

THE CASPARI CENTER MEDIA REVIEW

Caspari Center, P.O.Box 71099, Jerusalem 91710, Israel Tel. 972-2-233926/256095 Fax 972-2-251933 Email: caspari@netvision.net.il

Jerusalem, August 29 1996

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Thank you!

4. september 1996.

Kære Kai.

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Eivind

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Attn: Kai Kjær - Hansen

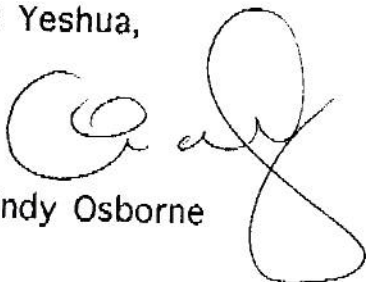
Jerusalem, August 29 1996

Shalom!

Following my opinion piece on civil marriage last month, the cultural divide has come even closer to home. A friend took a walk (with her husband and child) down the wrong street, wearing the wrong sort of clothes, and was hit by a bag of garbage. This kind of harassment has become quite common, not only inside orthodox neighborhoods but also in the surrounding areas. There have also been riots both for and against the Sabbath closure of a main road which passes by a religious neighborhood, and the Supreme Court will soon rule on whether or not it is constitutional to close roads on the Sabbath at all.

As always, we must trust in our Lord and pray that in all things He might be glorified, and that His peace might come to Jerusalem.

In Yeshua,


Cindy Osborne

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OUR SAVIOUR'S SABBATH

Kol Ha'Ir, August 2 1996, by V. Kelner

On a Saturday morning, when the Orthodox are on their way to synagogue, a different variety of Jews is gathering at Christ Church in the Old City of Jerusalem. A handful of families with children and a crowd of tourists and visitors are there to hold a Messianic Mass.

The atmosphere is a mix of the 19th century charismatic revival and a Hasidic gathering: a lot of pathos, emotional music and hands raised in expression of intimate communion with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Messianic Jewish congregation has obviously internalized the Reformation's rejection of the Catholic reliance on intermediaries. The leader then opened the service with a long list of prayers and praises in a familiar, friendly tone of voice. This is the advantage of Messianic Judaism - the personal, unaffected, ecstatic thankfulness of the believers hints at the power of a faith based on the great comfort inherent in the incarnation. What a complement to humans!

The intimacy between the participants and God is evident in the hour-long sermon about the will of God and predestination. Using quotes from the Bible, the speaker explains what God wants from humanity, the congregation, and himself.

The sermon itself brought the difference between Jews and Christians into sharp relief. Forget the Jewish opposition to judgement. Can you imagine sitting for an hour listening quietly to a sermon? Not in our synagogues!

Editor's note: This is the second article about a Messianic service in this paper (the first, "The Mission has no Amulets," was reviewed last month). The tone of both is sceptical, but not specifically anti-Christian, and both give the congregation's phone numbers for information. Not bad publicity!

A VISIT AT THE END OF THE WORLD

Yediot Aharonot, July 26 1996, by Y. Serana

At the end of a dusty road two Christian supporters of Benjamin Netanyahu await the war of Gog and Magog. The two German men, described in the article as Bible researchers, have settled in the valley next to Megiddo in order to watch the events accompanying the end of the world unfold. They managed to anger their left-wing kibbutz neighbors by supporting Netanyahu and the ultra-right wing Moledet party in the recent elections, but now they prefer to simply forget the incident, calling for the unity of Israel and brotherly love.

Like many Christians, they feel that the end of the millennium will bring with it the cataclysmic events prophesied in the Bible. They are filled, writes the author, with the excitement and anticipation of spectators at a bull fight - a mood which disturbed him, as he feels he is one of the bulls.

IS THERE A GOD?

Ha'Aretz, July 26 1996

The 50 page magazine section devoted to this subject was not enough to come up with a conclusive answer. It does, however, explore different views of God, including Judaism, Christianity, Eastern religions, Islam, Atheism and even Satanism. There are interviews with both religious and secular philosophers, a survey of Israeli politicians' beliefs, and a lexicon of "religious" terms.

JERUSALEM 3000 GOSPEL CONCERT

Kol Ha'Ir, August 16 1996, by E. Ha'Reuveni

A Jerusalem city council member from the Labor party condemned the Jerusalem 3000 Gospel concert, saying that she felt as if she was in a church, and that the event had a Christian message. The coordinator of the show reacted by saying that people apparently didn't know what Gospel music was.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION PROHIBITS NEW TESTAMENTS

Ma'ariv, Ha'Modia, Yated Ne'eman, August 22 1996

The director of the Ministry of Education has advised regional school superintendents to ban Bibles containing both the Old and New Testaments from Israeli public schools. Some of these "combined" Bibles have been found in a few schools, apparently placed there by the Messianic Jews. The new directive is aimed at preventing the mission getting a foothold in Israel's schools.

MISSIONARY ACTIVITY PREVENTED AT ARAD MUSIC FESTIVAL

Ha'Modia, August 12; Yated Ne'eman, August 13 1996

Lev L'Achim anti-missionary activists teamed up with local Yeshiva students to frustrate the plans of missionaries who came to prey on young people attending the rock music festival in Arad. Two groups, the Messianic Jews and Jehovah's Witnesses, showed up in force, but were countered by the Jewish activists, who warned the crowd against them.

