

the APRIL 1979

CHOSEN PEOPLE

" . . . and when I see the blood,
I will pass over you, . . . For even Christ
our passover is sacrificed for us . . . "

(Ex. 12:13, 1 Cor. 5:7)

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**An ancient feast
presents some
timely opportunities
for ABMJ's
Gospel witness.**

*In Israel, a Samaritan announces the beginning of Passover
with a blast of the ram's horn.*

Dearly Beloved Friends:
 "But now is Christ risen from the dead . . . the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:20).
 Israel's Passover was rich in type and symbol. The message of Christ in the Passover is a compelling testimony to the truth that "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."

Recently I spoke with Sid Stern, our Phoenix missionary. Last year he led our Phoenix branch in the celebration of the Passover Seder. After the service one of the audience came to him and said, "Now I know that Jesus is the Messiah!" This occurs frequently in our ministry.

In Biblical times part of the ceremonial of the Passover season was the presentation of the "Omer" or Sheaf of First Fruits to the Lord. While it was part of the celebration it was also a separate ceremony that took place later in the week.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it" (Lev. 23:9-11).

Observe that the sheaf of firstfruits was presented to the Lord "on the morrow after the sabbath." Although there is no question, that this "Sabbath" referred each year to the 15th of Nisan, no matter on which day of the week it fell, we should realize that in the week our Lord died for our sins, the 15th of Nisan was also the weekly Sabbath so that the "morrow after the Sabbath" was actually the first day of that week.

During Biblical times the presentation of the Omer was very elaborate:

"Already, on the 14th of Nisan, the spot whence the first sheaf was to be reaped had been marked out by delegates from the Sanhedrin, by tying together in bundles, while still standing, the barley that was to be cut down. . . . When the time for cutting the sheaf had arrived . . . just as the sun went down, three men, each with a sickle and basket, formally set to work. But in order clearly to bring out all that was distinctive in the ceremony, they first asked of the bystanders three times each of these questions: "Has the sun gone down?" "With this sickle?" "Into this basket?" "On this Sabbath (or first Passover-day)?"—and, lastly, "Shall I reap?" Having each time been answered in the affirmative, they cut down barley to the amount of one ephah, or ten omers, or three seahs, which is equal to about three pecks and three pints of our English measure. The ears were brought into the Court of the Temple, and thrashed out with canes or stalks, so as not to injure the corn; then "parched" on a pan perforated with holes, so that each grain might be touched by the fire, and finally exposed to the wind. The corn thus prepared was ground in a barley-mill, which left the hulls whole. . . . Though one ephah, or ten omers, of barley was cut down, only one omer of flour, or about 5.1 pints of our measure, was offered in the Temple on the second Paschal, or 16th day of Nisan."

Alfred Edersheim, The Temple, Its Ministry and Services, pp. 223, 224.

It was "on the morrow after the Sabbath" on the 16th of Nisan on the first day of the week when the omer of flour was being presented in the Temple that our Lord rose from the dead!



Is it any wonder that Paul used the Feast of Firstfruits as his climactic evidence to the fact that "now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept?" Is it any wonder that it is at the Passover when the Holy Spirit frequently opens the eyes of Jewish people so that they exclaim with our friend in Phoenix, "Now I know that Jesus is our Messiah"? It was on the 14th of Nisan that Christ, our Passover Lamb, was slain. It was then that the corn of wheat was sown into the ground that it might bear a glorious harvest. It was the third day after our Paschal Lamb was slain that our Lord rose again from the dead.

The Feast of Firstfruits not only assures us of our Lord's resurrection, it also abundantly reassures us of a



First Fruits: God's Pledge, Our Assurance



cognate truth that "... He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies..." (Rom. 8:11). I have frequently written that the word "first" is what the grammarians call a 'non-word,' a meaningless word unless there is at least a 'second' to follow the 'first.' Our passage richly asserts this truth.

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Cor. 15:20-23).

"Christ the firstfruits, afterward

they that are Christ's at his coming." How comforted we are to know this truth that "we too shall be raised!" There is a fuzzy theology making the rounds about the resurrection body. Professor Olin Curtis made the statement which should clarify our thinking in this matter. He said that "The body of the resurrection is nothing other than God's volitional repetition of the body of the grave—with splendid additions."

"We should ever keep in mind that the distinctive teaching of Christianity about the future is not that the soul is immortal. Paganism teaches that. It is, that there is a resurrection of the body. We are to be human beings in the world to come. A disembodied spirit is not a complete

human being. A human being consists of an embodied spirit. The body of the future will be the resurrection body. The new man in Christ is made complete only by the resurrection body.'

"... The question which we all ask, With what body will our departed come? we believe should be answered in terms which provide reply to this other question, namely, With what body did Jesus come from the grave? He is the first fruits. We shall be like Him when it is manifest what we shall be. Following as faithfully as possible this clue, we are clear already that the resurrection body is not the body reanimated. It is not a mere return to life in the same corruptible, weak, fleshly, natural body of the grave. His Easter body was not the natural body of the grave. Ours will not be. Paul makes this very clear in his great chapter on the resurrection—I Corinthians, fifteenth. He tells us that we sow not the body that shall be, when we sow wheat or oats or barley. But we sow bare grain, and in the strange, mysterious new life which succeeds death, God gives it a body as it pleases Him, to each seed its own body."

Wilbert W. White, The Resurrection Body, pp. 15, 18, 19.

"The firstfruits of them that slept" is the pledge and prophecy that just as our Lord rose from the dead there will be a complete harvest, the waving abundance of golden grain, "afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Firstfruits assures us of the complete Gospel which we preach to all men everywhere, "to the Jew first, and also the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).

Faithfully yours in His service,

Daniel Fuchs

Dr. Daniel Fuchs



FROM THE PRESIDENT

REV. HAROLD A. SEVENER

Happy New Year.

