bulletin. The upcoming CEO meeting in Oslo, Norway, 9–13 August 2001, will be another venue where the value of networking will be discussed – and experienced. ICC noted that the CEO meeting in Oslo is a result of networking at the New York conference in 1999. For further information about the Oslo meeting, see p. 27.

New initiatives

LCJE Directory
A new LCJE Directory is now available. ICC decided not to publish a printed version. It can be ordered by LCJE members as an e-mail file. More about this on p. 27.

LCJE Homepage

ICC asked Theresa Newell to look into the possibilities for making an LCJE homepage – perhaps in cooperation with LCJE North America. The international coordinator shared some ideas on what could be included, for example a catalogue listing what tools and expertise LCJE personal and/or organizations have to offer concerning Jewish evangelism.

Publication celebrating 25 years with LCJE (2005)
The idea of publishing a book about the 25 years with LCJE was discussed. No definitive decision was made.

Thanks

No one involved in Jewish evangelism dares to say that it is an easy task. On that background the ICC expressed its gratitude to all coordinators for their work and is encouraged by what

is being done. At the same time it wants to encourage all involved in the work of LCJE on the national level to see how the goals of LCJE can be better reached.

Kai Kjær-Hansen

New LCJE agency member

The Faroe Islands is a small group of islands in the North Atlantic between Scotland and Iceland. Together with Greenland the Faroe Islands is still in union with Denmark but has home rule; there are efforts to break away from Denmark. Compared to Denmark the spiritual life in the Faroe Islands has always been rich and included a strong interest in Israel. In 1992 the Faroese Israel Mission was formed, and now they have decided to become a member of the LCJE family.

Welcome!

With a population of less than 50,000 it is impressive that the Faroese Israel Mission publishes a biannual magazine in 2000 copies. They also have a homepage (www.israel.fo) with quite a few visitors. The Faroese Israel Mission has no paid staff, all work is done on a voluntary basis.



Ásbjörn Jacobsen

The Mission's chairman, Ásbjörn Jacobsen, says that the setting up of an independent Israel Mission and membership of LCJE are natural consequences of the realization that also people in the Faroe Islands have received the best of the best from Israel, namely salvation in Jesus, and that they therefore see it as their duty to be part of a greater fellowship – which also includes Christian churches

– which wants to help bring the gospel back to the Jewish people.

In the last eight years the Faroese Israel Mission has had volunteers working in Israel, where they for example have served at the Caspari Center and in the UBS's Bible Shop in Jerusalem. The Mission has supported the Nordic Joint Mission in Israel, which includes involvement with the Immanuel Church in Jaffo, where they also have had workers.

Ásbjörn Jacobsen says: We would like to continue to send people to Israel and to support various projects in the country. And we strive to increase the efforts at home to arrange meetings and give information. We believe that God wants to use us in his service, both here in the Faroe Islands and in Israel. And we ask our friends' prayers and support. *kk-h*

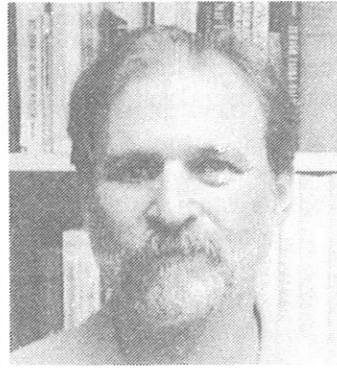
Raices (Roots)

By Rabbi Dr. Yosef Koelner, Temple Aron HaKodesh, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

At the ICC meeting in September Yosef Koelner was appointed new LCJE coordinator for South America. He introduces himself here.

I was born in Chicago during the early 50's to David and Evelyn Koelner. Religiously, my family was oriented toward orthodoxy due to the influence of my grandmother, Lilly Lev. The area I was raised in was predominantly Jewish. One might say my upbringing was typically Jewish suburban upper middle-class. My family background is a combination of Russian, Polish and German. Both of my parents are the offspring of immigrants. I remember my grandmother telling me about hiding under the table while the Cossaks pillaged her village. My father was born in 1899 and if you do the math, you can see I was a child of his old age.

The synagogue I was raised in was called Kehilat Jeshurun Synagogue in the Albany Park section of Chicago. Our synagogue to my recollection, was a unique blend of Hassidim, orthodox and conservative Jews. The Hassidim met in the original shul next to the new building. My most memorable experience at KJS was just before my bar mitzvah. I was in the shul and saw a man intently



Yosef Koelner

studying the Torah. I asked him what he was doing. He told me he was looking for the combination of letters that would help him find the words of eternal life. Upon hearing these words, I remember excitedly running home to see if I could find the words of eternal life in my mini-Torah. Little did I realize at that time, that not only would I find the words of eternal life, but I would meet the Author as well.

God used the Spanish language to help me find the words of eternal life. In high school, I developed a love for Spanish and for the Latin American people. In college, I started out as a theater major with a minor in Spanish. Because of my proficiency in Spanish, I was admitted into upper level courses. One of the courses I was enrolled in was a survey of Spanish literature. Many of the books we studied were of the genre called anticlerical. This genre

is basically atheistic and existentialist denying the existence of God. These ideas shook me to the core of my being and I began to question the teachings of my rabbis and my preconceived notions about the reality of God. During my search, I developed a need to know the truth about God's existence.

To make a very long story short, one night in my dorm room, God revealed Himself and His Son Yeshua to me. During this numinous experience, I also received my call to reach the Spanish speaking world with the good news about Yeshua. How could I refuse this call, since it was the Spanish language which helped me find the words of eternal life? Subsequently, I changed my major and graduated from Illinois State University with a BA in Spanish and Latin American Studies which includes a semester abroad at La Universidad de Las Americas, Cholula, Puebla, Mexico.

