

**READERS' NOTE:** SELECTIONS is a monthly abstract of Israeli newspaper and Jewish Diaspora news and comment relating to Evangelical Christian interests. The material abstracted is not necessarily unbiased, nor does SELECTIONS endorse the accuracy or views of the material.

MESSIANIC JEWS

**SHAUL ZUALLA OF TIBERIAS:** A Messianic Jew, father of eight children, has removed three of his children, ages 7, 9, and 10, from a State school in Tiberias, after they complained of being abused by other children because their parents are Messianic Jews. The local Office of Education has filed a complaint with the police against Shaul Zualla on grounds of violation of the Israeli compulsory education law. The 37-year-old Zualla has told the authorities he will return the children when their well-being can be guaranteed by school officials; meanwhile, he is teaching his children at home, using standard Israeli material supplemented by U.S. correspondence courses designed for the children of believers.

"This is not a matter of not wanting the children to study at school; the fact is that an older son is studying at the same school, but he can take care of himself," Zualla told a journalist. The children told the truant officer that "we are afraid to be in school because we are beaten and our notebooks and books torn, and we are called 'Christians.'"

Zualla is the opposite of the Messianic Jewish stereotype, and he looks more like a tractor driver than a pious sage. His parents, immigrants from Iraq, are devout Jews who sent their children to the State religious schools. Shaul seemed headed for the rabbinate, but as a teenager abandoned his orthodoxy, entered the general State school system and later a secular kibbutz (commune). He then served his three-year military stint in a combat unit, returned to the kibbutz and married Zahava, eventually settling in Tiberias. It was at age 25 that he came to faith in Yeshua the Messiah, as a result of three mystical dreams beginning during his military service. (MAARIV 10-15 MAR 89; HADASHOT 15 MAR 89)

**TEMPORARY IMMIGRANT PERMIT:** On the basis of an agreement between the Israeli Interior Ministry and the attorney for the Messianic Jewish woman Debora Marlow and her Christian husband James, the Marlows have received temporary permission to live and work in Israel pending the ruling of the Israeli High Court in the Beresford case. The latter case involves two Messianic Jews from Zimbabwe who are appealing against a ruling of the Interior Ministry which states that Jewish believers in Jesus have converted to Christianity and are therefore ineligible to benefit under the Law of Return, which grants automatic citizenship to Jewish immigrants to Israel.

The Marlows, who arrived in Israel from Chicago in January, had intended to settle in Israel under the Law of Return, but were granted permission to stay for only one month. They then flew to England and petitioned the High Court through an Israeli attorney to be allowed to return, and temporary permission was granted, pending the outcome of the Beresford case. (JERUSALEM POST 14 MAR 89) See also SELECTIONS No. 170, page 1 "ENTRANCE RESTRICTED"

**AN ULTRA-ORTHODOX VIEW:** Mission! The word produces shudders in every Jew, stirring up images of dark-clad nuns and monks leaping out from their dark dens to steal children from their parents in order to convert them forcibly to the "religion" of the Christians, while

preying on the weaker elements of Jewish society who become Christians for a mess of pottage.

Things are different now. The missionaries come as "lovers of Israel," only desiring to help the Jewish people. One of the most dangerous of the groups that have arisen is the sect of the "Messianic Jews," idolaters in Jewish clothes, sometimes in Ultra-Orthodox garb, who aim to penetrate the Jewish people as a fourth stream of Judaism beside the Orthodox, Conservative and Reform. (YETAID NEEMAN 17 MAR 89)

