



**LAUSANNE  
CONSULTATION  
ON JEWISH  
EVANGELISM**

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BULLETIN**



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## So Far Judaism Is the Victor

"In 1992, 740 people managed to convert to Judaism in Israel; in 1991, 593 people," writes Yossi Klein Halevi in an interesting article "The Hard Road to Judaism" in *The Jerusalem Report* (May 20, 1993). And he continues: "The numbers are kept deliberately low. Many judges consider converting a non-Jew to be an almost unbearable responsibility; and by discouraging candidates, they hope to preserve what they see as the spiritual intactness of the integrity of the conversion process."

In the article it is argued that in spite of ultra-orthodox accusations, there is no 'conversion industry' in Israel. The article cites a few examples of a dubious nature where people seem to have paid for the conversion, but it is made clear that "such cases are rare, and for most candidates, conversion is hardly an easy process." Part of the explanation for this may lie in the fact that as a rule it is required of the candidate that he or she accepts halakhah, the Jewish law, in its entirety. "There can be no conversion without the total acceptance of halakhah," former Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren is cited for.

Some candidates lie in order to make the judges sign the papers. Others will not do that and therefore get problems. A young couple puts it like this: "We still practice Jewish tradition, more than many secular Israelis. But we won't lie to the court and promise to become Orthodox. We love Israel and this is our home. We've done everything we could to be accepted. But no one can help us: the law is in the hands of the Orthodox."

It would be easy to make a comparison on several points between some of the article's persons and their problems and the Messianic Jews and the problems they are faced with in Israel today. But we shall not do that.

However, let us look at the figure: 740 persons were converted to Judaism last year in Israel. One cannot help wondering what they were before that. It is probably a fair guess to say that the majority of them were Christians prior to their conversion. Perhaps Christianity never meant anything – or much – to them. Perhaps they never met a living Christian faith. Perhaps they are now experiencing, as Jews, a quality of life and a religious dimension which they did not even know existed.

But that does not change the fact that they are no longer Christian.

How many Jews came to faith in Jesus as the Messiah in Israel in 1992? I do not know. But have neither imagination – nor faith – to believe that the figure comes anywhere near to 700.

As a neutral observer I can understand how the Jews who come to faith in Jesus can be considered lost to Judaism – no matter how strongly they themselves claim that they have become perfected Jews.

But when it is a fact that there are far more Christians who turn to Judaism than Jews who come to faith in Jesus, then the opposition against Messianic Jews and Christian mission in Israel is quite out of proportions.

So far Judaism is the victor

Kai Kjaer-Hansen

## Handing over of the Baton

By Bodil F. Skjoett, Jerusalem



From left: Gershon Nerel, Menachem Benhayim and Ron Lewis.

On Tuesday evening, 27 April, believers from all over Israel and even from different parts of the world met in Yad Hasmonah, a moshav just outside Jerusalem. The occasion was the farewell to Menachem Benhayim as secretary for the Israeli branch of the International Messianic Jewish (Hebrew Christian) Alliance and a welcome to his successor, Gershon Nerel.

The executive secretary of the International Alliance, Rev. Ron Lewis, was present for the occasion and brought greetings from the international board.

Both the outgoing and

the incoming secretary of the Israeli chapter addressed the gathering and a time of praise and worship was led by Lisa and David Loden.

In his short speech Menachem Benhayim reflected on the changes that have taken place both within the 30 years he and his wife Haya have been in Israel and the 17 years he has served as secretary for the movement. Jewish believers in Jesus are no longer as odd a phenomenon as they were in the 60'ies, and he expressed the realistic hope that the clock can indeed be turned back and Jews may again be accepted in the land as followers of Jesus.

Gershon Nerel voiced some of his vision for the future of the movement, one of them being that the organization, which in two years will be 70 years old, could move its headquarters from London to Israel, something that previously has been a vision but which has never been realized. He also hopes to make the office of the Alliance a data-bank related to the Messianic movement and to be used by all who share a concern for the work.

The evening was closed with prayer for the two secretaries and their work, after which refreshments were served.

## Update on Media Coverage of the Messianic Jewish Movement

Presented by Susan Perlman to the Tenth North American Coordinating Committee Meeting of the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism March 22-24, 1993



In the past year, the media coverage of our movement has been varied. There were three major news stories that I'd like to comment on and then some others to round out the report.

### 1. The Beresford deportation

To recap, Jewish believers Gary and Shirley Beresford moved to Israel from Zimbabwe in 1986 and applied for citizenship under the Law of Return. They were denied citizenship based on the fact that they were believers and baptized into another religion. They took their case to the Israeli Supreme Court, where in 1989 their claim for benefit under the Law of Return was

denied. They remained in Israel under tourist visas and tried to obtain permanent residency under the Law of Entry but were refused that status as well. They were told they would need to leave at the time of their visa expiration. They decided to try to get international media attention and held press conferences, etc.

According to David Stern, they had press show up from Time Magazine, Newsweek, Associated Press, the New York Times, etc. In February 1993 there were numerous articles in major US newspapers on the matter. The New York Times, writing in its international news section, titled their article, "Jews who call Jesus Messiah: Get Out, Says Israel." It is a relatively sympathetic article as is the Associated Press release that appeared in hundreds of U.S. papers. Perhaps the most sympathetic account was found in the Chicago Tribune of February 4 by Tom Hundley. It begins,

"Their children served in the Israeli army. Their relatives died in Nazi concentration camps. They insist they are Jews. But the Interior Ministry disagrees and has ordered their deportation."

The international edition of Time Magazine came out with a follow up on this story.

Their "fact" person called to ask some background questions about the movement, including how many Jews are there who believe in Jesus. According to the Chicago Tribune article the number is "anywhere from 100,000 to 400,000."

The international edition of the Jerusalem Post reported that the Beresfords have been given an extension on their visa due to the intervention of several



Shirley and Gary Beresford at a demonstration in Jerusalem early this year.



None-alcoholic beverages for youngsters under 18 in a Jerusalem restaurant. Schneerson on a dollar note looks on.

Knesset ministers. Newspapers and magazines which continually question Zionist aspirations, clucked their tongues over the Beresford deportation case. Coupled with the deportation of the 400 Hamas agents, people who had little care for Israel talked about atrocities and injustices. There are a growing number of evangelical Christians who are wondering out loud if Israel really belongs to the Jewish people, if the Jews are still God's chosen people and highlight atrocities against Arabs into this milieu of multi-colored thinking. The idea of the injustice of the deportation of the Jewish believers took root and made news.

The broader issue of Jewish believers in Jesus in Israel has been addressed in the U.S. press throughout the year. According to the Jewish Press of New York,

there are at least 40 congregations of "Messianic Jews" or "Hebrew Christians" in Israel with a combined membership of 5,000. Quoting the anti-missionary group, Yad L'Achim, "Five thousand Hebrew Christians may not sound like a lot in a country of four million people. but we're talking about people who are passionately devoted to missionizing. A few thousand people can cover a lot of territory in a small country like Israel, and if they succeed in converting even a handful of Jews, that's a catastrophe for the Jewish State."

Also of note was an article that appeared in the Globe and Mail in Canada on April 11, 1992 in which some of the believers are profiled: Ron and Aliza Neshet, King of Kings Assembly and Wayne Hilsden and Michael Bulman of CMJ in



Welcome, King Messiah. Jerusalem, the spring of 1993.

Jerusalem. This is juxtaposed with a profile of Yad L'Achim director, Judy Pearlman and her efforts as a "cultbuster."

## 2. The Schneerson Phenomena

The ongoing story of the Lubavitcher Hassidim and whether the coming of the Messiah, has made its way onto the pages of every major print publication in this country. In addition, several of the networks have picked up the story as has CNN and BBC.

Shortly after our last LCJE/NA meeting, an article appeared in Time Magazine, "Expecting the Messiah: An ultra-Orthodox sect says the Redeemer is due to arrive any day now - and he might be an American."

Habad's active campaigning to crown Schneerson Messiah has included billboards and full page advertisements with titles like, "Moshiach is coming and we must make the final preparations." These ads, of course, have a photograph of the rebbe prominently displayed.

One of the most interesting commentaries on this messianic fervor was in a recent edition of the Philadelphia Exponent (2/5/93) in an article entitled, "Is it time to remove the messianic concept?"

## 3. The British Press

There have been as many articles on our movement in Britain in the past year as

there have been here in North America. This is a result of two events. One, the removal of the Archbishop of Canterbury's patronage of the Church's Ministry Among the Jews and two, the arrival on the

scene of Jews for Jesus/UK.

