

NOTE TO READERS: The material in NEWS CLIPS is abstracted from mainly Israeli media sources relating to news and comments of interest to Evangelicals. Some of these sources are extremely hostile to mission work, to Messianic Jews, and to the New Testament. The editor requests that readers take this into consideration when reading NEWS CLIPS, nor does he vouch for the accuracy or for the views reproduced herein.

"THE MISSION"

GALTRONICS : Renewed interest in this U.S. Christian Galilee enterprise was noted in the press in Jan-Feb 1991. A three-page feature article was published in HA'ARETZ (4 JAN 91) by Amit Dubkin in the weekend supplement. The approach was objective, even sympathetic, and critical of ultra-orthodox anti-mission activities directed against the firm, which are characterized as "medieval," with fantastic tales of a missionary conspiracy to "take over Tiberias, and eventually all of Israel." A summary and some excerpts follow:

The story actually begins last February when a group of businessmen, all of them Christians and Messianic Jews, approached Tiberias Mayor Yossi Peretz with a proposal to create a new local audio-visual project called "GALILEE EXPERIENCE" as a tourist venture. The group are headed by Ken Crowell, a long-time U.S. Christian resident of Tiberias; Eric Morey, a U.S. Christian immigrant married to a Jewess; and Danny Yahav, a native Israeli Messianic Jew, general-director of GALTRONICS, which has won several Israeli prizes for its exporting and work norms. Although the proposed project was received favourably at first and the necessary preliminary permits advanced, they later became aware of deliberate stalling over the issuance of a license to do business followed by an order from the municipality to halt work on the project.

The mayor denies that ultra-orthodox political elements are behind the stalling of the project, but the activities of Rabbi Zvi Cohen, a member of the municipal coalition representing the ultra-orthodox SHAS party, belie the Mayor's claim. Although Rabbi Cohen has never reviewed the GALILEE EXPERIENCE, as have others, including the Orthodox mayor, (who found it to be non-missionary) the rabbi has no intention "to view this satanic show, whose aim is to cause the people of Israel to apostacize." The rabbi also refused to confirm or deny his backing of violent demonstrations against the project as well as wire-tapping of the phones of the project leaders.

A disgruntled former GALTRONICS employee, a U.S. immigrant named Hoffman, has also fueled hostility against the company. He claimed discrimination against him because he would not yield to Messianic pressures. When the reporter made a surprise visit to the company, he found nothing to support the charges of Christian missionary activity, of crosses on display or pictures of Jesus and Mary, as alleged. Instead, he observed not a few Orthodox Jewish employees and others working at their jobs. They all denied being under missionary pressure.

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Dan Yahav, general director of GALTRONICS, is a 31-year-old native Israeli Messianic Jew, a Reserve officer in the I.D.F., who lives with his wife and children in a settlement outside Tiberias. He accuses the ultra-orthodox of using Nazi-like propaganda tactics in their attacks upon them. He is a member of a local Messianic Jewish congregation.

The reporter discovered strong support for GALTRONICS and GALILEE EXPERIENCE when he spoke with a council member, who labeled the "missionary" accusation against them as "utter nonsense." He noted that the company "provides livelihood to 130 families in Tiberias," and is confident that their new project will be a real boon to the city. Although he is concerned that the GAL-GROUP may despair over the situation and leave Tiberias, they themselves are confident that they will overcome. "Israel is a democracy ruled by law, and we believe that Israeli law will be on our side and will not permit the dark forces of reaction to prevail," they say.

The ultra-orthodox YATAID NE'EMAN (11 Jan 91) published a full-page "expose" of GALTRONICS headlined, "INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN JEWISH SOULS". It linked the company to the Int'l Christian Embassy in Jerusalem (ICEJ), and accused former U.S. ambassador to Israel, Thomas Pickering, of intervening in behalf of GALTRONICS to avert pressure on the firm. An excerpt from UCCI NEWS (30th anniversary issue) is reproduced supporting the claim of the ambassador's intervention, as well as a letter from the ambassador to Rabbi Lifshitz of YAD L'AHIM dated 18.7.86 denying the charge, but adding: "As American ambassador in Israel, I believe very strongly in the importance of American-Israeli business cooperation and hope that this dispute can be resolved quickly...(and) I can also reassure you that Americans are committed to freedom of worship as a basic constitutional and human right." This statement is interpreted by the writer as a diplomatic way of saying that in exchange for U.S. trade dollars, freedom for the Christian mission in Israel should be forthcoming.

The UCCI NEWS article reported that a member of the GALTRONICS staff had contacted the ambassador, following which pressure from the Histadrut Labour Federation and the Israeli Dept of Industry stopped. The writer's attempt to clarify the alleged contradiction between Mr. Pickering's letter to YAD L'AHIM and the UCCI NEWS item was unfruitful inasmuch as Mr. Pickering is no longer the U.S. ambassador in Israel.

