

—PSALM 8:3-4a

*"When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars,
which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou dost take thought of him?"*



the
FEBRUARY 1979
CHOSEN
PEOPLE

FEBRUARY 1979
Vol. LXXXIV, No. 6

PRESIDENT

Rev. Harold A. Sevener

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Jonathan L. Singer

MISSIONARY DIRECTOR

Rev. Richard Cohen

Regional Directors:

NORTHEAST Orangeburg, N.Y.

Rev. Richard Cohen

914-359-8535

SOUTHEAST Silver Spring, Md.

Rev. Larry Jaffrey

301-949-6096

MIDWEST Chicago, Ill.

Rev. John Bell

312-338-5959

SOUTHWEST Dallas, Tx.

Dr. Thomas S. McCall

214-369-3274

WEST Los Angeles, Ca.

Mrs. Barbara Benedict (acting)

213-988-8080

Board of Directors:

Dr. Daniel Fuchs, Chairman,

Louis W. Ivins, John J. Kubach,

Isaac J. Leonard, John E. Melhorn,

Albert Pasche, Harold B. Pretlove,

Dr. David Reifsnyder, George Savage,

Harold A. Sevener, James W. Straub,

Tom Walker.

the CHOSEN PEOPLE

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE is published monthly except August as a medium of information concerning the Jews, Israel and the work of the AMERICAN BOARD OF MISSIONS TO THE JEWS, INC., 100 Hunt Rd., Orangeburg, N.Y. 10962. In Canada: BETH SAR SHALOM MISSION, INC., P.O. Box 4400, Station D, Hamilton, Ont., L8V 4L8. Copyright © 1979 by the American Board of Missions to the Jews, Inc. Not to be reproduced in any form without permission of the publisher. Second Class postage paid at Orangeburg, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. \$2 a year, 20 cents a copy.

Credit: Cover illustration from THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD by Nancy Barnhart is reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons. Copyright 1949 Nancy Barnhart.

“Commit thou to

Dearest Beloved Friends:
“... Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan” (Joshua 1:2). There is a very smooth transition between the books of Deuteronomy and Joshua. The narrative continues without a break. Moses had climbed Pisgah’s heights and viewed the land. Then the scene quietly changed from the mountain to Israel’s bustling camp and the new leader. In God’s program no man, not even Moses, is indispensable. God’s work continues without an interruption. The Master is the same but the tools are changed. What the aged lawgiver could not accomplish had to be delegated to a younger leader.

Most Bible teachers explain that punishment was the only reason why Moses could not enter Canaan. It was that, but it was also a blessing. It would have been cruel to continue Moses in leadership during the many years of conquest that were ahead.

The passing of Moses does not paralyze Israel’s march.

“No; it is but the ground for the

“In God’s program no man, not even Moses, is indispensable. God’s work continues without an interruption.”

ringing command, ‘Therefore arise, go over this Jordan.’ The immediate installation of his successor, and the uninterrupted continuance of the advance, do not mean that Moses is not honoured or is forgotten, for the narrative lovingly links his honorific title, ‘the servant of the Lord,’ with the mention of his death; and God Himself does the same, for he is thrice referred to in the divine command to Joshua, as the recipient of the promise of the conquest, as the example of the highest experience of God’s all-sufficing companionship, and as the medium by which Israel received the law. Joshua steps into the empty place, receives the same great promise, is assured of the same Presence, and is to obey the same law. The change of leaders is great, but nothing else is changed; and even it is not so great as faint hearts in their sorrow are apt to think, for the real Leader lives, and Moses and Joshua alike are but the transmitters of His orders and His aids to Israel.”

Alexander Maclaren, Expositions of Holy Scripture, Vol. I
Joshua pp. 87-88.

Look at the heading of this article. It is no longer “From the President.” Instead I have gone back to the original heading, “Salutation.” There are two reasons: I like it better, and I am no longer the President.



faithful men”

ABMJ Headquarters Building, 1940. It was forty-two years ago this month that I started as the “boys” worker in the American Board of Missions to the Jews.



Last month at the annual meeting of the Board of Directors, John Melhorn asked to be relieved of his responsibilities as Chairman of our Board of Directors. Mr. Melhorn, who has been a Director for twenty-seven years, effectively served seven years as President and four years as Chairman.

The Board of Directors has appointed me Chairman. I deeply appreciate this honor, and as I seek to fulfill my new responsibilities I will, by God’s grace, continue to use all of my strength to fulfill the purpose of ABMJ — to bring the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to all Jews everywhere.

At the same meeting, the Rev. Harold Sevens, our Executive Vice President, was appointed President. You will find his “From the President” editorial each month in the Chosen People. Actually this change is not drastic. For years Harold has been a faithful, capable leader on our staff. During my recent illnesses and hospitalizations he was in complete charge and our work continued to grow abundantly.

It was forty-two years ago this month that I started as the “boys” worker” in the American Board of Missions to the Jews. For years I thought that it was the most

monumental failure in Jewish missions history, yet there are three pastors, one missionary to the Jews and two foreign missionaries who first heard the Gospel in that class!

