

# LCJE Bulletin

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Networking Jewish Evangelism



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on Jewish Evangelism



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## From the Coordinator

### The CEO Conference in France

The third LCJE CEO conference took place in Lumières, Provence, France from 18-22 May, 2009. A little over 40 persons gathered to listen and to learn from each other during sessions in the conference room and outside in informal conversation. It all happened in a very good atmosphere.

The main topics for the presentations and the discussions during the three full days were:

“What is at stake? Theology and missiology.”

“Money, recruitment, and training.”

“Means and material for Jewish evangelism.”

Gary Hedrick of Christian Jews Foundation Ministries conducted the three Bible studies on themes from 1 Timothy.

The decision to have the conference was made in Lake Balaton in 2007, in connection with the 8th International LCJE conference.

During the opening session, LCJE's president, Tuvia Zaretsky, reminded the participants of why we had gathered:

“We are here because you, as mission leaders, asked your ICC to arrange this consultation. We are here to serve the Lord's plan for Jewish evangelism. We are here to seek and acquire the Lord's knowledge for the purposes of Jewish evangelism. We are here to serve the cause of Jewish evangelism together. And we are here to share with one another, study together, stimulate one another, and strategize on a global scope how we can contribute together to further the mission of Jewish evangelism.

Let us put the fear of the Lord at the heart of everything that we are here to do. And let us use this time to encourage one another to the end that Jewish people will be saved.”

In this issue of the LCJE Bulletin, we bring some of the approximately 30 papers and contributions given during the conference. Most of these can also be found at LCJE's website ([www.lcje.net](http://www.lcje.net)).

In July, LCJE AustralAsia held a very successful conference in Sydney, Australia. In the next issue of the Bulletin we will have more on that event.

*Kai Kjær-Hansen*

# A Psalm of Ascent to Jerusalem -- Psalm 122:1-9

By David Zadok, LCJE Coordinator for Israel

God in his great wisdom has given us much poetry in the Word, and particularly in the Old Testament. In fact, according to J. P. Fokkelman in his book *Reading Biblical Poetry*, about 35% of the Old Testament is poetry.<sup>1</sup> And of course the psalms are the largest body of biblical poetry in the Scriptures.

Psalms 120 to 134 have the title Song of Ascents, and apparently these were the songs the people of Israel would sing during their pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the city of God's temple and dwelling. In Psalm 122, we see that the feet of psalmist are already at the gates of the city and the temple. The psalmist here writes with the joy of someone that arrives to his long awaited destination. He has been on a long and somewhat tiring and dangerous journey. And up to this point the Lord has sustained and preserved him, and at last he arrives at the impressive and amazing structure whose blueprint was given and drawn by God himself.

We hear the joy in his voice and words: *I was glad when they said to me, let us go to the house of*



*the Lord!* What a treat and what a blessing it was for him to go with others to the house of the Lord. Next, he tells us that his feet are upon the gates, and he probably can see the magnificent pillars of Boaz and Yachin at the entrance to the temple. But it is not the magnificent building or even the beautiful shiny pillars that impress him, but rather the One who is there, the transcendent, omnipresent, omnipotent God, who dwells in His temple. The golden six-cup lampstand burned constantly, reminding those who came in of the presence of God among his people – the Immanuel. What an amazing experience to be in the presence of the living God. No wonder there was joy and excitement in the voice of the psalmist when he was told to go with others to the house of the Lord.

This is what brings the

most joy to the pilgrim psalmist. And today we need to ask ourselves: Do we come into God's presence, into his house, with such joy? Do we come with expectation? Do we look forward to being again in his presence with others in a special way? Do we make an effort to prepare our hearts for worship? Our psalmist did a whole lot of preparation to come to the house of God, and he rejoiced when he was asked to come to the house of the Lord with others. There with others he will have the opportunity to present his sacrifices and gifts to the Creator. In verse 4, he reminds us that the tribes of Israel go up together, as it was decreed for Israel. All the tribes come together – the larger together with the smaller tribes. No specific names or identity of the tribes is given; it is just the tribes of Israel.

And finally he turns to the subject of peace, the one thing that we so often seek eagerly – certainly in the Middle East region. He asks that we pray for the peace of Jerusalem, knowing that true and lasting peace comes from the one that dwells in Jerusalem. Let's pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

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1. J. P. Fokkelman, *Reading Biblical Poetry* (Louisville, London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 1.

# Churchill, LCJE, and King David

By Jim Sibley, LCJE Coordinator for North America

***“In essentials, unity, in non-essentials diversity, in all things charity.”***

***Some guidelines for how we are to treat one another in LCJE.***

Lady Astor once famously shouted at Churchill, “If you were my husband, I’d put poison in your coffee.” His response: “If I were your husband, I’d drink it.” We can laugh at that line, but it is a reminder that, as believers, we are held to a higher level of responsibility for our speech. In Colossians 4:6, we are admonished, “Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt [not poison!], so that you may know how to answer everyone.” Chuck Swindoll reminds us that it is not enough to understand the doctrine of salvation by grace; we must commit to live by grace, that is, to extend grace to others in a variety of contexts.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, in Ephesians 4:14-15 Paul says, “Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful

scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Messiah.” In other words, in contrast to those who are spiritual infants, the path to maturity is the ability to speak the truth in love. It has been well said that a loveless truth is just as wrong as a truthless love. Striking the balance is the path to maturity in Messiah.

As members of the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism, the cause that unites us is one that also engages our passions. The unity and the sweetness of fellowship we enjoy are really quite amazing, but unity does not require uniformity. We hold a variety of opinions on a variety of issues (within the confines of the Lausanne Covenant), and we defend them with vigor. Yet, it is precisely in the clash of ideas that sparks of insight and truth are revealed

more clearly. It isn’t always possible for us to reach theological or methodological consensus, but it is possible – and necessary – to reach a consensus on civil dialogue. The interesting thing is that Yeshua said that our unity is an essential aspect of our witness to a lost world (John 17:20-21), and therefore, it is a central part of LCJE’s *raison d’être*.

Part of the challenge comes from the fact that we are not all alike. Not only are physical abilities different, but personalities differ as well, and we all have a variety of spiritual gifts. Some avoid confrontation like the plague, while others are stimulated by a spirited debate. Some are most concerned for unity, while others are just as concerned for orthodoxy. While we must “contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints” (Jude



*Jim Sibley and Jonathan Bernis at the LCJE conference in Phoenix, March 2009*

1. Charles Swindoll, *The Grace Awakening: Believing in Grace Is One Thing. Living It Is Another* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003).

1:3) and “be on [our] guard so that [we] are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from [our] own steadfastness” (2 Pet 3:17), we must also be “diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph 4:3).

Fortunately, participation in a network such as ours does not require us to sacrifice either our deepest convictions or the sweetness of our fellowship. Obviously, some behavior should be acknowledged to be off-limits for any believer – personal attacks, intimidation, ridicule, and false characterizations of opposing positions will destroy any fellowship. Generally speaking, these kinds of behavior are the fruit of either pride or of frustration at not being able to adequately engage the arguments of others.

So, in the interest of facilitating the future success of LCJE, I offer these reminders that may serve as guidelines for how we are to treat one another:

- If there are personal issues, resolve them in private, either with the other person, with the Lord, or with both. “If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother” (Matt 18:15).
- Affirm our unity as brothers and sisters in the Messiah.
- Identify areas of agreement and stake out common ground before identifying areas of disagreement.
- Demonstrate Messiah’s love for those with whom we disagree.
- “Treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (Matt 7:12). In fact, Paul says, “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as *more important than yourselves*” (Phil 2:3, emphasis added).
- Make your goal not simply to be understood but also to understand.
- Mentally separate the other person from the opinion he espouses. Then, deal with the opinions impersonally. This will allow you to rigorously examine the belief under consideration without treating him or her unkindly.
- Commit to discovering the truth together, as it is taught in Scripture, or to identifying the solution that conforms most closely to the principles of Scripture.

Augustine’s maxim, “In essentials, unity, in non-essentials diversity, in all things charity,” is certainly pertinent. We should all recommit to these basic ground rules in order to strengthen and sweeten the LCJE network we all value. King David put it like this: “*Hinei mah tov u’mah na’im, shevet achim gam yachad!*” Was he a member, too?

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From left: Arlie and Noemi Francis and Rolf and Bodil Heitmann at the LCJE CEO meeting in France.



## Report from LCWE Meeting in Seoul

### Preparation for Lausanne III

By Bodil F. Skjøtt, Danish Israel Mission

In preparation for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization in Cape Town, in October 2010, leaders from the different LCWE working groups, regional leaders, and chairpersons for the different SIC (Special Interest Committees) met in Seoul, Korea, June 8-12, 2009. As an SIC, LCJE was invited to the meeting, and together with Kai Kjær-Hansen I had the privilege to be one of the about 200 people who met at the Presbyterian Theological Seminar in Seoul, where the biannual meeting was held. The last leadership meeting of the LCWE was in Budapest in 2007, where Susan Perlman represented LCJE.

