

**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 vouch for the accuracy or views of the material.

**THE PASSOVER LAMB:**

**"SHOCK OVER MISSIONARY ADVERT":** A full-page missionary advertisement was published in the Jerusalem weekly KAWL HA'IR, which belongs to the newspaper network of HAARETZ. The advert repeats the accusation that "Jesus was crucified" because the Jewish people rejected him. The publication may well be the first instance of a missionary advert in a Hebrew newspaper in Israel, and it is replete with errors.

Dr. Joseph Burg, president of the world movement of Mizrahi (religious Zionism), shocked at reading the advert, protested vigorously that "a vile thing has been done in Israel." For centuries Jews have been murdered because of the blood libels of the Christians, and how is it that just during our feast of freedom that such an advert of the Christian mission is published in a Hebrew newspaper? Dr. Burg asked. "If there is not a satisfactory explanation for this criminal act, the newspaper should be denounced and considered outcast," he said; "to the best of my knowledge, this is the first time that a missionary notice of this kind has been published in a Hebrew newspaper."

The assistant editor of the newspaper, Doron Glazer, asked to respond, told our correspondent that the editorial department of the paper does not intervene in matters concerning the advertising department and has no response to make in the matter. (HATSOFEH 16.4.89)

**"THE LAMB - THE PASSOVER SACRIFICE":** Following are excerpts and summary of the advertisement which appeared in a number of local weekly newspapers and the national Hebrew daily HAARETZ on 14.4.89:

The Passover has arrived, and the Jewish people in all their Diasporas, as they do each year, gather round the Seder table. With the reading of the Haggada (Passover narration), we remember the faithfulness of the Holy One, Blessed be He, in freeing our ancestors from Egyptian bondage... at the hands of Moses, God's servant... and our children sing the songs of hope for Messiah's coming and the appearance of the prophet Elijah; perhaps he will appear to announce the era of peace and the Messianic Kingdom.

(There follows a lengthy description and interpretation of the tenth plague, the slaying of the first-born of Egypt, and its parallel in the punishment of all sin and sinners except for those who find atonement in the sin offering that God has commanded.) The night of the plague was a night of fearful terror for those who ignored God's command to smear the lamb's blood on the doorsill; but for those who trusted in God and obeyed his command, it was a night mingled with the hope of deliverance from bondage to freedom... The lamb's blood protected the Israelites from the wrath of God Almighty.

Indeed we were rid of Egyptian bondage, but the Bible declares clearly that we remained SLAVES TO SIN, "for there is no righteous one on earth who does good without sinning" (Eccl. 7:20); "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psalm 51:5) Even today God judges everyone to the extent of their sins, and the wages of sin are still death; but as in Egypt, the love and grace of God are manifest in that He provides atonement for human sins. (There follow quotations from Isaiah 53:6, Proverbs 30:4, Psalm



2:7, 12, which are applied to "the Messiah Yeshua, GOD'S SON, who was made the atoning lamb for all who seek refuge in him.")

It was 2,000 years ago that the Romans ruled over Israel, and the people yearned for a Messiah who would redeem them from the Roman yoke, a triumphant Messiah. When the Messiah Yeshua came and died a sacrifice on the cross for the sins of all men, the Jewish people rejected God's plan of salvation, concerning which it is said in the New Testament: "He came unto his own and his own received him not." (John 1:11) Now this Messiah is the stone (in Psalm 118:22) of which we sing on every Seder night, and the builders are the chosen people of God. This Messiah whom we rejected... has become the cornerstone...

The Messiah was crucified on Passover some 2,000 years ago, rose from the dead after three days, thus fulfilling his Father's will, and being the atonement for our sins... and for all men who trust in him, in fulfilment of what God said to Abraham: "And in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:3) We erred when we rejected the Messiah, but God longs to forgive us and to accept us if we will but acknowledge that we are sinners and receive his son the Messiah as our atonement. And the day will surely come when we look upon the Messiah again, as described by the prophet Zechariah, "AND THEY SHALL LOOK UPON ME WHOM THEY HAVE PIERCED..." (Zech. 12:10)

As a creature of God, you are free to choose what to believe, but you dare not ignore the fact that the Bible is the proven word of God. Remember: God knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish." (Psalm 1) "Purge out the old leaven in order that you may be a new lump... for the Messiah our Passover lamb has been sacrificed..." (New Testament: 1st Corinthians 5:7-8). Yeshua the Messiah is the Passover lamb. By the Messiah's blood we shall merit forgiveness of sin and life with God. When this takes place, there will then be holy and joyful days for the whole house of Israel. THEN WILL WE KNOW PEACE WITH GOD AND MAN. (For additional details write to : M. Kalisher...)

