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CONSULTATION
ON JEWISH
EVANGELISM**

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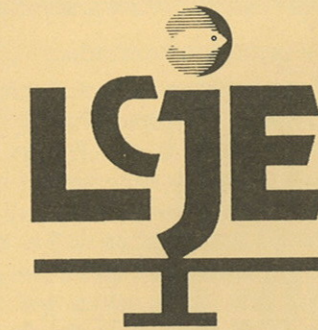
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ON JEWISH EVANGELISM
BULLETIN**



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From the Editor

Any editor wants to present matters of current interest. This issue of the Bulletin is topical although it does not deal with the current crisis in the Persian Gulf and Iraq's missile attack on Israel. Anti-mission is always a current issue, even if it is not - like the Gulf crisis and Israel - on everybody's lips, Jews' as well as non-Jews'.

But it might be appropriate to have a few comments from Israel in our next issue, which will also have reports about the LCJE meeting in South Africa, 23 February, and the LCJE meeting in Atlanta, 27-28 February.

The program for The Fourth International LCJE Conference in Holland, 5-9 August 1991, is enclosed with this Bulletin.

All conference papers will be printed. Of course they can be purchased by people who are prevented from taking part in the Conference. In the next issue of the Bulletin you will an order form enclosed.

The Bulletin that appears in late August this year will, naturally, contain glimpses from the Conference. And the Conference statement will also be available. But *to read* about a conference is only the second best thing.

Since I am the one who opens the LCJE mail and receives dues, I get a lot of letters with the name and logo of the organisation or church in question. From time to time I ask myself, Why this name and this logo? It goes without saying that a name and a logo signal a message. I would be interested to learn more about this. Therefore, all agencies and individual members are invited to make their contribution to the LCJE Bulletin No. 26 (November 1991):

- * Send your church/organisation's name and logo (must be reproducible).
- * Give a brief explanation (max 150 words) of the name and the symbolism of the logo.
- * Deadline 1 October 1991.

Please send the article with the logo to me (for the address of the LCJE office, see back cover).

Kai Kjaer-Hansen

**Holland 91
is not a minor event
Don't miss it
See the program enclosed
Send your registration
before 15 April 1991**

ANTI-MISSION in Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century

By Kelvin Crombie, Christ Church, Jaffa Gate, Jerusalem

Mention the word "Mission" in Israel today and eyebrows are sure to rise - angers too on occasion. Yaacov Fiedler of the "Jerusalem Post" wrote concerning the "Mission":

One anniversary we are not being asked to mark is the beginning, 150 years ago, of missionary activities to the Jews in the Holy Land. Indeed the very word arouses hostility bordering on hysteria in some circles, although the facts show that there is little justification for vilifying a body of men, many of whom have been true friends of Israel.¹

Indeed the truest friends the Jewish community of Eretz Israel had last century were the Jewish missionaries, and thankfully today a number of prominent Israeli historians are publicising this fact. The modernisation and development of Jerusalem was primarily a result of work of the "Mission". Professor Yehoshuah Ben Arieh wrote concerning the Jewish reaction to this situation:

The battle against the Mission led to the establishment of Jewish institutions for health, welfare, and education, so that Jews would not have to resort to the services of the Mission.²

Almost every aspect of

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modernism entered Jerusalem, either via the "Mission", one of the agencies associated with it, or from the reactions to it.

Anti-mission in the Old Yishuv

For the bulk of the nineteenth century the term "Mission" referred to but one missionary society, known historically as "The London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews", or the "London Jews Society"; (LJS), and presently as the Church's Ministry among the Jews (CMJ). CMJ was birthed in 1809 in a period of intense interest in the Jewish people and physical and spiritual restoration. CMJ thereafter became the vehicle for the strong restorationist movement in England. A

strong emphasis of the Society was the need to preach the Gospel to the Jewish people in Jerusalem to prepare the city for the return of the Jewish people, and ultimately of Jesus Himself.

Early attempts at the establishment of Protestantism in Jerusalem failed due to strong local opposition from the Turkish governor, Muslims, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Armenians and Jews. Joseph Wolff, a CMJ associate made the first serious attempt to bring the Gospel to the Jerusalem Jews in 1822, prompting the Society to declare its intentions to settle in 1823 when they sent the Rev. Lewis Way and some 10,000 Bibles to Eretz Israel. But Way fell sick and returned and in early 1824 an Imperial Firman from the Sultan and a Papal Bull from the Pope were enacted forbidding the distribution of the Protestant Bibles. In Jerusalem the rabbis forbade their flock from accepting any materials offered by the early CMJ missionaries, threatening a cherem, or excommunication, if this rule was broken.

Indeed it was the dreaded cherem (curse) which was to be the rabbis' strongest anti-mission tool during the nineteenth century, due to the very character of the Jewish

community. The Jewish community was the poorest and most despised in Jerusalem, they were the dhimmis and Christ-killers. They dared not venture near nor into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The lowest Muslim peasant could physically insult the leading rabbis and no redress of justice would be forthcoming. Their living conditions were deplorable and industry was scanty. Indeed the small community survived due to donations sent by their brethren in Europe. But these alms were sent to the leading rabbis, who then distributed them to the people, a system known as "haluka". Any disobedience from a member of the community and the alms could be withheld. A cherem or excommunication forbade the community having any social intercourse with a "renegade", his income was withheld, and death was a serious possibility. Moreso, a cherem affected his after life, as the person could be denied Jewish burial. W.H. Bartlett described in great detail the poor conditions of the Jewish community, and described how the poor Israelites "are all tyrannized over and kept in bondage by the Rabbis".³

As CMJ established its presence from 1833 onwards, through the pioneering work of John Nicolayson, conditions for the Jewish people changed dramatically. The early missionaries implored the Society at home to pressure the British government to open a consulate in Jerusalem in order to protect them, and



Christ Church Jerusalem. "This do in remembrance of me" - the words of Jesus when he instituted the new covenant.

the downtrodden Jewish community. Combined with political factors, this request became a reality in 1838 when the first consulate was set up in Jerusalem, and the British consul's instructions were to protect the Jewish community wherever possible. Already in 1825 the Society had laid the foundations for modern medicine in Jerusalem by sending out the city's first doctor. Later more doctors

were despatched. Stirred out of their lethargy, a number of rabbis petitioned the assistance of European Jewry, and in 1842 Sir Moses Montefiore sent out the first Jewish doctor. CMJ opened the first hospital in 1844 - exclusively for Jewish patients, on the edge of the Jewish quarter. The hospital was adorned with Jewish inscriptions, Bibles, Hebrew songs were sung on Shabbat

which filtered into the Jewish quarter. The rabbis were forced to proclaim severe cherems against any Jew entering the hospital. Jewish guards were placed near the hospital entrance who reported back to the rabbis. In 1866 following a severe drought the Hebrew press made consistent appeals for Jewish doctors to come to Jerusalem lest the Jewish community resort again to the "Mission".⁴

The appointment of a former rabbi, Michael Solomon Alexander, as the first Protestant/Anglican Bishop in 1841 extended the mission's influence, and stimulated further Jewish reactions. He was instrumental in establishing a Hebrew College, a House of Industry for teaching trades to Hebrew Christians, and a Book Shop. The rabbis retaliated by strengthening the cherems, and by sending long and distorted letters and appeals to the European brethren. The English Jewish newspaper "The Voice of Jacob" wrote:

The English Mission is represented as a thorn in the sides of the Jews, who have employed the press at their disposal there, to promulgate two Hebrew documents, by way of solemn protest against the whole proceedings of the missionaries and their proteges, and earnest appeal to their European brethren for the support of their own pious institutions.⁵

On occasion the rabbis

adopted very harsh measures against CMJ. The wife and child of one Jewish enquirer were secreted away by the rabbis and sent out of the country. On another occasion three rabbis were discovered to be enquirers. Physical harassment followed, including their being hit and beaten in the synagogue. The wife of one, with child at breast, was strongly coerced by the rabbis to seek divorce. Despite this threat, Rabbi Eleazar followed his convictions, forsook his family and followed the Nazarene through the waters of baptism. The Jewish community took a very dim view concerning the episode with the three rabbis and a delegation of rabbis arrived from Tiberias, having heard of

with Russia during the Crimean War. Starvation confronted many within the Jewish community. Many then resorted to the services of CMJ and of the very sympathetic British Consul, James Finn, and his wife, Elizabeth Ann. Upon hearing of this situation the Paris based Rothschild family despatched Dr. Albert Cohen to Jerusalem in order to establish Jewish institutions which would counter the influence of CMJ and the Consul. The first Jewish hospital was thereby established in 1854.

The Finns also established, during the Crimean War, an industrial plantation named "Abraham's Vineyard" to provide work and food for the



An open Bible in Christ Church Jerusalem

the "conversion" of fourteen rabbis in Jerusalem!

