

TO AN ANCIENT PEOPLE

By Leopold Cohn

The story of a modern missionary to an ancient people. The autobiography of ex-rabbi Leopold Cohn, missionary to the Jews and founder of ABMJ. This is a life story with changes so many and great, with experiences so varied and deep, with motive so high and true that sympathy cannot be withheld.

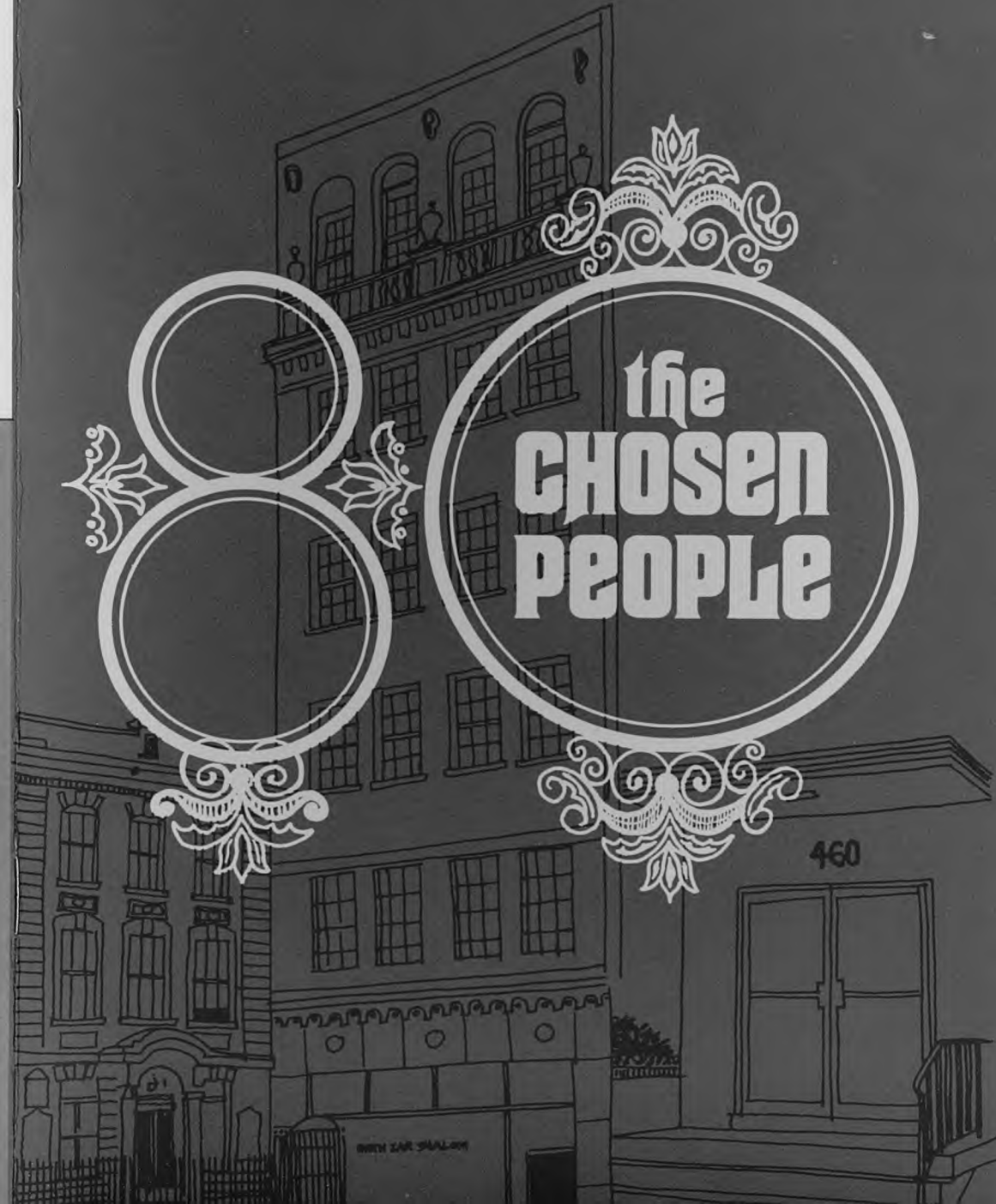
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1894-1974



OUR EIGHTIETH YEAR

Our special eightieth anniversary cover was designed by Mr. Howard Weinstein, a Hebrew Christian artist. The three buildings show our three successive headquarters as changing times and changing situations required changing sites for our administrative headquarters. The pictures of the two men above are those who have founded and established the work of the ABMJ.