MAARIV (4 Feb 91) carried a brief article by Uri Genosar headed: "RELIGION & ELECTRONICS IN TIBERIAS -- WHY GALTRONICS ISN'T PERMITTED TO EXPAND". After a description of the company's business, its turnover, and its request for expanded premises, which has been "strangely stalled" in the municipality, the mayor is quoted as saying: "GALTRONICS is an existing entity. I'm negotiating with other serious entrepreneurs. I have no prejudice against GALTRONICS, and will help in any way possible. If by the end of the week, we don't find another entrepreneur, we will issue them a permit for the new building."

The new weekly, JERUSALEM REPORT (28.2.91) published a brief item headed SIGNAL SUCCESS : "GALTRONICS of Tiberias is working around the clock to supply military antennas to Motorola, a world leader in

military communications equipment. GALTRONICS is expecting the Gulf War to boost 1991 sales to \$9 million, well beyond last year's figure of \$6.2 million."

TIBERIAS HOTEL BAN: The ultra-orthodox weekly SHEARIM (17.12.90) reported that a hassidic sect has refused to use the facilities of the "Jordan River" hotel in Tiberias because it permitted missionary activity in the hotel. Although the owners were completely surprised by the decision to boycott them, it should teach them a lesson for the future.

THE MISSION & THE WAR: From Copenhagen in Denmark, Eliyahu Zhavi, the Scandinavian correspondent of HAARETZ (16.1.91), reported that of the 1380 Danes registered with the Danish Embassy in Israel, at least 1,200 have ignored the advice of the Danish Foreign Ministry to leave Israel with the outbreak of hostilities in the region. Among them are missionaries of the Danish Mission to Israel who have come to Israel without revealing their true aims, but their names and addresses are published openly in the Danish Mission periodical.

The ultra-orthodox weekly YOM HASHISHI (22.1.91) published a report about alleged intensified mission activity during the Gulf war. The missionaries and the Messianic Jews have combined to distribute thousands of missionary tracts in letter boxes, and even dared to enter the Western Wall plaza among the women with their poisonous literature and conversations, but they were routed. While hundreds of missionaries have fled the country because of the war, a sufficient number have remained to exploit the situation for their nefarious purposes. In the Haifa area, local papers have reported on the mystical sects and the missionaries who are offering help to those who are in spiritual and material distress because of recent events.

THE MISSION & THE NEW IMMIGRANT: A local Haifa weekly (YEDIOT HAIFA) reports that a missionary sect called "MESSIANIC JEWS" is active in Haifa and is centered in the Carmel and Hadar Hacarmel neighbourhoods, where they are trying to strike the "soft underbelly" of the population, especially new immigrants from the USSR. Not only do they distribute tracts and place posters on bulletin boards, but they visit the new immigrants in their homes, call them on the phone, offering them material benefits, such as electrical implements and other help. In reply to a question by the newspaper, Haifa's chief rabbi Sher Yeshuv Cohen expressed shock at the revelation. "After the holocaust, they are trying to convert Jews to Christianity even in the Land of Israel and in Haifa," he commented. He added that he would instruct local rabbis to alert their congregations to the danger and conduct an information campaign among the new immigrants in Haifa. A reproduction of the front of a tract headed "WHERE ARE YOU?" is also provided.(30.11.90.) Similar items of alleged enticement of new immigrants appeared in the ultra-orthodox press on 31.12.90, 1.1.91, 3.1.91, 8.1.91.

The Haifa weekly KAWL BO (4.1.91) carried two items about Christmas celebrations sponsored by Messianic Jews for new immigrants from the USSR on Y.L. Peretz Street, with children and parents taking part. This was followed by an explanation of Messianic Judaism. One of the families by name of Tropimov are non-Jews whose immigrant certificates

have been withdrawn. A photograph of the family at the Christmas celebration accompanies the article, bylined Yosi Bar Moha, Yifat Reuveni.

POSTAL MISSION: Sympathy for Israel's policy of restraint following Iraqi Scud attacks is being 'exploited by the Dutch "CHRISTIANS FOR ISRAEL", which has mailed a quarter-million greeting cards of solidarity with the "missile children" in Israel. The founder and chairman of the organization, Karl Van Oordt, made a special trip to Israel in order to assist in the distribution of dozens of mail sacks of the postcards. Jacqueline Viget, a senior official in the postal service, was very moved by the gesture upon reading "the warm messages of solidarity with Israeli children and sincere wishes for peace and security; also prayers for peace..." She has "willingly taken on the assignment," and in a press announcement it was stated that the letter carriers report that tens of thousands of the cards are being received warmly and emotionally by Israeli children, especially those evacuated to hotels following Scud hits on their homes."

