

"THE MISSION"

TIBERIAS: The police have not succeeded in discovering the identity of the anonymous persons who drew crosses on the doors of ^{two} synagogues in Lower Tiberias. The sextons and worshippers believe that there is a link between recent intensified missionary activity in town and the incidents. The police view the desecration of the synagogues with great seriousness and have promised vigorous efforts to discover the perpetrators. (YOM HASHISHI, J^olm, 18.11.83)

Tiberias has ever been a major mission focus in Israel, with mission groups from round the world active here in the hunt for souls. Some people imagine missionaries as gangs of sombre-dressed, wicked-looking men snatching children from their homes and making them into Christians, but the reality is quite different. A missionary can be a very likeable and intelligent figure, helping the needy, ^{or} a kindly woman distributing sweets to children and thereby drawing people to them, little by little accomplishing their designs. Right now there is a very large number of missionaries in Tiberias from various and strange sects, each with its own methodology but with a common aim, to get Jews to change their religion...some by means of regular prayer meetings and conferences, others by means of evening parties in which soldiers and youth from the best homes are attracted, while others go out to the needy and offer aid...and unfortunately, they do meet with success, not much but still some success.

More recently, ^{THE} most dangerous missionary sects have invaded Tiberias under various guises of helping people develop their talents, giving lectures to which even intelligent persons have been attracted and some have been trapped. It should be noted that in many countries where the gravity of the matter has been understood, the activity of such sects has been prohibited. In addition to converting people to Christianity, these sects also cause psychological damage. Regrettably, in Israel they are permitted a completely free hand. (KOKHAV HATSAFON--STAR OF THE NORTH--19.11.83, Local weekly, Letter to Editor: Ben-Yaacov)

A group of Jewish converts and several Christians have recently widened their missionary activity among children and adults in Tiberias. Groups of Tiberians have complained about this activity, but the police in Tiberias have arrested the head of the yeshiva "Yad Rambam" and one of his students as suspects in an attack upon the building used by the mission for prayers and conferences. Although active in Tiberias for a long time, the missionaries have kept a low profile, but now they have taken to more extensive activities, especially among those in financial distress, and among school children. According to Mayor Yigal Bibi, the mission is exploiting the grave economic situation to "buy souls" by means of material benefits.

It appears that the missionaries in Tiberias have turned to various families in order to persuade them to join their conferences and prayers, and also visiting centres of New Immigrants to try to persuade them, as well as standing at the entrances of various schools to distribute Christian literature and trying to persuade the children to attend meetings, and many of the children have responded. The Mayor told the press that the missionary activity has caused panic among the town children who are fearful of "these strange people." The mayor claims that missionaries approached his 8-year-old daughter, who "came to me in a fright and asked me: 'Daddy, will they also kidnap us?'"

Nine days ago on Saturday night several yeshiva students entered the Nitzan Hotel in Tiberias (rented by the missionaries for their meetings), photographed the lesson being given to a large group of small children against the background of a picture of Jesus Christ. The teacher was a Jewish convert from Safed of an ultra-orthodox family who has declared his faith in Jesus. These photographs are in the possession of "MAARIV", and the children, the lecturer and the pictures of Jesus Christ are visible. Last Saturday night unknown persons smashed the windows and curtains of the hotel, and that night the police made their arrests of the suspects. Yesterday, dozens of youths gathered outside the police station demanding the release of the two suspects, who have denied any connection to the incident. The Mayor also intervened on behalf of the jailed suspects and they were released. Meanwhile, the police announced that the missionary activity would be investigated if a complaint of bribery-offer is made for the purpose of effecting conversion. (MAARIV:5.12.83)

THOSE WHO HAVE RECEIVED BENEFITS FROM THE MISSION IN TIBERIAS: "WE WILL NOT COMPLAIN TO THE POLICE--SO AS NOT TO GET INVOLVED": Religious circles in Tiberias are trying to persuade those who have received material benefits from missionaries to complain to the police inasmuch as the police have announced that they cannot take any legal action against the missionaries before such complaints are filed. These people yesterday stated that they are not prepared to make a complaint "so as not to get involved," or "because we are afraid that they might take revenge on us." Yesterday the missionaries were not seen in Tiberias after publication of their actions. Religious groups, especially in the religious schools in Tiberias, are prepared to take forceful action against the missionaries if their activity continues.

It appears from a "MAARIV" investigation that the missionaries indeed gave many material benefits ("monetary equivalents", in the legal definition) to children, young people and adults, in order to induce them to hear lectures on Christianity and to participate in religious ceremonies. In "MAARIV"s possession are testimonies of this nature, but all the witnesses have categorically requested that their names not be published, but they are known to the editors.

R.L., 25, married and mother of two, told "MAARIV": "At the beginning they gave me sport shoes and invited me to attend one of their meetings. I said I would think of it, but I didn't go. After a while, they came back and gave me all kinds of new clothes, but I still didn't go. Finally, they offered to send me abroad, on condition that I take part in their studies and meetings. This I also refused." She added that she came to know the missionaries through her 17-year-old sister who participated in the meetings and prayers of the missionaries. She received sport shoes, clothes and a silver chain. When it was discovered that the silver chain had a cross on it, she was forbidden to attend the meetings. In response to the question of why she and her sister were not prepared to file a complaint with the police, R.L. says: "After all, they didn't do us any harm, and they were rather likeable. Besides, why should I get involved?"