The following pages tell the story of our three buildings and of the shepherds as well as other aspects of the ministry of the ABMJ — yesterday, today, and tomorrow.



THE CHOSEN PEOPLE is published monthly, September to June, as a medium of information concerning the Jews, Israel and the work of the

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Yesterday



LEOPOLD COHN

1894 — 1937



THROOP AVENUE
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

At the age of seven, my father and mother died in the same year and left me to shift for myself as best I could. Thus I early learned to trust God and often prayed to Him to teach me His ways. When thirteen years old, I decided to study to be a rabbi or a leader of my people, the most honorable and meritorious life-office for a Jew.

Leopold Cohn, *A Modern Missionary To An Ancient People*, pp. 13-14.

Seeing my utter ignorance of the Christian faith, but also my great earnestness, he gave me a Hebrew New Testament, asking me to read it. I opened it at once and read for the first time in my life: "This is a book of the generation of Yeshua, the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham." My feelings could not be described! For many years my thoughts had been occupied almost continually with the coming of the Messiah. For that reason I had suffered and left my wife and children for a strange country, which I never expected to visit. I had inquired of several rabbis, searched the Scriptures, prayed and thought; my whole being was wrapped up in this one subject. And now at last here was a book that would tell me about the Messiah.

Ibid. p. 21.

Soon after that, a Jewish friend took me for a visit to Brooklyn, and on going across the river by ferry boat, I was surprised to see the large crowds of Jews accompanying us. I started a conversation with some of them and asked if they knew of any mission work being done in Brooklyn. They did not even seem to know what kind of creature a missionary was. Then a forcible thought came into my mind and heart that it was the place where the Lord wanted me to work. Ibid. p. 40.

As I had nobody to help me financially when I opened the Mission, one month I had no money to pay the rent. When I told my dear wife about it, she immediately gave her last pieces of jewelry which she had as a remembrance from her mother who died before we were married, and said: "Pawn this and pay the Mission rent." I said to her that in case we had no money to redeem it, she would lose it and be sorry all her life. To this she replied: "If it is lost here, Jesus will return it to me in heaven." She must now have received it from the hand of the Saviour, for I never redeemed it for her here. I was determined not to ask money of any man for the work of the Lord. My thought was that since the Lord Jesus led me so wonderfully to Himself, giving me power enough to give up everything for His sake, I need not ask men for financial help, for He is able to give it to me in some way known to Him alone. Ibid. pp. 43-44.



JOSEPH HOFFMAN COHN

1937 — 1953



SEVENTY-SECOND STREET
MANHATTAN, NEW YORK

From the time that my sainted father opened, in a renovated horse stable in that section of Brooklyn called Brownsville, the first Christian mission to the Jews ever known in the city of Brooklyn, there has never been, I suppose, a day without enemies. . . .

But here suddenly came the crisis, of which I will speak later on in the book. I left my college days and went to my father, but instead of saying to him, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me," I said, "Lend me one hundred dollars! I am going out over this country and bring the desperate call of the Jewish Mission to the man in the pew. To this I will devote my life. I am young, healthy, and have no family; God calls, I will go." This step determined my life destiny, and now I became attached to the Mission as a paid employee. I had cast the die, and for weal or for woe, my life work was set.

Joseph Hoffman Cohn, *I Have Fought A Good Fight*. pp. 14-15.

Another help that Mr. Cutter gave, was a suggestion: "Why not start a little paper that will tell about the Mission and perhaps make new friends for the work?" . . .

Mr. Cutter said, "I will pay the expenses of the little paper for two or three years, until it gets a foothold, and the Lord raises for you faithful friends to help you carry the load."