A strange greeting for the month of April? Not really. According to the Word of God, in the month when Passover is celebrated, that month is to be the beginning of months (cf. Exodus 12:2). Passover is to begin the new year—the spiritual year for the Jewish nation. It begins an exodus from bondage into freedom; an exodus from slavery to salvation.

In God's sacred calendar of redemption, recorded in Leviticus 23, there are seven major feasts that Israel was to keep: (1) Passover; (2) Unleavened Bread; (3) First Fruits; (4) Pentecost (Shavuus); (5) Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah); (6) Atonement (Yom Kippur); and (7) Tabernacles (Sukkot).

Each of these feasts form a portrait of God's redemptive work through His Messiah, the Lord Jesus. Passover, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits speak of His death, burial and resurrection (cf. 1 Cor. 5:7; 1 Cor. 15:20). Pentecost, His unique program through the Church: the Body of Christ (cf. Acts 2:1-4). Trumpets, Atonement; Tabernacles, His Return, the Tribulation and the establishment of His Kingdom (cf. 1 Cor. 15:51-58; 1 Thes. 4:16, 17; Acts 15:16, 17, Rev. 19:11-18; Rev. 20:4, 21:3).

The Scriptures indicate that during the ministry of Jesus He only kept the Feast of Passover (cf. Lk. 22:8). Scripture is careful to point out that the particular Passover which would symbolize Jesus' death,

burial and resurrection was the only Passover that Jesus would keep in this way with His disciples (cf. John 2:13, 23-25).

The Word having become flesh was fully aware of the prophetic events revealed in Israel's sacred calendar of redemption. This is made clear by the fact that while Jesus attended the Festival of Tabernacles, He did not keep the Feast that would symbolize the millennial reign of the Messiah. When His disciples pressed Him to go up to Jerusalem to keep the Festival of Tabernacles (cf. John 7:2, 3), Jesus' response is most interesting. He said, "Go ye up unto this feast. I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet fully come" (cf. John 7:8).

Scripture does indicate that on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, when traditionally the prayer for rain was given, that Jesus was there and cried out, saying "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (cf. John 7:37-38).

As the parched land needed rain to bring forth fruit and life, so also Israel needed the Living Waters of God's Son to quench their spiritual thirst and to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. (cf. Matt. 3:8). Thus Jesus, knowing full well the symbolism of Israel's holidays, used them wisely to vividly teach of God's redemptive grace through Himself.

The symbolism between Passover and the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus is remarkable. Notice the similarity: (1) at Passover a lamb was killed and its blood was used to save the first born son (cf. Ex. 12:12, 13). Jesus is called the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world (cf. John 1:29), and through His blood we become

by faith the first-born out from among the dead (cf. Heb. 12:22-24). (2) The lamb was to be kept on exhibition for 3½ days to see if it was without spot or blemish (cf. Ex. 12:1-6). The Lord Jesus was on exhibition for 3½ years and no fault could be found with him (cf. Lk. 23:13-15).

Even in the Passover service itself, the symbolism is most striking: (1) all leaven is to be removed from the home. It is the feast of unleavened bread (cf. Ex. 12:8; Lev. 23:5, 6). Leaven in Scripture is always a symbol of sin. In keeping the Lord's Passover we are admonished to search out the leaven or sin in our lives before eating of it (cf. 1 Cor. 5:7-8; 11:27-32). (2) According to Jewish tradition, three pieces of unleavened bread (matzoh) are to be used.

The middle piece is to be broken, wrapped in a linen napkin, and hid away during the pouring of three cups of wine. At the third cup of wine, the broken piece—wrapped in a white linen napkin, is brought back and eaten. The third cup of wine, which is poured after the supper, is called the Cup of Redemption.

Jesus, our Passover, sacrificed for us, was wrapped in a white linen tunic, and lay in the grave for three days. On the third day He arose, triumphant over death.

In Jewish literature, the piece of unleavened bread which is brought back and eaten, is entitled the "Afikomen". Literally translated it means, "I have come." It is to this piece of matzoh and to this third cup of wine that Jesus refers in Luke 22:19 and 20, saying "This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.'"

Notice that Jesus said "This is my body which is *given* for you," not *broken* for you. The Passover lamb was to be sacrificed and eaten whole with no bones broken (cf. Numbers 9:12). The soldiers pierced the side of Jesus, rather than breaking His legs as was customary in death by crucifixion. John tells us "for these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken" John 19:36.

We don't remember the broken body of the Lord Jesus; on the contrary we remember the Son that was given. The Lord Jesus sacrificed His body on our behalf (cf. Hebrews 10:5-10). He is the Passover Lamb.

Jesus Our Passover Sacrifice

This remarkable service of Passover will be shared with thousands of Jewish people by our missionaries this month. They will be retelling the story of Passover and relating it to the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Last year over 3,000 Jewish people attended the various Passover services held by the missionaries of the ABMJ. Many Jewish people, for the first time, heard the Gospel. Some came to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Perhaps you would like to have us present a Passover service in your church or in your community. Write to us and let us know, and we would be more than happy to make arrangements for one of our missionaries to come and to present Christ in the Passover.

There are two other striking similarities which make Passover unique:

(1) **Passover was to be the beginning of months.** The beginning of a spiritual calendar for the people of Israel. For those who have accepted the Lord Jesus as a Passover lamb, they too began a spiritual new year, for Scripture declares that those who place their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus have become a new creation. "Behold all things have become new" (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17).

(2) **Passover is a family celebration.** It is to be celebrated by the family together (cf. Ex. 12:3, 4). Jesus called apart His disciples from their earthly families to keep the Passover with Him (cf. Luke 22:11). He demonstrated that in His Passover a new family would be created; a family of faith composed of all who believe in Him as the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.