**"UNKOSHER" BILLBOARDS:** Recently it has been observed that the Tel-Aviv municipality has had a tendency to approve the posting of all notices on municipal billboards in exchange for a proper fee. In the past, however, care was taken to review the content of the notices in order to weed out those which might offend the public or were linked to controversial political topics. But now there have begun to appear notices by the "Messianic Jews" announcing their activities in Jaffa. This has angered a wide spectrum of Jews who are asking how the municipality allows such notices. Are all notices "Kosher" for posting on municipal billboards? (HATSOFEH 26.3.89)

**MESSIANIC SEMINAR:** Knesset member Rabbi Menahem Porush has submitted a parliamentary query to the Religious Affairs Ministry concerning the activities of Christian missionaries and "Messianic Jews" at kibbutz Ramat Rahel. He cited a newspaper item about a seminar under the patronage of the "Pro-Life" society, whose leaders are blatant missionaries. Rabbi Porush asks: Does the Religious Affairs Ministry know of this missionary activity, and how does it mean to act in order to prevent the continuation of such activity in the guise of seminars? (HAMODIYA 23.3.89; also EREV SHABAT 31.3.89)

**FOUR HUNDRED MESSIANIC JEWS TO ENTER ISRAEL:** Under the slogan "ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED," some 400 Messianic Jews are to enter Israel by way of the border at Rafiah, and the YAD L'AHIM anti-mission activists are planning a "Go Home" welcome. Last year some 400 arrived for a Shavuot '88 (Pentecost) conference and were met by Yad L'Ahim activists who caused a disturbance leading to the arrest of six activists. The Messianics were not taking any chances this year, and took another



route of entry, keeping it a secret, but the anti-mission activists have discovered this, too. The anti-mission leader Rabbi Lipschitz calls the Messianic Jews a menace to Jewish survival.

The number of Messianics in Israel is estimated to be over 1,000, with the most prominent being the Jews for J-S-S, which is especially active in the universities. The negative connotations of that name have led them to change their name to Messianic Jews under the guise of being Jewish. According to the information of the anti-mission group, there are some 11 congregations with innocent-sounding names like "Grace and Truth" (led by Baruch Maoz of Rishon Lezion), "Immanuel" (led by Yaakov Damkani), "Asaf" (led by D. Loden) in Netanya, "Netivya" (led by Josef Shulam in Jerusalem). During the past two years, some 250 persons have been baptized in Israel, and a list of those baptized is in the hands of the organization, and every effort is being made to free them from the fangs of apostasy.

Since most of the Messianics are of Jewish origin, they have decided to exploit the Law of Return, and during the past year the leaders have launched a campaign for immigration to Israel. The Messianics, in an attempt to change the image of Christianity in Jewish eyes, have advocated changing terminology, as noted in literature distributed last year at "Shavuot 88": "the tree" (instead of "cross"). In one place it was written: "All non-Jews are regarded as Christians (by Jews); even Hitler." A review of several court cases involving Jewish believers in Jesus was provided by the ultra-orthodox daily HAMODIYA (17.4.89; also AL HAMISHMAR/YATAID NE'EMAN/EREV SHABAT)

**LONDON MESSIANIC JEWS:** Some 70 Jews pack into a chapel in the Orthodox Jewish section of London (Golders Green) at the thriving London Messianic congregation, which insists that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah. They have recently been revitalized by the arrival of a U.S. "Rabbi" Charles Snow, who told Jerusalem Post reporter David Horovitz that attendance had doubled since he arrived last year, and that other groups were forming in Manchester, Leeds, Brighton. The growth of the movement follows advertisements in the national press and the distribution of leaflets at London underground stations sponsored by the U.S. evangelical group JEWS FOR JESUS in cooperation with local groups. Lubavitch Rabbi Shmuel Arkush, director of "OPERATION JUDAISM", counters missionary activities, and charges that the Anglo-Jewish community is failing to take the "threat" seriously. "We need better education and better funding to counter them," he says. (14 Apr 89)

#### THE MISSION

**TIBERIAS:** Ultra-orthodox Jews in Tiberias are complaining that near the tomb of the Miracle Rabbi Meir missionary activity is taking place; or as these circles define it, "idolatrous worship." They claim that pedlars are selling offensive products, including special aromatic and smoky incense. The municipality has announced that it will soon make a thorough study of the situation. (KAWL HAEMEX V'HAGALIL 17.3.89)