The bulk of the Ashkenazi Jews were Russian, and reliant upon the alms sent from Russia. Their situation became deplorable when a naval blockade cut off contact

beleaguered Jewish community. Mrs Finn recalled how the rabbis forbade the one hundred and fifty workers from going to the Vineyard, and even posted guards at the gates of the Old City to stop them. Many of the workers

ran around to the northern gate and exited nevertheless.⁶ Part of the rabbis' concern was the presence on the Vineyard of several Hebrew Christians, members of the Christ Church congregation.

CMJ operated several strategically located institutions, primarily Christ Church and the hospital. Both of these institutions boasted of metres of open wall space which faced the Jewish community - an ideal location for posters. On many occasions the Society posted up bills on these walls, often offering a Messianic interpretation of the text preached upon in the Synagogue that week, and groups of young Jews often gathered to read these texts.⁷

These handbills caused such a controversy that the Chief Rabbi complained to the British Consul, Noel Temple Moore, who then informed the Secretary of State, who in turn requested CMJ to desist from such controversial activities. In this case the anti-mission activity was conducted with diplomatic assistance.

Anti-mission and the First Aliyah

The first aliyah or immigration of nationalist Jews to Eretz Israel began in 1882, following fresh outbursts of anti-Semitism in Russia and Eastern Europe. Many of these immigrants were non-religious. Upon arrival in Eretz Israel their hopes of a warm welcome were sadly depressed. The old yishuv could not offer much

hope to these newcomers.

In contrast, the missionaries of CMJ offered, as much as their resources allowed, much assistance. Actually their benevolence outweighed their resources, causing CMJ a financial embarrassment. Yet the Society, both in Eretz Israel and in England, saw in the aliyah a fulfillment of prophecy, and thereby supported it wherever possible. And support it they did, both at Jaffa and especially at Jerusalem. Their schools were filled with Russian children, the hospital had many sick immigrants, up to 50 Russians attended the daily Hebrew service at Christ Church, and some 70 men were employed clearing land on some of the Society's property. In contradiction to previous patterns the Ashkenazi and Sephardi chief rabbis even concluded that assistance had to be accepted from the missionaries or else the immigrants would have starved to death.⁸

European Jews, such as Baron Rothschild and the various Jewish philanthropic organizations like the French Alliance Israelite, initially withheld support from these nationalist ventures. Charles Netter, founder of the Alliance agricultural farm named Mikve Israel near Jaffa wrote that these new immigrants would receive no assistance in Eretz Israel. Instead, Netter warned, they would fall into the net of the missionaries and "that which the promoters of the movement will have sown, the

buyers of souls will reap".⁹

The activities of CMJ ultimately aroused stronger Jewish opposition. When news reached Baron Edmond Rothschild of the situation in Eretz Israel, he conceived that there was a British-missionary plot associated with the immigration of the Russian Jews, and his stubborn opposition changed to one of co-operation.¹⁰

Once Rothschild turned his benevolence to the Jewish people, anti-mission feeling again rose. The Society wrote, in August 1883, of a meeting of the rabbis in Jerusalem and the issuing of "one of the severest cherems or bans which has been issued in Jerusalem".¹¹

Jewish opposition to the Society's activities further increased following the opening, in 1883, of a colony at Artuf near Bet Shemesh. The colony was established by a CMJ affiliated organization named the "Refugees Aid Society" for the Russian refugees.¹²

Synonymous with the first aliyah CMJ increased its operations in Jerusalem, as well as re-opening its station in Jaffa in 1883 and Safed in 1884. As could be expected anti-mission activities also developed. Arthur Kelk, leader of the Society's work, wrote in 1886 that almost every week the Hebrew paper was full of attacks upon the Society's work, and that this opposition was coming mostly from the so-called nationalists.¹³ The nationalist Jews opposed the work not so much on religious grounds, but

THE JEWISH CHURCH

Kelvin Crombie's forthcoming book "The Jewish Church" (its probable name) traces the development of the Church's Ministry among the Jews, looking at the political and ecclesiastical trends in England and Europe which led to its inception in 1809, and traces the development of the Society's work in Eretz Israel from the 1820's until the late 1970's. The history reflects upon the difficulties encountered by CMJ in establishing the first permanent Protestant presence in Jerusalem; in building the first Protestant Church in the Middle East; in establishing a Protestant Bishopric with a Jewish Bishop; in building the first modern institutions in Jerusalem, including the first hospital; and in assisting the Jewish people by combatting anti-Semitism. It also looks at the forced development of the Jewish community in Jerusalem in order to combat the effects of CMJ's presence, and the tensions within the Anglican Church in the Middle East over the issue of the restoration of Israel. This issue is highlighted by witnessing CMJ's role in the installment of a Jew as the first Anglican Bishop, and of CMJ's opposition to the installment of an assistant bishop in 1979 who is a member of the PLO Executive Committee.

* *

on nationalist. They accused the Hebrew Christians of having left the Jewish nation, and claimed that the universalist message of Jesus was opposed to Jewish exclusivity.

Henceforth the CMJ activities caused both elements of the Jewish community increasing concern. Foremost amongst such a concern were the schools. Each day several hundred Jewish children were exposed to the Gospel at the various Mission schools in Jerusalem and Safed. Added to this number were the special night schools which taught English and which used the New Testament as a teaching tool. In 1894 the Hebrew papers threatened to publish names of the Jews attending the missionary schools. In 1898 the Jewish philanthropic society "B'nai Brith" was founded in Jerusalem, and "... it waged war on the Anglican mission which had attracted many of our youngsters to its evening classes ..."¹⁴

The last decade of the nineteenth century saw an increase in Jewish opposition to the CMJ work. The stimulus for such was a further increase in the Mission activities, especially in the medical field. The Hebrew newspaper "Beth Jacob" carried a strong article in 1892, stating how two Jewish hospitals had been established in Jerusalem's Old City on either side of the English mission hospital, which

... are witnesses to warn and cry out to our brethren, "Take away

your reproach and defile not the honour of your nation by going to the English Mission Hospital, which tries to catch souls."¹⁵

In 1893 construction began on a new CMJ hospital outside the walls of the Old City. The hospital opened in 1897. The Jewish opposition which followed its opening became intense, resulting in the first serious Jewish demonstration known in Jerusalem in modern times. The "Beth Din" or Jewish religious court, issued a severe *cherem* which was posted up throughout the city warning people of the dire consequences if they visited the Hospital. Jewish people who disobeyed the *cherem* were then physically harassed as they left the premises and often their medicine was taken from them. Some Jewish people resorted to dressing up as Muslims in order to escape detection by the Jewish spies belonging to the newly formed anti-mission group, "Benei Israel". Ben Arieh wrote that severe opposition arose against the new Hospital, from both secular and religious Jews.¹⁶ John Dickson, the British Consul, wrote to the Foreign Office on June 25, 1897:

... since the opening of the new Hospital of the "Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews", in April last several hostile demonstrations against the work of the Society have been made by the Jews in Jerusalem in the

vicinity of the Hospital, but more particularly before the Dispensary of the Society situated within the city walls. Placards have been posted up, signed by the Rabbis, containing false and defamatory expressions respecting the Society and patients going to and from the Dispensary have been assaulted and ill-treated on several occasions by a Jewish mob.¹⁷

The effects of the *cherem* were felt in all aspects of the Society's work at Jerusalem, Safed, Jaffa and at Hebron. In Jerusalem for instance the school attendances dropped drastically. Matters came to a violent end when a Jewish lady died in the Hospital shortly after its opening. The rabbis refused to allow her a Jewish burial, thereby carrying out their threat contained in the *cherem*. Consul Dickson informed the Foreign Office that the Chief Rabbi even encouraged a crowd to assemble before the hospital to prevent the body being taken away.¹⁸ The Turkish Governor finally sent soldiers to take the body away for burial. The mob then attempted to stone the corpse. Dickson continues:

... hundreds of Jews had collected with sticks to prevent the body being interred in their ground. The police and gendarmes were stoned several times, but ultimately the body was buried in a plot of ground ... which belongs to the "London Jews Society".¹⁹

The night following the burial the ground was opened and the body thrown out. For several nights thereafter Turkish soldiers had to stand guard nearby.

In order to defuse the situation the British Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, Lord Salisbury, requested the Anglo-Jewish Association to intervene, which they did, albeit rather reluctantly. The involvement of government bodies and an influential Jewish organization outside of the land highlighted that the anti-mission movement was now entering a new phase.