The Archbishop's distancing of himself from Jewish evangelism made all the major newspapers, secular and religious. It was applauded in the Jewish

### Is it time to remove the messianic concept?

by Ernest R. Cohen in Jewish Exponent 2/5/93

"Along with the authors of several recent letters and articles, we are also concerned about Christian missionaries, who try to sell Jews the idea that Jesus is the Jewish messiah. Rather than argue about who is, or will be, a messiah, perhaps it is time to remove the messianic concept from Judaism altogether.

"The Hebrew word "messiah" means "anointed." The concept of a political/military leader appointed by G-d became a rallying point for Jews struggling to regain independence from the Roman Empire. The Jewish people longed for such a leader who would defeat the Roman army, and bring a descendant of King David back to the throne. The ritual of crowning Jewish kings involved anointing with oil, hence the use of the word "messiah."

"In time, the concept took on mystical trappings, since the planned revolts never succeeded. Today, the State of Israel has been restored, and few Jews desire that it be ruled by a monarch, whether of David's line or not. At best, the term "messiah" has lost its original meaning; at worst, it has developed into twisted theological mysticism.

"While some Orthodox Jews still talk about a coming Messiah as a human person, Reform and Conservative Jews have generally interpreted the Messiah into a "messianic age" at the end of time. Christians have wholly distorted the concept, turning it into a mystical personage so that they can claim continuity with Judaism. However, if we recognize the historical basis for messianic thoughts, we can simply assert that it is no longer a significant Jewish religious theme.

The Jewish people have been plagued by too many Jewish false messiahs, as well as by Christians attempting to foist their Trinity onto us by use of this word. By removing the word from our thinking, Jews can go back to what we are best at: trying to do G-d's work in the present world."

press, condemned in the evangelical Anglican press and dealt with some amusement by the secular media.

The Jews for Jesus press coverage centered around evangelistic ads that were produced for the London tubes. They were put up by London Transport and then taken down due to pressure from the Board of Deputies of British Jews and the Council of Christians and Jews. This made it into a media event which was the subject of dozens of articles and radio interviews. The matter is now in the courts and when a trial date is set, another round of media will no doubt take place. There are other areas of coverage in the media that bear mentioning:

#### *Defections that have made the press*

On a sad note, American Chuck Snow, who moved to England in 1988 to head up the London Messianic Congregation, left the faith and moved to Israel and this made the front page of the November 13 edition of the Jewish Chronicle of London. The article says, "One anti-missionary Jewish activist described Mr. Snow's departure as 'a body-blow to messianic Judaism world-wide'."

In the United States, Ellen Kamensky, who served on staff with Jews for Jesus for two years in Los Angeles and went through an "exit

counselor/deprogramming experience," has written a book, "Hawking God: A Young Jewish Woman's Ordeal in Jews for Jesus." She is on the lecture circuit with anti-missionaries and has had her story picked up in some of the Jewish newspapers including the Jewish Advocate of Boston.

#### *Anti-Missionaries*

In August 1992, Jews for Judaism put out a release about how they were going to disband because of a lack of funds. The Baltimore Jewish News reported that Jews for Judaism was "\$40,000-\$50,000 short this year of meeting its annual budget of \$120,000." It went on to say that among the group's creditors was "the Internal Revenue Service which has a judgement against the organization for about \$15,000 in back taxes." This article was picked up by dozens of Jewish newspapers.

However, the funds must have come in because Jews for Judaism is still in business.

The following month an article in the Orange County Jewish Heritage related how Ben Zion Kravitz, the LA director of Jews for Judaism and Tovia Singer, his counterpart in New York, came to the Hyatt Regency, Irvine for the seventh annual Southwest regional conference on Messianic Judaism. Kravitz boasted of having thirty in-depth conversations with "former"

Jews at the messianic conference between the Friday evening and Sunday morning. He went on to say our movement has continued to grow:

"In the mid-1980s they didn't have any conferences, and now they have half a dozen a year. In Dallas this summer, they drew 1,200 people to a convention. We came into town and gave 24 lectures around the Jewish community the time of the conference. That is how we try to counter their work. But there are a lot more of them than us and they mean to convert us."

#### *Messianic Congregations*

There continues to be local coverage of messianic congregations that are having an effect in their communities. Kevin Williams, a cantor with Adat Adonai in Toledo was profiled in an article last Passover in the Bowling Green Sentinel Tribune.

The Jewish Review of Portland did a piece on Bob Morris and Beth Ariel Congregation. Comments from Mark Powers of Jews for Judaism include, "There are 500 groups in America that push messianic Judaism... Although the Portland Ariel group has only 15 or 20 members, the messianic Jews are growing nationally with 160,000 members, 10 years ago the figure was 10,000."

Harvey Koelner of Temple Aron Kodesh in Lauderdale Lakes, Florida,

had a feature article in the Broward Jewish World in September of 1992. Congregation members are interviewed and several local rabbis offer their comments. The article also included a mention of other messianic

congregations as well as mission agencies in the area. Dr. Sandy Andron of Miami, offered the following analysis:

"I don't consider Messianic Jews a cult. I consider them a sect. They

are certainly more tied to Southern Baptists than to Judaism. They are deceptive. They are not Jews. You can't be partially pregnant. You're either black or white. This is not a gray matter. They are Christians."

## Jewish Prayer Needs Letters reach Believers in Myanmar

*Jewish Prayer Needs Letters* have been mentioned earlier in this magazine. Edited and sent out by Betty Baruch, Australia, they also reach many believers in Asia. One of them, now a member of LCJE, is Pastor E. Ngul Khaw Thang in the Union of Myanmar (Burma).

In a letter to LCJE's international office he expresses his appreciation of the *Jewish Prayer Needs Letters* and the LCJE Bulletin through which he is kept informed about the needs and work of Jewish evangelism.

Over the last year Pastor Thang has translated extracts from the *Prayer Needs* and the Bulletin and written introductions to the

pieces for the benefit of those among his own people who also have a need for the salvation of Jews and who cannot read English. "We pray for the peace of Jerusalem and for the Jews who do not know their Messiah and Redeemer," he writes. But not all Christians see a need for that. Pastor Thang regrets that many Christian leaders in their part of the world are not interested in praying for the Jews. "They say we are spiritual Israelites. Whosoever believes in Christ becomes the spiritual Israel, the sons and daughters of Abraham."

To do something for "my brethren" (Matth 25:40) has come to mean something new for Thang, and he uses

the passage from Matthew 25:31-46 as his topical text when he speaks about the need to pray for the salvation of the Jewish people.

Brother Thang also asks our prayers. In a letter of 7 February 1993 Thang mentions a personal tragedy: "My son, the only provider of our livelihood, died in a motor accident, left behind him 5 children and his wife for my care, so I cannot do as I will. But the Lord will provide everything possible in future for His work. The cost of everything is skyhigh."

"May God bless you all."

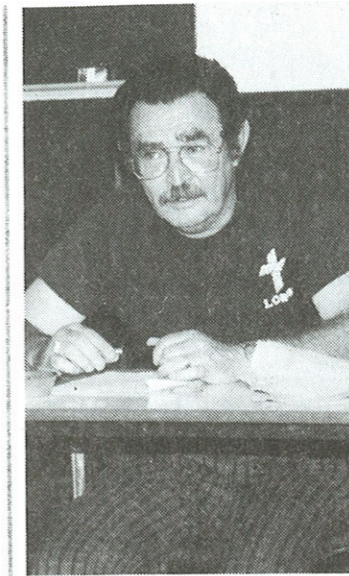
*Birger Petterson*

## A Personal View: North America LCJE 1993

By Milton Kohut,  
Missionary at Large for Jewish Outreach,  
Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod

There are a variety of expectations one brings to the annual North American Coordinating Committee of the LCJE. Each attendee, no doubt, brings his or her own agenda, hopes, ideas. I was no different. I came to Minneapolis from Los Angeles, where I serve as Missionary at Large for Jewish Outreach for the Pacific Southwest District of the LC-MS. As a member of LCJE, and as one who served as the co-host for the 1992 meeting in Beverly Hills, California, I felt it important to my personal and professional growth to attend.

What were my expectations? As one who labors largely alone in the megalopolis of greater Southern California, where 900,000 Jewish people live and work, high on my personal agenda was the opportunity to once again mingle with kindred spirits and fellow workers in the Great Commission. I needed the support and comfort of others; exchange of ideas, perspectives, thoughts, strategies. I wanted to immerse myself in the work of others; hear, read and absorb a variety of papers on wide ranging topics; and hopefully return to my office armed with new and provocative concepts which I



could apply to my principal task of reaching out in love with the saving Gospel of Yeshua Hamashiach to the lost sheep of Israel.