The purpose of the meeting was to give an update on the program for the Cape Town meeting, to

invite participants in the leadership meeting to play an active role in the final planning of the program, and to test some of the activities and meeting forms which the planning committee hopes to use when not just 200, but rather 4,000 participants meet less than 16 months from now. The main themes for each of the 6 full days had (of course) already been decided. They are: (1) the truth of the gospel; (2) the reconciling power of the gospel; (3) world religions, especially Islam; (4) the unfinished or on-going task, especially focusing on Bible translation, unreached people groups, mega-cities, youth, and the world of media and orality; (5) the need for authenticity in the life of the church; and (6) partnership.

#### Program

The morning program will be Bible study on the Book of Ephesians. Here there will be speakers, but a major part of the time will be spent in small groups of 10 people seated around tables. All participants will be assigned to a group. The program for the rest of the morning will be a plenary session on the theme of the day and made up of many different items all focusing on the theme.

The afternoons will be divided into three different multiplexes around the theme of the day. Altogether there will be 18 such multiplexes. Participants will choose the ones most relevant to them. During the rest of the afternoon people will be able to choose between up to 30 different dialogue sessions (work-shops), or they can form their own dialogue group if they so wish. Participants are very much encouraged to take the initiative and form fora or activities which will be relevant for them. The evenings will be a time of celebration and worship.

At this stage, the planning committee is inviting people to submit their suggestions for the different slots. It can be in the form of a video, a testimony, an interview, music, or another form of communication. We were



*Bodil F. Skjøtt and Byron Spradlin, a long-time member of LCJE, who is involved in music and art at the congress in Cape Town.*

also encouraged to suggest names of speakers or small group leaders. The congress has 9 official languages, but as the arts-group mentioned, they hope that all through the congress the language of the arts will also be used.

We were encouraged to follow developments on the Cape Town website and interact with the program there. This encouragement is hereby passed on to you as well. Check out the different links at <http://www.lausanne.org/cape-town-2010>.

### **Representing LCJE**

We had our own agenda besides the general agenda for the meeting in Seoul. During our interaction with both participants and key people, we did our best to focus on that. We wanted to do what we could to make sure that Jewish evangelism will be part of the program and visible on the platform when we all meet again in Cape Town. With 4,000 people from all over the world, and most of them coming from places and situations where Jewish people and Jewish evangelism aren't part of their everyday life, it is not hard for us to understand why LCJE was not even known to most people. However, when we talked to members of the leadership team, we did not have to explain who we are and what LCJE is. They were well aware of our long history and relationship



with LCWE – and open to listen.

As LCJE our challenge was, and still is, how – with our focus on Israel and the God of Israel, Jesus as the Jewish Messiah and the uniqueness of Christ, the gospel being not only the gospel of the needy but of the lost – this can be presented and seen as relevant with regard to the six themes of the congress: the truth of the gospel, reconciliation, world religions, and so on. One of the issues brought up several times by the leadership was the need to proclaim the gospel and to do so in humility. We believe that LCJE and the special history of the church and the Jewish people have a story to be told, which would be both helpful and relevant for others when we talk about proclaiming the gospel in humility.

We were able to come up with several concrete

suggestions to those responsible for the different sessions. We felt that we were heard, and that going to Seoul was worth the effort.

### **Something for LCJE to consider**

An extra benefit, not just for us but for all those who traveled to Seoul, was that we got to experience and enjoy Korean hospitality and church life. And it was impressive! So thank you to all our Korean hosts and stewards who did so much to make our days in Seoul an unforgettable time. I realize that they will not read this article. LCJE does not have many members among Korean Christians. And here might be something for us as LCJE to consider: If we truly believe that Jewish evangelism is important, not just for those of us who have it as our first priority in ministry but for the whole church, how can we then

present it so that it gets on the agenda of the church in the areas where the church is growing most.

Remember that two thirds of the participants will be coming from countries with no Jewish population. What can be our contribution to their understanding of being the church today – that it is made up of Jews and Gentiles, of Israel and the nations – and how can we best make this heard in a relevant way when we meet them again in Cape Town?

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*Korean choir singing "Hallelujah" from Händel's Messiah, at a service in Seoul.*

**Third LCJE CEO Conference, Lumières, Provence, France, May 18-22, 2009**

## Opening Address:

### For God So Loved the World – John and Jonah

By Kai Kjær-Hansen, International Coordinator, LCJE

**The prophet Jonah and Yaffo, whose name means "beautiful," belong together. In the Jaffo–Tel Aviv area there are several Messianic congregations today. A small group of Jesus-believing Jews gather in Immanuel Church in Yaffo. On the wall behind the altar the well-known verse John 3:16 can be read in Hebrew: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."**

Whatever may be said



about God's election of the people of Israel and about God's plan for the people of Israel today, the people of Israel belong to the "world," according to John. I am

tempted to say: Thank God for that! For if Jews were not included in God's love for the "world," as this has been expressed in Jesus, then it would be anti-Semitism of the worst kind.

#### **Kosmos and Jews**

The Greek word for "world," *kosmos*, was originally used for an adornment, something beautiful, something *Yaffe* and *Yaffa*. This meaning is found in Peter's first letter: "Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner



self . . .” (1 Pet 3:3-4). It is from the word *kosmos* we get the word “cosmetic.” Lydia, whom Paul meets in Philippi, is, according to, for example, the *Good News Bible*, “a dealer in purple cloth” (Acts 16:14). She may also have been a dealer in cosmetics. And by the way: People who deal in cosmetics always use cosmetics themselves! I wonder if her faith in Jesus changed her in this respect, but I don’t know!

Well, from this basic meaning of *kosmos* it then became the term for the universe, where all things exist in a harmonious beauty created by God. In the prologue, it is said about *Logos* (Jesus) that “the world was made through him” (John 1:10). The whole of verse 10 reads: “He [the light and *Logos*] was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.” In Leon Morris’ words, from his commentary *The Gospel According to John* (1971, p. 95): “On the first two occasions it [*kosmos*] refers to the earth together with all that is in it, including man. But on this third occasion it signifies men at large, more particularly those men who came into contact with Jesus of Nazareth.”

Although the people of Israel are included in the “world,” and also included when the word “world” is used in a negative sense about mankind in

opposition to Jesus and rejection of Jesus, there is a fine point in the prologue that must not be missed. The sad statement of verse 11 – “He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him” – is qualified by verse 12: “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” His “own” are Jews, naturally. The first “children” of God in the new covenant’s time were – many or few – from Jesus’ own people.

### **Salvation is from the Jews**

In John 4:22 Jesus says, in a conversation with a Samaritan woman, “salvation is from the Jews.” Of course this does not mean that salvation comes from the Jews to the Samaritans and that the Jews do not need this salvation themselves. Of course not! The salvation which is from the Jews and which includes the Jews also applies to the Samaritans, because they are also part of the “world.” Jesus is indeed “the Savior of the world,” as some Samaritans later conclude (John 4:42).

For God so loved Jews, Samaritans, indeed all people in the whole world that he gave his Son, gave him up in death as the Lamb of God “who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29).

Not least, we who are involved in Jewish

evangelism have problems with Jesus’ harsh words to the Jews in Jerusalem: “You belong to your father, the devil” (John 8:44). If I had the authority to delete some verses from the New Testament, this verse would be among them. And the reason would be the Christian church’s abuse of them for anti-Semitic purposes down through the ages. I cannot here go into the complicated question of how to understand the word “Jews” in John’s gospel. Various interpretations are possible, exegetically and historically. Some have tried softening the statement by insisting that it is addressed to the Jewish leadership at that time.

In Jewish evangelism we do not make campaigns with slogans in the style of “You Jews belong to your father, the devil!” We prefer campaigns with positive messages. In Jewish evangelism we also encourage others in their teaching and preaching to be very careful not to generate anti-Jewish feelings. Saying this does not solve all problems, however. For if we conclude that these words are addressed to the leadership of the day and cannot be applied to the “world,” whether the “world” is Jews *as such*, then and now, or non-Jews *as such*, then and now, we have created a serious problem. For “the whole world is under the control of the evil one,” as it is said in 1 John



*The big fish in Yaffo. Jonah is thrown into the sea, swallowed by a big fish, and vomited onto dry land; he is cast up but he is not cast away by God.*

5:19. Jews are not excluded. And included in the words, “You belong to your father, the devil,” are I, you, indeed the whole world.

The whole world is under God’s judgment. The whole world is encompassed by God’s love in Jesus. For God so loved the world.

### **Jonah and God’s love**

And now a brief reflection on the story about Jonah, the Old Testament prophet. Jonah and Jewish evangelism have nothing to do with each other. The story of Jonah has, if you will, more to do with “mission” to the nations. And yet, we who are involved in Jewish evangelism can learn something from this story. Whether the pressure on us to discontinue our mission to Israel comes from Jews or Christians,

they are really trying to limit God’s love. They are trying to pressure us to become reverse Jonahs.