During the process of time, in 1978 I was called to be the rabbi of Temple Aron HaKodesh in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Our congregation is currently comprised of people born in 50 different countries. Almost every nation in the Spanish speaking world is represented. Our congregation is approxima-

tely twenty-five percent Hispanic, fifty-percent of which are from Jewish backgrounds. Over the years, we have become increasingly involved in Messianic Jewish ministry in Latin America, which includes conferences, the training of rabbis, and the establishment, as well as supervision, of Messianic congregations. This aspect of the Temple's ministry is called *Fraternidad Judio-Mesianica Aron HaKodesh Internacional*. Recently, I received a Doctor of Practical Ministry from Wagner Leadership Institute specializing in Apostolic Ministry to the Messianic Jewish community of Latin America. According to the Word Jewish Congress as reported by The Jewish Student Online Research Center, there are approximately 529,500 Jewish people in Latin America today. The population ranges from 250,000 Jewish people in Argentina to less than 100 in Honduras and Nicaragua. This population survey does not take into account the numerous amount of Iberoamericans who have Jewish roots.

South American Jews are experiencing the spiritual revival that has swept the continent since the mid-1980's. There is definitely a move going on today, Scott Sekulow of Yachad Ministries told Religion Today. Thousands of Jewish people are

accepting the message that Christ is their promised Messiah, and Messianic congregations are starting and growing throughout the continent, he said. This revival is not limited to just South America but is spreading throughout Latin America. Long neglected by Jewish ministries, Latin America is now becoming an area of renewed interest and activity. Since this increased activity is relatively recent, there are no current statistics available to gauge the effectiveness or measure the impact on the Jewish community. In my opinion, based on my experience, I believe there is a parallel between the early stages of the Messianic Jewish movement in the United States and the present day Messianic Jewish movement in Latin America. There are probably less than 100 congregations/Bible study groups among the 529,500 Jewish people of Spanish America. Most groups have less than 50 people. In a similar way, the majority of Jewish believers can be found in churches. I cannot recall out of all the places that I have been, not meeting at least one Jewish believer in any church.

Since our congregation, Temple Aron HaKodesh, has begun to focus its attention on Latin America, the pace of ministry has increased rapidly. Let me give you an idea of the events of a typical week: Enable the rabbi of a Messianic

congregation in Venezuela to obtain Judaica items for his synagogue as well as a Torah; arrange for the training of the rabbi of our congregation in Rio de Janeiro; prepare for upcoming conferences in the Dominican Republic and Colombia; meet with a pastor from Argentina who has just rediscovered his Jewish roots and wants to implement a Messianic vision in his church. Those I know who are committed to reaching our Jewish people in Spanish America are having similar experiences. As Yeshua said, "Open your eyes and look at the fields. They are already ripe for harvest" (Jn. 4:35 JNT). May Yeshua send more laborers into the harvest field of Latin America.

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Imperatives For Reaching Generation J

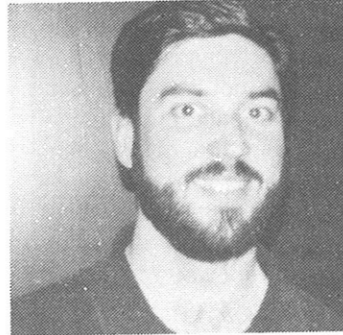
By Derek Leman, Light of Messiah Ministries, USA

When Kai Kjær-Hansen and Bodil F. Skjøtt asked the young leaders to get together at the August 1999 International LCJE, I doubt that anyone expected the enthusiastic and synergistic response that followed. A new network of ministers and leaders in Jewish evangelism was formed. A follow-up to this initial meeting happened in March of 2000, as the young people got together at the North American meeting. Out of these meetings came a renewed interest in bringing the message of Yeshua to Jewish Generation X, also known as Generation J.

Generation X or J

Born between 1965 and 1985, Generation X has largely dropped out of the church. In Jewish circles the trend is similar. Jewish evangelism ministries and Messianic Congregations are experiencing difficulty in reaching Generation J. I witnessed a visible confirmation of this reality at the 2000 Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations conference. I went to address this issue with the congregations and to observe for myself the participation of GenXers. Almost none were there.

One of the few GenXers present was Eve Fischer, daughter of Dr. John Fischer. Her soul-stirring



Derek Leman

article in the Spring 2000 issue of Boundaries ("The Young and the Faithless") identified the GenX problem succinctly:

Take a look at any of the college and career sessions of the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations' youth program, and the group is significantly smaller than its high school and junior high counterparts.

Take a closer look and you'll notice that the college and career group is predominantly people under the age of 20.

Eve went on to say in the article that less than 5 GenXers were in attendance after discounting board

members of the UMJCY.

Even as the daughter of a Messianic leader, Eve herself feels alienated from Messianic Judaism: "Ask me if I will still be attending UMJC conferences 10 years from now, and I cannot give an answer with any kind of certainty." Why not? "It is difficult to find many congregations where I might feel comfortable, much less fit in."

Messianic Judaism and the culture of Jewish evangelism agencies both share a Boomer atmosphere that is not congenial to GenXers. In a paper delivered to the 2000 North American chapter, I highlighted recruitment issues for Jewish evangelism agencies who want and need GenXers. To more fully describe the situation for our movement, I see three key problem areas for the future: our agencies are not set up to optimally draw in GenXers to replace and carry on the work, our congregations are not GenX friendly, and our outreach is doing little to get

One of the items at the ICC meeting in Jerusalem, September 2000, was about LCJE and the future, i.e. the relationship to young leaders with a calling to Jewish evangelism. With a view to that we had asked Derek Leman - one of LCJE's young leaders - for an input, which was discussed and which we bring here. In the next Bulletin we would like to print responses to it from those of our readers who would like to comment on it. Deadline 1 January 2001.

the message out to GenXers.

With regard to mission agency recruiting, I laid out some necessary steps in my paper. Mission leaders must be willing to look for GenX innovators, to allow them space to try new things, to empower them to reach their own generation, and to manage them according to principles that will succeed with GenX, understanding the generational differences.

With regard to Messianic Jewish congregations, several barriers need to be overcome. GenXers are more relational and less program oriented than Boomers. Messianic congregations that try small group ministry and that put GenXers in leadership positions will see success. Where do the Messianic GenXers go when they leave Messianic Judaism? Some leave the faith. Some enter non-Messianic churches that have cutting edge GenX ministries. Some drop out of "organized religion" but maintain a faith commitment.