My brother Kai Kjaer-Hansen has asked me to record my impressions on the conference. I take the liberty to translate that to mean how will I respond when I am asked a simple question: "What were the benefits, and how will you apply them to your ministry?"

I think that is a fair and proper point of departure for my analysis of the conference.

The benefits? Certainly high on the list would be the fellowship of believers and workers in the Kingdom. To be surrounded for two days by brothers and sisters

whose hearts' desires paralleled mine, whose goals, aspirations and lives are dedicated to bringing the Gospel of salvation by Grace through faith to God's first-chosen people, served as a stimulus and an undergirding. It was like a shot of renewal, almost akin to taking an annual dose of spiritual megavitamins!

Oftentimes we labor in our respective areas of ministry quite alone, facing a hostile mission field resistant to the harvest, hateful of our message, and opposed to the point of verbal and physical abuse. The uphill battle in the trenches of daily warfare are somehow made less threatening when I am surrounded by the encouragement and renewal from co-workers in the LCJE! Each morning of the conference a beautiful sister in the Lord, Joan Ruth Lipis, of NOVEA Ministries of Portland, Oregon, and, like me, a Jewish believer in Yeshua, led us in joyous devotions. On Monday, it centered on REPENTENCE for a Jewish harvest; on Tuesday, REVIVAL for a Jewish harvest; and on Wednesday, RELATIONSHIP for a Jewish harvest. Joan's enthusiasm, excitement and unbridled joy was infectious, stimulating and set an upbeat tone for

the rest of the day.

Initially, I had planned to summarize the essence of the papers that were presented. On reflection, however, I realized that an attempt to do so would somehow diminish the power and scope contained in the deeply reflective issues that were brought forward. Let me tease you, dear reader, with a challenge to read and contemplate the full text of such thought-provoking papers. Starting with Aaron "Art" Katz' disturbing analysis of Israel's distress over the Palestinian issue, and our blind continued support of Israel's position, Art's perspectives will cause eyes to open and preconceived notions to wither. His paper is entitled: "How should Jewish believers address the Palestinian issue?"

Dr. Louis Goldberg, the venerable and highly respected elder statesman of Jewish studies, delivered a fascinating paper entitled: "The two major watersheds between the Jewish people and the Messianic Jews at the end of the second temple period and lasting to our time." Dr. Goldberg's focus was on the watershed questions: How can a human be the Son of God? And, how is it possible that the Messiah should suffer and die?

Always challenging and incisive, Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, founder and director of Ariel Ministries, and past North American Coordinator for LCJE,

delivered a paper on "Replacement Theology". Those readers who are familiar with Arnie's voluminous writings will not be disappointed in this latest, thoroughly documented study on what Replacement Theologians believe and why they believe it.

Another familiar and revered brother in the LCJE, Dr. Arthur Glasser of Fuller Seminary, offered a new look at two older books: "The Puritan Hope" by Ian Murray, and "Puritan Eschatology" by Peter Toon.

The gathering was blessed by the guest appearance of Dr. Paul Cedar, President of the Evangelical Free Church of America, and co-chair of the US Lausanne Committee, who spoke to us on "Prayer as an evangelism strategy".

Our International Coordinator, Dr. Kai Kjaer-Hansen, brought a vitally important paper: "The cost of discipleship: lessons from the first century." This marvellous paper defies simple summary. It must be studied in the quietude of a devotional sense. For the serious student of Christian suffering and its application to Gospel proclamation to a dying world, this paper is highly recommended.

Unfortunately, space does not permit a full mention of all the papers and discussions, and I apologize to those brothers and sisters whose stimulating and important papers have not been mentioned. However,

elsewhere in this issue of the LCJE Bulletin is a full list of each paper. I urge the reader to acquire a full set. I further recommend that the next North American meeting in New York City, April 11-13, 1994, be placed on as many calendars as possible. Look for further details from our North American Coordinator, Rev. Kearney Frantsen.

One final note: A dear brother in Yeshua, a fellow Jew, Steven Schwartz, who has a heart overflowing with love for the lost sheep of Israel, has produced a superlative audio tape containing the actual exchange of letters between himself and his former rabbi. It is called, "Dear Rabbi, Tell me about Jesus." What can I say? It is a superb evangelistic tool, a wonderful teaching tool, and an annointed witnessing tool. It is a "must" for every Christian who has a heart for Jewish witness. You can obtain a cassette from Steve by writing him at 15709 Forest Circle, Burnside, MN 55337, or by calling him at (612) 892-7990.

Shalom Ha Shem! See you in New York.

## An Evangelistic Strategy for a Small Mission and Congregation

By Loren Jacobs, Leader of Shema Israel

I represent a small mission and a small congregation. In 1986 Martha and I started a small mission called *Shema Yisrael*. In 1991 the Lord used us to start *Congregation Shema Yisrael*, which is a small Messianic Congregation.

Jewish mission work is part of Martha's heritage. Martha is a fifth generation Messianic Jew. Her family has been involved in Jewish mission work for almost 100 years. Al Brickner, Martha's father, and her grandfather, Fred Kendal, labored in Detroit from the 1930's through the 1970's as *Israel's Remnant*. As a result of their labors we knew a number of Messianic Jews in the Detroit area before we moved there.

I'm the first one in my family to come to faith in Messiah. In 1976, a year after I came to faith, I met *Jews for Jesus* in the Chicago area. I went to Moody Bible Institute and sat under the teaching of Dr. Louis Goldberg. Martha and I were trained by *Jews for Jesus* and served on their staff until 1985. We moved to the Detroit area in 1986 and started *Shema Yisrael*.

*We moved into a home in a Jewish area*  
We felt God calling us to the Detroit area and moved here



by faith. We bought a house in Southfield, which is the center of the Metro Detroit Jewish community. I started out with an office in my basement. We had a ministry phone and a post office box. We sent a monthly newsletter to less than 200 people. We held a weekly Bible study in our home and eventually a weekly service as well. The congregation began in my basement. If 12 people came I was ecstatic! As the congregation grew we moved to a school, then to a church where we currently meet and where we have an office. *Congregation Shema Yisrael* has grown to about 80 people.

*Problems with operating from our home*  
We operated from our home for the first couple of years. I had an office in the basement. Volunteers came

to work there, I had another person on staff who worked there, we held a Bible study on Tuesday nights and a worship service on Sunday mornings. There was a constant flow of traffic in and out. Cars were parked everywhere on our residential block. We had little family privacy. Our neighbors complained to the city. Our children suffered because some of the neighbors refused to let their children play with them.

*Types of evangelism*  
Being a small mission or congregation doesn't mean being restricted to having a small testimony. A small mission or congregation can have a big impact.

We started off our ministry by doing a lot of "broadsideing". Within our first year we handed out 100,000 broadsides in the Detroit area. Detroit is a major metropolitan area that is spread out. Most Jewish Detroiters don't go downtown much nowadays and its difficult to broadside out in the suburbs. There isn't a lot of people traffic like there is in Manhattan. After our first year I realized that we were reaching just a small percentage of the Jewish community through broadsideing.

I thought about others

ways to reach out and came up with the idea of direct mail. Since then we have concentrated on direct mail for the following reasons:

1. A small congregation or small mission can do it. Volunteers can type or address cards or stuff envelopes.

2. A direct mailing can reach a majority of the Jewish community at one time. If someone is missed they usually hear about it from others who have received it!

3. Mailings sow seed and keep the issue of Messiah Yeshua in the forefront. The saying, "Out of sight out of mind" is true. I've heard that advertisers claim a new product has to come before the public something like 17 times before they are ready to consider buying it.

4. People hear what we have to say, not what others are saying about us.

5. Mailings are relatively non-threatening. Your material can be read in the privacy of a person's home.

6. Mailings are relatively inexpensive. They average under 20 cents per home. For 6000 dollars we can reach the majority of the Detroit Jewish community of 100,000.

*First mailing: September 1987*

I went through the phone book and picked out all the Jewish names. 50 volunteers hand address 26,000 envelopes and looked up all the zip codes. I composed a

letter. We stuffed it, sealed it and put a bulk rate stamp on it. It took 9 months of work. We had 125 total responses: 25 Non-Messianic Jewish positive responses and 5 Messianic Jewish positive responses. The mailing was mentioned in *The Detroit Jewish News* and the Michigan *ADL Bulletin*.

*Second mailing: April 1989*  
We bought a personal computer. I went through the phone book for a second time, and over the next 9 months we typed 29,000 names and addresses into our database. We sent a cover letter, "The Most Famous Jew Of All" pamphlet, and a response card. There were 71 Non-Messianic Jewish positive responses, and 3 Messianic Jewish positive responses. *The Good News According To Matthew* by Lederer Messianic Ministries was offered.