Conclusion

Throughout most of the nineteenth century the anti-mission movement was uncoordinated and sporadic, due mostly to the very character of the Jewish *yishuv*. The opposition, sometimes violent, revolved around two major strengths, one the feared *cherem/excommunication*, and the social ostracism associated with it. The other centred upon the establishment of Jewish institutions to counter the influence of the Mission initiatives.

The intensity of the opposition in 1897 and the union of religious and secular Jews in this opposition spelt a new beginning in the anti-mission movement. The newly founded Zionist movement encountered many obstacles in order to establish its position and authority within the Jewish *yishuv*. The Jewish mission was viewed as one

such obstacle. From 1898 onwards into the twentieth century there was an intensification of nationalist opposition which prompted CMJ to write in 1898: "Since the so-called 'Zionist' movement began there has been a most determined spirit of opposition to Christianity ..."²⁰

Notes

- 1) "Mission Impossible", "Jerusalem Post", November 11, 1983.
- 2) Ben Arieh, Y., "Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century", vol I, Jerusalem, 1984, p. 336.
- 3) Bartlett, W.H., "Jerusalem Revisited", London, 1853, p. 44.
- 4) Ben Arieh, Y., *ibid.* 339.
- 5) "The Voice of Jacob", April 11, 1845.
- 6) Finn, E.A., "Reminiscences of Mrs Finn", London, 1929, p. 125).
- 7) LJS Report, 1971, p. 78.
- 8) Laskov, S., "The Biliim", Jerusalem, 1979 (Hebrew), p. 28; and Ginat, S., "Activities of the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews", 1820-1914, Haifa, 1986, p. 73.
- 9) "Jewish Chronicle", May 19th 1882, p. 5.
- 10) Schama, S., "Two Rothschilds and the Land of Israel", London, 1978, p. 8, and Laskov, *ibid.*, p. 30, and Rothschild to Baron Hirsch, April 6, 1883, in Yavnieli, S., "Sefer Ha-Zionist" (Hebrew), Tel Aviv, 1944, p. 81.
- 11) "JMI", August 1883, p. 206.
- 12) See David Pileggi's article on "Artuf" in "Mishkan", Spring 1990.
- 13) LJS Report, 1886, p. 103-104.
- 14) Press Y. "A Hundred Years of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 1964 (Hebrew), p. 125.
- 15) "Beth Jacob", May 13, 1892, Eyar 17.
- 16) Ben Arieh, Vol 2, p. 323.
- 17) FO file 195/1984, No 36.
- 18) FO 195/1984, No 53, October 1897.
- 19) FO/1984, No 53, quoted in Hyamson, Vol 11, p. 508.
- 20) LJS Report, 1898, p. 88.

Anti-Missionary Efforts

By Tuvya Zaretsky

The anti-missionary movement is a reactionary effort. They would not be a subject for discussion were it not for the presence of a vibrant Gospel outreach to the Jewish people. Thus, their activity can be good for the work of Jewish evangelism.

The anti-missionary presence is a measure, in direct proportion, to the effective communication of the Gospel. That point may be, for some missionaries, the hardest to admit. If no viable testimony is being raised, anti-missionaries would be out of existence.

Four anti-missionary strategies have been observed in recent years. They are, on descending levels of sophistication, a) diplomacy, b) propaganda, c) indoctrination, and d) harassment. The first method has produced the least amount of direct contact with the opposition, yet it may be the most effective realm of their activity.

Diplomacy

Diplomatic activity happens behind the scenes. Specialists in Christian-Jewish relations have been developing coalitions of Christian and Jewish leaders. At the initiation of American Jewish agencies, a clique of "interfaith ministries" has developed to create

cooperation and understanding between Christians and Jews. Michael Shermis²¹ has catalogued 41 such agencies, operating in the United States and seven foreign countries.²²

Consistently, it's been found that interfaith ministries demonstrate little appreciation for those of Jewish nationality who profess faith in Christ. Certainly, they are not agencies for Jewish Christians. Those missionaries who labor to make the Gospel known among Jewish people are regarded by these agencies as only a little better than child molesters. They promote dialogue between Christians and Jews, while excluding Jewish Christians and those who seek to win followers to Jesus among Jews.

The Jewish community leader whose title reads something like "Director of Christian-Jewish Affairs" is nothing more than a highly placed anti-missionary. Some are Rabbis who, on the basis of clergy status, are able to maneuver with acceptance among Christian leaders.

Working within the more liberal Christian circles first, the anti-missionary diplomats sow doubt and misunderstanding, like the idea of two separate salvific covenants for Jews and Gentiles. Few evangelicals are

surprised that this view has taken hold in some of the more liberal denominations, yet the Willowbank Consultation on the Christian Gospel and the Jewish People was convened by *evangelical* scholars in 1989 to address the confusion which was becoming evident in their circles over the same theological question.

Missionaries ought to be giving attention and time to cultivating our evangelical friends who are the targets of diplomatic anti-missionary forays. Evangelicals, who have been involved in dialogue with Jewish clergy need to be informed of the hidden diplomatic agenda. They seek to drive a wedge between the Messianic Jewish community and the rest of the church.

Jewish community leaders who are the diplomatic opposition to Jewish mission need to be publicly labeled as anti-missionary. Fellow believers in Jesus Christ need to be warned before they discover that they've been used.

Propaganda

Propaganda, as a campaign to spread misinformation among ordinary Jewish people, is the attempt to scare or prejudice Jews against the Gospel. It must be regarded as anti-missionary work. Our opposition do not abide by

the same moral code of ethics as do Christians.

The use of propaganda is an attempt at negative image management. The missionary to the Jews may be depicted as a wicked wolf, while the Jewish leaders portray themselves as heroic saviors of the Jewish flock. That has become for them a fund-raising ploy.

An American anti-missionary agency conducted by a Chanukah magazine ad promotion calling on the Jewish community to "keep the lights (of Jerusalem) burning". It warned that "one hundred deceptive evangelical groups are committed to putting out these sacred lights". Instead of promoting the beauty of Judaism, they conducted a negative campaign aimed at urging the Jewish community to respond by digging into their pockets and giving financial support to their neo-Maccabean protectors.²³

Most of the anti-missionary propaganda obscures or avoids substantive issues. That's a key to countering the propaganda attacks. Mission workers need to deflect the propaganda charge as "untrue", while refocusing attention on the issue of Y'shua the Messiah.

Indoctrination

Every sectarian group is going to seek to teach its own fundamental points of belief. Instead of providing positive information about the beauty of Judaism, the anti-missionary use "preventive education" to create a climate

of fear in order to immunize Jews against Jesus. David Gotlib of the Overbrook Park Jewish Resource Center admitted, "We need to educate the Jewish community as to how severe a threat this (missionary movement) represents, how widespread it is and how best to immunize ourselves from it."²⁴

There is little that can be

pathetic intrusion. Physical and psychological harassment is the least socially acceptable missionary method. It usually provides sympathy to the underdog and demonstrates an ideological failure.

Most missionaries should admit that they find harassment a bother. It's intended to be distracting. Patience and energy are

Anti-missionaries come and go. Yet the oldest Adversary has been around from the beginning

done to halt the programs that promote the negative conditioning of our people. Yet we can see to it that Jews come to realize that they've been fed a distorted stereotype. Think how people react when they realize that they have been lied to and manipulated.

Competition for funding has prompted anti-missionaries to sensationalize the nature of the fabricated "missionary threat". Our commitment is to publishing the truth of Christ. The motivation of the Christian is, therefore, stronger than that of the opposition. We are the only ones who can truly hurt our Messiah's cause. Missionaries do well to thoughtfully consider their ethical standards for behavior in conducting ministry.²⁵

Harassment

The most visible form of anti-missionary work is the

pointlessly expended, and focus becomes diffused. If the missionary can be fatigued, made impatient or reactionary, or so defensive that one never gets around to proclaiming the Gospel, then they have succeeded.

Actually, harassment is an endorsement of effectiveness. No anti-missionary is going to waste effort if some visible missionary work is not being done. One ought to be flattered!

Harassment might be in the form of a demonstration outside of a church or meeting hall where a missionary speaker is giving a seminar. There are reports of literature being forcibly taken from a missionary on a street corner or off a table where display has been arrayed at an airport or on a college campus. They have interposed themselves in the midst of an outreach in a public place. They call at home and the

office, or write a letter, demanding interaction.

Bear a caution and do not interact. It should be kept in mind that their intent is to bother and waste time. In gaining attention, they fulfill their unhealthy need to interact. Anti-missionaries have a compelling need to build an image that demonstrates that they are doing something effective.

Remember that the anti-missionary movement is predicated on there being effective missionaries who are communicating Jesus Christ to the Jewish people. They

are a reactionary force.