**RAMAT GAN-TEL AVIV:** For months the men of YAD LA'HIM are sounding the alarm at the impotence of the authorities in dealing with the sect of the Messianic Jews who distribute their literature in public. On the eve of Purim a group of the sect of Messianic Jews appeared in Ramat Gan equipped with literature for distribution to passersby. One of the distributors was the well-known figure Yaakov Damkani, of Persian extraction, who is regarded by the anti-mission activists as one of the most dangerous missionaries in Israel. He also owns a center for Messianic studies in Jaffa. Last Thursday, Damkani and his friends were again seen distributing literature while using a loudspeaker, this time on Allenby Street in Tel Aviv. Soon the activists arrived and a commotion resulted, with a police patrol car appearing on the



scene, and Dankani and his friends were taken into a police station. A team of photographers from the foreign press was on hand, apparently on the initiative of the Messianics, to document the uproar. "We will do everything possible to thwart their deeds," say the anti-mission activists. (EREV SHABBAT 31.3.89)

**JERUSALEM:** In the heart of Jerusalem several shops are actively selling newspapers, cassette tapes, children's books, books on health, marriage counseling, video tapes, greeting cards, etc. Actually, these shops are distributing missionary material. One such shop operates under the seemingly innocent name, "GREETINGS FROM JERUSALEM," and is managed by Ted Walker, on 19 Keren Hayesod street. This is done without violating the law. Another shop not far from the central post office is "THE TORCH", located at 25 Jaffa Road, selling, among other things, a Hebrew translation of the New Testament, and is owned by a Christian missionary group named "Assemblies of God." At 4 Markis Street next to the BAPTIST HOUSE is a shop selling missionary material, and they have another shop in East Jerusalem not far from the E. Jerusalem central post office.

The anti-mission activists have a long list of distributors of missionary material under the guise of simple publishing. An especially large company is HAGEFEN in Haifa owned by Baruch Maoz, and another is YANETZ owned by Victor Smadja. In Tel Aviv there are Messianic-owned galleries, such as DUGIT on Frishman Street, and HALEVANA opposite "Habimah." There is also YAMA of the Messianic congregation in Ramat Hasharon owned by Ari Sorko-ram who is presently out of Israel. EMMAUS in Haifa prints "Holy Scriptures." Customers, it appears, are not always aware. CAUTION! (EREV SHABAT 7 Apr 89)

**CONVERSIONS:** A group of Christian fundamentalists claim, on the basis of recent research, that some 350,000 Jews in America have changed their religion and believe in that Man (Jesus). They are seeking to increase the figure to 500,000 by the year 2,000. The research was conducted by an Anglican missionary on the initiative of a Christian organization in Oklahoma which was investigating the growth of the Christian Pentecostal movement.

Michael Skorach, special adviser to the special task force on missionaries and sects of the New York Jewish Council, cited the research, which was reported in a Christian periodical, during a recent discussion of the report by the Jewish Council. He estimates that two percent of the world Jewish population believes in "that man" (Jesus). According to the Christian report, about 140,000 of the total of 350,000 apostates continue to identify themselves as Jewish and attend Messianic worship where Christian worship is conducted with Jewish "flavor". (HAMODIYA 28.3.89)

Surprising statistics were given in the Knesset plenum by the Interior Minister Arye Deri who, in reply to the query of Amnon Rubinstein (Shinui), reported that in the past five years 186 conversions to Judaism were registered in Israel, 56 conversions to Christianity and 46 to Islam. In response, Rubinstein asked if there was not a lack of proportion in the anti-mission activities against Mormons and Christians. Deri replied: "Whoever saves one soul in Israel is like one who has saved the whole world." (HADASHOT 5 Apr 89; also NAARIV)

**THE LAST TEMPTATION:** Between 28th and 31st March 1989 the Israeli press reported on the appeal to Israel's High Court of Justice by distributors of the film, THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST, against the censorship board's decision to ban the screening of the film in Israel. In an unusual step, the five justices sitting on the appeal (including Chief Justice Meir Shamgar) attended a private showing of the film before hearing the arguments in open court.



The petitioners, represented by attorney Dov Peri for Universal Film company and its Israeli agent Golan-Globus, argued in their brief to the court that there must be a "near-certainty" that Christian Israelis will be offended by the film before it could be banned; such certainty does not exist, especially when considering that the film was not banned in Rome, the seat of the Vatican. The ban is also a bar to free artistic expression.

The chairman of the censorship board, Joshua Justman, represented by State Attorney Nellie Arad, argued that the film is offensive to Christians in Israel and could also harm Israeli relations with the Christian world. Letters by experts on Christianity (Professors Flusser and Verblowsky of the Hebrew University) and by local and foreign Christian leaders were submitted in evidence. During the hearing of the oral arguments, the petitioners denied any anti-Christian aim in the production. "Every reasonable and intelligent person will understand that (the controversial portions of the film) are not the deeds or fantasy of Jesus but of the writer and producer," attorney Peri stated.