And so was born the little paper called THE CHOSEN PEOPLE which since those days has grown into a mighty document, reaching many thousands of the Lord's choicest people, and molding their Christian life into a deep, deep understanding of God's Book concerning Israel. Ibid. p. 87.

I told my father, "I am young, I am healthy, I have no family depending upon me for support, and I feel that I can do nothing less now than to step out into the unknown world and seek to find friends and support for the Mission." . . .

Therefore I knew pretty well what might be the hardships, and I felt that I could not with clear conscience shirk this duty that had suddenly pressed itself upon me, as though it had been dropped from heaven onto my shoulders. I told my father that he should stay at home, carry on the work of the Mission as he had always done, and I would go on the road — anywhere, everywhere, from coast to coast, and wherever I found friends I would tell them that they could come to Brooklyn and see for themselves a real work going on among the people of Israel — a work that would commend their utmost confidence and devotion. Ibid. p. 110.

When we had a missionary stationed in Warsaw, Poland, it was he who reported to us that the general slogan throughout all Central Europe among the Jewish missionaries was, "If you are in need, ask the Lord and tell Joseph Cohn!" Of course we felt embarrassed with such flattery, but we did feel also that this was a wonderful testimony for your Mission which has had such a policy through the years, through storm and through stress, through sorrow and through joy. Ibid. p. 116.

My father would have continual amusement to see how ambulatory I could be when these crisis times would come. He used to quote to me so many times Genesis 29:1. The English translation is not accurate, but the literal translation is,

And Jacob lifted up his feet, and he went into the land of the people of the east.

It used to be a standing piece of witticism that whenever my father would see me rushing out of the office with my suitcase, he would call out in Hebrew, "And Jacob lifted up his feet and went!" Ibid. p. 224.

The work had now grown to a size far beyond my father's early dreams. The old name, Williamsburg Mission to the Jews, no longer reflected properly the ever-increasing outreach of the Mission. Ibid. p. 269.

In 1924 in order to reflect more properly the far-flung battlelines of the Mission, we changed our corporate name to read AMERICAN BOARD OF MISSIONS TO THE JEWS, INC. Thus the general public would be able to get a better knowledge of our far outreach, a more wholesome respect for the management of the work, and its long-sighted vision for world testimony.

Ibid. p. 272.



Today



460 SYLVAN AVENUE
ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS
NEW JERSEY

REDEFINING OUR GOALS

by DR. DANIEL FUCHS, President



Dearly Beloved Friends:

This is the 80TH ANNIVERSARY edition of *The Chosen People* and I have been celebrating our anniversary in and out of the hospital. Last spring before making a quick trip to Israel, I had a physical check-up. The doctor observed that a small birthmark below my knee had changed, and said that I should have it removed. "No hurry," he said, "but it may become a problem." After my return I had it removed and the surgeon sent a sample to the lab for a biopsy. No problem, no pain, just a little discomfort. A few days later after a day at the office I took my usual four-mile stroll around Rockland Lake. I felt great.

On my return, my wife greeted me, "The doctor wants to see you at once." We knew it was something serious, as it was a Friday night when the doctor was usually away from his office. "Your report is very serious. There are three kinds of skin cancer. Two of these present no great difficulty, but unfortunately the type you have is very invasive. We must act at once." Within thirty minutes arrangements were made for admission to the hospital for numerous tests and several operations.

Praise the Lord that the cancer has been removed and tests prove that it has not spread! (Psalm 103:1-4).

At anniversaries we look back, and we also look forward and a hospital bed is a splendid vantage point from which a missionary administrator can look in both directions. Somehow when one is faced with eternal truths his values change. It was no longer how many mission stations? How many meetings? How many buildings? How much literature? How many workers? Now it became how faithful have we been? Are we setting proper goals? Are we meeting them? Do we have the right priorities? Are we planning for eternal results?