*Third mailing: April 1990*  
We mailed 30,000 "Four New Questions To Ask At Passover" letters. There was a coupon that was part of the letter. We had 19 Non-Messianic Jewish positive responses. The *Jewish New Testament* was offered for 2 dollars. I thought this was one of the best mailings and expected to get our best response from this mailing, but it turned out to be our smallest!

*Fourth mailing: January 1991*  
I wanted to change the

format from a letter inside an envelope. During the Gulf War we mailed 31,000 hand written postcards with a message about prophecy, the final World War in the Middle East, Messiah and the Bible. 100 volunteers hand wrote 300 postcards each! We had 44 Non-Messianic Jewish positive responses and 44 Gentile positive responses. *The Late Great Planet Earth* was offered.

*Fifth mailing: January 1992*  
We mailed 34,000 pre-printed postcards. There were 29 positive responses and 84 negative responses from Non-Messianic Jewish people. There were 13 positive and 6 negative responses from Gentiles. The *Jesus For Jews* testimony book was offered.

*Sixth mailing: December 1992*  
We supplemented our own mailing list by buying our first mailing list and extended the range from Saginaw to the Ohio border. We mailed 40,000 pre-printed postcards. Responses continue to come in. So far we have had 92 positive Jewish responses and 35 negative Jewish responses, 76 Gentile positive responses and 8 negative Gentile responses. We offered Josh McDowell's apologetic book, *More Than A Carpenter*.

*How to do a mailing*  
You can create a mailing list

yourself or buy a list from a mailing company. The advantage to creating one is that you get to keep using it. The disadvantage is that it takes more time and labor.

Sources for a mailing list: mailing lists companies, phone books, Bresser's, local Jewish papers. I read the local Jewish paper cover to cover every week. Births, deaths, engagements, anniversaries, bar and bat mitzvahs, and letters to the editor are especially helpful.

The price of a mailing: approximately 17 cents per home when sent out at the non-profit bulk rate.

*Telephone evangelism*  
One of the things we tried was a telephone campaign. I trained 20 people in the congregation and got them cold calling through the phone book. It was very hard to sustain this effort because of the many rejections. The phone campaign fizzled out after a month and 1000 calls. However there was a good rate of response: 5% of the Jewish people called were interested in finding out more about Messiah and Messianic Judaism.

*Ministry to the church*  
Not only have we reached out to the Jewish community, but we have reached out to the Church as well. We present *Messiah In The Passover*, *Yeshua In The Jewish Holidays*, *Sharing Yeshua Seminar*, give a message on Romans 11 and lead Passover Seders. We

have a worship team that is singing Messianic Jewish music outside the Congregation for the first time. I have trained 7 people to help me with the presentations. This Passover season we are speaking in 80 churches in southeastern Michigan. Since 1986 we have spoken in approximately 300 churches in southeastern Michigan.

*Media impact*  
We have had some good media coverage. The Michigan ADL bulletin mentioned us in 1987. I was on a popular hour long local T.V. show debating an orthodox rabbi and a liberal protestant minister. I've been on Christian and secular radio. About a dozen articles in *The Detroit Jewish News* have mentioned us, including a fairly objective eight page article that featured us in the summer of 1991.

*Use of volunteers*  
In the beginning most of my volunteer work force and supporters first came from various churches. As *Congregation Shema Yisrael* developed more of the support and the workers has been shifting from the churches to the congregation.

*Problems we have faced*  
The problem of versatility: A small mission or congregational leader has to be versatile. You can't afford specialists. You have to be able to write, teach, witness,

evangelize, organize, administrate, keep books, etc.

The problem of lack of recognition/trust. You don't have the name recognition and therefore the level of trust that often accompanies a larger work. Its not easy to be invited to speak in many larger churches.

The problem of lack of funding: This is probably not unique to smaller missions or congregations. We have operated on a shoestring budget. While we haven't had a huge budget, the Lord has provided enough for our needs.

The problem those who take advantage: There are people who will take advantage of a small congregation or ministry, especially one with an inexperienced leader. I've made several costly mistakes by working with the wrong people. Be cautious who you work with!

*Hopes for the future*  
We are working with Jewish believers in the Ann Arbor and Lansing areas to encourage the growth of congregations there.

We continue to hand out tracts at local college campuses. The University of Michigan at Ann Arbor has the largest Jewish student body of any college in the country.

We hope to expand our mailings to Windsor Canada which is only 30 minutes away and has a Jewish community of 3000. I'd like

to send our mailings to the rest of the state of Michigan.

*A plea regarding missions and congregations*

There should be no rivalry between Jewish missions and congregations. The missions need messianic congregations and the congregations need to be more mission minded. I wish every congregation could

have a missionary working with them, and that all Jewish missionaries were building up Messianic Congregations.

*Summary model for a small mission or congregation*

1. Move into a Jewish area. Get a ministry phone and a Post Office box.
2. Be bold, preach the Good News, sow seed, raise the

- issue of Messiah Yeshua.
3. Start a Shabbat service.
4. Get Messianic Jews and Gentiles involved as volunteers.
5. Send out a monthly newsletter.
6. Speak in churches. Get the Church involved through praying, supporting, witnessing, and referring Jewish people who are interested.

## Perceiving Israel's Crisis: How Should Jewish Believers Address the Palestinian Issue?

By Art Katz,  
Director of Ben Israel Fellowship

The recent and sudden deportation of some 400 Palestinian fundamentalists and suspected terrorists has provoked worldwide consternation over the moral rectitude of Israeli actions prompted by increasing desperation. Civil rights lawyers in Israel, learning of the deportation without due process, petitioned the Supreme Court unsuccessfully who allowed the deportation to continue its legality to be determined later.

The action, denounced by the UN as a violation of the Geneva Convention, brings to many of Israel's supporters that ache that stems from the desire to identify with the nation in its increasing perplexities coupled with the concern for the nation's character and stated intention of demonstrating the uniqueness of a Jewish state. These contradictions will prove to be an increasingly cruel paradox and one without remedy seeing the intractable and implacable bitterness of Israel's enemies bent upon her destruction.

*Statements by leading Israelis*

An increasingly disturbing note morally, is struck by Ariel Sharon in an article published by the Jerusalem Post (December 14, 1992) entitled "It's Possible to Stop Terrorism". In it, having assured the reader that "terrorist success is not a heavenly decree", he enjoins the government to "declare all out war on the terrorists, and uproot them utterly". Evidently, the Labor Government after the Six Day War had set as a clear objective "the physical extinction of the terrorist organizations" which he now calls for as the necessary condition for "stability". This "uprooting" is an IDF "mission", a "job" in which the hands of men and officers should not be tied "in the morass of detailed orders" that would impede "operational considerations".

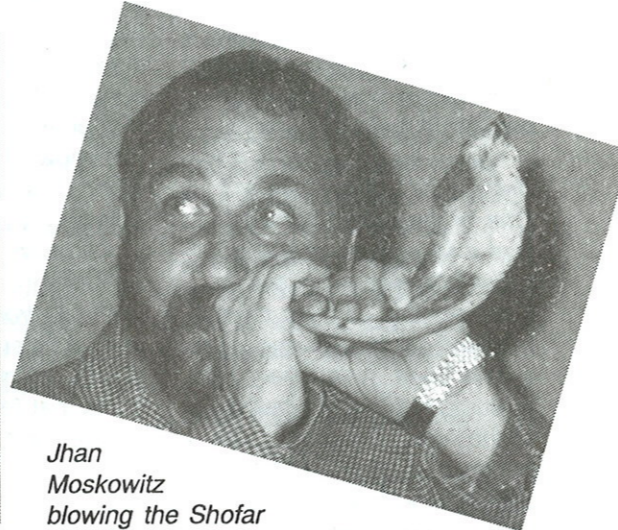
More candidly, Yosef Ben-Aharon, former director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, writing in the same issue and omitting the word "terrorist" identifies the problem as "the Palestinians [who] are responsible for the continuation of violence to an extent that cannot be

tolerated by Israel ..." He calls for "such measures as expulsion, administrative detention and drastic curtailment of freedom of movement of the Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District". In his opinion, this last "murder represents a quantum leap in Arab terror ... an act of war".

