

ABMJ's Beth Sar Shalom, Los Angeles:
Highly Visible

the MARCH 1979
**CHOSEN
PEOPLE**




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- FAMILY ACTIVITIES
- HEBREW CLASSES
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the CHOSEN PEOPLE

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Credits: RNS, 3, 5.

Dearly Beloved Friends:
Why did God create pain?
Please don't judge me as
being blasphemous. The
Lord knows I'm not, but
the older I get the more I
believe that there is a valid "theology
of pain." God does not just permit it;
He created it for His purpose!

There is compelling reason for
physical pain. We learn to avoid fire
by experiencing a painful burn.

A few months ago Harvey Scharf-
man, a member of our Board of
Directors, died of cancer. He was one
of the country's leading Hebrew
Christians, an eminently successful
Christian business man. He was on
the Board of Directors of some of the
most influential Christian organiza-
tions of the world. In the prime of
life this effective leader was taken
from us. The problem was that in its
initial stages cancer is frequently
painless. Harvey's cancer was not
discovered until it was too late.

A few years ago I had a heart
attack. It was the most serious type
of heart problem—it was a silent
attack. I didn't have any pain at all.
It was discovered by a routine electro-
cardiogram just prior to cancer
surgery. I could have died on the
operating table not because of cancer
but because I didn't suffer pain dur-
ing the attack and simple precautions
could have been neglected.

*I have never read a poem extolling
the virtues of pain, nor seen a statue
erected in its honor, nor heard a
hymn dedicated to it. Pain is usually
defined as "unpleasantness." Chris-
tians don't really know how to in-
terpret pain. If you pinned them
against the wall, or in a dark, secret
moment, many Christians would
probably concede that pain was God's
mistake. He really should have
worked harder and invented a better*

*way of alerting us to the world's
dangers. I am convinced that pain
gets a bad press. Perhaps we should
see statues, hymns, and poems to
pain. Up close, under a microscope,
the pain network is seen in an en-
tirely different dimension.*

*I was most impressed with the
amazing effectiveness of the pain
network when I visited Dr. Paul
Brand of Carville, Louisiana, the
only man I've met who crusades on
behalf of pain. Without hesitation,
Brand announces, "Thank God for
inventing pain! It's the paragon of
His creative genius." Dr. Brand is
well-qualified to make such a judg-
ment, since he is one of the world's
foremost experts on leprosy, which
attacks the nervous system. Leprosy
patients lose their fingers and toes,
not because the disease can cause
decay, but precisely because they
lack pain sensations. Nothing warns
them when water is too hot or a
hammer handle is splintered. Acci-
dental self-abuse destroys their bodies.*

*Philip Yancey, "Pain: The Tool of
the Wounded Surgeon"*

*Christianity Today, March 24,
1978, pp. 12, 13.*

God did not make any mistake
when He created pain. It is another
provision of His love for our good.
However, this truth does not
adequately answer another perplex-
ing problem, "Why do the righteous
suffer?" I wish that I could wrap up
a pretty little box which when we
press a spring, the answer would pop
out. As yet, there is no complete
adequate answer; but just as we know
from experience that pain is an act
of God's love, we find peace and
assurance when we rest in God's
love in times of suffering.

Even the Book of Job does not
give us an answer to this problem. It
doesn't tell us *why* Job suffered. He
would have loved to know! It does



The Problem of Pain

tell us that God is greater than suffering.

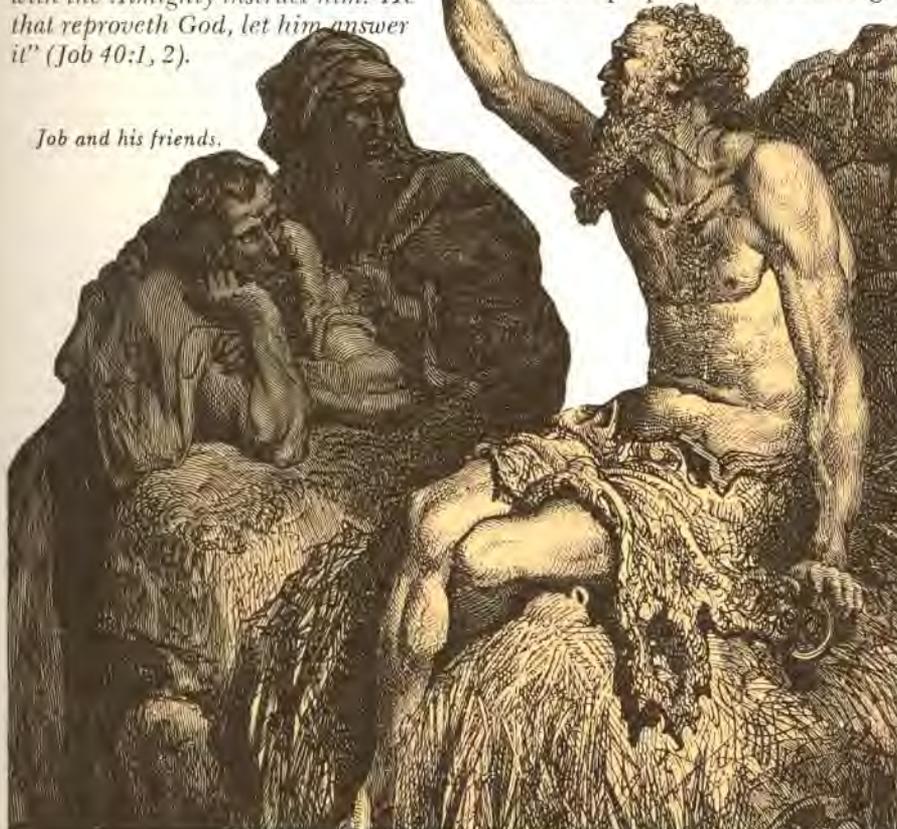
Satan's accusation was that Job served God for His blessings. He believed that every man has his price. God permitted him to bring suffering to Job, "only do not touch his life." Job's greatest pain was not physical; it was theological. His theology had been that God blesses the good with all abundance and curses the bad, and only the bad, with suffering. Therefore, he felt that God made a mistake and he argued with Him!

"Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God" (Job 13:3).

How gracious God's answer is:

"Moreover, the Lord answered Job and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? He that reproveth God, let him answer it" (Job 40:1, 2).

Job and his friends.



Job was stunned and replied: *"Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further" (Job 40:4, 5).*

At the end of his rope Job said, "I will proceed no further." He submitted himself to God. He had spoken to God; God had spoken to him. His pain was eased. His greatest pain had been that he thought God had made a mistake and forsaken him! He discovered what we all learn through suffering—that God is with us through joy and suffering. He doesn't play favorites because we are "good." But He is always there.

There is a greater question than "Why do the righteous suffer?" Isaiah, the prophet of the Suffering

Servant, expresses it. Why does God suffer? Isaiah tells us that God suffers with us!

"In all their affliction he was afflicted and the angel of his presence saved them" (Is. 63:9).

I can find many good reasons why I might suffer even though I'm a partaker of our Lord's righteousness. But I cannot fathom any reason why He should suffer with me except that He loves me and that's all the answer I need.

He not only suffers with us, He suffered for us:

"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." (Is. 53:5).

For whatever reason God chose to make man as he is—limited and suffering and subject to sorrows and death—He had the honesty and courage to take His own medicine. . . . He has Himself gone through the whole of human experience, from the trivial irritations of family life and the cramping restrictions of hard work and lack of money to the worst horrors of pain and humiliation, defeat, despair and death. When he was a man, He played the man. He was born in poverty and died in disgrace and thought it well worthwhile!

Dorothy L. Sayers, *Christian Letters to a Post-Christian World*, p. 14.

Our Lord could have entered this world as a Super-Caesar. Rather He chose to be the Suffering Savior. I still don't have the answer about suffering. I just rest in His love. After all, His Name is "Immanuel—God with us."

Faithfully yours in His service,

Daniel Fuchs

Dr. Daniel Fuchs



FROM THE PRESIDENT

REV. HAROLD A. SEVENS

Purim: God Keeps His Promise

MARCH IS A VERY SPECIAL MONTH for the ministry of The American Board of Missions to the Jews. This is the month that your missionaries are very busy preparing for the festival of Purim (*evening March 12-14*) a special holiday recorded in the Book of Esther.

It is a day that commemorates the casting of lots and the saving of Jewish people from certain destruction plotted by wicked Haman. Our branches will hold Purim pageants and Purim parties and children will be dressed in costume. There will be Queen Esther, King Ahasuerus, Mordecai and some one will even be selected to play wicked Haman.

The children will enact events of the Book of Esther. Children and audience will be given *greggors* (noisemakers), and every time the name of Haman is mentioned they will sound their *greggors* making a horrible noise while stomping their feet. Talmud tells us that whenever the name of Haman is read during the Feast of Purim, his name is not to be heard for he sought the destruction of the Jewish people.

In the kitchens mothers will be busy preparing *hamantaschen*, called "Haman's pockets" or "Haman's ears." These are small three-cornered cookies which are baked especially for this holiday, and of course, they delight the children. Purim is a time of celebration and rejoicing.

Why should the festival of Purim be so commemorated by the branches of ABMJ? The reason lies in the fact that Purim is unique among all Jewish holidays celebrated by the Jewish community.

"According to God's Word and promise, Abram's seed would be indestructible. It is interesting to note that this truth was apparent to Haman, his wife, and his cohorts . . ."

Purim is the only holiday instituted by God when Jewish people were outside the land, while in captivity. It is a holiday given by God during the great prophetic period called "the times of the Gentiles." All other holidays given by God (cf. Lev. 23) were instituted as festival days when Israel occupied the land. They prophetically showed forth God's redemptive program through the Messiah, beginning with Passover and concluding with Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles.

Purim, on the other hand, is celebrated because it verifies the promise that God made to Abraham in Gen. 12:3. "And I will bless them that bless thee and curse them that curseth thee, and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

This promise was made by God to Abram before the nation of Israel came into existence. It was unconditional; it had nothing to do with Israel's obedience or disobedience. It demonstrates God's concern for those He loves; and, as such, it serves as background for events recorded in the Book of Esther.

God's promise to Abram was that his seed would continue and that through his seed all nations of the

earth would be blessed. According to God's Word and promise, Abram's seed would be indestructible. It is interesting to note that this truth was apparent to Haman, his wife, and his cohorts as they sought to plan the destruction of the Jewish people. This makes their crime even more heinous.