What do I mean by that?

The prophet Jonah had received a calling from God. We also believe that we have a calling. A calling means a task, a task which God wants done and which God himself is behind. Jonah had no doubt that the God of Israel *is* love and that the people of Israel cannot do without the grace of God. That Jonah had been sent to proclaim judgment on the ungodly city of Nineveh was not a big problem for him. The way I read the story, the existential problem for Jonah was that he suspected that God might eventually “repent” – turn round, regret, show mercy – if the city repented after he had proclaimed the judgment.

If God had called Jonah to proclaim judgment on the people of Israel, he would probably have acted on the calling. Along with the other prophets, he knows that God’s judgment on the people of Israel includes an invitation to repent, he knows that behind God’s judgment lies God’s love with an invitation to a new beginning.

So Jonah goes “down” to Yaffo in order to, as the Scriptures say, “flee from the Lord” (1:3). A fine phrase, for of course you cannot do that! God is also God on an island in the Aegean Sea or in Spain, where the ship is headed. But Jonah cannot accept that the love of God extends to non-Jews.

We know the rest of the story. Jonah is thrown into the sea, swallowed by a big fish, and vomited onto

dry land; he is cast up, but he is not cast away by God.

### **Mission accomplished, and Jonah is angry**

God once again commands Jonah to go down to Nineveh; he gives him another opportunity, and this time Jonah obeys. He proclaims judgment on Nineveh, and Nineveh repents. As a consequence of this God does not destroy Nineveh. Jonah should now be pleased. Mission accomplished. But he is not pleased. On the contrary, he is angry with God. It went as he had suspected. He was right when he feared that God might eventually repent and show himself as the gracious and merciful God who is slow to anger. And that makes Jonah mad at God. He says, "Now, O LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live" (4:3, 8). He says so because he feels that God has not kept his word, the word that he has been commanded to lend his voice to. Better dead than alive, if the God of Israel also loves the enemies of Israel, Jonah thinks. And then God has to teach Jonah that he, God – the God of Israel – is

"concerned" (4:11) about Nineveh and that he is full of compassion and mercy, even for non-Jews.

How good it is that God does not always keep his word! If he did, we would always be lost!

For Jonah it was a problem that Israel's God's love was so great that it included non-Jews. But it did! Many Jewish people who take part in Jewish-Christian dialogue today side with God and go against the view that Jonah represents. But this does not solve all problems. According to a predominant theology, the love of God is so great that the life and death of Jesus has no decisive importance for Jews regarding the question of their salvation and peace with God. Another viewpoint is that it is no use engaging in mission to Jewish people, stiff-necked as they are. When people say something like this, they belittle God's great love as it is expressed in Jesus.

We do not share these viewpoints in LCJE, for we do not want to be the opposite of Jonah. We do not want to limit God's love *in Jesus* to "only" non-Jews. No, we want to be like John, we want to take

as our starting-point God's great love for the world, for *kosmos*, as it has been expressed in the "lifting up" of Jesus, a "lifting up" that, according to John, includes Jesus' death and resurrection as well as his presence with the Father. As it is said: "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life" (John 3:14-15).

When we share the gospel of God's love in Jesus with the Jews of our day, may we succeed in making it abundantly clear that we ourselves need that gospel as much as they do. For as long as we are "in the world" – even though we are not "of the world" – we need God's forgiveness every day. Those that we share the gospel with should know that!

". . . God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:17).

Instead of concluding with an "Amen," I think it would be appropriate in this context to end with "Yoffii!"

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## The Influences of the Media on Messianic Jewish Identity in Israel

By Knut Helge Høyland, Caspari Center, Jerusalem

**The issue of identity is, as we know, a burning issue in the Messianic movement in Israel. In some ways this has been the case ever since the emergence of the modern Messianic movement in Israel in the 1950s and 60s. As we see the body of believers growing in the Land it is only natural for the diversity to grow and for the different groups of believers to try to articulate more clearly what it means for them to be Messianic Jews in Israel today.**

In this short paper I want to focus on how the media as a representative of the non-believing society in Israel influences Messianic Jewish identity. This identity obviously does not develop in a vacuum. Sociological as well as theological self-understanding is influenced by the society around it and of course by global trends. For that reason Messianic Jewish identity in Israel is expressed in different ways than it is in the U.S. or other places in the world.

### **Presented as dangerous “missionaries”**

In the past few years, as the movement has grown in Israel, we have seen more and more interest

from the media. Some of it may be characterized as hostile, some of it as neutral, and some of it at times almost positive.

Traditionally, and largely due to the pressures of the orthodox anti-missionary groups such as Yad L’Achim, Messianic Jews have been presented as dangerous “missionaries” in the worst sense of the word (i.e., people who seek to manipulate weaker Jewish souls, by means of money or coercion, into betraying their Jewish faith and tradition and converting to Christianity), or presented as a foreign Christian cult, with endless funding and a hidden agenda from foreign Christian bodies.

This type of terminology is frequently used in the religious Jewish press, but can also be seen in the secular “neutral” media.

The HOT network, a major cable network in Israel, did a segment on the Jews for Jesus campaign in the Galilee last year, where the believers were labeled “missionaries” throughout the

report. This image of a secretive and subversive cult was also the picture which *Yediot Ahronot* tried to present when they sent an undercover journalist to play the role of a new believer and join a Tel Aviv congregation in August last year.

### **Presentation according to believers’ own definitions**

On the other hand, TV segments on Israel’s Channels 1 and 2, along with reports on the Ortiz family bombing, the recent ten-page article in the *Jerusalem Post* called “A Leap of Faith,” and articles published in the major newspapers in connection



*Knut Helge Høyland keeps a close eye on what the Israeli press writes about Messianic believers.*

with the public burning of New Testaments in Or Yehuda about a year ago, all presented the believers as “Messianic Jews,” gave them the opportunity to present themselves on their own terms with out any biased comments, and even criticized the religious groups opposing the movement. These reports maintained that these were normal Jews and Israelis, serving in the IDF, idealists who wished to help people in need and who happened to believe that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah and that the New Testament is not an anti-Semitic book, but rather a good Jewish book. Israeli author Meir Shalev wrote in *Yeditot Ahronot*:

As far as my experience is concerned, my reading of the New Testament led to a real strengthening. Yeshua was a good Jew – much better than the Shas members of Or Yehuda. He sought to cure the ills of the Judaism of his time, precisely as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Amos did before him, and it’s a great pity that the religious Jewish leadership of that time – corrupt and materialistic like that of Shas today – didn’t listen to him. In short, I recommend to every person in Israel – secular and religious alike – to read the New Testament. Not

everything in it is interesting, but you are promised a true Jewish experience.

In all the cases mentioned above, and in most other media coverage of Messianic Jews, it is evident that the believers interviewed are always responding to the accusations leveled by the religious community. The emphasis is often on being proper Jews, proper Israelis, and loyal citizens, at times combined with purposely distancing themselves from the church and missions. For example, in the 2007 Channel 2 segment about the believers in Yad Hashmona, Ayelet Ronen says: “We have nothing to do with the church establishment.” In the same piece it is said that the believers “deny that they are involved in mission,” but in the next moment one of the believers says he gladly shares his faith.

### **Terminology is important**

These instances are of course cases where there is a struggle for terminology, but whereas believers are very conscious of using Yeshua and not Yeshu, there are few attempts at redefining the Jewish religious and Israeli understanding of “mission” and “the church.” Perhaps one has to choose one’s battles, and the obvious one to fight is for

the name Yeshua.

At the same time, I believe this whole issue challenges the growing body of believers in Israel to be more conscious of how Messianic identity is presented and explained to the Israeli public. This is obviously closely linked to the challenge of defining one’s identity and theology. How “Jewish” does a Messianic Jew need to be? Which “Judaism” are we talking about (rabbinic Judaism or the Judaism of the first disciples)? What is our relationship to the worldwide church? How do we relate to the calling to mission and evangelism?

These questions need to be, and I believe already are, part of the reflection on which influences are shaping Messianic identity and theology: biblical influences, rabbinic Jewish influences, Western Protestant Christian influences, global cultural influences, and the influences of modern Israeli society, specifically the media.

These influences cannot be denied, but will hopefully be taken into account as the body of believers in Israel continues to form its identity and theology, and as we seek to communicate in one united voice the truth of the gospel to Jews and non-Jews in Israel.