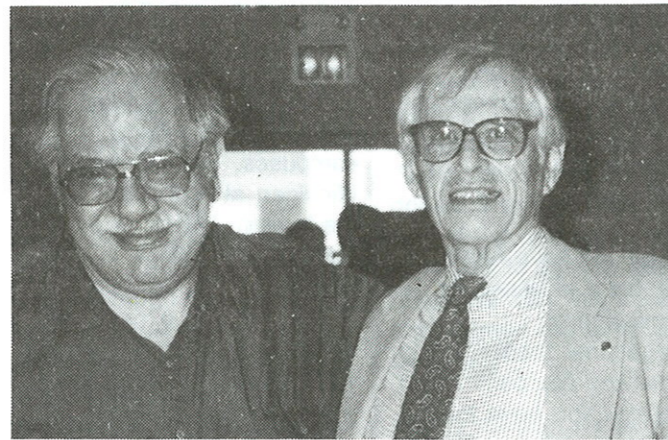
In the Editorial Comment of the same issue, the writer laments the difficulties imposed by being a democratic society [which] "is not built for such cold-blooded, ruthless uses of the law. Yet it is unthinkable that democracies should remain utterly defenseless ... [though] Israel in particular must find a solution". Sounding the sentiments in the article previously cited, we are called to realize that "there is a state of war in the country [and that] no democracy can win in a war by adhering to rules which can only prevail in peace". In the following day's editorial comment (December 16, 1992) we are reminded that "in response to Arab enormities natural survival instincts overcome twisted values and sickly guilt complexes". More ominously, "It is an ugly war, in which



Susan Perlman and Kearney Frantsen, LCJE coordinator North America.



Jhan Moskowitz blowing the Shofar



Moische Rosen with Arthur Glasser



Fred Klett, LCJE North American Secretary



the preservation of human rights must, as it does in every war, take a back seat to matters of survival. Rabin may have to introduce laws which will make expulsions easier, and which will stipulate that appeals can only be lodged after the expulsion." Furthermore, "The imperatives of war also include complete control over the conduct of Israelis in relation to the situation ... it is unthinkable that at times like these the police should worry about Israeli trouble-makers ... Members of organizations known for fomenting trouble should be promptly arrested and kept behind bars."

*Some questions*

Some evident questions raised by these statements might be:

- How are terrorists to be identified?
- Who in the general Arab population holds views different from them?
- Are all to be expelled?
- Should Israeli society be successful in meeting its threats to itself in this way, what will the character of that society become in the process?
- What has it already become?
- Are its effects reversible?
- If what is called "terrorism" is more rightly the cry and protest of an entire people, what kind of "final solution" might it require seeing that every present violent response engenders more of its

kind?

- Is not the unarticulated lament of Israel already that the Arabs are our "Unglück" (misfortune)?

*Israel remains God's witness in her apostasy*

For myself, the text of Ez 37 offers a construct for understanding Israel's predicament that saves one from untenable defense of morally indefensible conduct or condemnation of the same. If only a resurrected nation can qualify to bless all the families of the earth and become the locus and disseminators of a Davidic Theocratic Kingdom, then clearly there must be a death that precedes it. I believe Israel's present and worsening condition is the divine strategy toward that end. A view that expects progressive improvement or amelioration of Israel's condition, in my opinion, insufficiently reckons on the depth of not only Israel's but man's intransigence and falsely hopes for what is essentially a humanist rather than a Biblical expectation.

Israel's destiny is unquestionably real - but it is not to be realized as her own achievement but lies rather and exclusively with God's faithfulness and power. Therefore, this fulfillment waits upon a final exhaustion of any human capability (for which we Jews are characteristically notorious) revealing to Israel its God in the way that He must be known by her as the

One who raises the dead. Any knowledge less than this removes restored Israel's capacity to bless the nations who have known her in her previous and threatening posture and probably have themselves contributed to the death from which she is now visibly raised by God.

How wrong then to condemn her for the very thing she is called to demonstrate. Israel remains His witness people in her apostasy - all the more when He restores her exclusively on the basis of His mercy - i.e. what He is in Himself! The issue of Israel's redemption, we need to be reminded, is the issue of God; it is as this God that Israel must make Him known to the nations. It is as the recipient of His undeserved grace and mercy that Israel becomes most powerfully witness to Him (Romans 9:16). That the Church has any other expectation of a 'progressive' fulfillment speaks volumes about its own condition and expectation for itself! The Church that should have known better, would be less critical of Israel if it understood about itself that God does not receive us for any worthiness on our own part. How much of her coming or present disappointment is predicated upon a false premise of an idealized Israel - the projection of her own vain hopes - contrary to the whole tenor of the Gospel?

*Israel and the Church*

The Church must see itself in its own redeemed fallenness as the 'son of man' that is subject to all the error and pride of sinful mankind (which includes Israel) that it might prophetically call Israel to life again out of its own resurrection experience when only the power of God breaking into history can save it. Like the resurrection of Jesus, it will require a faith where the atheist thinks it should end. We need then to respect the death by suffering to which Israel is

now being needfully brought. There is a judgment here as well as a mystery made necessary by the depth and stubbornness of human pride convinced of its own intrinsic goodness and capability.

It may be that the segment of the Church that has idealized present Israel and so much desires her success has shrunk from considering an apocalyptic of death and resurrection so unwelcomed by herself. Nevertheless, in the genius of God, our mandate and requirement to be to Israel a 'son of man' company that

can raise her on the basis of our own resurrection faith and prophetic stature compels us to a transcendent ground we would not have otherwise chosen, by which we become ourselves transformed! So then, the issue of Israel becomes the issue of the Church - the issue of its last days making! Is it not this that Paul apostolically celebrates in his "O the depth of the riches" in his conclusion of the Mystery of Israel in Romans 9-11?

## A Major Watershed of Thought

Regarding Jewish People and Messianic Jews at the End of the Second Temple Period

By Louis Goldberg, M.A.; Th.D.  
Professor of Theology and Jewish Studies  
Moody Bible Institute

Among many issues which Yeshua raised in His day, two stand out in stark relief: 1) How can a human Yeshua also be the Son of God? 2) How is it possible that Yeshua, who claimed to be the Messiah, should also suffer and die as the atonement for our sins? These two issues alone created a division between the followers of Yeshua and the people of Judea of that day. In fact, even these very followers, after his death, began to disperse homeward and those who remained in

Jerusalem were disillusioned. These two watersheds are still the two major issues which separate Messianic Jews from the Jewish community to this day. Yet the major thrust of this paper will be to understand the thinking of the Rabbinical authorities at the end of the Second Temple period regarding Messiah. We will also note Yeshua's measures to circumvent some of this thinking by the religious leaders. One of these major issues alone

would be the subject for a book, nevertheless, the object in this paper is to paint a broad picture as possible of the first issue, try to understand the dynamics with which the disciples themselves had to wrestle, and what were the conclusions reached by Messianic Jews.

*I. How Is Yeshua Both Human and Divine?*  
As the Second Commonwealth of Judea began to unfold,<sup>1</sup> the religious leaders sought to



Art Katz (left) and Louis Goldberg at the LCJE conference in Minneapolis.

protect the high and lofty character of Israel's calling by their God. Specifically, the people of Judea must never again confuse their God with the pagan deities of other nations in the Middle East. The Babylonian exile was a national trauma affecting the people of Judea and one of the main designs of God's providence was to purify a remnant among Israel who would never place their God on the same level with other pagan deities (Micah 4:9-10). Therefore, the post exilic leaders and writers emphasized it upon the people that God was indeed transcendent. The Jewish literature of the period between the Hebrew Scriptures and the first century C.E. provides the development of a number of doctrines held by the people Israel, and particularly, for the discussion of this paper, the concept of Messiah. The so-called "silent years" were

not silent in non-canonical materials because this period saw the development of the literary genius of a people where the people Israel enjoyed one of their golden ages of literature.

#### The Targumim

The interpretation of Scripture already began in the days of Ezra: "They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read" (Neh. 8:8). The phrase "making it clear" meant that Ezra, and the cadre of Levites gathered around him, had begun a system of oral interpreting and paraphrasing of the Scripture. Eventually, this came to be known as the Targumim. We have every reason to believe that this process continued to build after the days of Ezra, what was translated was carried

orally through the intertestamental period, and eventually was committed to writing by 200 C.E. It remains now to see what the religious leaders did with the concept of God in the Targumim.

#### Memra

In the Targumim<sup>2</sup> the term *memra*, or "word" is prominent as the manifestation of divine power and also serves as the messenger of God on His behalf.

