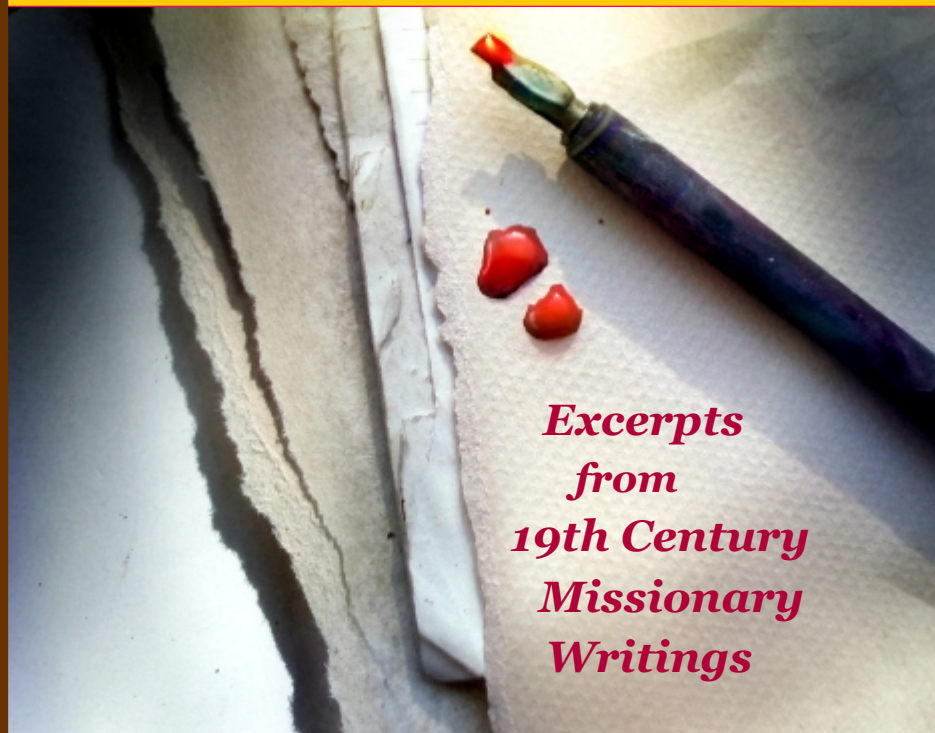




DEATH, TRIALS AND TRIUMPH



*Excerpts
from
19th Century
Missionary
Writings*

MISHKAN

A Forum on the Gospel and the Jewish People

ISSUE 52 / 2007

General Editor: Kai Kjær-Hansen

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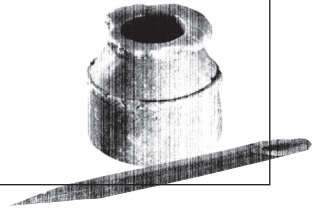
Mishkan is a forum for discussion, and articles included do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors.

Mishkan is the Hebrew word for *tabernacle* or *dwelling place* (John 1:14).

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Why, God?

By Kai Kjær-Hansen



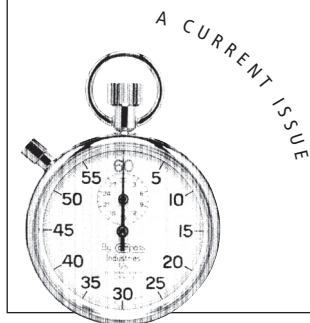
Acts chapter 12 briefly mentions the execution of the apostle James, the brother of John. It goes on to describe the miraculous deliverance of Peter from prison in Jerusalem, in the early 40s. Before he suffered a martyr's death in Rome sometime in the 60s, Peter was given over 20 more years to work for the gospel than James was.

Two apostles with very different lots – and yet with the same Lord. Why did James not experience a miraculous deliverance? Was he expendable? Why should he be lying in a grave in Jerusalem when the Jesus movement so desperately needed witnesses to tell about Jesus' empty grave? No answer is given. It is hidden in God's secret council. The stories of James and Peter are told in a way that breathes trust in God. No attempt is made to explain God's course of action. But God makes no mistakes. The apostles do not have God in their hands, he has them in his hands. In spite of martyrdom, the first church goes on witnessing about the death, the empty grave, and the resurrection of Jesus.

This issue of *Mishkan* is not about stories of martyrdom but about stories of disease and death. However, the underlying question remains the same: *Why, God?* When Jews as well as non-Jews need the gospel, why do you reduce the number of those that you yourself have called?

These stories are told by some of the first Protestant missionaries in Jerusalem and Beirut, in the period 1818–1840, about the way they experienced disease and death. They are stories of pain and hope. Sometimes the individuals involved felt that God was asleep, and they struggled to find God's will in the death and reflected on the possibility that they may be the next person to be laid in the grave.

Some of these stories about death are so moving, so existential, that they are still challenging for us today.



Occupation of the Field

By Kai Kjær-Hansen

The Eighth International LCJE Conference was held August 19–24, 2007, at Lake Balaton, Hungary, after the plan to hold the conference in Budapest had failed.

One of the reasons the conference had been scheduled for Budapest was that 80 years ago an important conference on Jewish evangelism was held there. Indeed, two important conferences were held in 1927: one in Budapest (April 7–13) and one in Warsaw (April 19–25).

Before the delegates met in Budapest and Warsaw in 1927, several years of preparatory work had been done. Eighteen months before the conference a detailed questionnaire was prepared and sent out. When the replies were received, “a digest of the information was skilfully drafted” and “when published was distributed to every delegate.” This was before the meeting.

The answers to the questionnaire are divided into eleven theme groups. In the report after the Budapest meeting there are nine topics:

1. Evangelisation and Message
2. Christian Education
3. Medical Missions, Philanthropy and Community Centres
4. Christian Literature
5. Occupation of the Field
6. Training and Welfare of Workers
7. Spiritual Power
8. Co-operation
9. Work among Jewish Women

At the plenary sessions the topics were presented and a general discussion followed. Next the delegates were divided in fairly equal numbers to various “Findings Committees.” After that the themes were discussed again at plenary sessions and the results were published as “Findings” in the official report *The Christian Approach to the Jew*, which appeared, well, in 1927. Quite impressive and professional!

A wealth of statistical and demographic information was gathered. Here is one interesting example of how they worked up the material

and asked some self-critical questions on the theme "Occupation of the Field."

In "Addendum on Palestine," it is said by way of introduction: "Palestine contains 1 per cent of the Jewish population of the world; yet, if we take mere numbers into account, it draws to itself 12 per cent of the missionary man-power. The fact is that, though there are many 'missions', there are few 'missionaries' in the sense of men qualified for direct and profitable contact with the Palestinian Jew."

It is assumed that the total of Christian workers among Jews is one thousand. The question is: Are these one thousand workers distributed in an expedient way? I quote:

For example, a conservative estimate shows that there are over 400 towns and cities in the world with Jewish populations varying from 5000 to 300,000 or more, but the total numbers of places in which there are established Missions does not seem to exceed 160, and in a considerable proportion of these there is only one individual worker.

Further, when we find that Mission Stations total about 270, it is at once apparent that more than one Mission is at work in many of the occupied places. Indeed, in some of them three or more Missions are at work. Besides, some of these Missions have large staffs, showing that a large proportion of the agency is concentrated in a relatively small number of towns and cities. To give an instance or two: Hamburg seems to have at least 30 workers, and there are as many employed in Budapest; in Bucharest there are over 20, In Constantinople 15; Safad has 12, Tiberias 24, Haifa 11, and Jerusalem over 40.

For present purposes the list need not be extended, but here we find over 180 agents employed in only eight of the occupied cities.

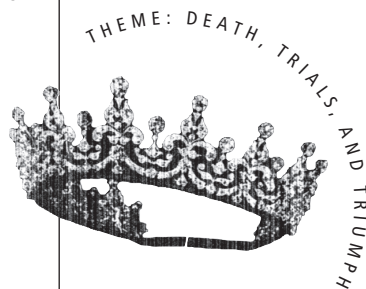
The most extraordinary concentration seems to be in Palestine, which, with only 160,000 Jews, contains more Jewish missionary agents than there are in the Slav lands of Europe, where over 6,000,000 Jews have their homes.

It is not too much to say that many of the great Jewish areas lie entirely fallow. It is doubtful if more than twenty cities in Russia, Ukrainia, Poland, and the Baltic States, together are occupied by Missions. Czechoslovakia, with 360,000 Jews, has only an occasional worker; Transylvania, with a quarter of a million, has only one regular worker.

And the list continues with further examples following the same pattern. Therefore they cannot recommend that more missionaries be sent to Palestine and, "after all, if effective mission work is to be done in Jewry, it should be self-evident that missionaries must be sent where the people are."

This is the way we do it today, isn't it? We have missionaries "where the people are" and we do not focus on just one place – or do we?





Stories About Disease and Death

Selections and comments by **Kai Kjær-Hansen**

The following stories about disease and death are from the period 1818–1840. They start in the year when the first Protestant Bible-man visited Jerusalem, and end with the last death within the framework of the Jerusalem mission *before* a new beginning was made in 1842 with the arrival in Jerusalem of Bishop Michael Solomon Alexander.

With a few exceptions, the missionaries in question were either attached to the *London Jews Society* (LJS), founded in 1809, or the Boston based *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (ABCFM), founded in 1810. Also included are a couple of stories about local, non-Protestant persons, in order to give an impression of how the Protestant missionaries viewed the deaths and eternity of these people.

It Is a Most Sickly Season

In November 1839, the LJS missionary in Jerusalem, John Nicolayson, wrote: "It is a most sickly season" (see below, no. 10). There were many of these in the Levant in the 19th century, and many died in the wake of such sickly seasons. Not just among Protestant missionaries, of course; quite a few explorers, pilgrims, and travelers also succumbed in such sickly seasons. These had an agenda which they pursued – often at the risk of their lives. The Protestant missionaries also had an agenda, their "calling." Their survival was secondary to the calling which they were convinced God had given them.

Naturally, these sickly seasons also made inroads into the local population. This can be inferred from, for example, the census of the Jewish population that Moses Montefiore caused to be done during his second visit to Palestine in 1839. Without many details (but with a reference to Sherman Lieber's summaries) here are some highlights:

- 9 percent of the population was 0–4 years old, indicating that newborn infants ran the highest risk of dying.
- Most Jewish children died before reaching age 10.
- 15 percent of the Jewish population was under 10 years old.

- In Jerusalem, three out of ten Jewish children (29 percent) did not have a living father.
- In Jerusalem, 49 percent of Jewish women were widows.
- Only one of ten Jews in Eretz Israel was over 60 years of age.
- Two out of three Jews living in Eretz Israel were under 40 years old.
- The estimated annual population deficit was 40 per 1,000 Jews – the death rate was 80 per 1,000 Jews while the birth rate was 40 per 1,000.¹

The high mortality rate for newborn infants was one of the reasons for the slow increase of the Jewish population in 19th century Palestine. Add to this deaths caused by disease; in Lieber's words:

In Palestine, the disregard of filth and the neglect of proper sanitation methods were detrimental to health. With no sewage and garbage disposal, rubbish, debris, excrement, and dead animals accumulated in the town streets. Drinking polluted water spread dysentery and cholera. Jewish immigrants who had yet to adjust to the country and develop immunities were easy prey for the pernicious "ague" – chills, fever, and sweating – that was rampant, recurring, and debilitating. Contributing to poor health conditions were crowded housing quarters – damp "dens of filth" with little light, fresh air, or ventilation. Inadequate clothing and lack of heating in the frigid winters also damaged the health of the Jewish population, as did malnutrition. Persons who died from a disease might have survived had they been adequately nourished. This is especially true of children under 5 years of age, whose cause of death today in many underdeveloped countries is listed as malnutrition.²

The Selection of Stories About Disease and Death

The stories collected here are framed by historical notes, to give the reader an impression of how disease at times hampered the work of the mission and how death reduced the not-very-high number of missionaries. These stories about disease and death are taken from sources that are not easily accessible today.³ The selection comprises different genres, such as notes or letters from the critically ill or dying person to family and friends, descriptions of the disease and death by the persons surrounding the patient, and subsequent reflections.

The missionaries' illnesses and deaths help to shed light on their lives

1 Sherman Lieber, *Mystics and Missionaries* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1992), 333–339. Lieber mentions that in 1839–1840 there were nearly 7,500 Jews in Eretz Israel.

2 Lieber, 340.

3 The texts have been taken from published sources. The varying forms of names and places have been retained. Sometimes dates have been inserted in square brackets. Only evident misprints are corrected, without a *sic*. In a few places an indentation, not in the sources, has been made. The sub-headlines in the texts are mine.



and the history of the mission. But the purpose of telling these stories in this issue of *Mishkan* is not primarily to tell the history of the mission. It is rather to bring the reader into an existential encounter with these missionaries and their families – their thoughts, reflections, and pain – when the fever was rising: *was it a sickness unto death, or would the fever go down?* Or when, inexorably, death had occurred: *how do the bereaved, and the mission, go on?*

The close contact between the patient and the person nursing him or her makes for moving reading. There is physical closeness and care, even when the feverish patient is delirious. He or she alternates between fear and hope, depending on whether the fever is going up or down. They pray together, read the Scriptures, and talk about eternity, where there is no more sin. For some of these pious missionaries Psalm 51, with David's confession of sin, has become *the* Psalm in their hour of death, as it was also in their lives. They are pious in their hour of death, but their acknowledgment and confession of sin prevents them from looking like saints.

At times the talk is about ordinary, everyday things, like wind and weather; good memories are recalled; or the dying person discusses with a Jewish doctor the meaning of the plural name of God (Elohim)! In some selections the widow or widower goes on, after the description of disease and death, to talk about the "business" of the mission.

The missionaries themselves, their spouses⁴, and their children are convinced that the deceased is now "with Jesus." They are not so convinced when it comes to people from the Greek Orthodox Church, even people they have known well, which can be seen from the following example: When the Greek Orthodox priest Papas Ysa is on his deathbed (see no. 6), he, according to John Nicolayson, "plainly and explicitly declares that Christ is his only hope and all his salvation," and yet Nicolayson finds it hard to declare the deceased Papas Ysa "with Jesus." Would that we could ask Nicolayson the critical question, *what does he still lack?*

Eulogies and obituaries written in the hour of death, or shortly thereafter, have to be taken as "subjective" truth. This goes for the deceased as well as the bereaved. The deceased cannot comment and must "accept" that what is said in a eulogy, or in the hour of death, is not an adequate description of a person. A person's eulogy cannot replace historical research about that person's life. If we content ourselves with the eulogy, we shall not get the right picture of the person in question.

My task has been to collect these stories about disease and death. We have asked a number of people to comment on and interact with these texts about missionaries of an earlier period and their attitude to disease and death in an area where there were many sickly seasons.

Have they something to say to us? And if yes, what?

4 In this period the spouses are women; they are referred to as "wife," not "missionary," even if they do missionary work among women and children.

1. Christoph Burckhardt

Died in Aleppo, August 14, 1818

The Swiss Christoph Burckhardt came to Malta on January 5, 1818, supported by the wealthy English banker and politician Henry Drummond. Having got his instructions there, he worked as a Bible-man in Egypt. In May he stayed in Jerusalem for approximately ten days as the first Protestant Bible-man. He traveled north and arrived at Aleppo, where a fatal fever, then raging in the neighborhood, put an end to his life. He was buried on August 14, 1818. He spent seven months as a traveling Bible-man in the Levant.⁵

The Englishman James Connor came to Malta on January 4, 1818, sent out by the Church Missionary Society (CMS), so he must have met Burckhardt there. Connor fell ill shortly thereafter. After recuperating in various places he settled in Constantinople. His only major journey as a Bible-man took place from October 31, 1819 to October 13, 1820, when he arrived back in Constantinople. He served as a Bible-Man in Jerusalem from March 6 to April 19, 1820. Then he also traveled north, to Aleppo.⁶

In June 1820 Connor, in Aleppo, reflected on Burckhardt's death and on the fact that, so far, he himself is still alive.

At Burckhardt's Grave

By James Connor, Aleppo, June 26, 1820.⁷

I have visited the grave of Burckhardt with mingled feelings

“I have received from the hands of the French Chancellor here, the effects of poor Burckhardt; and, among other things, a Case of Bibles and Testaments. These I shall leave in Aleppo: the private effects I shall send to Malta.

I have visited the grave of Burckhardt, with mingled feelings of sorrow and gratitude – sorrow, at the loss sustained by the Church of Christ by his death – gratitude, at the reflection that I have come out uninjured from that ordeal of fatigue and privations, to which he most probably fell a victim. *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits!* A large uninscribed stone marks the grave of our departed friend. Before I leave Aleppo, I shall cause some short memorial to be engraved thereon.”

5 On Burckhardt in Jerusalem, see *Mishkan*, no. 42 (2005), 57–67.

6 On Connor in Jerusalem, see *Mishkan*, no. 44 (2005), 62–75. Connor's description of his journey is in William Jowett, *Christian Researches in the Mediterranean* (London: CMS, 2nd edition, 1822), 413–454.

7 Connor in Jowett, 453. Cf. British and Foreign Bible Society, *Seventeenth Report* (1821), 63.

Connor Hands On the Baton

Having survived his almost twelve-month journey as a Bible-man, Connor returned to Constantinople. He knew that two American missionaries, Levi Parsons and Pliny Fisk, had come to Smyrna and intended to go to Syria, Palestine and Jerusalem. In the beginning of December 1820, he handed them a "letter of introduction" to key persons he had met.

In mid-February 1821, Connor returned to London, having escaped the sickly Levant. Both American missionaries died at an early age, as we will now see.

2. Levi Parsons

Died in Alexandria, February 10, 1822

Levi Parsons had been sent out by ABCFM to work in Jerusalem. He arrived at Smyrna on January 15, 1820 with his friend and colleague Pliny Fisk. After language studies there and at Scio, Parsons left for Jerusalem, where he arrived on February 17, 1821. After approximately three months' work as a Bible-man, he left Jerusalem on May 7, 1821, in good health and with the intention to return.

On the journey to Smyrna he fell ill and was close to dying. On December 3 he was reunited with Pliny Fisk in Smyrna, but he did not regain his health. On January 8, 1822, they both set out for Alexandria in the hope that a sea voyage and a milder climate would encourage healing. They intended to go to Jerusalem.⁸

Levi Parsons' journey – and life – ended in Alexandria.

First let us hear what he said about his disease, writing from the island of Syra in the Aegean Sea in September, 1821, then what he wrote in his journal, on his deathbed in Alexandria, in the beginning of 1822. Pliny Fisk stood by him all during this time, and he has also something to say.

Parsons' Illness at the Island of Syra, September 1821

*By Levi Parsons, Syra, November 7, 1821, to his Board.*⁹

The solemn moment of exchanging worlds had not arrived

“Dear Sir,

From the 5th of Sept. to the 1st of Oct. I have no correct recollection of any thing which was said to me, or of any thing which was administered for my recovery. My mind was greatly confused, and for some days remained in a state of the most distressing derangement. Three physicians visited me every day, and the result of one of their consultations was, that my life must terminate within 24 hours. About the first of Oct. the fever abated, and I awoke as from a long dream. It was not the dream of death. I opened my eyes, but it was not in eternity. The solemn moment of exchanging worlds, had not arrived. I yet tabernacle in the flesh; – and if it may be to contribute a little for the promotion of the Gospel among the heathen; if it may be for the everlasting happiness of one sinner; what occasion shall I have to rejoice!

⁸ On Parsons in Jerusalem, see *Mishkan*, no. 48 (2006), 73–85. Parsons' brother-in-law, Daniel O. Morton, published *Memoir of Rev. Levi Parsons, Late Missionary to Palestine* (Poultney, Vt: Smith & Shute, 1824). Reprint Arno Press, New York, 1977.

⁹ *Missionary Herald* (1822), 111.

For a month past I have been gaining strength, though, in consequence of frequent colds, I am still confined to my room.

If my health will permit, I design to sail for Smyrna by the first opportunity. Vessels are frequently passing from Smyrna to Cyprus, or Jaffa. I am not without a strong hope of arriving at Jerusalem before Christmas. The time from Christmas to the Passover affords high advantages for obtaining and diffusing religious information.”