With regard to outreach, mission agencies must first take the message where GenXers are, such as the college campus and the Internet (not to mention Starbucks and Barnes and Noble). New Messianic Jewish art and music must be encouraged from GenXers. Old images of Hasids at the Wailing Wall must go as our primary advertising pieces. We need art that reflects

contemporary issues.

GenXers are very much driven by art and music, less so by the printed word. Eastern European folk music was great for Boomers, but GenXers are drawn to alternative sounds. Messianic Jewish themes can be successfully combined with alternative sounds to reach a new generation.

My shopping list

What can the LCJE do to foster evangelism and discipleship in Generation J? Here is my shopping list:

1. Form a subteam to stay on top of GenX issues (this has already happened informally with the Young Leader's Network and with Young Leader's sessions at LCJE meetings, but it could perhaps continue to be strengthened)
2. Come up with funding to pay for the recording of Messianic Jewish GenX music
3. Have a website dedicated to Generation J (this has been undertaken by LCJE Young Leaders. As of Sept 1, 2000, Mjzine.com will be just such a site)
4. Form a network of Messianic Jewish musicians and artists who can produce art for Generation J and be a resource to mission agencies and congregations
5. Encourage mission agency leaders to actively recruit GenX workers and help them understand how to win them and keep them
6. Form a campus

ministry team of the LCJE to network and resource people reaching out to Jewish college students

7. Try to pull in more congregational leaders to LCJE meetings so that mission agencies and congregations can work together more effectively. To do this, we need to be able to show the congregational leaders some take-away value for attending an LCJE meeting, such as, new strategies and resources for outreach and discipleship.

I polled other young leaders in Jewish evangelism and they contributed the following ideas in addition to my own:

1. Perhaps an initiative could be to survey young Jewish believers raised outside the Christian community between 18-30 and find out what triggered their faith in Jesus. Since there is a wide range of Jewish experience among our generation it might help to see what has worked in peoples life as a way of seeing how to better reach like people.
2. In conjunction with the above, it may be fruitful to make a cd with a collection of testimonies of young Jewish believers along with music and art that could be sent to people who respond to the website, or even as a form of outreach to be used by all missionary agencies. They could be essays or live interviews.
3. Seek out Jewish

believers on secular college campuses around the country to foster outreach and encouragement. Strengthen these students and teach them to reach out or inspire them to do so.

4. Possibly a web based support network of college age Jewish believers to go along with this. This would perhaps be a jumping off point for them to join

missions agencies. Goes along with recruitment.

5. I think we need to develop new materials, specifically literature that speaks to the GenX mind.

6. Develop a network of GenX church/ministry leaders outside of Jewish ministry who have interest in Jewish evangelism/roots, etc.

8. Market to and invite

GenX leaders outside of Jewish ministry to attend the LCJE conference.

There is plenty of work here to keep a lot of people busy. Not all of these initiatives would involve the direct effort of the LCJE. Yet, the LCJE could certainly make people aware of these needs and thereby foster growth in these areas.

Symbols Used by Messianic Jews in Israel

By Gershon Nerel, Ph.D., Israel secretary for IMJA

Many Messianic Jewish congregations and organizations in Israel use a logo as their graphic identification. Such symbols often relate to national images, like the Menorah or the Star (Shield) of David, that are rooted in the Bible or in Jewish tradition. Increasingly, these national signs also include the fish, well known since antiquity as a symbol for Messiah Yeshua. Of course, such imagery is not exclusive to Israel.

Contemporary Messianic Jewish symbols basically convey the message that there is no contradiction in being Jewish and believing in Yeshua. This message is directed towards Gentile Christians as well as mainstream Jews, to say that Yeshua was and remained a Jew, and that Jewish believers in Yeshua (JBY) are not traitors or renegades.¹



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The Sign of the Cross and Modern Messianic Jewish Symbolism

It is a fact, both in Israel and in the Diaspora, that in the last decades the sign of the cross was gradually removed from most Messianic Jewish symbols. Sometimes, however, their new symbols still project the element of the cross, yet only in a marginal and indirect way. The explanation for this fact seems to be the growing visibility, as well as social involvement, of JBY within the normative Jewish milieu. Jewish collective memory still remembers Church persecutions, and forced conversions, always done under the sign of the cross.² In

Israeli elementary schools, children who attend Math classes are taught to use the + sign in a way that would not look like an ordinary cross. In other words, pupils are requested to write the plus mark only with the three upper pointers of an +, omitting its bottom part. This shows how contemporary Jewry still considers the symbol of the cross as a symbol of Christian anti-Semitism. Therefore JBY try to shape their emblems through alternatives - eliminating or minimizing the cross sign. This development, however, did not occur without disputes and even divisions within congregations.

The *Cross anti-Semitism* is particularly remembered in the State of Israel. When daily surrounded by the geography and history of the Land of Israel, one can hardly forget the Christian Crusaders. With the blessing of the Church, Crusaders conquered this Land with slaughter and expulsion of Jews. With bloody hands the Crusaders used, at the very same time, both the cross and the sword. With this local background, most Israeli Messianic Jews refuse to exhibit the physical symbol of the cross on the walls of their homes or congregation halls. This is the same even with a small personal ornament, like the cross on a necklace.

However, we should also realize that in their teachings JBY constantly emphasize, both privately and in public,

that there is no substitute for the message of the crucified Messiah. Even without using a golden or a wooden decoration of the cross, and without highlighting the cross in their symbolism, still JBY repeat and point to the narrow way of the cross. They openly declare the teaching of the cross as being the source for mercy, forgiveness, and everlasting life, which is the cornerstone of their faith.³ In general, Israeli Messianic Jewish symbols express *Continuity and Renewal*: JBY are the heirs of the New Testament Jews, as well as active partakers in the restoration of Israel.



