

The Chosen People

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**Bethlehem: Finding Meaning
Beyond the Manger**



The Chosen People

At this time of the year, Christians frequently try to convince their Jewish friends and neighbors that Christmas is really a Jewish holiday. When our Lord became flesh, He entered our history as the Seed of Abraham and the Seed of David. He was of the tribe of Judah. It all happened in Israel. Even His name is Jewish. "... Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Mt. 1:21). Yes, Christmas is a Jewish holiday.

But strange as it seems, Chanukah could also be called a "Christian" holiday. The only time it is mentioned in the Bible is in John 10:22, which clearly indicates that our Lord kept it. "It was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication." The NIV marginal note explains, "That is, Hanukkah."

History has erected a new wall of partition, and now most people believe that Christmas is for Christians and Chanukah is for Jews. Let's break down this wall! I believe that we can validly rejoice in Chanukah, and that if we do so, many Jewish hearts will be opened to the truth of our Lord's incarnation.

The story of Chanukah is simply told. "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep" (Ps. 121:4). Antiochus Epiphanes, the antichrist of the Old Testament, almost succeeded in destroying the Jews. In the midst of this persecution our Lord once more raised up a deliverer.

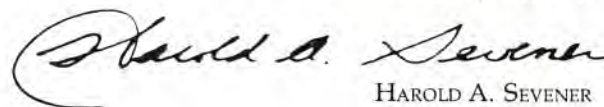
About the year 168 B.C., a blow for liberty was struck by an aged priest named Mattathias at Modin in the hill country of Judea. There was no definite plan of revolt or even of a preliminary organization. Mattathias refused to sacrifice to the heathen gods. When a renegade stepped forward to sacrifice, Mattathias slew him and the Syrian officer and fled to the mountains with his family. Other brave Jews joined him, and resistance rapidly grew into revolution. Mattathias died early in the struggle and was succeeded by Judas, surnamed Maccabees, "the Hammer," who won victory after victory, and in the year 166 B.C. he captured the city of Jerusalem. He rededicated the Temple and renewed the sacred rites. This is the origin of the Feast of Dedication or Chanukah.

If there were not a Chanukah, there wouldn't be a Christmas! I believe that we could more effectively share our faith in our Lord's incarnation if we would send our Jewish friends Chanukah cards (Nov. 30-Dec. 8) as well as Christmas cards during this season. I also believe that Christ-honoring churches can use the story of Chanukah in witnessing to the Jews.

I have mentioned the fact that Chanukah is not mentioned in the Old Testament. While this is true, it is also a fact that Chanukah is definitely prophesied in the Book of Daniel. Daniel 11:1-35 is one of the most detailed of all prophesies that have already been fulfilled. It details prophetically the salient events during the centuries of Darius to the Desolation of the Temple by Antiochus Epiphanes! The prophecy of Daniel is also the only prophecy in the Old Testament that sets the time of our Lord's coming (see Dan. 9:24-27).

This is an excellent time of the year to have prophetic conferences on the subject, "Chanukah and Christmas in Biblical Prophecy." Let's try it!

Shalom, Shalom!



HAROLD A. SEVENER

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How To Share Christmas With Your Jewish Friends

There are many ways you can share the real blessings of Christmas with your Jewish friends from special speakers at your church to a thoughtful gift. Read why this season is an especially good time for you to share your faith

Joe stood out like a sore thumb. While several believers lounged on oversized pillows and sang Christmas songs in the warm glow of the fireplace, Joe sipped his eggnog on the other side of the room. He gazed out the large picture window at the snow drifts, his mind deep in thought.

"Jews aren't supposed to show up at Christmas parties on Christmas Eve," he must have been telling himself. Just a few minutes ago, though, he had even joined in singing "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"—all four stanzas.

But Jesus was no friend of Joe's.

He'd declared on several previous occasions that he was an avowed atheist. Joe's father, an insurance salesman, had systematically joined every local church, synagogue and fraternal organization to further his business contacts. No wonder Joe felt "religious people" were gullible and weak. No wonder he wanted nothing to do with Christianity.

Yet something had drawn him back this night, Christmas Eve, to be in the company of believers.

One of our missionaries quietly slipped away from the group in front of the fireplace and walked across the

continued from previous page

room to where Joe was standing. Joe seemed ready to talk, and the two walked into the kitchen.

