

**TOURIST MINISTRY NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ENFORCING MISSION LAW:** Tourist Minister Abraham Sharir confirmed, in a reply to the Parliamentary question of Rabbi Abraham Shapiro, that Christian pilgrims are visiting this year in the framework of the celebrations of Israel's 40th year. In his question the rabbi referred to a newspaper report in HAMODIYA, that 4,000 missionary tourists have arrived in Israel to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the State. They are also preparing a crusade headed by Messianic congregational leaders and sectarians, which includes, among others, a "Christian-Zionist" Congress sponsored by the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, in which senior government officials would participate.

The rabbi inquired whether a "renewed crusade" of Christian tourists was being organized, and whether counter-measures were being taken to prevent missionary conversionist activity. Furthermore, would government ministers and public figures be asked to refrain from participating in these conferences, and would it be possible to act to prevent missionary tourism in the future?

The Minister of Tourism replied that he could not prevent the participation of any person in conferences organized by pilgrims, and the authority to bar entrance to Israel by visitors was not within the province of the Tourism Ministry, but of the Interior Ministry. (HAMODIYA; also ULTRA-ORTHODOX CAMP 20 JUL 88)

**WARNING: MISSIONARY LITERATURE** — About two weeks ago yellow postcards were distributed in postboxes in Bnei Brak from a London-based international company with an Israeli branch for supposedly statistical purposes. Questions included were about English-language fluency, interest in learning the language, traveling abroad, and participating in a lottery among the first 500 responses for winning a free course in English.

After filling out the form, I was contacted at home and informed that I had won a free course in the lottery, and I was then to be interviewed with my wife for suitability to take the course. My suspicion aroused, I contacted YAD L'AHIM, who informed me that the company was known to them as a missionary front in the guise of teaching English. Let the public know and beware! S. Y. Niger. (HAMODIYA 9 AUG 88)

**MISSIONARY SECTS:** From time to time missionaries come to Israel to organize various courses, which seem to have no link to Christianity, but they are really idolatrous, aimed at influencing students to join their sects. This applies also to the group of Messianic "Jews" working in various towns in Israel, who bestir themselves from time to time and distribute propaganda which at first sight looks like Jewish literature, and only after leafing through it does one discover the fraud. Let the public be alert and report these activities in order to nip them in the bud. Avraham Yisraeli (SHEARIM 10 AUG 88)

**"WAITING FOR DEATH":** A story of a desperate heart and liver patient, under this heading, described Shlomo Litvak's desire to die, but that members of a Christian sect in Haifa have been visiting him and trying to convince him to travel to Germany for medical help. A local citizen trying to help Litvak expressed concern that he might be influenced to convert to Christianity, but that it still might be preferable for him to find help overseas. (HADASHOT 14 AUG 88)

**RATIONAL ANSWERS:** The JERUSALEM POST INTERNATIONAL EDITION (23 JUL 88) published an advertisement offering "Rational Answers to Christian Missionaries" by means of a correspondence course, "of value to Jewish

educators and youth group leaders, for USD 90, or on cassettes USD 100, written and compiled by Shmuel Golding."

**RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING:** A. Aviad, writing in the ultra-orthodox weekly YOM HASHISHT (17 JUN 88), attacks the "transparent missionary messages" of the Christian "VOICE OF HOPE" radio station. Originally set up by the "born again" Christian, George Otis, with the support of former P.M. Begin and the late Lebanese commander Major Haddad, allegedly to help the South Lebanese, it has received considerable assistance from Israeli authorities. Otis has written about "the supernatural and very encouraging assistance" he has received from Israelis. In a missionary letter he has written, he states: "We have much more work to do to save our Jewish brethren, to get the Gospel of Jesus through to them, and this is what VOICE OF HOPE is doing ... and is even reaching Jews in the USSR with the Gospel on short wave bands."