This family, uniquely composed of Jew and Gentile alike, who by faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus are a part of the new family of God, is in reality the chosen people family.

Please continue to pray for us and for the many hundreds and thousands of Jewish families, this year, who will hear the Gospel through the Passover. Pray that by faith they, too, will become members with us of God's chosen people family.



“Even as you read this, missionaries are presenting the Gospel through the uniquely Jewish Passover”

by **REV. RICHARD COHEN**
Missionary Director

THE ANCIENT FEAST OF PASSOVER commemorates God freeing His Chosen People from Egyptian bondage nearly 3,500 years ago. Today our missionaries have been able to present this ancient feast to literally thousands of Jewish people as a prophetic illustration of the coming of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the *true* salvation that He offers.

Several months before Passover (Pesach) our staff is busy preparing for Passover banquets in cities where many Jewish brethren reside. Local churches join us in this remarkable task. The ball gets rolling when a pastor decides to have the banquet and reserves a hall or church facility. Then a ladies' committee is formed in each church to co-ordinate and prepare for the Seder.

Do's and Don'ts

A month before the banquets are given these ladies meet together. Our

workers take them step-by-step through the art of Jewish cooking. They also explain the do's and don'ts of the dietary laws pertaining to Passover.

By this time things are well under way! Church members and missionaries are working together, inviting friends and neighbors to the upcoming feast. As Passover approaches our missionaries begin to pray for an experience that both Jewish and Christian people will find unique and spiritually fulfilling.

Last year I enjoyed an intimate involvement with many of the banquets given in the Western part of the country. In Fresno, California, a high percentage of the participants were unsaved Jewish people. Their enthusiastic involvement was a joy to behold! What a wonderful opportunity to share the redemptive message of their Messiah Who had already come, died for their sins, rose again, and now offered them a personal relationship with God.

“Never Felt More Jewish”

One gentleman, the president of the local synagogue, said he never felt more Jewish and thanked me for sharing the Gospel message with him. In Portland, Oregon, almost 200 people similarly responded; noting the vivid foreshadowing of Jesus' work in the type and symbols of the Passover.

These stories were repeated in Seattle, Las Vegas and Santa Barbara, California. In the San Fernando Valley area of Los Angeles, over 300 people joined in the Passover celebration. Christians sat alongside their Jewish neighbors, fellowshiping and enjoying each other's company.

While our Jewish congregants read from the Haggadah (instruction manual) their Christian friends would



lean over and explain in fuller detail the portions of this ancient service pertaining to Messiah. Conversely, the Jewish participants would lean over to their Christian friends and share those portions of the Seder that related to the traditional Jewish experience of Passover. At the end of the evening, Jesus had become Lord and Savior of many there.



COMMENTARY ON WORLD EVENTS

Dr. John F. Walvoord

THE PROPHETIC SIGNIFICANCE OF ISRAEL'S PRESENT RESTORATION

continued from March '79 Chosen People

In the light of the program of God which indicates prophetically that stages two, three, and four are still future, the fact that stage one is already a historical fact gives it unusual prophetic significance. Certainly there is no indication that God ever hesitates when He deals with Israel. While it is true that when He brought them back from Egypt to the promised land they wandered for forty years, there was no return to Egypt. While God disciplined them for their lack of faith, His purpose was sure and He fulfilled His promise of giving them a portion of the land. The same thing is true of the return of Israel after the Babylonian and Assyrian captivities. Although only 50,000 went back on the first return, and although they were slow in restoring the nation as a whole, God's purpose was sure. There was no turning back to Assyria or Babylon once the regathering had begun. Although it took them twenty years to build the temple and another seventy years before the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt and another fifty years after that before the city was fully restored, there was no turning back. God, once having undertaken to bring them back to the land, fulfilled His promise.

Under these circumstances, it is almost unthinkable that God would go to the extent of returning Israel to their promised land after all these many centuries of wandering and establish them so strongly as a nation politically, economically, and militarily and bring them back such large numbers so that 3,000,000 are now located in the land. To attempt to describe this as purely a passing incident in the history of Israel which has no significance, simply does not harmonize with the pattern of God's dealings with Israel in the past. While Israel has had its ups and downs, it has always followed precisely the pattern of Scripture. There is no indication that when the third regathering, which is the present regathering of Israel, was once begun, there would be any turning back, any hesitation, or any stuttering in God's fulfillment of His plan.

Accordingly, many careful students of prophecy believe that what we are seeing today is stage one in Israel's restoration and that the pattern will follow its predicted course of a peace treaty observed for only three and a half years, but giving Israel a temporary respite from trouble and war. This time of peace will be followed by a terrible time of purging and perse-

cution. This will be climaxed by the second coming of Christ, the rescue of the nation Israel, and the reestablishment of Israel in its fully restored form in His kingdom on earth.

As we today are observing what amounts to a holding pattern where there is a little progress beyond the establishment of Israel as a nation, the question may fairly be asked, when will stage two come?

Many Christians believe that the rapture of the church is the next event. Their reasoning for this is that the Scriptures seem to indicate that the prince who is to make the covenant with Israel is to be identified with the lawless one of 2 Thessalonians 2. According to 2 Thessalonians 2, this lawless one will not be revealed until that which is restraining the full judgment of God in the day of the Lord breaks forth. That which is restraining evil is perhaps again a matter of controversy among scholars. But obviously the ultimate restrainer is God Himself, and the presence of the church in the world indwelt by the Triune God constitutes an obstacle to God's bringing to bear upon the earth His full judgment.