Notice Esther 5:15, "Then said Zeresh, his wife (Haman's wife), and all his friends unto him, let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and tomorrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged on it; then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made."

The story then continues that the king could not sleep. He began to read and found where Mordecai had done service for the king but was not honored. The king then told Haman to honor Mordecai, and Haman related these events to his wife and friends. Notice their comment, "and Haman told Zeresh, his wife, and all his friends everything that had befallen him. Then said his wisemen and Zeresh, his wife, unto him, If Mordecai is of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him

"Purim is the only holiday instituted by God when Jewish people were outside the land, while in captivity. It is a holiday given by God during the great prophetic period called 'the times of the Gentiles.'"

but shalt surely fall before him" (Esther 6:13).

Haman's wife and his friends, who a little earlier had counselled him on how to destroy the Jews, then realized the folly of what they were attempting to do and recognized that what they had begun would end with their own destruction. Such is the outworking of God's promise to Abram—"I will bless him that bless thee, and will curse him that curseth thee."

It holds true today though the nation of Israel is scattered among the nations of the world, God will still bless and preserve them.

How marvelous is God's grace! How marvelous are God's promises, for that same love and that same grace which He has extended to the nation of Israel, He has extended to us individually as we place our faith and trust in our Messiah, the Lord Jesus.

This is the message of Purim and the message that the missionaries of the ABMJ will be portraying—a visual object lesson which is used to demonstrate God's love for the nation of Israel and His promised Messiah, the Lord Jesus.

Some scholars have questioned whether or not the Book of Esther should be included as a part of the Holy Scriptures because the name of God does not appear in the story. However, the name of God does appear in the Hebrew text. It appears in the name ascribed to Israel, the term, the Jew.

This word is only used ten times in the Old Testament, and eight of these occurrences appear in the Book of Esther. The name, Jew, translated means, "the praise of God." How fitting it is for this term to be used in the Book of Esther, not in derision, as some would use it today, but as verification of God's redemptive program in history, for as long as there are Jewish people, God's Word is true. God is faithful to His promise.

Even today as Jewish people are scattered throughout the nations of the world, their presence among those nations verifies the fact that God is faithfully keeping His promises.

Please pray for our missionaries and for the Purim pageants and programs that will be planned this



Mordecai, the "hero" of the Purim story and his cousin Esther.

"Some scholars have questioned whether or not the Book of Esther should be included as a part of the Holy Scriptures because the name of God does not appear in the story. However, the name of God does appear in the Hebrew text. It appears in the name ascribed to Israel, the term, the Jew."

month. For many Jewish parents this will be the first time that they attend a mission service. For others it will be the first time they hear their children recite from the Word of God. For still others, it will be the first time they hear the Gospel proclaimed through the historical events in the Book of Esther.

God's Word never returns unto Him void. The seed that is sown will produce fruit. As you read *The Chosen People* magazine, you will see how God is faithfully keeping His promise and using your missionaries to reach the lost sheep of the House of Israel.

"For many Jewish parents this will be the first time that they attend a mission service. For others it will be the first time they hear their children recite from the Word of God."

L

California is more than a State, it is really a state of mind. There are as many Californias as there are *Californians*. Each person seems to have developed a distinctive style of living; evident in their art, fashion and cuisine.

Los Angeles, the State's largest city can hardly be described as a city in the usual sense of the word. It is not the typically concentrated urban center with distinct boundaries, but rather it is a burgeoning sprawl of intermingled communities, each with its own identity and character.



Food, fun and fellowship at the storefront.



Greater L. A. staff convenes for fellowship.

"I am made all things to all men,"

In order to better serve the nearly 500,000 Jewish people who are scattered in this megatropolis, the ABMJ has divided it into four areas. (See map.) Our workers do a great deal of visitation, counselling, door-to-door evangelism, church speaking and of course, one-to-one witnessing.



Window display, N. Hollywood Center.

Los Angeles

said Paul. Becoming all things is

Starting at the northern section of Greater Los Angeles (see no. 4 on map) is the San Fernando Valley a vital and important work here. Two hundred thousand Jewish people endure the smog and heat and enjoy the sunshine and warm winters. The Valley presents unlimited opportunities to share Jesus. It is one of the fastest



Ladies Bible study, N. Hollywood.

a unique challenge at Beth

Sar Shalom, Los Angeles.



N. Hollywood storefronts.



Ruth Wardell

Beth Sar Shalom, L.A. : "Highly Visible"

by RUTH WARDELL
MISSIONARY, N. HOLLYWOOD

growing communities with thousands of Jewish folk moving here.

God is greatly using the ABMJ's North Hollywood Center in the San Fernando Valley. The Center consists of two adjoining stores; one store is used for meetings and the other for classrooms and office. Pastors and many Gentile believers consider our Center a "must" for literature and counsel on effectively sharing Messiah with Jewish friends and relatives.

Both stores receive a lot of attention from a variety of folks

because we are highly visible. Many Jewish people have even come to know the Lord as a result of observing the buildings' signs, like Sally Berendt who is now our office receptionist. One woman from a Reform Jewish background writes:

"Some months back I was sitting in the Burger King, when I saw the sign "Beth Sar Shalom" across the street. Something made me cross over and go inside.