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## Messianic Congregations and Their Fruit

By Daniel Nessim, Chosen People Ministries UK

### ***A Survey of the Messianic Congregational Movement: The Whys, Hows, and What-nows***

It is generally accepted that the history of the modern Messianic Congregational Movement began with Rabbi Joseph Rabinowitz in Kishinev in 1884. In that first year Delitzsch wrote, "There are now said to be more than 200 families who have joined the new Hebrew Christianity..." (Kjær-Hansen 62). By July of 1886 the new community had its own special burial ground (Kjær-Hansen 64), and in December of the same year it received permission to hold public gatherings (Kjær-Hansen 65). One event that illustrates the extent to which the movement in Kishinev drew attention (and maybe emulation) is the telling questions that Shabtai Rohold had to answer for the Toronto Presbytery in 1915: "Have you anything peculiar in your 'Christian Synagogue'?" and "Are you advocating what is called the 'Messianic Judaism'?" (Nessim 92). As can be seen from this question, not only were there more synagogues than the one in Kishinev, but, as today, they were viewed with suspicion within polite



*Deborah and Daniel Nessim at the CEO conference.*

society.

Regardless of the semantics bandied about between "Hebrew Christianity" and "Messianic Judaism," there is no doubt in my mind that these early Messianic Synagogues are at one with the Messianic congregational movement that would later spring forth from their dormant roots. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that by the end of the 1960s the Messianic Congregational Movement had virtually ceased to exist, save for a few pockets in North America. It would not be until the period between the Six Day War and the Yom Kippur War (1967-1973) that this would change. The change came with a move of God. Along with exhilaration at Israel's stunning military success in 1967 came a post-Holocaust resurrection

of Jewish dignity and self respect. In conjunction with the cultural revolution of the 1960s came a surge of new Jewish believers in Yeshua. With numbers came mutual affirmation. With self-respect came a desire to maintain Jewishness – personally and communally.

### **The "WHY" of the Messianic Congregational Movement**

At the core of the Messianic Congregational Movement is the conviction that Jewishness and faith in Yeshua are fundamentally compatible. This gives rise to its primary motivation: A desire to maintain Jewish identity, which history has proven is impossible within the greater body of Messiah.

### **Identity**

There are few values more important to the Jewish community than that of survival. This needs no justification or explanation to those who know Jewish people well. Is this value compatible with faith in Yeshua the Messiah? Is it compatible with the idea of distinctly Jewish congregations in his body? Many Jewish Believers in Yeshua (JBY) of the 1960s and 1970s said yes. The

time had come to put an end, even if only partially successfully, to 2,000 years of cultural and ethnic assimilation.

The Church's Ministry among Jewish People has just celebrated its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary at its birthplace in Spitalfields, London. I felt honoured to be invited. Jewish believers world over owe much to this venerable organisation. To it belong some of the most luminous personalities and accomplishments in the history of Jewish evangelism. Nevertheless, the inevitable question must be asked: After years, decades and even centuries, where is the fruit? The answer is that the fruit of centuries' work has assimilated into the branches of the church that it has been grafted into. Its seed has been *cross-pollinated*, and its descendants are no longer recognisable. The "fruit" has not reproduced after its own kind, as it did not retain its identity. Rather than being grafted back into the root, it has been grafted into the branches. JBY in days past generally accepted not only the gospel, but the gospel as it had been contextualised into the cultures of the missionaries. Unfortunately, by the time Roland Allen wrote his seminal work on missions and there was the potential for mission approaches to change, the curtain was already closing on the stage of Jewish missions in Europe, to deadly effect.

Roland Allen, expressing ideas that would affect missions thinking for decades after him, wrote, "We naturally expect our converts to adopt from us not only the essentials but accidentals" (Allen 8). Years later it was an innate recognition and repudiation of this that drove some of the many new JBY, mainly in the USA, to assert their own identity and to begin ferreting out the "essentials" from the "accidentals."

Unconsciously, maybe, the new JBY were doing what Hiebert calls "Critical contextualization" – seeking "to find *metacultural* and *metatheological frameworks* that enable people in one culture to understand messages and ritual practices from another culture with a minimum of distortion" (Hiebert 92). With statements of faith that were (and still are in many cases) almost verbatim adaptations of standard evangelical creeds, they yet sought to express God's truth and faith in Yeshua in their own way, in the context of their own ethnic and religious identity.

In 1988 David Stern published a "Manifesto" that became a milestone in the developing theology of the Messianic Congregational Movement. In 2005 Mark Kinzer's *Postmissionary Messianic Judaism* similarly became a milestone that cannot and should not be ignored. It

might be comforting to know that despite its title, Kinzer assures us "this book is not an attack on the missionary endeavor in general and in every context" (Kinzer 13). In this book, Kinzer cogently sets forth his thesis that there is a unique relationship between "Yeshua (and his *ekklesia*), the Jewish people, and the Jewish way of life" (Kinzer 13).

Is Kinzer right? If so, the ramifications are extensive (as well as being beyond the scope of this paper). What makes Kinzer's thesis credible today is the growing conviction among a number of Messianic congregational leaders that the Jewish people *are* unique, and that it is a disservice to both the church and the Jewish people, not to mention JBY, to trade away or downplay this distinctiveness. The national pride and self-respect that helped give birth to the Messianic Congregational Movement have clearly given way now to a deep theological conviction that within the universal body of Messiah, the Jewish people have a distinct role to play.

In Canada, a special variety of wheat is grown that grew from just three ears of wheat harvested in 1842. This was after decades of experimentation with grains that were native to other countries and climates that didn't succeed in the colony's short summers. Today Canada is one of the world's great

grain exporters – all from those three ears. How? The seed was preserved, and sown again in the Canadian soil so that it might multiply.<sup>1</sup> As Messianic Jews we have rightly questioned how we might be able to reproduce after our own kind when we are routinely transplanted into foreign soil.

So the issue of Identity is closely related to that of assimilation. Messianic congregations formed to preserve Jewish identity – and to address the issue of Jewish survival. Increasingly, Messianic congregations are taking active steps to encourage Jewish youth to engage with other Jewish youth, with the hope that their Jewish identity might be passed on to the next generation.<sup>2</sup>

### **Safety**

While not the primary motivation for the establishment of the Messianic Congregational Movement, safety has nevertheless been an issue for JBY even in North America. The safety is not that of the body, but that of the soul. To become a Jewish believer in Yeshua incurs serious risks: 1) alienation from one's own family; 2) alienation from one's own community; 3) loss of one's culture; 4) loss of the right to make *aliyah*; 5) the risk of being wrong – and actually *stepping away* from God by believing in Yeshua, and fortunately less often than in the past; 6) loss of one's

income and/or inheritance. On top of all this, JBY outside the Messianic Congregational Movement are expected to acculturate themselves to a church culture that sometimes is openly hostile to various aspects of their own.

Just last week, I received an email from a Jewish seeker who was attending an Alpha course. He wrote the following:

I attend an Alpha course at the moment my 3rd one, and heard a woman saying that unless we went through Jesus then we would never enter heaven. I said to this woman, so none of the Jews will go then and [she] said no they never will, I then said but we are God's chosen people, to which she replied that was the only mistake he ever made choosing the Jewish race! (*sic*)

Last month in Oldenburg I heard a preacher address a crowd of 3,000 youth at a missions conference, telling them a "joke" that clearly insinuated that Jewish people care more for money than anything else in the world, including their loved ones.

For a Jewish believer to be in an environment where this kind of prejudice can rear its ugly head at any time is not "safe." The spread of the gospel among Jewish people is impeded by God's own people.

There is no doubt that theological and political trends both within and without the church and the Messianic Congregational Movement are playing a significant part in the self-conception of JBY. An increase in so-called "supersessionism" or "replacement theology" is asking JBY to either accept its tenets – and therefore agree that God is basically done with the Jewish people – or become increasingly uncomfortable in its environment. Since supersessionism often has little place for Israel in the plan of God today, it opens the door for a negation of the Jewish people's existence and survival as well as for the significance of the State of Israel. Thus communities that subscribe to supersessionist theologies tend to alienate JBY within their midst. Sometimes, their theology and opinions verge on anti-Semitism.

Directly issuing from the need JBY have for safety is the safety that the Messianic Congregational Movement wishes to provide for its Jewish brethren who might or may be considering Yeshua's messianic claims. From the Jewish perspective, it would be better to enter a mosque than a church, since Moslems are not considered idolaters, but Christians are. To enter a church might be to take part in idolatry. Life events held in a church incur the disfavour – and



disappearance - of family and friends, but the same people will often concede to celebrating these milestones in a neutral or Messianic context. Thus the Messianic Congregational Movement provides safety not only for its adherents but for a portion of the wider Jewish community. Symbols used in Messianic congregations are uniformly Jewish symbols, to the extent that buildings that prominently display distinctly Christian symbols (e.g. crosses or statuary) are most often shunned as meeting places. In this respect, the Messianic Congregational Movement sought to be "seeker friendly" and to operate within the Jewish community rather than without it, although with only partial success.

Often, non-Jewish congregations effectively minister to Jewish people. Both in North America and in Europe, we do not see evidence of wide scale "defections" from mainline churches to the Messianic Congregational Movement, which implies that most Jewish believers are happy in their new communities and generally not too uncomfortable.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, this does not negate the concern in the movement to provide a safe haven in an unsafe world.