On the basis of many witnesses, one of the central activists of the Tiberias mission is a Jewish believer in Jesus. S.Z., who knows the man for 11 years, relates: "I first discovered that something had happened to him six years ago. He told me that Jesus had revealed himself to him nine times and told him that the people of Israel aren't right because the Jews don't believe in him. I tried to convince him that he should return to his own religion, but without success. In his home I saw many writings about Jesus and cross-shaped objects." The mission activist lives in the Rabbi Akiva neighbourhood, is the son of a religious family, and according to witnesses distributes sweets and other things to children to induce them to hear about Jesus. At a meeting the day before yesterday with Mayor Bibi of Tiberias the man said: "I'm a Jew but I believe in Jesus." On/Saturday night religious students succeeded in ^{one} photographing the man at the Hotel Nitzan in Tiberias while he was giving/lesson about Jesus to children. (MAARIV 6.12.83) (PHOTOGRAPH OF MISSIONARY ASSEMBLY HANDS UPRAISED TAKEN BY ULTRA-ORTHODOX IN TIBERIAS)

A storm broke in Tiberias yesterday following the arrest of Rabbi Machluf Aden and Yitzhak Cohen, after they had acted against missionaries in town. The two belong to the activists of "YAD L'AHIM" who were summoned in the wake of a missionary conference at the Nitzan Hotel in the Kiriyat Shmuel neighbourhood. They were arrested on the complaint of two missionaries, Berger and Zialla, Jewish converts, who complained of a disturbance at the missionary conference. The swift action of the police stunned Tiberians. Mayor Bibi also intervened in the matter at the request of rabbinic leaders. A "Yad L'Ahim" spokesman last night noted that in Tiberias recently there has been extensive missionary activity, including the engraving of crosses on synagogues and the distribution of huge amounts of incitement literature at schools and youth clubs. (HATSOFEH:6.12.83) A Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA) reporter notes that thousands of pamphlets with photocopied pages of the New Testament have been distributed in the streets of Safed and Tiberias and near schools. On the central street of Safed one may see dozens of young people crowding around missionaries in debates about the principles of the Christian religion. In several instances fights broke out which led to police intervention.

It is also reported that during the Sabbath missionaries waited outside synagogues in Safed and Tiberias and distributed New Testaments to the worshippers. Many tore the books in the sight of the missionaries and others threw them away. At the head of the mission in the

north is a Safed Jewish convert, whose father (an Orthodox observant Jew) rent his garment in mourning and broke out in weeping when he learned of his son's activity.

A large group of ultra-orthodox Jews demonstrated on Monday in B'nei Brak in protest at the arrest of a religious student suspected of snatching a child away from the mission in Tiberias. They burnt tires and blocked the street. The police arrived at the scene and ordered the demonstrators to disperse, and shortly afterwards the tires were extinguished and the demonstrators dispersed. A young man of 23 was arrested on suspicion of setting fire to the tires. (HATSOFEH:6.12.83) A shortened version of the Tiberias-related story in HATSOFEH:6.12 appeared in DAVAR on the same date from the same source, while HAARETZ on the same date carried a small six-line account.

HATSOFEH reported that ^{some 300} religious students were organizing to curb missionary activity in Safed. A JTA correspondent reported that at one of the hotels a large group of missionaries were using the premises as headquarters for missionary operation. The students have issued a warning to the missionaries to leave town. Meanwhile, JTA reports that the Tiberias police have released the suspects in connection with the attack on the missionaries there without making formal charges against them. (7.12.83)

"HAMODIYA" (organ of Agudat Yisrael) again appealed for action against the missionary menace, reviewing the situation from Mandatory times, and noting that "recently a new affliction has been added to the first, the idolatrous cults...who are directing youth to blatant idol-worship; and again the Government demonstrates an astonishing impotence..."

CALL-UP ORDERS & THE MISSION: Israeli youth about to be called up for military service ^(7.12.83) from the Tel-Hashomer HQ received missionary literature together with their call-up orders. (One report states that the orders came from Beersheva HQ). One young woman, Sheli Amiel from Ashdod reported that the tract contained quotations and prophecies from Ezekiel, Zecharia and Jonah, ^{and} from 2nd Kings. The recipients were advised to keep the tract in their pockets "so that in the day of affliction and visitation they will find their Saviour (Jesus the Nazarene)." The tract explained that Yeshua is the Messiah, and addresses of missionaries in the U.S.A. are furnished who will supply them with New Testaments in Hebrew. A "Yad L'Ahim" spokesman charged that missionaries are known to be operating in IDF bases. An investigation is under way by IDF personnel to discover who was responsible for the mailing. Also reported was a diary of a soldier in an officers training course openly engaging in soul-hunting, and the diary has been turned over to the authorities for study. Meanwhile, a parliamentary query has been submitted on the matter by the Agudas Yisrael MK to the Minister of Defense. Another editorial appeal by HAMODIYA (29.11) to alert the public to the missionary menace. (VARIOUS PAPERS: YEDIOT AHRONOT 24.11, DAVAR 24.11, HATSOFEH 28.11, HAMODIYA 29.11, 1.12.83)