"I asked some questions and I was amazed. They were interested in me — a total stranger." ▶

- CHILDREN'S CLASSES
- LADIES CLASSES
- CAMPUS
- MONTHLY MEETING
- WEEKLY MEETING
- CONVALESCENT MINISTRIES



Sally Berendt



Fred Emery



Maddy Goldberg

After experiencing the love of God through the warm fellowship of the North Hollywood Center, this woman, after a lifetime of searching, from Zen to Spiritualism, found her Messiah! "I feel secure in Jesus," she continues, "and in my new found friends at Beth Sar Shalom."

We praise the Lord for a testimony like this, for He has carefully built a work here and lovingly hand-picked a staff that knows how to share with the hundreds upon hundreds of Jewish people who have passed through these doors. Some come in out of curiosity, others

want a good debate and some show genuine interest.

We conduct Hebrew and Bible classes for children and adults. Many of these people come to view the Center as a home away from home, a place where they can come to share their happiness as well as their troubles. The North Hollywood Center also has a lending library. People can sign books out just like a regular library. We usually have an excellent opportunity to witness when the people return the books.

Being highly visible also brings problems. Our windows are ▶

cont'd, bottom pg. 9

"Many people come to view the Center as a home away from home, a place where they can come to share their happiness as well as their troubles."



Wherever two or three are gathered . . .

San Fernando Valley: FRED EMERY

"There is no doubt God has been using our meetings. For several months a Jewish couple, Sam and Shirley, regularly drove many miles from West Los Angeles through the peak of the weekly rush hour traffic just to come to our meetings. Early this year they accepted Jesus as their Messiah. Art, another Jewish man, has attended almost every week for a year. His wife, Audrey, who is a believer, has told us how he even turned down a dinner invitation recently, because he would have had to miss our meeting. Praise the Lord for this seeking individual!"

Area 4 on map

San Fernando Valley: MADDY GOLDBERG

"We have had a marvelous Jewish Sunday School for several years here using the facilities of a local church. We have seen many people, especially new Jewish believers, filter through and become members of local churches. The children are taught their Jewish heritage along with New Testament truths. We praise the Lord that we've been able to provide a stepping stone for those seeking a relationship with the One True God.

"We also have three convalescent home ministries, where we sing and share His love with these dear folk who for the most part have really been forgotten."

Area 4 on map

North Hollywood: SALLY BERENDT, Receptionist

"The Beth Sar Shalom Center is located in the middle of an active Jewish community—a community that we have a good rapport with. The window displays set up by Mary and Ray Brummel always attract people. Our sign over the Center telling people we believe in Moses, the Prophets and Jesus the Messiah, has literally stopped traffic causing people to come in and ask questions about what we believe. How can we, as Jews, they ask, believe in Jesus? It's exciting to explain!"

Area 4 on map

San Gabriel Valley: SANDY WINGATE

"East of Los Angeles, the San Gabriel Valley is a melting pot of ethnic groups nestled in dozens of small towns. The Jewish community, an estimated 25,000, is smaller than other parts of greater Los Angeles.

"A year-and-a-half ago the Lord directed me to move out to the San Gabriel Valley to reach His chosen ones. Already our Beth Sar Shalom chapter meets once-a-month in Covina for a fellowship outreach meeting. Every week two classes are held in my home in El Monte. As a relatively new work we're really seeking the Lord's guidance in knowing the best way to reach our Jewish brethren here, many scattered and assimilated; the majority non-observant. Continue to hold the San Gabriel Valley up in prayer for we know God has begun to do great things here."

Area 1 on map

Orange County: ALTHEA and ROBERT MILLER

"Once a month our work also takes us to Palm Springs, California, famous for its weather, residents and tourists. We go there to minister to as many Jewish residents and tourists as we possibly can. The program is simple and informative, featuring an Old Testament oriented Bible study and/or a good film about the Jewish people.

"For the past year we have been reaching more Jewish people than ever before! During our first couple of years in Palm Springs we met in a private home, now for the last three years we've been meeting in the community room of a local bank which has really enlarged the scope of our ministry.

"Many Jewish folks on holiday in Palm Springs read about our program in the local newspaper and decide to check out the Friday evening service. They come with varying degrees of interest and friendliness. Some are reluctant to talk or to say anything about their own interests. Others almost dare us to convince them. (They don't realize that's not our responsibility. The Holy Spirit assumes this task!) And some are a bit hostile.

"Whatever the response on the part of these dear Jewish people, we know that many are hearing, perhaps for the first time, that Messiah Jesus died for them. As they return to their homes we follow them with prayer that our Father will send some concerned believers across their path.

"Most of the witness time is at the close of the program when, while "nosh-ing" refreshments we answer questions from individuals who will not speak out publicly, tell them who we are, and more importantly, Who Jesus Christ is."

Area 2 on map

► sometimes broken or words are spray-painted on our building. As I write this, we are in the middle of a week when we have been warned that we will be bombed some night. But we pray for God's protection as we praise Him for His manifold blessings.