*Memra* is an interesting concept in early Jewish thought. The intermediate agency between God and man was commonly held to be *memra* as was a means of revelation of God to man. The etymology of the word is given by Jastrow as "*memra*, 1) word, command, or 2) hypostatized, the Word, i.e., the LORD used in the Targum to obviate anthropomorphism..."<sup>3</sup>

Some examples of this term follow: 1) the biblical Deut. 1:32, "you did not trust the LORD your God" is seen in the Targum as "you have not believed in the (*memra*) of the LORD;"<sup>4</sup> 2) it was the *memra* who plagued the people" (Targum Yerushalmi for Ex. 32:35)<sup>5</sup> instead of the biblical, "the LORD smote the people;" 3) instead of "I will cover you with my hand," (Ex. 33:22), the Targum says that "I will cover you with my *memra*;" 4) it is the *memra* which goes before Cyrus (Targum Isa. 45:2)<sup>6</sup> instead of the biblical, "I will go before you;" it is against the *memra* who men offend instead of God Himself as seen in the Scriptures (Ex. 16:8).

The *memra* is regarded as the manifestation of God. Targum Yerushalmi for Deut. 4:7 says that "The *memra* brings Israel nigh to God and sits on His throne receiving the prayers of Israel."<sup>7</sup> The *memra* is the one who guards Jacob (Gen. 28:20-21; 35:3) and Israel (Ex. 12:28-29), and so on. The *memra* is also regarded as the agent of God, e.g., in the creation of the earth (Isa. 45:12)<sup>8</sup> and that He is the one who executes justice (Targum Yerushalmi for Num. 33:4).<sup>9</sup> The *memra* is even regarded as the comforter in the future: "So shall my *memra* comfort you" (Targum Isa. 66:13).<sup>10</sup>

Texts like this can be multiplied over and over. The problem before us is just how did the Jewish scholars

understand the term *memra* by the first century C.E. G.E. Moore comments on this understanding: "Nowhere in the Targums is *memra* a "being" of any kind or in any sense, much less a personal being. The appearance of personality which in some places attaches to the word is due solely to the fact the *memra* of the LORD and similar phrases and reverent circumlocutions for 'God', introduced precisely where in the original God is personally active in the affairs of men."<sup>11</sup> In addition, Moore states that "the *memra* is purely a phenomenon of translation, not a figment of speculation; it never gets outside the Targums."<sup>12</sup> H.A. Wolfson echoes the same sentiments: "No scholar nowadays will entertain the view that it (*memra*) is either a real being or an intermediary."<sup>13</sup>

Obviously, both from the Jewish point of view of the first century as well as modern commentators, the use of *memra* was intended as a means to deanthropomorphize the way people understand and talk about God. This became the means so as to protect the transcendence of Israel's God compared to the deities of other nations.

#### Shekinah

Another means to obviate anthropomorphic expressions was the use of *Shekinah*, which was a way of describing the immanence of God, or referring to God

Himself. This word appears many times in the Targumim as well as in other mainstream Jewish literature.

The Targum Onkelos<sup>14</sup> uses this expression in interesting ways: For example, "The LORD is not in your midst" (Num. 14:42) is rendered "The *Shekinah* is not in your midst." The verse, "You cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live" (Ex. 33:20) is given as "You cannot see the face of my *Shekinah*." Of Deut. 12:5, where one reads, "To put his Name there," Onkelos renders it as "To rest his *Shekinah* there."

#### Other Procedures

The Targumim paraphrasers (*meturgemanim*) also had a reverent way of speaking about God and His activities. When describing His relationship with the world, God is never made the direct subject or object of an action. Active words in the biblical text were handled in the passive so as to avoid undue anthropomorphic expression. McNamara points out this technique in a number of examples from a Targum known as Neofiti.<sup>15</sup>

1) Gen. 1:4 is rendered, "and it was manifest *before the Lord* that the light was good;"

2) instead of "God heard their groaning" (Ex. 2:4), the Targum reads, "and their complaint was heard *before the Lord*;"

3) concerning Ex. 2:25, "God saw the people of Israel and God took notice of

them," the paraphrasers provided it as "the servants of the sons of Israel were manifest *before the Lord*." Many more examples can be provided but the point is that God must not be brought into any direct contact whatsoever with man. The phrase "before the LORD," was chosen to avoid false impression among the unlearned and every care was exercised to render biblical materials so as to prevent the identification of the God of Israel with the pagan deities.

#### The Outside Literature

The Outside Literature of Israel reflects fairly accurately the Hebrew Scriptures when talking about God. And yet, some of the deanthropomorphizing process is also present in the Writings in specific words:

1) "Thy all-powerful *word* leaped from heaven, from the royal throne, into the midst of the land that was doomed, a stern warrior carrying the sharp sword of thy authentic command" (Wisdom of Solomon 18:15, 16). The Greek term for *word* is *logos* but it is not to be understood in a Greek philosophical reference. This passage is Hebraic in its world view and appears to mirror the imagery of I Chronicles 21:16 where the angel of the LORD drew out his sword over Jerusalem for destruction.

Joseph Reider suggests the usual later understanding of Jewish people on the Wisdom passage, "The writer had no intention of hypostatizing the *Logos* (*Memra*), but had in mind only the customary Jewish periphrasis for the LORD, i.e., the *memra* of Yahweh, meaning the Divine Being in self manifestation."<sup>16</sup>

2) "By the words (*memra*) of the Lord His works are done" (Ecclus. 42:15);

3) "Thy word (*memra*), O LORD, which heals all men" (Wisdom 16:12);

4) "Thy word (*memra*) preserves those who trust in Thee" (Wisdom 16:26), and so on.

#### The Septuagint

The first Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (about 250-100 B.C.E.) represents a further step along the way in the deanthropomorphizing process. A few examples are indicated which show the distinction between the Hebrew Massoretic text and the Septuagint: 1) "likeness" (*temunah*) is rendered as "glory" when referring to the deity, "I shall be satisfied when thy glory (*doxa*, for *temunah*, likeness) appears," and 2) in Num. 12:8, "He (Moses) beholds the form (*temunah*) of the LORD" is rendered, "He (Moses) had the glory (*doxa*) of the LORD." "The mouth of the LORD" is also a phrase which is handled with concern at certain times: 1) In Isaiah 40:5, "For the

mouth of the LORD has spoken," and 2) in Isa. 45:23, "The word has gone forth from my mouth in righteousness" is rendered in the Greek translation as, "Righteousness shall surely proceed out of my mouth; my words shall not be frustrated." Other examples can be demonstrated.

Later Greek translations, e.g., Symmachus, sharpened the consistency of deanthropomorphizing. These Jewish concerns, however, were already post first century, after the Council of Yavne,<sup>17</sup> when the original Greek translation was suspect in Jewish eyes because of the way the community of the Jewish believers were using it to proclaim the uniqueness of Jesus. Yet the pattern was already set as to the way one talked about God in the Greek translation by the first century. There was a reluctance to bring God down to the level of man.

Was this deanthropomorphizing process in the Septuagint because of the Greek philosophical influence which had an aversion to speaking of God in human terms and the attribution to God of anything corporeal? Philo recognized the philosophic distaste and allegorized Old Testament Scriptures with the Greek sensitivity in mind. However, Frankel indicated in an article at one time that he saw *no* traces of an influence of Greek philosophy on the Jewish

*main stream* thinkers and religious leaders.<sup>18</sup> The deanthropomorphizing by the Jewish translators of the Hebrew Scriptures reflected an activity which has already taken place upon Jewish soil and pointed up the intense interest in keeping the being of God as lofty as possible.

The Jerusalem authorities were reluctant to produce a Greek translation when the project was first broached by those who requested it in Egypt. However, when the permission was given, the Jewish translators in Egypt would only reflect the concern of the Judean religious leaders as to a proper understanding of anthropomorphisms. Even though the Prophets and the Writings of the Hebrew Scriptures did not receive as adequate a treatment as the Torah of Moses, yet anthropomorphisms of the more glaring kind would have been toned down, not by the aversion of Greek thinking, but from the common understanding of the Jewish scholars in the land of Israel.

#### Names for God

While Jewish literature after the first century abounded with various suggestions for the names of God, yet by the first century specific names were used so as to carefully protect the being of God from contact with His creation, including that of man.<sup>19</sup>

One quite prominent

name is "heaven," found quite often in a number of compound expressions, e.g., "fear of heaven," which approximates the biblical "fear of the LORD". Besides the numerous places this word appears in the traditional literature, one may also note its presence in the Gospels (Matt. 21:25; Mk. 11:30; Luke 15:18, 21). Matthew often uses the phrase "kingdom of heaven," which is a periphrastic phrase for kingdom of God.

Still another substitute name for God is "power," found not infrequently in the rabbinic literature. One particular phrase associated with this name is what Yeshua used to describe His uniqueness when asked by the high priest if He was the son of the blessed one: "You shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of *"power"* (Matt. 26:64). The term "power" is seen as a circumlocution for that of "God."