There were several indications of our Lord's continued blessing. It has been wonderful to receive hundreds of cards from Mission people and friends all over the world. Our family in the Lord has grown and it's good to know of the many people who are praying, not only for me, but also for the Mission. It seems that every Mission Branch sent cards signed by the Hebrew Christians. The card from Beth Sar Shalom Camp was huge, and the remarks by the young people were precious. One startling fact I observed was that many cards were signed by countless Hebrew Chris-

tians unknown to me who are praying for me by name. Times have changed! When I was appointed Director of Missionary Activities seventeen years ago, it seemed as if I knew every Hebrew Christian in the world. At least I did know our own people, their families, their sicknesses, their problems, and their joys. But now there are so many! Thank God for this evident moving of the Holy Spirit in our midst.

There was another wonderful indication of the Lord's blessing. On the Sunday after my operation there was a nurse's aid on my floor and she was a real Jewish mother. I was asking the Lord for an opportunity to witness, and I began by thanking her for her efficient nursing care. Without any hesitation she responded, "Are you a born-again Christian?" I was astounded! In the hospital only five miles from my home was a Hebrew Christian whom I didn't know. Here I was a Hebrew Christian for forty-four years, President of the world's largest Jewish mission, and the first person in my life who ever asked me if I were "born-again" was a dear lady who used her job to witness for our Lord. There must be thousands like her. The Holy Spirit is working.

Working Out In The Communities From Our Centers

Anniversaries are a good time to redefine your goals. The ABMJ purpose is to reach all Jews everywhere with the Gospel. A few years ago our goal was to build mission

stations in areas of large Jewish population, and we have met our goals. But we realized that building of centers, if continued indefinitely, would not bring us to our purpose of reaching all Jews everywhere with the Gospel. So we re-defined our goals. Our centers were not to be buildings to which we asked the Jewish people to "come" but they were to become strategic centers and we changed the invitation "come" to the command "go!" From these strategic centers our workers are now going into outlying areas holding meetings in homes, holding street meetings, witnessing on the college campuses. And the Lord has abundantly blessed this new direction. One branch now holds meetings in homes in twenty-four communities. In this way we are able to reach more Jews than ever before.

We are thankful for this definite and measurable progress, but I felt that, in spite of the evident growth, we hadn't accomplished enough! Even if we effectively reached every Jew in every area in which we worked, we were still reaching only a small percentage of "all Jews everywhere."

As I pondered the problem in the hospital, the little Jewish nurse's aid came in to talk of the Lord. In her witness, I found a solution to my dilemma—the need for individual believers witnessing wherever they live and work. We can meet our defined purpose with the help of the local church and enlisting individual volunteers. A few years ago we

almost met our goal when the Passover Telecast was cancelled. Through the publicity and news media Jewish people read the Gospel in Israel, Russia, South America, Africa, Australia—all over the world. We didn't plan it that way, but the Lord did. As we look back at that experience we realize two important truths: first, the Passover Telecast ministry was a co-operative effort—our Mission with the local churches; and second, we were able to use this mass media to do what we alone could not do. Television is still closed to us as a mission to the Jews, but many local churches use it. In fact, last spring the Passover Telecast was used twenty times by churches, and they did this without any opposition by the Rabbinic community. Besides this, the press media has always been open to us. This door is open and we must enter!

Enlisting The Church in Our Five-Year Program In Testifying To The Jews In Their Communities

With these thoughts in mind we are now entering an entirely new "five year program." Our goal in this program is to have every Gospel preaching church, in every area where there are Jews, be an effective testimony to the Jews in their own communities.

Our purpose, to reach all Jews everywhere, is a long-range objective;

and one of the problems of long-range objectives is that they are ephemeral. We can never know exactly how well we are succeeding or how miserably we are failing. However, a goal is definite and attainable, and progress is measurable. Our goal in the next five years is to train witnesses to the Jews in every city in the United States where there are 2500 or more Jews. It will be the responsibility of our Missionaries-in-Charge in each district to pinpoint these cities; enlist the enthusiastic co-operation of local pastors to recruit volunteers; and to train these volunteers. The ABMJ will supply teachers, equipment and literature. The Rev. Terry Delaney will supply material for use in the media-press releases, for ads in the newspapers, Gospel spot announcements and television shorts.

There are 101 communities in areas in the United States having a Jewish population of over 2500, where we do not have mission stations. In order to reach these areas effectively, we would have to triple our budget and we cannot do this. However, the local churches are in these areas and can reach into the communities.