In fact, one of the delights of my ministry is the number of leaders of Jewish missions all over the world who first heard the Gospel at ABMJ during these years. One of my mottoes has been 2 Tim. 2:2, “And the things that thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

As I look back over these years, I would do it all over again. I would serve the same Lord, work with the same Mission, marry the same girl, raise the same children (and oh, those grandchildren!) and train and lead the same staff of missionaries — the staff of the American Board of Missions to the Jews.

But then forgive my reminiscing. I sound as if I’m retiring and I’m not! By God’s grace, as long as He gives me strength, I’m going to serve our Lord in the task He has given us, “to bring the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to all Jews everywhere.”

Faithfully yours in His service,

Daniel Fuchs

Dr. Daniel Fuchs

In Chicago: Workable Alternatives



MICHAEL SCHIFFMAN
Missionary, Chicago



AS A NEW BELIEVER some five years ago, my family's reaction to my beliefs affected me so strongly that for a long time whenever I shared the Gospel, I was over-cautious not to offend the individual. I didn't apologize for my faith, I was just careful not to seem too zealous.

In the past month here in Chicago, instead of maintaining a somewhat low-key witness, we've tried something new. We've gone door-to-door inviting Jewish people to our Olive Tree Congregation and then shared with them why they needed to receive and accept Jesus as Messiah.

I have shared with Jewish people in the past, but never on such a scale. We made almost two hundred contacts. Even more startling was the response I observed. I saw over sixty people flatly reject the Gospel, but I saw five Jewish women accept the Lord and about seventy others were very open to coming to the meetings.

In the past, I would visit, share with that person, leave some literature and call again — a type of friendship evangelism. As I would re-visit the individual, I befriended them and attempted to lead them to the Lord.

What we have been doing recently is basically the same except my visits seem to have more of a definite purpose. I am inviting people to our congregation, the Olive Tree. The Olive Tree doesn't sound too foreign and it intrigues them. The second distinctive in our new visitation outreach is that we share with each person how they can receive the Lord on the first visit.

This was somewhat of a shock to my "non-offensive" stance. But what if that person (God forbid!) died that night. I have an obligation to share with them how they can receive Him. What they do with the Gospel is between them and the Lord. I am very careful not to offend my Jewish friends with culturally offensive language or attitude, but beyond that, I will not withhold from them the Jesus of the Bible and of my life.

This is what the Lord has taught me from Olive Tree's outreach. If we can share the Gospel with a Jewish accent, we can have a local congregation with a Jewish flavor that is reaching out to Jews and Gentiles. By the grace of our great God, I will be an effective missionary to His chosen people.

We believe this is an alternative that God would have for us here in our outreach in Chicago — not *the* method but a workable, un-offensive outreach for Him to Jewish people.

the challenge of challenge

ONE OF THE MARVELOUS BLESSINGS of being a child of God is that you never face a challenge alone. God's grace is always sufficient to meet every need. The promise of God is real, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

These were some of my thoughts as Dr. Fuchs and I sat together to discuss the future and ministry of the American Board of Missions to the Jews. Now the responsibility for fulfilling the goal of the ABMJ to reach all Jews everywhere with the Gospel would rest upon my shoulders, but by God's grace I do not face the challenge alone. God has already supplied the means to meet the challenge.

How? First, I thought of Dr. Fuchs and the close working relationship that I have had with him through the years. It will continue, for as he assumes the responsibilities as Chairman of the Board I will still be able to call upon him for advice and counsel. How thankful I am for this man of God and for the learning experience which is mine in an ongoing working relationship with him.

Next, I thought of our faithful co-laborers in the ministry, our missionaries, and our staff workers. Each is excited about the particular task that God has given him to do. Tirelessly they labor daily to present the Gospel to Jewish people everywhere. I praise God for each one of them.

Then, I thought of you, our CHOSEN PEOPLE family, who uphold us daily in prayer. How thankful we are for each of you. It is your faithful and effective prayers on our behalf that sustains the ministry of the ABMJ. Together we are a team. The ABMJ — always bringing the Gospel to Jewish people everywhere.

In the months ahead I will be sharing with you the exciting new programs that we are developing to reach more Jewish people with the Gospel. Programs to reach young people, the campuses, the community. Programs to reach every sector of Jewish life. Yes, and programs that you can use to share your faith with your Jewish friends and families.

Pray for us. Pray for me. Pray for the challenges that God will give to us in the year 1979.



RESPONSIBLE DISCIPLESHIP Watchwords in Bergen County

by GARY DERECHINSKY

"...we were confronted with the need to disciple those Jews who had made a personal decision to accept Jesus..."

EVER SINCE WE BEGAN OUR WORK among the Jewish people here in Bergen County, we were always concerned about finding the best method to reach most Jews with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have used a number of different approaches such as tract distribution on the streets of different towns in our area as well as at one of the major airports.

In addition to this, we have conducted Bible studies in which the Jewish community was invited to attend. Also, our personal follow-up work included either writing letters, making telephone calls or personal visitation.

As the ministry developed, we were confronted with the need to disciple those Jews who had made a personal decision to accept Jesus as their Messiah in addition to our goal of bringing the Gospel to unbelieving Jewish people.

Particularly important in discipling these Jewish believers was the need to encourage them in their Jewish heritage so that they might preserve their Jewish identity. Quite often it was suggested to us that we begin a worship service so that these believing Jews could worship the Lord in a Jewish cultural setting.