CONDITIONAL LOVE

Ha'Aretz, August 20 1996, by S. Kahn

A number of families in a run-down section of Beersheba have been visited by missionaries who talk about the scriptures and offer help for them and their children (editor's note: the people described are obviously Jehovah's Witnesses). In Tel-Aviv, under-privileged residents have been offered financial assistance, free tutoring, and even paid vacations by activists who try to persuade them to accept their beliefs. A number of families take part in activities in the Damkani home in Yaffo, which is adorned with the legend "Messianic Jews."

These accounts point to the increasing Christian focus on Jewish/Israeli evangelism, which is partially due to the approach of the year 2000 with all of its attendant eschatological ramifications. One of these is that the return of the Jews to Israel is a precursor to the redemption, and accordingly many Christian organizations are active in bringing Jews home

(mainly from Russia). These ministries, mainly in the USA and Scandinavia, proclaim a fervent love for the Jewish people, but by all tokens this love is not unconditional - aside from bringing them to Israel they also try to spread the message of Christianity in their midst.

Many of these Protestant Christians add a political/Zionist dimension to their agenda. The International Christian Embassy, for instance, claims to represent thousands of Christians working for the security and geographical wholeness of Israel. The Christian Zionists take differing stands in the matter of evangelism. Some want to convert as many Jews as possible as soon as possible. Some prefer to "love the Jews and tell them about Jesus." Others, who believe that Jews should stay Jewish but must be redeemed by Jesus, lend their support to the evangelistic efforts of Messianic Jews.

When people join a Messianic Jewish congregation they make a commitment to try to draw other Jews to their faith. According to Lev L'Achim, there are approximately 25,000 Messianic Jews in Israel, and the numbers are still growing (editor's note: from their mouths to God's ears!). Recently Messianic Jews have been discovered volunteering in hospitals, rest homes and on telephone hot-lines, where they can focus their missionary efforts on people in crisis who are likely to be vulnerable to an empathic Christian approach.

LEV L'ACHIM WARNS AGAINST MISSIONARIES HELPING IMMIGRANTS

Yated Ne'eman, August 22 1996, by A. Zisman

The anti-missionary organization Lev L'Achim is concerned about the Russian immigrants aboard a ship chartered by the Ebenezer ministry. In the past, the Ministry of Absorption kept a close eye on such trips, but today the missionary activity goes on unchecked, with the immigrants joining Christian groups even before arriving in Israel. Lev L'Achim has called on religious members of Knesset to use their influence in the government coalition to put a stop to these dangerous phenomena.

IMMIGRANTS' ASSOCIATION ARRANGES TOUR OF CHRISTIAN HOLY SITES

Hed Ha'Krayot, Arei Ha'Mifratz, August 2 1996

The Russian immigrants' association in a suburb of Haifa recently advertised a tour of Christian holy sites in northern Israel. Officials of the municipality, which funds the organization, were quick to condemn the event. The coordinator, on the other hand, claimed their right to tour anywhere they liked in Israel, and noted that the tour included other destinations as well as those in question.

MISSIONARY CAMPAIGN

Hadashot Mishpaha, August 15 1996

In a report from New York, the writer complains about missionary activity in Jewish neighborhoods in Brooklyn. Bus stops and billboards were adorned with the message "If you want to be a better Jew..." (editor's note: that's a translation of the Hebrew translation. I think it must be JFJ's slogan "Be more Jewish - believe in Jesus"). The bus stops were vandalized by Jewish Yeshiva students, but the billboards present a bigger challenge. The only way they have found so far to blot out the message is to throw balloons filled with paint at the boards, a time-consuming operation during which they must also be on the lookout for police.

NO LONGER A JEW

Yediot Aharonot, August 15 1996, by D. Regev

A Swiss tourist falls in love with an Israeli man and converts to Judaism. They marry and have two children, and live happily ever after. Right? Wrong. According to this article, the troubles began when the husband decided to become a religious Jew. He wanted his wife to join him, to keep a kosher kitchen, wear a wig, and send the children to a Yeshiva. Then he accused her of adultery.

The two agreed to divorce, and the court gave her custody of the children. Then came the shock - a letter from the Rabbinate informing her that she is no longer a Jew. This of course calls into question the status of the children as well, and the distraught mother has no choice but to start on a course of appeals to higher courts.

SHAS APPEALS POLICE DECISION NOT TO INVESTIGATE THE ANGLICAN MISSION

Yom L'Yom, August 8 1996

The General Secretary of the Sephardic/Orthodox political party, Shas, has written to the Attorney General to protest the police's lack of action against the Anglican mission in Jerusalem. The call for an investigation came on the heels of CMJ's decision to sell the Anglican School property, when accusations of missionizing and dishonest financial practices were published in the local press. In response, the head of the police investigations department stated that the articles contained insufficient evidence to justify further action on their part.

NEWSPAPERS USED IN THIS EDITION:

Kol Ha'Ir: Jerusalem leftist weekly. Pro-Palestinian, anti-religious, objective towards believers.

Yedi'ot Aharonot: National daily published in Tel-Aviv. Attitude to believers depends on the reporter.

Ha'Aretz: National daily, published in Tel-Aviv, mostly objective towards believers.

Ma'ariv: National daily, published in Tel-Aviv. Politically tends to the right, mostly objective towards believers (depends on the reporter).

Ha'Modia: Jerusalem religious daily. Very hostile to believers.

Yated Ne'eman: National religious/political daily published in Bnei Brak. Very hostile to believers.

Hed Ha'Krayot: Haifa area weekly.

Mishpaha/Hadashot Mishpaha: Jerusalem religious weekly.

Yom L'Yom: Jerusalem religious/political weekly. Less interested in believers than other orthodox papers.