Enlisting Youth in Witnessing To The Jews In Their Communities

I am asking every worker in the ABMJ to set a personal goal. Each year, until our Lord returns, he is to enlist and train a different young

people's group in local churches. We believe that our greatest response will be in this area. Early in 1973 the Youth Department of the Jewish Federation Council, United Synagogue Youth and the Los Angeles Hillel Council sponsored a "Jewish Christian Movements Conference" at Temple Beth Ami in Los Angeles. Keynoting this conference, Rabbi David M. Berner read a paper entitled "The Jesus Pushers." Apart from the expected vitriolic adjectives, this paper was one of the finest resumes of the effectiveness of our ministry that ever has been published. After describing our work, the learned rabbi underlines the effectiveness of the youth ministry in the local churches:

The most difficult group to describe is the one that has the most success: the local missionizing community church. These churches succeed on the most solid grounds by providing excellent youth services and maintaining well rounded church programs.

Typically, such a church will establish a coffee house with a dynamic youth minister, open to working with students on any and all problems. It offers fine recreational and social activities well dosed with a strong sense of Christian purpose and morality. Often Christian fellowships will form, geared for high school and

for college campuses. Usually a Jewish student becomes involved through a social event, and is gradually drawn into the very warm and "moral" fellowship. From that point he will join in the Bible study group, and then find Jesus.

We believe the rabbi is a prophet.

Faithfully yours in His service,

Samuel Yuch



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MIAMI

HEADQUARTERS TODAY



RECEPTIONIST
DESK

COMPUTER
ROOM



GENERAL STAFF
OFFICE

OPENING THE
MORNING MAIL



Tomorrow

THE HARVEST IS RIPE — THE LABORERS ARE FEW



by HAROLD A. SEVENER, Vice President

Eighty years of faithfully proclaiming the Gospel to the Jewish people! This is the history of the American Board of Missions to the Jews. Throughout these years the emphasis of our missionary program has always been placed upon personal contact, i.e., communicating the Gospel on a one-to-one basis. We have discovered new ways of proclaiming the message: our tracts and literature, modern means of recording information, the latest computer equipment, up-to-date methods of communication, mass media, radio, and television; but our emphasis still remains the same — the need for personal contact with the Jewish people.

In recent months our missionaries have been inundated with requests for visitation. Through media, through literature, and through the careful recording of information we are finding that more Jewish people are responding to the Gospel and are interested in the claims of Christ than our missionaries have time to contact. Imagine! More people to call upon and to visit than one has time! More people interested in attending Bible classes and home fellowship type meetings than our missionaries can arrange! We believe that this is indicative of the last days — the grafting back of the natural branches into the olive tree. But it is also indicative of the fact that the "field is white unto harvest," and that God is

looking for laborers, both men and women, who are willing to participate in this "great harvest."

With this in view, our Board of Directors has just recently approved a program whereby we can involve a greater number of laborers into this harvest field. We have called it "A Volunteer Missionary Program." As you know, the ABMJ has emphasized the fact that we have qualified and well-trained missionaries dedicated to proclaiming the Gospel to the Jewish community. This elite corps of missionaries is doing its very best to meet the need but they need help, so alongside of them we would like to see an elite corps of "volunteer missionaries," dedicated and trained by our staff for assisting in this great missionary work.

Perhaps you are an individual who has had a special burden to share the Gospel with the Jewish people. Maybe God has been speaking to you already; however, because of your age, work, family commitment, etc., you feel that you cannot be a full-time missionary to the Jews. Under this new program you may qualify to become a "volunteer missionary."

For the past few years we have been experimenting with this program and now can say without hesitation that some of our most successful branches are being run by volunteer missionaries: in Phoenix, Mrs. Dorothy Mellow; in Santa Barbara Mrs.

Dorothy Wilkerson; in Portland, Oregon, Mrs. Bea Watson; in Palm Springs, Mr. Glenn Webb. These dedicated Christians have volunteered their time and effort for a most rewarding ministry.