Extracts from Journal

*By Levi Parsons, Alexandria, January 15 – February 8, 1822.*¹⁰

Brother F. [Fisk] took me in his arms and, with ease, carried me up the stairs; so wasted is this dying body

“*Alexandria, Jan. 15.* Two men took me in my chair from the boat, and carried me safely to my room. So tender is my heavenly Father to provide for me.

Saturday, 19. My health greatly enfeebled. It seems that this shattered frame will no longer endure so great weakness. With brother F. I talk freely of finishing my work, and of meeting my final Judge, the Lord of Missions. Heaven looks desirable, to obtain the *perfect* image of God – to know more of the existence of God as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost – to see, without a glass, the exceeding love displayed on the cross – to observe the stations, orders, and employments of angels – to know how saints are employed in relation to this and other worlds – to see how God overrules sin – and why it is *through great tribulation* that he brings his children to glory – in a word, to see God in all his attributes, and his angels and saints in all their glory.

21. Find my strength exceedingly reduced. Desire to be in readiness to meet my summons from the world. Have but little expectation of *recovering strength before I go hence to be here no more*. My great desire is, to honor God and religion, even to the moment of closing my eyes. As this earthly tabernacle is dissolving, I pray God to build me up into a new, vigorous, spiritual man; then can I sing, with a dying voice, ‘O death where is thy sting?’ I *did* desire to slumber, till the resurrection, on the holy hill, Bethlehem, the birth place of our Savior. But I rejoice that the Lord has brought me to Egypt; and as to the future, may I say, ‘the will of the Lord be done.’

22. In view of my great weakness, and in consideration that all the means we could use, have not had their desired effect, we thought it our duty to set apart this day to prayer. We enjoyed a season for several prayers, and for much conversation respecting God as Physician and Parent. We read Ps. cvi, Isa. xxxviii, Sam. iii, and many precious hymns. We said, this day brings heaven near. May it hasten us towards our home.

¹⁰ *Missionary Herald* (1822), 318–319.

23. Rain most of the day – the cold very uncomfortable. I am subject to constant chills – keep my bed most of the day – find the nights refreshing, the days long. Brother F. reads to me much of the time. Our morning and evening devotions are always deeply affecting. Thus, while I descend to the banks of Jordan, I can gather a flower – I can see a ray of light, from beyond the swelling flood. My flesh is literally consumed like the smoke, but nothing is impossible with God. He can make these dry bones praise him in this world, or he can lay them aside, to raise from them a spiritual and glorious tabernacle, for his kingdom.

25. In the morning, read the account of the character and doom of unfaithful ministers, Ezek. xxxiii. Afterwards, we endeavored to confess our past unfaithfulness, and to supplicate, with many cries to God, for the entire class of the clergy in Asia, of every denomination. To be ever alive to this subject, it is necessary to contemplate, often, the wretchedness of blind leaders of the blind, and of their deluded followers, beyond the grave, in the fire that is never to be quenched.

*Sabbath 27.*¹¹ Early in the morning, read from the Epistle to the Hebrews, and prayed together for our American missionary brethren, and then for all faithful missionaries of every denomination, and for every missionary station, beginning at China, including India, Cape of Good Hope, Sierra Leone, Malta, Astrachan, &c. &c.

At 10 o'clock, brother F. went to the house of Mr. Lee, the English consul, to preach to a few Protestants, who seem to be grateful for his services. The distant prospect of the entire conversion of this city to God, is a rich compensation for many years of toil, and suffering.

28. Weather a little more moderate – Rest well during the nights. The Sabbath past was highly interesting – no interruptions – a little emblem of heaven. We read Isa. liii, and the chapters relating to the love, suffering, and death of Christ. Gained new encouragement to perseverance in our work. This morning, read from Corinthians concerning their superiority of *charity*, and our united prayers were, for a great increase of charity, in our *own* breasts, and throughout this world of sin.

30. Walked on the terrace of the house, and viewed the city. Brother F. took me in his arms, and, with ease, carried me up the stairs; so wasted is this dying body. I assured him it was my opinion, that he would take care of this dissolving body but a few days longer. Let me be waiting, and at last say, 'Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.' I am often very weary and sorrowful, but tears are not in heaven. O may I find the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

31. Weather very unfavorable – rain almost every day. – The Dr. informed brother F. that, in his opinion, I shall never again enjoy perfect health in this warm climate, and I am now too weak to change my situation. Why should I wish to be in any other hands, than in his who is able to save to the uttermost."¹¹

¹¹ In contemporary Christian sources, like here, "Sabbath" refers to Sunday and should not be confused with the Jewish Sabbath.



God is very kind to me in my sickness

“February 1. Awoke with great faintness, which continued for an hour. I tried to cast my burden on the Lord, and after a few hours he enabled me to do it. ‘Come unto me’, said the blessed Savior, ‘all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ – God is very kind to me in my sickness. My appetite and sleep are usually excellent, my mind calm in view of death, although I see heavenly things, as through a glass, darkly, my hope is, that as my outward man decays, my inward man will be renewed day by day.

Sabbath 3. Awoke with greater weakness than ever I was sensible of before. I fear I shall complain as my body decays. How much Christians that are in health, should pray for their brethren on a dying bed. I need many prayers to day. I cry out in my distress – I do sink under the rod – shall I ever see Jesus as he is? *Will* Jesus make my dying bed? Let me not doubt. I cry, with every breath, to him who is my only hope.

Read, prayed, and conversed with Antonio. I told him I expected to die, and my desire was, to meet him in heaven. He promised to read the Bible, and to pray every day. How dreadfully solemn to remain fixed between two worlds – between time and eternity – between a mortal and an immortal tabernacle! How dreadful, and at the same time, how pleasing, to rest with all the saints.

4. Monthly concert. Read, in the morning, Ps. lxxii, and 1 Chron. xxix, conversed respecting the last devotional attainments of David, and made one request to God, that we may attain to a measure of the same faith, before we pass to the clear light of eternal day. We remembered to pray for the three churches in Boston, which give their monthly contribution for the support of this mission, and for all our missionary brethren; and last evening, we thought of our duty to all the colleges in America. On this evening, we could only raise our cries to God for kings, princes, presidents, governors, all in civil and all in ecclesiastical authority, that they may *all* praise our God. Let every thing praise God.

5. Weather more favorable. Walked in the public street a few moments – appetite good, but feet swollen to an extraordinary size – strength not sensibly improved. Wrote to brother and sister M. Conversed, in the morning, with our Jewish doctor, respecting the Hebrew plural name of God. He replied, ‘merely an idiom of the language.’

6. Thermometer at 60°¹² – rainy – cannot therefore walk abroad. Read, for our devotions, morning and evening, a chapter of Exodus, respecting the plagues sent on Pharaoh.

7. Rainy. Walked in my room – wrote to my uncle L. of G.¹³ Mr. Glidden¹⁴ visited me.

8. Weather as yesterday. Remain very weak. Last night we conversed

¹² 60° Fahrenheit = 16° Celsius.

¹³ Uncle Lyman of Goshen, Massachusetts.

¹⁴ Mr. Glidden (Gliddon) was the American consul at Alexandria.

on the high Christian attainment of submission and quietness. God says, when we make an improper inquiry: *'Be still, children, be still.'*"

Parsons' Sickness and Death

By *Pliny Fisk, Alexandria, February 10, 1822; to Jeremiah Evarts, Esq.*¹⁵

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him

"Very dear Sir,

I have written to you twice, since we arrived at this place. In my last I stated the opinion of the physician, that brother Parsons would probably never enjoy perfect health in this climate; though he said, without hesitation, that he would recover from his present weakness. So we all hoped and believed, though I apprehend brother Parsons had less hope of it, that any one who knew him.

His symptoms continued favorable, till day before yesterday; and our hopes were rather brightened. Then his diarrhoea returned, though not severely; and the physician said it would be easy to cure it. Yesterday it was worse, and he was weaker than I had ever seen him. My apprehensions respecting a fatal termination of his disorder, were greatly excited. He conversed on the subject with his usual serenity, referring the event continually to the will of God, as he has always been accustomed to do. Last evening, we spent a most precious hour in reading the Scriptures, prayer, and conversation. We read John 14th, and conversed some time about the 27th verse. 'Peace I leave with you,' &c. After conversing about an hour, I told him it was necessary that he should stop and take some rest. He replied, 'I feel as though I could converse two hours longer. You don't know how refreshing these seasons are to me.' He then fell asleep, and I sat down to write. I soon heard him saying in his sleep, – 'the goodness of God – growth in grace – fulfillment of the promises – so God is all in heaven, and all on earth.' – After sleeping a while, he awoke; and seemed about as usual at that hour. I proposed sitting by his side through the night; but he insisted on my going to bed; said he felt as though he should have a very quiet night; and as his attendant always slept near him, and awoke at the least word or motion, he urged me to retire to rest. About 11 o'clock I bid him good night, and wished that God might put underneath him the arms of everlasting mercy. He replied, 'The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him.'"

I pressed his hand, and kissed his quivering lips, and spoke to him; but he gave me no answer

"These, my dear Sir, were the last words that I ever heard that beloved brother speak, – the last, that I shall hear him, until I hear him speak in the language of immortality. Twice, while I slept, he awoke, and told



¹⁵ *Missionary Herald* (1822), 218–219.

Antonio, his servant, that he had slept very quietly, and felt easy and well. At half past three Antonio heard him speak, or groan, and started up. He saw something was the matter, and called me. I was by the bed side in a moment. O what a heart-rending moment was that! He was gasping for breath, unable to speak, and apparently insensible to all around him. I stood by his side and attempted to revive him, but in vain. I sent in haste for the physician, but did not obtain him. Nor do I suppose it would have been of any use whatever, if he had come. It was evident, that he was dying. I attempted to commend his departing spirit to that Redeemer, on whom he had believed. I pressed his hand, and kissed his quivering lips, and spoke to him; but he gave me no answer, – not even a look, or a motion. He took no notice of me, or of any thing around him. His appointed time had arrived. He continued to breathe till a quarter past four. Then the muscles of his face were knit together, as if he was in pain. It was the dying struggle. It was the dissolution of the last ties that united soul and body. It was the soul breaking off its last fetters. His features then became placid again. His breath stopped. His pulse ceased to beat. His soul took its immortal flight.

After the first pang of separation, I stood pensive by the corpse, thinking of the scenes which were opening to his view. O what glories! O what glories!

I turned my thoughts to myself, and found my heart sink and faint. But I have not room here to describe the emotions, that agitated my breast.

A little while after, as there was no person with me who understood English, I read a chapter, and prayed in Greek with Antonio, and then we dressed the body for the grave.”

With a heart overflowing with grief

“Early in the forenoon, Mr. Lee, the Consul, called on me, and kindly offered to see that all necessary arrangements were made for the funeral. He said, that in this climate it was necessary to bury soon, to prevent putrefaction. On this account he thought it necessary that the funeral should be to-day. Four o’clock was accordingly appointed. All the English gentlemen resident in the place, six or seven in number, the captains of several English ships, and a great number of merchants, principally Maltese, attended the funeral. The consul walked with me next to the coffin, and the others, 60 or 70 in number, followed in procession to the Greek convent, where the few English who reside here, bury their dead. At the grave, I read some verses from Job xiv, Ps xxxix, 1 Cor. xv, and Rev. xxi, xxii, and then made a short address, and closed with prayer. We then committed the dust to its kindred dust, there to await the archangel’s trumpet.

To me the stroke seems almost insupportable. Sometimes my heart rebels; and sometimes I hope it acquiesces in the will of God. I desire your prayers, that I may not faint when the Lord rebukes me.

With a heart overflowing with grief, I subscribe, yours affectionately,
Pliny Fisk.”

The Board on Parsons' Death

By the editor of *Missionary Herald*, July 1822.¹⁶

... the language of this, or of any similar providence, is not that of discouragement

“This simple and affecting narrative of the closing scene to the labors of that faithful servant of Christ, whose early departure we are now called to mourn, will excite the liveliest emotions in the friends of Zion. Most tenderly will they sympathize with that beloved missionary, who was thus suddenly deprived of his true yoke-fellow, and left alone in a land of strangers; and with no less tenderness will they mingle their tears with those of the beloved parents, who, for reasons such as in this world we can seldom fully comprehend, have been called to this afflictive loss.

We would, however, remark, – that the language of this, or of any similar providence, is not that of discouragement. He, to whom all power in heaven and on earth is committed, has certainly more regard for Zion, and for the attempts, however feeble, which are made, in obedience to his command, to render her the joy of all lands, than the most holy of his saints can ever have; and will by no means suffer a permanent injury to befall her. In this truth, we find the common refuge of God's people, in every age when the Church has been afflicted.”

Life, Death, and Psalm 51

By *Pliny Fisk*, Alexandria, February 15, 1822.¹⁷

While on our mission, we have read the 51st Ps. oftener than any other part of Scripture

“Apprehensive, especially after our arrival at Alexandria, that his [Parsons'] sickness *might* terminate in our separation, I had begun to note down, on a separate piece of paper, some of his remarks. ...

Monday, Jan. 21. I desire to record it as one of the greatest mercies of my life, that I am permitted to enjoy the heavenly society, conversation, and prayers of brother Parsons. While at Smyrna, from Dec. 4, to Jan. 9, we enjoyed seasons of social prayer, morning and evening, and were allowed some most precious seasons on the Sabbath. I do not recollect that a single season of devotion passed, without some remarks from brother P., expressive of submission to the divine will, concern for the souls of men, love to our mission, gratitude for divine mercies, confidence in God, and love to the Savior. I scarcely read a verse of Scripture but it drew from him some heavenly remark. While on our mission, we have read the 51st Ps. oftener than any other part of Scripture, and he has often remarked, 'we cannot read that too often.' One day he said, 'I have often thought of

¹⁶ *Missionary Herald* (1822), 219.

¹⁷ *Missionary Herald* (1822), 320.



being on missionary ground, and too feeble to labor, as one of the greatest trials that could be laid upon me, and this is now the very thing with which God sees fit to try me.'

You and I have now lost each his most intimate fellow-laborer. May it lead us to a more entire reliance on Christ, that friend who is always with his servants, who *never* leaves, who *never* forsakes them.

Your brother in the Gospel,
Pliny Fisk. ”

30 and 33 Years Old

Pliny Fisk had buried his good friend and colleague, Levi Parsons, who had not yet turned 30. The next Protestant missionary in Palestine or Syria to be laid in a grave was Pliny Fisk. This happened a little over three years later – before Fisk turned 33.

3. Pliny Fisk

Died in Beirut, October 23, 1825

Pliny Fisk had arrived in the Levant together with Levy Parsons (see no. 2). After Parsons' death in February 1822, the young American Jonas King was taken on by ABCFM on a three-year contract. On September 26, 1825, Fisk and King parted in Beirut, and about one month later Fisk died.

From April 25, 1823 to May 9, 1825, Fisk (together with others) worked in Jerusalem as Bible-men three times, totaling a period of over eight months. Toward the end of 1824, a Bible Society Room was set up in Jerusalem. Fisk had been designated the leader of the effort to distribute Scriptures in and from Jerusalem.¹⁸ Things were to turn out quite differently.

On October 11, 1825, Fisk began to mention that he was ill. "In the evening, after uniting, as usual, in reading the Scriptures in Arabic, he said he felt himself too ill to make any remarks, and requested Mr. Goodell, (in whose family he was) to make a few. He, however, prayed in Arabic with his usual fervency, though not with his usual length," write the American missionaries Isaac Bird and William Goodell.¹⁹

The disease got worse. One evening Fisk asked that Psalm 51 be read, and he also wanted "to hear the hymn which he had formerly sung at the grave of Mr. Parsons."

Brother, thou art gone before us,
And thy saintly soul hath flown
Where tears are wiped from every eye,
And sorrow is unknown, &c. &c.²⁰

The recently arrived missionary Dr. George E. Dalton (see no. 4), sent out by LJS, was in Sour (Tyre), and not available as his wife Jane was in an advanced stage of pregnancy. On October 29 she gave birth to her second son, Henry. The story of his death will be told later (see no. 5).

Three days before his death, Fisk, who had not yet turned 33, dictated some moving letters, included below. But first, the account of Fisk's last hours as described by his colleagues in Beirut, Isaac Bird and William Goodell. We begin on the evening of October 21, 1825.

¹⁸ Cf. *Missionary Herald* (1825), 33.

¹⁹ Cf. Alvan Bond, *Memoir of the Rev. Pliny Fisk, A.M.* (Edinburgh: Waugh & Innes, 1829), 306.

²⁰ Bond, 309.

Fisk's Last Twenty-four Hours

By Isaac Bird and William Goodell, Beirut, October 1825.²¹

... the hand of death seemed really upon him

“At six o'clock he had rapidly altered, and the hand of death seemed really upon him. We repaired to the throne of grace, commending his soul to him that gave it. He had inquired anxiously if the doctor had not come. He came at eight, but Mr. Fisk was insensible. He approached the bedside. 'Here is the doctor,' said we. He raised his eyes, fastened them a moment on the stranger, and sunk immediately into his former stupor. The physician, on learning what had been his symptoms, expressed little hope of saving him; but not to abandon him entirely, he ordered new mustard poultices to his feet, and warm wet cloths to his stomach, with frequent draughts of rice-water. One hour after, to our no small joy and encouragement came on a free perspiration, the paroxysm of fever was arrested, respiration more free, and the remainder of the night comparatively quiet.”

Our hope had not for many days been higher that he might yet survive

“*Saturday 22d.* He was able to return the morning salutation to those that came in. When the physician entered the room, he immediately recognised him, and conversed a little with him in Italian – passed the day quietly – said almost nothing – tongue palsied.

The sun had set, and no appearance of his usual paroxysm. His strength was such, that he could still raise himself on his elbow, and nearly leave his bed without assistance. Our hope had not for many days been higher that he might yet survive. The fever came on, however, at eight or nine o'clock, but so gently, that the physician repeatedly assured us he apprehended no danger from it. We therefore retired to rest, leaving him, for the first half of the night, in the hands of the physician and a single attendant. Scarcely had we closed our eyes in sleep, when we were awaked to be told, that all hope concerning him was fled. We hastened to his bedside, found him panting for breath, and evidently sinking into the arms of death. The physician immediately left him and retired to rest. We sat down, conversed, prayed, wept, and watched the progress of his dissolution; until at precisely three o'clock on the Lord's day morning, October 23, the tired wheels of nature ceased to move, and the soul, which had been so long waiting for deliverance, was quietly released.

It rose, like its great Deliverer, very early on the first day of the week, triumphant over death, and entered, as we believe, on that Sabbath, that *eternal rest* which remaineth for the people of God.”

²¹ Bond, 310–312.

His remains sweetly slumber in a garden connected with one of our houses

“As soon as the news of his death was heard, all the flags of the different consuls were seen at half-mast. His funeral was attended at four P.M. At his grave, a part of the chapter in Corinthians, respecting the resurrection, was read in Italian, and a prayer offered in English, in presence of a more numerous and orderly concourse of people than we have ever witnessed on a similar occasion. His remains sweetly slumber in a garden connected with one of our houses.”

Our house is left unto us desolate

“As for ourselves, we feel that we have lost our elder brother. Our house is left unto us desolate. To die, we doubt not, has been infinite gain to *him*, but to *us* the *loss* seems at present irreparable. He cheered us in the social circle, he reproved us when we erred, he strengthened us by his prayers, exhortations, and counsels. – The Board of Missions will feel the loss, perhaps, not less than we. Another servant, with talents like his for explaining and enforcing the doctrines of the Gospel, and who shall be able to preach fluently in most of the languages heard in this country, will not soon be found. But the Lord of the harvest has resources of which we know but little. To him let us still repair, and pray in hope.”