Anti-missionaries come and go. Yet the oldest Adversary has been around from the beginning. Resist him, and he will flee; rebuke, and his power is bound on earth. Know that he is behind every scheme against the Lord's people, and consider that our wrestling is not against flesh and blood. The truest anti-missionary is the spiritual power of the air, and we must be content to do battle with him in the course of our ministries until he is banished forever from our midst.

Notes

- 1) Shermis, Michael, *Jewish-Christian Relations*, Indiana University Press, 1988.
- 2) Canada - ADL and Canadian Council of Christians and Jews; France - A.J. Comm. & ADL; Israel - A.J. Committee, ADL, Bridges for Peace, Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity, Nes Amim & Root and Branch Assn.; Italy - ADL; Switzerland - WCC Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People; W. Germany - International Council of Christians and Jews.
- 3) Time Magazine, Southern California edition, December 12, 1988, p.72.
- 4) "Messianics: Taking Root in Fertile Ground Here" by Marilyn S. Lieberstein; *The Jewish Exponent*, January 1, 1988.
- 5) A good guideline is the paper prepared by Dr. Erwin J. Kolb, Executive Director of Evangelism for the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, "Ethics for Missionaries", presented to the LCJE North American Coordinating Committee in Chicago; March 25-26, 1987.

Anti-Missionary Successes

By Tuvya Zaretsky

In the real world, the ministry of Gospel proclamation is occasionally hindered. Real problems are caused by the work of anti-missionaries. Some lessons can be learned from several illustrative case studies.

At the March 1987 meeting of LCJE North America, a participant remarked that no active anti-missionary work was taking place in Chicago. Utterly overlooked was the virulent diplomatic penetration of the Christian community being made by Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein of the Holy Land Fellowship of Christians and Jews.¹

Created in 1983, the Holy Land Fellowship has operated

with the financial support of philanthropic foundations, individual Jews and Christians. Christian leaders, like Rev. Jerry Rose of TV Channel 38 in Chicago, and Robert Walker, President of Christian Life Missions who also serves on the Executive Board of the Holy Land Fellowship, have unwittingly involved their own names, funds and organizations, like the Christian Broadcasting Network, to undermine the work of Jewish evangelism.² Eckstein's book, *What Christians should know about Jews and Judaism*,³ was published by Word, a Christian agency, in 1984.

A pluralism that excludes Jewish Christians

In his promotional brochures, Rabbi Eckstein said he wanted to build bridges and promote dialogue between Christians and Jews. What he actually did was promote his own theological agenda of two covenants for salvation, and a pluralism that excluded Jewish Christians. A former entertainer, Eckstein gained credibility simply for his clergy status.

Christians treated him as a friend, yet he reportedly said, "When a Jew accepts Jesus, he has accepted idolatry ... it's an act of betrayal, an act of treason to the people."⁴ While he disparaged missionary

outreach to Jews, Eckstein charmed the church by encouraging dialogue, unconditional love and the two-covenant theory of salvation.⁵

Eckstein engaged in diplomacy. He worked behind the scenes to press evangelicals not to evangelize Jewish people. He succeeded in capitalizing upon the confusion of evangelical Christians about the uniqueness of salvation in Jesus for the Jewish people. In a manipulative letter to Dr. Vernon Grounds, the chairman of the Willowbank Consultation on the Christian Gospel and the Jewish People in April of 1989, Eckstein pleaded to Dr. Grounds to learn the lessons of dialogue, and to be more sensitive to the Jewish community. He postured, lamenting that his critics in the Jewish community were all saying that his work "explaining Jewish beliefs and attitudes, and sensitizing evangelicals to Jewish concerns, seems to be for naught".⁶

For those who have not been alerted to the activity of Yechiel Eckstein, a hard lesson could be learned from the success that he has experienced.

"Faithful Jews are doing just fine with God ..."

The *Washington Times*⁷ unwittingly reported the high-level diplomatic efforts of American rabbis. The intent was to build inter-faith coalitions between Jews and evangelical Christians, therefore blunting evangelical

What You Should Know About Jews and Judaism

fervor about presenting Jesus Christ to the Jewish community. Rabbi Andrew Baker, president of the Washington Board of Rabbis, was quoted to have said, "Christian efforts to convert Jews have diminished in the United States due to local interfaith work and resolutions about Judaism passed by several of the major denominations."

The Episcopal Church in the U.S. recently joined a coalition of Jewish clergy to form the Abrahamic Accord. The aim was to "promote interfaith dialogue on the grass roots level".⁸ In 1988, their retiring director described their theological position: "Christians do not need to 'save' the Jews ... faithful Jews are doing just fine with God, and do not need Christian 'help'."

Such coalitions function at the diplomatic level of anti-missionary work. They have caused several North American Christian denominations to equivocate

Judaism with Christianity. Worse yet, they are hurting the effort to mobilize Christians to the cause of Jewish evangelism. Missionaries must be building cooperative relationships with church and denominational leaders. There must be a call to Christians everywhere to line up on one side or the other of theological statements, like the Willowbank Declaration, regarding the salvation of the Jewish people.

Letter-writing campaigns

Anti-missionaries have successfully used propaganda. Pressure has been brought to bear against publishers through the mobilization of letter-writing campaigns. Volumes of dissenting mail from Jews, against evangelistic ads or statements advertising Messianic congregations have been effective in shaping editorial policy.

The Canadian *Jewish News*⁹ reported that the U.S.-based Jews for Judaism anti-missionary organization had stirred a letter-writing campaign to the editors of publications that printed evangelistic ads during the Christmas season. They reported having successfully influenced four to no longer accept the ads.

In 1988 the spring issue of the *Jews for Judaism* newsletter boasted: "The message is clear: sustained pressure gets results. Publishers of newspapers and magazines are, above all, businessmen. When the publishers see that their

economic interests favor closing of the channels ... the channels get closed."

Misinformation

Propaganda also involves disseminating false or misinformation. The June/July 1990 *Jewish Monthly* reported that American Christians were allegedly providing "material inducement for conversion" to Russian immigrants. The reader was left with the impression that Soviet Jews in the United Kingdom, Israel, the Soviet Union, and North America are being preyed upon by church groups and missionaries. Anti-missionaries charge Christian workers with "deceitful and cynical attempts to take advantage of people who are largely ignorant of Jewish culture and who have been made vulnerable by the hardships of establishing new homes in a strange country."

Messianic Believers need to mobilize Christians and challenge these anti-missionary propaganda ploys as attacks on free speech. We can acknowledge that our message is unpopular. However, anti-missionaries who disagree don't have a right to prevent other Jewish people, who do want to hear the Gospel message, from knowing the truth.

By employing propaganda, Jewish spokesmen want to attach a negative image to Jewish belief in Y'shua. They have sounded the alarm and have successfully put their negative association across.

The attack usually comes against the personal worthiness of the Jewish

Believer, or the expression of Messianic faith. For example, Julius Berman, Chairman of the Jewish Community Relations Council Task Force on Missionaries and Cults, was quoted as saying that Messianic Jews observe "established rituals and forms of worship, but in their practice each of these sacred Jewish acts and symbols is distorted."¹⁰

Rabbis and anti-missionaries don't want to be seen as attacking Christianity. In their view, however, a pluralistic society is best served when virtue is measured by their own pronouncements of rabbinic *halakha*. Messianic Jews must learn to speak up; denounce propaganda for what it is, and seek opportunities to gain a hearing in order to set the record straight. At the same time, there is a greater need to promote Y'shua, than to defend our own *kashrut*.

One Jew's education is another's indoctrination. Anti-missionaries want to "educate" Jews about the Gospel and its advocates. In December of 1988, "The Target is You"¹¹ was released. The Executive Producer of the 30 minute video was the late anti-missionary, Annette Daum. She had previously written a number of pamphlets against missionaries for the Reform Movement. Funding for the project came from the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Reform), and by a grant from a private corporation in Southern California.

The message of the video

is that the missionaries are out to get Jews. Youth, in particular are presented with the image that missionaries are out to snatch their souls. They are expected to respond with mistrust for any Gospel-bearer. They are informed that the only acceptable direction for Jews is toward Judaism.

One of the best ways to deal with the false claims of indoctrination is to repeat and attribute their exaggerations and misrepresentations. Their own credibility will crumble when who care are exposed to the truth. Missionaries can demonstrate a greater faith in the intelligence of Jewish people, than that evidenced by the opposition. People can decide for themselves, and should be given the chance to know the truth.

Harassment

Physical harassment is intended to wear down the missionary and intimidate the Messianic community. It can succeed in damaging a work if one reacts to the harassment. In Detroit, anti-missionaries Ronnie and Batya Schreiber handed out fliers on the sidewalk outside a Bible meeting sponsored by Shema Yisrael.¹²

Nearby Jewish residents were angered as much by the presence of the demonstration as they were by the ministry of the Messianic outreach in their neighborhood. The Schreibers had intended to announce their presence and to seek support. Their pathetic intrusion at a private residence effectively stirred up

a neighborhood and harassed those who were attending a Bible study. They also did Shema Yisrael a great favor. They provided free publicity about the existence of a group of Messianic Jews who were available nearby.