Simply put, our program works in this way:

1. You let us know if you would like to serve as a volunteer missionary with the ABMJ.

2. The missionary on staff with the ABMJ will train you in witnessing and visitation techniques. He will further assist you in setting up home Bible study classes and in the operation of a monthly home-fellowship-type meeting in your area. The missionary-in-charge, under whom you are trained, will always be available for assistance, speaking, planning holiday services, etc.

3. The personnel, resources, and literature ministry of the ABMJ would be available to you in your designated area to assist you in reaching the Jewish people for Christ.

4. Volunteer missionaries would be listed in *The Chosen People* magazine with names and addresses so that individuals wishing to contact these workers in order to have them visit Jewish friends will

be able to have that information at hand.

It is our hope and prayer that as God blesses this program, we may be able to open up an additional thirty-four branches in the United States and Canada, staffed by trained volunteer workers.

Our immediate concern is to establish the branches in the following cities which have large Jewish populations and/or are situated in strategic locations:

United States—

Albany	Louisville
Albuquerque	Memphis
Alexandria, Va.	Milwaukee
Bergen Co., N.J.	Minneapolis
Birmingham	New Orleans
Boston	Norfolk
Buffalo	Providence
Charleston, S. Car.	Richmond
Charleston, W. Va.	Rochester
Cincinnati	Rockland Co., N.Y.
Cleveland	Sacramento
Columbus	San Francisco
Detroit	Seattle
Hartford	St. Louis
Indianapolis	Syracuse
Kansas City	

Canada—

Ottawa
Vancouver, B.C.
Winnipeg

There are, of course, many other cities that could be listed; however, we feel that these should have priority. If you live in a city not listed and feel that God is leading you into this volunteer program, we would be more than happy to take the matter under prayerful consideration. If you would like to participate in the program, or if you would like to have more information about it, please fill

out the coupon and return it to me as quickly as possible. We will then have one of our missionaries get in touch with you concerning your participation in this evangelistic expansion program.

Please make this a matter of prayer as we feel the urgency of the hour in which we live and the need to share the Gospel with the Jewish people everywhere while the Lord tarries.



TO THE JEW FIRST

by ARNOLD G. FRUCHTENBAUM, Editor



Dr. Joseph Hoffman Cohn once wrote:

The work of The American Board of Missions to The Jews was begun because of an earnest and unshakable conviction that the Bible doctrine of "To The Jew First" is just as imperative today as it was on the day it was first uttered; that the doctrine is as basic in its application to the missionary program of the Church as faith in Christ is basic in the program of salvation. Upon this conviction this work stands or falls. There have been no sentimental appeals in connection with the work of this Mission, no artificial means for the securing of funds, no questionable methods employed, no paid staff of "campaign managers." Our sole reliance has been upon the belief that the Word of God cannot return unto Him void; that there must be in this country a sufficient number of the Lord's people to whom "thus saith the Lord" means implicit obedience. To such a constituency we have resolutely and persistently lent ourselves through all these years. God's blessing has never failed us!

Down On Throop Avenue, P. 5.

On the basis of Romans 1:16 The American Board of Missions to The Jews was founded and on that foundation it has continued to operate throughout the days of Leopold Cohn, Joseph Hoffman Cohn, and continued to this day under the leadership of Dr. Daniel Fuchs. But to establish Romans 1:16 as the foundation of the existence of the ABMJ and to present it as such to the churches were two different matters. In another work Dr. Cohn writes:

Nor was it an easy task out in the field. The very claim that I made, that the Gospel must be given "to the Jew first," seemed to

infuriate some of the very best of the Lord's people in the churches. For so many years they have been taught the Jew's chance was gone, and here was I, daring to smash down this idol of their doctrinal souls! But I felt that I must keep to the vision that God had given to me.

I Have Fought A Good Fight, p. 17.

But in spite of such infuriation, father and son continued to proclaim the firm conviction that the Gospel is to the Jew first. In every January issue of *The Chosen People* there has been a reminder to God's people everywhere of their obligation of fulfilling the command of the Gospel going to the Jew first.

With this issue we are celebrating the eightieth year of our ministry among the Jews. In connection with this special issue it would be wise again to re-investigate our commitment to our foundation upon which we stand: the Gospel is to the Jew first.