As for the Jewish community in the San Fernando Valley, we can describe it in three ways: relatively young, well-educated and secularized. Fortunately the Lord has raised up extremely effective people like Fred Emery (*La Crescenta*). We also praise the Lord for Ken & Ruth Hammer

who both share a burden for reaching God's Chosen People and assisting Fred in his work. Pray for the Hammers, Dr. Vera Schlamm, Edith Levine and *all* our workers that God may use them in drawing the many Jewish people in this area to Himself.

cont'd. on pg. 10

Sandy Wingate



Althea and Robert Miller



N. Hollywood storefronts.

"... we know that many (Jewish people) are hearing perhaps for the first time, that Messiah Jesus died for them."

Dreidle-spinning during Chanukkah program.



Bill and Edith Freeman

cont'd. from pg. 9

Bearing fruit in the young secular and educated field of Los Angeles are two fine young men, Louis Lapidés and Bill Katin. In addition to regular missionary work, both are working on their doctorates. Louis has much to offer all our areas in his teaching ministry, while Bill has worked hard and successfully at opening up a ministry among professional people. (See *Chosen People*, April 1978.)

Also part of our team in the Greater Los Angeles ministry is Dorothy Wilkerson, Santa Barbara. Dorothy has faithfully carried on monthly meetings with many fine results.

A quarter of a million Jewish people reside in the large section of the map known as West Los Angeles (#3 on the map). The Freemans, Bill and Edith have recently moved there and are currently developing a music ministry. Two of our newer workers in California, Bill and Edith have been leading the work in West Los Angeles since May '78.

Both are well prepared for the demands of such work. Bill was a pastor in the northwest for five years and Edith is a completed Jew

raised in an Orthodox Brooklyn, N.Y. home. As they serve in this challenging field, the Freemans are realizing the precious opportunities of counselling and discipling new Gentile and Jewish believers. Mrs. Sally Miller has graciously opened her Santa Monica home for the Freemans' fellowship meetings.

Orange County's 50,000 Jewish brethren continue to hear the Gospel under the able Millers. Both Robert and Althea knew the founder of our mission, Leopold Cohn. How wonderful to see their faithfulness to the ABMJ for so many years. Their ministry shows great growth in the area of reaching many Jewish people for their Messiah.

Chris and Trudy Sherbourne also help the Freemans by hosting a monthly prayer meeting in their home. Trudy continues to teach a ladies Bible Study in Kitty Elliot's home.

The Millers also journey west to minister in Palm Springs, a famous vacation resort. Key team members like Mr. and Mrs. Gale Beals, Mr. and Mrs. Dick Craig, and Mrs. Wm. Ford live in Palm Springs and make excellent contacts for us. It's exciting to see how God blesses team work!

As I look at the map and realize all the blessings and happenings in the Los Angeles area I raise my heart to God with a great volume of thanksgiving for the faithfulness of each staff member and volunteer. Praise God with us for answered prayer and ask for a great outpouring of His gracious Spirit on each of these ministries.

West Los Angeles: BILL and EDITH FREEMAN

"Our West Los Angeles evening meetings usually begin with Jewish singing. This is followed by prophetic Scripture memorization from the Old Testament. The main program may include a Bible study, a concert, a film, or a testimony. Then we finish with prayer, refreshments and fellowship. Our aim of course is to always reach Jewish people who have never heard the Gospel.

"The long, temperate summer in southern California when multitudes flock to the crowded beaches, also presents itself as a great opportunity to meet and share the Holy Scriptures with Jew and Gentile alike. My husband and I covet your prayers that God will continue to bless and enlarge the Ladies' Bible study, our monthly meetings, the UCL.A and Santa Monica City College campus ministries and street evangelism. Join with us in our prayer that one Jewish person will receive the Lord each month."

Area 3 on map



by **KATHERINE SNYDER**

I was born to Jewish parents in Brooklyn, N.Y. My parents believed in God, but did not go to temple regularly. I grew up not quite knowing what it meant to be Jewish or what it was like having a strong faith in God.

In my early teens, I felt an awakening in my social conscience and joined the civil rights movement. I sincerely believed at that point, that if we all worked hard enough towards a peaceful world, we could make it happen. I sang, "We Shall Overcome," in the U. N. Plaza with lots of other young people, until I was blue in the face. But we did not overcome at all.

I left the world of politics some years later when the peace movement became violent in reaction to the Viet Nam War. I was then left to face an inner emptiness that had been previously masked by political involvement. What now? I was attending City College of New York at the time, but my studies seemed more and more meaningless. I mean, where could I go majoring in philosophy?

I left college and worked as a secretary; I returned to college and left again. Finally, I moved to California, hoping to find some answers to what felt like a useless existence. I fell into a hippie life style.

I thought my loneliness and ache inside could be filled by traveling. So I traveled for two years in Europe. I worked with emotionally disturbed children for awhile in Scotland, and decided to return to the U.S. for further training. I was tired of drifting and counterfeit spirituality.

I returned to the U.S. and in 1974, entered Sonoma State College in California to work toward my teaching certification. During my first days back in school, I fractured my leg in a bicycle accident.

While I was in the hospital, a young lady came over to me and asked me if I knew Jesus as my personal Savior. I answered her in a huffy manner, and said, "Of course." Anything to be left alone. She continued on and asked me what church I attended at that time. I replied that I did not attend any church, since I was Jewish. I thought that would fix her wago!

Instead of being put off, she replied sweetly, "Praise the Lord! So am I." Now I looked at her in amazement. I would have walked off, but as the old saying goes, I did not have a leg to stand on. Unfortunately, I was not saved at that time, but it did plant

a big seed in my heart.