Through the efforts of both Jewish and Gentile believers who have committed themselves to the ministry of the American Board of Missions to the Jews in our area, the service became a reality.

Currently, our services are held at the Elmwood Park Bible Church every Friday evening. It was interesting to see how God guided us as we were considering the right place for these services. Looking back on that initial period, I could see that God was not only burdening our hearts for this type of ministry, but also the hearts of those who attended the Elmwood Park Bible Church.

PHOTOS: CURTIS STONE



Gary leads singing at a recent service.



A lighter moment during Mr. Dahl's message.



ABMJ's Theresa Bosotina lights candles while Martin Luther King Jr. is mentioned.



...an increase of unity among the believers.



Discussion follows Mr. Dahl's message.



Associate Professor, Melvin Dahl, Northeastern Bible College.



Friedman reads Scripture passage.

includes singing, prayers and reading from the Law, the Writings, the Prophets and the New Testament in both Hebrew and English. These services have not only served to bring the Gospel to unbelieving Jews and to disciple Jewish believers, but to help the church better understand the culture and traditions of their Jewish friends and neighbors.

Some of the results of the Friday evening services has been an increase of unity among the believers. Many unbelieving Jews who have come and heard the Gospel have been able to speak more in depth with us after the service during a time of fellowship together.

One incident which stands out in my mind was having the opportunity to share Isaiah 53 with Mr. S. This gentleman had felt that the issue of whether or not Jesus is the Messiah was not important.

Sensing that I wasn't going to be able to really get through to this individual, I opened up to Isaiah 53 and asked him to read it. After he had read it out loud, I asked him who he thought the passage was speaking about. His reply was that he felt it was talking about Jesus.

You can imagine my surprise after he had just said to me that the issue of whether or not Jesus is the Messiah wasn't important. So I asked him why he was so sure that Isaiah 53 spoke of the Messiah and he said to me "this is the New Testament, isn't it?"

I then informed him that Isaiah 53 was not found in the New Testament, but rather in the Old Testament written about 750 years before the birth of Jesus. He was greatly shocked by this. I then suggested to him that the issue of whether or not Jesus is the Messiah is indeed, an important one and worthy of our investigation.

Mr. S. agreed with me at this point and I could sense that he was feeling rather uncomfortable and wanted to leave. I gave him some of our literature, said that I would look forward to meeting him again and we shook hands. Please pray with us that Mr. S. and others might come to know Jesus as their Messiah and Savior.

We pray that God will continue to bless our efforts and to guide us as we endeavor to share the Gospel with Jewish people in a way that will best communicate to them what we believe.

The thought of using the facilities of this church occurred to me after having shared with the congregation the work of the American Board of Missions to the Jews.

Two primary reasons for choosing this building was, first of all, its size. It wasn't too big and rather had a homey atmosphere. Secondly, its location. It was very close to one of the largest Jewish communities in Bergen County which has approximately 20,000 Jewish families, and yet it was not right in the middle of that community so as to be threatening to them.

It was close to three major highways in Bergen County making it rather accessible for many. I later found out that the church had been praying for the past few years that they might be directly involved in a Jewish work in their community. This was also seen as an answer to their prayers. So, it was God who was working both with us and with the church.

Our services have a distinct Jewish flavor to them. The order of service

"...for about a six-block radius I collected about fifteen of these posters. They read: 'Attention Jewish Brethren, Beware of Missionaries Who Have Infiltrated Your Neighborhood'...it (also) gave my name and address."

by
RAY GORDET
Missionary, NYC



MISSIONARY OUT!

I GREW UP IN THE ORTHODOX Chassidic neighborhood of Boro Park, Brooklyn where my parents own a house. They are unsaved, Reformed Jews, who have lived there for almost thirty years.

When I was twenty, I moved away from home for three years, then moved back into the basement apartment in my parents' home over a year ago. Even though I have made my beliefs known, my parents love me and have accepted me. They see the changed life I live because of Yeshua the Messiah.

For a long time I prayed the Lord would use me in the Boro Park area to reach my own people (Romans 10:1-4). I've prayed for opportunities to witness and to make contacts, but no doors opened. Aside from a few unsaved friends I grew up with, my parents and their friends, practically no one else in the neighborhood knew I was a believer in the Messiah.

Yet I know that the Lord commands us to be lights shining in the dark world (Matthew 4:14-16), so I continued to pray that He would use me. As Isaiah 55:8-9 reads, our ways are not God's ways. This scripture was to become real to me.

Then, one day a few months ago, my mother came downstairs and she was almost hysterical. There

were posters about me throughout the neighborhood.

After calming her down, I went out and sure enough, for about a six-block radius I collected about fifteen of these posters. They read: "Attention Jewish Brethren, Beware of Missionaries Who Have Infiltrated Your Neighborhood To Steal Your Loved Ones" and it gave my name and address.

A few days later, in black spray paint on the sidewalk of my parents' house, were the words: 'Missionary Out! Ray Gordet, JDL.' And for several blocks in the street in white paint and on the sidewalk in black paint, signs read, 'Stop Missionary, Ray Gordet, 'Beware Missionary, etc. Also, long white arrows pointed to my house.