On May 23, 1990, the Jews for Jesus singing group, the Liberated Wailing Wall, was ministering at a church in Scarborough, Ontario (Canada). Anti-missionaries leaf-letted the meeting, and displayed a placard: "This event is an act of deception on the part of Christian missionaries. Their claims that you can be Jewish and believe in Jesus is a lie!" Jews for Judaism leader, Julius Ciss, was photographed making an obscene gesture. No one was turned from the concert.

Christian friends need to understand that fellow kinsmen in the flesh are not our enemies, but simply our opposition. Gentile Christians

in particular must realize that opposition to the Gospel is normative to Jewish evangelism. Harassment must not be tolerated with a victim's mentality, but it should be anticipated as a cost of outreach.

It is good to remember that while the ministry of the Gospel is occasionally impeded, Messiah Jesus will always lead us in his triumph.¹³ Behind the scenes, the Chief Anti-Missionary labors away; the old Adversary himself. A praying missionary keeps in mind the spiritual nature of the battle where evangelism occurs. Resist the Evil One and find confidence in the competence from God.

* * *

Notes

- 1) Holy Land Fellowship of Christians and Jews; 36 So. Wabash, Ste. 626; Chicago, IL 60603; phone (312) 346-7693.
- 2) Holy Land Fellowship Bulletin, May 1987.
- 3) Recommended is Dr Ray Gannon's excellent review of this book presented at the fourth annual consultation of the North American Coordinating Committee of LCJE in Chicago, March 1987.
- 4) Christianity Today, October 7, 1988: "Fulfilled Jews" or "Former Jews?", pp. 66-68.
- 5) Miami Jewish Tribune, February 5, 1988, and Christianity Today article, p. 68.
- 6) Reference: Personal letter to Vernon Grounds, dated 7/18/89.
- 7) March 3, 1990, p. B5
- 8) Northern California Jewish Bulletin, October 28, 1988, p. 12.
- 9) January 7, 1988.
- 10) "JCRC Outraged by Jews for Jesus Ads," Jewish Forward, December, 1987.
- 11) "The Target is You" can be ordered from the UAHF TV and Film Institute, 838 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10021, for \$32.95. It comes in Beta or VHS format and includes a 29-page "video study kit".
- 12) The Detroit Jewish News, February 3, 1989.
- 13) "But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him" (2 Corinthians 2:14).

Decade of danger

Headline from Jewish Chronicle, January 5 1990.

Subtitle: Christian evangelists are preparing an onslaught against the Jewish community over the next few years. Lee Levitt infiltrates a "Messianic" group and discusses its aims with adherents and opponents.

A Missionary Response to Antimissionary Activity

By
Eliezer Maass, Director of Training, American Messianic
Fellowship, Chicago.

With the growing visibility of the messianic movement in this part of the country, those involved in full time outreach to the Jewish people have experienced corresponding opposition to their work in recent years. This paper will attempt to deal, at least in part, with a biblical missionary response to antimissionary activity - particularly that involving professional opposition to the gospel and community reaction to Jewish evangelism. The approach centers around three case studies:

1. A local missionary's experience/reaction
2. A local congregation's experience/reaction
3. A non-local congregation's experience/reaction

Case Study 1: John Kanter, West Rogers Park, Illinois

The first case study involves door-to-door work accomplished by a part time worker, John Kanter, for Chosen People Ministries in West Rogers Park, a northside suburb of Chicago. John writes:

Attempts to engage people in dialogue were generally met with polite yet firm refusals to discuss the issue of Jesus' messiahship. In the midst of this mundane response, however, I encountered a Lubavicher Rebbe who seemed to be following me around. I suddenly found myself engaged in a heated discussion. After going back and forth on Judaism's clear departure from the Mosaic requirements for atonement as found in Leviticus 17:11, I was told by this "spiritual leader" that Jesus was a bastard child who had appeared to him in a vision standing next to Adolf Hitler.

In short, the conversation had degenerated into a series of blasphemous statements attacking the character of Yeshua and thereby eliminating the possibility of further discussion.

The antimissionary approach in this first example involved intimidation and ridicule. There was no real discussion of the theological "matter at hand". This kind of tactic is not untypical of antimissionary strategy. Many involved in Jewish missions have shared similar experience. [Ron Weinbaum, pastor of King's Highway Baptist Church in Brooklyn, NY, has reported encounters of this type with the ultra-Orthodox per conversation 09.01.90.]

John notes his response in the following manner:

I walked away feeling hurt, angry, and frustrated. Yet the pastoral injunction of 2 Timothy 2:24-26 renewed my desire to be used of God in bringing the gospel to God's covenant people.

The passage in question reads this way [all scriptures quoted are NIV]:

And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses

and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

The conclusion to be drawn from this episode (and the accompanying New Testament passage) is that arguing with those who have no interest in our activities, other than to intimidate and harass, is essentially a waste of effort and provides a de facto victory for the opposition. John exercised wisdom in controlling his emotions but probably erred in becoming involved in an extended conversation. This was time the antimissionary successfully took away from his witness to the community.

Case Study 2: Adat haTikvah Congregation, Chicago, Illinois

Our second case study involves antimissionary activity on a larger scale. Adat haTikvah, the oldest messianic congregation in the greater Chicago area, has been the target of several antimissionary campaigns over the years [see accompanying letter]. The particular outbreak in question occurred a few weeks before the Jewish High Holidays in the fall of 1989. A summary of events follows:

On several occasions unidentified members of what was presumably a Chassidic sect demonstrated outside the congregation. While the effect was negligible (in one incident two Jewish unbelievers were prevented entry) the confrontation itself produced an interesting dynamic for visitors.

Larry Rich, the spiritual leader of Adat haTikvah, writes:

... the weekend of April 21 stands out. That weekend the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations (UMJC) held its Midwest Regional Conference in the Chicago area and our congregation hosted the Saturday morning service. We had many visitors that morning, and on the outside were eleven Orthodox! The scene was dramatic as Messianic Jewish leaders from many places engaged these men in conversation.

This situation represents a more organized effort at obstruction to the gospel. In this particular case, the opposition appears to have helped rather than hindered the messianic cause due to the particular circumstances involved.

Of greater interest, however, are the dynamics of response on the part of Adat haTikvah's leadership. A further quotation from Pastor Rich's letter sheds some light on the subject:

During this time our leadership sought to determine how best to respond. Should we require them to leave or welcome them? On the one hand we had a responsibility to care for our people (1 Peter 5:5) - sometimes one or two of the Orthodox got overly zealous and abusive. We had to teach our people how to respond. On the other hand these were non-believing Jewish people coming within earshot of the Gospel (1 Peter 3:15-16). With the summer approaching we began keeping our windows and doors open, and outside discussions were affecting our services inside. We decided to require that they stay at least ten feet away from the stairs leading to our entrance and to be off the block when our service was in progress.

This seems to represent a godly response to an assault upon the ministry of this congregation. Particularly impressive was the attempt to strive for balance - on the one hand a concern for the safety and spiritual well-being of the congregants and on the other a recognition that even these individuals in opposition had need of hearing the gospel. In cases such as this, one's actions need to be carefully weighed as many in the Jewish community will undoubtedly become appraised of the situation either through the media of by word of mouth.

It needs to be said, when dealing with the Orthodox or any other Jewish group desiring to engage in "dialogue", that there are two forms of contact on this level: constructive and destructive. Constructive dialogue (usually rare) involves a valid exchange of interpretive ideas based on a given passage or theological concept. Here one can agree or differ but still "respect" the other individual's opinion (even if it is based upon a faulty exegetical or hermeneutical

principal, e.g., the standard rabbinical interpretation of Isaiah 53, which sees the "servant" as Israel). In this respect, at least the messianic position is offered a hearing.

The other and far more common approach can be labelled "destructive dialogue" (actually a misnomer because no valid exchange of opinion is taking place). Here, one side simply states its case with little or no concern for the other side's convictions. This form of interchange should be systematically avoided. When attempting to engage any individual opposed to messianic understanding of Scripture certain guidelines ought to be established at the outset. These include a time limit on each side for the presentation of interpretive material, the avoidance of volatile behavior (e.g., character assassination, inflammatory rhetoric, abusive language, etc.), and a willingness to carefully examine the issues. When dealing with the subject of messianic prophecy or any interpretive issue in the Hebrew Bible an agreed upon translation should be chosen beforehand (e.g., Jewish Publication Society) or one should work directly from the Masoretic text.