All of this would be fine and dandy were it not for the fact that the organization behind it is deeply immersed in missionary activity in Israel financially, and is closely linked to the Int'l Christian Embassy; they have reportedly contributed about \$1.5 million to help new immigrants. The anti-mission activists fear that the postal 'missile' of the Dutch organization is aimed at establishing direct contacts for bringing the Gospel to Israeli children. (YOM SHISHI 27.2)

"JEWISH-CHRISTIANS SECT" REPORTED: M.K. Rabbi M.Z. Feldman, in a parliamentary query to the Minister of Religious Affairs about the activities of the "Jewish-Christian" sect in Israel, asked: In view of an article published about the activities of a sect called "Jewish-Christians" and the possible conversion to Christianity by several families as a result of unlawful activities by the sect, has the ministry investigated the activities of the sect, have there been violations of the law relating to conversion by bribery, and are the various sects being monitored? (HAMODIYA 27.2.91)

HOLON :At the Absorption Center for New Immigrants in Holon, several copies of the booklet "Living Water" (Mayim Hayim), which contains excerpts from the New Testament, were found among new immigrants. They reported that a Tel-Aviv woman visited them and handed them literature, stating that they were shortened versions of the Bible, "by means of which you will repent of your sins and find a wonderful way to G-d." An inquiry with the anti-mission activists revealed that the man behind the distribution is Yaakov Damkani, a Messianic Jew who spreads the Gospel from Jaffa under the disguised name of "KOL KOREI" ("A Voice Calling"). It should be noted that the booklet deals entirely with "the Holy Gospel According to Matthew" in Hebrew, and also has a glossary of historical, geographical and religious information as well as terms from the Gospel of Matthew. (SHEARIM 24.12.90)

WESTERN GALILEE: There has been an intensification of mission activity especially in Carmiel, Nahariya and Acre, because of the increase of potential converts in the wake of great waves of immigrants. In a hearing of the Knesset Interior Committee, police officer Amira Kochava testified concerning this, and noted that for 12 years now the police have not prosecuted violators of the Mission Law against bribery. When

ever she receives a complaint, she investigates and then files the material away on the basis of instructions from the Attorney General not to prosecute without his approval. The ultra-orthodox party Agudat Yisrael is now demanding that these instructions be canceled, but this call is not being heeded, even in such a time. (Motti Ofir, HED HATSFON, MISGAV, 4 Jan 91).

JERUSALEM: In a sympathetic feature article in the weekly Jerusalem supplement of the POST, Fern Allen provided a half-page column on "How To Refute the ABCs of the Gospel" with the help of anti-missionary counsellor Shmuel Golding, "to show Christians a contradiction...to shake their faith...and I don't apologize for doing it." (IN JERUSALEM 22.2.91) In a response, Chas. M. Kopp, Chairman of the UCCI, charged the article with being "insensitive and totally unbalanced, providing a one-sided platform to a man whose credibility has been seriously questioned by both Jewish and Christian sources." Kopp concluded that "Golding's spurious characterization only serves to undermine efforts to build positive Jewish-Christian understanding, and perpetuate mistrust and suspicion between Christians and Jews which so many in both communities are working hard to overcome." (1 Mar 91)

LONDON: Missionary groups have increased their activities during the Christian holidays under the leadership of the sect called "Jews for J-s-s" at underground stations in the London area. They wear shirts with Christian slogans such as "You don't have to be a Jew in order to love ('that man'), but it helps." Anti-mission leader Rabbi Shmuel Arkush claims that the activity is more intense in London because the missionary sect believes their prospects are better in London than in other cities. (HAMODIYA 1.1.91) In two follow-up stories on J.F.J activities in England, two Orthodox journals reported the opening of a J.F.J. campaign among U.K. Jews. According to Moishe Rosen, the General-Director of the U.S.-based organization, "the time is ripe; the anti-mission Jewish groups are in despair, and there are Jews in Britain willing to hear what we have to say." The London TIMES published a letter from Rev. Drummond, General Director of the British missionary group, "Church Ministry to the Jews," defending the right of Christians to work for the conversion of Jews. (HAMODIYA/HATSOFEH 27.2)

MESSIANIC JEWS

BARUCH MAOZ: "ARIM," a local paper of the Rishon-Rehovoth-Nes Ziona area, carried a feature article by Yisraela Rosenzweig (21.12.90) headlined "RENTAL CONTRACT IN MESSIANIC SPIRIT." The article dealt with Baruch Maoz, Director of HAGEFEN Publishers, who was about to sign a lease with the Rishon municipality for renting a city-owned flat on 22 Nordau Street, for the purpose of setting up a free dental clinic for new immigrants in collaboration with a Finnish philanthropic organization called PATMOS. In addition, the municipality was to contribute the sum of NIS 48,000 for refurbishing the flat.