The Cross in the Star of David

Between the World Wars the symbol of the *Cross in the Star of David* was widely used by JBY, and it remained so in Israel during the first decade after the establishment of the State in 1948. Three persons, Abram Poljak, Agnes Waldstein and Albert Springer, stood behind the mass dissemination of this image. In the early 1950s their *Jerusalem Jewish Christian Fellowship* used publicly an official flag: a blue cloth as background and a white cross in the Star

of David (Fig. 1). In 1959 they also introduced another emblem: a wooden candelabrum, with a cross inside the Star of David that was placed between the seven branches.

The cross in the flag, however, soon became a controversial issue in this community. By the argument that "we are not semi-Christians," Poljak strongly defended the presence of the cross in the flag.⁴ But eventually the leadership of this group went to Europe and after Poljak's death in 1963, the symbol of the *Cross in the Star of David* no longer appeared in Israeli Messianic Jewish congregations. Since those times Messianic Jewish logos in the country developed in other directions. They looked for *graphic substitutes* for the sign of the cross.



The Star of David in the Star of Light

In 1958, Zeev Shlomo Kofsmann, the founder of the *Messianic Assembly of Israel - The Assembly of Jerusalem*,⁵ created for his congregation a new symbol. This emblem contained three elements: a white Star of David in the center, encompassed by a blue star,

surrounded by a ring that included the Hebrew verse: "Arise, shine; for your light has come" (Isaiah 60: 1). The blue star was shaped by octagonal angles, with its four extreme corners stretching out beyond the ring (Fig. 2). The star image also represented the cross, yet in an indirect way.⁶

Another motif that is reflected in this symbol is the compass. Just as the compass is a valuable tool to direct a person on his way, pointing to the North Star, so also the light of Yeshua leads to the truth. The integration of all these components produced a symbol friendly to the environment, not provocative, but still combining the basic messianic narrative of the Old and New Testaments. The Hebrew inscription in this symbol, together with the star of light, gave the association of ideas that the holders of the logo believed in the fulfillment of biblical prophecy. Although the graphic play with the star still left the cross, but no one could be mistaken that this symbol represented a Jewish group.

However, like the other symbols of the *Cross in the Star of David*, also this emblem of the *Star of David in the Star of Light* did not survive more than a decade. In December 1969 the *Jerusalem Messianic Assembly* accepted new members, and it moved back to its original place on the Street of Prophets, where it is located

today. As the congregational symbol was greatly identified with the personality and work of Kofsman,⁷ was not accepted by the new leadership. After Kofsman's death in 1976, this symbol gradually disappeared. Today this Assembly uses another emblem: the Menorah and the Fish.



The Dolphin

Between the years 1966–1969, under the auspices of the *United Christian Council in Israel* (UCCI), an unprecedented Messianic Jewish Printing Press was established in Jerusalem. The symbol of the fish – in the form of the dolphin – appeared on the publications. Victor Smadja, then head of the UCCI sub-committee for Hebrew literature,⁸ and Risto Santala, both representing the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM), introduced the dolphin symbol (Fig. 3). Unlike the cross, the fish symbol was not a controversial sign, and at the same time it was universally accepted as symbolizing Yeshua. As is well known, the early Church fathers made reference to ICHTUS, the Greek acronym identifying Messiah with a fish. The

original acronym stood for *Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior*. Since then this association of Messiah with fish has remained until today. In Israel, the dolphin was used by JBY as a peaceful artistic means to introduce the fish symbol relating to Yeshua.

The late Moshe Ben-Meir provided a relevant interpretation to the following verse: "for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12: 40). Ben-Meir explained that the big fish was DAG in Hebrew, and not a whale. Whale is Leviathan, an unclean sea fish, while DAG is a clean creature. According to Ben-Meir, the Hebrew letters Daled (4) and Gimel (3) in the word DAG make the number 7, "which is a sacred number, indicating divine fullness."⁹ By following this reasoning, i.e. using numerology, one could easily point to Yeshua's perfection and divinity – in the messianic symbolism of Fish/DAG.

Dolphin Christian Press and Publishers was housed rent-free in a basement room at the Finnish Mission School in Jerusalem and the *International Hebrew Christian Alliance* (now the *International Messianic Jewish Alliance*) and FELM were represented on its managerial board. Eventually in October 1969 the equipment

and funds of *Dolphin Press* were handed over to *Yanetz Ltd.*, a new Messianic Publishing House in Jerusalem still in operation today.



The Light of the Menorah

In 1991, when the *Messianic Jewish Alliance of Israel* (MJAI) started to publish its magazine *Zot Habrith* (the Covenant), the emblem of a seven-branched candelabrum was chosen as its symbol.¹⁰ The seven-branched candlestick was originally placed in the Tabernacle and Temple sanctuary. The Menorah has since become a universal symbol of Jewry and Judaism, and now it is the official emblem of the President and State of Israel. However, unlike the traditional Menorah, i.e. not kindled, Messianic Jews usually show a symbol of an *illuminant* Menorah. (Fig. 4) For JBY, the Menorah symbolizes the light of the Messiah (John 1: 4–5), shining and covering the whole earth (Luke 8: 16).

The new Israeli Alliance, born in 1989, was closely related to the *International Messianic Jewish Alliance*, born in 1925, so *daughter* society found the symbol of the Menorah already there with the *mother* Alliance. Since the 1940s the *International Alliance* has used the symbol of the shining

Menorah as a "Candlestick of Witness."¹¹ Later, in the 1950s the *International Alliance* also added to its Menorah logo the Greek word ICHTUS: fish, symbolizing Messiah Yeshua. However, in the 1970s *The Hebrew Christian*, the quarterly organ of the *International Alliance*, dropped the Greek word ICHTUS from its logo, and instead inserted in Hebrew the inscription "Yeshua said: I am the light of the World".¹²

Today, the *illuminant* Menorah in the logo of the *International Alliance* holds a shortened inscription in Hebrew: "Yeshua light of the world." This logo appears on the back of the current magazine. In Israel we use this logo on our formal letterhead, and also on our bank checks and receipts.