Farewell Letters from Fisk

*Dictated by Pliny Fisk, Beirut, October 20, 1825.*²²

To Jonas King, his fellow-worker

“My beloved brother King, – Little did we think, when we parted, that the first or nearly the first intelligence concerning me, would be the news of my death. Yet, at present, this is likely to be the case. I write you as from my dying bed. The Saviour whom I have so imperfectly served, I trust now grants me his aid; and to his faithful care I commit my immortal spirit. May *your* life be prolonged, and be made abundantly useful. Live a life of prayer. Let your conversation be in heaven. Labour abundantly for Christ. Whatever treatment you meet with, whatever difficulties you encounter, whatever vexations fall to your lot, and from whatever source, possess your soul in patience; yea, let patience have her perfect work. I think of you now in my dying moments, and remember many happy hours we have spent together. And I die in the glorious hope of meeting you where we shall be freed from all sin. Till that happy meeting, dear brother, farewell!

P. Fisk.”

²² Bond, 314–316.



To Daniel Temple, Malta

“My beloved brother Temple, – On the confines of eternity, as I suppose, I send you a last token of my love, and a last farewell. Viewing myself, as I now do, a dying man, the great and holy cause in which we are engaged, presents itself to my mind with indescribable importance. We have both had slight disappointments and troubles in our work, but they are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be, as we trust, revealed in us. At this solemn moment, I seem unable to recollect any thing that deserves the name of trial, disappointment, or sacrifice. The history of my life has been a history of mercies, and – of sins! My only hope is in the unmerited mercy of Christ. I trust that for sixteen or seventeen years, I have found his service pleasant, and him a faithful and gracious Master, though I have been constantly violating his laws, and wandering from his presence.

I wish you a long and useful life, and much communion with Christ. My kindest love to Mrs Temple. My prayer is, that you may long live and be happy together; and the Lord grant, that your children may be early sanctified by his grace, and live to occupy the places made vacant in this mission, by the calling of one and another of us to himself.²³

Your dying brother. P. Fisk.”

To his father

“My beloved aged Father, – I compose a few lines for you upon a sick, probably a dying bed. When you gave me up for this mission, you gave me up for life and death. You know to whom to look for consolation and support. The same God, who has comforted you so many years, under so many troubles, will comfort you under this. You know his consolations are neither few nor small. I leave these lines as a pledge to you, and my brothers and sisters, my nephews and nieces, that I love you all most dearly, though so long separated from you. I hope all, or nearly all our number, have been enabled to give themselves to Christ, and that we shall meet with our departed mother in heaven.”

Dalton at Fisk's Grave

By George E. Dalton, Beirut, November 24, 1825.²⁴

... but our sorrow is not without hope

“Nov. 24. – We felt much grief at the departure of Br. Fisk, whose face we are no more to behold in the flesh. I felt deeply that a brother was

²³ Mrs. Temple died at Malta on January 15, 1827, and shortly thereafter the Temples' two youngest children also died. In Daniel Temple's words: "Death has swept away, one after another, one half of my family ... I am sometimes sad: I am happy to say, however, that I am never disconsolate. You knew a little of my companion, and can therefore form some faint idea of what I and my two surviving little boys have lost." Cf. *Missionary Herald* (1827), 308.

²⁴ *Jewish Expositor* (1827), 27.

gone, and heard the history of all his sickness and his last words, with feelings I cannot describe. In the evening, taking my little boy in my arms, I walked to visit the resting place of the earthly remains of this dearly beloved brother, whose grave is visible from the windows of the house we now inhabit. I often look for it, and think how soon may my last earthly remains be laid besides his. It is intended to remove his body, as soon as a burying-ground is purchased for the English. His loss is deeply felt by us all; every thing associates him with us, but our sorrow is not without hope; sin and sorrow affect him now no more, and this is another proof of the power of God, in keeping his chosen ones unto salvation; his work was done, and we also shall only live whilst the Lord has need of our services; then rest, the same sweet rest, shall be our's."

Fisk and Dalton

Dr. Dalton had looked forward to working with Fisk in Jerusalem. They had agreed that it would be unwise for the Dalton family to live in Jerusalem without a fellow worker. After Fisk died, Dalton received information from the LJS that a replacement was on his way. He therefore applied for and obtained a residence permit in Jerusalem, and arrived late in 1825 in order to make the final practical arrangements for the family to settle there with John Nicolayson as a fellow worker.

But, as we shall now see, Dr. Dalton died, leaving Nicolayson as the only LJS missionary in Palestine.



4. George E. Dalton

Died in Jerusalem, January 25, 1826

Dr. George E. Dalton and his wife, Jane, together with their newborn son George W., arrived in Beirut on January 6, 1825, as emissaries for LJS. According to the plan, Dalton was to work as a doctor in Jerusalem. On December 24, 1825, he arrived alone in Jerusalem in order to make the final preparations for his family's transfer to this place. Before that he had obtained a residence permit for the family.

On December 21, 1825, John Nicolayson came to Beirut. He had also been sent out by LJS to work among the Jews in Jerusalem. He arrived in Jerusalem as early as January 3, 1826. LJS's staff of missionaries had now doubled!

On January 4, 1826, they left Jerusalem together to visit Bethlehem. But the next day Dalton was seized with fever, "perhaps in consequence of having drunk more than he ought of the springs we found on the road," writes Nicolayson. The fever abated on January 8, and the rain ceased so that they could leave Bethlehem and reach Jerusalem that same day with Dalton "riding on horseback ... and thus we reached home, and have come within reach of means, which, by the Lord's blessing, will soon, I hope, restore this valuable servant of the Lord to his missionary labours." But this fever was to be a sickness unto death for Dr. Dalton.²⁵

When Nicolayson first arrived in Jerusalem, Dalton came from a sick call to a Greek Orthodox bishop. We will begin the story of Dalton's last days here, and let Nicolayson go on to describe the course of events from January 14 until Dalton's burial on January 26, 1826.

Dalton's Last Journal Entry

*By George E. Dalton, Jerusalem, January 3, 1826.*²⁶

**... a companion has been sent to supply
the place of my dear departed brother Fisk**

“Whilst with him [the bishop], news came to me of a 'new Englishman' from Beyrout, having arrived at Mar Michael.²⁷ It rejoiced my heart to find my fellow-labourer Mr. Nicolayson the person. O Lord, how great are thy mercies; dwelling here alone, a companion has been sent to supply

²⁵ *Jewish Expositor* (1827), 141.

²⁶ *Jewish Expositor* (1827), 73.

²⁷ Mar Michael is Greek Orthodox convent where most of the 1820s Bible-men lived while in Jerusalem; the so-called "Bible Society Room" established by Pliny Fisk was also there.

the place of my dear departed brother Fisk, and bring intelligence from my near and dear ties of health, preservation, and peace! ”

Dalton's Last Days

By John Nicolayson, Jerusalem, January 14–26, 1826.²⁸

He also spoke of getting to Jaffa

“Jan. 14. – The Doctor is again more feverish and weaker to-day. What may be the will of God respecting him, I know not; but should it be (as appears not improbable) to take him away from us, it would be a hard, though, doubtless, a necessary lesson for me, to rely more exclusively upon the Lord himself for every assistance needed: for, as I am generally apt to lean upon every apparent support, so I had particularly promised myself much from the assistance, counsel, and advice, of this my dear fellow-labourer.

Jan. 15. – Sunday. The Doctor was nearly the same as yesterday. This is as much a day of visiting among the Greeks as any other day, which made it a very comfortless Sabbath to me, having no opportunity of attending a public worship performed according to the doctrines and in the spirit of the Gospel, and my private readings and meditations being constantly interrupted by visitors, whose mutual conversations I could not understand or join in.

Jan. 16. – The Doctor continued the same as yesterday. In the afternoon he spoke rather confusedly about making his will, and as if he thought that we had been trying to prevent his doing it, though it had not so much as been mentioned before. He also spoke of getting to Jaffa, and going from thence by sea to Beyrout, which I fear would be quite impracticable at present.

Jan. 17. – In the forenoon he was rather worse than yesterday, but towards evening a very considerable change took place: the fever seemed to have left him, and as this is a time of crisis, being the thirteenth day, we hope his recovery may be dated from this time; and though it naturally will be slow, as we are here deprived of many of the means which might accelerate it, yet I trust it will be sure, as we shall be able to proceed more according to his own directions, as his strength increases, and thus shall not be so much dependent upon the physician, whose knowledge and skill is not to be estimated very highly, though he is the best we could find here. May the Lord's name be blessed for this good hope!

Jan. 18. – The Doctor was as yesterday. Though I trust he is recovering, he is too weak to engage in conversation.”

This is my home!

“Jan. 19. – He seemed to be relapsing again, and was exceedingly weak during the night, when the fever rose higher than it ever had been be-



²⁸ *Jewish Expositor* (1827), 142–144.

fore; and his nerves were attacked in a peculiar manner, which seemed to make every thing appear difficult and painful to him, and deprived him of all rest. At half past four o'clock he suddenly said, 'I believe I am near my home.' When I asked him, 'What home do you mean?' he pointed upwards, and said, 'This is my home!' I then asked him whether he actually thought the Lord would take him home soon? His answer was, 'I cannot speak positively, but I feel as one dying.' A little after, he added, 'I am at perfect peace with God, and feel no difficulty in committing my dear wife, and the little ones the Lord has given us, into his hands.' He then desired me to remember him affectionately to the Missionary brethren and sisters in Beyrout.

I asked him whether he had any particulars to mention respecting the mission in this country, or the cause in general? To which he replied, 'Tell the Committee that the friends of the cause in England have too high an opinion of what has been done here, for as to the establishing of a mission in Jerusalem, or any other place in the country, nothing has been done as yet.' Some time after, he said, 'As to burial, I had rather be buried among the Greeks.' All this he spoke with considerable difficulty, but with perfect presence of mind.

Jan. 20. – In the morning my valued friend Dr. Dalton seemed to recover some little strength again, so that there is still hope. His strength continued to increase in the afternoon and evening, so that he repeatedly said, 'The Lord's name be praised;' adding, 'He makes all things better than we apprehend.' We removed my bed into his room, that I might attend on him in the night, whenever he wanted any thing. The first part of the night he spent in great restlessness and delirium; but the latter part in stammering and singing praise to the Lord his Redeemer, but in accents so broken, that I could understand no more than these few words: 'Praised be the Lord for his infinite mercy;' and a little after, 'Lift up your heads, ye gates.'

Jan. 21. – In the course of the day he seemed a little better, but towards night the fever and the weakness increased.

Jan. 22. – A little better again in the day than he was in the night.

Jan. 23. – In the night he was very delirious and very weak. The fever has been increasing for the last two or three days. To-day we applied blisters to both his legs. I dread the coming night. The Lord help us!

Jan. 24. – In consequence of the blisters we had applied, he enjoyed some rest in the night, so that he is considerably better to-day, and we again entertain hope. Feeling himself so much better to-night, as I had sat up several nights with him, he desired me to go to bed, which I did, leaving his servant with him. ”

When I came in I found him in dreadful convulsions

“*Jan. 25.* – Wednesday. In the night, before twelve o'clock, he was suddenly taken with violent spasms in his right side. He desired his servant to call me; but again said, 'No, let him rest, perhaps it may go off.' At two o'clock he sent the servant to call me. When I came in I found him

in dreadful convulsions. I immediately asked him whether he was able to think of any medicine that might afford him relief? He then ordered us to rub his right arm with opodeldoc,²⁹ which gave him some relief. About four o'clock the spasms gradually subsided, and a state of insensibility, resembling sleep, succeeded. About five o'clock I left him, apparently sleeping, and when in about three hours I entered the room, I found him in the same state. We immediately sent for the physician, who soon came and applied several remedies, but all in vain. Though he did not speak, and seemed entirely insensible, yet when I asked him whether he knew me, he answered, 'I do:' and a little afterwards he spoke some words which I did not understand, but the last of them was, 'die.' We sent for another physician, but all was in vain, and at one o'clock, P.M. he breathed his last. He had anticipated death without the least fear, and was entirely resigned to the will of his Master; so he died in an easy frame, and I felt assured that his blessed and happy spirit has found its rest in the Lord Jesus, and has joined the multitude of those who have been saved through the blood of the Lamb, and through the mercy of the God of their salvation.

The Greek priests, who have shown us great kindness during the illness of my dear deceased brother, have kindly offered a place in their burial-ground for the interment of his remains.

In the evening I wrote to Beyrout, to inform them of his decease, intending to send a courier with my letter to-morrow. ”

The place of interment is on Mount Zion

“*Jan. 26.* – In order to bury the remains of my dear departed brother, it was necessary to have the usual license from the Cadi;³⁰ but he not being here at present, in consequence of the recent disturbances, which have produced a sort of temporary anarchy, his agents demanded five hundred piastres³¹ before granting the licence. I told them in reply to this extravagant demand, that as Englishmen we were exempted from all payment of the kind, but that if they chose to insist upon a payment, I would give them whatever they wished, provided they gave me a receipt for it, and chose to take the consequences. This had the desired effect. The licence was granted, and we proceeded to the burial.

The Greeks, like all other Orientals, bury without a coffin, but the Doctor's servant, who is a carpenter, having seen the coffin which was made for Mr. Fisk in Beyrout, made one for the body of the departed brother, and thus we followed the English custom in this particular.

The bishops having desired the Greek Christians to follow the corpse

29 According to Wikipedia: "The Pharmacopoeia of the United States (U.S.P.) gives a recipe for opodeldoc that contains: Powdered soap, 60 grams; Camphor, 45 grams; Oil of rosemary, 10 milliliters; Alcohol, 700 milliliters; Water, enough to make 1000 milliliters."

30 Muslim judge.

31 One twentieth of Nicolayson's annual salary of 100 pounds sterling. One pound sterling was approximately 100 piastres. A Jewish family in Jerusalem needed 400–500 piastres annually for rent and cost of living. In 1839 an adult Jew received 21 piastres from Montefiore, the equivalent of one month's income; cf. Lieber, 336.



to the grave, in honour of the deceased and the English nation, in general, there were, notwithstanding the bad weather, about fifty persons who attended. The Superior of Mar Michael, Papas Yoel, Papas Ysa, Papas Cesare,³² and another priest, honoured us with their presence also. The place of interment is on Mount Zion.³³”

Nicolayson’s Situation Without Dalton

*By John Nicolayson, Beirut, March 13, 1826; to his committee.*³⁴

... **the Mission here is quite in its infancy**

“How I must find myself situated at present, as it concerns the great work before me, you will easily perceive, if you consider the peculiar difficulties which attend it in this country, by reason of the unsettled state of things, and from a number of other causes. For you will remember that the Mission here is quite in its infancy, (if indeed so much may be said of it) and likewise, that I was sent out here without receiving any particular instructions from the Committee, being directed to confer with those who were here before me, on the manner and plan of proceeding.”

Working in the Vineyard of the Lord

About his first meeting with Dalton, Nicolayson wrote on January 3, 1826 that he “had the joy of seeing and saluting this dear brother in the Lord, with whom I hope, through the grace of God, to spend many happy days in labouring jointly with him in the vineyard of the Lord. The rest of the day was spent in conversation as to the nature and importance of our work, and upon various subjects connected with it; and we concluded with reading the Scriptures, and with prayer.”³⁵

These hopes of “happy days” were not fulfilled. With Dalton’s death in 1826, LJS’s staff of missionaries in Palestine was reduced from two to one. The young Nicolayson attached himself to the American missionaries in Beirut, where Jane Dalton and her two young boys were living.

Less than six months after her husband’s death, Mrs. Dalton buried their youngest son. Nicolayson was also present.

32 Local Greek Orthodox priests in Jerusalem with whom the Bible-men in Jerusalem had good contact in the 1820s; see no. 6.

33 The Greek cemetery is near the so-called David’s sepulcher.

34 *Jewish Expositor* (1827), 25–26.

35 *Jewish Expositor* (1827), 140.

5. Mrs. Dalton's Little Henry

Died in Beirut, July 18, 1826

During the Daltons' journey to Syria and Palestine, Jane Dalton had given birth to their first son, George W., in the autumn of 1824 at Malta.³⁶ The couple's second son, Henry, was born at Sour (Tyre) on October 29, 1825.³⁷

Jane Dalton had not been present when her husband, Dr. George E. Dalton, was buried in Jerusalem on January 26, 1826 (see no. 4). Less than six months later she buried her son Henry in Beirut. John Nicolayson was present at both burials.

Little Henry's Death and Burial

*By John Nicolayson, Beirut, July 18, 1826.*³⁸

To-day we buried his mortal remains near those of Mr. Fisk

“Mrs. Dalton's little Henry was unwell yesterday, but no danger was apprehended. At half past twelve in the night, her servant came to call Mr. Bird,³⁹ saying, the child was very sick. In half an hour Mr. B. returned, and told me that the child was dead when he arrived there. To-day we buried his mortal remains near those of Mr. Fisk. We assembled at Mrs. Dalton's soon after five o'clock in the afternoon, where we had some conversations upon death and eternity in Arabic, with those natives who attended. Mr. Goodell⁴⁰ then read a portion of the Gospel in English, and I concluded with a prayer for the afflicted mother, and for a blessing upon all present. At the grave, Mr. Bird made a short address in Arabic, to the persons around.”

Not the Last Time

Jane Dalton did not have the strength to return to Ireland right away with her remaining son, George, but stayed with the American missionaries in Beirut. In March 1828 she married John Nicolayson. They had two daughters together, and together they had to bury the youngest, Jane Dorothy, in Jerusalem in 1839 (see no. 10).

³⁶ *Jewish Expositor* (1825), 155.

³⁷ *Jewish Expositor* (1826), 115.

³⁸ *Jewish Expositor* (1827), 468.

³⁹ Isaac Bird, sent out by ABCFM.

⁴⁰ William Goodell, sent out by ABCFM.

6. Papas Ysa

Died in Jerusalem, June 10, 1834

John Nicolayson's first visit to Jerusalem took place in early January 1826. Due to the changed political situation it was not possible for him to settle there with his family until the autumn of 1833. It had been agreed with the American missionaries that they should also send a family to Jerusalem. This turned out to be William W. M. Thomson and his wife Eliza, who had come to Beirut on February 26, 1833. The Thomson family, with their newborn son William, came to Jerusalem on April 24, 1834 (see no. 8).

The city they came to was, in Nicolayson's words, struck by "God's four sore punishments, earthquake, war, pestilence, and (in part) famine"⁴¹ over the next few months.

All in Nicolayson's household were ill, but they recovered, at least initially. Many people in Jerusalem died, among them Papas Ysa (Isa) Petros and his son. Papas Ysa was a learned Greek Orthodox priest who since the early 1820s had had close contacts with the various Protestant missionaries in Jerusalem; he also translated some writings into Arabic for them.

The following account by William Thomson was written *after* Mrs. Thomson's death (see second paragraph).

Ravages of War and Disease in Jerusalem

*By William W. M. Thomson, Jerusalem, July, 1834.*⁴²

He was the most learned and ingenious man I have found in the country

“There have been many deaths in this city since the war commenced. Amongst these the mission will feel deeply the loss of Papas Isa Petros and his son. The former, the Greek priest so friendly to our brethren Parsons and Fisk, has always been ready to assist us in translations, and in every other way in his power. Immediately before the rebellion, he had made all the preparatory arrangements to explore some twenty villages of Greek Christians in the mountains between this and Nazareth. He was to ascertain the number of families, the number of children, whether there was any school, any church, or any books, and how many could read; whether they had a teacher, etc. He was to return his statistics to me, when he would pursue what farther measures in reference to schools and

41 *Jewish Intelligence* (1834), 199. The “war” was a peasant rebellion during which the felahin (peasants) forced their way into Jerusalem.

42 *Missionary Herald* (1835), 91–92.

the distribution of books I should see proper to sustain. I was surprised to find so many villages of Christians, where we thought there were none, and was greatly interested in the plan. He was the most learned and ingenious man I have found in the country; and Mr. Bird says he does not know of any one that can supply his place as a translator.

When the Fellahs entered the city he labored hard, burying his chests; he then walled up his door to keep the Fellahs out; but death entered in another way, and this very work was the cause of it. Alas no cheering light shines from the tomb. His only son, a fine young man and the teacher of our school, followed him to the grave in a few days,⁴³ leaving an only sister about thirteen years of age. Her father had taught her to read, and wished her educated for a teacher. Mrs. Thomson had resolved to do it, along with Miria,⁴⁴ whom we brought from Beyroot for the same purpose; and we thus hoped in two years to have two active and efficient native helpers in the most difficult work of female education. But God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts.