When two councilmen (Gibstein of Likud and Tal of Shas) discovered the proposed lease, they acted to forestall finalizing it on the grounds that it was a missionary plot, and that the HAGEFEN director, Baruch Maoz, was linked to missionary activity among new immigrants as well as allegedly influencing them to emigrate. Tal insisted that Maoz would use the clinic to preach conversion, while Gibstein claimed that when he was mayor he had thwarted Maoz in his missionary activities.

In a conversation with Maoz at his office, located in Shmotkin Street in Rishon, he refused to provide details about his activities because he feared the reaction of ultra-orthodox elements. Others at HAGEFEN stated that the Messianic congregation headed by Maoz numbered 70-100 persons. "We believe in God, and the difference between us and orthodox Jews may be summed up in the fact that we believe in the New Covenant in addition to the Hebrew Scriptures. We also engage in voluntary activities, support HATOMER, an institution for retarded children in Nes Ziona," they stated.

Baruch Maoz, 47, U.S.-born, made aliya to Israel as a child, and after army service moved to Eilat and worked in the Timna mine. Later he worked at a missionary centre in Haifa, then travelled to Wales where he studied in a seminary, and eventually settled in Rehovoth where he began his Messianic activity about six years ago, causing a storm in that quiet scientific town. He was accused of enticing children with candy and cards with cross drawings on them to join the mission. There were protests and petitions and grafitti urging his removal from the town. It was legally impossible to halt Maoz's activity, but he has since engaged in quiet activities until his name came up once again at the Rishon LeZion municipality recently.

The weekly YEDIOT AHRONOT Rishon supplement carried a full two-page feature article (28.12.90) by Vered Kaminsky about Maoz and Yeshua (punning the Hanukah hymn, MAOZ TZUR YESHUATI). "We are Jews and Israelis like others, paying taxes, serving in the Defence Forces in various units, from all the communities, living in various cities and settlements around Israel; some of us are young, some of us are older, some of us are likeable, some less likeable, and certainly some of us resemble you who are reading these lines. As befits Jews, we believe in God and see in Him the essence of this world and therefore of our lives." This is what is written in information leaflets distributed by the Messianic Jewish congregation, which Rehovoth residents claim were placed in their letter boxes. The pamphlets explain their belief in the New Testament as well as the Tanakh and in the Messiah Yeshua. (The article goes into the details given above about the thwarted arrangement with the Rishon municipality for opening a free dental clinic for new immigrants.)

A comment was elicited from Rabbi Simcha HaCohen Kook, Chief Rabbi of Rehovoth, who led the battle against Maoz and "the mission" in previous years: "The mention of this name causes me to shudder. Baruch Maoz is an element of incitement against the State, whose aim is to see to it that there will not be a Jewish person remaining in Israel, that every Jew will change his religion."

Maoz responds: "I don't know how to shatter this incredible and ridiculous perception. What is so revolting about my representing a different opinion and trying to spread it abroad?" he wonders. "Most of the information about me given out by religious circles is confused and unchecked" (and he gives illustrations relating to personal data; this is followed by a description of the HAGEFEN offices).

The company publishes arty literature, a quarterly called ME'ET LE'ET, as well as a quarterly for children called RE'A NE'EMAN ("Faithful Friend"). 25% of the funding for the publishing derives from E.D.I. (Gospel Work in Israel), a German Christian organization founded by a Messianic Jew, Alfred Burchartz, a Holocaust survivor. Another 25%

comes from a Finnish society, the balance from various Christian sources in England, U.S.A. and Israel. Maoz notes that they do have a profit from sales, which covers some of the costs... The interviewer continued the article with a series of questions and answers (excerpted):

Q. According to your literature, you believe in God and also in Jesus?

A. True, the Torah leads to the New Testament. The religious establishment wants to protect its position with the Jewish people and the State of Israel, and it sees any framework that casts doubt upon its authority as a threat.

Q. You preach for conversion. There are Rehovoth residents who claim you distributed candies with crosses to school children, for example.

A. I've heard these nonsensical tales. You won't find crosses anywhere around me. I oppose that symbol; and never, never have we approached a child to offer anything, or to exploit human weakness, which is immoral.

Q. There is an opinion that your congregation members serving in the army try to make converts of the soldiers they serve with.