The Torch and the Trumpet of Gideon

The model of the Judge Gideon is the source for the emblem of the Ethiopian Messianic Jewish community in Israel. In this logo appears Gideon, or one of his followers (Judges 7: 20), holding in one hand a lightened torch (*lapid*) and in the other a trumpet (*Shofar*). Under the legs of this fighter is a broken pitcher. Below

this image an inscription in Hebrew holds three words: *trumpet, pitcher, torch*.¹³ Metaphorically this logo declares: "we are a small minority, but God is with us; eventually the victory is ours." (Fig. 5)

Interestingly, the signs of the torch and the trumpet were used previously by Israeli JBY. For example, *The Torch* was the name of a Messianic journal in Hebrew published in Jerusalem between 1960 and 1962; *Voice of the Trumpet* was the title of another journal printed in Haifa in 1953.



The Menorah and the Fish

Helmut Iffert, from the *Messianic Assembly* in Jerusalem, is the initiator and designer of the *Menorah and Fish* logo, which is widely used among Israeli JBY. In this symbol, the bottom side of the horizontal shape of the fish is the basis of the lower branch of the Menorah (Fig. 6). This sign is also printed on books and pamphlets published by *Yanetz Printing Press* in Jerusalem, currently under the management of Victor Smadja. The *Menorah in the Fish* is printed as a sticker in various colors and is distributed freely.

Practically, the symbol of the *Menorah within the Fish*

functions as an identification sign among Messianic Jews, and even as a *badge of pride*. However, although Israeli JBY live in an intolerant environment, this symbol should not be interpreted as a secret means of identification for an *underground catacomb movement*. Many Israeli cars are the platform for political and even military labels. For example, some would proudly exhibit stickers of special units of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). In the same way, Israeli Messianic Jews also use such stickers as their *trademark*.

The *Messianic Assembly* in Jerusalem, originally founded by Shlomo Kofman, now uses as its logo another format of the *Menorah and the Fish* symbol. This congregational logo is a semi-oval consisting of three parts: a large seven-branched Menorah, above it is a small fish and on the top, as a cover are written the Hebrew words *Kehila Meshihit Israelit*, i.e. Israeli Messianic Assembly (Fig. 7). The message of this symbol is clear: Messiah Yeshua – the Fish – is placed in the center, and the Menorah represents the national Jewish aspect.

In the *Messianic Assembly* building, a seven-branched Menorah, enlightened with electricity, is placed near the pulpit in the congregational hall. This is customary also in some other congregations. Thus even just the Menorah itself

is viewed by JBY as a messianic symbol

Interestingly, according to Israeli archaeologists, since the late second and third centuries AD, the Menorah has been a messianic symbol throughout the entire Jewish world. Namely, in Jewish art the Menorah reflects the hope for the future coming of the Messiah. Within mainstream Jewry, the Menorah became a symbol for the still expected Messiah.¹⁴ Thus, while in the wide Jewish world the Menorah is accepted as a messianic symbol, expressing hope for redemption, JBY find it legitimate to identify the Menorah with Messiah Yeshua. Consequently the Menorah is viewed by JBY both as a national and a messianic symbol.



Epilogue

The Menorah and Fish, separately or together, are major symbols used by Messianic Jews in Israel. Also the *Star of David* appears in various logos. However, it is especially the Menorah, with its national and messianic symbolism, that becomes an artistic instrument to identify with the ethnic Jewish community and at the same time,

represent Yeshua through the Menorah. Yet as JBY rarely use the traditional sign of the cross, because of the connotation with Church anti-Semitism, they still adopt the fish symbol.

The interesting point is that modern JBY even view the fish symbol as an authentic sign of the original Jewish community of the New Testament. One may ask the following question: is this just an anachronism, even ignorance, or, is there a realistic possibility that the fish symbol was an authentic messianic sign for the first JBY?

Although there is no substantial evidence, archaeological or narrative, that Yeshua's first Jewish followers identified the Redeemer with the fish, yet few scholars still believe that they did so.¹⁵ In a research recently done at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, it was suggested that the identification of Yeshua with fish first occurred in the earliest, Aramaic/Hebrew-speaking, community.¹⁶ Namely, it is argued that the fish symbol for Messiah did not originate in the Greek world, but rather among the Palestinian Nazarene Jews, as part of their linguistic association between the names of Yeshua and *Yehoshua*, i.e. Joshua Ben-Nun, the successor of Moses. Literally, *Nun* in Hebrew means fish. So perhaps some modern JBY could find in this new hypothesis an affirmation for

currently using the Fish as a Jewish Symbol for Messiah Yeshua.

Notes

- 1 Walter Riggans, "Image and Reality: The Use of Jewish Symbolism by Messianic Jews," in *Mishkan*, 19 (1993), pp. 54–63.
- 2 Tsvi Sadan, "Even After Auschwitz – Immanuel," in *Teaching from Zion*, 9 (January 1997), pp. 28–29.
- 3 Haim Joseph Haimoff, "Beginning at Jerusalem," in *Salvation*, 22 (1968), p. 6.
- 4 Abram Poljak, "The Cross Matters," in *Jerusalem*, 28 (1949), p. 5.
- 5 Gershon Nerel, "Messianic Jews' in *Eretz-Israel (1917–1967): Trends and Changes in Shaping Self Identity*, Ph. D. Dissertation, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem 1996, p. 171 (Hebrew).
- 6 "Shalom," (*Journal d'Information*), Granville, Manche 1961–1966, the cover page.
- 7 Appeared on the private letterhead of Zeev Kofman and his wife Yvette.
- 8 "Two U.C.C.I. Books Ready for Publication," in *UCCI News*, [United Christian Council in Israel], vol. 1 (1970), p. 13.
- 9 Moshe Ben-Meir, *The Message of the Prophet Jona*, Haifa, n.d., p. 11.
- 10 "Zot Habrith – This is the Covenant," Jerusalem, Autumn 1999, p. 1.
- 11 Gershon Nerel, "Messianic Jews in Eretz Israel," in *Mishkan*, 27 (1997), p. 25.
- 12 Heinz Leuner, ed., *Der Zeuge*, The International Hebrew Christian Alliance, cover page.
- 13 Fritz May, *Von Saba*

nach Zion, Wetzlar 1998, p. 134.