The plague has made fearful ravages in the convents. Twenty out of the forty-four monks and friars in the Latin convent, died with it. All the rest fled, leaving their convent entirely desolate.”

Papas Ysa's Death

*By John Nicolayson, Jerusalem, June 9–11, 1834.*⁴⁵

We have lost a kind friend and an experienced counsellor

“Yesterday Papas Ysa's son called, to tell me that his father is very ill and has been so ever since the rebels entered town. I called and found him in a high fever. He seemed to recognise me; but when they bid him to tell me what he had been wanting to speak to me about, he had nothing to say. To my inquiries respecting the state of his soul, he gave me the same general only half-satisfactory answers that he always used to give: he did, however, plainly and explicitly declare that Christ is his only hope and all his salvation. May he soon find this verified in fact, for he is evidently hastening towards eternity!

June 10. – Spent a good deal of the day with Papas Ysa. He seems to be going very fast. The medicines used will not take effect. The root of his disease seems to have been fright and fatigue occasioned by the late troubles. On returning home I found our friend the English priest there; and learning from him that there is a military physician residing at the Casa Nova, we went together in search of him, to get him to see Papas Ysa, but we found him gone to the convent. Thither we followed him, but found him gone to the hospital. My friend promised to bring him on his

43 According to Nicolayson, Papas Ysa's son, Butrus, died on July 12, 1834. Cf. *Jewish Intelligence* (1835), 221.

44 Daughter of Jacob Aga, former Armenian patriarch.

45 *Jewish Intelligence* (1835), 208.



return, if not too late. Towards evening he did so, and he ordered blisters for his legs. I sent Mr. Thomson's servant to put them on, and he thinks there are some symptoms of returning hope. The medicines had begun to take effect. I feel a good deal indisposed myself. An European officer in the Pasha's⁴⁶ employ brought us a letter from Mr. Thomson, and kindly offered to forward letters for us to Jaffa and Beyroot. Accordingly we wrote some hasty lines to assure our brethren and friends of our safety.

June 11. – Papas Ysa is no more on earth. About ten o'clock last night he breathed his last. Thus another link between us and the people in this country is snapped. But it is the Lord; let him do what seemeth good in his sight! We have lost a kind friend and an experienced counsellor; his family their main support. Continue to feel indisposed; Mrs. Thomson also. It is indeed a wonder that we have hitherto enjoyed so good health under these circumstances: Many are suffering, and some dying, in consequence of the troubles. The owner of my house has brought a mason to inspect it, who assures me that, if thoroughly repaired in time, it will be perfectly safe. He is to set about it to-morrow. ”

Is Papas “Jesus” “with Jesus”?

“Ysa” is the Arabic name for Jesus. Nicolayson hoped, but was seemingly not convinced, that Papas “Jesus” was now “with Jesus” – a conviction which, in the hour of death, was always expressed about the Protestant missionaries, their spouses, and their children.

On February 24, 1835, Nicolayson wrote this about Papas Yoel's death, with reference to information from other Greek Orthodox persons in Jerusalem: “I learnt from them that my old friend Papas Yoel (once Superior of St. Michael) died a month or two ago. He had heard much of the truths of the Gospel; he had seen many of the errors of the Church in which he was a minister. O might I but hope that ere death seized him he had laid firm hold on the former, and seriously abandoned the latter!”⁴⁷

I wonder whether there were not also “errors” among the Protestant missionaries in the Holy Land in the 19th century.

⁴⁶ Turkish governor.

⁴⁷ *Jewish Intelligence* (1836), 15.

7. A Lad from Beirut

Died in Jaffa, February 1835

In February 1835 John Nicolayson was informed that “a lad” in his service had died in Jaffa. This made Nicolayson reflect on whether the gospel had made it from the lad’s head to his heart. Nicolayson also explains the belief of some that, in the hour of death, all – Christians, Jews, and Moslems – are declared true sons of their respective religious communities.

Death and the Matter of Course System

By John Nicolayson, Jerusalem, February 24, 1835.⁴⁸

Has all this gone for nothing, by reaching his head only?

“I received letters from Jaffa, announcing the death of a lad from Beyrout, who had been in my service before, and was again returning to my employ. He had been taught to read, read the Scriptures much for himself last winter, besides hearing them read and expounded by me every evening; had been remarkably reformed in his conduct, and entirely abandoned, while with me, his former dishonesty, and seemed to have some perception of the all-important distinction so universally overlooked in this country, between mere external, so-called religious exercises, and that worship in spirit and in truth which alone can be accepted of that God who is a pure Spirit. Has all this gone for nothing, by reaching his head only, or did he recur to it in true earnest, and apply it to his heart when he saw death approaching? This also remains to be seen in that day. Those who write about him pursue the matter of course system, so prevalent in this country, in all its deadening influences.”

All this is a matter of course

“Shall I explain what I mean by this system? Having mentioned it, perhaps I ought. Moreover, the real religious and moral condition of – I may say – all the inhabitants of these countries, Christians, Jews, Moslems, Druses, &c., can scarcely be better illustrated. I shall, therefore, add a few specimens of this system. A man sins – confesseth to a priest – is absolved; – sins again – is laid on his death bed – sends for a priest. If death appears certain, (not till then,) the last rites of his Church are administered to him. He dies – his body is buried – his soul passes its period in purgatory, (or, in the rounds of metempsychosis, if he be a Jew,) – then finally is saved, (having, of course, been at bottom a true son of the church, or synagogue, or mosque,) and all this as a matter of course. Thus passes

⁴⁸ *Jewish Intelligence* (1836), 15–16.

one generation after another into eternity, without one effectual stirring thought on its consequences, or one earnest appropriate exertion for the necessary and proper preparation! ”

Back to the Missionaries, 1834

Papas Ysa and his son succumbed in the sickly season (no. 6). The missionaries in Jerusalem held out – but only until July 22.

8. Eliza N. Thomson

Died in Jerusalem, July 22, 1834

The Thomson family arrived in Jerusalem on April 24, 1834, and stayed in Nicolayson's house. On May 20, the very day the peasant rebellion began, William Thomson went to Jaffa in order to bring the family's furniture up to Jerusalem. He was not able to get back until July 12. Though all those in Nicolayson's house had been ill, the sickness had not been unto death. The month of June had been cold, and Mrs. Thomson had "enjoyed excellent health until about the close of it."

On his return to Jerusalem, Thomson found his wife "suffering intensely from violent ophthalmia ... and she was in a high inflammatory fever."⁴⁹

This sickness was unto death. Here is William Thomson's story about his last five days with Eliza.

Mrs. Thomson's Last Five Days

By William W. M. Thomson, Jerusalem, July 16–20, 1834.⁵⁰

I knew not what was the matter, and I knew not what to do

"Thursday, 16th, Mrs. Thomson spent a restless night. The case which had before appeared a plain one, now became, to me, utterly mysterious. I knew not what was the matter, and I knew not what to do. The action of the heart was still very distressing, and I endeavored merely to allay the violence of such symptoms as appeared. On Friday evening we heard of an Italian physician among the troops, whom we sent for, and who came the next morning. But he did not pretend to understand the case and recommended no new course of treatment.**"**

The blood of atonement was her only hope

"My dear wife, at an early stage of her disease, was convinced that she would not recover. The thought never alarmed her. She had for many weeks been in the higher, clearer regions of faith, ready to depart at any time. We often conversed on the subject, and she gave the most consoling assurance, that for a considerable time before her sickness she had enjoyed greater nearness to God in prayer, and greater comfort with regard to her interest in the blood and love of the Savior, than ever before. Sometimes she remarked, that, owing to her great bodily sufferings, it was difficult to compose her thoughts to meditation and prayer, and that her faith appeared at times very weak; but she was always distinct,

49 Thomson's Journal, *Missionary Herald* (1835), 44, 53.

50 *Missionary Herald* (1835), 52–53.

clear, and decisive in declaring her confidence in her Savior. The blood of atonement was her only hope; and she repeatedly remarked that it was a ground of hope, that would not, and did not fail in the hour of death.”

She spoke of the dear babe with visible emotion

“We spent much of Sabbath night, the 20th, in this kind of conversation, and in prayer. She also gave directions with regard to some small temporal affairs; left messages for her near friends; spoke of the dear babe with visible emotion, but was enabled to resign him to ‘Him who gave’. She had cherished the hope of laboring longer to educate and bring to the knowledge of the truth some of the degraded daughters of Jerusalem; but the Lord knew best, and to his will she cheerfully submitted. I was astonished at the composure with which she was enabled to make all these arrangements preparatory to her upward and everlasting flight. Being somewhat exhausted she fell into a quiet sleep, and awoke in the morning with all her symptoms greatly mitigated – her pulse nearly natural, the heat abated, accompanied with a sensation of general comfort.”

And just as the sun set, she silently fell asleep in Jesus

“At one o’clock she was seized with an alarming chill, which yielded to applications and passed off with an irregular fever. Our friends were much encouraged, but I was sure that she could not survive another such attack, and therefore directed all my efforts to prevent its return, and succeeded through that day and till noon of Tuesday. During the morning of the latter day she was uncommonly well and strong. About one o’clock I was sent for to dinner. She assured me she had no tendency to chill whatever, and leaving Miria⁵¹ alone with her, I went below. On returning, in about five minutes, I noticed a change indicating the return of the chill. She thought not, but I immediately used every effort to prevent it, but without avail. It came on violently, and in half an hour her reason, for the first time, became disturbed, and my fears became a painful certainty that the hour of her departure was at hand. I called Mr. Nicolayson, and he and I labored to restore circulation in the extremities; but all our efforts were utterly powerless. For several hours she suffered greatly. I continued to repeat to her those texts of Scripture which I knew afforded her particular comfort; and at times she appeared for a moment to recollect, and would reply, ‘Oh yes, it is so, it is so’, or words to that effect. Once, in a moment of comparative quiet, I asked her if she remembered Sabbath night; and whether she felt now as she did then? She seemed to recall the scene and said, ‘Yes, I remember it, and my feelings are the same’. She knew me to the very last moment, and the only connected sentence which she spoke after her situation became manifest, was just before she died. Looking me steadfastly in the face she said, ‘Native, native, native

51 See note 44 above.

land – you remember when we travelled west, that wild young man and his wife who came on board the boat, and you talked with him a great deal, and he became very serious. Oh I thought it was such an opportunity'. This she repeated several times. 'It was such an opportunity, and he left us much impressed'. The next word was on some other subject. After this she requested to be laid upon her side. We then kneeled down and commended her departing spirit to God. And just as the sun set, she silently fell asleep in Jesus without a struggle or a groan. Her last end was perfect peace.

When she ceased to breathe I gently closed her eyes, prepared the body for the burial, and then sat down and watched by the dear remains until the day dawned.”

Strangers carried her to the grave

“We were apprehensive that we should not be allowed to bury in any of the grave-yards, but God prepared the way for us. The Greek bishop not only gave permission, but took the whole charge of preparing the grave himself. Those who know what difficulty has generally been experienced on this subject in these countries, will not fail to notice the good providence of God in this. When all was ready we read and talked of that day when that which was now sown in corruption should be raised in incorruption – ‘dishonor’ should be changed to ‘glory’ – ‘weakness’ ‘raised in power’ – when this ‘natural body’ should become ‘spiritual’, like unto Christ’s glorified body.

Strangers carried her to the grave, followed by myself, Mr. Nicolayson, Elias, a Christian brother, and two or three others, the only Franks⁵² in the place. Her sleeping dust awaits in hope the joyful morning of the resurrection, on the top of Zion, near the sepulchre of David, and by the grave of Dr. Dalton, an English missionary and former husband of Mrs. Nicolayson.”

The Lord had ... written my dear little babe motherless in a strange land

“I have been in the ‘strait’ which Paul mentions; nevertheless, if to ‘abide in the flesh be more needful’, I trust the grace of God will enable me cheerfully to wait all the days of my appointed time, till my change come. – The Lord had put out the light in my dwelling, laid my earthly hopes in the dust, and written my dear little babe motherless in a strange land. But it is the Lord that had done it – the same Lord who eighteen hundred years ago shed his blood in this very place to redeem our souls from death; and I have no doubt that the same love has directed all these afflicting dispensations.”

52 In this context the word is used about foreigners, Westerners.



On the Confines of Eternity

By John Nicolayson, Jerusalem, August 13 – September 1, 1834.⁵³

I have been on the confines of eternity; and what a privilege!

“Aug. 13. – Mrs. N. [Nicolayson] has of late appeared so well that I really thought she was fast recovering, but to-day she has had a return of the fever, followed by ague.

Aug. 16. – Yesterday we made a new trial of quinine, and it appears this time to have taken effect, she feels so much better. About sun-set I received notice that the Commander of the United States squadron, lately arrived at Jaffa, was coming up here with his family, and about sixty of his officers. As I expected they would have a letter for me, I went to the gate and found them there, inquiring for me. I obtained one of the Greek convents for the officers, and invited Commodore Patterson and family to my house, notwithstanding Mrs. N.'s illness.

Sept. 1 – Since the above date I have not been able to use a pen, but now, through the rich goodness and wise providence of my God, I am recovering fast. I have been on the confines of eternity; and what a privilege! I desire to record my most unfeigned gratitude to the Father of mercies, not only for my recovery, but rather for the invaluable experience made in the sickness. O, how very precious has the Redeemer appeared to my soul, as my only and all-sufficient hope in view of eternity, brought so near! May I live the rest of my days entirely to him, and in him! The means made use of by Providence for my recovery were the kind attentions of two of the physicians of the Delaware, whose kindness I shall never forget. Mrs. N. began to recover before I was taken down. She has since had a new attack of fever, but we are now favoured with the medical aid of Dr. Dodge, who, together with Mr. Thomson, arrived on the 30th ult. [August], the very day that Dr. Baltzen, of the Delaware, left me, having just seen me pass the crisis safely that night. It was not till after my recovery that I learnt that my disease had been a typhus. It was, of course, attended with delirium, though not constant, and has brought on an extraordinary debility, though it did not continue severe for more than ten or twelve days.”

Assistance on the Way

William W. M. Thomson left Jerusalem with his “motherless babe,” William, and continued his ministry as a missionary in Beirut. On August 30, 1834, he went back to Jerusalem for a short time, and introduced Dr. Dodge to the work there.⁵⁴ An American missionary family, the Whitings, were also on their way as reinforcements for the Protestant mission in Jerusalem.

As we shall now see, the next person to be buried in Jerusalem was Dr. Dodge.

⁵³ *Jewish Intelligence* (1835), 287.

⁵⁴ *Jewish Intelligence* (1835), 287.

9. Asa Dodge

Died in Jerusalem, January 28, 1835

Following Mrs. Thomson's death on July 22, 1834 (see above), Thomson left Jerusalem with his young child. The Americans decided to station the Dodge⁵⁵ and Whiting⁵⁶ families in Jerusalem. And in the autumn of 1834, E. Scott Calman – "an Israelite who believes in Jesus as Messiah" – was, after a visit to Baghdad, back in Jerusalem, where he decided to stay.⁵⁷ On November 1, 1834, Nicolayson wrote optimistically, "Rather late this evening our brethren from Beyrout, Mr. Whiting and Dr. Dodge, with their families, arrived. Thus our little band is complete. May we have grace to strengthen each other's hands both in praying to, and acting for the Lord our Redeemer!"⁵⁸

But disease was still in the air in Jerusalem. Nicolayson took his family to Beirut, and from there they planned to sail to England for a vacation. In Beirut, Mrs. Bird was seriously ill, so Dr. Dodge was sent for. Nicolayson and Dodge were back in Jerusalem by January 3, 1835.⁵⁹ They both became seriously ill; Dodge died, while Nicolayson recovered. During the time of Nicolayson's illness, Mrs. Nicolayson and her children were waiting for passage on a ship to England; she feared that her husband had died in Jerusalem.

On January 13, 1835, Nicolayson called on someone in the Jewish Quarter. On his way home he visited Dr. Dodge. We begin Nicolayson's story here.

Nicolayson's Illness and Dodge's Death

*By John Nicolayson, Jerusalem, January 13 and February 5, 1835.*⁶⁰

**He will probably precede me into eternity,
but we may soon meet again**

"All this time I had had a slight ague upon me; our two hours were gone, and we returned home.⁶¹ Having to pass by Dr. Dodge's house, and knowing that he was ill yesterday [= January 12], I thought I must see him. The walk, and particularly the ascent of the stairs, exhausted me very

55 Dr. Asa Dodge and wife Martha had arrived in Beirut together with the Thomsons on February 24, 1833; cf. *Missionary Herald* (1833), 441.

56 George B. Whiting and wife Matilda had arrived in Beirut on May 18, 1830; cf. *Missionary Herald* (1830), 373.

57 *Jewish Intelligence* (1835), 295; cf. (1835), 177.

58 *Jewish Intelligence* (1835), 292–293.

59 *Jewish Intelligence* (1836), 3.

60 *Jewish Intelligence* (1836), 10–11.

61 After a visit in the Jewish Quarter on January 13, 1835.

much, but I am thankful that I saw my brother, for it will perhaps prove the last time here below. I scarcely spoke to him, but I saw him, noticed his labour under the fever, and the flush of it in his cheeks, and thought of death and eternity. I reached home, and soon laid down with the same kind of fever, but not so violent. He will probably precede me into eternity, but we may soon meet again.”

**Such a disease allows no further time
to prepare for death and eternity**

“Feb. 5. – Since the above date [January 13] I have not been able to write. I have now again to record my gratitude to a tender and gracious God and Father for having been made partaker of his paternal chastisement, and again restored to praise him in the land of the living. The same disease that was sent to our dear, now departed, Brother Dodge, to call him into that ‘inheritance among saints in light,’ for which he had, visibly to us of late, been rendered meet, has in my case proved only another message to set my house in order, and an admonition to labour while the day lasts. ... This sickness has completely reduced my strength. It was in both our cases typhus, and of course attended with much delirium. Such a disease allows no further time to prepare for death and eternity, if this be not done before, as we have the consolation to know it was in the case of our deceased brother. As, however, during my sickness, I had, perhaps daily, short intervals in which I was free from delirious wanderings of mind, I had eternity brought nigh and clearly opened to my view, and the blessedness of faith in a risen Redeemer who has brought life and immortality to light! I was enabled to look at it calmly, and with a happy anticipation of its being, sooner or later, my blessed inheritance in Him. My fellow-sufferer, however, appeared much in advance of me, and I therefore never forgot, at such times, to inquire after him; yet I did not actually learn his death till the 31st, when my fever was quite over. I remember that on the 29th I asked Br. Whiting about him, and he, instead of a direct answer, said, I presume you would not be much surprised if you were to hear that our brother had entered into his rest. I should not, I replied, for I expect it. But the thought of separation so affected me, that I could not help giving free vent to my tears. I perceived that Br. Whiting did the same, and no wonder, for he knew that to be fact already which at that moment I only anticipated. Our brother had already departed the day before [= January 28]. He was truly a man of God, and having of late made rapid strides in preparation for eternity, (though we thought not of it,) he had become peculiarly endeared to all of us. With regard to the loss the Mission here has thus again sustained, we are, I trust, all enabled to say, ‘It is the Lord – the Lord of the work – let him do what seemeth good unto him.’ May we be as docile, as I trust we are submissive, to such dispensations! for we feel we have much to learn from them. ... Last Lord’s-day [= February 1] I was already able to get over to Br. Whiting’s for worship, though not without great exhaustion. It was a solemn and truly affecting season; we spend much of it in conversation. Death and eter-

nity, life and immortality through Christ, was our theme. Next Monday (first in the month) [= February 2] was our monthly prayer-meeting; and I got over with rather less fatigue. (It is in the same house.) We missed our dear departed brother in our little assembly, and it was again a searching and trying but blessed season to us.”