"I'm a people person," Joe confessed, explaining his presence there that evening. Joe had sensed something genuine and real from these believers. He enjoyed their fellowship and the special quality of this night. But was he really ready to join in the faith of these believers whose company he was drawn to? Join them in real fellowship around the One whose entrance into the world they celebrated?

Joe knew all the necessary spiritual principles—sin, the need for atonement—and he had no trouble weighing the evidence. He even had several graduate degrees. But tonight he could not make that decision.

"You know, I don't even believe in God," he agonized. Then softly he continued, "But if I was ever going to believe anything, I'd believe in Christ."

What compelled Joe, an atheist, to make this startling confession? Of course, God was working that night, drawing Joe to the Messiah (cf. Jn. 6:44).

But we also recognize that Christmas is a time when the attention of even unbelievers is focused on the Person of Christ.

Why not take advantage of this and make Christmas an avenue of sharing the Lord with your Jewish friends? Here are a few reasons we think you will have success.

First: Christmas presents Christ in a nonthreatening manner. Down through history the Jewish people have been dogged by anti-Semitic acts but relatively fewer incidents occurred at Christmas.

The great waves of wholesale slaughter, forced conversions and pogroms happened in the Lenten season.

The "blood libel"—the Satanic notion that the Jews killed "Christian" boys and girls to obtain blood to make *matzah* surfaced in countless European locales around Passover and Easter.

And only in recent history has the Roman Catholic Church officially "exonerated" the Jewish people for any blame in Christ's death.

Thus the image of Christ associated with the Lenten season may well inspire subconscious guilt feelings in the Jewish mind.

By contrast, there have been less violent incidents during Christmas. It would seem that even an unregenerate world has taken seriously—if only for one night—the angels' pronouncement of "good will toward men."

Second: Christmas has always been a highly secularized, i.e., Americanized holiday, and thus, it is attractive to Jews wishing to assimilate.

Speaking of the first Jewish immigrants in this country, Rabbi Eugene B. Borowitz, professor of Education and Jewish Religious Thought at the Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion in New York, asserts that these immigrant parents were not able to transmit the Jewishness of their world to their infant or American-born children.

They, the infant immigrants or the American-born, usually did not grow up living a rich and impressive Jewish life. . . . For them [the American-born] to be a Jew smacked of clinging to the immigrant

status they were most eager to leave behind.

The Mask Jews Wear
(Simon and Schuster,
1973), p. 36.

We are not suggesting that these second-generation American Jews celebrated Christmas. But it was precisely these Jewish people who came of age between the world wars, cast adrift from the traditional currents of Jewish experience, who aspired to a thoroughly contemporary American life style. The exchange of gifts on Chanukah never took on the signifi-



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cance it now has until it became the "Jewish Christmas." The Chanukah bush—a tradition unknown to European Jews—isn't much more than a thinly disguised Christmas tree.

What are we saying? Simply that Christmas lost much of the Gentile-*otherness* as it became an institution of the new (desirable) mother culture.

For years, our Coney Island Beth Sar Shalom branch would gear up weeks in advance for a special Christmas program. There would be carols and Christmas skits presented by the neighborhood children who attended our Bible studies.

It was always a wonderful time of witness to the many Jewish parents who had reached adulthood in the 1930s and 1940s who would come to watch their children perform at our Christmas program.

Third: The Jewish people put an extremely high priority on close family ties, the warmth of fellowship and a sense of community with their fellowman. Certainly these qualities are all hallmarks of the Christmas season.

But these are only qualities. The Giver of every good gift is God. At Christmas we celebrate God's greatest gift—His Son—in whom we have our



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salvation. Let's point our Jewish friends in His direction this year. Here are a few ways:

Two or three performances of Handel's *Messiah* are always scheduled at this time of the year. Why not invite your Jewish friend to one? This great music is sure to spark some scintillating conversation.

Gifts are a staple of the season. If you have reached that certain rapport with your friend, prayerfully consider giving him one of these excellent titles: *Mere Christianity* by C. S. Lewis; *Christianity Is Jewish* by Edith Schaeffer; *Hebrew Christianity: Its Theology, History, and Philosophy* by Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum,* or perhaps one of the many Hebrew Christian testimonies in book form.

Read the book yourself before you present it as a gift. Of course, the book you choose should be the most appropriate one for your friend.

We also welcome you to browse by mail through the ABMJ bookroom (a list of publications and tracts we stock is available on request). You might want to give your Jewish friend more detailed information once he begins asking questions. Or perhaps you might like to bone up on these subjects yourself.