- 14 Dan Barag, "The Menorah as a Messianic Symbol in the Late Roman and Byzantine Periods," in *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Division B, Volume I, Jerusalem 1986, pp. 59–62 (Hebrew).
- 15 Bellarmino Bagatti, *The Church from the Circumcision*, Jerusalem 1984, p. 214; Cf. G. Robinson Lees, "Notes, (Lamps from Tomb near Silwan)," in *Palestine Exploration Fund*, London 1892, p. 198.
- 16 Gedaliahu Guy Stroumsa, "The Early Christian Fish Symbol Reconsidered," in I. Gruenwald, Sh. Shaked & G. Stroumsa, eds., *Messiah and Christos*, Tuebingen 1992, p. 205.

Evangelizing the Chosen People

Reviewed by Rich Robinson, research librarian, Jews for Jesus, USA

Review of Yaakov Ariel, *Evangelizing the Chosen People: Missions to the Jews in America, 1880–2000*. Chapel Hill, NC; London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000. US\$ 37,50 cloth, US\$ 14,95 paper, 367 pages.

Yaakov Ariel is an Israeli Jew currently teaching at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is not a believer in Jesus. But his

EVANGELIZING the CHOSEN PEOPLE

Missions to the Jews in America, 1880-2000

YAAKOV ARIEL

network of messianic Jewish contacts and several years' research in missions archives has produced the informative and even-handed *Evangelizing the Chosen People*. The result will surprise some who do not expect to find much objectivity on this topic from the pen of a mainstream Jewish scholar.

Ariel divides his history into three parts: the "rise" of the Jewish missions

movement from 1880–1920; the "years of quiet growth" from 1920–1965; and the "coming of age," 1965–2000. Each time period coincides roughly with a new generation of Jews in America and new social factors in American Jewish life. The dynamic interplay between Gentile evangelicals, Jewish mission agencies, Jewish believers and their organizations, and anti-missionaries is woven throughout the history.

Concerning its even-handedness and objectivity, as much as possible, Ariel describes the Jewish missions in terms of their own value systems and also in terms of the general Jewish culture of the day. Repeatedly, it is stressed that the motivation of the Jewish missions was theological (for which see below) and sprang from a high regard for the Jewish people as the Chosen People destined to play a glorious role within God's plan.

Several "myths" (Ariel's term) about Jewish missions are demolished. For instance, though upholding the notion that Jewish believers, for the 1880–1920 period, come from troubled family backgrounds ("[In accounts from this period], I have not found one that described a person who converted while living with a warm and supportive two-parent family," p. 41), Ariel goes on to dispel a number of myths related to family and community ("Memoirs of

converts reveal that . . . Jews who embraced Christianity, for the most part, were able to retain their family ties"; "those converts who wished to retain ties with the Jewish community managed to do so"). In fact, the major problems facing Jewish believers were not external but internal: "how to have peace of mind with a choice and an action that they had been brought up to regard as a betrayal of their people and heritage" (pp. 46–47).

Likewise the myth that missionaries paid money for converts is belied by Ariel's account: "contrary to a common Jewish perception, missionaries were interested in sincere, truly converted people and not in bought ones" (p. 43).

(By the way, the term "converted" and "conversion," used throughout the book, is likely simply an adoption of the standard language of sociology of religious change, rather than a value judgment on whether or not a Jewish believer in Jesus remains Jewish.)

There are examples of how Ariel prefers to describe even the "dirty laundry" of inter-missionary relations in Jewish cultural terms. For example, commenting on the apparently hostile relationship between Henry Einspruch and Aaron Krelenbaum, who produced rival translations of the New Testament into Yiddish:

"For these rivals, then,

Christian tolerance and love were commandments they adhered to in principle but found difficult to carry out in practice. The clash between Einspruch and Krelenbaum showed them to be typical Yiddish writers of their day—jealous, grudging, and self-centered. The Yiddish literary community of the time perceived that it was producing works for a dwindling readership. A large percentage of Yiddish readers perished in the Holocaust; this together with the integration of second-generation immigrants into New World cultures and the emphasis by Zionists on learning modern Hebrew, led to a greater decline in the use of Yiddish. That situation made Yiddish writers feel insecure and bitter. Generosity and indulgence were qualities one could hardly hope to find in their relationships with one another" (p. 92).

Likewise, the difficulty of inter-mission cooperation in this period is explained by the immigrant backgrounds of the mission leaders, who in the ups and downs of a difficult life developed qualities necessary for endurance but not necessarily helpful in learning mutual tolerance (p. 121).

I will leave it to those who might have been present during these rivalries to comment on the accuracy of Ariel's account. What is noteworthy is that the tensions are depicted as what could naturally be

expected of typical Jewish people in their situations.

A similar even-handed treatment is accorded non-Jews in the history: what many would take to be blatantly anti-Semitic stereotyping on the part of Gentile Christians was "often expressed with good intentions and without realizing that Jews might be hurt by such remarks" (p. 176).

One last and significant instance of even-handed treatment: like other writers, Ariel differentiates the early "Hebrew Christian" period from the later "Messianic Jewish" period. But unlike some, Ariel does not take the simplistic path of playing off the difference in terms of assimilation vs. non-assimilation. In fact, he points out that such a simplistic view "tends to ignore the vulnerabilities of Jewish converts during those early years and the circumstances they faced. There were converts who did not care very much about retaining their Jewish roots, but there were others who allowed themselves as much self-assertion as they felt they could afford without losing credibility in their new environment. The remarkable thing about the attitudes of the Jewish Christian activists of the early twentieth century was not their unwillingness to build new modes of Jewish Christian life but rather that they did get together and find the courage to build an organization of their own in which

they gave expression to their mutual concerns" (pp. 50–51). Thus the lesser role sometimes given to Jewish behavior and identity in the "Hebrew Christian" period is given a positive interpretation, in contrast so those who have seen it as a marked deficiency.