NAHARIYA: A 3¹/₂-page 'exposé', written by Esther Han-Bargilai for the woman's magazine LA'ISHA (26.10.83), under the heading "SOUL HUNTERS", dealt with believers living in Nahariya, but also branched out to include alleged missionary activists such as "PROJECT KIBBUTZ," "NES AMIM," "VOICE OF HOPE," "INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN EMBASSY," etc. A photo of five local Nahariya believers in a café accompanies the story. Excerpts follow:

A new dangerous wave of extensive missionary activity, accompanied by modern sophisticated psychological methods, has recently been disclosed in Israel. It appears that the worldwide missionary organizations have placed Israel in the first place of their targets. They come to Israel in the thousands, behind them a ^{mighty} rearward of churches and devout Christians from their various sects who have at their disposal unlimited funds to achieve their ultimate aim: to bring as many Jews as possible into Christianity....The mission does not shrink at any means to attain its end. Missionaries exploit economic and mental distress, hunt out weak characters and offer them the fat of the land, or more correctly, the land outside Israel. Families of new immigrants and also veteran settlers disappear from the country with the aid of the missionaries. The law imposes almost no ^{exact} restrictions. The number of Jews who have become Christians is unknown, in the wake of the free rein given to the Mission in Israel....

The Mission was able to take hold as a result of the political and social deterioration of the State of Israel. With Israel's friends in the world turning their backs on her, her enemies could become "friends," without their motives being examined....And the Mission, in order to establish its "friendship" to the people of Israel began to bombard the

"new concubine" with everything she needed: money, love, solidarity, volunteers, moral support, and the like. One of the first bases for this attack was a Christian settlement in the north by name of Nes Amim, near Nahariya. There is a guest house there, the children study in Jewish schools, the parents speak of dialogue with the Jewish people; nothing which suggests missionary intentions. But in the study room of Nes Amim in the central building there is plenty of material, such as a publication entitled "WHAT DO WE REALLY THINK OF THE JEWS?" written by the director of the Episcopal Church of Christ in Ohio, one Philip Culbertson. For example, on page 156: "The Jews are the same flesh and blood as Jesus, and the Gospel must be spread among the Jews in order to bring near the return of Jesus who alone proclaims redemption..." In the periodical of Nes Amim from March 1982 the hope is expressed that "the children of the settlement will succeed where their mothers failed." This statement calls for further explanation....

A Christian missionary organization by name of "BETH SHALOM" has invested during the past decade many dollars in hospitals and charitable institutions in Israel, its aim to create fraternity between Christians and Jews...They are about to build a 177-room hotel in the Gilo neighbourhood of Jerusalem...In a Swiss-German paper published by the organization abroad one article reads: "The Beth Shalom centre in Jerusalem will serve various purposes, including a hotel, a centre for prophecy conferences, a missionary Bible school and a church." It's worth noting that the head of Beth Shalom admits that his organization engages in missionary activity worldwide since this is part of the Christian vocation, but he claims they do not do so in Israel....

Christian organizations have found an excellent field of activity in the kibbutzim, especially in the north. For the purpose of soul-hunting they have set up a special plan of activity called "PROJECT KIBBUTZ" whose centre is in Kfar Giladi. To implement this missionary plan they bring to Israel under the guise of love and sympathy for Israel hundreds of volunteers who win souls for Christian Messianism.... This program is navigated essentially by an extremist missionary sect called "charismatic"...and they are called "born-again"...The "JEWS FOR JESUS" movement is one result of the "born again Christians" who claim that "you can remain a Jew and at the same time believe in Jesus"...Kibbutz youth estranged from Jewish values are much more open, according to the missionaries, to an acceptance of the truths of the New Testament....

Another project under the aegis of the Canadian Pentecostal church is "KIBBUTZ SHALOM." The program is based on 1½^{months}/work (on kibbutzim) with the aim to prepare the ground for longer stays by the missionaries of a year or two...The Evangelistic Church to which these volunteers belong is the most missionary of all, which is imbedded in the very name "Evangelist"--spreading the Gospel....Jim Cantelon, whose vision KIBBUTZ SHALOM was, is a member of the Canadian Pentecostal church, and has said in a recorded interview: "We penetrate many kibbutzim throughout Israel...We try in every way possible to demonstrate Christian love to Israel....not to work underground but openly...The link must be natural and simple because in Israel there is a negative sense of missionaries. If a missionary is caught in missionary activity, the prospects for extending his visa are very slim...."

In the prospectus of "THE VOICE OF HOPE" (which is erroneously called "Haddad's station") the naive are told that Haddad asked George Otis to build a radio station in Free Lebanon...Notwithstanding (the dire need of the local inhabitants) and out of all proportion to the true needs of the local inhabitants, it was decided that the mission headed by Otis would build a radio station...The concept of helping Lebanon...is only secondary, the real aim is Israel and the Jewish people....In an article Otis published in the periodical "Charisma," he claims he has broken the credibility barrier and that the Israelis are prepared now to trust a Christian and to enable him to set up a TV station that will flood Israel with the Christian Gospel...