As you can imagine, my parents were very upset because of this. It reminded them of the tactics used by Nazis in Germany against Jews. To top this off, a caller who said he was from the JDL (Jewish Defense League) told my mother they were going to kill me.

My mother answered, "Why are you persecuting me and my husband? It's our house that you've defaced. We're not believers and my son has a right to believe what he wants. This is America, not Nazi Germany. Anyway, my son is moving out!"

This was news to me. I don't believe that God wants us to

run from persecution; however, He does want us to obey our parents, so I moved out. My parents are also going to move soon.

I can't even begin to count the many doors opened for me to witness and testify for the Lord. My parents saw the peace of God in my actions. My parents, neighbors, friends, my parents' friends and police detectives all knew I was a believer in Jesus the Messiah.

I praise God for the way He answered my prayers. Through it all I was thankful for the reality of His Word which brought me comfort, strength and reassurance of His love (2 Tim. 3:12, John 15:18-16:4a and Matthew 5:10-12).

When this happened, I was not yet on ABMJ staff. For two years I've been praying that the Lord would put me in Bible school and in His work. God answered. Psalm 116:1-2. As God was answering this prayer, Satan was attacking, but God was using me. Praise the Lord!

Please pray for the salvation of my parents and that God would use this experience in their lives to see the reality of a living Savior and their need for Him. Also pray for the Jewish people of Boro Park, especially an Orthodox young man named Mark, that he will be saved. Remember the other Jewish believers in Boro Park, too, that the Lord will protect them.



REV. M. TRIESTMAN



THE FREEMANS

Today Is The Day

NEIL IS A VERY SPECIAL, Jewish young man. He suffered from a childhood disease and is physically handicapped. His parents are divorced and Neil lives with his father. He is very much alone. He wandered into the center one afternoon right at closing time and we were all preparing to leave.

He asked what Jewish Christians believe in. I told him it is not what, but who they believe in that makes them Jewish Christians. A lengthy discussion ensued, then I said, "Listen, get right to the meat of the issue. Let me show you what the Old Testament has to say and you can decide for yourself."

We turned to Isaiah 53 and we read the chapter together. Immediately he responded. "I suppose you're going to tell me that's talking about Jesus?" "I don't have to," I answered, "you just told me." We went through the Scriptures and as we looked at different passages I discerned that this young man was extremely open.

When I described the Incarnation, he interrupted with, "That makes sense. I could never believe that man became God, but God becoming man, I can handle." Then we discussed universal depravity and the principles of substitutionary atonement as outlined in the Old Testament.

He kept asking questions. Then finally, feeling led of the Lord, I said, "Neil, I've been getting question after question from you, and now I've got one question for you. Are you ready to trust the Savior?" "Just like that?" he asked. I answered, "Sure. You've seen

the Word. You understand it. Now are you going to believe it?" He said, "Let me think about it a while."

"Fine," I told him. If he wanted to talk further, he could come back, but I wanted to know right at that time what his decision was — yes or no. With that rushed invitation Neil paused for a moment and then exclaimed with a resounding, "Yes! Yes, I want to trust the Savior."

We bowed for a word of prayer as this lonely Jewish youth joined the family of God. Pray that he might grow to know all the joy that belongs to him as a new creation.

REV. MITCHELL TRIESTMAN
Missionary
Philadelphia, Pa.

Say It With Flowers

One Sunday night recently we visited one of our supporting churches and they shared their huge bouquet of flowers with us. The next day we made four equal arrangements of them.

Our first visit was to Ella, a Jewish lady in her eighties. She was depressed when we arrived, but her face lit up when she saw the flowers we brought for her. She was recovering from a broken shoulder. We left her some literature and she allowed us to pray for her.

A lovely widow named Rose, in her seventies, was the one to whom we made our second visit. She is still grieving over the death of her only daughter. As we unwrapped the flowers, she smiled and joy filled her face. "How did you know I love flowers?" she asked. She is Orthodox and keeps a kosher home. Yet she speaks openly

of Jesus. She told us we are welcome anytime.

Our third visit was to a very religious retirement home. Minnie is also in her eighties. Two weeks before we had visited her with her daughter who is a completed Jew. At that time Minnie accepted Jesus as her Jewish Messiah.

As we knocked on her door, we found her tired, depressed and not feeling well. We placed the flowers in a vase for her. She perked up and told us how they brightened up her room. She told us she was lonely for her daughter. So we phoned her daughter, then we sang a few Yiddish songs as she loves to sing. We shared Scripture with her and prayed together. When we left she said she felt so good that she was going for a walk.

Our fourth and last visit was to Evelyn. Again, we had only visited with her by telephone. She has been corresponding with ABMJ's Dr. Fuchs. She was so gracious and charming. She had been studying the Chumosh (Holy Scriptures and the opinions of the rabbis). We talked some about the Scriptures. We plan to visit again as she wants to share a shabbat meal with us.

We went out that day to share the love of our Messiah Jesus with four lovely ladies. All were home and they received us in a most gracious way. We will be visiting them again soon. Our ready responsiveness to their daily needs will prove to them that we really care.

BILL and EDITH FREEMAN
Missionaries
Los Angeles, Ca.



by **FRANCES FRIEDMAN**

I was born and raised in New York City by conservative Jewish parents. Raised in a religious family, I was brought up to believe in God. We lit candles on Friday night and attended services on the holy days. Although I loved God with all my heart, I never truly had peace.