The book is sprinkled with some surprising gems. For instance, there is the account of Amos Dushaw, a Jewish Christian novelist "who gave voice in his novels to the struggles and dilemmas of converted Jews" (p. 51). Comparing his writings to those of the famous Yiddish novelist Abraham Cahan, Ariel notes that Dushaw was somewhat unconventional but that nevertheless, he served as the Hebrew Christian Alliance's representative to Palestine beginning in 1920.

Alongside much that can be commended, there are also some shortcomings in the book. In seeking to understand Jewish missions on their own terms, Ariel makes continual reference to "dispensational premillennialism" as the formative and shaping theological factor in Jewish missions. He is right that in America this school of theology had a major, perhaps *the* major, influence on Jewish missions and still continues to. Nevertheless, it would seem by emphasizing its influence, other formative factors are neglected.

For one thing, Ariel does not mention the role of such

non-dispensational denominations as the Christian Reformed Church and devotes very little to the Lutheran Church. Since in Europe the Lutheran Church was very much involved in Jewish missions, one wants to ask what factors led the Lutheran Church in Europe to engage in that work to the extent it did. It would seem that factors other than dispensational premillennialism need to be addressed: theological factors (i.e. what did the non-dispensationalist groups who were active in Jewish missions say about the place of the Jewish people in God's plan?), missiological (the issue of contextualization in general missions is not addressed vis-a-vis the increased emphasis on Jewish identity among converts in the modern period), and sociological (could the simple fact of Jewish immigration and the subsequent increased visibility of Jews in America have contributed to the rise in support for Jewish missions from 1880 on?).

Furthermore, sometimes theological doctrines held in common by all Christians are described as though they were distinctives of dispensational premillennialism alone: "a message that emphasized the dispensationalist premillennialist missionary interpretation of history, namely, that there is a new covenant between God and his people" (p. 90); "the dispensationalist idea that the Church equals the

body of the true Christian believers and that Christians were defined by their acceptance of Jesus as their personal Savior..." (p. 223) These mis-steps in describing this branch of theology suggests that wider theological factors may well have been at work.

I would not belabor this point were it not for the fact that "dispensational pre-millennialism" becomes the constant theological refrain throughout the book that tends to push aside other contributing elements.

The third section (1965-2000) is perhaps the most problematic. Ariel gives a glimpse of the energy and enthusiasm, as well as the growing pains, that characterize this period. Of course, it is always difficult to write with perspective when one is describing still-developing events. The two key chapters are on "Jews for Jesus" and "Messianic Judaism," the latter phrase generally used synonymously with the messianic congregational movement.

Perhaps the most debatable assertion here will be that the messianic congregations have come into their own as "effective" vehicles for evangelism. Ariel posits that the impetus in evangelism has swung from the established missions to the messianic congregations. Notably missing from the bibliography is Jeffrey Wasserman's important study *Messianic Jewish Congregations: Who Sold*

This Business to the Gentiles? which argues that most members and leaders of the 200 or so North American messianic Jewish congregations are Gentiles, and that evangelism is not at all their strong point (in contrast to the congregational situation in Israel; perhaps this different situation influenced Ariel's conclusions).

In fact, apart from the chapter on Jews for Jesus, one would get the overall impression that the landscape of the messianic Jewish movement today is largely congregational and not at all missional. Ultimately, though, the congregational movement in America may turn out to be more significant as a chapter in how Christians relate to Jewishness than in either how mission work is carried on, or in how messianic Jews express their faith (there are 50,000 to 75,000 Jewish believers in traditional churches in America vs. 5,000 to 6,000 in messianic congregations, according to Wasserman, p. 155).

Some possible errors of fact: on p. 83 Albert Huisjen is identified as Lutheran, but his books and articles were under the auspices of the Christian Reformed Church. On p. 86, read "confession," not "confusion," in the quote from Hanson. I suspect that the name of the missionary journal *The Mediator* was not intended to symbolize mediation between Protestant Christians and Jews (p. 89), but to identify Jesus as

the mediator between man and God as described in the New Testament (Hebrews 9:15). In the final chapter, which discusses missionary activity in Israel (and its relation to the American scene), the adoption of new terminology in place of "convert" and similar terms is described as internalizing Jewish identity and as more effective in evangelism—but missing is the goal of communicating more clearly and accurately in an appropriate language. Again, a look at contextualization issues in terms of overall missiology would have been of benefit. It is hoped that a second edition might address some of the concerns raised here, especially with regard to the third period.

Despite these criticisms, *Evangelizing the Chosen People* is a noteworthy accomplishment and a must-read for all in Jewish missions. Indeed, it should be on the shelf of every missions library; it will certainly be on the shelves of many Jewish libraries. As the most recent and comprehensive treatment of American Jewish missions, it will be adopted as a textbook for courses in Jewish missions history. An extensive bibliography and index add to its usefulness.

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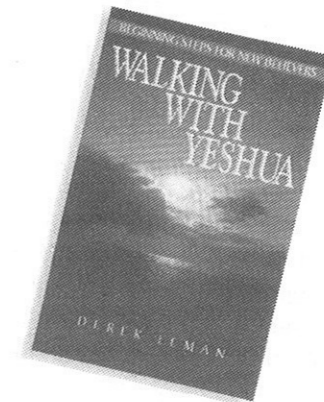
WALKING WITH YESHUA: Beginning Steps for New Believers

Reviewed by Theresa Newell, North American LCJE Coordinator

Review of Derek Leman, *WALKING WITH YESHUA: Beginning Steps for New Believers*. Lederer, Messianic Jewish Publishers, Baltimore, MD, 2000. 170 pages, USD 14.95.

As I read through this discipleship book for new Jewish believers (JB's), I jotted down a list of descriptive words for it: *practical, orthodox, Bible-based, orderly, thorough, balanced, consistent, encouraged unity in the Body of Messiah, personal*. As I read, I was impressed by the need for such materials to be available to those of us who work to get the Gospel to our Jewish friends. Help is needed to take the new JB through the next steps toward maturity in Messiah. Vital questions of their own Jewishness in the face of their new beliefs need to find a place for discussion that is open and sensitive. Leman has produced such a book.