### Expectancy

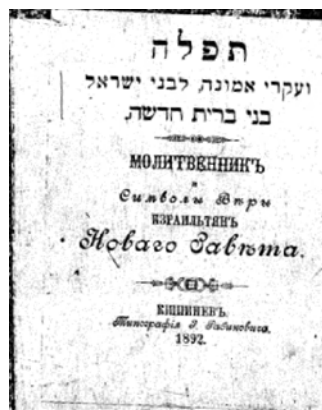
Messianic Jews and the Messianic Congregational Movement have a vibrant

expectancy that their movement has an unparalleled significance. The movement hopes that as it grows in wisdom and stature, it will also grow in favour with God and men. As in its early days, it continues to be optimistic concerning its relevance to the Jewish people, the church and the world. Increasingly, as Jewish people are being won directly into the movement, both in the *galut* and in Israel, this expectancy is being rewarded.

Stern's *Manifesto* (Stern 12) proposes that there are four benefits of the Messianic Congregational Movement, arguing that it is: 1) "useful in evangelizing Jews"; 2) "useful ... that Gentile Christians may appreciate their own Jewish roots"; 3) "useful in ministering to Jews who have accepted Yeshua as the Messiah"; and 4) "a witness to the world." I would summarise this as saying that the MJM expects that it will be effective in Jewish evangelism, Jewish discipleship, world evangelism, and teaching the church.

It should be interesting to members of the LCJE that two of these "uses" of the movement have to do with evangelism. In practice this has generally consisted of evangelising through congregational programmes, services, and the personal relationships that members have with Jewish people. Most

members of the Messianic Congregational Movement would probably agree heartily with Newbigin, who asserted that "Jesus ... did not write a book but formed a community" (Newbigin 227). It is the expectant aspiration of the Messianic Congregational Movement



Cover of Rabinowitz's Kishinev Siddur, 1892.

that its congregations might be an effective, if not the leading, agent in bringing Jewish people face to face with their Messiah.

The Messianic Congregational Movement is more than ever sure of its significance as its goals are increasingly being realised. It increasingly expects to play a growing role in the church and the Jewish world. This expectant conviction is the underlying stimulus that has led increasing numbers of JBY to give their lives and talents to the advancement of the movement.

In addition, there is little doubt that the Messianic Congregational Movement



*CEO participants sightseeing in and around Avignon.*

health, most sizeable affiliations contain within themselves a diversity of practical theologies of Messianic Judaism, most notably typified by groups in the UMJC known as “Hashivenu” and “Dayenu.”

In Israel, by the 1980s Israeli congregations were making the sometimes painful transition from being

believes that the promise of Romans 11:15 (“what *will* their acceptance *be* but life from the dead?”) is directly pertinent to itself. As a form of first fruits, the Messianic Congregational Movement sees itself as having eschatological significance. Being overwhelmingly premillennial, the Messianic Congregational Movement also looks forward to the day when “all” the Jewish nation will “be saved.” This is in part the movement’s relevance to worldwide evangelism.

**The “HOW” of the Messianic Congregational Movement: Early theology, praxis, and growth**

As the Messianic Congregational Movement began to establish itself, one of the first feet across the threshold into the

uncharted territory ahead was Philip Goble, with his handy workbook *Everything You Need to Grow a Messianic Synagogue* (Goble), published in 1974. By 1979, the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations was formed in the USA. Today the Messianic Congregational Movement traverses the Jewish world. In every country with a significant number of Jewish people, Messianic congregations have established themselves. Major movements within the movement have been instituted. Some are affiliated with the Messianic Alliances of various countries; others such as the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations and the Union of British Messianic Congregations are more independent. In what I view as a sign of

largely expatriate, foreign-language meetings to Israeli, Hebrew-speaking assemblies. There may be some question as to whether Israeli Hebrew congregations should be considered part of the Messianic Congregational movement. These congregations typically exhibit a different adaptation of the ramifications of Jewishness and belief in Yeshua than congregations in the *galut*. Nevertheless, the recent moves of congregations in the *Galil* and in Netanya to purchase Torah scrolls for use in their services points to what is really a rapid development towards accommodating traditionally Jewish forms of worship. It could be argued then that the differences in style inside and outside Israel are decreasing.

Initially, the Messianic Congregational Movement

had to break considerable “market resistance.” Most commonly, this resistance came from the church at large as well as from those most involved in Jewish evangelism. As a result the Movement had to provide a rationale for its existence particularly in the light of Ephesians 2:14 (“He ... has broken down the middle wall of separation”) and Galatians 3:28 (“There is neither Jew nor Greek ...”). Immediately, the early movement had to theologise and begin to grapple with the ecclesiological issues involved in establishing distinctly *Jewish* congregations. The presence of many non-Jewish “cheerleaders” in the movement both simplified the task of answering charges of exclusivity and complicated the task of maintaining a Jewish identity in Jewish congregations where the majority was often not Jewish.

### **Challenges that lie ahead**

Needless to say, not all of those who know the Messianic Congregational Movement well are impressed by its distinctives. Most notable among these are Baruch Maoz and Stan Telchin. In what could be viewed as a sign of maturity, the Messianic Congregational Movement is now developing its own critics from within. What this points to is that theology and praxis within the Messianic Congregational

Movement is far from universally accepted or uniform, and is still open for debate.

Recently Richard Harvey completed a dissertation titled *Mapping Messianic Jewish Theology*. In that work, he surveys Messianic theology from around the world according to the Jewish convention of theologising in terms of God, Torah and Israel. A number of observations can be made on the basis of his work. First, although Harvey has surveyed a great number of Messianic theologians from around the world, he has by no means exhausted the pool of potential contributors. Secondly, despite this there has not yet been as *much* theologising as there could or should be (Harvey 281). Thirdly, as he points out, there are yet no standards or even discussions concerning the methods to be employed in the construction of Messianic Jewish Theology (Harvey 283).

To me these are some of the most pressing indictments of the Messianic Congregational Movement. In forty years its leadership has been too busy pursuing its own agendas and causes, no matter how worthy these might be, to exchange ideas, to confer with one another, and to work towards constructively developing a Messianic theology, or even theologies. I find it distressing how few

mission leaders and those involved in Jewish evangelism, not to mention the staff in their organisations (present company excepted I am sure), subscribe to or even know about the *Mishkan* or *Kesher* journals. Here I have to point at myself too. The demands of growing a charity in the United Kingdom make it very difficult for me to carve out space – including psychological space – for study and writing.

It is careful, reflective theologising that holds the potential to provide reasonable answers and theological solutions to the issues that even today hinder the growth of the Messianic Congregational Movement. Do JBY have any obligation to retain their Jewish identity? Are they obliged by God to join their local churches, to seek out a Messianic congregation, or neither? Is the Jewish believer in the same relationship to the law as the Gentile believer? How is the Messianic Congregational Movement theologically pertinent to the church-going Jewish believer? The questions flow easily. The answers do not. MJT is only beginning to constructively engage on the academic level with either Jewish theology or Christian.

The future of the movement – partially as the fruit of two centuries’ mission effort – depends on such thoughtful

reflection. Without it, the Messianic Congregational Movement will condemn itself to a marginal role in the body of our Messiah, being regarded by the majority as simply “fruity.”

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1. From a journal called the *Canadian Agriculturalist* comes this famous letter in 1861: “About 1842, Mr. David Fife of Otonabee, Canada West, procured through a friend in Glasgow, Scotland, a quantity of wheat, which had been obtained from a cargo direct from ... Danzig ... at the time of spring sowing. As it came to hand just before spring seed time, and not knowing whether it was a fall or spring variety, Mr. Fife concluded to sow a part of it that spring, and wait for the result. It proved to be fall wheat, as it never ripened, except three ears, which grew apparently from a single grain; these were preserved, and although sowed the next year under very unfavourable circumstances, being quite late, and in a shady place, it proved at harvest to be entirely free of rust, when all the wheat in the neighbourhood was badly rusted. The produce of this was carefully preserved, and from it sprung the variety of wheat known over Canada and the Northern States, by the different names of Fife, Scotch and Glasgow.”

2. A high profile example is the recent wedding of Joel Chernoff's daughter Sharon to Paul Wilbur's son Joel.

3. Interestingly, safety has not only become an issue for JBY, but there are a significant number of Gentile believers who similarly feel alienated from their churches ideals, customs, and leadership because their theologies of Israel and the Jewish people cut across the grain.

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## Jewish Evangelism in Germany in the Shadow of the Holocaust

By Avi Snyder, Jews for Jesus, Germany

### Introduction: Should Y'shua apologize for the Shoah?

Some years ago, I spoke with an older Christian woman who told me that she would never tell Jewish people the message of the gospel. When I asked her why not, she explained, "In light of all that's happened to your people in the name of Jesus, I would never offend them by telling them about the Lord."

"What would you say instead?" I asked.

"As a Christian, I'd apologize to them."

"For ...?" I prompted.

She scowled at me as if to say, Don't you know your own history? "For the Crusades," she said. "For the Inquisition, for the pogroms, and especially for the Holocaust."