The Mission is striking deep roots in Israel thanks to the widespread activity of Jewish Israelis who call themselves "JEWS FOR JESUS" and belong to the Messianic Assembly. Recently, in the Haifa area a number of seminars were held with the aim of brain-washing hundreds of Jews on the threshold of becoming believers in Jesus. At such a seminar

which took place at Beit Yedidya on the Carmel, youth from all over Israel took part, among them young people from well-known long-time resident families in Nahariya... At the same time there was a camp for children from around Israel with dozens of Jewish children who paid nominal fees. A similar seminar was planned for the Tabernacles festival at the guest house "Bethel" in Shavi Zion belonging to German Christians. This seminar was aimed at 150 Jews who were due to convert to Christianity upon the conclusion of the conference, but at the last moment it was canceled following the threats of the Chief Rabbi of Nahariya that he would expose the guest house as a missionary centre....

The Mission in the north has to its credit the baptism of young people and the increase of a desire on the part of Jewish youth ^{to} change their religion, with the main missionary activity centering in Nahariya... The "Yad L'Ahim" organization, fighting the Mission for decades in Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem, has removed the focus of battle to Nahariya... At the height of this unseen struggle between the missionaries and the "Yad L'Ahim" organization, two youths were baptized. Shlomo Gaz, age 27, and Michael age 21, at the seashore on the eve of Yom Kippur in the presence of three foreign press photographers... "The act of baptism," Shlomo says, "is not for the purpose of becoming a Christian but for purification from my sins. After the baptism it was as if I had been born anew, and only thus could I begin to believe in Jesus."

Shlomo's father, Jacob Gaz, works as a municipal inspector, and claims that his son was swept in after his sister Dorit who believes in Jesus as Israel's Messiah. (There follows a similar account to that reported in REHOV ROSHI; SEE SELECTIONS 117, pages 2-3 under heading "HAIFA MISSION")

Ruth Nissim, identified by the Yad L'Ahim organization as a dangerous missionary, is working eight years already among Jews. She says: "I am not a missionary. I don't go out on the streets to explain my belief in Jesus. People contact me and ask to know about Messianic Jews, and I can't slam the telephone on them and say it's none of their business. I don't compel anyone to believe as I do. The "Yad L'Ahim" organization has blown up the matter out of all proportion. They claim there is extensive missionary activity in Nahariya but it's not so." Ruth Nissim, 47, speaks enthusiastically about Jesus and explains with great patience why Jesus is the Messiah of Israel, bringing prophetic parallels from the Hebrew Scriptures... "No one has to be a Christian in order to believe in Jesus, and not every Christian is a follower of Jesus. The Messianic Jews and the Messianic Christians are like the 12 apostles of Jesus. He was Jewish and they were Jewish. We don't pray to the cross nor to Holy Mary nor to images of various saints like the Christians. For us God is holy and so is His Son Jesus, for our faith is based on the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament... We pray for the people of Israel... The Messianics don't believe in baptizing into Christianity but baptism for the sake of purification, like the Jewish custom...."

Asked whether she engages in the promotion of faith in Jesus, she answers: "All that I do is for the people of Israel and for the State of Israel. We must do this, we cannot lock ourselves up at home with faith in the heart. We must go and explain things to the unbeliever, spread the Gospel, but not in exchange for gifts and money. Faith in Jesus cannot be bought with money; it is a gift of God." According to Ruth Nissim there are no missionaries in Nahariya.... (END EXCERPTS)

Under the heading "SEX TO THE AID OF THE MISSION: VOLUNTEER WOMEN FROM ABROAD HELP THE DISSEMINATORS OF CHRISTIANITY," KOL-BO of HAIFA (19.8.83) published a brief article based on information provided by "YAD L'AHIM" to the effect that a new sophisticated system has been initiated recently by various "missionaries" in the north--proposals to young men to spend weekend holidays with volunteer girls from abroad and thus to encounter the principles of Christian faith, this according to Aharon Kornfeld, "YAD L'AHIM" spokesman. (SEE SELECTIONS 117 page 1 re. Kornfeld) "NAHAR-TON" of Nahariya (1.9.83) published a similar story, adding that the Int'l Christian Embassy is behind these activities, and also that "JEWS FOR JESUS" is active in Nahariya, and NES AMIM as well. A similar tale without the sexual innuendos appeared in ZAFON-1 of ACHE (5.8.83), also based on the said Kornfeld's "information."

MORE

GOLDING: A full two-page article with photographs of "Rav Shmuel Golding" appeared in the new Orthodox weekly "YOM HASHISHI" (28.10.83). (SEE SELECTIONS 116, page 1) The article opens with a report on threatening letters allegedly received by the "rav": "We warn you that if you don't stop your activities at once, one of your children is liable to be kidnapped. You have been warned!!!" (this with letters cut out from newspapers). Golding claims he has a whole file of such letters. Several "horror" stories are related: A young man from a religious home fell in love with a Gentile Christian girl and was on the verge of marriage and conversion when they were referred to him. He persuaded them that Christian faith is not based on logic but on emotion only. In the end, the girl, like a number of other Christians, asked for more information about the Jewish response to Christianity. He claims that five Christians have converted to Judaism during the past year as a result of his conversations with them.