The title, *Walking With Yeshua*, sets the tone for Jewish discipleship: *halakh*, to walk, from which *halakhah* comes, is the exact verb. The *talmidim* (disciples) learn by walking in the ways of *Torah* with their Rebbe. The new Jewish believer is invited to be a *talmid(ah)*, a disciple walking with the



Master Himself, Yeshua, to learn step by step.

The book is divided into five sections which flow in an orderly way from simple to more complex issues: Getting Started; Beginning Steps; Deeper Issues; Potential Problem Areas; A Messianic Jewish Lifestyle. It is a book that can be used in a mentoring/discipling one-on-one way which is the method Leman suggests for using the book. "It is the heart material and the practical experience that you must add," he instructs the discipler (pg. ix). There is "homework" at the end of each section, verses to be committed to memory and others to be reviewed from week to week.

Fill-in-the-blank questions appear throughout each section which draw the new disciple into thinking more deeply about each issue. Each section contains pertinent Bible verses (most quoting from the *Complete*

Jewish Bible by David Stern and a few from NASB) that Leman exegetes simply, expanding on meanings or various ways of understanding a passage. Between sections of teaching material, Leman intersperses stories to illustrate his points. These vignettes include everything from stories from the Talmud to contemporary testimonies such as Odessa Moore from South Central Los Angeles to classic authors like as Brother Lawrence and Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Leman leads the reader from the basics of coming to faith to questions of membership in a Messianic or non-Messianic congregation. He briefly covers a plethora of topics that a new JB might have questions about as he/she begins to experience life in the Body of Messiah. These topics include how to view *Torah*, written and oral, and the wearing (or not wearing) of *tzitziyot*, *tallit*, *kippah*. Then there are discussions about the celebration of Jewish Holidays, the use of the *Siddur*, keeping Kosher, and *Shabbat* observance. Leman gives a fair assessment of issues which may be controversial (such as the use of the gift of tongues in some congregations) and good

commonsense advice about such things: search the Scriptures, pray and do not be pressured by others. He simply says about such things: "Not all believers agree on this issue." Throughout this book, Leman teaches with a

pastoral heart, not skirting difficult topics or leaving out the deeper call to future growth and maturity. There is a kindness in tone in the text that the discipler using the book with a new believer would do well to imitate. A brief 170 pages,

Walking with Yeshua is a concise guidebook for helping new disciples find their way to solid footing in their beginning days with the Lord who called them to "Follow Me."
Theresa Newel
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To The Jew First In The New Millennium

By Nathanael Hirsch, LCJE Coordinator for Australia/New Zealand

From the 13th to 14th of October 2000, Celebrate Messiah Australia together with Chosen People Ministries International hosted an historic conference in Melbourne, Australia, called "To the Jew First in the New Millennium." This groundbreaking event highlighted the Biblical mandate and priority of Jewish evangelism as well as providing delegates with information on how to share the Gospel with Jewish people.

The conference was attended by some 80 delegates from across the country. They were stimulated and challenged by 7 different distinguished speakers (from both Australia and overseas) from various Churches and Bible Colleges including Baptist, Churches of Christ, Anglican and Assemblies of God. What was quite unique was that 6 of the speakers are Jewish believers in Jesus and 4 of them are in full-time missionary service.

The papers that were presented reflected the speakers various perspec-

tives, however, the overall impact was a resounding and robust affirmation of the need and priority of sharing the Gospel with Jewish people in Australia and world-wide.

Topics that were covered were: Jewish Evangelism, the Forgotten Mission Field; The Alleged Anti-Semitism of the NT with particular emphasis on John and Acts; The Coming Deliverance of Israel - A Look at Messiah's

return through Zechariah 12:10; The Jewish Jesus: Rediscovering a Hebraic Spirituality; Putting First Things First: The Priority of Jewish evangelism in Romans; Jewish Evangelism in the Shadow of the Holocaust; Jewish Evangelism, the Forgotten Mission Field; New Covenant, New Israel? Supercessionism, Pluralism and Jewish evangelism.
Lawrence Hirsch lhirsch@celebratemessiah.com.au

Tapes from Celebrate Messiah Australia

Tapes from the conference can be ordered through Celebrate Messiah Australia as well as a set of 5 tapes on how to share the Gospel with Jewish people. The cost of the tapes are as follows:

* Exploring the Biblical Mandate (set of 6 tapes) - Aus \$35 (plus \$8 postage within Australia; international postage to be advised on ordering).

* Bringing The Message To The Original Messengers: A Seminar On Jewish Evangelism - Aus \$30 (plus \$7 postage within Australia, international postage to be advised on ordering).

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Congregation website: www.beithamashiach.com

LCJE Directory

From 1 December 2000 all members of LCJE - agencies or individuals - can order the new LCJE Directory. The material for the new directory has been compiled by Birger Petterson. It consists of two files: one with the names and addresses of individual members, and one with a list of the LCJE agency members. The LCJE members who appear in these files are those who have expressed their wish to appear in it and who have given their explicit permission to this.

The LCJE Directory will be continuously updated and only be available as e-mail files. Those who want the information on paper will have to print it out themselves. The files will be sent as RTF files. The information in the Directory should only be used for networking in the spirit of LCJE.

Those LCJE members who want their names and/or organizations included in the Directory, should send the relevant information to LCJE International - where the new Directory can also be ordered from: lcje-int@post3.tele.dk

MEETINGS

LCJE North America

Next meeting: 12-14 March 2001 in Los Angeles. Further information: Theresa Newell (see back cover)

LCJE Europe

Next meeting: 15-18 March 2001 in La Buessière-Sur-Ouche in France. Further information: Hartmut Renz (see back cover)

CEO

CEO-conference
9-13 August 2001
in Oslo, Norway.

Further information:
Rolf G. Heitmann
post@israelsmisjonen.no

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