"Did you support the Holocaust?" I asked.

"No," she protested, apparently aghast at the notion that I would even ask so vile a question.

"Did Jesus support the Holocaust?"

Again, she answered "No."

"Then why would you apologize for something that neither you nor Jesus supported?"

She was clearly impatient with my inability to grasp the obvious. "Because your people *think* that Jesus



supported the Holocaust."

"Yes, many of us do," I agreed. "And your silence after the apology in his name lets us continue believing that lie. You know, after any repentance or apology, it would be better if you told us about the real Jesus, and explained his gospel to us,"

The memory of the Holocaust clearly influenced this woman's opinion on the question of bringing the gospel to us Jews. And so, I'd like to ask, what impact does the Holocaust have upon the cause of Jewish evangelism in Germany today? More specifically: How does the horror of the Holocaust affect the activity of Jewish evangelism? How does it affect our people's receptivity to the gospel message? How does it affect the endorsement and participation of German Christians? What theological shifts has the

Holocaust brought about in parts of the German church?

### How does the Holocaust affect the *activity* of Jewish evangelism in Germany today?

The remembrance of the Nazi regime is always present, from the documentaries on television, to the yearly observance of Holocaust Remembrance Day, to the brass plaques in the sidewalks, noting the places where Jewish people once lived. But must the shadow of the Holocaust negatively impact the *activity* of Jewish evangelism in Germany today? The answer is actually no. Let me clarify the question, however, or else the answer won't make sense. I'm speaking purely of the activity of bringing the message of the gospel to our Jewish people so that they may respond or react. I am not speaking of the receptivity itself (which I'll address below) nor of the results; just the activity. So, must the shadow of the Holocaust impede the proclamation of the Good News to our people in Germany? No, that needn't be the case.

At present, there are at least 50 workers engaged in the field of Jewish

evangelism in Germany, representing the following mission agencies: AMZI; Beit Sar Shalom; Evangeliumsdienst für Israel; Juden für Jesus; Licht im Osten, and Operation Mobilization. In addition to these mission workers, no less than 40 Messianic congregations, Shabbat meetings and Bible study groups of various strengths point to the facts that Jewish people are coming to faith in Germany, and that German believers are standing with them. We have no way of knowing precisely how many individual German believers are actively engaged in witnessing to Jewish relatives, friends, acquaintances, colleagues and classmates, nor do we know the number of Jewish believers who are living out an active faith within traditional State and Free church congregations. But Jewish believers are to be found throughout the wider body of Messiah in Germany, allowing for a testimony to go forth from Jewish and German lips and lives.

As in other countries, professional missionaries and ministers along with laymen direct a variety of evangelistic activities toward our people. These activities include, but are not limited to: congregational services and other public meetings; personal evangelism; street evangelism; child evangelism; youth camps;

web and internet evangelism; telephone and door-to-door canvassing; tract distribution; literature production; and more. The point is not that *more* activity is taking place in Germany than in other countries. Rather, the point is that the shadow of the Holocaust does not automatically limit what we may choose to do. Two further facts underscore this point.

First, there are no laws directed specifically against Jewish evangelistic activity in Germany. *Anti-Semitism* is illegal, yes. And even though opponents falsely brand Jewish evangelism as anti-Semitic, there are currently no laws that specifically seek to curtail Jewish evangelistic activity on the grounds that such activity is hateful or harmful to our people.

Secondly, no organized anti-missionary work currently exists in Germany that might impede the activity of bringing the gospel to our people. Numerous websites exist, and articles “alerting” the Jewish community to the dangers of missionary activity appear periodically in both Russian and German language Jewish newspapers. Furthermore, it’s “understood” among Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union that any involvement with Messianic groups will incur the disfavor of the Jewish organizations that have sponsored them and that regularly assist them with

material aid. But no systematic opposition from anti-missionary groups in Germany presently impedes the proclamation of the gospel to our fellow Jews.

### **Some reflections for consideration**

*Concerning the activity of Jewish evangelism in Germany:* Without entering into a discussion of methodology, let me urge us to remember that whatever activity we undertake for the Lord and in this cause will bear fruit and produce the results that God wants to produce. “Therefore my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord, your labor is never in vain” (1 Cor 15:58).

*Concerning receptivity to the gospel message among our people in Germany:* Let us remember that the effective communication of the gospel message always results in at least two results: some are drawn closer to God, and others are driven away. Polarization is proof of the power of the gospel. And so, we should acknowledge that both reception and rejection are valid indicators that the message has gone out. “For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma of death to death, to the other an



*Such a picture makes Jewish mission difficult but not impossible for Avi Snyder.*

aroma from life to life” (2 Cor 2:15-16).

*Concerning fostering a greater participation among German Christians in the cause of bringing our Jewish people to the Lord:* Let us remind our German fellow believers that with repentance, the sin is forgiven and the line of generational guilt comes to an end, for there is now no condemnation for those in Messiah Y’shua. Let us remind our German fellow believers that Y’shua never loved us with a silent love. Yes, he fed our hungry, he healed our sick, he raised our dead back to life. But he also told us that unless we repented, we would all likewise perish. Biblical love compelled him to tell us the truth, despite the rejection that he knew he would face. We must exhort our German brothers and sisters in the faith as Paul exhorted Timothy, “Do not be ashamed of the testimony

of our Lord, or of me, His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel ...” (2 Tim 1:8).

*Concerning the theological shift in parts of the German church:* We must hold German theologians to the biblical truth that Jesus is “the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father” except through him. We must solemnly and urgently – even passionately – warn them that to disown and condemn Jewish evangelism is to disown and condemn the greatest Jewish evangelist who ever brought the gospel to his own – the Messiah Y’shua. We must confront them in love with the hard truth that if Y’shua really is the only way to be saved, then the ones guilty of continuing the Holocaust are not the ones who share their faith, but the ones who withhold their faith from a Jewish person, just because that person is a Jew.

## **Two final thoughts about the shadow of the Holocaust upon the cause of Jewish evangelism in Germany**

*Because of the Holocaust,* the cause of Jewish evangelism remains a hot, ever-stirred and ever-stirring topic in the German church and in the Jewish community. May God always use us to stoke the flames and to turn up the heat.

*Because of the Holocaust,* an unprecedented opportunity now exists. The history of persecution has given us the platform to proclaim the gospel to the Jew first, and also to the German. What better voice can slice through post-Christian indifference to the gospel than the seemingly “absurd,” dissonant sound of the good news coming from Jewish lips?

For the sake of our people in Germany, and for the sake of Germans who will listen to us only because we are Jews, may we never be quiet or still. Rather, with Isaiah, may we declare, “For Zion’s sake I will not be silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until her righteousness goes forth like brightness, and her salvation like a burning torch, and the nations will see...” (Isa 62:1-2).

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## Events and Other Creative Means of Evangelism

By Mitch Glaser, Chosen People Ministries, New York

### The debates

Some years ago, I was approached by a Jewish believer who felt that many of the evangelistic events sponsored by Jewish missions were not especially evangelistic, as these events typically drew very few Jewish people who did not yet know the Lord. I agreed. He suggested that we invite Rabbi Shmuley Boteach to debate a Messianic Jewish scholar, and I thought this was a great idea.

Most of the debates between Messianic Jews and other rabbis over the last few years were usually between professional anti-missionaries and Jewish believers who were not trained debaters, nor especially scholarly in their approach. We have not found any mainline rabbis who are willing to debate Mike Brown or any other Messianic Jewish leader.

There was a rabbi in Canada, Emmanuel Schochet, who did a number of debates with Messianic Jews during the 1980s and early 1990s and even debated Mike Brown, but he is much older now and unwilling to debate. The only rabbis who are sometimes willing to debate Messianic Jews are anti-missionaries, and these are exactly the

people that we do not want to debate. Also, they really have little status within the mainline Jewish community. Shmuley has a TV show and is well-known because of his media presence; he is far more respected than the anti-missionaries.

### Is Jesus the Jewish Messiah?

In 2002, we arranged for Mike and Shmuley to debate the topic *Is Jesus the Jewish Messiah?* The debate was held at the West Side YMCA in Manhattan, which held 200 people. I advertised heavily and took out a half-page ad in *The New York Times*. But I really did not think many people would come - especially unsaved Jewish people. When I saw that we had 300 people at the debate, I was surprised! The manager then made us ask 100 people to leave, so I actually got up and said, "Those who already agree with Dr. Michael Brown should leave and make room for those who do not." Shmuley had gone first in the debate!

What I did not realize at that moment was that there were over 600 people waiting outside to get into the debate -- and most of them were Jewish people,

since we had not done any advertising in Christian media. I quickly realized that Jewish people would actually attend a debate, because it was deemed fair and because a credible rabbi who is well-known in the Jewish community was representing the traditional Jewish point of view. I was shocked! I did not expect that many people to show up.