Churches are traditionally busy this time of year with many holiday programs. Why not consider inviting an ABMJ speaker to talk about your church's "Jewish roots" on an off night? Our speakers would certainly enjoy bringing a message regarding Christmas and Chanukah. Either of these programs would be an excellent time to invite your Jewish friends and neighbors.

Most of our branches will be holding some kind of Chanukah/Christmas party as you read this. Many Jewish people will come to these festive gatherings and perhaps for the first time hear of the Messiah. Uphold these meetings in prayer. Above all, pray for the Jewish people God has given you. And pray for your ABMJ missionaries. Pray too that the veil might be lifted from Jewish hearts and that the promised Jewish Messiah will be revealed to scattered Israel. □

**Sorry, these books are not available from ABMJ's bookroom. Your local Christian bookstore should stock all of them.*

DAVID'S THRONE LITERAL OR FIGURATIVE ?

By HAROLD A. SEVENER

The genealogy of "The Gospel According to Matthew" is one of the greatest historical documents in existence. In fact, it aptly describes our Biblical philosophy of history.

It has always been God's purpose to offer salvation to all people everywhere. Man failed, but God still pursued His purpose. He finally chose a single family to whom He would give His gracious promises in order that eventually the whole world might have the opportunity to receive His grace. This family grew into the nation of Israel. They were separated by God for His purpose, and apart from this there is no accounting for the Jewish nation.

Benjamin Disraeli wrote of Israel, "They produced no new order of architecture, in sculpture, they did nothing, their religion forbade their making graven images. Their mission was to make known the idea of God as a Being, holy, just and loving."



When in the fulness of time God fulfilled His purpose, the news is published in a book, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Mt. 1:1).

The genealogy of our Lord speaks of the abundant faithfulness of God. In a very real sense the inspired title of the book is not "The Gospel According to Matthew." It is "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." God called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees, so that in him should "all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). The genealogy shows us that God keeps His promises.

Countless volumes have been written on the history of the Jews. I am not deprecating them. It would help all of us to study this fascinating subject, but here in less than 400 words (in the English translation), God shows His purpose in Jewish history. He prepared this people for the coming of the Redeemer. Not once in Matthew's Gospel is there a comment on the faithfulness of Abraham, nor is it ever contrasted with the sin of Judah. Likewise God did not forget His purpose in Jewish history during David's reign or during the shameful declension that resulted in the Babylonian captivity, namely the incarnation of our Lord.

These verses also proclaim another related truth. Not only is God faithful, but He also means what He says.

We are living in a day when theologians who say they believe in the inerrancy of Scripture spiritualize the truths of the Scriptures, especially in the prophetic writings. I am well aware of the fact that we cannot take a figurative passage and seek a literal interpretation from it. For instance, trees do not have hands to clap.

But there is nothing figurative about God's covenants with Abraham and David. These were covenants of God with a real Abraham and a real David.

Read the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 1:1-17. You cannot allegorize any one of these ancestors without mental gymnastics or spiritual chaos.

Read over the accounts of the birth of Christ and observe how many times it is said, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken." These are literal prophecies, which were actually fulfilled. Our Lord was born in an actual town called Bethlehem, in an authentic area called Judea, to a real virgin called Mary. Why do we stress this point? Since the promises of the first coming of the Messiah were fulfilled so literally, we have every confidence that the predictions of His second coming also mean exactly what they say.

This brings us to another truth. Matthew's genealogy proves the right of the Lord Jesus Christ to the throne of David. One of the reasons why the incarnation was necessary was that by becoming flesh our Lord Jesus

Christ could sit upon the throne of David. The greatest passages about our Lord's birth emphasize this truth.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:6, 7).

The Gospel account of the birth of our Lord also emphasizes David's throne: "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Lk. 1:30-33).

The realization of God's purpose for this earth is centered in the Davidic throne and on the King whom He has set upon His holy hill of Zion (cf. Ps. 2:6). "Thy throne shall be established for ever" (2 Sam. 7:16) is God's promise to David.

But the amillennialist says, "David's children sinned." True but God's promise remains. "I have found David my servant. . . His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once I have sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me" (Ps. 89:20, 29-36).

In the light of such clear statements, it is arrogance to teach that the throne of David is merely a spiritual figment. Note how frequently the Lord is called "the Son of David" in the Scriptures. Pilate asked Him, "Art thou a king then?" Let the rulers of the earth heed His answer, "Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth" (Jn. 18:37).