A. If you call this making converts ... I suppose a Messianic does exactly what an orthodox Jew does for his faith.

Q. How do your neighbours react, and how do school children relate to your children?

A. No special way; there is no opposition from the neighbours or the children in the school where my daughters study.

Q. Why did you decide to set up a dental clinic for new immigrants?

A. The Christian organization PATMOS is doing much for Israel and for aliya. They just finished helping establish a Magen David Adom branch in Petah Tikva, and were looking for a new project. The Jewish Agency suggested that they open a dental clinic, and I agreed to represent them with the municipality. Why all the fuss! This country has been built by plants and schools which included many contributions from Gentile Christians... Another fact: We asked the mayor explicitly to add to the agreement a paragraph obliging us not to introduce symbols or any missionary activity into the place.

Q. What will you do now that the proposal has been set aside?

A. We will consider other possibilities ... whether in Rishon or in some other town, with the help of the municipality or without it.

Q. Baruch Maoz, are you a Jew or a Christian?

A. I am a Jew; of course I'm a Jew.

Q. But were you not baptised?

A. True, but I wasn't baptised by the Church but as a sign of

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repentance and faith in Yeshua... I was baptised in the home of a friend in Jerusalem by Ovadia Amrani, a young Yemenite Jew, in a bathtub. I am not a cleric, I am a Messianic Jew.

In several sidebars accompanying the article, the following (excerpted) comments were included:

Attorney Hananya Gibstein (Likud): It is a serious matter that the mayor knew (about the missionary connection) and did not give advance notice to council members, especially the orthodox representatives. They might have voted to lease municipal property and funds for renovations in order that the Mission might try to convert Jewish new immigrants!

Meir Nitzan, Rishon Mayor: If the lease were to be signed with "Patmos" (Finnish-Christian organization helping new immigrants), even if it is represented by the Messianic Jew Baruch Maoz, I would not disqualify them, but there is no way to sign a lease with Hagefen and Baruch Maoz. There is nothing wrong in receiving aid from Christians. The State of Israel exists also on dollars sent by Christians, but I am against missionary activity.

Tamar: (A 27-year-old mother, completed her military service, a Messianic believer for 3-1/2 years, as a result of contending with her sister, a Messianic Jewish believer before her.) We believe that the Messiah of Israel is Yeshua. God promised that in the end time he would give us a new covenant. My father, although an ultra-orthodox Jew as a child, has denied God because of the Holocaust, in which he lost his family, but he doesn't care what we believe. My mother, although not a believer, does come to assembly meetings and listens. I haven't cut my ties with (non-Messianic) friends, but I will never speak to anyone about Messianic faith unless there is interest in it.

"YESHUA KING OF ISRAEL" : Under this heading, the Histadrut daily "DAVAR" published a half-page article about the Messianic Jews by Natan Ro'i. (22.1.91) The article focuses mainly on Beit Emmanuel in Jaffa, quoting literature the reporter picked up about the Israel Trust Anglican Church (ITAC), the congregation, the booklet "Who is a Jew?", the tract "Messiah Now!", "Intifada" and others; "very sophisticated." Ro-i also refers to Hagefen Publishers, the "missionary" book "That Man" by Noam Hendrin, and a two-hour interview with a congregational member which is summarized in one paragraph. There is also reference to the "strange" network of "informers" maintained by "Yad L'Ahim" which seeks to "purge out the sect" from our midst. The reporter is clearly unsympathetic to both sides.

Another brief item in the same paper by the same writer appeared earlier (4 Jan 91) in which he described missionaries including "Messianic Jews" conducting a tract campaign in downtown Tel-Aviv, with several brief quotes from the tracts and a photograph of one of the campaigners wearing a T-shirt inscribed "Messianic Jews" on the front.

MESSIANIC JEWISH SCHOOL: The Nazareth District Court has issued an injunction forbidding the Dept of Education from implementing a closure order against the school belonging to the Messianic Jewish community in Tiberias until such time as the complaint of the principal of the school, Wendell Stearns, is heard. In a brief filed with the

court, Stearns, a psychologist by profession who once worked for the municipal department of education, noted the harassment that the Messianics had endured from the municipality and from local Orthodox Jewish residents, both verbal and physical. This had made it necessary for the parents to remove their children from the schools and set up a school of their own called Peñiel, which 31 children are attending. They follow the Ministry of Education plan but are linked to the Anglican School in Jerusalem. Stearns stresses that the municipality issued its closure order without giving the school an opportunity to appeal. Meanwhile, the municipality has not yet submitted a response. (HADASHOT 13 Feb 91, Faïd Abbas)