Golding also described his "unmasking" of the missionary motives behind the "BETH SHALOM" movement, ^{how he} succeeded by stealth to obtain copies of their magazine abroad which revealed their missionary character, sent photocopies of same to the Prime Minister and some 25 Knesset members, but not one of them responded, because of the vast sums BETH SHALOM contributes to Israel. The newspaper continues: In the wake of his anti-Christian and anti-missionary activity, Golding has been threatened and harassed in various ways, and also offered bribes to stop his anti-mission activity against "Beth Shalom". After a bribe offer failed to move him, he claims he was warned, and shortly after strange things began to happen in his office, the electricity and water were cut off by a strange mistake. Later he was also told that his life was in danger.

Golding has also uncovered a missionary plot in the I.D.F. with several officers having converted to Christianity and joined Emmanuel Church. Two of Golding's volunteers went to a Saturday night service (which is intended for soldiers only with about 100 coming each week) where they sing Christian songs and hear sermons about the New Testament. The volunteers carried miniature tape recorders and taped the services several nights...in various parts of the country. At one such service a German missionary from the Mount of Olives charged that terrorism was the result of the Jewish displacement of the Palestinians and blamed the entire Israel-Arab conflict on the Jews. As a result, a young I.D.F. soldier present allegedly removed his army documents and tore them publicly. Golding turned to the military authorities with the tape recording of the event.

Two accompanying articles relate his rescue from the Nazis at the age of 4 and transfer "in unknown and unexplained ways" to the Port of Odessa and from thence to England during World War Two, to be adopted by a Baptist couple, who in later years told him of his Jewish origin. The second tale deals with his "reconversion" of some of his volunteers, one said to have been a ^{Christian and later a} Baptist preacher for 18 years in the U.S.A. Another tale is of the reconversion of a "Jews for Jesus" worker in Israel. (END SUMMARY)

"WHAT ARE THEY LOOKING FOR IN THE KIBBUTZIM?" (YOM HASHISHI, Orthodox weekly, 18.11.83) Under this heading, B. Z. Eshel writes about PROJECT KIBBUTZ & KIBBUTZ SHALOM, as reported above, adding a few emphases about the complete commitment of the volunteers to Jesus and the inevitable impact on kibbutz life. A brief letter is also printed from the spokesman of the United Kibbutz Movement, which states that "the kibbutz movement completely rejects any missionary activity on the part of volunteers who are screened thoroughly. There are clear instructions on this subject to the offices of the movement abroad. We do not accept groups engaged in mission work...and in the event that such do penetrate the kibbutz and the fact is discovered, we see to their removal." (END SUMMARY)

KIRIYAT HAYIM: "SHAKAF" of Kiriyat Motzkin, a Haifa suburb, reported on 18.11.83 that a church has been trying to settle in another Haifa suburb, Kiriyat Hayim. One of the local residents offered his flat for sale, which led a group of clergy to respond to the proposal, much to the chagrin of the other neighbours. They have appealed to the newspaper to publicize the matter because of their fear that missionary activity will be conducted from the building. There is a possibility of forestalling the sale in view of the fact that the building belongs to the Israel Lands Authority.

MORRIS CERULLO: A Christian missionary event in which a number of Israelis were present at a Jerusalem Hotel (The Shalom) may lead to the cancellation by the rabbinate of the Kosher certificate of the hotel, after the U.S.-based World Evangelist Church-School of Ministry screened a film about Jesus' Second Coming at the hotel auditorium. The hotel was strongly censured by the rabbinate. An Orthodox Jewish member of the J'lm Municipal Council noticed an advertisement about the film "ADVENT P.W.O." and organized a demonstration

outside the hotel. The Councilwoman, Viva Sivan, entered the premises and was removed by the police following a disturbance. The hotel manager told the rabbinate and the press that he was not aware that Jews had been invited to the screening but thought it was a private Christian affair. Morris Cerullo, the head of this Christian group, is a well-known missionary who does not conceal his aims. The Ministry of Religious Affairs ~~has~~ asked the Ministry of Interior to restrict his stay in Israel but found no legal way to do so. The film he screened is about the repentance of an American family, and is quite pro-Israel. During one scene, which relates to the establishment of the State of Israel, the audience broke out in applause. (JLM POST 13.10.83, KOL HA'IR 14.10) Meanwhile, the religious political bloc represented by Councilwoman Sivan announced that they would campaign against the BETH SHALOM hotel project in Gilo (not related to the Shalom Hotel). The paper also reported that it was the police who insisted on her leaving the premises of the Shalom Hotel and not the organizers of the event, who asked the police to permit her to remain. (IN JERUSALEM SUPPLEMENT: 14.10.83)

In response to the stories about the ADVENT TWO film, two letters were published by the JERUSALEM POST. One attacked the reporting of the incident, denying there was any attempt at proselytizing Israelis, and protesting "the bigotry expressed by the threat to cancel the kosher certificate of the hotel." The writer, A.J. Caplan, concludes: "When will these zealots stop pushing their form of Judaism down our throats? I for one resent it." (27.10) The second letter denies that proselytizing is of itself unlawful in Israel. He cites the law against "enticement to Change Religion" (so-called anti-mission law) which only forbids the use of material inducements in proselytizing and not the act itself. (23.10.83)