Case Study 3: Olive Tree Congregation, Plainview, New York

Unlike the above situation where a specific group of antimissionaries targeted a congregation utilizing a single approach, in this scenario the Jewish community (or a representative segment of it) launched a multi-faceted operation designed to blunt the effectiveness of a Chosen People planted congregation in Greater New York City. Based upon a phone interview with Rev. Michael Rydelnik [08.30.90] and a series of newspaper articles events can be capsulated as follows:

Shortly after the Olive Tree Congregation opened its doors in 1986 it was met with opposition on several fronts. Demonstrations by irate individuals, an anti-messianic rally at the Plainview Jewish Center, and negative oriented media coverage all contributed to feelings of tension and uneasiness at the congregation.

In response, regular and intensive prayer meetings were held, and "the Lord began to overrule..." A turning point was the refusal of local authorities to grant the demonstrators a permit to gather outside the church. Hindsight also provided the following recommendations:

1. On a congregational level, try to avoid a cultlike image. The Jewish community became increasingly sensitized to the issue of door-to-door evangelism (which was eventually replaced as a missions strategy with seminars of general interest to the community at large, e.g., intermarriage).
2. Try to view those in opposition to the gospel in the light of New Testament teaching (e.g., Romans 11:28-29). We are to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us.
3. Try to get the messianic side of the story presented in the media. The Olive Tree Congregation took out full page ads in community newspapers in an attempt to rebut false accusations.

Individual Problems

So far, in this paper, we have dealt with the antimissionary threat as it relates to Jewish missions strategy on a purely professional level. Antimissionaries have as their primary target, however, new Jewish believers in the Messiah who are not yet grounded in their faith. What can those of us involved in full time work do to help new believers who are being challenged in this manner? To paraphrase the apostle Paul: Much in every way!

Probably the most important principal involved in cases where individuals are being harassed by antimissionaries is to meticulously follow up each case and monitor ongoing situations. There are a variety of applicable methodologies which can be summarized in the following way:

1. The usual first step and initial contact between a new believer and antimissionary activity is the proverbial trip to the local rabbi. Typically this is precipitated by a family member (often the parents of a new believer).

It is recommended that the individual in question *not* attend this interview alone. The missionary, in this case, who is obviously more experienced in handling Jewish-Christian polemics should do one of the following:

- a. Recommend that the visit be postponed or cancelled.
- b. If this is impossible, volunteer to go along to the interview as an invited friend.
- c. If all else fails, get together with the new believer beforehand to go over anticipated challenges and arguments.

2. The issue of discipleship becomes paramount when faced with antimissionary endeavor. It goes without saying that the success of parasitic sectarianism on the evangelical world is the result of across the board inadequate Bible training and preparation on our part. As a result, the professional missionary should:

- a. Set up a systematic program of Bible study and the examination of doctrinal issues with individuals he/she has led to the Lord or new believers that have been contacted.

- b. Make a special effort to prepare new believers for potential opposition to their faith. Try to anticipate antimissionary arguments and instruct individuals in basic messianic doctrine.

The above may involve specialized Hebrew study, the incorporation of a discipleship program (sadly little has been done in this area from a messianic perspective but research current available materials) and provide a recommended reading list of messianic apologetics. [My book, *Stand Firm: A Survival Guide for the New Jewish Believer* may prove helpful in this regard. This work is available from AMF, P.O. Box 5470, Lansing, IL 60438-5470.]

- c. Provide specialized counseling for new Jewish believers. This is another field where much work needs to be done. [As far as I understand Dr Barry Leventhal, whose address is available from the LCJE, has done some initial research in this area.] Using contemporary techniques in Christian counseling, try to determine the emotional needs of new Jewish believers. What is the dynamic of their home life? What has been the reaction of other family members to his/her profession of faith? Develop a library of counseling tools relevant to the needs of Hebrew-Christians.

- d. Encourage the new believer to become involved in a solid Bible teaching congregation where the leadership is sensitive to the needs of Jewish believers.

- e. The professional missionary should present him or herself as a resource for crisis intervention.

The following excerpt is taken from *Stand Firm* (pp. 116-117) under the heading of "What to do in an Emergency":

Deprogrammers employ professional interrogation to destroy the faith of young Jewish believers. They use separation, disorientation, brainwashing, threats, guilt, humiliation, psychological intimidation, denial, and physical violence.

[Jewish missionaries should recommend the following course of action for believers who are

taken hostage:]

- a. Do not reveal anything about yourself, or cooperate in any way with your kidnapers. They have violated your civil rights and have taken you against your will. No religious discussion can be carried on under such circumstances.
- b. Pray silently. Prayer is God's secret weapon that protects the believer from Satanic attack. Quietly recite Bible verses and recall incidents of God's faithfulness in the Scriptures.
- c. Go on a fast [health issues providing].
- d. Try to escape and call the police. Explain your predicament to a local pastor.

Professional workers need to be cognizant of their responsibility in protecting new believers from spiritual predators. If necessary, one's home may serve as a temporary place of refuge for those under siege by antimissionary activity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there are some bottom line factors which need to be reiterated. The antimissionary threat is growing as the Jewish community attempts to deal with the spread of the messianic movement. Time spent dealing with antimissionaries in an attempt to refute their arguments represents a largely futile endeavor. As a rule, antimissionaries have no real interest in the Gospel other than to ridicule and debase it. This task should be left to the few who have expertise in the area (messianic scholars, seminary professors, etc.).

On another front, of extreme importance is the spiritual preparation of young believers through the establishment of well thought out discipleship programs (education). New believers must be prepared beforehand to handle the opposition's tactics and polemics. This is surely the best way of overcoming the basis of antimissionary provocation.

* * *

THE GOSPEL TO ISRAEL

the Challenge for All the Christian Church

By Samuel Roswall, Chairman of Ordet og Israel (The Bible and Israel), Denmark

Some time ago I read a review of a new Danish book, written by the grand old man of the Danish Israel Mission, Axel Torm. The reviewer concluded: "The book is recommendable to all who are interested in the relationship between Christians and Jews and who are involved in how we, today, can bring the

gospel of Christ to the Jews." My concern here is not the book, but the attitude I meet among Christians: that the relationship between the Jewish nation and Christians is a subject only for *some*, namely those who are *interested* in this relationship - just as one might be interested in mission to other

nations.

Well, if you want to bring the gospel back to the Jewish people, you have to work with methods, etc., but in principle, the relationship to the Jewish people concerns all Bible-believing and Bible-reading Christians and not just some.

Why?

Because Israel is the geographical and historical frame of the Bible, and Jesus himself and the gospel belong to this frame. Furthermore, according to the Bible, God has a plan of salvation and God plans to use the Jewish people as a nation - a plan which also includes the church and the Gentiles. If we believe in the word of God, we are able to see, with our own eyes, how God, for this purpose, gathers his people in his own country (which also strengthens our hope of Christ's return). One more thing: The relationship to the Jewish people is also very important when a Gentile Christian wants to understand himself as a child of God, because "branches were broken off, so that I might be grafted in," as St. Paul says (Rom. 11). And finally, as a consequence of what is mentioned above: It is because of God's specific relationship to Israel and his people's mission in salvation history that the Bible says: The gospel is for the Jew first.

Here I would like to say that we in "Ordet og Israel" (The Bible and Israel) have a double purpose. We work for the Christian church's acceptance of the Bible's teaching about Israel, and for the Jewish people's acceptance of the Bible's teaching about Jesus Christ, who is the only way of salvation for all mankind. So in practice we have two aims, but in principle you should see these two aims as one.

When we look upon the



Samuel Roswall, Chairman of Ordet og Israel (The Bible and Israel), Denmark

situation in the churches, it seems to be increasingly necessary to underline both aims (as one), also in relation to our purpose in Jewish evangelism. Also inside the churches, the attitude to the Jews is becoming more and more negative, tending towards anti-Semitism. The actual reasons may differ. One of the current reasons may be what we have been told of Israel's handling of the Intifada. But in the church, it is a fundamental question of Bible-view and Bible-understanding, and if in the church there is a negative attitude to Israel and the theological view e.g. is that the church fully has taken Israel's place and that Israel as a nation has been taken out of God's plan for salvation, then we also have a bad starting-point for caring for the Jewish people and for preaching the gospel for the Jewish people. In the ministry of our agencies we should do as St. Paul. He worked for

the individual Jew to become a believer in Jesus as Messiah, and he worked in the expectation and assurance that all of Israel will be saved.

It is important that we in LCJE can discuss and help each other as to *how* to bring the gospel to the Jewish people, and we should also encourage each other in this. At the same time we should also work with the subject as to *why* we must bring the gospel first and foremost to the Jewish people. We do not talk much about that. Therefore we should also help each other to proclaim, in our congregations, the Bible's teaching about God's plan with Israel and the world. I hope it will be understood that I am not talking about the attitude to the state of Israel in general. I am talking about a biblically founded teaching about Israel as a nation and Israel as a homeland for the nation.