A year later, some of my friends announced at a local diet club meeting that they had made personal commitments to Christ. There it was again, that personal stuff about Jesus. I was really drawn, but I feared that it might be just another "trip."

I decided to go however to their church, just to check it out and get the idea out of my mind. What a surprise! It was a very real and moving experience for me. I wept openly at the service. My friends were shocked.

A few days later, I prayed silently that God would show me if all this was real or an emotional jag. I turned on the TV at this point, and literally moments later, there was a Hebrew-Christian proclaiming that it was the time for Jews to come to Christ, and that God chose a particular moment to make an alliance with each soul, and it could be my moment.

It was too much — even for hard-hearted Katherine. I knelt and gave my life to the Lord, right there in the living room. Later, I made a public confession at church, and was baptized on Yom Kippur 1975, to the rejoicing of many angels and a few friends (down here).

I am currently teaching sixth grade in El Paso, and praise God for His amazing grace.

Negev A Rich Mineral Source

The Negev which has been a desert for centuries is now believed to become not only, "one large, sprawling military base," but to a group of mineral scientists at the National Geological Institute it represents one of Israel's greatest mineral assets: a rich source of raw materials for building trades and road construction. Building supply minerals such as sand for concrete aggregate in the dunes of Halutza. The current supplies drawn from dunes around Caesarea will undoubtedly be used up by the next mid-century. Scientists have also found:

- Limestone in good-sized deposits for manufacture of Portland cement.
 - Intermediate chemical components for plaster of Paris and ceramics under the soil surface at Machtsh Ramon.
 - Glass sand — a highly pure variety for glass making — concentrated in the northeast sector.
 - Porcelainite, of which large deposits have been sighted, can be used as an ingredient for cement.
- Copper and Iron both valuable and much needed are also known to be present. The Negev is about to bloom — with rich minerals.



SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

by DR. CHARLES L. FEINBERG

CHAPTER XIV DROUGHT AND IMPENDING EXILE (1-22) cont'd. from Feb.

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

Verse 14 points out the four methods by which the false prophets practiced their deception. A thing of nought (futility) may mean an idol (cf. 2:5). God's retribution on the lying prophets for misleading the people will be their endurance of the very punishment they would not predict.

God points out to Jeremiah that the wickedness of the nation made them a ready prey to the false prophets. They are responsible for their own wickedness. Their guilt is emphasized here, because they should have known of God's punishment on sin and not believed the false seers. The reason the judgment of the nation is dwelt on more than that of the prophets is because the people were deceived by their own consent.

5. The grief of Jeremiah (17-18)

17-18 The prophet is to show the hardened nation the grief he experiences in viewing their coming ruin. The grief is over both war and famine. The calamity here is a critical war. Jeremiah cannot view their distress unfeelingly (cf. 9:18; 13:17). Judah is called "the virgin daughter of my people," because she had been jealously kept from the idolatrous nations, as virgins are guarded in an Oriental household. Now the prophet describes the conditions in the land after Jerusalem's fall. The blame is still attributed to the false prophet and godless priest, who have to be exiled to a foreign, unfamiliar land.

The verb in verse 18, which is translated "to go about, travel about," has the sense of trading. In

"God points out to Jeremiah that the wickedness of the nation made them a ready prey to the false prophets. They are responsible for their own wickedness."

modern Hebrew it means "to go about as a merchant." In the Syriac it denotes "to go about as a beggar, be a beggar." In what sense is the passage here to be understood? The renderings vary. The Revised Standard Version prefers the sense of plying a trade as a merchant (cf. Gen. 34:10, 21; 42:34), reading "both prophet and priest ply their trade through the land." The concept appears to be that they traffic as usual in spite of the people's distress.

The King James Version, The American Standard Version, the Jewish Publication Society, and the New American Standard Bible (with its text, "gone roving about," and its margin, "gone around trading") render substantially the same; "go about in the land." A freer translation which has been suggested is "they wandered off to a land with which they were unfamiliar." Jerusalem Bible renders "even prophets and priests plough the land; they are at their wit's end," a translation difficult to defend on many grounds. American Translation and New English Bible are substantially alike, "go begging round the land." The Hebrew edition of the text suggests in the margin, "have been dragged to a land they know not" (cf. 15:3). But there is no textual or manuscript authority for this conjecture. It seems best to adhere to the KJV, ASV, and NASB rendering.

6. Prayer of Confession and Plea for help (19-22)

19-22 In these last verses there is further lament of the people and appeal for divine aid. The nation pleads its own case with God. There is intense questioning with greater concern. They cannot believe that God has irretrievably cast them off. Now they freely admit that all their hopes and prospects have been blasted. They also admit the basis of their woes; their wickedness. How genuine it was time would tell.

They acknowledge sinfulness of their ancestors also. In desperation they plead three reasons for God to help them in spite of their sins: (1) His reputation in the earth; (2) His temple; and (3) His covenant. The throne of God's glory is Zion, especially the temple (cf. 2 Kings 19:15; Psa. 99:1). With the drought distress still in mind they declare their belief that neither idols nor the heavens by themselves can give rain. In this area only God is able. The Lord alone can end their trials, and they expect His help from their difficulties. The Talmud records: "Three keys have not been entrusted to an agent (but are kept in God's hand): the keys of birth, rain, and resurrection" (Sanh. 113a).