Reflections on Dodge’s Death

*By George B. Whiting, Jerusalem, February 3, 1835.*⁶²

**... his body now sleeps on Mount Zion,
by the side of Dr. Dalton and Mrs. Thomson**

“It is natural to regret that his [Dodge’s] health was so exposed on that journey, and to wish that he had been more careful and taken proper rest and medicine immediately after his arrival at home. The weather was, at that time, remarkably cold and wet; and one day, soon after he reached home, he spent several hours in a cold uncomfortable room, arranging his medicines, and putting up medicine for some sick persons at Ramla, whom he had seen on his return from Beyroot. But let us not look too much at these second causes. When I think of the incalculable loss which our mission, and especially this infant branch of it, has sustained; when I look at these perishing souls, who are no longer to have the benefit of his prayers, his instructions, his holy example, and his medical services; or at his bereaved partner and orphan child; or think of my own personal loss; my mind finds little repose until I look beyond means, and resolve it all into the holy will of God. His work was done; and it was the will of Christ that his dear servant should be with him, where he is, and behold his glory. Even so, Lord Jesus, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Here is a resting place for the afflicted soul. Here, blessed be God, we have found consolation in our sorrow. And here all who knew and loved our departed friend, will find consolation.

... After a few months labor in that city of sacred recollections, he was called to his rest, and his body now sleeps on Mount Zion, by the side of Dr. Dalton and Mrs. Thomson.”

Mrs. Nicolayson’s Fear and Trembling

*By John Nicolayson, Jerusalem, February 8, 1835.*⁶³

**[Mrs. Nicolayson] ... thinking me either
still suffering or already in eternity**

“To-day a messenger arrived from Mrs. Nicolayson, who has not yet sailed. Such had been the impression made by Mr. W.’s [Whiting’s] letters, that they fully expected to hear of the death of either or both of us. Mrs.

⁶² *Missionary Herald* (1835), 458.

⁶³ *Jewish Intelligence* (1836), 11.



N., therefore, though she says expressly that under all her apprehensions and feelings she had been much strengthened from on high, ventured to write to Br. Whiting only, thinking me either still suffering or already in eternity. Thank God I shall be able to write in reply myself. She wanted to know if she should come here, sending George⁶⁴ alone with Captain Hays. There is no need of this, and her own health needs a visit to her native country.”

The Reduced “Little Band” in Jerusalem

With Dr. Dodge’s death, the number of Protestant missionaries in Jerusalem was reduced once more. Calman was frequently ill, and he was transported from Jerusalem to Beirut in critical condition at the end of April 1835.⁶⁵ Jane Nicolayson was on her way to England with her three children. In the spring of 1835, only John Nicolayson and the Whiting family remained in Jerusalem. The “little band,” referred to so optimistically on November 1, 1834, has now been more than halved.

64 William E. and Jane Dalton’s eldest son; see no. 5.

65 *Jewish Intelligence* (1836), 127–131.

10. Jane Dorothy Nicolayson

Died in Jerusalem, November 1, 1839

Jane Dalton, the widow of Dr. George E. Dalton, had buried the couple's son Henry in July 1826 in Beirut (see above). In March 1828 she married John Nicolayson. Due to political unrest in the area, Malta became their base from May 1828 to March 1832. The couple's first daughter, Mary Elisabeth,⁶⁶ was born there, on April 6, 1830. She died on January 22, 1855, during a stay in Ireland with her mother. She had not yet turned 25.⁶⁷ The couple's second daughter, Jane Dorothy, was born around December 1, 1831.⁶⁸

John Nicolayson began to keep Church Records in Jerusalem in connection with the first baptisms he performed. Under "Baptisms" are entered, on April 14, 1839, the first four baptisms: Simeon Rosenthal, his wife, and two children. Under "Deaths and Burials" the first entry is for his own daughter; she died on November 1, 1839. Jane Dorothy was also the first to be buried in the newly bought American graveyard on Zion, on November 2.

In the weeks before Jane Dorothy's death, Nicolayson was sorting out the business of the title-deed for the property in Jerusalem, earlier bought in the name of Signor Hohannes. On October 24, 1839, he wrote, "When this shall be done, I shall then feel a heavy weight of responsibility taken off me, as the title will then be duly and legally secured to the trustees. Indeed I do now already rejoice in its being so far settled, and feel that I am bound to render unfeigned thanks to the Father of all mercies, in which I am sure you will heartily join me as soon as this reaches you."⁶⁹

But Jane Dorothy's death laid another burden on Nicolayson. Her death made him reflect on a possible successor; it could easily have been him who had died. Mary Elisabeth was also taken ill. It was "a most sickly season" in Jerusalem.

Jane Dorothy's Death and Nicolayson's Reflections

*By John Nicolayson, Jerusalem, November 2, 1839.*⁷⁰

May her ashes rest in peace till the coming of the Lord!

“It has pleased our heavenly Father to take our youngest beloved

66 Nicknamed Betsy.

67 Cf. Nicolayson's letter no. 431, February 1855, in Conrad Schick Library, Jerusalem.

68 Cf. *Church Records* (Conrad Schick Library, Jerusalem), which Nicolayson began to keep in 1839. In other sources her birthday is given as "in November" or December 2, 1831.

69 *Jewish Intelligence* (1840), 11.

70 *Jewish Intelligence* (1840), 11–12.

daughter, Jane Dorothy, to himself, almost quite unexpectedly to us. On Tuesday last [October 29] (this is Saturday,) she was in perfect health; Wednesday morning she began to complain, and begged to be put to bed; on Thursday she continued feverish, and rather delirious; on Friday morning she seemed so much better that the doctor said she might get up. But she preferred to stay in bed, and, indeed, from the first seemed herself to feel the severity of the disease, which entirely escaped our notice. The doctor, however, attended her very assiduously. Yesterday afternoon her mother began to think the complaint more serious, and asked the doctor if there was danger. He hesitated to say so, and she came over to me in my study to bring me (at near five o'clock) the first news and idea of danger in the case. I went and found her almost gone. She did not know me, nor speak at all. Soon some very severe spasms followed one another at short intervals. We prayed the Lord to shorten her struggle, and we were heard. At six the last spasm, which reached the heart, was over. She then breathed so gently and calmly that we scarcely perceived when her young spirit took its departure from the body, – 'to be,' we doubt not, 'with the Lord who bought her.'"

A beautiful rainbow came into view

"We have now (five p.m.) just returned from burying her in peace, the first in the new burial-ground of the Americans just finished. May her ashes rest in peace till the coming of our Lord!

A beautiful rainbow came into view just as we came out of the cemetery; and that silent token of God's covenant of peace to the earth, brought thoughts of rich consolation to our minds, reminding us sweetly of that other covenant ordered in all things and sure, the divinely appointed token of which she had received in her infancy."

I now return to the subject of this letter

"I now return to the subject of this letter. On the 24th of October, the purchase of the whole was made in my own name; the title-deed, duly drawn up, sealed, and attested, was brought me on the next day. It was not however till the 28th that I was able to get the registration made in the Consulate, an attested copy of which, together with the literal translation of the original Arabic title-deed, I transmit by this same post.

I trust that the declaration or deposition made by me before the Consul, and in the presence of the undersigned witnesses, and entered in the Consular Register, will be found sufficient to secure in law the title to the trustees, and satisfactory to themselves and the Committee. It was framed with reference to the power of attorney.

The translation of the title-deed is, of course, of no validity, and I send it chiefly as a matter of curiosity. It has puzzled me a good deal to make it out, but I believe it is correct – certainly for substance. I must yet add that I have, of course, received and hold in my keeping all the several title-deeds by which Signor Hohannes held the several premises bought

in his name at different times, and also some previous documents, one of which goes back at least 150 years.”

Had the Lord been pleased to call me instead of my child ...

“I have now only to add the most urgent motive I can think of for a competent fellow-labourer soon joining me.⁷¹ It is this: ‘In the midst of life, we are in death.’ This has been most touchingly and tenderly impressed upon me just at this time. Had the Lord been pleased to call me instead of my child, into whose hands would all this property of the mission, and their documents for it have gone? If there be no successor appointed me by the Committee, registered as such in the Consulate,⁷² and duly qualified for the task, all must take the usual law-course. It is, therefore, as indispensable to the interests of the Society, and the prosperity of the mission and the undertaking, as to my quiet of mind, and relief from distressing anxiety that some such person come out soon, and that he come out duly appointed by the Committee my successor, so that I may have him immediately recognized as such by the Consul – have him make on his behalf and his heirs the same declaration I have made in the Consulate, and have him there also registered as my lawful substitute and successor. I shall then do all in my power to qualify him for this, by making him perfectly familiar with the whole state of things here, from the first to the last, my present manner of conducting affairs, and my plans for the future; and then I shall feel that I have, ‘set my house in order,’ and am ready for my Lord’s call.”

I am not in any way under the influence of melancholy

“I am, thank God, in perfect, nay, unusually good health. I am not in any way under the influence of melancholy, or depression of spirit – quite the contrary – but I write ‘the words of truth and soberness;’ it is madness not to be every moment ready to ‘depart home and be with the Lord.’ I have little or no earthly affairs of my own to order, but I feel those of the Society and mission to be mine, and to rest upon me alone, so long as there is not one ready to take my place. Neither do I urge this, because I am tired of my work, or overwhelmed by it. Blessed be God, my strength is as my day – it is easy and delightful. Besides, I am just now most kindly aided by the Rev. Mr. L.,⁷³ a most excellent young clergyman now here, who took the rather painful duty of the burial service for me, and also preached for me in English yesterday (this is Nov. 4,) and assisted me in ad-

71 In 1839 Nicolayson had four young assistants to help him, but none of them were considered competent to be his successor. G. W. Pieritz and A. Levi had arrived early in July 1838, W. A. Gerstmann and M. P. Bergheim in the beginning of December 1838; cf. *Jewish Intelligence* (1839), 155–156.

72 The first British Vice-Consul in Jerusalem, William T. Young, had arrived on March 16, 1839. Cf. *Jewish Intelligence* (1839), 174.

73 In *Church Records* Nicolayson identifies “L” as “Rev. Edward Leighton, an English Clergyman here on a visit.”



ministering the Lord's Supper, at which we had eighteen communicants. He intends to stay here for some time, and will continue to aid me.”

Reflections on a Duly Appointed Successor

By John Nicolayson, Jerusalem, November 5, 1839.⁷⁴

**I will not leave the vessel in which I am embarked,
because I believe the Lord is on board
– even though he should seem to be asleep**

“I join you in leaving it in God's hand. Still, what I have said in my last on the subject of a duly appointed successor will abide in all its strength. In speaking of a successor, however, let me not be understood to mean that I think of quitting my station, otherwise than by the Committee's act, or that of death, unless indeed such a one should be found, as I should feel fully justified in exchanging position with, and become his second, which I should, in that case, most willingly do. So long as I can get a rope to hold to, and have a hand to hold it by, I will not leave the vessel in which I have embarked, because I believe the Lord is on board – even though he should seem to be asleep. It is in view of the uncertainty of life, and the certainty of death, that I plead for a duly appointed successor. Though I endeavour to keep everything in the best and plainest order I can think of, still much confusion might ensue in the affairs of the mission, were not a duly appointed and properly initiated successor on the spot whenever I shall realize the hope of David, of going to my child, who will not return to me, – or rather to the Lord who bought us both and all. Nor, let me again say, is this an effect of melancholy or despondency? I have known what melancholy is, and I do, thank God, know what freeness from that bondage is. I enjoy, blessed be His name, a calm but deep serenity, and even cheerfulness. While things not seen are my delight, the things that are seen are a present duty to me; and every duty, rightly understood, is a privilege.”

**Whether this illness be unto death or not we know not
... It is a most sickly season**

“PS. Nov. 6. – Our only remaining daughter is taken this morning with the same disease as her poor sister, which is quite prevalent in the city at present. Whether this illness be unto death or not we know not. In either event we trust it will prove for the glory of God. We hope she has more strength of constitution, and may perhaps pass through it safely. The Lord only knows. You will feel with me that it is exceedingly distressing to me, that even in time of illness I am obliged to attend to the distracting calls of business, and thus leave all the weight of it on Mrs. N. You will see that this affords an additional reason for sending me an assistant soon.

⁷⁴ *Jewish Intelligence* (1840), 13–14.

Moreover, though in perfect health I feel that death is ever at hand, and I do wish I had one to succeed me in that case.

P.S. Nov. 7. – I am happy to add that our dear girl soon became much better yesterday; and this morning, after a good night, she appears still more so.

Mr. Pieritz was a little indisposed yesterday, and is still so this morning.

Last night about sunset they seized workmen to send to Acre. Ours got timely notice, and retreated to my house before leaving the premises, where they have spent the night. Being a holiday to-day they have dispersed to hide as they can best, and I cannot tell whether any of them might have left the premises before the notice came, and thus have been taken; I think not, however.

It is reported that the plague broke out here yesterday among some Jews come from Hebron, where it had continued. An inspector of quarantine has just arrived at Jaffa from Beyrout, who is to examine all this district; thus we may look out for the plague of quarantine again.

P.S. Nov. 7, *Evening*. – Mr. Pieritz, I am sorry to add, is a good deal indisposed; though I hope not dangerously. It is a most sickly season.”

Sickness and Personal Conflict

As mentioned above, Nicolayson had four assistants in 1839, all of Jewish descent. The next year they had all left Jerusalem. This reduction was caused not only by sickness.

The young Alexander Levi left Jerusalem in the autumn of 1839 because of poor health. The next to leave, in early 1839, was Albert Gerstmann. This was not due to bad health. In 1839, Pieritz accused Gerstmann of misconduct in very severe terms. He constantly lied, according to Pieritz.⁷⁵ Gerstmann continued as an LJS missionary in Constantinople, where he died on May 23, 1841. Nicolayson, who took Pieritz's side in the conflict, arrived in Constantinople two days after Gerstmann's death.

So they were in no way “saints”; even among Protestant missionaries there were “errors” (cf. no. 6). How, then, did Nicolayson describe the deceased Gerstmann? He did it diplomatically by referring to others: “He had died on Saturday evening the 23d instant [May 1841], and been buried on the Sunday. He had appeared to be in good health and spirits on the Wednesday, was taken ill on the Thursday; no idea of danger was entertained on Saturday towards evening, except by himself. By midnight his soul was in eternity. He had the best and kindest attendance, both medical and spiritual, from Christian friends, who loved him as a Christian, and speak most affectionately and satisfactorily of him also as a Missionary.”⁷⁶

⁷⁵ The correspondence between the conflicting parties can be seen in *Letters and Communications to The London Society (1837–1840)*, Conrad Schick Library, Jerusalem; see e.g. pp. 382–408.

⁷⁶ *Jewish Intelligence* (1841), 280.



In the autumn of 1840 the two remaining assistants, Pieritz and Bergheim, left Jerusalem, not because of disease but due to conflict.

But before then there was another burial in Jerusalem, the last to be mentioned in this series of stories about disease and death in 1818–1840.

11. William Curry Hillier

Died in Jerusalem, August 8, 1840

In October 1839, John Nicolayson received the title deed of the plot of land he had acquired in Jerusalem (see no. 10). In mid-December they began digging the foundations for a building where temporary services could be held until Christ Church, which was dedicated in 1849, could be built.⁷⁷

In order to relieve Nicolayson, LJS sent William Curry Hillier to Jerusalem as the architect for the construction work. He arrived on July 7, 1840 and died on August 8, the same year. He would serve as architect for less than a month, since he was already taken ill on August 3.

LJS's comment on this was, "... it has pleased God to remove him when his service seemed most needful."⁷⁸

Hillier's Last Sunday

*By John Nicolayson, Jerusalem, August 31, 1840.*⁷⁹

In the afternoon his delirium took the usual turn

“On Saturday evening [August 7, 1840] he was so ill that we scarcely hoped he would get through the night, but on Sunday morning he seemed a little better, though very delirious. In the afternoon his delirium took the usual turn (when fatal) of a full persuasion that his life was attempted by those about him. Mr. Young⁸⁰ and I were sent for, and it was only by our giving him a solemn promise not to leave him for a moment that we could induce him to stay quiet in the house. He then wished us to join in reading a portion of Scripture and in prayer. He bid me read the 27th Psalm; after which I prayed, till he stopped me and then prayed himself with a very strong voice and tolerably coherently. I sat alone with him a long while, and by yielding to his impressions, and endeavouring to lead him to different trains of thought, succeeded in quieting him very much, though the delirium never forsook him, but now took a less distressing turn. In the evening we were obliged to watch him very closely, as he would every now and then start out of bed. I would then catch him in my arms, and he would say, ‘Well, I thought we were to go;’ to which I would reply, ‘Not till I tell you;’ and he would lie down again, apparently satisfied, but only for a moment. Gradually the exertions he made

⁷⁷ *Jewish Intelligence* (1841), 36–43.

⁷⁸ *Jewish Intelligence* (1840), 358.

⁷⁹ *Jewish Intelligence* (1840), 359.

⁸⁰ The British Vice-Consul in Jerusalem.

of this kind, became more and more violent and frequent, so that at last we were obliged to have one of the carpenters to help me to keep him in the bed, and under cover. After a tremendous exertion of this kind, about half-past ten o'clock, he sank back and never stirred more, breathed slower and slower, and heavier and heavier, for about ten minutes, till at last he died away so peaceably and quietly, that, though I watched him very closely, I could scarcely tell when his released spirit left the earthly tabernacle, now completely exhausted. When I thought this was the case, I commended it to Him who had redeemed it, in a single sentence pronounced aloud, which brought the others into the room, with Mr. Young, who had kindly stayed with us.

I immediately set the carpenters to work, who, early in the forenoon of Monday, had finished the most decent coffin any has ever been buried in this place. The grave (in the American burial-ground, close to our dear Jane)⁸¹ was not finished till about noon, when we buried him in due order, all the Americans attending, and in perfect peace.”

In Perfect Peace – But ...

Nicolayson buried Hillier “in perfect peace” on August 9, 1840. But really there was not much “peace” for Nicolayson in those days. There was the war between Egypt and Turkey and its allies, among them England, which put an end to Egypt’s rule over Palestine as early as the spring of 1840. Another problem was the conflict, not to say “war,” between Pieritz and Bergheim on the one side and Nicolayson on the other, in the summer of 1840.⁸² That story will not be told here. But on September 19, 1840, Pieritz and Bergheim left Jerusalem. Bergheim returned to Jerusalem in the autumn of 1841; later he established himself as a banker there.

The burial of Hillier “in perfect peace” was not directly proportional to the peace, or lack thereof, among the Protestant missionaries in Jerusalem in the summer of 1840.

They needed, like Parsons and Fisk, Psalm 51 – in life and in death (see no. 2).

On January 21, 1842, Bishop Alexander and other missionaries came to Jerusalem, inaugurating a new era in the Jerusalem mission’s history, which we cannot cover here. Disease and death continued. One of the first things Alexander did was to bury his infant daughter on February 4, 1842. In Nicolayson’s words in *Church Records*: “The above infant was this day deposited in a temporary vault in my Garden till we obtain a Burial-Ground of our own.” Bishop Alexander himself died during a journey to Egypt, on November 22, 1845. He was to serve less than four years as a bishop in Jerusalem.

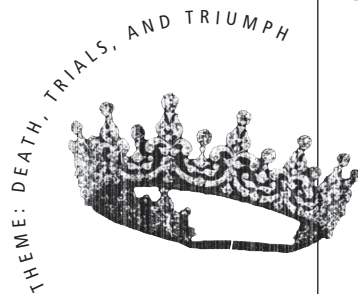
Why, God?

⁸¹ See no. 10.

⁸² Cf. *Letters and Communications to The London Society (1837–1840)*, pp. 589–660.

Our Hope is in the Lord

By **Steve Cohen**



As I read of the tremendous struggles of heroic missionaries like Nicolayson, Dalton, and Fisk, brave saints who labored under harsh conditions without the benefit of the medical miracles and technologies we have today, I wonder – could I be that strong? *Would I be willing to labor to the degree they did, giving the last full measure to our Lord?*

A Look Back

When I was in college in the 1960s, I was told by a professor one day, “Life is hard, then you die.” I was a young, agnostic Jew who believed in little but himself. I had no concern for end of life issues nor for the complications they brought for those surrounding a loved one struggling with declining health.

On February 24, 1971, love struck during a blind date with Janice Anne Isbell. We were married two years later. I came to faith in Y’shua ten months after our wedding. As a new believer, I was confronted with the plight of my new mother-in-law, who was battling a disease I’d never encountered: Huntington’s Chorea (HD), a gene defect causing the brain to die. Over time, her physical abilities were lost until she could no longer care for herself.