If we succeed in that, then maybe a greater part of our church members would

- see themselves as a part of God's plan of salvation
- feel a greater responsibility for the Jewish people
- better understand that the gospel is for the Jew first

Then Israel mission will not be only for those especially interested in Jewish-Christian relations, but for all believers who understand the position of the church in relation to the nation of Israel.

Jewishness and Faith in Jesus

- an Analysis of the U.S. Situation

By Susan Perlman, Member of the International Coordinating Committee

According to recent surveys (*The People's Religion: American Faith in the 90's - George Gallup*), religion is a relatively low priority for American Jews, who lag far behind the general U.S. population in congregation membership, worship attendance and the importance they attach to religion in their lives.

In 1986, 1 Jew in 5 (20%) reported attending synagogue in the week before being interviewed which was half the general population rate. 35% of American Jews say religion is not very important in their lives compared to 14% of the general population. 31% of American Jews say religion is "fairly important" and 30% say it is "very important".

Only 44% of American Jews say they are members of a synagogue while 69% of the general population cite membership in a church or other religious institution. To some degree, this reflects that "Jewish" represents an ethnic as well as a religious group and that not all ethnic Jews are religious.

From this picture of the American Jewish community as a whole, let us look at the Jewish believers in Jesus.

The controversy over how many Jewish believers there are in the U.S. will not be easily settled. Whether it is



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mission groups, messianic congregations or counter-missionary groups, they all tend to optimize the number of Jewish believers in Jesus in the U.S. for their own purposes. Certain evangelical Christians who are eager to believe that there is an increase in the number of Jews coming to the Savior tend to estimate high. But in the narrowest definition of "Jewish believer", there are at least 20,000. (*Narrow Definition: A person who would have practiced the Jewish religion as his own and who worships Christ.*)

A broader definition which would encompass many more would be: *Those who have Jewish ancestry and/or those who might be the children of Jewish believers.* That would

increase the number to 50,000-75,000.

Grossly exaggerated numbers like 100,000 are often a surmise projected from the 1906 *Jewish Encyclopedia*, which numbered more than 150,000 Jewish converts to Protestantism a century before. The one thing that can be said is that there are more Jews coming to Christ than there are dying in Christ. But one must also take into account a defection rate which could be as high as 25%.

Irregardless of the exact number of Jewish believers, their self-identification as Jews should tell us a lot. In the Jewish believer survey conducted by Jews for Jesus in 1983, a question was asked of the more than 1,000 respondents, "What do you prefer to be called?" Many gave more than one answer.

Christian:	334
Hebrew Christian:	364
Jewish Christian:	390
Jewish Believer:	445
Messianic Jew:	442
Other:	54

It's important to note that more than 80% wanted to be identified as Jewish as well as Christian.

However, there is another group who should be noted. One mission leader

commented that through speaking in many U.S. churches, he encountered people who might be called "former Jews". That is to say they are denying their present relationship to the Jewish people except that of having descended from Jews.

Frequently such a person would make the statement, "My mother and father were Jews but I am a Christian." There is no reason to doubt their sincerity in confessing the Christian faith, but they would not accept themselves as Jews today. When it is explained that, theologically speaking, Jewishness and Christianity are not mutually exclusive, it's typical for these people to respond, "It's too complicated to be both." Others will express themselves and quote, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile in Christ."

Moishe Rosen says that there might be as many as 20% of the Jewish believers today who simply want to be known as Christian and disassociate themselves from anything Jewish.

One of the benefits of the modern congregational movement is that they have encouraged many of these "former Jews" to bring their Jewishness out of the closet and has helped them to see that Jewishness is part of their present and future and not merely their past.

Nomenclature

To some, nomenclature is very important. Both the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations and the Messianic Jewish Alliance

affiliated congregations call their congregational leaders "messianic rabbi". This seems to be an official agreement and to back it up, each group has been struggling with education programs and certification ordination.

The Union of Messianic

"messianic rabbi" would not be acceptable. Jews for Jesus planted congregations would not use it, because for us all titles which confer status such as messianic rabbi, even "Rev." are avoided.

Other groups, like the Fellowship of Messianic

The one thing that can be said is that there are more Jews coming to Christ than there are dying in Christ. But one must also take into account a defection rate which could be as high as 25%

Jewish Congregations has an annual yeshiva for two weeks, usually prior to their convention. They've had some excellent lecturers. However, it has been noted that the real problem is in getting the congregation leaders to attend these sessions. A few of the messianic rabbis have attended, but for the most part the classes have been filled by those hopeful of leadership opportunities. It's significant that they call this program a yeshiva. By the way, about one third of the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations "rabbis" are Christian seminary trained.

The Messianic Jewish Alliance affiliated congregations, on the other hand, tend to use more of the apprenticeship program and guided studies. However, M. Schiffman reports that the Messianic Jewish Alliance has begun a training institute as well.

For others in the movement, the term,

Congregations, avoid the term on other grounds. Most mission societies would avoid the term. Yet for a few in the movement, how terms are used is a keystone conviction and a litmus test of how "Jewish" a believer you are. A few would even decline the appellation "Christian" and insist that they were Messianic Jews. They would also say that they did not undergo baptism, but were *mikvahed*. This seems to spread some confusion since the concept of mikvah includes not only an act depicting repentance from sin but is something done periodically for cleansing from defilement.

Ecclesiology

Next I want to look briefly at ecclesiology and Jewishness and faith in Jesus. About 10% of the Jewish believers in the U.S. attend a messianic congregation. Of that number, some hold dual membership in a traditional evangelical church. An alarming 15% of

the Jewish believers say that they do not attend worship services anywhere on a regular basis. Jewish believers in the U.S. show a high percentage as members of charismatic churches. When it comes to stewardship, Jewish believers are very generous in their giving patterns. For example, the cost of ISSUES is funded entirely by Jewish believers. I think it is most important to note that Jewish believers do not identify so much with a congregation or a mission society as they do with individual messianic leaders and teachers.

Practical Messianic Living
Among Jewish believers today, there is a greater tendency to seek other Jewish believers as marriage mates than there was 20 years ago. In the 1983 Jewish believer survey, 12% of the Jewish believers surveyed were married to other Jewish believers and 46% were married to Gentile believers. Today the figures have altered somewhat. Still, most Jewish believers who are married have Gentile spouses.

A more significant development is the high number of Jews who remain single well into their adult years. The Gallup survey showed that 38% of adult U.S. Jews are single as compared to 21% of the general population of the U.S. Factors that aid in this are an upscale Jewish community by way of education and income. Since Jewish believers have equal if not higher educational achievement than other Jews

and are of similar incomes, it stands to reason that a significant number today are single adults. There has been little energy put in to address this segment of Jewish believers apart from encouraging them not to remain single. I wonder, however, if a significant number have remained single because of a lack of an adequate marriage pool of eligible Jewish believers and their desire to affirm their Jewish identity in the spouse they choose?

Jewish believers in the U.S. express their faith in Jesus in a Jewish way through the rising interest in Jewish holiday observance and life cycle events such as brit, bar mitzvah, etc. About 75% of those surveyed say they do celebrate some of the holidays to one degree or another. Then there is a desire to develop some materials for the education of children of Jewish believers. Beth Yeshua Congregation in Philadelphia has pioneered in this area. Others have followed. For example, there is now some children's curriculum available, put together by Jeff Feinberg. There are also various Messianic summer camps and educational programs. Messiah's Moshav, an eight week summer program organized by Jews for Jesus and run by Ruth Wardell has operated successfully for three consecutive summers.

Under this category of Messianic Jewish living, I want to comment on books purchased by Jewish believers. Those on messianic themes in

the U.S. are less than best sellers. Occasionally, a testimony book like *Betrayed* will have wide circulation, but for the most part, publications need to be subsidized. The *Jewish New Testament* by David Stern was highly publicized and widely circulated and while some have purchased a copy, most Messianic Jews seem to be satisfied to use a New American Standard Bible or a New International Version of the Bible as their primary Bible.

Israel and the Jewish Believer

Like Messianic Jews all over the world, in the U.S. we have been told that it is our duty to move to Israel and build the land and thus be a testimony to our people.

Between 200 and 300 American Messianic Jews have made Aliyah and are still living in the Land. Perhaps most notable would be Dr David Stern, who has been very vocal on the matter and has said that every Jewish believer in the diaspora needs a calling or a leading from God to stay in the diaspora. Yet comparatively few U.S. Jewish believers feel that their Jewishness and faith in Jesus are wrapped up in living in the Land. It is not clear whether the U.S. Jewish believers don't believe this is the time of regathering or if they don't believe in God enough to trust him with such a move or that possibly they have a calling or leading from God to stay where they are. One thing is certain, that

is that the Beresford case has had a chilling effect on many who might have chosen to go to Israel.