The Personal Word

In portions of the book where Jeremiah lays bare his heart and interacts with the agonies of that

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desperate hour, there is no more forceful, stirring, and poignant disclosure in the Word of God. The autobiographical sections are never meant to magnify the person of the prophet, but rather they reveal unparalleled love for the nation and unexcelled zeal for the glory of the Lord, come what may. No prophet in Israel could view a disastrous drought without being moved to his depths over the agony caused to man and animal. Yet he could only rejoice that it led the nation in some measure to turn to the Lord in confession of guilt.

As the psalmist admitted, before he was afflicted he went astray; but the afflictions were used of God to turn him back to fellowship. Throughout the Scriptures, and nowhere more clearly than in this book, God clearly reveals that in a moral universe the physical (here drought) cannot be divorced from the spiritual. But any repentance must be genuine, for the Lord is not interested in their adding to already heartless rites another consisting of hypocritical penitence.

"God refuses to avert the judgment of His people. The determination of the Lord to punish them is irreversible. For that reason . . . intercession cannot succeed."

And to add to all the tensions there was the emergence of false prophets in great numbers. Ages of confusion and departure from the Lord always witness an efflorescence of the spurious. Witness our day with its incredible rise of false prophets, false teachers, and false religions. What a scourge for those who will not heed the simple truth!

The prophet, true to God and His Word, realizes that God cannot compromise with sin, but at the same time he must grieve over the destruction wrought by wickedness in the midst of the nation. How parallel to Jeremiah's day is our own! It is a matchless hour to call Israel to her God. Verily, we have been brought to this hour of world history for this very purpose.

Chapter XV
Impending Judgment and
Jeremiah's Complaint (1-21)

The first four verses of this chapter are treated by many writers as linked to chapter 14. The chapter break may be disregarded, because it does not help in the understanding of the portion. The tempo in this chapter seems to take on an added dimension as the exile is elaborated on. In fact, Jeremiah may be said to plumb the depths of despair, leading him to make certain comments which are rebuked by the Lord.

1. Prayer unavailing for Judah (1)

1 God refuses to avert the judgment of His people. The determination of the Lord to punish them is irreversible. For that reason the continued intercession of Jeremiah, or that of any other intercessors for Israel, cannot succeed. Their incorrigibility has placed them beyond the power of prayer. Moses and Samuel, exemplary intercessors for Israel, could not move God from His decision. Cf. for Moses, Exod. 32:11-14, 30-34; Num. 14:13-19; Deut. 9:18-20, 25-29; for Samuel, I Sam. 7:5-9; 12:19-25; see also Psa. 99:6-8. The Lord commands that the nation be sent from His presence. He cannot abide them in His presence; He does not want Jeremiah to keep reminding Him of them. To be sure, this final command is not to be taken as absolute and final, but rather conditional.

2. The punishment determined (2-9)

2-4 Should the nation ask in fear or mockery, where they were to go, the answer is that each will proceed to the punishment allotted him by God. If they think it is only to banishment, they are sadly mistaken. It is to death by disease (cf. 14:12), warfare, famine, and exile. Now the doom is stated more explicitly. As though the judgment of verse 2 were insufficient, these four kinds (lit. families, i.e., classes of things) will do their destructive work too. The first destroys the living; the other three mutilate and consume the dead.

For the corpse of a Jew to be dragged on the ground, then to furnish carrion for bird and beast, was too horrendous for an Israelite to contemplate. It was the ultimate in dishonor to the dead. It has been suggested that the symbolism (v. 3) has been carried over into Revelation 6:1-8. When the Lord refers to making them an object of horror to all

the kingdoms of the earth, He evidently has in view more than just that generation. Manasseh's sin is presented as the procuring cause of Judah's captivity, not in the sense that they were suffering for his sins. He had contributed to the moral tone of the nation, but they had imitated his ways, when he introduced unashamed idolatry in Israel. Cf. 2 Kings 21:3-7, 10-15; 23:26, 27; 24:3, 4.

5-9 No one will pity Israel when the Lord forsakes her. She will be left desolate without any taking notice. These conditions could be the result of one of the previous Babylonian invasions of the land. Because they had repeatedly rejected the Lord and His worship by going backward into apostasy, the patience of God is at last exhausted. He is weary of relenting in His purpose to punish. Only destruction remains. As a farmer winnows the wheat to remove the chaff, so God will disperse them from their cities. Loss of children and decimation will overtake them. And the cause of God's weariness is that they would not repent in truth.

cont'd next month

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

by DR. HENRY J. HEYDT

Peace and the Messianic hope.

QUESTION: Do the Jews of today give any expression in their prayers of the Messianic hope?

ANSWER: This hope is definitely expressed. The following quotations are taken from the *Authorized Daily Prayer Book* with notes by the Late Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, Joseph H. Hertz. **MORNING SERVICE: XIV Benediction:** "And to Jerusalem, thy city, return in mercy and dwell therein as thou hast spoken; rebuild it soon in our days as an everlasting building, and speedily set up therein the throne of David. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who rebuildest Jerusalem.