In 1948 my husband died, leaving me with two daughters, aged 12 and 15 years. It was at this time that I questioned if my name was written in the "Book of Life" and if I could know for sure where I would spend eternity. I looked into cults like Unity, Jewish and Christian Science, and Religious Science where I satisfied my mind with metaphysical thoughts, but never attained peace in my heart. I studied these and other groups until 1970 — a span of 22 years. Throughout these years of seeking my life was not only empty and purposeless, but lonely.

In the Spring of 1970 my mother was dying of back cancer. Looking for an answer for my mother's problems and some hope for myself, I attended a small town church. There I heard a message that gave me the peace in my heart that for years I had been searching for.

I heard that God loved me and had a

plan for my life. The Bible tells us "there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." (Ecclesiastes 7:20). Realizing my sin and the need of the blood atonement (Lev. 17:11), it was stated that Messiah Jesus came to die for man's sins. The Bible tells us in Romans 10:9... "that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Believing that Jesus was truly the Messiah and came to be my blood atonement, I asked Him to come into my heart and life.

I now knew that my name was written in the "Book of Life" and had the peace and joy I was looking for. God, in his infinite love, healed my mother and six months later my mother accepted Jesus as her Messiah.

At this time, I started to attend Bible classes and to read and study the Old and New Testaments. I found that there were hundreds of prophecies in the Old Testament clearly showing Jesus to be the Messiah. Isaiah 9:6 says: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." In Zechariah Chapter 12 verse 10 the Lord says, "...and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced...", speaking of the time the Messiah will come back to earth. These prophecies were written 600 to 800 years before Jesus came and died for our sins.

Since then my love for my Lord has grown greatly and I pray that you, too, will have the same joy in your heart that I have through Messiah Jesus. My life now has purpose and fulfillment.

NEWS FROM ISRAEL

Returning to Jewish Roots

Since Israel's Six Day War thousands of Jews in the Holy Land have returned to their faith. An outgrowth of this phenomenon, reports the Jerusalem Post's Judy Siegel, is the Machon Meir, a tuition-free institution of Jewish and religious studies. Here students of any age may plow through the long forgotten holy books

"Some Jews are afraid to return to Judaism because of their fear that they will have to leave the real world," said Rabbi Dov Bigon, the young founder and director of Machon Meir. "But the return to Judaism is a Continuation of Zionism."

Starting with a small room where interested Jews came to study, the school has expanded into an independent network of eight branches with thousands of students in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, Netanya, Kiryat Shmona, Rehovot, the Golan and Eilat.

Since there is no tuition for weekly evening courses — the Machon leads a hand-to-mouth existence. It survives on contributions from students who can afford to give something.

In the early years of Zionism, Bigon says the religious population in Israel was always small in numbers and influence.

"But in recent years, the secular segment lost their ideals and yearned only to be comfortable. So now religious Zionists have begun, by their quality, to lead the way. And they have done so with their youth movements, settlements and Jewish education."



STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

by DR. CHARLES L. FEINBERG

CHAPTER XIV DROUGHT AND IMPENDING EXILE (1-22)

Chapters 14 and 15 are joined in thought. In fact, chapters 14-17 are autobiographical and full of Jeremiah's grief over the future of his people. The present chapter and the one following relate to the drought. When there are no chronological helps, it is difficult to date the chapters. One writer prefers the fourth year of Jehoiakim; another only offers a time early in Jehoiakim's reign.

The reason for the difficulty, apart from the lack of precise dating in the text, is that even references to invasions and exile cannot help to focus on a date, because there were three invasions and as many deportations. But, happily, the interpretation of the passages is not made impossible. Again, it is difficult to date the chapter with a particular crisis in the life of the nation. The drought here is probably later than that in 3:3 and 12:4, because this one is connected with war (vv. 17, 18).

1. The critical drought (1-6)

1-6 The portion begins with an unusual formula, literally, "That which was the word of the Lord to Jeremiah" (cf. 46:1; 47:1; 49:34). It is the first time in the Old Testament. The word "drought" is in the plural; it may be intensive plural or point to a series of droughts. Rainfall in Palestine is never too abundant. A year of drought can cause suffering. Unlike Egypt and Mesopotamia, Palestine depended on seasonal rainfall.

Droughts were common in Palestine (cf. Gen. 12:10; Ruth 1:1; 2 Sam. 21:1; 1 Kings 8:37). In Israel a drought was never viewed as a chance occurrence. It had been threatened for disobedience (Deut. 28:23, 24); it was part of the covenant curses. The Lord's purpose in sending the drought was to bring the nation to repentance.

Jeremiah paints a vivid picture of the distress of man and animal. The entire country is in the grip of the anguish from lack of water. The drought is in the city. The gates stand for the city, because the people assembled there, and the courts were held there. The nation is clothed in black to express

"It is sad for irrational creatures to have to suffer also, because man has incurred the displeasure of God."

its mourning. The capital cries out for help. Furthermore, the nobles are not immune, for when they send their domestic servants (lit. little ones) to the cisterns for water, they return with empty vessels. Rain water was stored for time of need, but the supply has long since been exhausted. In mourning they cover their heads, as though to shut out the painful scene.