SUNDRIES: "A MISSIONARY SERMON ON THE SABBATH": A letter of protest in "Maariv" from a reader in Ramat Gan, Leah Ganz, concerning the "missionary sermon of 'Brother Marcel'... accompanied by a church choir" on a Friday evening radio program. (17.10.83)
A letter protesting contacts with Fundamentalist Christian groups for rebuilding the Temple, citing the alleged entanglement of the Jerusalem Foundation with the BETH SHALOM group in Gilo. (JLM POST:28.10.83)

DEREK PRINCE: There was a storm stirred up in the ultra-orthodox community in Johannesburg, and not for nothing. The local Zionist Federation had invited a guest lecturer from Jerusalem by name of Derek Prince, a Christian who often visits South Africa and preaches Zionism to the local Christians. The Orthodox were suspicious, and by telephone contacted YAD L'AHIM in Jerusalem to check out the man, whether he was a missionary, and the reply was surprising. Professor Prince is well-known as a missionary preacher. The writings of the man were sent by special courier that same day to Johannesburg, and when the material arrived it stirred a sharp debate in the congregation. There were those who favoured welcoming this "friend of Israel" as a speaker. They claimed that cancellation of the event would alienate the local pro-Israel Christian group, and Israel Ambassador Eliyahu Lenkin also took this view. Others called for a cancellation of the event so that it would be clear that there can be no link between support of Israel and missionary activity by Christians.

In order to conclude the debate, the advice of the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem was sought, alongside further clarifications with the organization YAD L'AHIM, who meanwhile had forwarded their material to the Foreign Ministry, which was not impressed by it, notwithstanding the fact that he ^(Derek Prince) boasts of having adopted nine daughters, six of whom were Jewish! They also noted that Prof. Prince had already appeared before the local Zionist organization in Capetown... An aide of Deputy Foreign Minister Yehuda Ben-Meir also noted that "it has not been proven that the man is indeed a missionary, which is a question of terminology. Even the YAD L'AHIM people admit that he has not succeeded in converting any Jews. We have nothing to lose by encouraging activity to promote Christian support for Israel; on the contrary, we have everything to gain." (YOM HASHISHI 11.11.83)

YAD L'AHIM: One of the foremost Jerusalem-based organizations actively opposing missionary activity has been criticized by liberal thinkers who are bending over backwards to prove their tolerance. If they took the time to sit down and read YAD L'AHIM's latest evidence, they might be shocked into changing their tune. The report can be obtained by writing to POB 5195, JERUSALEM. (IN JERUSALEM: Greer Fay Cashman, 2.12.83)

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: A feature article in the JERUSALEM POST (18.11.83) by Yaacov Friedler marks the 150th anniversary of missionary activity among the Jews of the Holy Land in 1842. "Indeed, the very word (missionary) arouses hostility bordering on hysteria in some circles, although the facts show that there is little justification for vilifying a body of men, many of whom have been true friends of Israel," the reporter writes. Citing Professor Alex Carmel of Haifa University's Eretz-Israel Studies Dept, an expert on 19th Century Palestine who has published five books on the subject of missionaries, he claims that no more than an estimated 1,000 converts were won to Christianity.

The impetus to renewed missionary activity was provided largely by a revival of millenarian hopes among European Protestants, and the political opportunities for introducing a Protestant mission to the Holy Land under Ottoman rule. The Jewish Anglican Bishop Michael Solomon Alexander was chosen in the 1840s, and he was responsible for the conversion of "perhaps 30" Jews before he died three years later. But he was responsible for a powerful reaction among the Orthodox Jews (numbering some 8,000 at the time). In the opinion of Carmel, "this is when the big shnorr (begging for money) began... It is still going strong... and should be attributed to the missionaries, a by-product of their activities."

The article cites other "by-products," such as the offer by the British Govt (under the impetus of believing Protestants and missionaries) to support resettling of the Land by Jews. But the country was steeped in poverty at that time and the Jews did not go. "It is a tragedy that we missed this opportunity to settle the land, which was virtually uninhabited, under the auspices of Britain, then a major world power," says Carmel. "We had the chance to solve our national problem without opposition from the indigenous population, which was in any case tiny in number," he adds.

The successor to Alexander, Bishop Gobat, a Swiss, served for 33 years, and "his activities were instrumental in bringing about a profound change in this country," Carmel says. "They brought money, and good skilled people and provoked an attitude of self-defence against alien influences among the Jews that propelled them, too, into the modern age." His research has proven that Gobat did much good for the country, including the Jews, and he deserves commemoration even if he was a missionary.