**ARAB CHRISTIANS:** If anyone had expectations that the Christian population in the territories would disassociate itself from the Palestinian uprising, they were dispelled this week with the death of two Christians in the vicinity of Jerusalem, making a total of four Christian casualties of the "intifada". The tolling of the church bells mingled with the chanting of the muezzins. (KAWL HA'TR 22 JUL 88)

**RUSSIAN CHURCH:** A resort of the Russian Church will be built this coming year on the shore of Lake Kinneret north of Tiberias. It will have 700 rooms, a country club and a park on 40 dunams of land. Members of the Russian consular delegation now in Israel visited the site and have arranged for contacts between the church and the consular delegation with the Tiberias municipality. (HADASHOT 10 AUG 88)

**MESSIANIC JEWS:** The ultra-orthodox daily HAMODIYA has begun a series of articles by A. Farkash about Messianic Jews in Israel and those seeking entrance to Israel under the Law of Return. The first article (29 JUL 88) dealt with the Beresfords of Zimbabwe, who have petitioned the High Court to compel the Interior Ministry to grant them immigrant rights as Jews notwithstanding their Messianic faith, which they insist is not conversion to Christianity.

The writer also quotes Zvi Sadan, a former kibbutz member, who found his way to faith during a time of world-traveling in the wake of the Yom Kippur War. "We have discovered the truth and we want to share it with our fellow-citizens, even though most of them and the rabbinical establishment oppose us. Fortunately, the rabbinic establishment are beneath criticism," he states.

The second article in the series deals with the Eileen Dorflinger case, whose appeal to the High Court in 1977 for recognition as a Jew under the Law of Return was rejected after evidence was submitted of her membership and baptism in a New England church, and her statement of beliefs relating to Jesus. The second part of the article reviewed the case of Ari Sorko-ram, who has petitioned the High Court to be returned to his Reserve unit from which he was removed because of information about alleged missionary activity while in service. The newspaper quoted excerpts from a personal diary which had been published describing his missionary activities while in military service.

**RESPONSE TO BELIEVERS IN JESUS:** After reading about Messianic Jews in Jerusalem, I want to point out that Jesus came to fulfil the Torah and not to change the smallest letter of it. His aim was to draw mankind to the Torah. For David Stern's information, if he prays on Sunday, he is an enemy of Jesus, because he is supporting the changes made by Christianity. If he loves Jesus, he should walk in His footsteps; that

way he will remain a good Jew. Y. Regev (IN JERUSALEM, JERUSALEM POST SUPPLEMENT. See SELECTIONS No. 165, page 3: "Believers in Jesus.")

**"OVERLAPPING":** The overlapping of religious and civil interests, frequently a point of contention in Israeli life, affects key areas like marriage, conversion, Sabbath observance. A case in point ... is the religious status of a group of Jews for Jesus who have petitioned the High Court to allow them to enter Israel under the Law of Return. (Excerpt from World Zionist Press Service feature article 2 MAY 88/1577, Page 2, by Leslie J. Gottesman.)

**MESSIANIC JEWS IN ISRAEL:** The Baptist Beacon of Phoenix, Arizona published an article by Art Toalston, datelined Jerusalem, about Jewish believers living in Israel. It included quotations from the testimonies of local believers, David Yaniv, Shaul Zuala, Ilan Zamir, David Stern, Baruch Maoz, and several unnamed persons. (28 APR 88)

**JIMMY SWAGGART:**

**PILGRIM TO ISRAEL:** Accompanied by his wife and 400 believers in a chartered jumbo plane, Jimmy Swaggart, the weeping preacher, will arrive today in Israel. (HADASHOT 28 JUL 88) One of the most famous Christian preachers in America, Swaggart gathered around him millions of fanatical believers until he became entangled in a sex scandal a few months ago. Before flying to Israel he stated that he had always wanted to visit the Holy Land, and would come to Jerusalem and Nazareth, among other sites.

Upon his arrival at Ben Gurion airport, "the weeping preacher" was approached by Rabbi Eisenberg of the hassidic sect "Habad," who thrust into his hand a tract written by the hassidic Lubovitch rabbi entitled "The Seven Laws of Noah" (said to be given by God for promulgation among non-Jewish sons of Noah in lieu of the Torah laws). "I hope you will use your influence positively," the bearded rabbi said to the most famous preacher of America.