The famine affects city, country, high, low, man, and beast. If the city suffered from the drought, it is understandable that the country and farmers would feel the crisis all the more. From lack of rain the

ground is cracked (lit. dismayed) and is full of fissures. In the verb there is a transference by poetic license of emotions which belong to men to inanimate objects. The farmers are suffering keenly, because they cannot work the soil and hence cannot expect a harvest. They, too, are in deep mourning.

It is sad for irrational creatures to have to suffer also, because man has incurred the displeasure of God. The hind, known for its solicitude and care for its young, according to quotations from ancient writers, is not unconcerned because of its own need and inability to provide for its offspring. The wild donkeys, hardiest of all wild animals and able to survive on very little, will be in great distress. Even on the bare heights a breath of air will be impossible to enjoy. They will gasp for breath because oppressed by heat and thirst. Too, instead of the usual sharpness of sight, they lose the power of vision in their agony. The imagery throughout this portion reflects Jeremiah's poetical ability.

2. The confession of the nation (7-9)

7-9 Writers are divided in opinion as to whose confession this is. It is not impossible that it should be that of the prophet, but he usually couches his intercession in personal form with the singular pronoun. Besides, something is lost of the agony of the nation if they are not voicing their own confession. Some feel they are more concerned about God's position and His lack of intervention on their behalf.

than in the gravity of their sins before God. A good case can be made out for the contrary position.

In verse 7 they acknowledge their iniquities, apostasies, and sins, thus are deserving only of death. But they plead on solid ground, that is, that the Lord's honor may be witnessed by the pagan nations about them. Because there is no merit in them, God's work will be for His reputation and His exhibition of His nature as a God of compassion.

God is entreated not to disappoint their hope in Him. When Jeremiah designates God as the hope of Israel, this is a favorite expression of his (cf. 17:7, 13; 50:7; also Paul's use of it in Acts 28:20; Col. 1:27; 1 Tim. 1:1). The people ask God why He is as a stranger or traveler in the land with no interest in the country where He is only passing through. Why should God be so to Israel? Others may disclaim any responsibility or stake in the land,

"God seeks above all else reality, truth in the inward parts."

but surely not the Lord God of Israel. If He is their hope and deliverer in distress, why does He not act now in their behalf in these capacities?

God is not impotent, so why should He hesitate as one who has temporarily out of fright lost his usual activity and presence of mind? God was still among them in the ark of the covenant, the temple, the sacred service, and His presence. Further, they plead the covenant relationship, for they are called by God's name. The purpose of their prayer is to dissuade God from forsaking them.

3. God's answer in judgment (10-12)

10-12 The reply of the Lord is an explanation for His chastisements of them. Because they have continued in their wicked deeds, the drought was punishment for their ungodliness. Evidently, God considered their prayer lacking in true penitence. They were constantly wandering after foreign gods;

because they rejected the Lord, He was rejecting them. This is the third time (cf. 7:16 and 11:14).

They were beyond help, because they were determined in their disobedience. Intercession was an important function of the prophet; but Jeremiah was restricted in doing so at that fateful hour (1 Sam. 7:8; 12:19).

In fact, worse visitations than the drought would overtake them, namely, the sword, famine, and pestilence. The combination of these three is found seven times in the book. Moreover, neither fasting nor sacrifices could avail to recover God's favor, as long as they were determined on idolatry. External marks of repentance are useless, since God seeks above all else reality, truth in the inward parts. It will take more than ritual or ceremonial form to be effective.

4. The doom of the false prophets (13-16)

13-16 Jeremiah blames the false prophets for the plight of the nation. They lulled the nation into an unwarranted complacency, which led them to believe all was well and would be. The prophet pleads a mitigation of the nation's offenses. His plea is on the basis of their being misled, but he does not thereby excuse their sin. It may be well here to consider the reason the false prophets appeared on the scene of Israel's history, and especially in Jeremiah's day. More is said concerning them by Jeremiah than any other prophet.

First of all, when a prophet appeared in Israel with God's message, it was evident that the nation was not walking in the will of the Lord. Notice how the first prophecy in the Bible appears in a setting of failure (cf. Gen. 3:15). Prophets were revivalists, calling the people back to God. They denounced sin, so their messages were not welcome to the ungodly. They disturbed sinners in their ungodly ways.

The true prophet was never really popular any more than today (cf. 2 Tim. 4:3, 4). Thus there arose alongside the true servant of God false prophets who were self-seeking, profiteering, and zealous of popularity, but with no word of

authority from God. Since Jeremiah's message was a heartbreaking one of almost unrelieved judgment, it furnished the false prophets with ample latitude for their labors.

In that desperate hour they preach deliverance and peace, so the people could not believe in the imminence of judgment. They promised assured (lit. peace of truth), lasting, durable peace, the very opposite of Jeremiah's true

"Jeremiah blames the false prophets for the plight of the nation. They lulled the nation into an unwarranted complacency, which led them to believe all was well..."

message. Imagine the confusion with their babel of bright promises over against the thundering message of doom from Jeremiah. The reason they were false, lying prophets was that God had never sent them, though they claimed authorization from Him.

cont'd next month

SEND TO: ABMJ, Box 2000
ORANGEBURG, NY 10962

a reminder...