This has been illustrated many times in the past, as in the case of Noah, as in the time of Sodom and Gomorrah, and many other periods where God had to remove those who were true to Him before the full force of His judgment could fall upon the wicked world. According to 2 Thessalonians 2, the lawless one will be revealed only when that which restrains the manifestation of sin in the world is removed. If this is the church indwelt by the Spirit, as many scholars believe, then the rapture is the next step in the prophetic program, and stage two, the peace stage described in the Bible, will not come until the church is taken home to glory.

continued in May '79 Chosen People

free, release," or from "to establish, strengthen." Taking into account the context in which the prophet in his despair of life needs undergirding to go on with his ministry, the preferable translation would be that of strengthening him for good, that is, with the objective of his accomplishing the good he has been called to perform.

4. The inevitable Judgment (12-14)

12-14 This portion is clearly predicting the exile, but verse 12 is difficult, so that some claim it is a gloss. Brass, an alloy of copper and zinc, was not known to the ancients. Bronze is an alloy of copper and tin. Unusually hard iron was available from the Black Sea region; it was probably that of Chalybes of Pontus on the coast of the Euxine. It was famous for being harder than all others, like steel. What is the purpose of the question here? The sense is that as little as men can break iron, Judah will not be able to sustain an attack from the power in the north, the Chaldeans. The query demands a negative answer. Because Israel will not be able to withstand the northern enemy, her wealth and treasures will be freely carried off by the adversary. God's wrath against their sin will not be satisfied until all is plundered and taken to Babylon.

According to some scholars the first Hebrew verb in verse 14, which has been translated "and I will make to pass over," is probably a corruption for the verb meaning "I will make you serve." The Revised Standard Version follows this textural change. This brings it into harmony with a parallel passage in 17:4; also, there are some twenty-seven manuscripts that have this reading. Either reading would give an acceptable text. A word of caution is in order, however, regarding claims of a corrupt text. This must be done only on good grounds, lest it become a gateway for free emendation, from which the Old Testament has suffered at the hands of well-meaning scholars.

5. Jeremiah's charge against God (15-18)

15-18 The prophet pleads for God's help on the basis of his loyalty to the will of the Lord. Verse 15 is connected in thought with verse 10. He prays that vengeance will be meted

out by God who has been opposed in the person of His prophet. He desires that the Lord's vengeance may not be deferred, because of His patience with Jeremiah's enemies, until the prophet is one. He wants vindication in this life (cf. Job). Future life was an uncertain quantity to Old Testament saints, because not yet clearly revealed by God. In effect, he is pleading that God will not be so lenient with his persecutors that they have time to destroy him.

The prophet now recalls his first reception of God's message and how he made it his own. For a similar figure see Ezekiel 2:8-3:3 and Revelation 10:9, 10. It is a symbolic representation of assimilation of God's revealed truth. Jeremiah was in every sense of the word a chosen servant of God, commissioned by Him. His chief delight was in the Word of God.

He tells of his loneliness in the midst of his people. Because he sided with God, he was cut off from the joys of those about him. He was filled with God's indignation against their sin. It pained him greatly to be out of step with his contemporaries. The hand of God was upon him, and the constraint of God's truth was on his spirit. For the sake of the ministry he gave up normal pleasures and social outlets.

In verse 18 the rhetorical question seems to indicate that for the moment Jeremiah gave way to despair. He was so deeply and continuously wounded that he wanted to know if God had left him and proved unreliable! After all, his own family had been traitorous to him. The deceptive brook referred to (cf. Job 6:15-20) was a familiar figure to all his readers.

In Palestine many brooks have water only after a drenching rainfall. At other times a traveler may be disappointed if he goes looking for water (contrast 2:13). In his extreme distraught condition he charged God with failure to fulfill His promises to strengthen him in his resistance against his enemies (1:18, 19). How can God fail him when he needs Him the most?

6. God's rebuke and encouragement (19-21)

19-21 This is an amazing chapter in

which Jeremiah penned God's greatest rebuke to him in the hour of his despair and hasty accusation of God. God tells the prophet that, if he leaves his doubts and attitude of reproach, and if he avoids worthless statements and holds to precious ones, then he may continue as God's servant to be prophet and mouth-piece (Exod. 4:16). He will have to use the refining process on himself, so that he can cleave to precious words and not vile ones.

The end of the verse has a play on words (turn, return). He must lift his coreligionists and not let them drag him down to their level. The only solution is to go more deeply in faith in God. He must be faithful to the message whatever it brings. He will not need to trim his message to suit them and convince them; rather, they will be won over by his firm stand.

Then God promises assurance and personal victory. There is a practical recommission of the prophet (cf. 1:18, 19). He would be kept from the power of the violent wicked. There were such for they finally assassinated Gedaliah, the governor of Judah after the fall of the city (cf. 41:1-3). That this word of encouragement was sufficient for the prophet's need can be seen from the fact that, although opposition and persecution to his message gained perilous proportions, he did not once again speak to the Lord in this fashion.

cont'd. next month





SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

DR. CHARLES L. FEINBERG

Studies in the Book of Jeremiah

CHAPTER XV (1-21)

2. The punishment determined (2-9)

continued from March '79 Chosen People

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, gates standing for the whole. Loss of children and decimation will overtake them. And the cause of God's weariness is that they would not repent in truth.

To the Lord's grief Judah's widows will be more numerous than the sand of the seas, an amazing comparison (cf. 2 Chron. 28:6). Even the mothers of warriors will not escape the destroyer, because they will be defenseless through the loss of their valiant sons in the war. Many take the reference to mother figuratively of Jerusalem; to be sure, she is meant. The enemy will strike at noonday, suddenly and when least expected (cf. 6:4).

To have seven sons is a Hebrew picture of complete happiness, but the mother of verse 9 has had her happiness pass all too soon. Because of the blessing of abundant offspring she might have considered herself secure. But she is seen not dying, but swooning, literally, "she breathed out her soul," or "she gasps for breath," that is to say, "her throat gasps" as in 4:10 and in Ugaritic (Canaanite language). Any survivors of the fall of Jerusalem will

suffer the same end as those already slain.