The article concludes with a description of the contributions of the German Templars (a minority of whose descendants became vociferous Nazis and were expelled from the country), whose teachings led them to believe that they were the "true Israelites". The more recent German sect of Emma Berger centered in Zicron Yaacov, however, believe that the Promised Land belongs to the Jews. They have also done much good, the reporter states, but "in the hysterical anti-missionary atmosphere that has developed in this country, Emma Berger and her flock (like most other gentile communities in Israel) expend a great deal of effort preventing any suspicion of missionary activity falling on them." [SEE ALSO "SELECTIONS" # 117, PAGES 117, "CHRISTIAN BUILDERS OF LAND"]

HASSIDIC MISSIONARIES: The Orthodox engage mainly in building up their own power and attempts to reach "marginal" Jews are few. Only the Habad hassidim engage in "missionary" work--more than once using methods very like those of Christian missionaries. The other Orthodox feel that the return is not worth the investment since only the smallest number can be returned to Orthodoxy. (EXCERPT "HAARETZ" 5.8.83)

CHRISTIANS IN ISRAEL

BAPTIST FIRE: Police have renewed their investigation of last year's arson at a local Baptist church in J'lm. Baptist leaders report that \$4,000 has accumulated in the special account opened by the J'lm Municipality. (JLM POST 9.10.83)

REINTERMENT?: The problem of the burial place of the late Teresa Engelvich, an East European Gentile woman who married a Jew and emigrated with him to Israel, continues to stir controversy. The family contend that the woman lived as a Jewess and raised them as Jews. One daughter, however, was formally converted to Judaism, while another daughter, now deceased, did not formally convert and was interred beside her mother. The religious authorities are now seeking to reinter mother and daughter in a Christian cemetery over the objections of the family and friends. The matter has been angrily debated in the Knesset. The daughter Adina, who formally converted to Judaism, has threatened that should the reinterment take place, she would become a Christian convert but she would fight the rabbinic design as long as she could. (YEDIOT ACHRONOT 1.12 HAARETZ 2.12.83, MAARIV 4.12.83)

NES ANIM: The German-language ISRAEL NACHRICHTEN (T.A.) published a full-page article about "Nes Anim, its people and its books". (14.11.83) A report on the opening of a botanic garden in Nes Anim to demonstrate water conservation appeared in HAARETZ

JERUSALEM'S HOLINESS: Dr. John N. Tleel of the Old City of J'lm, a Christian "with family roots that go back as far as 400 years," in a letter to the JLM POST (18.11.83) expressed the belief that "the cosmo-historic event of Jesus Christ's coming gave to Jlm more importance and significance as a holy city," even though it was always a holy city. The Greek Orthodox Patriarch Diodoros is the 96th patriarch of Jlm, "the representative of all generations since Patriarch Abraham."

ELIJAH'S CAVE: Hundreds of Christians from throughout Israel and Lebanon took part in festive celebrations at Elijah's Cave on Mt. Carmel in Haifa near Stella Maris Carmelite Monastery. (SHAFAT HAIFA 22.7.83)

CONVERT TO JUDAISM: A feature article about Job Albers, son of a Dutch clergyman, ^{WHO} is seeking conversion to Judaism in Israel. Raised by liberal Dutch Protestants, now divorced, he admitted that he had never had a belief in Jesus and Christian principles, only lots of information about the subject. His father has expressed no objection to his conversion, although he ^(HIS FATHER) continues to be active in the Dutch church. He has a Jewish girlfriend, a freethinker, who has urged him to stop the conversion process because of bureaucratic delays, but he is determined to persist. He wants to be an Israeli Jew, and claims no attachment to Holland or Dutch roots. (YEDIOT AKHRONOT 11.11.83)

BETH EL NAHARIYA: A sympathetic report on the work of German Protestants in the Nahariya area (Shavei Zion) to minister to Jewish survivors of the Holocaust in a guest house, as well as contributions to the erection of philanthropic institutions elsewhere in the Land. The reporter found no evidence of missionary intent, only very dedicated and very impressive service to ^{Jewish} guests, many of them crippled and still scarred from the war. The director and staff are committed Christians with a millennialist view of prophecy comprehending Old Testament and New Testament eschatology. (YEDIOT AKHRONOT 28.10)

FIRST HOLY LAND CANONIZED SAINT: A two-page feature article in HAARETZ concerning Miriam Bavardi, an Arab nun, who was to be canonized by the Roman Catholic Church, the first such saint from the Holy Land. (28.10.83)

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP IN BEERSHEVA: A report by a local paper (KOL BO BEERSHEVA) about a small secluded Christian house of worship (apparently Roman Catholic) in the Negev city of Beersheva. Sister Johanna, who is responsible for the house, says that it is supported by free-will offerings, mostly of tourists, and an average of 25 Beersheva Christians attend Sunday services when a Jerusalem priest visits them. They have minimal contact with their neighbours, who regard them as very quiet, peaceful and generally positive persons but who have no interest in being involved in the community. They deny any missionary intent. (2.9.83)

CHRISTIAN VISITORS IN ISRAEL

BEGIN & FALWELL: Former P.M. Menachem Begin met briefly with Dr. Jerry Falwell, leader of the Moral Majority Movement in the USA, during the latter's visit to Israel to attend the first Moral Majority conference outside the USA. Falwell was also received by P.M. Yitzhak Shamir and Defence Minister Moshe Arens, and the latter addressed the conference. (HAARETZ 21.11, KAWL HA'IR 25.11)

The Histadrut daily DAVAR, in an editorial about the Moral Majority convention, noted the appreciation of Israelis for the support provided by "Evangelical Protestant churches" in an era when liberal Protestant churches were turning their backs on Israel. Nevertheless, the fact ^{remains} that the Fundamentalist outlook with respect to the Second Coming of Christ and with respect to social issues in the U.S.A. is very far from ^{the outlook of} the vast majority of Jews in the U.S. and in Israel. (21.11.83)