**RICHARD HARVEY: CHRISTIANS WORRY:** Mr. Richard Harvey is a personable young man, a model salesman; his product, "Messianic Judaism." His appearance at a missionary week run by Cambridge University's Christian Union caused concern among Jewish students. About 60 people attended his lunchtime talk in a church hall where he spoke on the topic: "Jews for Jesus - why not?" Several Jews were present, including an Ethiopian Jew who challenged Harvey over the missionary practice of confusing Jews by taking them copies of the Hebrew New Testament. A Jewish leader, Jeremy Callman, asked why the Christian message was disguised with Jewish symbols. Harvey replied: "What one person sees as deception, another sees as contextual communication and a translation of ideas." An Anglican seminarian, Andrew White, said he was "extremely concerned about organizations that target Jews." (JEWISH CHRONICLE 17 FEB 89. See also SELECTIONS 171, p. 6, UK)

#### "THE MISSION"

**ANTI-ABORTION:** Rabbis, doctors and public figures were invited to an anti-abortion conference at Kibbutz Ramat Rahel on Purim (Feast of Esther) without knowing the organizers are a missionary front named "Be'ad Hayim" (PRO-LIFE), which publishes a bi-lingual journal. The group's leaders are active in the Jewish-Christian/Messianic-Jewish Israeli movement, which is committed to active promotion of belief in Jesus among Jews. (JLM POST 14 MAR 89 Haim Shapiro)

The seminar, "Abortion - Facing the '90's," sponsored by Christian missionaries, including "Messianic Jews," is under the auspices of some of the leading missionaries in Israel, such as the Loden family of Netanya, Barry Segal and David Stern. Dozens of phone calls were received at the offices of the anti-mission society "Yad L'Ahim" from citizens familiar with the sophisticated tactics of these missionaries, asking that the public be warned about the danger of this seminar. Thousands of invitations have been sent out to Jews throughout Israel, including rabbis involved in fighting abortion. One such rabbi became suspicious of the names of the leaders of the seminar, and investigation led him to the fact that they were all clearly missionaries. (HAMODIYA 16 MAR 89)

Members of Be'ad Haim have denied they are a missionary front. Barry Segal, President of "Pro-Life", and his wife, Batya, said the fact that they are Messianic Jews is not relevant to the organization, which is concerned only with the abortion issue. He said that a missionary is a person on the payroll of a foreign organization. Moreover, in the U.S., the Segals asserted, there are often coalitions between Christians and religious Jews concerning abortion. (JERUSALEM POST 16 MAR 89)

**BOOK FAIR:** "The Society for the Distribution of the Holy Scriptures" has in the past been a target for accusations that they engage in missionary activity. In their booth (at the 14th International Book Fair in Jerusalem) alongside hundreds of translations of the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament into various languages, you find a new type of literature, Christian "information" for Israelis. It includes free distribution of books, such as the Book of Psalms, the Parables (excerpts from the New Testament) and the Book of Jonah in modern Hebrew translation by R. Pritz.

There are coloured posters on the walls (much more impressive than the sole biblical poster in the Jewish National Fund booth), with the society's motto: "The Word of G-d in every place in the world." The "Word of G-d," for those who don't understand, is the New Testament. There are also illustrated Bible stories for young people as well as a New Testament in modern Hebrew, which Pritz hopes will become a "best-seller" ... and there is a response to the literature. Pritz is an especially friendly type of person who implores visitors "to keep in touch," and to write him of their reactions to the free literature. (Y. Gal, HAMODIYA 17 MAR 89)

**"FOR WHOM THE BELLS TOLL: REMEMBER WHAT AMALEK DID TO THEE":** Under this headline, the Ultra-Orthodox weekly YETAID NE'EMAN (17 MAR 89) published a full three pages of "exposure" of the missionary "menace" and of the Messianic Jews in Israel. Quoting from newspaper reports, Messianic literature and anti-missionary sources, a lurid picture of a vast network emerges of missionaries and Messianics who allegedly number in Israel 3,000 "registered" Jewish believers and an equal number of "secret believers," with a worldwide figure given of 100,000. Tales of those few rescued from "the claws of the Mission" while others were "seduced" were provided, and the growth was noted of Messianic congregations from Tiberias to Eilat and in the territories.