3. Jeremiah's complaint (10-11)

10-11 The prophet in his engulfing despondency laments his life work and lot. This is one of the most moving of the confessions of Jeremiah. He was complaining of loneliness. His strength and greatness lay in his sensitive nature which could feel pain for his people and their doom. The hopelessness of the situation and the difficulty of his own position weighed upon him. There is clear indication of lapse into self-pity. It is one of the saddest cries in the book. It must have been at a time when he was experiencing great opposition, probably during Jehoia-kim's reign. He feels deeply his alienation from his nation whom he loves. He wishes he had not been born. Notice the tenderness in his address to his mother. He is like one constantly in a lawsuit with his people. Borrowing and lending are proverbial reasons for disagreement and tense relations between men. The populace was cursing him, because he attacked their sins so unsparingly.

The last two words in the Hebrew of verse 10 have occasioned some difficulty. The last word in the original is entirely abnormal. The term has been rendered in KJV, ASV, NASB, and RSV as "all of them" or "every one of them" according to the marginal reading. The best explanation for the final word is to understand it as a *forma mixta* or conflate.

Portions such as this show that the prophets were not supernatural, but human; they were neither impassive or automata. The Lord now answers

the complaint of Jeremiah and gives him personal assurance. The Hebrew of verse 11 (and v. 12 also) is difficult. The force of the verse is that God promises vindication for Jeremiah against his enemies, as well as strength for his ministry whose objective is only good. In their distress even his enemies will come asking for his help and intercession (cf. 21:1-6; 37:3; 42:1-6).

More difficulty has centered around verse 11 than any in the chapter. The second verb in the sentence has been understood by some as a noun and by others as a verb. The King James Version renders it as a noun: "it shall be well with thy remnant." This seems to be the least likely translation, because the word is not written correctly (a letter must be assumed as having been dropped out), and the obvious force appears to be verbal rather than nominal. Even those who agree on a verbal form are not in accord on the final translation.

The Revised Standard Version has a divergent rendering: "if I have not entreated thee for their good." This with the remainder of the verse gives no good principal clause, so RSV has decided on an exclamatory sentence. The margin of the Hebrew edition of the text reveals the variety of opinions. American Standard Version prefers "I will strengthen thee for good"; Jewish Publication Society, "I will release thee for good"; New English Bible is substantially as ASV; Jerusalem Bible agrees with ASV in the footnote; New American Standard Bible renders "I will set you free for purposes of good."

The area seems to be restricted to rendering the verb as from "to set

'and a little child shall lead them'

Eric is a nine-year old boy who has been coming to our classes since he was very young. He comes from a broken home and has lived in many areas.

Despite these "setbacks," Eric loves the Lord and tells others about Him. He witnesses to his classmates and tells them he no longer wants to be bad "because it won't please God."

One Friday evening, Eric was waiting for our van to bring him to our Service. In the hall of his apartment building, stood a young man of about 20, who noticed that Eric was carrying a Bible. He asked Eric where he was going and when he heard, thought that he, too, would like to attend the Bible study. He said he had been waiting to meet someone, but they hadn't shown up. So Eric invited him to come along.

God had already prepared his heart, because after the message he went up to Larry Feldman (*ABMJ, Coney Island, N.Y.*) and prayed with him to receive the Lord!

Pray for this young man, that he will come out faithfully and grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus, our Messiah.



TESTIMONY

"I saw the same stubbornness in myself as in my fathers before me . . . I knew we had turned from God."



by **DR. STEVEN A. HELD**

THE PRESENCE OF GOD really struck me the first day of dental school as I stood over a cadaver and began to dissect the human body. Nerves, arteries and veins were running in all different directions, each with a specific purpose. What an invention!

Who made this, I thought. How could I find out?

My search continued through my dental training as I investigated the Oriental philosophy of medicine which took into account the presence of a supreme being.

During my search, I often wondered what was man's purpose on earth. Being Jewish, I also questioned why we were the Chosen People and what were we chosen *for*. In the course of my studies, a professor whom I greatly respected gave me a Bible and said, "You have to read this book; it has the best Author in the world."

Disappointing God

After reading the first two thirds of the Old Testament, I realized that we, as Jewish people, were constantly disappointing God. I saw the same stubbornness in myself as in my fathers before me. I didn't have to read anymore. I knew we had turned from God.

I wanted to apologize, but I didn't know who to apologize to. I

then turned to the New Covenant (New Testament), and I could not put it down. It was an answer to prayer. Then one day I stopped reading and I threw myself down on the ground. I cried out for forgiveness and my Messiah, Yeshua Ha Mashiach, came into my heart and life with the love and forgiveness of my God, Elohim, the Creator of the Universe.

My wife Joan, who is also Jewish, observed my revelation, and thought I had changed my religion. But, I knew in my heart that I was really Jewish, for now I was completed and whole. For three months Joan thought that we had an inter-faith marriage.

Needless to say, she was very upset. Then, after much prayer another miracle happened. God touched Joan's heart and she realized it was the most Jewish thing in the world to believe in the Messiah!

As a completed Jewish family we now praise God and know Him personally as He had originally intended.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

by DR. HENRY J. HEYDT

QUESTION: If all leavening had to be removed from the home during Passover would this not include fermented wine?

ANSWER: The Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Jews have always been most particular about the letter of the law. The Talmud contains an entire section of ten chapters called *Pesachim* (Paschal Lambs) which deals with the observance of the Passover. Here we find not only the laws concerning leaven, the searching for it and the burning of it, but also the requirements for the drinking of at least four cups of wine. If the prohibition

regarding leaven included fermented wine, this would have been strictly observed.