"WHO IS A JEWISH-CHRISTIAN?" Under this heading, the Jerusalem weekly "YERUSHALAYIM" published a three-full-page feature article on Jewish Catholics, bylined Yair Nahorai. (22.2.91) The subheading read: They are Jews who seek to draw near to the profound truth of Judaism - or if you will - to flee from it. Here and there a personal tragedy lies behind the story, here and there a personal tragedy develops from the story. It is hard to be a Jew, and not at all easy to be a Jewish Christian. (Excerpts and summary follow:)

For all the reasons in the world they are very few--200, perhaps 250 in all of Israel; naturally, they all know one another, and meet almost daily for mass, although the cross in their centres is relatively small, because they are well aware of the emotional load carried by this symbol--antisemitism, persecution of Jews. They pray for tolerance, patience, peace, which in the Israeli reality -- tolerance, generally, and religious tolerance particularly -- was never a high priority. So they live almost an underground existence, and it's hard to locate them. The interviewees demanded anonymity as a precondition for interviews, whether out of fear of harassment from ultra-orthodox zealots or from employers who would discharge them if they knew who they were.

Q (addressed to priest leading the group): If your example leads someone to convert to Christianity, how will you feel?

A I will be happy. Mission, however, is far from my position. I don't try to influence anyone. I don't know what is God's will for everyone, but I know that every upright man can be redeemed, saved.

This priest has been serving the group for six years, although in Israel since 1956, and he has devoted his life to identifying with the Jewish people. Jewish-Christians received legitimacy from the Church only after the Holocaust, and especially since the papacy of John the 23rd. He also points to a recent document which instructs the faithful to read the Gospels, especially John, in the context of religious polemic and to have reservations about certain passages which have led to antisemitism. The document also praises the fruitfulness of Judaism and its ability to preserve its faith.

Three women were interviewed, whom we will name Rahel, Clara and Shira, the first two being the backbone of the group while Shira doesn't "belong," and sees herself more as a Christian Jewess rather than a Jewish Christian.

Rahel, now 50, discovered Jesus at 15. She was born in Russia to a wealthy assimilated Jewish family, and the little Judaism she knew came from a pious grandmother. The family eventually moved to France, where she first came in contact with Christian faith and Jesus and realized that this was the way for her. "There was an inner revelation; all at once I believed," she relates. For three years she kept it to herself, sensing that such belief was out of bounds for her family. She continued to study Christian faith secretly, not daring to have any contact with the Church, until one day she accompanied a friend to church, and that night she sensed a transformation in her life. The family also began to notice a change in her, and one day her father found a copy of the New Testament in her room, forbade her to leave the house or to have any contact with Christian friends and teachers. Eventually, she found a Jewish convert, a Catholic priest and an artist and intellectual, who agreed to teach her the Catholic faith and baptized her, which she disclosed to her parents only on reaching 21. They took it quite hard, but became reconciled to it, and together survived the Holocaust. After the war, she made aliya to Israel and received Israeli citizenship, but not under the Law of Return. She visits the synagogue, lights Sabbath candles, and has studied Judaism with a Jerusalem rabbi, but remains firmly committed to her Catholic faith. In reply to a question, she states: "I've had the strength to re-examine my way, and I have chosen Jesus again, feeling even more how much He belongs to the Jewish people and understanding anew the New Testament."

Efraim Meir, a Jerusalem Orthodox Jew who converted from Catholicism and had earned a doctorate in theology, gave his interpretation of Christian faith as a "romantic religion in distinction from Judaism, a classical religion, a religion of works and world-perfecting; also Christianity is an international religion while Judaism is a national identity." Beginning with Paul, the Church made it difficult, then impossible, to continue a Jewish lifestyle (the way other cultures were "baptized"), but the State of Israel has provided the background for the growth once again of a Jewish Christianity, as at the beginning.

The second interviewee, Rahel, is an example of this: At 20 she converted out of an Orthodox Jewish modern Zionist background in Belgium following a period of crisis in faith when she came in contact with modern secular education, especially evolution. The Holocaust intensified the crisis, but the shelter provided by good Christians, "who lived the Christian life truly according to the Gospel," and did not try to convert her drew her closer to the faith. It was, however, only after the war when she began to believe in God anew, "this time through Yeshua, not the Church and not the Christians; only Yeshua." Her parents died before she was baptized, but her brothers took it very hard, and only 22 years later were willing to speak with her again. One lives in Israel as an Orthodox Jew with his family. It took much persuasion to convince the Interior Ministry to grant her residence rights, but not under the Law of Return. For her, Christianity is the fulfilment of Judaism, and she continues to observe many Jewish practices, but in a very free manner.