### Who really killed Jesus?

Eventually we scheduled a number of other debates, including one a few days before the Mel Gibson movie *The Passion of the Christ* came out in theaters. That debate was entitled *Who Really Killed Jesus?* We also made a DVD of that debate, which has been widely circulated and continues to be sold and viewed today.

We did two other debates during the next few years, including one on *The Da Vinci Code*, which included Dr. Darrell Bock. This debate was actually webcast -- live -- and was viewed by almost 1,000 people at the Midtown Hilton Hotel and another 10,000 who watched it on the web, including many Jewish people. We did this webcast in cooperation with Dallas Theological Seminary.



## Did Jesus die for our sins?

Last summer, we did another debate between Mike and Shmuley in Manhattan on the subject of Isaiah chapter 53. The title of that debate was *Did Jesus Die for our Sins?* and more than 800 people attended. This debate went especially well, and we also produced a DVD that we are using; it will one day become a key tool in our Isaiah 53 evangelistic campaigns. We also inaugurated our new website by doing two well-advertised webcasts of the Isaiah chapter 53 debate. Once again, thousands of people watched the webcast, including hundreds of Jewish people we invited through utilizing rentable Jewish e-mailing lists.

In between these NYC-based debates, we sponsored another one in Scottsdale, Arizona, and Mike and Shmuley have also debated a number of times on radio and TV. In addition, Jews for Jesus sponsored a debate between the two in Boston.

### Debates in England

We have concluded this "run" of debates with two in England -- in partnership with CWI.

The first debate was held in London on Monday, May 12, at what is known as the Friends Hall, near Euston station in the heart of London. This hall is used for many different political, public and religious



*Mitch Glaser and Herby Geer, Israel.*

purposes and is known as a neutral place. The downstairs of the whole seats about 550 people and it was full. We had an additional 50-75 people in the balcony. I was very pleased with the turnout. I know that there were at least 30 or 40 Jewish nonbelievers in attendance and probably more.

The Oxford debate was held on Tuesday, May 13 at the Oxford Townhall, which seats about 500 people. It is a beautiful hall with ornate carvings in the woodwork throughout the hall. There have been many important speeches, lectures and debates held in this hall and it was a very wise choice on the part of Mike Moore from Christian Witness to Israel to choose this venue.

There were about 300 people at the debate and we were blessed to have so many. About 50-60 of them are students. It was exam week at Oxford and the Christian groups had just finished the campaign called Love Oxford. This

made it a bit difficult to draw the crowd, but this was the date that we had to choose for various reasons. I noticed a number of Jewish people in the crowd, and someone told me that at least 10 of his friends attended.

I was pleased with these events, but they drew fewer Jewish non-believers than those in NYC. Still, they were quite successful for a variety of reasons.

Certainly our main goal for the debates in England was to reach Jewish people with the gospel, but it is also our intention to strengthen the Messianic Jewish movement in the UK and to encourage the missionaries to the Jews who are working on the field. It was also my hope to try to partner with some of the Jewish missions in the UK to build a greater sense of unity with our brothers and sisters across the pond. It worked out quite well, as Christian Witness to Israel director Mike Moore and I have been good friends; we



*Gary Hedrick, Christian Jews Foundation Ministries, conducted the three Bible studies on themes from 1 Timothy.*

shared much of the effort in preparing these debates and even some of the costs. For example, Christian Witness to Israel actually paid for the lecture hall in both London and Oxford as well as quite a bit of the advertising, the filming of the DVDs and some of the publicity.

### **Conclusion**

The first debate between Mike and Shmuley at the Westside YMCA in Manhattan was filled with tension. I believe that Shmuley viewed Mike Brown in the same way as the Messianic Jewish ex-leader he “trounced” years ago in Britain. In fact, Shmuley seemed to be seething with anger at this first debate and I could tell that he thought he would “beat Mike up” like he did

the others ... and that he would enjoy doing it!

But something happened at that debate, and more so at the dinner we shared with Shmuley and Debbie Boteach afterwards: we got to know one another as people, and some of the prejudices Shmuley had towards Messianic Jews began breaking down. Mike and Shmuley actually began a friendship that night which continues until this day.

It has become traditional in the last two debates for Mike and Shmuley to publicly declare the fact that they are friends and that they respect one another. This was not true at the first debate. It is also fun to watch Mike and Shmuley embrace one another after each debate. Of course one of the reasons it is so charming to watch is because Mike is about 6 foot 7 inches and Shmuley is almost a foot shorter.

I have noticed in doing these debates over the years that many believers have a variety of problems with Rabbi Boteach. He is accused of manipulating emotions, not being logical, not sticking to the subject, and not using the Scriptures. The interesting thing is that the unsaved Jewish people never accuse him of these things.

I find that most Christians, especially if they are not Jewish and if they have

been believers for a long time, have developed certain expectations about how to debate the nature of truth and faith. It is hard for many evangelicals to see that the way in which they debate and hear truth is colored by their evangelical culture.

The truth is that most of the Jewish people who attend actually believe that Shmuley wins the debates; those who do not have often been those who are closer to the gospel. And of course we are very grateful that some Jewish people who have attended actually do see the difference between Shmuley's message and Mike's. This of course the main reason we do the debates.

In my 35 years of being a missionary to the Jewish people, I have never seen this many unbelieving Jewish people attend an event like this where the gospel is preached.

I believe that the debates have been used by God in the lives of many Jewish people as a way to interest them in Jesus and clarify some of the issues. I am also confident that eventually the relationships these people have with Christians and Messianic Jewish friends will be what ultimately leads them to the Lord.

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## How “Christian” is Christian Zionism?

By David Brickner, Jews for Jesus, San Francisco

*The National Council of Churches describes Christian Zionism as “a danger to true peace in the Middle East.” Anglican Vicar Stephen Sizer, in his scorching and widely read book, Christian Zionism: Roadmap to Armageddon, attacks Christian Zionism as “racist” and “unbiblical.”*

We can shrug off such attacks on Christian Zionism, knowing that many of its critics seem to have little love for the Jewish people, and do not believe that God has or will fulfill His promises to them literally.

### **A serious problem**

Yet there is a serious problem with Christian Zionism that cannot be chalked up to the biases or lack of balance that some critics demonstrate. That problem ought not go without scrutiny and censure, but unfortunately the average Christian is unaware of it. The problem is, many Christian Zionists are involved (some proactively, others unknowingly) in preventing Jews from hearing the gospel.

So maybe the time has come for us to ask, “How Christian is today’s Christian Zionism?” Please



note the word “today’s,” because the landscape of Christian Zionism has dramatically shifted in recent years.

Once called “restorationism,” Christian Zionism (which I’ll refer to as biblical Christian Zionism) began as a two-fold belief rooted in a commitment to Scripture. At its core was the conviction that God would one day return the Jewish people to the land He had given to their ancestors and that they would finally come to recognize Jesus as their long-awaited Messiah.

Great nineteenth century preachers such as Simeon and Spurgeon frequently preached about both a physical and spiritual restoration of the Jewish people. Nineteenth century British political leaders such as Lord Byron and Lord Shaftesbury promoted

the cause of a Jewish homeland, while also supporting the efforts of Jewish evangelism and missions.

In the United States, biblical Christian Zionism was promoted by a wide range of theologians, though it became more widespread, in part due to the rise of dispensational theology. William Blackstone championed the cause and rallied four hundred American business leaders and politicians – both Christian and Jewish – to sign a bold statement calling for the establishment of a Jewish homeland. That petition is known as the Blackstone Memorial. Blackstone was also committed to Jewish evangelism, and founded a Jewish mission agency known as “Life in Messiah.”

When Israel finally became a modern state in 1948, it was a glorious, faith-strengthening confirmation of biblical Christian Zionism. And when Jerusalem was reclaimed in 1967, many believed the “times of the Gentiles” had been fulfilled and the end-times scenario of rapture and tribulation was about to unfold.

Certainly there did seem to be many Jewish people coming to believe in Jesus in the late ‘60s and early ‘70s. Jews for Jesus and

the wider Messianic movement came into existence during that time. Yet the numbers of Jesus-believing Jews, especially in Israel, remained few. One might think that Christian Zionism would see this as a challenge to be met by greater fervor and commitment to proclaiming the good news to Jewish people. But curiously, the opposite occurred.

### **A new form of Christian Zionism**

A new form of Christian Zionism emerged in the mid 1970s and early 1980s; it was more political and actually divorced itself from Jewish evangelism, contending that a Christian's biblical duty to the Jews and Israel was best carried out through providing material comfort, political support and helping fund Jewish immigration to Israel.

These new Christian Zionist organizations, best represented by Bridges for Peace and the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, made it very clear to Jewish leaders in Israel and abroad they had no intention of evangelizing Jews. Some, not all, of their leaders argued that evangelism of Jews was a waste of time and unnecessarily offensive. Jewish evangelism, in any case, was not a cause that would endear these leaders to the people with whom they were beginning to network. The hope

seemed to be that eventually those networks would help open people's hearts to the gospel in a way that direct evangelism would not. If this has proven to be the case, it is a well-kept secret.