Ex. 13:7 reads specifically, "Unleavened bread (*matstsah*) shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread (*chamets*) be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven (*se'or*) seen with thee in all thy quarters." The word *se'or* is used only five times in the Old Testament (Ex. 12:15, 19; 13:7; Lev. 2:11; Dt. 16:4) and refers to the swelling of the dough, especially the remnant of dough left over from the preceding baking. It is evident from this and the account in Ex. 12:15-20 that it was

the eating of leavened bread that was forbidden.

QUESTION: Please explain Gen. 43:32, "... because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews ..."

ANSWER: The reason for this was primarily religious although there might also have been some political aspects connected with it. The best and most concise presentation we could find is contained in the Keil-Delitzsch Commentary on the passage. We quote the entire section:

Separate tables were prepared for him, for his brethren, and for the Egyptians who dined with them. This was required by the Egyptian spirit of caste, which neither allowed Joseph, as minister of state and a member of the priestly order, to eat along with Egyptians who were below him, nor the latter along with the Hebrews as foreigners. "They cannot (*i.e.* may not) eat (cf. Deut. xii.17, xvi.5, xvii.15). For this was an abomination to the Egyptians." The Hebrews and others, for example, slaughtered and ate animals, even female animals, which were regarded by the Egyptians as sacred; so that, according to Herod. ii.41, no Egyptian would use the knife, or fork, or saucepan of a Greek, nor would any eat of the flesh of a clean animal which had been cut up with a Grecian knife (cf. Ex. viii.22) (Commentary on Genesis, Vol. I, pp. 361-362).

What was Paul's thorn in the flesh?

ANSWER: Paul's "thorn in the flesh" has been a matter of more diversified speculation than almost any other thing in Scripture. It has been thought to have been a painful struggle against temptation to incontinence, a terrible battle to control his temper, some human antagonist who repeatedly "heckled" him, stings of conscience resulting from his former life as a persecutor, blasphemous thoughts suggested by Satan, melancholy, and such physical maladies as epilepsy, malaria, insomnia, migraine headaches, hypochondria, inflammation of the eyes, and so on.

A careful reading of 2 Cor. 12:7-9 will show that it was a messenger of Satan permitted by God to keep him humble because of the abundance of the revelations he had.

Several things are at once evident. It was not the result of sin in Paul's life. It was not given in order to tempt him but to keep him from the

temptation to self-exaltation. It was "in the flesh" and therefore some physical malady. God preferred to give him grace to bear it rather than to remove it. It did not prevent his constant travel, exhausting labors and the enduring of repeated hardships and persecutions.

The safest conclusion to draw regarding the matter is that of Luther, "I do not know what it was."

Without designating an eye condition as Paul's thorn in the flesh, we do note that he had some difficulty with his sight. The Galatians would have plucked out their own eyes and given them to him had they been able to do so (Gal. 4:15). Paul wrote his letters through an amanuensis and signed them in his own hand with large letters (Gal. 6:11). This is probably also the reason he did not recognize the high priest in Acts 23:4, 5. It has been suggested that this is the reason he seldom traveled alone, and that the condition was the result of his blindness at Damascus (Acts 9:9), but these matters are too speculative.

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

"Was Jesus ... A SUCCESS?"

When this issue popped up during a witness at ABMJ's Huntington, Long Island branch, the Rubins responded with another question: What is success?

by **MRS. CLARA RUBIN**
Missionary, Long Island

A faithful lady friend, who enjoys sharing her faith in Messiah, particularly likes to witness to her "kinsmen in the flesh", the Chosen People of Israel. Quite often she will bring a Jewish person to our Friday evening class to see first-hand how other people of Hebrew backgrounds deal with the seeming paradox of accepting Messiah Jesus as Lord.

The most recent visitor proved to be a worthy "adversary." He was extremely intelligent, aggressive and lacked neither questions nor answers. Having been raised in an Orthodox environment and Yeshiva educated, he literally barraged us with a rapid-fire attack dealing with concepts from Torah, Midrashim, and the Talmud. And, he gladly drew from his knowledge of English, Hebrew and Yiddish to impress us, with his sophisticated approach to life and his interpretation of the sacred writings.

Unfortunately, our worthy opponent was more concerned with talking than listening, and readily confessed that, although raised in orthodoxy, he had become a skeptic—somewhere between an atheist and agnostic. The Bible was nothing more than poetry, and God must have died, if He ever

existed at all. In spite of this, many points were made, drawing from the Scriptures, and our visitor could only concede that these imponderables were being "put on the shelf" until he could deal with them at some future date.

After several hours of discussion, our friend rather triumphantly exclaimed that we would have to concede that Jesus was a total and dismal failure. He seemed somewhat disappointed when we readily agreed and did not challenge that remark.

Our teacher, Martin Fromm, then told him it would certainly be pointless to argue that one who had no worldly possessions, no permanent residence, no prestigious job, one who was betrayed by his friends, abandoned in time of tribulation, and subjected to humiliation, torture and a most ignoble death—could be considered anything but a dismal failure. That is of course, unless this is the desired objective! After all, what is success, unless it is measured in terms of having achieved the desired goal.

Messiah's goals are stated time and again in both Old and New Testament passages. It is written in

Psalms, "I come to do thy will, oh Lord," and Jesus declared that His desire was—"to do the will of my Father." This was reiterated at Gethsemane when Jesus said, "Thy will be done." Elsewhere we see His goal to fulfill the law, to come and save that which is lost, and even to give His life as a ransom for many.

Yes, it is clear from the Bible that Messiah would be called a failure. He was to be despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrow, and one from whom we hid our faces and esteemed not. His utter dismay was to be epitomized by the plaintiff cry on Calvary's tree—"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And yet, in His rejection, He did bear our griefs, carry our sorrows, accomplish the Father's objective, fulfill the law, and thus reconcile sinful man to a Holy God.