Shira, married and the mother of three, 40 plus, converted six years ago, after 20 years in Israel. She began to be disillusioned with Judaism while still in the Diaspora in the Jewish school, intensely disliking the "arrogance" and "bragging" about being Jewish. She saw

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a film about Mother Teresa, her devotion to the unfortunates she served. It reflected the Christian concept of God who so loved us that He sacrificed His Son to correct original sin, so different from the Jewish concept of Messiah who comes for us to rule over others. She rejects the "ethnocentric" nature of Judaism, Orthodoxy with its obsession with laws (she studied Talmud and tried an Orthodox lifestyle), and the State of Israel is a great disappointment. Her fervent explanations remind the interviewer of the classical apostate, "the stereotype of the self-hating Jew." Nevertheless, she sees her Jewish identity as a part of her and doesn't want to escape it and recognizes that, with all her reservations about Israel, because of its existence she is able to live as a Jewish Catholic.

In a sidebar to the article, the writer notes: "There is no connection between Jewish-Christians and Messianic Jews; the former belong to the Roman Catholic church, the latter are linked to the Protestant stream in Christianity. The Jewish-Christians are baptized, the Messianic Jews are not, and this is one of the reasons for the numerical success of the Messianics, it is claimed. In another sidebar the writer provides a description of Jewish Catholic worship in Hebrew, with minimal Christian worship objects, and with references to Jewish festivals. (END SUMMARY & EXCERPTS)

"ADDICTED TO DRUGS, NOW ADDICTED TO JESUS" : Under this heading, the local Ashdod weekly (HASHAVUA B'ASHDOD 25.1.91), bylined Yossi Asulin, published a four-page feature article about Nissim Alkovi, an Ashdod resident who hopes to open a drug rehabilitation centre for addicts in Ashdod. At 28, Alkovi has experienced a traditional Jewish life with a solid family foundation, worked as a successful contractor and businessman following military service, got involved with drugs, lost his business and fled to Europe where he was arrested for drug-trafficking and spent four years in a Norwegian prison. It was there he came in touch with a believer and with the Messianic prophecies. The Hebrew Scriptures are the prophetic message, the New Testament is their fulfilment, according to Alkovi and the Messianic sect, he enthusiastically seeks to prove to the reporter. He adamantly denies that he is a Christian ("notzri") and therefore no longer a Jew. "I am a Jew in every sense. Does belief in a Jew (Yeshua) make one feel like a Christian?" he asks.

Alkovi now works in Jaffa, directing the center of the Messianic Jews as a volunteer. He has been back in Israel four months and is fully accepted by the Messianics. He believes he will stay clean of narcotics. There are an estimated 30 congregations of Messianics in Israel. In the Jaffa group, Keren Yeshuah, to which he belongs, most of them are normal Israeli Jews from Sefardi, Ashkenazi, traditional and secular backgrounds. They observe Jewish holidays, fast on Yom Kippur, celebrate the Passover, have added the New Testament, but have dropped the rabbinic interpretations to Judaism and don't adhere to Christian symbols and holy places.

"CRUSADE: CROSSING THE LINES" : Under a sensational heading, the Hebrew New Year edition of "YISRAEL SHELANU" ("Our Israel"), the New York Hebrew language journal carried a full-three-page feature by Yael Steinski, an Israeli living in New York, describing her encounter with the evangelistic outreach of JEWS FOR JESUS and their Messianic congregation in the city. The article is based on a chance encounter

with a J.F.J broadside, a few phone calls, an office visit, and attendance at a worship service and Bible study. The article is mostly negative and provides a translation of an anti-mission broadside distributed by the local Jewish community about "kosher pork" and Jewish believers in Jesus. (19.9.90)

CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

IN MEMORIAM - NELLY SCHUMACHER MARCINKOWSKI: The JERUSALEM POST carried a memorial article about the death of Nelly Schumacher who died at the age of 95 and was one of two remaining members of the German Templar Society. At the funeral in the Haifa Protestant cemetery, Professor Alex Carmel, head of the Haifa research institute into 19th century Christian activities in Palestine, eulogized her and her family, "which had contributed enormously to the modernization of pre-State Palestine," in the fields of architecture, building, education. (19.2.91) A memorial notice by Bethesda Haifa Messianic Assembly was also published announcing her departure, the funeral service at Ebenezer Home where she died, and interment at the Protestant cemetery, followed by a quotation from John's Gospel, 11:25. (17.2.91)

NEW INTERFAITH GROUP: The Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel (ICCI), comprising Jewish, Christian, Muslim groups was formed in January, with some 40 more organizations expected to join, according to Dr. Ronald Kronish, American Jewish Committee Israel Director, who presided at the formative session. (JLM POST 18.1.91)

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS: A sarcastic feature article by Roitel Levi-Stein of the Eilat weekly "EREV EREV B'EILAT (3 Jan 91) dealt with Jews celebrating the Christian New Year. "Have we all suddenly become Christians?" the writer asks. A similar article in a more serious tone appeared in the weekly magazine JERUSALEM REPORT (17.1.91) headed "THE SYLVESTER SYNDROME" (common Israeli name for New Year's Eve, after St. Sylvester, whose feast is dated 31st December). The writer protests: The fact of "Jews celebrating Israel's newest festival New Year's Eve on 'Sylvester' remains particularly offensive in the Jewish state."