Approach to Missions

The next category I want to address is the approach of U.S. Jewish believers to missions - both philosophically and in terms of practical steps taken. I'll begin with what I call "a variant sense of mission".

There has been a side current to the flow of the evangelical mainstream which might be embodied in the "bless Israel/Christian Embassy" approach. This approach to witness is legitimized by the broad definition of witness used by the World Council of Churches, whereby social justice, feeding the hungry and comforting the afflicted is considered mission. However, when it comes to Jewish evangelism, this kind of approach has virtually no adherents in the Messianic Jewish community of the U.S. with one exception. Lee Amber, a Jewish believer who heads up a ministry called LAMB uses this approach. There are others, like Frank Eiklor, a GB, and Mike Evans, who sometimes says he's Jewish and sometimes says he's not, but in general the American Christian community is too pragmatic to think that salvation for Jews would happen this way.

A unique approach on the American scene is done through TV and radio, but even then the programs are on the stations that restrict

their audience to the more narrow boundaries of evangelical Christians. But some, like Zola Levitt, have gathered a few unsaved Jewish fans. For the most part, however, the style and content of other broadcasters would seem to indicate that their programs are aimed at evangelical Christians. However, experimentation is continuing in this realm.

As for the messianic congregations, most are ready to do evangelism and from experience I can say that when Jews for Jesus gives presentations at messianic congregations they've always generously supported the mission work, even though the kind of outreach might be different from their own.

Nevertheless, the shift has been from direct contact evangelism, similar to that which would be coordinated by most Jewish missions, to a congregation planting made where it is assumed that each congregation has a means of making Y'shua known to the community.

Michael Schiffman notes that the outreach methods with which the congregations are most comfortable are

- 57% - Friendship
- 53% - Holiday celebrations
- 43% - Musical presentations
- 30% - Advertising
- 30% - Special activities
- 3% - Literature Distribution

Please note that conventional Jewish mission forms like tracting rate very low. Door to door visitation does not

even appear on the list.

But comfort level and effectiveness are not being measured here. It has become increasingly apparent that most Jewish people who come to Y'shua do so through the witness of ordinary Christians (Gentile believers) who are often more zealous than their pastors.

Of the 400 or so Jews who come to Christ each year through the Jews for Jesus ministry, from 3/5ths to 2/3rds were originally referred to us by Christian friends or Jewish believer relatives. With this in mind we've prepared a program which includes a letter of witness, a subscription to ISSUES, and a personal call from one of our missionaries. The rest of those who come to faith are usually contacted initially through our street witnessing campaigns, media campaigns and personal contact with our missionary staff in public places. Next source, Jews who come to public meetings in churches and lastly, Jews who attend Bible studies and holiday celebrations and ingatherings.

Most Jewish believers have managed to witness to their immediate family and a few friends. Soon they become assimilated into a body of believers and whether that body is a messianic congregation or a traditional church, most of their new friends will be believers. There seems to be a window of opportunity from the time that they first confess Christ publicly for a three to nine month duration. After that,

there is usually some resistance from their pre-faith family and friends.

So far as the perception of the Jewish community leaders would be concerned there is little difference between messianic Jews and other Jews who believe in Jesus. They see little difference between the Jewish person who keeps kosher, attends a messianic synagogue, does not use the name Jesus, but rather Y'shua, as compared with the Jew who simply describes himself as a Jew who believes in Jesus. They prefer to regard all these as "converts to Christianity" or "former Jews" those who have abandoned Judaism.

The reason is simple if unstated: Jewish community leaders insist that Jesus is the God of the Gentiles - those who worship him are idolaters.

Some might, for public relations purposes, admit that there is a distinction where they say Jews who believe in Jesus are practicing idolatry whereas Gentiles who believe in him do not.

Some rabbis are even free to say that Jesus is a wonderful teacher, but then they must find fault with Paul and the other apostles and blame the worship of Jesus on others as a "misunderstanding". Simply stated, their premise is: "A man cannot be God, hence God cannot be man." The fallacy of this logic does not disturb them, but rather, the assumption serves the purpose of making the Jewish religion exclusive and unique.

One thing which makes us question the sincerity of the rabbis is that with all of the introspective research done by the American Jewish community, no one has written an essay or done a study which could give the Jewish community an accurate portrayal of who we are, what we do and what we say about ourselves. Instead, "research" has gone no farther than to take a superficial look at what we were saying and then willfully distorting it so as to demonstrate that both messenger and message were unworthy.

In fact there seems to be a fear of any kind of authentic, objective inquiry into the nature of the movement. However, there is a light at the end of the tunnel and that light is that the relatives and Jewish friends of messianic Jews find it difficult to believe that we are naive and deceived.

Conclusion

The American Jewish community was diverse and divergent before Hitler and united to fight anti-Semitism to provide relief for the survivors after Hitler. Now such unity of the past has begun to disintegrate.

Nevertheless, on one thing they remain unified - that is anti-missionary, anti-messianic sentiment. Even the liberal or reform Jewish movement, with tolerance to ordain homosexuals, is as bitterly intolerant as the most orthodox Jews when it comes to our movement.

Moishe Rosen, in reporting

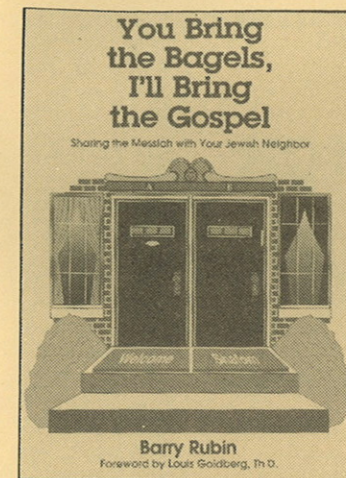
his observations over a 30 year period, expressed his opinion that there is a hardening that has gradually increased since the Jesus revolution and the greater proclamation of the gospel.

A bright exception to this hardening is found among the Russian Jews. Those new to the American Jewish community, like the Russian immigrants, are not as easily indoctrinated, and they regard the anti-Christian indoctrination of the Jewish community as an attempt to control their thoughts. They are much better at recognizing propaganda statements than American Jews.

Likewise, those Jews who are in transition are more open. U.S. Jews today are more likely to transfer locations for better jobs or quality of life criteria than was true twenty years ago. Until they get plugged into the traditional Jewish network in a given city, they are more willing to consider the claims of Y'shua.

Another bright spot is the continued growth of conferences for Jewish believers such as the Messiah Conference of the Messianic Jewish Alliance, the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations annual conference, Jews for Jesus gatherings, Chosen People Simchas, etc.

Jewishness and faith in Jesus are not mutually exclusive categories, and by way of perceived needs, Jewish believers list fellowship with other Jewish believers, Jewish evangelism, and Jewish identity as their top three categories of need.



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HOLLAND 91

Fourth International LCJE Conference
in Woudschoten, Zeist, 5-9 August 1991

Welcome to Holland. With the writer to the Hebrews we may say with confidence, the Lord is our helper (Hebrews 13:6).

There were pessimistic voices which greeted the formation of LCJE in 1980 with comments that the advocates of Jewish evangelism could not cohere for any reasonable time and that their endeavours to do so would soon disintegrate. It is by the Lord's help and grace that we are here today, eleven years on. Together by His help we will build on the foundations already laid. Together we will pursue more vigorously the dawning of that day when all Israel will be saved.

Murdo A. MacLeod, President

Registration and payment

- * Registration and full payment are to be made by 15 April.
- * In case of registration after 15 April an extra USD 30 will be imposed.
- * Speakers and workshop leaders are also to send their registration and payment.
- * Organisations are to send a separate registration form for each participant together with full payment.
- * Registration of spouse and children is to be made on one's own registration form.
- * Please use the enclosed registration form.
- * Accommodation will mainly be in shared double/triple rooms. A limited number of single rooms are available. Reservation of single rooms in a nearby hotel is possible. Those who register first will be given the single rooms at the conference centre.
- * In case of over-booking, LCJE members have priority over non-members.
- * Non-members are to pay an extra fee of USD 35 (cp point 9 on the registration form).
- * Please indicate fax number on registration form. If you do not have a fax of your own, please indicate another fax on which communication may reach you.
- * In mid May you will receive confirmation of your registration.
- * Messages to the LCJE office can be sent on fax (45) 86 22 95 91.

Registration by 15 April 1991 to be sent to
LCJE, Kai Kjaer-Hansen
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Tel (45) 86 22 64 70 * Fax (45) 86 22 95 91