When the State Attorney Arad was asked by the court why the film should be banned in Israel when it was being shown in Christian countries, she stated: "In the eyes of the Christian world, Israel is the Holy Land and Jerusalem is the Holy City. Screening the film here is different from any other place." Justice Barak asked if there might be a certain Christian theological issue involving more than offended Christian feelings; in such case, would we not be returning to the days of the Inquisition?

After hearing both sides, Chief Justice Shamgar announced that the matter would be studied further and a decision given at a later date.

**JERUSALEM ANGLICAN BISHOP:** "A foolish error by two British policemen" was the way Anglican Bishop Samir Kaffity described his arrest in the London underground a month ago on charges of "indecent behaviour in a public lavatory." The British press jumped on the story and headlined it. Later it was reported that the case was closed for lack of public interest. Upon the bishop's return to Jerusalem, a statement was issued by the Dean of St. George's Cathedral that the charge was "without foundation, had been denied by the bishop, and was canceled by the authorities. ("JERUSALEM" 31.3.39)

**LATIN PATRIARCH:** The Latin patriarch, Michael Sabah, has charged that Israel offended Christian believers by arresting several youths at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre during prayers. The patriarch's charge aroused the ire of the Minister of Religious Affairs, which counter-charged that the patriarch was violating the status quo of non-interference in political matters. The minister replied that several of the arrested youth later confessed to the murder of a Jewish youth. The patriarch was asked to denounce acts of terror and to make it clear to believers that churches were for worship and not for storing stones and bottles as was discovered at the Church of the Nativity. ("JERUSALEM" 24.3.39)

**DEPORTATION OF ARAB PASTOR CANCELED:** Alex Awad, brother of Dr. Mubarak Awad, chief of the centre for the study of non-violence, deported from Israel several months ago, reported that the intervention of TV reporter Victor Nahmias with the Minister of Interior prevented his deportation from Israel. An American of Palestinian origin, Alex Awad, age 43, serves as pastor for the Baptist Church in East Jerusalem. When his one-month visa expired, following the refusal of the Ministry to extend it, he was contacted by the TV journalist, to whom he reported his situation, linking it to his brother's deportation. Before reporting the case on TV news, Nahmias contacted Joseph Tov of



the Ministry for his reaction. Tov expressed surprise and promised to extend the visa. ("Jerusalem", 24.3.89)

**MESSIANISM IN ZION:** Yoram Harpaz (KAWL HA'IR 27.1.89) reviewed 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 analyzed 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.

**"MESSIAH NOW":** The left-wing daily AL HAMISHMAR (24.4.89) published a review of a collection of articles on the subject of "Messianism and Eschatology" published by the Shazar Centre in Jerusalem. Longings for the Messiah whose coming tarried are woven like a scarlet thread into the history of Israel from its earliest beginnings, the reviewer noted. The Christian religion, developed from Judaism's roots, continued to be influenced by Jewish messianic ideas. Within Judaism there were diverse concepts of Messiah, such as the divine Son of Man found in Daniel or, by contrast, the military deliverer portrayed by Samson or Bar-Kochva in AD 132.

The ultra-orthodox weekly YETAID NE'EMAN (30.4.89) compared the danger of false messiahs within Judaism to the Christian missionary and Eastern sects today. Reference was also made to a recent book entitled "FALSE MESSIAHS AND THEIR OPPONENTS", which shows how each false messiah seeks to enslave his followers.

#### DIASPORA NEWS

**NEW ZEALAND:** The Vice-President of the Wellington Hebrew Congregation, Stephen Sedley, vehemently attacked missionaries whose aim is to convert Jews to Christianity and who are at work in Wellington. Centuries of antisemitism taught Jews how to react to attacks, but nothing in Jewish experience tells them how to respond to those who offer friendship but are out to destroy our faith. Those who associate with these missionaries betray their parents, their heritage and their community. (NEW ZEALAND JEWISH CHRONICLE, Wellington, July 1983)

An article describing missionary activities in New Zealand prompted letters from one such group taking issue with some of the statements made. The Chronicle apologises for any errors of fact; but it was published in good faith and because of concern about proselytization. (August 1983)

**PARIS, FRANCE:** "Missionaries seek to vanquish naive Jews through preaching the commandment of settling in Israel," proclaims the Paris Yiddish Journal Unser Wort, and warns its readers against their "seductive" friendship. (23.11.83)

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

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