The genealogy of the Gospel by Matthew proves the right of the Lord Jesus Christ to the throne of David. We praise our Lord—He was born in Bethlehem, invaded our history to die for us. He shall return to reign as KING of kings and LORD of lords. □

TESTIMONY OF LUNA TIEDE

Last month Luna Tiede an ABMJ S.T.E.P. missionary described her shock and dismay when she realized her young daughter had come to accept the Lord. Despite her daughter's frequent testimony, Luna refused to accept Dianne's faith. Judaism and Christianity were mutually exclusive, she thought. Besides, down through the years Luna had carried a nagging guilt that God was displeased with her for marrying out of her (Jewish) faith.

When the Lord took her daughter home Luna was torn with grief. Then two ladies from Dianne's vacation Bible school convinced Luna to accompany them to an evangelistic meeting. When the preacher invited those willing to make a decision for the Lord to come forward Luna responded.

Days later I realized that I had actually said Jesus was God. I knew God would punish me severely. How could I do this?

I reasoned that if He punished me for marrying a Gentile, He would avenge me terribly for this brazen act of idolatry.

For two years I hated myself for my weakness, hated the fact that I had turned against the one and true God to take comfort in some idol.

In one moment of weakness, I had gone and done this terrible thing of pretending to love Jesus, the one act I was certain would separate me from the God of the Jews forever.

I took my daughter, Karen, and together we traveled. My husband didn't quite understand what was going on inside me, but he knew I had to find something, some peace which seemed to get further and further from me.

So Karen and I traveled from our home in Racine, Wisconsin, and explored the West, meeting with people, cults, groups, anyone who might be able to point me in the right direction. Finally, in La Habra, California, some new friends invited Karen to vacation Bible school.

I remembered what happened when Dianne had gone to VBS, but this time

I knew I needed something.

I gave Karen permission to go, but I insisted on going along. There, at the evangelistic service that was part of the program, I heard the plan of salvation.

I realize now that I had probably heard that simple outline many times before in my travels and search. But on this day, it was so clear, so understandable.

I realized that Jesus was no foreign God. I saw that Jesus died for me. I was a sinner and I needed Jesus, not as a way to see Dianne again, but as a way to know the one true God whom I had always loved.

I accepted Christ in that service, and the years of looking, fighting, traveling were suddenly at an end. I was assured that the God I loved also loved me.

Everything wasn't easy from that time on. When I returned home Charlie was not willing to listen to me talk about Jesus.

"How are you, a Jew, going to tell me about Jesus? I know all about Jesus. I was raised a Christian!" But slowly he came to listen and he too came to faith.

Then there was my family. Though I had never been officially renamed a daughter, I was in touch with my six brothers and sisters.

They knew that I had made some step toward Jesus after Dianne's death, so they didn't think my new-found faith was serious or special.

Yet, slowly but surely my life came to order. My understanding of God grew as I read the Scriptures, and those feelings of guilt I had struggled with for years began to pass away.

Once I knew Jesus personally, my Jewish heritage seemed all the more rich. I had been like many Jewish people—not understanding enough about my own God and history to understand how Jewish Jesus really is.

However, I feel there is a need inside all of us that longs to be fulfilled by God, and we're driven to search for this fulfillment. Some seek fulfillment through drugs or cults, others through work or money, but it is actually a spiritual drive.

I sometimes reflect on Dianne, on her simple childlike faith and understanding God gave her even as a child. I wish I could have shared the comfort of God with her and helped prepare her and counsel her from God's Word.

More often, however, I reflect on the greatness of God. Through love and care, using a daughter who was to be with Him very early in her life, He brought me to Himself. □



"WE ARE AWARE OF YOUR ACTIVITIES!"

David Sedaca, Missionary, Toronto

"We want to warn you," the voice at the other end of the telephone shrieked, "we are aware of your activities." This "warning" actually came as pleasant news to me. After all, it is our intention to make people aware of our activities and then have them attend our Beth Sar Shalom meetings.

"We have sent letters," she continued, "warning various Jewish schools and organizations that the same people who have been upsetting and causing problems in Jewish communities all over the world are finally here in Toronto." What was intended to scare and upset me actually made me rejoice. We want the Jewish com-

munity in Toronto to know we're here and to know why we're here. We're just starting out and unknowingly the woman on the phone is giving us "free publicity"!