Romans 1:16 presents the Biblical method of evangelism. The Gospel is the power of God, and the Gospel is to the Jew first. The governing verb is in the present tense and functions for both clauses; the Gospel is the power of God and the Gospel is to the Jew first. The Greek present tense means continuous action. To interpret this verse as historical, that is, the Gospel was to the Jew first, in the sense that it came to them first and that it is no longer true, or that it was only true during the apostolic period, is also to say that the Gospel was the power of

YES, I am interested in volunteer missionary work with the American Board of Missions to the Jews. Please send me more information about the program.
Have one of your missionaries contact me.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone: Area code () _____

Member of: _____ Church

Address: _____

Pastor's Name: _____

Address: _____

Send to: Rev. Harold A. Sevener
American Board of Missions to the Jews
P.O. Box 1331
Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 07632

God and that it is no longer that. Consistent exegesis would demand from this verse that if the Gospel is always the power of God, then the Gospel is always to the Jew first.

The application of this verse to the Great Commission for the local church or for the individual missionary is that the Gospel, when it goes out and in whatever means it goes out, must go out to the Jew first. This is true of the individual believer. It is also true of the local assembly whether they are engaged in active evangelism such as going out to witness or passive evangelism such as supporting missionary activities within the church budget.

Nor can anyone claim that since he was called to a specific group of Gentiles to evangelize, he is not obligated to keep the commission of Romans 1:16. The author of Romans 1:16 also stated in 11:13-14 of the same book:

But I speak to you that are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my ministry; if by any means I may provoke to jealousy them that are my flesh, and may save some of them.

Paul's particular calling was not to go to the Jews but to the Gentiles. He was the unique apostle of the Gentiles and in this point his ministry was different from that of Peter as is clear from Galatians 2:7-9. Nevertheless, the great apostle to Gentiles recognized the principle of Romans 1:16 and everywhere he went, he went to the Jew first. In order that our readers might see this clearly, we will follow the footsteps of the apostle in the Book of Acts.

The beginning of Paul's apostleship to the Gentiles is to be found in Acts 13:2-3:

And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. Then when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

And so with these verses Paul was sent out by the Holy Spirit to fulfill his calling of the Apostle of the Gentiles. This was the ministry to which he was called. But as he goes, he follows the procedure: to the Jew first. Please note the following verses:

So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. And when they were at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John as their attendant. [13:4-5].

But they, passing through from Perga, came to Antioch of Pisidia; and they went into the synagogue on the sabbath day and sat down: [13:14].

And it came to pass in Iconium that they entered together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake that a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed [14:1].

Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the day following to Neapolis; and from thence to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a Roman colony: and we were in this city tarrying certain days. And on the sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the women that were come together. [16:11-13].

Since this was a Sabbath prayer meeting, this group was obviously Jewish. In this verse we see that although Paul arrived in Philippi and was there several days he did not begin to preach the Gospel immediately. He recognized the procedure of Romans 1:16, that he must first present the Gospel to the Jews. So he waited for the Sabbath, and went outside the city by a river where Jews would gather. Philippi did not have many Jews in it and so they were not strong enough to have a synagogue. And so the place of prayer was outside the city, and Paul knowing Jewish customs went out on the Sabbath to present to them the Gospel. He waited several days in order to be able to fulfill the

requirement of going to the Jew first. We continue in following the apostle's footsteps:

Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: and Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three sabbath days reasoned with them from the scriptures [17:1-2].

And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who when they were come thither went into the synagogue of the Jews [17:10].

Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he beheld the city full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the market-place every day with them that met him [17:16-17].

This passage is another clear example of Paul's procedure in presenting the Gospel. First of all, he is disturbed over the mass idolatry in Athens and he has a desire to preach to the idol-worshippers. It is not the Jews who are worshiping these idols; idolatry was not a Jewish problem at this stage of Jewish history. The people who worshiped these idols were the Gentiles of Athens. But although he wants to preach to the idol-worshippers, he knows what God's procedure is: to the Jew first. So in verse 17 he presents the claims of Christ to the Jews, then in verse 18 he finally goes to the idol-worshiping Gentiles.