As new missionaries serving on the East Coast in the mid 70s, Jan and I watched from afar as the relentless, unremitting disease wracked Martha Lou Isbell’s mind and body. Mercifully, she lost the battle and went home to the Lord in 1986.

I will never forget the memorial service held in their tiny church in Grand Coulee, Washington. While there certainly were tears shed, joy was evident in the hearts of all the believers. Marty was promoted to a far better place. Jan’s sister, Beth, chose to celebrate her home-going by filling the narthex with helium balloons. As mourners left the sanctuary, she gave one to each person. When all were outside in the sparkling clear blue-skied afternoon, she said, “We are sending a welcome home present to Marty!”

I still see the balloons ascending heavenward with their colorful ribbons

trailing behind, and I could almost hear whispering in the wind, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

One of the struggles families face is whether or not to be tested for HD. Until 1993, there was no direct test. Would you want to know if you would develop a disease for which there is yet no cure? In the 1970s, Jan had a CAT scan to see if there was any evident brain deterioration, and that test was negative. But it did not mean she would not develop the disease later in life.

Jan and I wrestled with the weighty question of whether to have children or not. Jan's mom shared words that settled my heart: *No one knows the future. There could be a cancer, an auto accident, or a war. But life would have been greatly diminished without having children.* In 1980, seven years after our marriage, the first of our five children was born.

I was involved in a ministry that called for giving much and traveling often. Genuine concerns loomed in the back of my mind over what might happen in the future. Because I was disowned by my family, I had no parents with whom to discuss my feelings and apprehensions. Moishe Rosen and I had many talks concerning Jan over the 20 years I served with Jews for Jesus. We probed what might be best for the children and dealing with HD.

Reality Arises

In 1990, I set up an appointment for Jan with a neurologist in Miami. Jan had developed facial tics, an early sign of the onset of HD. The results of our visit confirmed that she had HD. This was hard news, but not unexpected. Still, the emotions and sorrows of hearing that news had to be addressed. I took Jan away for four days just to be alone where we could pray, cry, and begin to plan for her care.

Initially, little changed in our daily routine. I carried on with my regular missionary duties while our five children continued with their myriad of activities. The "glide-path" of HD is different for each person. For some, from onset to death can be as little as 5–7 years, while others can live a full life with certain inconveniences.

I had to begin a balancing act: rearing five children, leading a mission effort in South Florida, and taking an increasing role in caring for Jan.

I was asked to consider taking leadership for ministries in South America – meaning much more travel. I knew that there were certain responsibilities that had to be upheld, so I wrote a letter of inquiry to the ministry: *Could they foresee a time when I might be able to adapt/reduce my duties in light of organizational standards in order to attend to growing needs at home?* After prayerful deliberation, the answer came back: "No."

Retooling

I accepted that answer, and Moishe and I began considering alternatives. In 1995, he was asked to release me to serve as a missionary leader with

the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. He negotiated a new opportunity, and in 1996 we moved to St. Louis to start from scratch. But this time, I was able to build my missionary work in such a way that Jan’s growing and future needs were integrated into the long-term plan.

The early years were spent in vigorous efforts to lay the foundation and build initial support and the ministry team. It called for more on my part than before, knowing that the initial investment would allow for future returns.

In 2001, we had to take away Jan’s keys, as she could no longer safely drive. That was very hard with 5 children, but soon our oldest got his driver’s license and was able to assist with transportation chores. We told Jan it was not that she was immobile, but that we would be “Driving Miss Jan” instead of her driving us.

Knowing that HD was taking its toll, I had to work with our children to help them understand the personality changes Jan underwent. There were times when she would obsess over minutiae to which she normally never gave thought. She battled me over recycling, composting, using the disposal, newspapers, and cans and bottles. At times I had to involve the dogs to distract her from her uncharacteristic outbursts. We knew this was not Jan but the disease talking. Still, it was hard and uncomfortable. *Lord, grant us peace!* was my daily prayer.

Because Jan was not able to do normal household chores, I hired others to come in and help. Some also sought to volunteer. Sadly, their good intentions turned sour when our home life was not up to their standards. On two occasions child welfare was “anonymously” called in an attempt to have our children removed from the home. Each situation brought heightened anguish.

The social workers who saw our living conditions may not have given us a “white glove award,” but they saw a home filled with faith, love, and five well-adjusted youngsters at the top of their classes and coping with a very difficult situation. Case closed! We learned a hard lesson and had to limit access to Jan and our home. Nothing was more concerning than the possibility that a stranger would come and whisk our children away from us!

We knew this was not Jan but the disease talking. Still, it was hard and uncomfortable. *Lord, grant us peace!* was my daily prayer.

An Idea Whose Time Had Come

From the earliest days of our ministry, Jan and I traveled together. She was a very gifted vocalist and pianist, and I knew that our presentations in churches were always far better when she was able to come and sing. I am convinced that music is a more effective means of reaching the heart with the gospel than the spoken word, and Jan was a very effective communicator.

In 1996, I was invited to speak at a Lutheran Women’s Mission convention in Lake Tahoe. I asked if it was OK to bring Jan along. She sang her



heart out for the over 600 ladies present. Then I did something I had not done before. I distributed blank 3x5 cards to the ladies and told them of Jan's growing battle. "Jan is a hugger!" I told them. "But she can not hug everyone here. Would you give her a written hug instead, by penning some words of encouragement for the struggle ahead?"

That afternoon, we sat in the hotel room as I read her over 200 cards with love notes. The tears Jan shed from the outpouring of love still remain with me to this very day. Now every church I speak at, I ask if people would write a note. Today we have thousands of them. A wonderful friend who is a scrap-booker arranged them in 4 large albums. Eventually, as an act of love, I hope to publish many of these notes in a

book called *Jan's Book of Hope*. In this way, we will continue to encourage, inform, and involve others in our life even if we never meet face-to-face.

We are all dying of something, Jan just happens to know what it is.

I am careful to let people know that I share with them not so people will feel sorry for us, but so they would understand how to pray specifically for the Cohen clan. We are all dying of something, Jan just happens to know what it is. Our hope is not in these decaying bodies but in the Lord!

Mountains to Move

Loss of motor skills comes in the middle of the disease, and Jan fell – a lot. In the past five years she's been to the emergency room six times, three of them by ambulance, for stitches and a broken collarbone. We intentionally made the house less of a danger to her.

We rearranged her walk-in closet so that she would not slip on something strewn on the floor. A few nights later, Jan fell in our just-cleaned-out bedroom closet. There was no grab bar to help with stability, so she grabbed the nearest thing she could, the clothes. We all heard the thud from downstairs and rushed up to see Jan on the floor with "mount clothing" piled on top of her – everything had collapsed. She was quite a sight, with arms and legs akimbo under the jumbled mass of clothing and hangers. Thankfully, she was not hurt.

At 10:30 in the evening, Seth, Lizzy, and I were un-piling the clothes and re-hanging them. Once that was done, I herded everyone down to the kitchen table and declared that we were having a celebration with ice-cream floats. The kids asked what we were celebrating and I said, "We are celebrating the fact that the paramedics did not have to come. Mom was not taken to the hospital, she did not need stitches, there is no recovery period, and she is not in pain! Also we got to clean the closet once again!" Jan's battle with HD has helped me to count the blessing of each day and each situation, quite a change from my indifferent days in college. We acknowledge God's grace and mercy – new every morning, and every evening too.

HD affects the whole family. My role has shifted from spouse to primary

caregiver. The children have played invaluable support roles. I am still able to travel and speak in churches on weekends because the children step in to help. Without those weekends away, I would not be able to continue the balancing act of ministry and family care at the same time, simply because I need a break from the stress of care giving. Many nights Jan wakes up 3–4 times, needing help in some way. That means broken sleep patterns for me, too. It becomes exhausting at times.

Sometimes I just can't continue, and I ask one of the children to give me a two hour break so I can go to Barnes & Noble to relax and read something not related to work or home duties. Those breaks help!

This summer, our youngest leaves home for college. How to fill the void left by those who have grown and gone? *God answered my prayer!* Our oldest, Micha, a missionary with Jews for Jesus, along with his wife Leah and two of our grand-daughters, will be taking a leave of absence to move back home and help. I am blessed and thankful to Jews for Jesus for making it possible for them to do this.

With so many people praying over the years, some have wondered why God has not chosen to heal Jan. Oh, it would be wonderful if he did, but through her illness, we have learned lessons in life that we might never have learned otherwise.

Lessons for the Future

We have experienced first hand that:

God's mercies are new each day;
 God's grace is ever present, even in the darkest hours;
 God's love is seen in even the smallest smile on Jan's face;
 God's peace passes my meager understanding!

These precious lessons will be integrated into our continuing mission efforts and training of new missionaries.

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. (2 Cor 4:7–10)

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. (2 Cor 4:16–18)



Now Jan is in hospice care at home. She entered hospice on January 24th, 2007, the same day our third granddaughter, Liora, was born. A nurse comes twice a week to check up on Jan and a care worker helps with bathing. We have three wonderfully loving people we pay to come weekly to help with chores in the house, cooking and cleaning and sitting with Jan, so that I can carry on with the mission – though with diminished travel at this time.

I am thankful for the support of our Board of Directors, which understands the present struggle and grants me the leeway to balance family and ministry as needs demand.

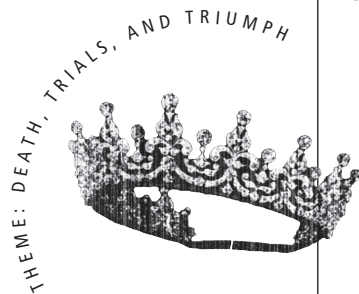
Since the early 1980s my life verse has been 1 Corinthians 15:58: “Therefore my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. For in the Lord your labor is not in vain.”

So I do not ask, “Why God?”; instead I ask, “Lord, give us all the wisdom and stamina to press on so that you are glorified!”

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Following a Call and Counting the Costs



By **Moishe Rosen**

I have been asked to comment on the excerpts from diaries of missionaries to Jerusalem in the beginning of the 19th century. I approached this as a missionary and a mission leader who has taken responsibility for other missionaries over the years.

One important factor in these letters and stories of life and death needs to be taken into account. Joseph Lister was born in 1825. The state of medicine at the time was such that if the illness didn't kill you, the treatment might well cause debilitation and even death.

Illness was known first of all by fever, which was usually a symptom of infection. But they did not treat the cause of the illness. They treated the symptom, and as mentioned, this included the drinking of rice water and application of poultices. Rice water had a practical effect inasmuch as it might slow the bowel movements of dysentery, which was commonly caused by many different bacteria.

But the poultices were often the same as mustard plaster, a remedy with which some of us were acquainted as children. By the time that I was past childhood illnesses, it was discovered that mustard plasters were less than useless. The idea was that the poultice raised the body temperature, and according to medical theories involving humors, the bad humors were thus moved around the body where they could be released through the extremities. By heating the feet, they thought to attract the body's heat and disperse it.

The condition of the practice of medicine probably added much to the illnesses of these travelers. Missionaries might have believed many things, but they were all travelers: travelers to new places, eating new foods, in sanitary conditions that the locals were immune to. It was inevitable that most missionaries became ill, and many died.

"Present Your Bodies a Living Sacrifice"

Against that background, when we look at these missionary accounts, though we see the word "call" once in awhile, we don't realize its significance. Missionary work grew out of revival and renewal. A verse that was prominent and often memorized is Romans 12:1-2:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

In this age, when people talk about a call to the ministry, very often what I hear is how someone opted to get a job in the field of religion. No one at that time thought of ministry as being a job. It was always a calling. But in dealing with some of the heavier questions – how did these missionaries feel, losing their children to illnesses, their families to hunger, and about their terrible living conditions – all of these questions about their feelings must be refracted through the lens of the call or the calling.

I know that God called me. I can point to a time and a place, an event, and reiterating that event wouldn't mean anything to others because the Holy Spirit had interpreted that event to my heart. It happened during a time of prayer. On my lunch hour, I used to go to a church that was open for prayer, four blocks from the place that I worked. It was the Pillar of Fire Church, a Holiness church that had an altar where one could kneel. As I knelt, I was reading through Acts and came upon Paul's call in Acts 20:21: "... testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

Now, in some supernatural way, that was a signal to me. It went beyond the words or the biblical event, and said that God wanted me. What difference did it make whether or not I could earn a living for my family? What difference did it make if I didn't know how to do anything like that? What difference did it make if I didn't know where to start? God called me. I had one of two choices, or at least I thought I had one of two choices: either obey or don't. So, if that meant that I was going to have to fight dysentery, run away from mobs of angry villagers, live in a tent – whatever it meant – I was called, and that was that.

I can either feel sorry for myself because I said "yes," or I can trust God and believe that he will not test me above that which I am able to bear.

Now, the rest is this: I can either feel sorry for myself because I said "yes," or I can trust God and believe that he will not test me above that which I am able to bear. Abram received a call from God. The man who could not be a father was told he would have a son, and it came to pass. Then, the God who called him said, "Well, it's time that we kill little Isaac, so let's haul up to Mount Moriah – get the wood, get the knife – you're going to do it." I don't think that Abram was jubilant about it. But somehow, there was a trusting, a believing that God would bring good out of it so that Abram could rejoice with God.

That's what it feels like when your children are getting sick and might die from the conditions of your call. That's what it feels like when you're despised for believing and saying what is right when other people prefer what is wrong. It's not just the period of the 1820s that saw hardship

among missionaries. The Book of Acts describes similar hardships, and in every age when people obeyed the call of God, there was great risk, and sometimes death. But whether or not there was disappointment depended on whether or not you recognized God's call and you believed that God would do good.

Questions to Ponder

I pondered the following questions arising out of the letters, diaries, and accounts of missionary hardship: 1) What commitment can we expect from one another today? 2) How do we ourselves, or those we take responsibility for, deal with the illness or even death of loved ones? 3) How can God permit these things, or "afford" not to save or heal his servants; and how do we deal with anger? 4) How can we know that this person has "gone to be with Jesus"? 5) How do we answer the questions of those left behind and left alone?

These are all the questions of a person who is persuaded that the events of life must make sense, and since there is a good God, they can't account for the hardship and inequities of life. Over and again, these questions are asked in different ways, but they basically boil down to, "Why do the righteous suffer while the evil prosper?" My only answer is, "Let's wait and see." A time is coming when what has been promised will either be paid in full, or not. I've seen enough of the goodness of God to believe that God rewards his servants bountifully.

But back to the questions:

What commitment can we expect from one another today? My answer might be self-centered, but I'm more concerned about maintaining my own commitment to God and to the task than measuring anyone else's commitment. I'm constantly aware that I have not been entirely whole-hearted in carrying out the task to which God has called me.

In the course of following my own commitment, I've had many others join me, but I never saw them as people who were trying to help me do my ministry. I always saw them as people who were trying to follow their own destinies. I've officially been a missionary since 1956. I've always been a leader. In 1957, I was supervising three people, and since that time, I've directly supervised almost 450 people involved in missionary work among the Jews.

I never thought of them as people who were joining my ministry to help me, but I saw them more or less as fellow travelers. The commitment wasn't to me as a leader, but to each task. I've seen a few people who seem to have a commitment, but they were attracted to Jewish missions because it was an area in which it was extremely easy to find acceptance. Some were false, and only wanted to be part of a group. I'm glad to say that they were few. But others had different kinds of commitments.

Through the years, I've noticed some rather uncommitted people giving testimony to God's taking a big role in their life – God led them to a



certain neighborhood, for instance. To quote one person: "I know that it seems far out, and the house is huge, and the yard is much nicer than what we could have ever hoped, but God led us directly to that place."

This didn't line up with my own experience with God. I didn't need God's leading to live in a large house, or to take a raise in my living allowance, or to do things that I enjoyed. It seemed to me that God was most insistent when the task was difficult or unpleasant. It was then that I felt I needed him. But having led many people, I concluded that each person must make their own commitment. The only thing that I will allow myself to expect from others is what they lead me to expect.

I have no doubt that many of the people with whom I've worked would be willing to lay down their lives the way the early missionaries did, but the advice that I would give anyone entering Jewish missions is to make sure of their own calling, and to do their own duty, and not to count on their fellow workers for overly much encouragement. The real struggle is not what we should expect from others, but what we can expect from ourselves.

How do we ourselves, or those we take responsibility for, deal with the illness or even death of loved ones? This has to be a rather speculative answer, because most of my colleagues who have suffered illness and died did not do so because of the conditions of ministry. I can't recall where I heard it, but there was one preacher who said, "There are many things that are worse than dying, but one of them is living a useless life."

If I imagine myself in Israel in the third decade of the nineteenth century, trying to live in the filth, the squalor, and the discouragement, I think I would try to bring my family. But I would understand if my wife didn't want to go and decided to raise our children at home. That's the way it was for a few of those missionaries. But if my family came with me, it would be with full knowledge that there was a great risk of debilitating illness and death.

But rather than thinking of ourselves as being so noble, let's compare ourselves to those who attempt to climb Mount Everest or those who are astronauts. Many of the things that people do for recreation carry the promise of pain, suffering, and death. Why do people risk hardship and death for recreation? I would like to think that I would definitely be one of the people who would take the risk of being a missionary in the Ottoman Empire.

It seems to me that anyone who's lived more than a few years and has studied history should know that there's a great deal of pain in this world, and no one is exempt from it.

How can God permit these things, or "afford" not to save or heal his servants; and how do we deal with anger? My answer to this question is: "Ask him.

Maybe he'll tell you. He hasn't told me, and yet I still trust him." God doesn't do what I think is right, even if my sense of right comes from reading the Bible. My reading of Scripture

tells me how a man should do what's right, and exemplifies how I should be giving myself to the Lord. I haven't read the "Guidebook for Being God." I don't know what rules God must live by.

It seems to me that anyone who's lived more than a few years and has studied history should know that there's a great deal of pain in this world, and no one is exempt from it. I just pray that I will be able to bear my toll of pain when the time comes for it.

"The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." What these words mean to me is that my life is not an entitlement. I do not have the right to do what I want. I don't even have the right to want what I do. But whether God gives or whether he takes away, we're to bless his name. And I don't find it all that difficult.

As for anger, my understanding is that it's a God-given emotion, and its purpose is to energize us to do the right thing: one's temper is something one should use, not lose.

How can we know that this person has "gone to be with Jesus"? My understanding of Scripture is that I become a believer in Christ by confessing Christ openly (Romans 10:9–10). By confessing him I make a claim, repent of my sins, and accept his gracious salvation, and I continue in that confession of faith. Should there come a time when I deny that Christ saved me, I believe that would mean that I did not have a true Christian experience of redemption. I know that I could not deny him any more than I could deny that I am a married man and that my wife's name is Ceil. Thankfully, I get along pretty well with my wife. But even if I didn't like her, I would still have to admit that she is my wife – the mother of my daughters. It would be extremely difficult for me to deny the reality that I've experienced in Christ. It would be at least as difficult as denying my marriage, my wife. Nevertheless, in every person's life, there is doubt. Reality is not that well established.

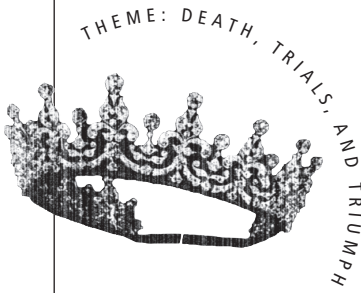
How do we answer the questions of those left behind and left alone? I never saw myself as an answerer of questions. That's at the heart of rabbinism. Rabbis are called upon to give answers to questions: whether or not this chicken is kosher; whether or not a certain garment is pure according to shatnes (laws concerning fabric). My way of dealing with this is to love those people, to mourn with them, to hug them, and to look heavenward to Jesus, the ultimate answer to our questions.

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Disease and Death – Where is God?

By Flemming Kofod-Svendsen

When I was young I took an active part in a foreign mission society. We sent a missionary to Ethiopia. Before going, she got all the necessary vaccinations. A few weeks after her arrival, she died of malaria. I remember what I said to God in prayer: “What are you doing, God? She placed herself at your disposal. She left her family and friends to serve you. Why didn’t you take care of her? Why did she die?”