There has never been a more opportune time to present the Gospel of the Lord Jesus; His glorious plan of salvation, the forgiveness of sins through His precious blood. Your prayers and gifts are essential that God might enlarge and direct this work.

I promise to remember the Jewish people in my prayers and to do what I can to give them the Gospel of Jesus, their Messiah.

I enclose \$ _____ to be used for the following:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

d29



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

by DR. HENRY J. HEYDT

*Job's repentance,
God's protection
over Jacob, and
Egypt and Edom's
judgement.*

QUESTION: What was there for Job to repent of (42:6) if he was perfect and upright (1:1)?

ANSWER: The basic meaning of the Hebrew word, *tam*, translated "perfect" is "complete." Job was in every respect a well-rounded individual. This does not mean that he was absolutely sinless and flawless, nor did he so consider himself. He said, "If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse" (9:20). In 40:4 he said, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee?" It has been a characteristic of the greatest saints that they considered themselves the greatest of sinners.

What brought forth Job's cry in 42:6 and caused his repentance was his realization that he had uttered things he understood not, things that were too wonderful for him, which he knew not (42:3). This realization and confession resulted from the fact that he "was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil" (1:1). Job is a good example of the answer to the riddle: "Why is a Christian like a church spire?" "Because the nearer he gets to heaven the smaller he gets."

QUESTION: Please explain Dt. 32:11. I know it pertains to God's protection over Jacob.

ANSWER: You are correct in your application. The figure is a beautiful one as will be seen from the following selected quotation:

11. *as an eagle.* God's loving care for Israel is likened to the tender affection that is shown by the eagle towards its young when it teaches them to fly.

stirreth up her nest. When the time comes for the young to leave the nest, the mother-bird does not rouse them suddenly, but strikes her wings against the surrounding branches. Having thus gently awakened them, she 'stirs up' the nest, and allures them to imitate her fluttering in flight.

hovereth over her young. She hovers over them in loving solicitude, and has her wings in readiness to catch them, should they become exhausted.

spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them. If the young are too weak or too timid to fly, the eagle takes them upon her outspread wings and carries them — a picture of the fostering care, the discipline and training to independence, that Israel received at the Divine hands (Dr. J. H. Hertz, Late Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, Editor, *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, p. 898).

QUESTION: Please give me your understanding of Joel 3:21. The New American Standard Bible uses the word "avenge," and the King James and American Standard Versions translate "cleanse."

ANSWER: The Hebrew word is *naqah*, which means "to be or make clean." This is its most frequent use. However, the word is employed in an adverse sense in such passages as Jer. 25:29; 30:11; 46:28 where it is rendered "unpunished" with the negative. Thus "avenge" is also correct.

That Egypt and Edom represent the nations who were Israel's adversaries is clear from Joel 3:2, 11 and 12. *The Pulpit Commentary* contains the following excellent summary:

The blood shed by the Egyptians and Edomites is proved by Jehovah to be innocent blood, because he promises to avenge it in the end, though for wise and good reasons he had delayed to do so. This closing thought is well explained by Keil in the words, "The eternal desolation of the world-kingsdoms mentioned here will wipe out all the wrong which they have done to the people of God, and which had hitherto remained unpunished." When Jehovah wipes out the blood guiltiness of the enemies of Judah by punishing them with destruction for their cruelties, while he exalts gloriously, finally, and forever his people, he proves his sovereignty over them and his dwelling-place in Zion (The Pulpit Commentary, Exposition on Joel 3:20, 21).

Dr. Henry Heydt has served for many years with the ABMJ. He is the author of the CHOSEN PEOPLE QUESTION BOX II.

COMMENTARY ON WORLD EVENTS

Dr. John F. Walvoord (Continued from January)

Their return to the land, however, is going to plunge them into a time of suffering as Jeremiah makes clear in Jeremiah 30:4-7. "Now these are the words which the LORD spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah, 'For thus says the LORD, "I have heard a sound of terror, Of dread, and there is no peace. Ask now, and see, If a male can give birth. Why do I see every man With his hands on his loins, as a woman in childbirth? And why have all faces turned pale? Alas! for that day is great, There is none like it; And it is the time of Jacob's distress, But he will be saved from it."'" According to Jeremiah, there is going to be a time of Jacob's distress, a time so great that it will exceed any time of suffering in their past. It is a time when they will go through the ultimate in difficulty and distress.

Many other passages bring this out. According to Zechariah 13:8, "'And it will come about in all the land,' Declares the LORD, 'That two parts in it will be cut off and perish; But the third will be left in it.'" The important fact brought out in all these passages, however, is that Israel will survive as a nation and ultimately enter into their glorious restoration. This is anticipated in the passage quoted from Jeremiah 30:8-9, "'And it shall come about on that day,' declares the LORD of hosts, 'that I will break his yoke from off their neck, and will tear off their bonds; and strangers shall no longer make them their slaves. But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.'" That this time of restoration is related to the second coming of Christ and the

resurrection of Israel is made plain by the fact that David, their king, will be raised up to lead them.