After these things he departed from Athens, and came to Corinth . . . and he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath and persuaded Jews and Greeks [18:1,4].

And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews [18:19].

And it came to pass that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, . . . and he entered into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, reasoning and persuading as to the things concerning the kingdom of God. [19:1,8].

And when we entered into Rome, Paul was suffered to abide by himself with the

soldier that guarded him. And it came to pass that after three days he called together those that were the chief of the Jews [28:16-17].

All through the Book of Acts, right to the very end of the history of Paul, he is fulfilling Romans 1:16 and presenting the Gospel to the Jew first. Even after he returned to a city where he had already established a church, he first went to the Jews.

Although the Scriptures are very clear as to his procedure, it is, nevertheless, denied by many. This Joseph Hoffman Cohn found much to his regret and it cost him a great deal of difficulty in his ministry. But on what grounds do people deny that the Gospel is to the Jew first today? A major argument used to refute the doctrine of to the Jew first is based on Acts 28:25-28:

And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Spirit through Isaiah the prophet unto your fathers, saying, Go thou unto this people, and say, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand; And seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, And their ears are dull of hearing, And their eyes they have closed: Lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And should turn again, And I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that this salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles: they will also hear.

Because of these concluding words in Acts 28, and Paul's declaration that the Gospel will now go out to the Gentiles, the passage is taken to mean that the Gospel is no longer to the Jew first. In other words, this passage is construed to mean that now God has changed His program of evangelism and this passage supersedes Romans 1:16, since the Book of Romans was written before Acts 28.

It is true that Romans was written before Acts 28, but this does not mean that the words found in verses 25-28 mean that the Gospel is no

longer to the Jew first, or that God has changed His program in the procedure of evangelism. The true meaning of these words is to be found by comparing them with two other passages in which these words have been spoken before:


And the next sabbath almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with jealousy, and contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul, and blasphemed. And Paul and Barnabas spake out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles, That thou shouldst be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth. And as the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed [Acts 13:44-48].

But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was constrained by the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. And when they opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook out his raiment and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles [Acts 18:5-6].

The true interpretation of Acts 28:25-28 is to be seen in these two previous passages. They indicate a local change and not an overall change in the program of evangelism. In the first passage, the Jews of Antioch of Pisidia rejected the Gospel so now in Antioch of Pisidia Paul will go to Gentiles. In the second passage, the Jews of Corinth rejected the Gospel so now Paul will turn to the Gentiles of Corinth. But when he left both Antioch of Pisidia and Corinth for new territory, it was back to the Jew first. Furthermore, when he returned to Corinth in Chapter 19, he again went to the Jew first, even after his declaration of going to the Gentiles in the previous chapter.

What was true of Antioch of Pisidia and Corinth is also true of Rome in Acts 28. The Jews of Rome had rejected the Gospel, and now Paul will go to the Gentiles of Rome. There is no shift in the procedure of presenting the Gospel. Acts 28 is only a continuation of the procedure already in progress: to present the Gospel to the Jew first and then turn to the Gentiles. If Paul left Rome after two years (and this writer believes that he did), he again repeated after Rome what he repeated after Antioch of Pisidia and Corinth: he went to the Jew first.

The Gospel to the Jew first is the eternal principle for God has not cast off His people whom He foreknew. This is the foundation upon which the American Board of Missions to the Jews was established and has continued to operate to the present day. On this premise we shall continue to operate until Christ returns for His Church.

I once heard a man say, "Show me a church that has not put the Jew first, and I will show you a church that has not put them anywhere." While there are exceptions to this, I have nevertheless found this to be generally true. But those churches that have put the Jew first can testify of special blessings from God as a result. For God still blesses those who bless Israel (Gen. 12:3). And the means by which the local church can continue to bless Israel is by means of exercising Romans 1:16. The Gospel, when it goes out, and by whatever means it goes out, is to go to the Jew first. 

TARGETED STEWARDSHIP

By Wesley J. A. Jones

Have you caught the excitement in the announcement story about the expansion of the Volunteer Missionary Training Program as reported in this issue? Do you feel the Holy Spirit's direction to commit your prayers and encouragement to this vital program?

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