Roy Kendall, writing from Jerusalem, protested the writeup of Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem, which failed to mention the Evangelical Christian participation with a choir and about 1,000 Evangelicals in attendance. (JERUSALEM POST 21.1.91)

CHRISTIANITY COURSE: A university-level course on Christianity, its history and sources, was described in feature articles in the Hebrew daily HAARETZ (14.12.91) and the weekly KAWL HA'IR (15.2.91). The ultra-orthodox weekly YATAID NE'EMAN (22.2.91) reproduced a newspaper ad for the course and protested the alleged unfairness of a 120-hour course on Christianity by a university which obtains government aid whereas protests are raised over aid to ultra-orthodox Jewish seminaries, which are allegedly "unproductive."

CONVERSION THREATS: Several members of Kibbutz Mizra, producers of pork products faced with closure under a proposed anti-pork law for Jewish areas, have threatened to convert to Christianity if the law is enacted. This report was carried in the regional weekly (KAWL HAEMEK V'HAGALIL, 21.12.90). The same journal (7 Dec 90) also reported that Rafi Dadon, a Likud activist has threatened to convert because of debts.

"NO CHRISTIAN CHARITY WANTED": Deputy Labour & Welfare Minister Rabbi Menahem Porush has issued a directive to ministry staff forbidding transfer of Jewish retarded children and incurables to Christian institutions. "I don't want the charity of a Christian on behalf of a Jew," the ultra-orthodox politico remarked in answer to a journalist's inquiry. The directive was scored by Ya'ir Tzaban, Mapam M.K., in a letter to Rabbi Porush. (Various papers 21.2./28.2.91)

TOURISTS PRAY FOR JERUSALEM: A group of 275 tourists from Germany and Switzerland arrived this week to pray for the peace of Israel and Jerusalem on several mountain-tops, during a week-long stay. Ludwig Schneider, organizer of the event, stated that there were only 275 seats available on EL AL flights but 410 had booked flights. They also raised NIS 100,000 for helping new immigrants (IN JERUSALEM 4 Jan. 91).

SOVIET IMMIGRANTS & CHRISTIAN AID: The Christian Friends of Israel opened a distribution centre for Soviet immigrants to obtain clothing, bedding and footwear. Anti-mission activists, however, suspect the good deeds are designed to spread the Gospel. Some 80 Soviet Jews appear daily, hearing about the warehouse on Moriah Street in Jerusalem by word of mouth. Contributions come from Christian groups world-wide, including a South African Jewish-Christian group. A Soviet Jewish spokesperson, Luba Kogan, denied CFI were missionaries but were "Christian Zionists". (IN JERUSALEM 15.2.91) In response to the article, Ray Sanders, CFI Jerusalem director, in a letter to the paper, outlined "Christian practical and financial support for Israel's new citizens, both Soviet and Ethiopian." (22.2.91) Richard Peterson of Jerusalem also defended CFI, and gave personal testimony to the help provided by CFI to new immigrants without "attempting to further missionary aims". (1 March 91)

THE POPE & PRO-ISRAEL CHRISTIANS: In a feature article, Benjamin Zvieli contrasts papal hesitancy in its dealings with Israel with the enthusiastic support of vast numbers of Christians for Israel. Despite tragic memories of Christian persecution and intolerance, there have always been righteous Gentile Christians who have defended the Jewish people in time of need. Jews must be on guard against concealed missionary motives, but should not dismiss pro-Jewish Christianity out of hand. (MA'ARIV 10 Jan. 91)

"BIKERS FOR JESUS": Forty-two motorcyclists arrived from Los Angeles to demonstrate solidarity with Israel, dressed in black leather jackets and heavy boots. The minister accompanying them assured Israelis that, as menacing as they might look, they are believing Christians who excel in good works. (DAVAR/HATZOFEH/JLM POST 28.2.91)

"HANUXMAS": The Netanya weekly paper carried a story from Detroit about the wide-spread combining of Hanukkah-Christmas celebrations among half-assimilated Jewish families, especially intermarried couples and their children. (4 Jan. 91)

LITURGICA 1990: At a special concert within the framework of the annual festival, music inspired by Old and New Testament subjects was performed at the YMCA in Jerusalem. (HA'ARETZ 2 Jan. 91)

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Editor.