On December 26, 2004, I lost my son (28), my daughter-in-law (32), and two grandchildren (4 and 3) in the Indian Ocean tsunami. I felt angry at God. I felt that God had not treated my family fairly. During this time, I found that the authors of the Old Testament psalms expressed their anger and disappointment to God. I realized that the Bible was my ally as I expressed all my feelings to God. At the same time, I realized that being angry at God was not the solution.

When I studied the prophet Isaiah, I realized that God’s thoughts are different from mine (Isaiah 55:8–9). I can’t understand God, but he has experienced suffering and can understand me. He also loves me. He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:16).

Sometimes it is a struggle to accept God’s ways and plans. But I think it is both important and necessary to do so. We can’t live our whole life in protest against God without becoming bitter. It is difficult to accept the

loss we have suffered, but it is necessary, or bitterness will darken and spoil the remnant of our life.

It is difficult to accept the loss we have suffered, but it is necessary, or bitterness will darken and spoil the remnant of our life.

Since the tsunami I have been in a continual fight. Again and again I have dwelled on the seeming injustice and absurdity of the tsunami

and its terrible consequences. On the one hand I will maintain my protest, because I cannot accept completely meaningless death. I regard death as an enemy I must fight against. At the same time, I have to remember that I did not find peace and rest until I accepted God’s will. We have no right to call God to account for what he does. As Christians we know that God’s

way is always best – even when we can't understand the meaning of his decisions. Faith follows God.

What happens when we accept God's way? The grief doesn't disappear, but bitterness stops. The grief for the dead person continues, but in a different atmosphere.

The final comfort is our Christian hope: Just as Christ has been raised from the dead, we shall rise again and forever be with Christ and our loved ones. Faith in Christ gives the ultimate hope. The resurrection of Christ is absolutely unique in world history. It proclaims the beginning of the new world, which shall be revealed in glory – a re-created world just as real as the old one. Christ was just as real after the resurrection as before it. The disciples didn't doubt that it was the same Lord they had known; but at the same time he was quite different. Christ was the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep. Easter morning was the beginning of a new world.

The final morning will be the second coming of Christ, which is described in the Bible. We can imagine it as a splendid spring day, with budding trees and blooming flowers, but this is only a weak reflection of the coming glory.

Together with the second coming, the resurrection will happen. We will each get a re-created body, a body without weaknesses or handicaps of any kind, without disease or decay, without hunger or thirst. The soul will again be united with the body.

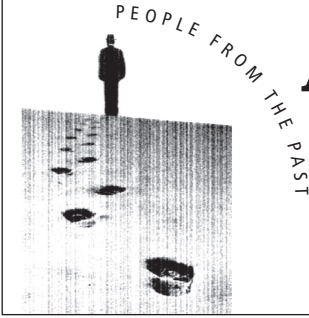
Our ultimate hope doesn't solve all the incomprehensible riddles in our lives. But the Christian hope gives peace, making it possible to live with those riddles.

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Arthur F. Glasser and Jewish Evangelism

*A Timely Contribution
from a Seminal Missiological Thinker*

By **Hanne Kirchheiner**

This article examines Arthur F. Glasser's life and involvement in Jewish evangelism, in an attempt to extract from this an understanding of what is required for an effective and valuable missiology in relation to Jewish evangelism.

The research draws both on literature written by Glasser and literature written about him. Interviews with nine persons¹ who are prominent in the field of Jewish evangelism have been conducted via e-mail to determine the extent to which he has been influential, and to evaluate him as a possible role model for those who, following in his footsteps, want to undertake Jewish evangelism. In this investigation it becomes evident that Glasser's contribution and missiology are greatly appreciated by people who are leaders in the field of Jewish evangelism.

Glasser's understanding of mission is largely dependent on his understanding of theology. This work examines the relationship between his theology and his approach to Jewish evangelism.

It is concluded that, in order to gain a hearing in the Jewish community, a satisfactory theology should include an understanding of the "interactive relationship" of the Old and New Testaments and of the theological significance of an ongoing Jewish peoplehood. The Messianic congregational approach is commended as it is seen to affirm the legitimacy of the Jewish people and culture. Furthermore, Glasser's approach is seen to place an emphasis on the spiritual dimension of the opposition to Jewish evangelism, in which prayer plays an important role.

Early Years

Arthur Frederick Glasser was born in 1914 in Paterson, New Jersey, USA. Glasser describes how he was led to a personal faith in Jesus during a summer camp just prior to his years at Cornell, where he studied engineering.² Following his graduation, Glasser got a good position in an en-

¹ Eight Jewish persons and one non-Jewish person.

² Glasser, *unpublished biography*, sent to me by A. Glasser, n.d., 4.

gineering firm, but after the first year he decided to leave his job and aim at full time ministry. During his three years at Bible college, 1939–42, Glasser used his week-ends and summers to assist in distributing “a special edition of the Gospel of Matthew to Jewish people,” and to hold outdoor meetings in New York. Glasser recalls what the larger context was like in those years: “The Jewish people suffering under the Nazis, and the churches, particularly in Germany, hardly raising one word of protest.”³ Glasser subsequently wrestled with questions on the Holocaust.

When Art graduated from seminary in 1942 he married Alice Oliver. Shortly thereafter, he became a marine chaplain in the Navy and was sent to areas of heavy fighting in the South Pacific. The war ended and, after much prayer, Art and Alice Glasser made the decision to go to China.⁴ They arrived in Shanghai on the last day of 1946. The Communists expelled Art and Alice from China in 1951, along with other missionaries.⁵

For four years Glasser taught at Columbia Bible College in South Carolina. In 1955 Glasser was appointed the assistant home director for Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF), and in 1960 he became the director of OMF. Glasser resigned from OMF in 1969, to study for a year.⁶ After Glasser’s year of studies, he was asked to join the faculty of the School of World Mission (SWM) at Fuller.⁷

It was during his years at Fuller that Glasser’s involvement in Jewish evangelism flourished. When Glasser joined the faculty of SWM to teach Theology of Mission in 1970, Donald McGavran was the dean. The church growth theories introduced by McGavran placed an emphasis on the critical evaluation of mission strategies. McGavran opposed the common practice of extracting individuals from their culture and setting them in a new one, the church. He feared that an individual would be ostracized or, at the very least, excluded, especially among people with what he calls high “people consciousness.” Thus, he advocated that people should have their own culturally relevant congregational units.⁸ This approach was to affect Glasser’s approach to Jewish evangelism, as we shall see below.⁹

Putting Jewish Evangelism on the Agenda

Glasser became the second dean of SWM, from 1971–1980, after McGavran became dean emeritus. From 1980 Glasser served as dean emeritus, and until 1999 remained an active faculty member as senior professor.¹⁰

3 Glasser, “My Pilgrimage in Mission,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 14/3 (1990), 112.

4 Glasser, n.d., 13.

5 Paul E. Pierson, “Arthur F. Glasser: Citizen of the Kingdom,” in Charles Van Engen et al., *The Good News of the Kingdom: Mission Theology for the Third Millennium* (Maryknoll: Orbis 1993), 4.

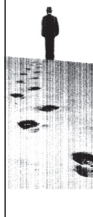
6 Glasser, *Announcing the Kingdom* (Baker Academic, 2003), 13.

7 Pierson, 6.

8 Donald McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Eerdmans, 1990), viii–x.

9 Glasser, “Church Growth at Fuller,” *Missiology: An International Review*, 14/4 (1986), 417.

10 Hannaford, D., “Arthur Glasser,” e-mail (Sept. 2006).



During his years at Fuller, Glasser's leadership in the broader world of missiology grew.

In 1974 Glasser attended the first Lausanne Consultation for World Evangelism. It was decided that a Lausanne Covenant should be prepared to confirm what evangelicals stood for. Different workshops could be attended, and Glasser realized that one was on Jewish evangelism. He was excited by the prospect of "a solid affirmation of the abiding relevance of Jewish evangelism in the Lausanne Covenant," but, to Glasser's distress, the statement prepared by this group was "turned down."¹¹

Far from forgetting the incident, Glasser seems to have used every opportunity since to promote Jewish evangelism. In the Lausanne movement Glasser pressed on to promote Jewish evangelism. He was not present when the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism, LCJE, was established in Pattaya in 1980, but as it continued to meet in the U.S. annually and every three years internationally he was a regular contributor.¹² According to the international coordinator of LCJE, Kai Kjær-Hansen, Glasser has had a "colossal" influence on LCJE.¹³

Glasser also took part in drafting the Willowbank Declaration.¹⁴ The World Evangelical Fellowship and the LCWE sponsored a joint gathering, a small group of representative theologians from four continents, to draft a comprehensive statement on the gospel and the Jewish people. Glasser saw this as "the most significant evangelical gathering in 1989."¹⁵

Glasser has been a prolific writer of articles. His talks and writings on Jewish evangelism are also seen to have been influential, as Theresa Newell makes clear:

He made strong scriptural arguments for his case in mission magazines and in talks that he gave at conferences ... convincing the Church through the Scriptures of its mandate to proclaim the gospel to the Jewish people.¹⁶

Since the mid-eighties, most of Glasser's writings have related to Jewish evangelism.¹⁷

Supporting the Messianic Movement

During Glasser's time as dean at Fuller, some notable events have occurred. Glasser describes them like this:

11 Glasser, "The Puritans and the Jewish people – part 1 of 3: Who were the Puritans," *Missionary Monthly*, 99:5 (1993), 5.

12 Moishe Rosen, e-mail (July 21, 2006).

13 Kai Kjær-Hansen, e-mail (Jan. 18, 2006).

14 Quoted in Rich Robinson, *The Messianic Movement: A Field Guide for Evangelical Christians* (Purple Pomegranate Productions, 2005), 174–185.

15 Glasser, "Messianic Jews – What They Represent," *Themelios*, 16/2 (1991), 14.

16 Theresa Newell, interview (2006).

17 Dean S. Gilliland, "Bibliography of Arthur F. Glasser's Works," in *The Good News of the Kingdom*, ed. Charles Van Engen (Maryknoll: Orbis 1993), 11–22.

Something wonderful happened in the mid 1970s ... At first, all that we heard were rumors of something new happening in San Francisco among Jewish hippies ... Soon it was widely known that Jewish youth of quality were increasingly responding to a Jewish witness to the Messiah ... Fortunately, we at Fuller had the privilege of some of these Messianic Jews as students.¹⁸

Tuvia Zaretsky recalls how Glasser supported Moishe Rosen, founder of the organization Jews for Jesus:

He was instrumental in the early encouragement of the ministry of Jews for Jesus. He certainly was one of the first people who Moishe Rosen contacted back in the early 1970s as he was looking for encouragement to focus Jewish evangelism in a new and confrontational fashion.¹⁹

Glasser's support and approval of Jews for Jesus helped them gain credibility in a difficult time. Some considered them a sect. It happened that new believers were even kidnapped by "deprogrammers" who considered Jewish faith in Jesus to be a "mental and social aberration."²⁰ Courses at Fuller were started to support the growing Messianic movement. For Rosen it was an asset that an evangelical professor supported their cause.²¹

By 1976 Glasser, as dean, convened a statement on Jewish evangelism issued by the SWM faculty. The statement encouraged an active response from the church to the mandate of Romans 1:16, calling for evangelism "to the Jew first" and for greater cultural sensitivity in dealing with the Jewish people.²²

Glasser carried on promoting courses at Fuller, acting as a mentor on doctoral dissertations on Messianic Judaism,²³ and supporting Jewish leaders in their ministry. Stuart Dauermann writes:

Arthur proves himself a friend to people of widely divergent viewpoints while always remaining true to his own convictions ... he modeled ... an irenic spirit.²⁴

Ray Gannon explains how Glasser helped him and Phil Goble, who pioneered a Los Angeles-based Messianic synagogue, Temple Beth Emanuel (now Ahavat Zion in Beverly Hills): "He was highly supportive of the

18 Glasser, "Thoughts from a Longtime Friend," in *Voices of Messianic Judaism*, ed. Dan Cohn-Sherbok (Maryland: Lederer Books, 2001) 229-234.

19 Tuvia Zaretsky, interview (2006).

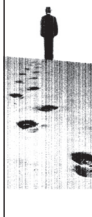
20 Moishe Rosen, "A Vital Area for Pastoral Counsel," in *Everything You Need to Grow a Messianic Yeshiva*, ed. Phillip Goble (William Carey Library, 1981), 260.

21 Moishe Rosen, interview (2006).

22 Glasser "Missiological Events," *Missiology*, 4/4 (1976), 499-500.

23 Glasser, *Missionary Monthly*, 99:5 (1993), 5.

24 Stuart Dauermann, interview (2006).



Messianic congregational approach when ours was the only one west of the Mississippi River.” When objection was raised to this approach, Glasser took an active part in trying to still the criticism by bringing together those with a Messianic approach and their critics. Gannon says:

His efforts resulted not only in largely silencing the criticism coming from other Jewish ministries but even encouraged them to likewise apply the same principles. Many successful congregations resulted.²⁵

Mitch Glaser explains how a further step was taken in 1988:

Dr. Glasser and I – along with Dr. Paul Pierson, the Dean of the School of World Mission at that time, initiated an MA degree in Jewish Studies and Evangelism.²⁶

Glasser’s support for Jewish evangelism continues. He has moved to Seattle, Washington,²⁷ but David Brickner, executive director of Jews for Jesus, states that “he continues to be a real booster of Jews for Jesus even in his declining health. I have visited him several times ... and his passion is still vibrant though his health is in decline.”²⁸

In order to understand why Glasser places such an emphasis on Jewish evangelism, we need to take a closer look at his theology.

Refuting the Rejection of the Jewish People

Glasser asserts that “any attempt to define the term Jew must begin with the term when God made a covenant with Abraham.”²⁹ Yet there are Christians who claim that Jesus rejected the Jewish people.³⁰ Glasser opposes not only these claims but also the thesis that the Jewish people have been rejected or lie under the curse of God because of their corporate rejection of Jesus.³¹ Glasser regrets that the early church fathers laid the foundation for the thesis that the church has replaced Israel. The Catholic Church held this view and only began to question this understanding after Vatican II.³² Glasser laments that this theology has provided a breeding soil for the anti-Semitism that has often been a characteristic of the church. He calls the periods in the history of the church when the church joined with the state in its anti-Semitism “most tragic.” He refers to two

25 Ray Gannon, interview (2006).

26 Mitch Glaser, interview (2006).

27 Glasser, private letter (March 16, 2006).

28 David Brickner, interview (2006).

29 Glasser, “Jewish Identity Yesterday and Today: part I: Who is a Jew?” *Missionary Monthly*, 99B:8 (1993), 6.

30 Glasser 2003, 237.

31 Glasser, “An Article in Four Parts – part II: Did Jesus Teach the Rejection of Israel?” *Missionary Monthly*, 97:9 (1990), 9.

32 Glasser, “Evangelical Objections to Jewish Evangelism,” *Mishkan*, no.16 (1992), 40.

other factors behind anti-Semitism. The first is the extent of the depravity of the human heart, which becomes particularly clear when considering the Nazi crimes against the Jews. The other factor is that Glasser believes anti-Semitism is demonic in its origin.³³

Glasser identifies the theological problem as hermeneutical and warns against a tendency to extract texts from their context or to superimpose our own views on Scripture. He contends that the opposition to Jesus comes from the religious establishment and not from the common people. John the Baptist made a prophetic call for repentance. "The Jesus John represents will not save all Israelites, nor will he abandon them. He will sift them." The majority of the people responded to the prophetic call to repent and meet God in a personal encounter.³⁴ Glasser relates this to the prophets of the Old Testament and claims that "as a result of the ministry of the prophets, spiritual Israel was always clearly differentiated from political Israel." Those who repented were classified as "the Remnant." They would be saved although the nation would be chastened.³⁵

Glasser maintains that Paul likewise taught that all individual Jews needed to hear the gospel in order to believe, and that Paul did not turn from his pattern of proclaiming to the Jews first. Paul affirms that "God has not rejected his people" (Rom.11:1).³⁶

Should Christians Evangelize Jews?

Glasser is worried because of the development of thought within the WCC. He explains their strong stance in 1948 to "include the Jewish people in their evangelistic task." He regrets how, over the years, this standpoint has changed, so that in 1988 "the next step may be to proscribe all proselytism to the Jews." Glasser endorses the respect the WCC have for many of the values of rabbinic Judaism, but affirms that "no case can be made for the theological validity of both Christianity and Judaism."³⁷

Not only does Glasser see rabbinic Judaism as "diametrically opposed to the Christian faith"; he claims that the very antithesis of modern Judaism "is the prophetic tradition of the Old Testament."³⁸ Glasser emphasizes that rabbinic teaching neglects the seriousness of human fallenness, and that the rabbis teach "in contrast with the Sinaitic revelation, that neither mediator nor sacrifice is needed to gain acceptance with God." Glasser continues, "The Sinaitic covenant is inviolable; it has not been abrogated

33 Glasser, "The Jewish People: Issues and Questions II: The Holocaust," *Missionary Monthly*, 96:5 (1989), 3.

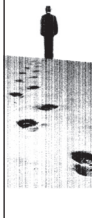
34 Glasser, "Evangelical Objections to Jewish Evangelism," *Mishkan*, no.16 (1992), 38–41.

35 Glasser, "Jewish Identity Yesterday and Today: Part II: Israel as Nation and as Individuals," *Missionary Monthly*, 99B:9 (1993), 8.

36 Glasser, "The Jewish people: Issues and Questions VI: The Encounter," *Missionary Monthly* 96:9 (1989), 6.

37 Glasser, "The Churches and the Jewish People: Towards a New Understanding," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 13/4 (1989), 158.

38 Glasser, "The Jewish People: Issues and Questions IV: The Synagogue: What Attitude should Christians Adopt toward Rabbinic Judaism?" *Missionary Monthly*, 96:7 (1989), 13.



but, rather, completed by Jesus Christ,³⁹ by his “mediatorial priesthood, vicarious sacrifice, and the possibility of spiritual transformation.”⁴⁰

He refers to Peter in Acts:

Peter proclaimed in no uncertain terms that when Jews turn to Jesus Christ in repentance and faith, they are doing nothing less than re-affirming their allegiance to the Abrahamic-Sinaitic Covenant that God had made with ancient Israel. To reject him was to repudiate their essential relationship to God via this covenant.⁴¹

Glasser maintains that, arguably, all variations of modern Judaism are agreed that radical salvation is not necessary. He claims that modern Judaism has developed out of the Pharisaic form of first century Judaism, and that “Jesus was not a Pharisaic Jew; he was a Prophetic Jew.”⁴² Like the Old Testament prophets, he called the people to turn back to the Lord, to be “converted.”⁴³ Those who responded constituted the ongoing prophetic Jewish “Remnant.”⁴⁴

Glasser thus argues that there is no scriptural basis for “the thesis that the Israelites can be saved apart from the vicarious suffering of Christ.”⁴⁵

After Baptism: Ordinary Church Life or Messianic Judaism?