This "failure" triumphed over every enemy; over sin, over Satan, and even over Death itself! He alone could satisfy the spotless perfection demanded by Levitical law, and for the joy of making Jew and Gentile one in God, He endured the tree, the shame, the lack of man's success, and became the greatest achiever the world has even known.

Our learned friend had to agree that Martin's conception of success and failure was right. He still doubts, as do so many, so God has "returned to my place until they seek my face." We pray that this blessed soul, and all others who have not yet believed, will seek Him early.

Joe Rubin, second from left and Clara open the floor to discussion during refreshments at a recent Bible study.





Donna Wood in concert!

April 1, Calvary Baptist Church,
La Puente, Ca.; April 20, Tarzana
Baptist Chapel, Tarzana, Ca.;
April 29, Fremont Avenue Brethren
Church, So. Pasadena, Ca.; May 6,
Cornerstone Christian Church,
Northridge, Ca.; May 12, First
Presbyterian Church, Rosemead,
Ca.; May 13, First Church of the
Nazarene, No. Hollywood, Ca.

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The following week we had a Mother's Day Luncheon at the mission and these three ladies again heard the Good News proclaimed. Shortly afterwards, at a Friday night meeting in Hollis the other two women accepted the Lord.

Another Jewish lady was invited to the Banquet through a friendship we developed via the Jewish art calendars. She reserved a ticket for herself and two Jewish friends. She sat at a front table with both Jewish and Gentile believers and a few of our office staff.

At the outset she was clearly on the defensive and constantly remarked that her beliefs differed greatly from ours. She took great lengths to indicate that she did not intend to change her opinion—all but challenging anyone who might consider doing so.

As the Seder proceeded the woman responded to the warmth and gentle spirit of those around her and entered into the animated conversations of the others at the table. Soon in a very casual manner, she was questioning the activities of ABMJ's Beth Sar Shalom. About that time I stopped by their table to chat with everyone.

I quickly realized what was happening and invited her to bring her friends to a barbecue we were having on the lawn of the Hollis mission. We were all surprised to see her at the barbecue, but even more delighted to find her at our Tuesday ladies class.

Our new found friend is gradually changing from a suspicious, nervous person to one who is much more open and sometimes she even participates in the Bible lessons. Please continue to pray for this dear woman as we seek to lead her to Christ.

Mrs. Barbara Benedict, left, and Edith Freeman enjoy a lighter moment at ABMJ's L.A. center.



"She wants the peace and love which she sees in our lives."

by BILL and EDITH FREEMAN
San Fernando Valley, Ca.

Edith and I picked up Rose, an elderly Jewish woman, for our Friday Family Fellowship meeting. The next thing we knew she was in the UCLA hospital due to a heart attack. We sent her a card, called her, and visited when she came home.

Passover was drawing near and she told us she would be alone. She is a widow, and her only son lives in New York City so we offered to come to her home and prepare a Seder supper. We brought chicken, matzos, vegetables and Edith cooked the meal.

We shared the meaning of the three matzos, the "Afikomen" and discussed the Lord's Supper. We read Scripture, sang Jewish songs (which she loves) and had a good evening. She was so happy and grateful for the time we spent together.

More recently, Rose invited us to her home for a meal in celebration of Edith's birthday. Rose calls us her adopted children. We had the joy of presenting the claims of Jesus the Messiah to Rose. She wants the peace and love which she sees in our lives. Pray for Rose as she asks God to reveal the truth about Jesus to her.

A Passover Crash Course

After I arrived home, I received a call from a local Christian gentleman who had attended one of our Passover banquets. He asked me if I would consider coming to his home to conduct a family Passover so his Jewish son-in-law could hear this unique presentation of the Gospel.

I accepted with enthusiasm and gave the gentleman a "crash course" on how to prepare a Passover meal. As the evening drew to a close, we were confident that this man's son-in-law had finally understood from his own Jewish perspective the message of salvation. After sharing some pertinent Scriptures, I left, praying the Lord would touch his heart.

A few days later, we realized over 6,000 people had attended Passover



"Everytime we present a Passover Seder and banquet through an area church I'm always thrilled at the genuine concern for the Jewish people these local believers evidence," writes Irwin Chalek, missionary, Dallas. Pictured above at a banquet in Houston; Chalek standing center, Bill Ennis, extreme right on dais and Dr. Daniel Fuchs, left of Rev. Chalek.

Seders in our part of the country! Of course the friendships made and the opportunities to relate face-to-face with Jewish people around God's Word and His Gospel were inestimable.

This year, even as you read this article, stories like these will be repeated hundreds of times over as missionaries throughout the country share the Gospel in this unique and meaningful way.



Calvary Temple in Denver graciously offered their premises for ABMJ Denver's last Passover Seder. "The atmosphere was filled with expectancy," said missionary Eliezer Urbach. "Our Christian friends invited their unsaved Jewish friends, many of whom were astonished that we, being Jewish believers, have become more Jewish than ever."

by **ELEANOR BULLOCK**
Missionary, Hollis, N.Y.C.

All of the Jewish holy days are rich in Messianic pictures of the person and work of our Savior but the Passover is especially precious in showing redemption in and through Christ "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29).

We at the Hollis mission eagerly look forward to the Passover Banquet as a great opportunity to introduce Jewish people to the Lord Jesus Christ, to provide fellowship for Jewish believers and to teach Christians from our neighboring churches how to witness to Jewish people.

This last year's banquet accomplished great things for the Lord in each of these areas.

There were 265 people who came to participate with many unsaved Jewish people coming under the sound of the Gospel for the first time.