Exposed were the missionary exploits of Ari Sorko-ram (including a "satanic plan" to set up a "yeshiva" for some 200 young men), of Menahem Benhayim ("coordinator of all the missionary activities of the Messianics in the Land of Israel") and several unnamed persons around Israel who engage in tracting and other forms of mission.

The First International Messianic Jewish Conference in Jerusalem last May ("SHAVUOT '88) was described in detail as well as court cases involving Messianic Jews on the issue of the Law of Return (Dorflinger, Hutchins, Beresford, Kendall). The mainstream churches, the Fundamentalists ("the Baptists and their like") and the Messianics were defined as the three main missionary sources. They are all trying to bring Jews to believe in "that Man, may His name and memory be blotted out." (This imprecation is repeated several times throughout the report. Editor.)

**"WHO'S AFRAID OF THE NEW TESTAMENT?":** A paid advertisement by a Christian missionary society in the Haifa weekly KOL-BO aroused the anger of Rabbi Dr. Rafael Weinberg, an immigrant from the U.S.A. "Democracy is fine, but what is Jesus doing in a Hebrew paper in the Jewish State?" he asks.

Director of an Orthodox Jewish college for women, and a Haifa University lecturer on Jewish history, Dr. Weinberg was upset that the newspaper published the ad, which stated that "the New Testament is the direct continuation of the Abrahamic covenant, and assures life everlasting." He claims not to be a fanatic, and is tolerant about modern Jewish pluralism, including Jews who join sects like EST and the Emin, but he draws the line at Christian missionary beliefs; it offends him emotionally.

He tells a story which implies that Jesus was a lunatic Messiah, and rejects the comparison of Christian missionary activity to Ultra-Orthodox attempts to convert secular Jews to Jewish Orthodoxy. He claimed there was discrimination against Jewish Orthodoxy by "leftish and liberal" Jews.

The newspaper interviewer noted that "the distinguished rabbi was not much interested in the fact that the ad was paid for, and that any newspaper would be willing to accept a paid ad, even from an Ultra-Orthodox rabbi, as long as it did not violate the law." (KOL-BO HAIFA, 27 JAN 89)

**"NOT ALL CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS IN ISRAEL ARE MISSIONARY":** An Israeli German-language newspaper (2 JAN 89) published an article by Arnold Margalith of Haifa under this caption. "Although it is no secret that most Christian organizations from Europe and North America, despite their love and good works on behalf of Israel, are mission oriented, there are exceptions," such as the Scandinavian Seamen's Mission led by Pastor Fay Hansen and his daughter and son-in-law, and the German Christian group called "Zedakah" which works in Shave Zion (near Nahariya) and in Maaloth, to help Holocaust survivors in Israel.

**PENSIONER FACING DEPORTATION:** A German Christian pensioner, Ursula Scherer, who has engaged in volunteer work in Israel for 13 years involving blind Arab girls, and at Mt. Scopus Hadassah Hospital, has been asked to leave Israel. Yosef Tov, assistant director of the population registry in the Interior Department, states: "There is no hardening of our position, but there have been more requests by Christians to remain in Israel, and therefore more refusals."

Mrs. Scherer, a widow, believes she made a mistake when she requested a more regular status in Israel in 1987, which was rejected. Her friends at the hospital have commented on her excellent and dedicated work. "I am an old woman, and I am not supported by the State, neither am I taking any job away from an Israeli, nor do I have a Nazi past," she comments. "If I am forced to leave, who will take care of my blind girls? I am hoping that God who is over all will also help me," she concludes. (JERUSALEM WEEKLY 17 MAR 89)

**SHAME AND REPROACH:** As a Lt. Col. (Reserves) who served for over eight years in the Arab Family Reunion Program for Jerusalem, Judaea and Samaria, and as a research student of the Holocaust the past four years, I feel a sense of shame and reproach at the attitude of the Interior Ministry in the matter of Ursula Scherer (17 MAR 89) and the request for an extension of her visa by this aged pensioner and Christian volunteer. How insensitive and malicious have we become! I hope that public pressure will lead to a reversal of the ministry's arbitrary decision. (TOVYA NAVOT, "JERUSALEM," 24 MAR 89)