PEACE HIKERS: A group of 20 peace advocates ^{who} have journeyed 12,000 Km from the nuclear submarine base in Seattle, Washington, have arrived in Israel and plan to continue their hike to Bethlehem in time for Christmas Eve. The group was welcomed by Haifa Mayor Gurel who congratulated them on their bold venture to encourage worldwide nuclear disarmament. Most of the participants are members of various Christian denominations, including a former U.S. Air Force chaplain whose unit dropped the nuclear bombs on Japan. (DAVAR 5.12, MAARIV 6.12, AL HAMISHMAR 6.12)

MARONITES: The leadership of the worldwide movement of Maronite Christians have come to Israel for a visit of several days. They had a dinner meeting with the coordinator in the Foreign Ministry on the subject of Lebanon, Mr. Uri Luvrani. (HAARETZ 17.10.83)

CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

LUTHER COMMEMORATION: The theory of a straight line from Martin Luther to Hitler is an oversimplification, Geoffrey Wigdler writes in the JERUSALEMPOST (11.11.83) in reviewing commemorations of the 500th anniversary of Luther's birth. He also notes Lutheran acts of repentance for the anti-Jewish tirades of Luther and the ongoing dialogue between Lutherans and Jews in Europe and America.

HAARETZ (1.11.83) carried an interview with an East German Lutheran Bishop, Werner Leich, who expressed strong sympathy for Israel and the Jews, as well as a disassociation from the anti-Jewish writings of Luther. HAARETZ also carried a lengthy book review of a work by a Jewish writer in East Germany, "AHASUERUS, THE WANDERING JEW" by Stefan Heim. It has been translated into Hebrew, and also touches on the Reformation and Luther's role in it. (19.8.83) The participation of official Roman Catholic clergy at a Lutheran commemoration in Rome is another sign of reconciliation between Protestants and Catholics, Hilda Liberman reports from Rome. (HAARETZ 11.11.83)

CONSERVATIVE ALLIANCE? A series of articles in HAARETZ by Yehudit Winkler in November described efforts by right-wing Jewish Israelis, some of an Orthodox inclination, to come to some understanding with U.S. rightists, including Christian conservative Evangelicals or Fundamentalists. One of the leaders of the Israeli movement is Avigdor Askin, a Soviet Jewish emigré, also M.K. Michael Kleiner. Contacts have already been made with both secular and religious conservatives in the USA, such as Jerry Falwell. Askin remarked to the reporter: "As a Jewish believer (Orthodox Judaism), it is easier for me to find a common language with a Christian believer than with a leftwing atheist."

CHRISTIAN ZIONISTS: The International Singers from Denver, Colorado, the Faith Bible Church, have arrived for their annual tour on behalf of the Soldiers Welfare Fund, their sixth tour. Their church was founded by Christians who believe the prophecies concerning Israel in the Bible. (MAARIV 30.10.83, AL HAMISHMAR 1.11.83, MAARIV 11.11.83)

HATSOPEH (N.R.P.) published a short opinion piece about the INT'L CHRISTIAN EMBASSY wondering how to relate to them, in view of conflicting reports about their motives and activities. "whoever has met with them is unable to suspect them nor has any evidence about their intentions; but if this is truly unconditional love, how can we hurt their sincere feelings?" (19.10.83) A report on a demonstration on behalf of Prisoners of Zion took place outside the U.S. Embassy which was joined also by representatives of the Int'l Christian Embassy. (HATSOPEH 3.11.83)

BIBLICAL AND CULTURAL ITEMS

JOSHUA ALTAR: Archaeologists working at Mt. Ebal believe they have found the altar erected by Joshua son of Nun recorded in the Book of Joshua 8:30-32. (HAARETZ 28.10)

THE NAME OF JESUS: Dr. Reuven Sivan, responding to a reader of the weekly "OLAM HAZEH" who questions whether the common Hebrew name for Jesus (Yeshu) is a pejorative, presents his evidence from Jewish sources that it is a shortened form of Joshua-Yeshua which was already prevalent in Jesus' day. He notes similar contractions in classical and later Hebrew--Yesh ayahu/Yeshaya, Jehonatan/Jonatan, Matityahua/Mati, Yosef/Yosi, and notes that only fanatical Orthodox Jews of the most extreme kind use the name as a pejorative on the basis of an imagined link to a Hebrew imprecation. (4.7.83)

GENESIS: A Book review of a work by the late Joshua M. Grintz, "The Unity (or Distinctiveness) of the Book of Genesis, which disputes the Documentary Hypothesis. Magnes, 108 pages. A Book review about Chas. Darwin and the impact of 19th century Fiction and Darwin's own theories. The book, "Darwin's Fictions: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin", is an appeal to read Darwin as "science fiction." (BOOK REVIEWS IN HAARETZ: 4.11, 11.11.83) YOM HA-SHISHI published a brief report on a work by an Orthodox Jewish scientist dealing with Creation in response to non-theistic theories of origins. (CREATION by M. Trop) 25.11.83

*** END TRANSCRIPTION ***

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