#### The Implications of Deanthropomorphizing God

What does this mean by the time when we come to a first century Judaism? For one thing, while God certainly can be regarded as personal, yet He became in another way, far removed from the average Jewish person. A warm living vital relationship was lost in comparison with how the Hebrew Scriptures speak of God. God had become a "wholly other being".

This trend was to have a devastating influence on an understanding of the Messiah. The deanthropomorphizing process created a great gulf between God and man, and therefore, it would not be possible to think in terms of a human Messiah, who is at the same time, divine. Neither would it be possible for the divinity to be entangled with humanity; Israel's God was not an idol like that of any other nation. Can we perhaps see the problem now for the first century Jew? Yeshua can be a Messiah, even superhuman, but not divine. The development of a Jewish religious tradition in the way one talked about God had schooled the nation to its own particular concept of Messiah as human only.

#### Proclamation by Yeshua

What is interesting, Yeshua did not proclaim in the beginning to one and all that He is the Son of God. Neither did He constantly insist on his Messiahship. There seemed to be a reticence about it all. William Wrede spoke of a doctrine of "veiled glory" and the Messianic secret.<sup>20</sup> But David Flusser, professor of Comparative religion at the Hebrew University, also commented on this fabric of reticence concerning Messiahship by pointing to a parallel in the reticence displayed at Qumran by the Teacher of Righteousness

and Simon of Kosebah of Murabba'at.<sup>21</sup> Flusser's convictions were that "from the strictly theological point of view no man can be defined as a Messiah before he had accomplished the task of the anointed."<sup>22</sup> In other words, before the title can begin to have any true meaning, the real mission must be realized. Now, while the different personalities already mentioned have totally different goals, the aspect of reticence on the part of Jesus is more readily understood. So, the Messiah as the Son of man demonstrated all the works that the Messiah was supposed to do, and at one point, emphasized the testimony concerning Himself and His works (John 5:31-46).

#### *His Unusual Works and Teaching*

A quick perusal of how Matthew related the claims of Yeshua's works is interesting (Matt. 8:1-9:8; 9:23-26): 1) He is the healer, caring for all who came to Him (Matt. 8:1-17); 2) He is the superb teacher (Matt. 8:18-22); 3) He has control over nature (Matt. 8:23-27); 4) He has control over the unseen world, both the good and the evil (Matt. 8:28-34); 5) He is the one who can forgive sins, based on his authority to accomplish all healing (Matt. 9:1-8); and finally, 6) He has the power to do what God does: raise people from the dead (Matt. 9:23-26). In this

last presentation alone, Matthew demonstrates the strategy by Yeshua that as He raises people from the dead, He has the right to be both human and divine.

In His teaching and preaching, He always left the impression that His presentation is unique. He had a particular unique way of stating, "I say to you," and no religious leader of that day would dare utter such a statement. Teaching was a compendium of what other sages had taught, but Yeshua cut through that methodology, and used the word: "I." No wonder the people proclaimed that He taught as no other man taught. But then again, He was no mere man.

His claims did not go unnoticed. At the end of His ministry when Yeshua was confronted by some of the Pharisees, He then openly challenged the thinking of His day concerning Messiah. To some of the Pharisees who questioned Him, He asked, "How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls Him 'LORD'?" The crux of the argument centered on the interpretation of Psalm 110:1, and in pressing the point, Yeshua queried, "If then David calls Him 'LORD,' how can he be his son?" (Matt. 22:45). To this statement, the Pharisees had no reply. But what was Yeshua doing? He had cut across the tradition of deanthropomorphizing the deity and demonstrated the

distinct mysterious possibility of the divine sonship of Messiah son of David.

#### *At Yeshua's Trial*

Finally, Yeshua faced the Sanhedrin at his trial, and near its end, the High priest asked, "Tell us if you are the Messiah, the son of God" (Matt. 26:63). Actually, there are two questions: 1) Is Yeshua the Messiah; and 2) (Is Yeshua) the Son of God, or, the Son of the Blessed one. Yeshua had no difficulty confirming His Messiahship, to which the Sanhedrin made no reply. To this day, there are many Traditional Jewish authorities who could accept Yeshua in a Messiahship role. The second question is what produces the watershed. And in response to it, Yeshua did not answer on His own but replied with a paraphrase of Daniel 7:13, 14. No doubt was left in the mind of Caiaphas as to the implications of the interpretation: Yeshua claimed a unique relationship with His Father.

As a side comment on Yeshua's pronouncement, it is interesting to note that when Jewish believers gave witness to the Messiah in the days after the destruction of the Temple, the rabbis of the Tannianic period drew sharp lines as to what former messianic passages would be accepted. Rabbi Akiba was once reprimanded on an occasion when he and his colleagues were discussing the meaning of the plurality

of "thrones" in Daniel 9:9; in answer to the reason for the plural, Akiba given the traditional answer: "One for God and one for David, i.e., for Messiah the son of David." Rabbi Yose severely criticized him: "Akiba, how long will you profane the *Shekinah*? It is one for justice and one for righteousness."<sup>23</sup>

The point in all this discussion, however, is that Yeshua's claims were based on a literal understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures and not through the tinted sunglasses of tradition. This thrust also became the basis by which Rav Shaul (Paul) could then emphasize in his Christology when sharing the Gospel with non-Jewish peoples.

#### **The Testimony By Messianic Jews by the Second Century**

Danielou considered how Messianic Jews proclaimed the uniqueness of Yeshua, calling Him the Name:

The beginnings of this Christology of the Name are already to be found in the New Testament. On the one hand Old Testament texts mentioning the Name are frequently quoted in the New Testament. Thus Acts 15:17 quoting Amos 9:12, reads: 'All the Gentiles, upon whom my Name is called.' Paul (Rom. 2:24) mentions Isa. 52:5: 'The Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles

because of you.' The same Epistle quotes Ex. 9:16: 'that my Name might be published abroad in all the earth' (Rom. 9:17)...

In these various quotations the Name can in fact only mean Yahweh, but it is very hard to see why these texts should have been collected in messianic dossiers unless the Name had appeared to have some relation to Christ. There are, moreover, some passages in which this relationship is explicitly stated. Thus Joel 3:5: 'Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved' is quoted in Acts 2:21 and 4:12 in a somewhat indeterminate sense. But the same text is repeated in Rom. 1:12, as follows: '(Christ) is the same Lord (Kurios) of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him: for, Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.' Here the name is clearly that of Christ; ...<sup>24</sup>

What can we then conclude? Instead of using the title, The Son of God, Jewish believers spoke of Yeshua as The Name in such a way as to emphasize His uniqueness.

Danielou also points out the peculiar use of Law and Covenant. The Greek *nomos* (or, Hebrew *Torah*) was used in such a way with Jewish people so as to emphasize the uniqueness

of Yeshua. Exactly because the Torah is somehow regarded as the presence of the divine word, it becomes an excellent means to describe Yeshua as the living Torah.

One of the first passages to be considered occurs in Hermas and treats of the vision of an immense willow-tree: 'This great tree which over shadows plains and mountains and all the earth is the Law of God (*nomos Theou*) which was given to the whole world; and this Law is the Son of God preached unto the ends of the earth' (Sim. VIII, 3:2). The text could hardly be more explicit. The Law is the name of the Son of God. This is clearly and archaic expression in which *nomos* takes the place of *Logos*, which never occurs in the *Shepherd* ...

... Quoting the *Preaching of Peter* Clement of Alexandria writes: 'In the *Preaching of Peter* you will find the Lord called Law and Word ... (Strom. I, 182:3) ...

In Justin ... in the *Dial.* XXIV, 1 he writes 'There is now another Covenant; another Law has gone forth from Sion, Jesus Christ.' Justin again refers to Isaiah ... a little further on: 'The Son of God ... Christ ... was proclaimed as about to come as an everlasting

Law (*nomos*) and new Covenant for the whole world (Dial. XLIII, 1). It will be noticed that Christ is here called at the same time both Law and Covenant (*diatheke*)....

This conception of Christ as the Covenant is found in several times in Justin: 'The New Covenant ... which had long since been proclaimed by God was now already present, that is to say, the Christ himself' (Dial. LI, 3). It is interesting to note that the expression had already been applied to the person of Christ by the *Epistle of Barnabas*, which quotes Is. 42:6: 'I have given thee to be a covenant of the peoples'

(XIV, 7). The text of Isaiah applying the world covenant to the Servant justified its application to Christ. In connection with this same text of Isaiah, Justin writes: 'What is the covenant of God? Is it not Christ?' (Dial. CXXII, 5; of also CXVIII, 3; CXII, 4).<sup>25</sup>

Therefore, because of Jewish comprehension of the uniqueness of Yeshua, Messianic Jews dared to equate him with terms such as the Living Torah and the New Covenant that would underscore his deity.