Beth Sar Shalom Toronto began

with a home Bible study. Only a few weeks later we were so crowded that we were forced to find a larger meeting place, one that was closer to the Jewish community. From there, we realized we would soon require our own center to accommodate our well-attended activities. Now, only one year after it all began, here we are at 343 Eglinton Avenue East.

Our work here is very important as Toronto is one of the fastest growing Jewish communities in North America. It has a large Orthodox and Hasidic contingency, heavily influenced by their brethren in New York. Toronto has recently replaced



In one of the fastest growing Jewish communities in North America street witnessing and evangelism is a big part of the Toronto work. Here Diana Holditch an ABMJ S.T.E.P. participant for the summer, now a Toronto missionary, distributes tracts.


David Sedaca teaches a weekly study at ABMJ's Beth Sar Shalom Toronto branch.



Montreal as Canada's largest and most dynamic Jewish community. Due to the large number of immigrants (from such places as Russia, Israel and Montreal), Toronto's Jewish population has almost doubled from approximately 80,000 ten years ago to close to 150,000 today.

Not a single day goes by that I don't receive a phone call from an unsaved Jewish person asking questions or interested in or upset by our work. But the important thing is that we are sowing seeds. Already we have shared the Gospel through our Passover (Seder) banquet, weekly worship services and Bible studies.

Pray with us as we plan to start a ladies study and youth outreach. Truly the fields of Toronto are now white unto harvest. □



THE INCARNATION: MEANING BEYOND THE MANGER

By DANIEL FUCHS

The incarnation of our Lord is one of the most amazing events in the history of the universe. It is a subject that is hard to understand thoroughly. In no aspect of the theology is the student so completely dependent upon the Word of God than in the study of this truth. It is a revelation of the purest character.

The Bible reveals several reasons why it was necessary for God to become man. One of them is that our Lord might manifest God to man. In our Lord's high priestly intercessory prayer (Jn. 17:6), He said, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me." The incarnate Christ answers man's question, "What is God like?" Our Lord is the answer to that question.

Dr. V. Raymond Edman, the late president of Wheaton College, told the story of a missionary friend who

labored among the Brahmans in India. He witnessed to a high caste Brahman who was greatly impressed by the Gospel message but he stumbled over the incarnation. He could not understand why God would ever become a man. It seemed so degrading to him!

One bright, sunny afternoon after a lively discussion with the missionary, the Brahman went for a walk. In India some of the ant hills are several feet high. As the Brahman walked, his shadow crossed the ant hills and the ants became panicky. They had a fear of man. But this man was a Brahman, one who never hurt any living creature. He believed in the transmigration of souls, and for all of his belief, one of these ants could be one of his relations. He didn't want to hurt or even to frighten them. In one sense he loved those ants. As he walked, he pondered, "I wish that I could tell those ants that I don't hate them; I really love them." As he continued his stroll, he came to

a conclusion, "I wish I could become an ant, live among them as an ant, speak their language, and then I could tell them I don't hate them, I love them."

As he continued his stroll, his pace quickened. He had the answer to his questions about the incarnation of God! He had been taught to believe that his gods were those of hatred, and when it thundered his gods were imprecating their creatures.

But the one true God manifested Himself to him to show him that He loved him. God did what the Brahman couldn't do. He took upon Himself the form of sinful man. He lived among man as Man, He spoke our language and proclaimed, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn. 3:16). Only an incarnate Christ could do this.

Another reason for the incarnation was that as true Man, He might represent man to God. This was, and is, our Lord's high priestly ministry. Only a man could be the high priest.

"... but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:16-18).

One of the reasons for the incarnation is that our Lord might be a faithful and merciful High Priest. In recent months we have been studying the typical and prophetic aspects of Israel's most important holy day—the Day of Atonement. Just as the Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal High Priest who is infinitely superior to the Aaronic priesthood, so He has entered a Tabernacle that is infinitely superior to the

Old Testament tabernacle.

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Heb. 8:1, 2).

Many of us have been blessed and instructed by viewing models of the Old Testament tabernacle. Some of them have been so detailed and ornately beautiful that we wondered how majestic the real tabernacle in the wilderness must have been. Hebrews teaches us that the Old Testament tabernacle itself was only a model—a small imitation of the real thing.

When God gave Moses the plan for the tabernacle, He gave minute details that are so explicit an artisan can study the plans in Exodus 25-27 today and even make replicas of the Menorah in the tabernacle. So many bowls, so many knobs, so many branches, so much distance between this and that. Verse after verse of details.