**"THE BAD WOMAN OF THE INTERIOR MINISTRY":** In a feature article in the Jerusalem weekly KAWL HA'IR (3 FEB 89) during the municipal election campaign, reporter Arye Dayan subheaded the article about candidate Yehudit Huebner of the National Religious Party's independent women's list, "The Bad Woman ...". Huebner served as Deputy General-Director of the Interior Ministry from 1967 to 1983, and was considered a hard-liner, especially when dealing with non-Jews and Christians. Dayan provides one of several examples: Laurence Goldberg, a history student at Jerusalem Hebrew University from the U.S., whose appeal to the High Court around 1970 earned her department a stinging rebuke from the court about the Ministry's rigidity in dealing with the Goldberg residence requests, despite their attachment to Israel. (Goldberg had a Gentile mother and his wife was entirely Gentile.)

Huebner claimed she was only abiding by the law as it existed then, but there have been changes since, permitting part-Jews and the spouses of Jews to settle in Israel. She also expressed complete support for the so-called anti-mission law against religious bribery for conversion, but denied that she or the ministry had ever been instructed to bar entrance to Israel of persons only because they were missionaries.

**ADOPTION PROBLEM:** Two eight-month old infants born with the Down Syndrome have been virtually abandoned by their parents in a Haifa hospital, who have refused to agree to the children's adoption by a Christian family willing to raise the disabled infants. "Does a parent who refuses to take their children home from the hospital have a right to determine where they shall be taken, whether for adoption or with

foster parents?" asks Ronnie Gagin, director of social services at Rambam Hospital. Meanwhile, an appeal for prospective adoptive parents has been made to the public. (KAWL-BO HAIFA 27 JAN 89)

**CONVERT FROM CHRISTIANITY:** "IN JERUSALEM" (17 FEB 89) carried a feature article about Asher (Wallace) Wade and his family now studying at a Jerusalem "penitents" yeshiva. Wade was formerly a Christian pastor studying for a doctorate in Christian theology at Hamburg University in West Germany. Confronted by Holocaust history, he undertook a study of Judaism and church history which led him to the conversion process in 1979. In Judaism he found what he was looking for, a God who makes demands, who gives you do's and don'ts. "Torah Jews don't believe in God; they know him," he says. Now in Israel for six months, he is working on an autobiography, plans a speaking tour worldwide, and eventually wants to become a resource person for anti-mission workers.

**JESUS AND CHRISTIANITY:** In response to the Wade conversion article above, Judith Regev asserted in a letter to IN JERUSALEM (3 MAR 89) that "Jesus had nothing to do with Christianity," was raised according to the Torah, became a great rabbi whose lifework was to fulfill Torah and draw men back to it. "The Christian Church, founded 100 years after the death of Jesus, abandoned the Torah, and opened the way for racism ... and hate against (those) who followed the way of Torah," she charges. Regev calls on the Church to repent and embrace the Torah, and "I hope people realize there is no need to convert Jews to Christianity."

In response to the Regev letter, Dagan Ben-Shimon asks: "Which particular path of Torah are we to follow? Habad, Conservative, Reform, Messianic, or some other? ... There is no need to be converted to GENTILE Christianity, but those who claim to be followers of the Torah need (conversion) to SOMETHING." He concludes with quotations from Isaiah and Jeremiah, whose words, "like those of Jesus, fell on deaf ears." (IN JERUSALEM 17 MAR 89)

**LATIN-AMERICAN EVANGELICAL CONFERENCE:** Some 300 Christian evangelists (sic.! The term is confused with "evangelicals" TRANSL.) from 13 countries in South America began a conference of solidarity with the State of Israel. These Christians see the revival of Israel and the events in the territories as signs of the soon-coming of Messiah. "There is a special significance to the congress at this time," said Joseph Feit, Israeli tour company director who organized the congress. At its conclusion, the participants will spend a night in prayer on the Mount of Olives, as Jesus did. Because of the great interest the congress aroused among believers, another congress will be held in Jerusalem in February 1990. (HAARETZ 26 FEB 89; AL HAMISHMAR 28 FEB 89)