During Glasser’s early ministry to the Jewish people in New York, the new Jewish believers in the Messiah were encouraged to join ordinary churches. Glasser expressed the concern that “this mission through extraction would diminish the possibility of their new life in Yeshua influencing their larger Jewish community.” The response Glasser got from other Christians was that they would not be received by the Jewish community anyway, but regarded as traitors. Further discouragement followed when Glasser learned that some of the new believers left these churches as they felt uncomfortable within the unfamiliar culture.⁴⁶

Glasser contends that there is no such thing as a solitary believer and rejoices in both Messianic Jewish congregations and evangelical churches where Jewish believers are welcomed.⁴⁷ However, he attaches missiological significance to the way Messianic Jewish congregations “strip the gospel” of its non-Jewish cultural accretions and “clothe it in forms congenial

39 Glasser, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 13/4 (1989), 158.

40 Glasser, *Missionary Monthly*, 96:7 (1989), 13.

41 Glasser, “Israel’s Understanding of ‘Conversion’: From Exodus to the Present,” *LCJE*, 28 (1992), 18.

42 Glasser, *Missionary Monthly*, 96:7 (1989), 13.

43 Glasser 2003, 354.

44 Glasser, *Missionary Monthly*, 97:9 (1990), 9.

45 Glasser 2003, 238.

46 Glasser, “Thoughts from a Longtime Friend,” in Cohn-Sherbok 2001, 229.

47 Glasser, “The Missiological Dimension: Third of 3 Installments: Jewish Evangelism in the New Century,” *Missionary Monthly*, 104:3 (2000), 13.

to the Jewish people,⁴⁸ and therefore advises that Jewish believers “affirm their Jewishness.”⁴⁹ Glasser rejoices in these believers’ confessions, even when they stay in the ordinary churches, but fears their assimilation into non-Jewish culture, and it is notable that he prefers that they be “visibly identified with the Messianic Jewish movement.” This is in line with McGavran’s idea on cultural congregational units as noted above, but it is also important to Glasser for another reason. He believes that the recent development of “visible congregations of Jewish believers in Jesus” is very significant:

They are in vital continuity with the Remnant that has always been present, but which in our day is becoming truly visible. And within these congregations a new generation of leaders is emerging in continuity with the pattern of “The Twelve” during the Apostolic Age.⁵⁰

Glasser further explains that he had been impressed with Max I. Reich’s exposition of Paul’s illustration of the olive tree in Romans 11 – “Only the unbelieving branches will be broken off; but the believing branches remain” – and with Reich’s conclusion that “Hebrew Christians cannot fulfill their mission to their people unless they remain a part of Israel.” To Glasser the implication of this is that Messianic Jewish congregations have to be planted in order to evangelize the Jewish people.⁵¹

Even so, Glasser warns that many modern synagogue forms were developed as a reaction to first century Jewish Christianity, and therefore states, “Messianic Jewish gatherings dare not reflect an insufficiently clear break with rabbinic Judaism.”⁵² He emphasizes that Yeshua must be “the center of their loyalty and worship”⁵³ and that “all portions of Holy Scriptures should be given equal prominence.”⁵⁴

Glasser believes that, like evangelization, prayer for the Jewish people is so important everyone should take part, whether Jewish or not. He emphasizes the spiritual dimension of the Jewish resistance to Jesus. Prayer should be persistent with an inner stance “of aggression toward the one who is determined to keep Jewish people from their Messiah.”⁵⁵

As for the teaching of Jewish believers and involvement in Messianic Jewish congregational life, Glasser recommends that non-Jewish believers should not play a prominent role. Glasser explains that he decided to

48 Glasser, “An Article in Four Parts – Part III: The Jewish Remnant,” *Missionary Monthly*, 98:1 (1991), 14.

49 Glasser, “Jewish Identity Yesterday and Today – Part VII: The Heart of the Matter,” *Missionary Monthly*, 99C:5 (1994), 7.

50 Glasser, “An Article in Four Parts – Part III: The Jewish Remnant,” *Missionary Monthly*, 98:1 (1991), 14.

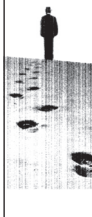
51 Glasser, “Thoughts from a Longtime Friend,” in Cohn-Sherbok 2001, 231.

52 Glasser, *Missionary Monthly*, 98:1 (1991), 15.

53 Glasser, “Thoughts from a Longtime Friend,” in Cohn-Sherbok 2001, 232.

54 Glasser, *Missionary Monthly*, 98:1 (1991), 15.

55 Glasser, *LCJE*, 45 (1996), 23–24.



look for Jewish teachers for the Judaic studies at Fuller.⁵⁶ He affirms: "We must contend that Jewish believers be encouraged to engage in self-theologizing as an expression of their having possessed the gospel as Jews." This is imperative in order to attract Jewish people to these congregations, but Glasser also emphasizes the significance of this "because of the unique Remnant concept underlying this discussion."⁵⁷

Jewish Evangelism and Eschatology

Glasser calls the Kingdom of God "one of the central overarching themes of the Bible."⁵⁸ The Kingdom of God theme has concerned him for most of his Christian life. Early on he was told that he should not be too bothered by it, as it was of Jewish eschatological relevance and not central to the Christian faith.⁵⁹ Glasser, however, developed an understanding of the Kingdom of God as central to the Christian faith and to mission.⁶⁰ I propose that he never doubted the theme was of Jewish eschatological relevance; rather he realized that Jewish eschatology was central to the Christian faith.

Glasser refers to Messianic Jewish congregations as "a growing prophetic presence." Glasser explains that "ten of the great prophetic figures in Israel's history made the Remnant a key motif in eschatology and a guarantee that God would not fail his people." He emphasizes that "Paul affirmed the Remnant's importance" as he pleaded for the evangelization of the Jewish people, and spoke with confidence of "all Israel" being saved (Rom 9–11).⁶¹

Glasser is influenced by the emphasis on Jewish evangelism in the Puritan movement and among the Moravians due to their understanding of Romans 11. The Puritans "were convinced that the Kingdom of Christ would expand following a large numerical increase of converted Jews."⁶² The founder of the Moravians, Count Zinzendorf, "did not believe that any heathen race as a whole could be converted until the Jews had embraced Jesus as their Messiah." Glasser emphasizes that Zinzendorf was above all impressed by "Paul's conviction in Romans 11 that toward the close of the Church Age a renewed Jewish people would have an important role to fill in God's missionary purpose."⁶³

This is the background for Glasser's excitement when he learned of the growing Jewish openness to the gospel in the 1970s. Glasser counts it a privilege that some of these Messianic Jews studied at his faculty at

56 Glasser, "Salvation – Old and New," *LCJE*, 19 (1990), 20.

57 Glasser, *Missionary Monthly*, 98:1 (1991), 14.

58 Glasser 2003, 20.

59 Glasser, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 14/3 (1990), 114.

60 Pierson, 8.

61 Glasser, *Missionary Monthly*, 98:1 (1991), 13.

62 Glasser, "The Puritans and the Jewish People – Part 2 of 3: The Puritans and Prophecy," *Missionary Monthly*, 99:6 (1993), 14.

63 Glasser, "A Tribute to the 'Father of Modern Biblical Missions': Zinzendorf and the Jewish People," *Missionary Monthly*, 99C:7 (1994), 9.

Fuller. By 2001 he was writing that he “was challenged to believe that God is doing a ‘new thing’ in Jewry in our day.”⁶⁴ He expresses his belief that the nations will again hear the gospel from Jewish lips and even experience the “going forth of the law from Jerusalem,”⁶⁵ as “within the last two decades visible congregations of Jewish believers in Jesus have come into existence in the State of Israel.”⁶⁶

Glasser is convinced that this Remnant, the Messianic Jews, “is a reminder that God is still the God of Israel, and he will be faithful to the promises and covenant he made with them,”⁶⁷ and as this movement “gathers momentum ... they will then extend to the corners of the earth in an unprecedented fashion the blessings of His salvation,”⁶⁸ and it will “mean nothing less than ‘life from the dead’ for the Gentile nations.”⁶⁹

Evaluation of the Interviews and Conclusion

A conclusion may be drawn specifically from the interviews. They give a clear indication that Glasser’s courses at Fuller, his writings, his engagement in LCJE, his involvement in various pioneering activities, and his personal support of young Jewish leaders have been much valued. Although differences are known to exist among the interviewed persons, they all see him as a role model for Jewish evangelism. Glasser’s underlying misological thinking is likewise unanimously appreciated. Glasser is commended for his strong biblical foundation and for his “Kingdom of God” approach to mission with its eschatological emphasis. His belief that God has not abandoned Israel, but is rather leading her into the fulfillment of her mission toward the end times, is likewise appreciated. In fact it is stated that, without this belief, he would not gain a hearing in the Jewish community. The responses also show a great approval of his support for the Messianic congregational approach, which is seen to affirm the legitimacy of Jewish people and culture.

The conclusion of this research is that Glasser is seen to provide a valuable role model for all who want to practice Jewish evangelism, and that we can extract lessons from his life and ministry about how we too might offer a “timely” contribution in this field.

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64 Glasser, in Cohn-Sherbok 2001, 234.

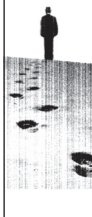
65 Glasser, “The Jewish People: Issues and Questions I – The Jewish People,” *Missionary Monthly*, 96:4 (1989), 3.

66 Glasser, *Missionary Monthly*, 98:1 (1991), 14.

67 Glasser, “Messianic Jews – What they represent,” *Themelios*, 16/2 (1991), 14.

68 Glasser, *LCJE*, 45 (1996), 22.

69 Glasser, *Missionary Monthly*, 99C:7 (1994), 9.



United Christian Council in Israel

By **Harry Tees**

In 2006 the United Christian Council in Israel (UCCI) celebrated its 50th anniversary. In light of this Mishkan has asked the present general secretary, Harry Tees, to give a short history and introduction to the work of the UCCI today. From its beginning in 1984 until 2000 Mishkan was published by the UCCI.

The Beginning of the Network – How and Why It Started

In 1956 evangelical Protestant leaders in Israel came together in a spirit of unity to form the United Christian Council in Israel (UCCI). The past 50 years have been filled with dramatic events in the Middle East. Throughout these years, many people have placed their stamp on the organization – after all, people are the organization. Things never happen in a vacuum. Starting an organization has a beginning and a reason.

Roy H. Kreider, in his book *Land of Revelation*, writes, “The UCCI was formed in 1956 to welcome into membership those churches and Christian institutions and agencies within the Protestant and Episcopal communities who desired to cooperate in strengthening the local congregations in the Land.”

In the beginning, God began stirring the hearts of a few individuals to bring together a few churches and expatriate Christian organizations. They saw the need and the benefit of coming together in a formal organization for mutual fellowship and encouragement. Thus, the UCCI in Israel had its origin as the umbrella organization for evangelical groups.

More organizations were added steadily, though tests and crises caused some to leave. The spirit that binds us together has stayed and, through it all, the organization has matured.

Count Zinzendorf (1700–1760), founder of the Christian Community at Herrnhut, also had to grapple with the fact that members of his community came from very different backgrounds. The count, a very charismatic leader, reiterated the famous quote by Augustine: “In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, diversity; in all things, charity” – a concept that has been the spirit of the UCCI from its conception. I cannot escape the impression

that Christians from so many backgrounds and persuasions being brought together, and staying together, is a miracle in itself!

In our desire to fulfill the prayer of Jesus for unity amongst the disciples, the UCCI has been eager in following his call. In keeping with the historical tradition expressed by Augustine and Zinzendorf, we make every effort to maintain the unity of the spirit wherever we can. We live in exciting times – never before we have seen so many revivals in the Global North as well as in the Global South.

Main Issues and Achievements

Throughout the years, the UCCI has been actively involved in supporting the evangelical community through various trials and difficulties. One of these is what are commonly referred to as “anti-missionary laws” – proposals, still being made today, to forbid Christians from speaking to Jews about their faith with the aim of persuading the latter that Jesus is the Messiah. Needless to say, when these proposals were tabled the Christian communities – and the UCCI in particular – made every effort to raise high the banner on which Israeli society is built, emphasizing the freedom of speech.

The UCCI’s responses to these attempts were consistent and steadfast, addressed to members of the Knesset (Israeli Parliament), and in particular to cabinet ministers. Constant reminders that an open and free society could not pass laws that infringe on the basic human rights were argued by letter, phone, and personal contact. The UN Charter of Human Rights, of which the State of Israel is a signatory, clearly guarantees the freedom of speech and religion of any individual. The guarantee of such freedom is a non-negotiable for the UCCI.

Another area that the UCCI has been directly involved in is what is today called the Department for Christian Communities – part of the Interior Ministry that was originally a separate ministry, the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This Ministry was instituted to facilitate legal matters pertaining to property rights and authorizations. It also had authority to approve or deny visa requests submitted to the Interior Ministry. In *Land of Revelation* Roy Kreider wrote, “Constant pressure was brought by the Orthodox anti-mission organizations upon the Ministry of Interior to deny visa extensions to Christian workers, unless overruled by the authority of the Ministry of Religious Affairs.” Throughout the years, many UCCI members have faced severe difficulties when their visas came up for renewal.

It appears to us that when the Ministry of Religious Affairs was incorporated into the Interior Ministry in 2003, it ceased to carry the same weight. I know by experience the constant pressure and struggle that members of the UCCI face when their visas are up for renewal. This pres-

Constant reminders that an open and free society could not pass laws that infringe on the basic human rights were argued by letter, phone, and personal contact.



sure is not generated by the Department of Christian Communities, but by a system that seems inconsistent and arbitrary.

In the year 2003, as the Ministry of Religious Affairs was brought under the authority and scope of responsibility of the Interior Ministry, we faced an unprecedented visa crisis. Ignoring the previous practice and status quo, the Interior Ministry initiated a new *modus operandi*. A ministry spokesman informed us that “the status quo has ended.” He added, “From now on, new rules apply.” The new imperative was that a clergy visa (A3) would now only be given on an individual assessment of the religious worker and not, as previously was the case, on a visa quota allocated to the church or Christian organization. If this had been implemented, many organizations active in the land would have had tremendous difficulty functioning and some would have been paralyzed. After an enormous effort over a period of more than one year, involving meetings with government ministers, consultations with lawyers, and mustering overseas support from our own governments, we seem to have regained much ground.

During this process, we saw that senior members of the government were in our favor and understood our position, and yes, even sought to assist us. The filtering down of their directives through the bureaucratic system was at times painfully slow, and one could not escape the feeling that there was internal resistance to these directives. The Interior Minister alluded to this when he very eloquently commented, “Bureaucracy is cruel even to the bureaucrat.”

The whole ordeal left scars on many organizations; some of their key personnel left in the process. The visa situation requires constant vigilance for two reasons: The first is that organizations themselves are dynamic – subject to constant change – and therefore need to be able to adjust their visas accordingly. Without this flexibility, the organizations are not able to adjust to the changing environments in which they are called to minister. The second reason is that the government changes regularly. To speak in biblical terms, the chance is great that “there will be a Pharaoh who does not know about Joseph and all the good he had done for the Egyptians.” One of the tasks of those in the leadership of the UCCI is to remember the past, and keep those in government mindful of the good we have done, and are doing.

Financial Challenges

In keeping with the apostolic tradition of the ages, many UCCI member organizations are faith-based. This means that the funding for both the organization and its staff comes through sacrificial donations from churches and individuals; those who give believe in the call of the individual and the cause of the ministry.

The member organizations of the UCCI are not the only ones that operate on this basis. The traditional churches have been operating like this for centuries. During Ottoman times, religious institutions (synagogues,

mosques, and churches) were given special tax status, which was applied to these institutions. Both the institution and its religious personnel were exempt from the paying of taxes (tax exempt), a tradition upheld under British rule and reaffirmed under Israeli rule. We still witness the effects of this tax exemption today. When standing on a high point on the Mount of Olives, one can see forested areas. These areas are on religious properties like monasteries, or on the Temple Mount, places that were exempt from taxes levied when the Ottomans taxed even the trees in the empire. Deforestation throughout the Middle East was a direct result of this taxation; farmers cut the trees on their land in order to escape this tax burden.

Tax authorities are restless and constantly seek fresh pickings. From time to time, they have used different arguments to challenge the status quo. The Catholic Church has been on the forefront of this struggle and is still in the negotiating stage. We seek to be a part of these negotiations in order to ensure the long-term stability of our ministries.

The Main Purpose of UCCI and Its Members Today

Today the UCCI is a national ministry comprised of thirty-three members, including church and parachurch organizations; these organizations in turn represent many local churches. Its purpose is to join together in common concern and to equip and empower these members to be even brighter lights in their communities. The UCCI also seeks to represent the interests of its member bodies before the government.

The UCCI is a member of the European Evangelical Alliance (EEA). The UCCI, an umbrella organization established in 1956, is also a full member of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), and subscribes to the WEA statement of faith. The WEA is a network of churches in 128 nations, which have each formed an evangelical alliance, and over 100 international organizations, joining together to give a worldwide identity, voice, and platform to more than 420 million evangelical Christians – seeking holiness, justice, and renewal at every level of society.

The UCCI's mission is to foster unity, provide a nationwide identity, and give a voice and platform to evangelical believers. We also seek empowerment by the Holy Spirit to live Christ-centered lives in order to extend the kingdom of God to all. We seek to deepen our fellowship and to live together in unity. Our mandate is to love one another, so that the whole world will see that we are disciples of Jesus.

To keep the UCCI focused on the cutting edge of spiritual, social, and political realities, it is governed by an executive committee drawn from its members. These men and women represent the cultural mosaic that is the fabric of today's global church.

At each annual spring meeting, elections are held to select a new executive committee. All members of the executive committee are elected for a term of two years and may be re-elected; they are voted in by the general assembly. The chairman's term of service shall not exceed four



consecutive years. Approximately six times a year, the executive committee meets to discuss current events, hear progress reports on existing endeavors, and appoint committees to drive forward new and ongoing projects.

As General Secretary, I have had the privilege of being able to stand on the rich heritage of the UCCI. Looking forward, I am excited to see what God will do in this land. As we come closer to the return of Jesus, and more and more Evangelicals join together to reach the world with the message of Christ, I sense that it is imperative to emphasize our unity more than ever. For where brethren dwell in unity God will command his blessing, even life forevermore.

On the occasion of its 50th anniversary, UCCI has published a book in English, Hebrew and Arabic which gives an overview of each of the 30 members which comprised the UCCI at that time. Today, there are 33 member organizations. The book can be ordered at www.ucci.net.

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Rev. Harry Tees has been the director of Project Redemption (a UCCI member organization) for 16 years, and has served as general secretary of the UCCI for the past four years.

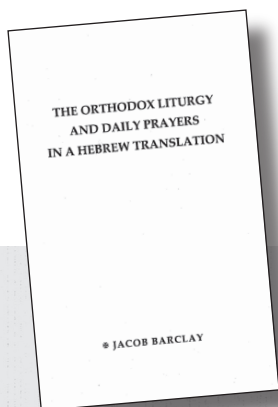
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The Orthodox Liturgy & Daily Prayers in a Hebrew Translation

The fundamental connection between Christian and Jewish prayer has long been recognized. Thus, an old prayer book used by Greek pilgrims during their visits to Jerusalem says, "The hours were originally services for the Jews, read or sung by them at set hours of the day. The Christians took them over, adding various hymns and prayers ..." Jerusalemites familiar with both the Greek prayers used by the Orthodox Church and the Hebrew prayers used by the synagogue can hardly fail to notice the parallels in their very wording.

Jacob Barclay has – over a period of 40 years – made use of his knowledge of the Hebrew language and his close familiarity with and personal use of the prayers of the Orthodox Church. The result is this unique book, and the Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity in Jerusalem deserves great appreciation for having adopted the project and making these liturgies available in Hebrew.

The book is a Hebrew translation from the Greek of the three Divine Liturgies of St. James, St. Chrysostom and St. Basil; the Prayers of the Hours; Evening and Morning Prayers; the Akathistos Hymn; and the Athanasian and Nicene Creeds. A detailed



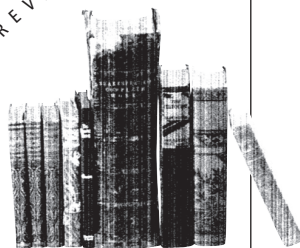
introduction elucidates the method and rationale of the translation, which really began in the Galilee in the late 1950s when Melkite Greek Catholics translated into Hebrew parts of the Orthodox liturgy for use by members of their church. The book is supplemented by two glossaries of more than two hundred and sixty words, which offer easy access to the study of the Hebrew renditions of key Christian Greek terms employed in this work.

The significance and utility of the translation is evident to all who pray the Liturgy in the Hebrew vernacular, to professors and students of liturgy, and to the Israeli tour guide or journalist who is challenged to explain, in familiar terms, forms of worship conducted in an unfamiliar language and with unfamiliar vestments and processions.

The book can be ordered from the website of the ETRF in Jerusalem, www.etrfi.org. The price is NIS 60 or \$20 plus shipping.

Bodil F. Skjøtt

BOOK REVIEWS



The Orthodox Liturgy & Daily Prayers in a Hebrew Translation

THE ECUMENICAL THEOLOGICAL RESEARCH
FRATERNITY IN ISRAEL, 2006