Recently, the two above-mentioned organizations have been dwarfed in scope and influence by the rise of two other organizations: the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews (IFCJ) and Christians United For Israel (CUFI). These financial juggernauts successfully tap into the deep reservoir of Christian Zionist sentiment here in America. (IFCJ raised 75 million dollars last year. CUFI does not disclose its finances but is on record as giving millions of dollars to various Jewish groups in Israel each year.) Both organizations are currently run by Jewish people who do not know Jesus: Yechiel Eckstein of IFCJ is an Orthodox rabbi, and David Brog of CUFI an attorney and former chief of staff to Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania.

These newer "Christian" Zionist organizations have set themselves against Jewish evangelism in ways that their predecessors did not. In his book *What Christians Should Know About Jews and Judaism* (as well as in other printed material), Rabbi Eckstein suggests that, "The rejection of Jesus as Messiah is the key to Jewish survival."

Accordingly, a good deal of the money Eckstein raises from Christians goes to organizations whose agendas include anti-missionary activity.

As for David Brog, in an interview with Katherine Jean Lopez on Beliefnet, he boasts on behalf of the Christians he knows that, "I and others who have worked with Christians in support of Israel all report that no one has ever tried to convert us," and in his book *Standing With Israel* he says that "While there is no evidence that the Christian-Jewish alliance in support of Israel [aka CUFI] facilitates the conversion of Jews, there is evidence that the alliance actually works to impede efforts to convert Jews" (David Brog, *Standing With Israel*, Lake Mary, Fla.: Frontline Publishers, 2006, 188-189). While this is meant to reassure the Jewish community concerning Christian Zionists, it ought to have the opposite effect on Christians who care about the salvation of Jewish people.

It might seem like the phrases "try to convert" or "efforts to convert" imply a certain overbearing attempt at sharing the gospel, but the fact is, Brog is referring to any attempt to tell Jewish people the gospel. *Washington Jewish Week* interviewed Brog and published an article explaining, "Brog said the group (CUFI) tells people, 'If you cannot put aside your desire to share the

Gospel with Jews, there's the door” (Eric Fingerhut, “Educating on Evangelicals.” *Washington Jewish Week*. July 4, 2007).

### **Recalling the biblical vision**

I am absolutely convinced the vast majority of Christians supporting CUFI and IFCJ do not know about these policies and practices. My guess is that many who support these groups genuinely believe in Jewish evangelism and expect that their support will help Jewish people come to Christ. Sadly, their resources are going to projects run by people who are committed to preventing Jewish people from hearing about Jesus.

This is not meant to discourage Christians from providing material help and support in a truly Christian way; but it is fair to question how “Christian” such support can really be in situations where Christ himself is excluded from the conversation, and where funds are raised and channeled by people who do not know Him. Jewish people in Israel are more open to the gospel message than any other Jewish community in the world today! The responses we've seen to our Behold Your God Israel campaigns have signaled

us that now is the time to make an all out effort to make the Savior known in the Land of Israel.

It is time for all true Christian Zionists to recall the biblical vision that not only supports God's promises to restore a homeland for the Jewish people, but also addresses the greatest need of all. Just like anyone else, Jewish people need to have a restored relationship with God through Jesus. Now more than ever is the time for true Christian Zionists to open their eyes to the phenomenal opportunity to take part in that original vision.

It is not enough to raise funds for Israel. Christian Zionists ought also to raise the awareness that Jesus, the Messiah, loves Israelis and Palestinians – and that only He can bring the peace that those who live in the Land so urgently need and so earnestly desire.

When those who stand by Israel are willing to bring the good news of Jesus to the Jew first, then Christian Zionism will once again be fully Christian.

### **Please consider this ...**

In the meantime, please consider this:

When someone makes an appeal for Christians to show their love for Jewish

people, please remember that our love is incomplete at best and misleading at worst if it does not point beyond ourselves and to the One who loved us so much that He sent His Son to die, so that WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM will not perish, but have eternal life. If you are concerned about where a Christian Zionist organization you support (or would like to support) stands when it comes to the gospel, write and ask them for a written response to these questions:

Are participants on your projects permitted to speak of their faith in Jesus to the Jewish people they meet through your program?

Are Jews who believe the teachings of the New Testament concerning Jesus allowed to participate in your programs?

Do any of the organizations to whom you send funds include a component for countering Christian missionary work?

God bless you as you look for biblical ways to bless the people of Israel!

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# Arthur Goldberg – In Memoriam

By Dr. Gershon Nerel, Yad Hashmona, Israel



*Arthur and Zella Goldberg at the LCJE international conference, Helsinki, 2003.*

Although I knew Arthur already as a teenager in the late 1960s, when we met at the old Mission House in Beer Sheva, it was only several decades later that I had the opportunity to closely cooperate with him when both of us served, since the early 1990s, on the Executive Board of the Messianic Jewish Alliance of Israel (MJAI). Arthur was not merely the treasurer of the MJAI but was also a faithful friend who did his best to use every chance to tell anyone who would listen about his/our Savior, Yeshua. Arthur's passion for sharing his trust, joy and hope in the Lord Messiah accompanied him until his last day.

Arthur David Goldberg was born in Baltimore, USA (October 9, 1940), and was buried in Modi'in (April 28, 2009), between Jerusalem

and Tel Aviv. His dynamic lifetime reflected his energetic personality. In July 1966 he made *Aliya* (immigrated) to Israel with his wife Zella and 2 children (David and Jonathan). His studies at *Moody Bible Institute* in Chicago (1963-1966) followed his service in the American Navy (1958-1962). In Israel the family was enlarged with three more children: Nathan, Joel and Michelle ("Mishi"). For 30 years Arthur worked as a licensed aircraft mechanic with TWA in Israel (1972-2002).

Throughout retirement he filled his time as a pensioner mainly with visiting believers and congregations around the country, encouraging and supporting those in need and distress.

For long years Arthur contributed much of his time as a full member on different committees both locally and overseas. He functioned as an elder in several congregations in the land – in the Messianic Assembly in Jerusalem (56 Prophets Street), in the Messianic congregation in Rishon-Letziyon as well as in *Keren Yeshua* congregation in Tel Aviv, and finally in the Modi'in Assembly. He also served as the Israeli LCJE Coordinator for two periods: 1995-1999 and 1999-2003. In his reports and articles he always tried

to portray an authentic picture of the Messianic scene in the land.

Arthur especially loved children ("our younger generation" in his parlance), and always reminded us to support their education. He often encouraged various study and training opportunities for younger believers. For many years he and Zella consistently helped in organizing summer and youth camps, starting with Warren and Linda Graham of the C&MA (now retired in the USA), in places such as Beer Sheva, Jerusalem and Eilat. When the numbers of Messianic children and Messianic congregations grew rapidly in the land and one annual camp became too small to host all those who wanted to attend, Arthur was also instrumental in the establishment of new summer camps which took place at the Baptist Village near Petah Tikva (Sharon Plain). Actually he and Zella assisted Marsha Smith with the youth camps (*Clei HaYotser* - "Potter's Wheel") not only in the summertime but also during vacations from school during the holy days of Passover and Hannuka.

My closer acquaintance with Arthur developed within a small panel of three persons including Hanan Lukatz, chairman of MJAI, as we worked

together in social-charitable activities. With other members of the Board (Asher Intrater, Zvi Randelman, Berili Belai and Danny Sayag), we focused on the annual *Shavuot* (Pentecost) national gathering of many believers celebrating the festival of *Bikurim* (First Fruits) at Yad Hashmona. In these large crowds with more than a thousand participants, Arthur emo-

tionally expressed his excitement and happiness like a child while meeting old friends and seeing the colorful body of believers having a free time of fellowship.

Together with Zella, Arthur was well known for opening his home to many visitors with a welcoming hospitality that both of them offered. In meetings, Arthur had not only a loud voice but also a big heart for the

Lord and for the body of believers. We shall remember his warmth, his faithfulness and his enthusiasm in everything he did. "So shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish what I please..." (Isaiah 55:11).

*Gershon NereI*  
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## **LCJE Meetings**

### **LCJE North America**

1-3 March, 2010, in Atlanta  
28-30 March, 2011, in St. Louis  
5-7 March, 2012, in San Diego  
Contact Jim Sibley  
[na-director@lcje.net](mailto:na-director@lcje.net)

### **LCJE Europe**

19-22/23 April, 2010 in Krakow, Poland  
22 April after lunch: Optional tour to Auschwitz and Schindler's Fabrik, and extra night in Krakow (22 to 23 April)  
Contact Jean-Paul Rempp  
[jpnremppbn@wanadoo.fr](mailto:jpnremppbn@wanadoo.fr)

### **LCJE South Africa**

15 October 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa  
Contact Cecilia Burger  
[simcha@mweb.co.za](mailto:simcha@mweb.co.za)

### **LCJE International**

Ninth International LCJE conference is scheduled for 7-12 August, 2011 (venue to be announced later).