Members of our local mission had invited relatives and friends to whom they had witnessed on many occasions. One woman brought her mother and sister. That same afternoon as a result of the Passover services this woman's mother professed her faith in the Lord Jesus as her Messiah and Savior.

cont'd next page



The Passover Seder and banquet is always a place where many Jewish brethren will hear the Gospel for the first time. These "first-timers" however are joined by another significant group who have heard the Word and need further teaching. In San Diego, after Mike Hyman accepted the Lord (See Chosen People Nov. '78) Irv Rifkin (ABMJ, missionary) invited him and his mother to the Seder. The work of the Holy Spirit and the unique way in which the eternal truths of Scripture are presented in the Passover apparently brought Mrs. Hyman close to a decision. A month to the day after Mike accepted his Messiah, his mother also placed her faith in Him. Here Irv Rifkin assists Mrs. Hyman as she follows the Lord in baptism.

OUR FINAL OPPORTUNITY

by WESLEY J. A. JONES
Director of Stewardship



DO YOU KNOW an otherwise thoughtful, careful, well-organized person, especially one who is a Christian, who does not have an up-to-date will?

Arranging for the final disposition of those assets with which God has entrusted us seems to be an objectionable task to many people. Sometimes it is postponed indefinitely. Often it's delayed too long, to the disappointment, even the hardship of dependents.

Yet we who place our trust in the Savior must realize that a will—for all its necessary legal jargon—is our last opportunity to express to our loved ones and to our friends our unswerving commitment to the cause of Christ.

There is no more convincing opportunity to demonstrate that commitment than to create a document whose preamble is a testimony to our faith and trust in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our interested readers will find a suggestion for the wording of such a preamble in ABMJ's will brochure. It's available just for the asking.

Write: *The President, ABMJ, Box 2000, Orangeburg, NY 10962.*

NEWS FROM ISRAEL

Brain Scanner

An electronic brain scanner has been developed at Beilinson Medical Centre by Prof. Shalit, head of the neurosurgery department. This is an improved method of identifying cancerous growths during brain surgery thus the surgeon will have a better understanding of the problem during actual operation. The professor reported two such operations as successful. In the two operations the patient's head was placed in the Scanex and this helped better control the course of the brain operation. The operations were performed in areas not particularly designed for them and Prof. Shalit hopes that enough funds will soon be available to build a special operating theatre based on the Scanex. He observed that the cost of the Scanex might seem exorbitant, but all major hospitals in Israel have either bought one or have one on order.

Israel's Energy Needs

The Israeli government has begun a study of the feasibility of Israel building a power reactor of its own. This would ensure independence in the field of nuclear power and also further the country's technology. Prof. Shavit, head of the Energy Ministry's research and development department believes the country could supply a percentage of its energy from sources other than oil by the 1990s and the best way would be the improvement and installation of solar water heaters. At Tel Hashomer Hospital a solar collector is to be installed this year which will provide the ophthalmic departments' needs, saving 10 per cent of the hospital's fuel consumption. A solar pond will also be built within three years in a shallow area of the Dead Sea which may provide 5 percent or more of Israel's total future energy needs.

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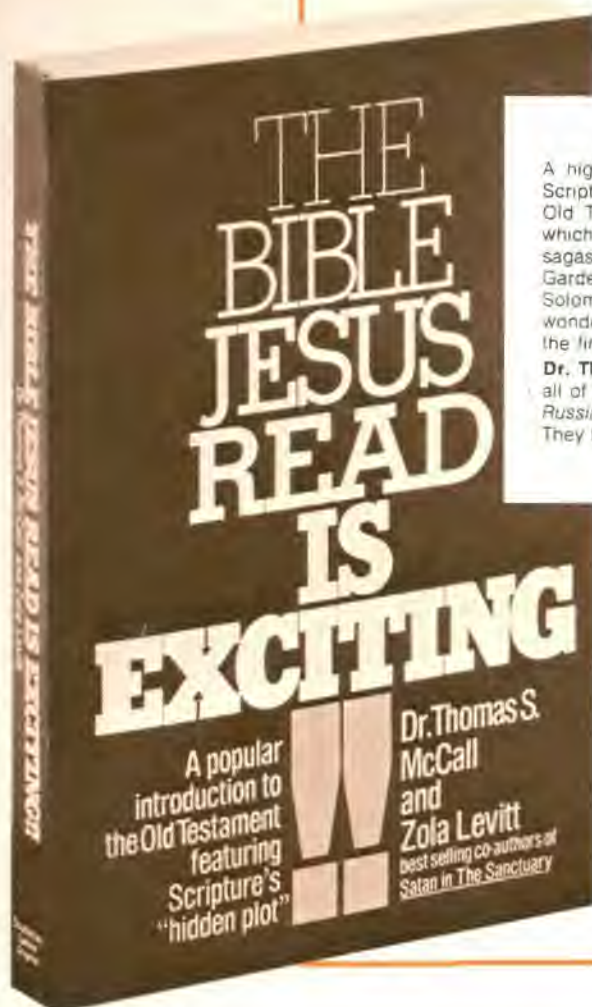
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The Israel Museum's Shrine of the Book, home of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

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A highly readable, popular introduction to the Old Testament, featuring Scripture's "hidden plot"—the vital thread of prophecy running through Old Testament stories that not only predicted the advent of Christ, but which continue to reveal God's plans for mankind. Among the best-loved sagas in this "digest" of Scripture "Jesus read" are the story of the Garden of Eden; the stories of Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, and Solomon; the lives of the major Prophets; and the return to Jerusalem. A wonderful Bible study guide for students reading the Old Testament for the first time—or for those rediscovering it in the light of Evangelical faith.

Dr. Thomas S. McCall and Zola Levitt have collaborated on three books, all of which are concerned with Biblical prophecy—*Raptured, The Coming Russian Invasion of Israel*, and the best-selling *Satan in The Sanctuary*. They both live in Dallas, Texas.



ZOLA LEVITT



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