**LAURENCE OLIPHANT, EARLY CHRISTIAN ZIONIST:** IN JERUSALEM (3 MAR 89) carried a two-column story about the scion of Scottish aristocrats (1829-1888) "who embraced Zionism as his final cause and spent his latter years in Haifa." He came from a strict Evangelical family, and had a tendency to become involved with exotic persons and activities. "It was difficult to understand Oliphant, but impossible not to love him," one contemporary wrote of him. A street in Jerusalem is named for him.

**"ISRAEL: TOUCHSTONE FOR THE NATIONS":** In a full-page paid advertisement, the "Institute for Investigating the Eternal People," chaired by Klaus Moshe Pulz of Tel-Aviv, offered its comments on current events involving Israel, the churches, the Christian nations, the end-times, Jesus, the Bible, personal and universal salvation. A free Bible and additional material about the future of the Jewish people was offered readers. (HADASHOT 10 FEB 89)

**CENSORSHIP AND FAITH**

**THE LAST TEMPTATION:** The hearing in the Israeli High Court of the appeal against the ban of the film The Last Temptation of Christ by the Israeli censorship board has been set for 19 March. The attorney representing the Israeli distributors announced that he had found only two other countries who had banned the film - Pakistan and India. (YEDIOT AKHRONOT 21 FEB 89) In a feature article sub-headed "JUSTMAN FIGHTS TO THE LAST TEMPTATION," the Sabbath supplement of HAARETZ (17 MAR 89) published an update on the appeal against the censors' film ban, which the distributors claim exceeded the authority granted them by law. The issue, their attorney argues, is whether showing the film represents a clear and imminent danger to public order, and not whether the film distorts the character of Jesus or offends Christian beliefs. In an affidavit upholding the ban, Joshua Justman is basing his position on statements by Christians and experts in Christianity that the film gives serious offence to Christian feelings, and the board was acting within its authority in banning the film.

**SATANIC VERSES:** Members of the Islamic repentance movement in Israel have been considering an appeal to the courts to ban the controversial Rushdi novel Satanic Verses, citing the banning of The Last Temptation of Christ film as a precedent. There is no reason not to consider Moslem feelings, one Israeli Moslem leader commented. (HADASHOT 21 FEB 89)

**SUNDRIES**

**INTERFAITH:** Paul Stokey of the legendary trio, Peter, Paul and Mary, returned to Israel for a series of workshops and performances, under the auspices of the World Jewish Reform Movement, in order to promote interfaith tolerance. A believing Christian, Stokey was happy to fit into the program. (YEDIOT AKHRONOT 21 FEB 89)

**MESSIANISM IN ZION:** Yoram Harpaz (KAWL HA'IR 27 JAN 89) reviews the January issue of Politica on the subject of the rise of the religious camp in Israel. The articles by moderate Orthodox and one secular thinker analyze the threat to traditional Zionist humanism and moderate Orthodoxy now posed by the active politicking of Ultra-Orthodox groups and militant Orthodox nationalists. These groups have either been seeking to promote a theocratic society in Israel or have assigned Messianic categories to Israel. Secularist philosopher Jeremy Yovel saw political Zionism as a rival to Jewish Messianic belief, but now followers of the Rav Kook are trying to appropriate that Zionism for belief in the Messiah.

**NOT MESSIANICS:** In response to an article about the "Atereth Cohanim" yeshiva published in the Jerusalem weekly KAWL HA'IR, a spokesman denied claims that the seminary supports the transfer of Arabs out of the Land of Israel, or that they are Messianic in the common sense of the term; neither are they preparing priests for service in a future Temple. (13 JAN 89)

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

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