"Israel is in a difficult situation now, and we want to encourage her and express support for her," Swaggart stated. "I don't intend to meet with politicians or to intervene in politics, but our visit will prove to the American people that it is possible to travel about in the Land of Israel," he said. (YEDIOT AKHRONOT 29 JUL 88)

A feature article by Ronit Antler of HADASHOT described an interview with members of his party, "very pleasant and simple people, very much believing in Jesus and his apostle Jimmy Swaggart." Antler is impressed by their quiet bearing and smiling innocence "till it hurts," their desire to see the land where Jesus was born, their readiness to forgive Swaggart for his visit to the prostitute. "He asked for forgiveness, Jesus forgave him, and we forgive him. Why don't you leave him be?" one couple, Ohio industrial workers, told her.

They all go to church at least twice a week, but they reject the term "religious," which they regard as ritual. "We have a personal relationship with God," they insist. They are so happy to be in the Land of the Bible and to sense the presence of Jesus. "They were all appreciative at being interviewed, and also want to know when I would follow Jesus. When I explained that I was Jewish, they consoled me: 'You're still young, but soon you will begin to understand more.'" (2 AUG 88)

Defrocked evangelist Jimmy Swaggart embraced Bobby Brown, an ultra-nationalistic Jewish settler in the West Bank town of Tekoa. Swaggart called the Palestinian uprising the work of the devil. (BOSTON GLOBE 2 AUG 88)

The sale of ornamental olive-wood crosses at the downtown Jerusalem department store "Hamashbir" has aroused the ire of the ultra-orthodox. Complaining devout customers have been told by the management that the service is maintained for tourists. (YATTED NEEMAN 11 AUG 88)

**FAMILY TRAGEDY LINKED TO UNNAMED SECT:** Nellie Abadi, who was murdered by her son Ofer, had been gathering material against members of a Sabbath-observing Christian sect, from which she had been expelled four years ago, following an affair with a young member. She was alleged to have gathered incriminating material which she was intending to publish soon.

A convert to Judaism following marriage to her Jewish husband, she came into contact with the sect some 20 years ago and studied the New Testament, which caused a family rift. As a result of this, her children were taken away by the husband's family, but they were eventually returned to her, and attended sect meetings with her. After her expulsion from the sect, she developed a paranoid suspicion of the sect, that they were pursuing her, were inciting her son Ofer against her, were behind her dismissal from work and were ruining her family life. She also claimed that all the men in the sect were propositioning her. (MAARTIV 17 AUG 88)

**CHRISTIAN TEXTILE ARTIST HAILED:** The late Gudy Hendrikse van der Schoor, a textile artist from Holland, was posthumously awarded a prize for her tapestry congratulating Jerusalem on 20 years of unification. Her husband and daughter came to Jerusalem to receive the award. She was a devout Christian who read the Bible with her husband. Her father had been imprisoned at Dachau by the Nazis for his work to save Jews. (IN JERUSALEM 13 MAY 88)

**"GOD BLESS YOU, ISRAEL!":** The Army youth magazine (BEMAHANE NAHAL AUG 88) published a feature article under this heading about the performances of the "strange" Denver Colorado singing group from Faith Bible Church which recently visited Israeli army bases and Nahal settlements to sing and dance before the young servicemen and women. All expenses are covered by the strongly pro-Israel Christian group.

**BIBLE BELIEVERS IN SOUTH AFRICA:** In reply to a query by a newspaper interviewer, the new ambassador to Israel from South Africa denied that "messianic-biblical" arguments that have been applied to the Israeli-West Bank situation were similar to those used by some South Africans to justify apartheid in his country. "There is a minority in South Africa trying for generations to justify internal policy relating to apartheid on biblical arguments, but it is only a minority," he stated. (HAARETZ 5 AUG 88)

**NOT ALL ISRAELITES CAME OUT OF EGYPT, CLAIMS ISRAELI SCHOLAR:** Israeli archaeologist Uzi Avner, a long-time student of desert archaeology, has advanced a theory that the Exodus from Egypt involved only a part of the ancient Israelites, while the others had remained in their semitic homelands in desert areas which were heavily populated and developed economically, culturally and spiritually. Avner refers to ancient Hebrew scripts going back to the 19th century B.C., and has found other evidences of ancient Hebrew culture predating the patriarchal period. He claims these were people intimately related to the biblical Israelites. (KAWL HA'IR 11 MAR 88)

\*\*\*END TRANSCRIPT\*\*\*

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