"Speedily cause the offspring of David, thy servant, to flourish, and lift up his glory by thy divine help because we wait for thy salvation all the day . . . Note: In that New Jerusalem, the Messianic King would establish his throne. Throughout the days of the Second Temple, this feeling prevailed, and it grew in intensity during the tyranny of the Herods . . ." pages 145, 147.

MORNING SERVICE: XVII Benediction, page 149: "Our God and God of our Fathers! May our remembrance ascend, come and be acceptable before thee, with the remembrance of our fathers, of the Messiah the son of David thy servant, of Jerusalem thy holy city, and of all thy people the house of Israel . . ." (Repeated during the services for the New Year, page 853.)

SERVICE FOR THE NEW YEAR, page 849: "Give then glory, O Lord, unto thy people, praise to them that revere thee, hope to them that seek thee, and confidence to them that wait for thee, joy to thy land, gladness to thy city, a flowering of strength unto David thy servant, and a clear shining light unto the son of Jesse, thine anointed, speedily in our days."

Note on **THE SHOFAR, page 865:** "8. The Prophets picture the Reunion of Israel's scattered children as to be ushered in by the sounding of the Shofar. And they speak of the Shofar of the Messiah that shall inaugurate the time when all tiger-passions in the human breast shall have been tamed, and peace reign on earth; when 'the knowledge of God shall fill the earth, as the waters cover the bed of the ocean' (Isa. 11:9). And in the poetic conception of our later Teachers, it was the sound of the Great Shofar that will on the Last Day rend open the graves and cause the dead to rise. Thus, the Messianic Hope, Resurrection and Immortality of the soul are intertwined with the message of the Shofar."

QUESTION: The word "peace" is used so lightly today. Would the meaning of the Greek word for this give us a deeper understanding of its true significance?

ANSWER: The meaning of the Greek word for "peace" will help us primarily in our understanding of its use in the New Testament, and it will also be seen to underlie the various uses of the word through the centuries.

The basic significance of the Hebrew *Shalom* is "to be safe."

From this developed the various ideas of well-being, prosperity, health, and so forth. For this Hebrew word the Greek Old Testament uses *eirene*, the regular Greek word for "peace," with the same variety of applications.

For the derivation of *eirene* Strong's Exhaustive Concordance suggests *eiro*, "to join," a verb used in the New Testament. There is another *eiro* meaning "to say, speak, talk, tell" which is a rare form referred to *ero* (*ereo*). See the Greek-English Lexicon by Liddell and Scott. The Greek Old Testament uses this constantly under the forms *ero*, *eiro*, *ereo*, and *rheo*. See the Handy Concordance of the Septuagint, page 99 (S. Bagster and Sons). The New Testament uses both *ereo* and *rheo*. We have, therefore, two possible meanings under-lying the Greek word for "peace," the one "to join to" and the other "to speak to." Both of these can be traced in the various ways the word "peace" is used.

We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and He is our peace as well. Thus joined together with Him we are also united with the Father and have fellowship with the Father and the Son (1 Jn. 1:3) and with the Spirit (Phil. 2:1). This peace was made through the blood of His cross (Col. 1:20) and results in both the assurance of our salvation and our access to the throne of grace. New Testament peace will take on a new dimension for us if we study the subject with these two concepts in mind.

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

Extending Your Influence

by WESLEY J. A. JONES
Stewardship Director

THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH that all the evil forces in the world cannot overcome the mission and work of the Church. Further, the experience of history clearly illustrates that the institutions related to the Church's mission have renewed themselves and persisted from generation to generation.

But people do not endure! The psalmist wrote, "The days of our years are threescore and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet...it is soon cut off and we fly away". However, the influence of one's life need not die. We can extend that influence beyond our lifetime through our estate plan, and we can do so by providing financial assistance for the continuing work and witness of Christ in the world.

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The fact that there will be peace for a time is also indicated in Ezekiel 38-39 when the great invasion from the north descends upon the land of Israel in a time which is described as a period when Israel is at peace. Inasmuch as Israel has not known peace since their formation as a nation in 1948, it would seem that such a peaceful situation as described in Ezekiel 38 and 39 as preceding the great conflict which follows must come as a result of some peace treaty, however poorly conceived and poorly fulfilled. Accordingly, putting these Scriptures together, it is evident that we have established a pattern. The final restoration, of course, awaits the second coming of Christ. It will be preceded by three and a half years of trouble and great tribulation for Israel. This period of trouble, however, will be preceded by a time of peace as Israel enters into a covenant relationship with this prince who shall come.

Dr. John F. Walvoord is President of Dallas Theological Seminary.

The Prophetic Significance of Israel's Present Restoration

In the light of God's program for Israel as outlined in the Scriptures, it becomes evident that Israel's present situation of being restored as a nation is a necessary preparation; for Israel could enter into a time of peace. In other words, whether it be conceded that this is prophetically significant or not, Israel would have to be found in a position precisely as they are found today in order to set the stage for the program of Israel's restoration as outlined in the Scriptures. To put this before us again in simple form, this program is (1) Israel's restoration as a nation and recognition as a political state; (2) Israel's peace treaty with a ruler in the Middle East; (3) Israel's time of trouble, a three-and-a-half-year period preceding the second coming of Christ; (4) Israel's complete restoration at the time of the second coming of Christ and their regathering to their ancient land.

cont'd next month

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