Other suggestions for other consideration are the terms: 'arche and hemera (Day). We can only wish we had more materials at our disposal but their paucity is

our limitation. We have to be content with what material we have which Jewish believers themselves used in the witness to their brethren.

The tragedy is that the Messianic Jewish presence disappears after the total arabization of the land in the 600s. Although Jewish believers through the centuries in isolated instances were testimonies to the uniqueness of Yeshua to their brethren, the task facing us today is much the same as it was in the first century, at the end of the second temple period. We still wrestle with the major watershed with the Jewish communities over conception of the Messiah who is human and divine.

<sup>1</sup> The Second Commonwealth covered the period from the end of the Babylonian exile until the loss of the second Temple in 70 C.E. The build up of traditional interpretation of the Scriptures began with the religious leaders not too soon after the death of Ezra, i.e., 400 B.C.E. Traditional rabbinical authorities today would insist that the Oral Law was given at Sinai along with the Hebrew Scriptures, a view which is challenged by Jewish historical criticism.

<sup>2</sup> The Aramaic translation of the first five books of Moses and the paraphrase of the prophetic portion of the Hebrew Scriptures required for those who returned from Babylonia and for successive generations in Israel who primarily spoke Aramaic.

<sup>3</sup> M. Jastrow, *Dictionary of the Targumim, Vol. 2* (New York: Title Publishing Co., 1943), p. 775.

<sup>4</sup> All citations from the Targum on the Pentateuch are from J.W. Etheridge, tr., *The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan* - Ben Uzziel, 2 Vols., (London: Longman, Green, and Co., 1865) except where otherwise noted.

<sup>5</sup> K. Kohler. "Memra," in *The Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VIII* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1891), p. 465, citing the Targum Yerushalmi. Several Targumim are identified for the Torah (Pentateuch): 1) Onkelos, 2) Palestinian Targum, and 3) the Yerushalmi, probably some offshoot of the Palestinian Targum.

<sup>6</sup> J.F. Stenning, tr., *The Targum of Isaiah* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), based on the Targum of the Prophets, primarily Jonathan ben Uzziel.1.

<sup>7</sup> K. Kohler, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>8</sup> J.F. Stenning, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>9</sup> K. Kohler, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>10</sup> J.F. Stenning, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>11</sup> G.E. Moore, *Judaism, Vol. I* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 419.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> H.A. Wolfson, *Philo, Vol. I* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 287.

<sup>14</sup> Reputed to be the author, that is, the one to start to put the Targum into writing, a Targum on the first five books which had been carried orally to the end of the first and beginning of the second centuries.

<sup>15</sup> M. McNamara, *Targum and Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), pp. 103, 104. The author provides a citation from the Neofiti manuscript (The Palestinian Targum) describing the work of creation: "The earth was void and empty and darkness was spread over the face of the abyss. And the Word (Memra) was the light and it shone ... and he called it the first night ... If the Word (Memra) of the Lord shone at creation, this can only be because it was the light. It is identified with the primordial light ... This is precisely what John in his prologue to the Gospel says of the Logos. 'In the beginning was the word ... and the word was God. In him was light and the light shines in darkness' (John 1:1-3). And like the Targumist, John was speaking of the activity of the Logos at creation. He was then light, and this light still shines in Christ."

<sup>16</sup> Joseph Reider, *The Book of Wisdom* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 210.

<sup>17</sup> This was a council under the leadership of Yohanan ben Zakkai, which met in the village of Yavneh, not too far from the Tel Aviv of today, from about 70-90 C.E., for the purpose of restructuring Judaism without the Temple worship.

<sup>18</sup> Louis Ginsberg. "Anthropomorphism and Anthropopathism," in *The Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. I*, citing Z. Frankel, *Vorstudien zu der Septuaginta*, 1841, pp. 174-179. This writer indicates main stream Judaism in the ancient period to be the traditional one which produced the literature that became basic for Jewish thought, e.g., *tannaim*, religious leaders until 200 C.E.

<sup>19</sup> Louis Jacobs, *A Jewish Theology* (New York: Behrman House, 1973), pp. 143ff.

<sup>20</sup> William Wrede, *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht: Gottingen, 1901), p.

<sup>21</sup> David Flusser, "Two Notes on the Midrash on 2 Sam. vii" in *Israel Exploration Journal*, IX (1959), pp. 107-109.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Sanhedrin* 38b in *Nezikin Vol. III*, Jacob Schachter, tr. p. 245 (London: Soncino Press, 1935).

<sup>24</sup> Jean Cardinal Danielou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, John Baker, tr. (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1964), p. 147, 148.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 164, 165.

# The Caspari Center in New Premises

By Bodil F. Skjoett, Jerusalem

who works with expatriate education at the Caspari Center

In its short life – 10 years last November – the Caspari Center for Biblical and Jewish Studies in Jerusalem has moved already four times. This nomadic life has had different reasons, some being more positive than others. One of the reasons for the last move was that the old premises were getting too small for the daily life of the center and its staff. The search for a new place has gone on for the last year and the center had to realize what was already known: that it is difficult to find a place in Jerusalem that is centrally located and not too expensive. Add to the difficulty of finding a proprietor who is willing to accept the tenants also when he knows the profile of the Caspari Center work.

After having looked for a long time and at times also been ready to accept something less suitable than what was hoped for, the ideal place all of a sudden became available. It is located on the top floor of No 36 Jaffa Road, which is right in the heart of downtown Jerusalem, two minutes' walk from the pedestrian area of the city. Not only was the location perfect and the rent reasonable, the conditions of the six-room apartment were also very good. Only little renovation needed to be

done before the actual move could take place, which happened at the end of March.

The new premises of the Caspari Center have allowed the staff to spread out, each person now having if not his or her own office, at least their own desk. The library, which before was not only library but also meeting-room and working place for various office projects, is now only a library where it is possible to study without being disturbed by other activities. One of the rooms has been set aside as a meeting and lecture room and is big enough to seat about 30 people. To have a place big enough for the daily activities is a cause for thanksgiving. To have one so centrally located is an extra bonus. The real challenge is how to make the best use of the new office and the real joy will be generated from more visitors in the library, more people stopping by to talk or to take a subscription to Mishkan, more planning and executing of plans in the meeting room and more groups receiving teaching and information in the same lecture room.

Our prayer is that the Lord will give wisdom and inspiration to make that possible.

The Caspari Center's first director (1982–86) was Ole Chr. Kvarme, LCJE's President. He was succeeded by Torleif Elgvin, who leaves the post of director this summer in order to continue his Qumran research in Norway. From the summer of 1994 Thorkild Masvie will take up the post as director. Until then Bodil F. Skjoett will act as interim director.

At the picture below Bodil F. Skjoett is on her way to the Caspari Center on the third floor. The second floor houses an establishment which sells wedding dresses.



## Papers from LCJE North America, 22–24 March 1993

Bill BJORAKER, *Update on Operation Ezekiel*  
Bill BJORAKER, *Book Review of The Jewish Mind, by Raphael Patai*  
Paul CEDAR, *Prayer as Evangelism Strategy*  
E.N. FAULSTICH, *Can Anything Good Come out of Bible Chronology?*  
Arnold FRUCHTENBAUM, *Replacement Theology Today*  
Art GLASSER, *Book Review Paper on the Puritan Hope, by Ian Murray, and Puritan Eschatology, by Peter Toon*  
Louis GOLDBERG, *The Two Major Watersheds Between the Jewish People & the Messianic Jews at the End of the Second Temple & Lasting to Our Time*  
Loren JACOBS, *Model for Evangelistic Strategy of a Small Mission or Congregation*  
Art KATZ, *How Should Jewish Believers Address the Palestinian Issue? (Perceiving Israel's Distress)*  
Kai KJAER-HANSEN, *Update on LCJE International*  
Kai KJAER-HANSEN, *The Cost of Discipleship: Lessons from the First Century*  
Joan LIPIS, *Three Devotions*  
Susan PERLMAN, *Media Update*  
Jim R. SIBLEY, *Christian Zionism and Israeli Congregations*

The papers can be obtained from the LCJE North American secretary  
Fred Klett, Box 133, Glenside, PA 19038, USA.

### Meetings

#### Conference in Moscow

A conference on Jewish evangelism is scheduled to take place in Moscow, July 6–7, 1993.

Contact Jim Melnick  
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PO Box 2567, Springfield,  
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#### LCJE North American Chapter

Next meeting: April 11–13,  
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