As a result of this deliverance from their time of suffering, God gives Israel reassurance in Jeremiah 30:10-11, "'And fear not, O Jacob My servant,' declares the LORD, And do not be dismayed, O Israel; For behold, I will save you from afar, And your offspring from the land of their captivity. And Jacob shall return, and shall be quiet and at ease, And no one shall make him afraid. For I am with you,' declares the LORD, 'to save you; For I will destroy completely all the nations where I have scattered you, Only I will not destroy you completely, But I will chasten you justly, And will by no means leave you unpunished.'"

From these passages we can therefore determine that in God's program, while the ultimate restoration related to the second coming of Christ is assured, it will be preceded by a terrible time of trouble. From other Scriptures such as Daniel 9:27 and Matthew 24:15-22, it can be determined that this will be the great tribulation, the three-and-a-half-year period preceding the second coming of Christ.

Israel's Predicted Time of Peace

In the midst of these many prophecies that predict Israel's ultimate restoration and the time of trouble which precedes it, there is also prediction of a brief respite for three and a half years when Israel enters into a peace covenant. This is indicated in Daniel 9:27 where a covenant for seven years is predicted as being enacted between Israel and "the prince who is to come" (Dan. 9:26). While scholars have disputed the interpretation of this passage, the only interpretation which allows for a full and complete literal fulfillment is the concept that this

covenant is still a future covenant and indicates a seven-year period leading up to the second coming of Christ. The first half of it will be a peace treaty when there will be comparative peace and prosperity in Israel. The second half will be the time of Jacob's trouble, the time of the great tribulation preceding the second coming of Christ.

cont'd next month

A Profitable Investment

by WES JONES STEWARDSHIP DIRECTOR
CAN AN INVESTMENT BE PROFITABLE and safe these days?

Yes, there is an age-old investment in the Lord's work which is as tried and proven as any of more modern favor — the ABMJ GIFT ANNUITY. Here are a few advantages of this unique plan:

(1) It pays a generous guaranteed income, particularly at the older ages.

(2) A portion of that income is not subject to tax, and the older the annuitant, the greater is the tax-free portion.

(3) The annuity income may be payable for the lives of two persons if desired.

(4) A contribution deduction is available in the tax year when the annuity investment is made.

(5) An estate tax deduction can be taken at the death of the donor/beneficiary.

(6) Above all, the investor can enjoy peace of mind, knowing that the unused portion of the capital investment will be multiplied fruitfully in the cause of Jewish evangelism.

It's all explained in ABMJ's annuity brochure. Just write *The President, ABMJ, Box 2000, Orangeburg NY 10962*

IN CONCERT!

DONNA JEAN WOOD
Feb. 3, World Prophetic Ministries, Colton, Ca.; Feb. 4, Phelan Community Church, Phelan, Ca.; Feb. 11, Community Baptist Church, Manhattan Beach, Ca.; Feb. 25, The Salvation Army, Whittier, Ca.

Dr. John F. Walvoord is President of Dallas Theological Seminary and Professor of Systematic Theology.

CONFERENCE

Insights into tomorrow's
prophetic forecast
by renowned Bible scholars.

'79

**THE AMERICAN BOARD OF MISSIONS TO THE JEWS
presents Prophetic Bible Conferences in Los Angeles,
Baton Rouge and Washington, D.C.**

"And it came to pass." In the four Gospels these words explicitly or implicitly preface the more than 333 prophecies concerning the coming of Jesus, the Messiah. God's Word could not help but come to pass! Yet, there are myriads of God's promises that await fulfillment in these last days.

THE AMERICAN BOARD OF MISSIONS TO THE JEWS has gathered together some of the world's finest Bible scholars to explore the exciting events that will precede Messiah's return and Israel's position in the consummating plan of God. Plan to attend these significant, prophetic conferences. Here are just some of the themes that will be discussed during these '79 conferences: *The Church and The Tribulation*, *The Beginning of Birth Pangs*, *The Great White Throne Judgment*, *What is the Practical Value of Prophecy?*, *Will the Man of Sin Be Revealed Before The Rapture?*

THE GREATER LOS ANGELES CONFERENCE ON PROPHECY (March 2-4, 1979) *Participating speakers:* Dr. Earl Radmacher, President, Western Conservative Baptist Seminary; Dr. Charles Feinberg, Dean Emeritus, Professor, Talbot Theological Seminary; Dr. Donald Campbell, Professor, Dallas Theological Seminary; Dr. John Walvoord, President, Dallas Theological Seminary. *Participating churches:* Bethany Baptist Church, West Covina, Ca.; Calvary Bible Church, Burbank, Ca., Calvary Church of Pacific Palisades, Pacific Palisades, Ca.; Magnolia Baptist Church, Anaheim, Ca.

THE BATON ROUGE CONFERENCE ON PROPHECY (March 11-14, 1979) *Participating speakers:* Dr. Paul Feinberg, Professor, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. Mr. Calvin Marsh, Conference Soloist. *Participating church:* Immanuel Baptist Church. And coming up in October '79, THE GREATER WASHINGTON, D.C. CONFERENCE ON PROPHECY (October 14, 1979) *with participating speakers* Dr. Dwight Pentecost and Dr. Richard De Haan. *Participating church:* Cherrydale Baptist Church, Arlington, Va. *For more information write:* DR. THOMAS S. MCCALL, Director of Conferences, ABMJ, PO Box 2000, Orangeburg, N.Y. 10962.