The tabernacle in the wilderness was God's dwelling place with man. But this tabernacle was only a replica of the true Tabernacle, which is in the heavens. Why should anyone yield to the temptation to accept what he can see in the light of the reality of heaven?

Just as the high priest of the Old Testament entered the Holy of Holies with the blood of a sacrifice, so the Lord Jesus Christ entered the real Holy of Holies, which is heaven itself with His own blood. "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but

by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:11, 12).

Israel's Day of Atonement itself was a vivid reminder that all of the daily, weekly and monthly sacrifices which were made at the altar of burnt offering were not sufficient. At the altar each Israelite stood "afar off." He could not approach God's presence in the Holy of Holies. Only the high priest on this day alone could sprinkle the atoning blood.

One of the purposes of the Old Testament tabernacle was to teach that sin hindered access to God. Unlike the Israelite of old, the believer does not need to stand afar off, but he is now bidden to enter into the presence of God.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering" (Heb. 10:19-23).

There is a significant symbolism which becomes apparent when we compare Israel's Day of Atonement with the letter to the Hebrews. We have mentioned (see *The Chosen People*, October and November 1983 issues) the intricate ritual on that day. It started early in the morning before sunrise. During the earlier sacrifices the high priest wore his golden vestments. After this part of the service was finished, he took off this royal robe, bathed and then put on the linen garments which he wore during his ministry within the veil.

Every eye was strained towards the sanctuary as, slowly bearing the censer

and the incense, the figure of the white robed high priest was seen to disappear within the Holy Place. After that nothing further could be seen of his movements. The curtain of the Most Holy Place was folded back, and the high priest stood alone and separated from all the people in the awful gloom of the Holiest of All, only lit up by the red glow of the coals in the priest's censer.

Alfred Edersheim,
The Temple, p. 274.

Compare this description with the record of our great High Priest as He entered the "true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Heb. 8:2). "... While they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him

out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:9-11).

It must have seemed interminable for those Israelites packed outside the tabernacle, as they waited for their high priest to return. Did they have a living high priest? Had God accepted the sacrifice? Did the scapegoat bear their sins into the wilderness?

Many hours later after the evening sacrifice, once more the high priest washed his hands, took off his linen

garments, which would never be used again. He then donned his golden garments and lighted the golden candlestick. The evening closed with a feast.

For almost two thousand years our Lord has been seated on the right hand of God in the true Tabernacle, the heavens. We long for Him to clothe Himself with the garments of His power and glory. It seems as if He must right now be changing His garments. He entered the Holy of Holies in the linen garments of suffering. He is soon to return in His golden vesture.

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28). □



O Little Town of Bethlehem

The distance between Jerusalem and Bethlehem is only a few miles. You can walk between the two cities in less than 45 minutes. But Jerusalem, with its magical blue sky and God-appointed destiny, overshadows Bethlehem many times. It was in Jerusalem where the holy men of Jesus' time gathered. It was in Jerusalem where they built an elaborate Temple with a carefully formulated worship system. It was in Jerusalem where they debated the fine points of God's Law, about how to walk with the Most High God, sending out decrees to the outer cities like Bethlehem.

How foolish it seems that when the Messiah came, He wasn't born in Jerusalem. How foolish that the angels announced the birth of the Messiah in muddy fields two or three miles outside Jerusalem but not in the holy Temple. How foolish that God brought wise men from faraway lands, and yet the wisest men in Jerusalem did not journey a few miles south.

Sometimes God's wisdom looks foolish to men. Perhaps that is why it is so special when someone is first willing to see beyond the foolishness of men to the wisdom of God.

Yet that is what is happening in hundreds of people's lives, day after day, around the world, through your ABMJ missionaries. They are sharing their faith, helping new Christians, praying, witnessing and teaching. And as you stand with these missionaries through your gifts and prayers, you are there also.

Yes, to some the Gospel may seem simple and foolish. But we know that it is not foolish to those who have been prepared to hear. Won't you continue to pray, to give and to help us proclaim this Good News wherever God sends us... to your town, to Bethlehem or even to Jerusalem.

SEND TO: ABMJ, Box 2000, Orangeburg, N.Y. 10962

- I promise to pray for ABMJ missionaries and for the salvation of the Jewish people.
- I also enclose \$_____ in support of ABMJ missionaries.

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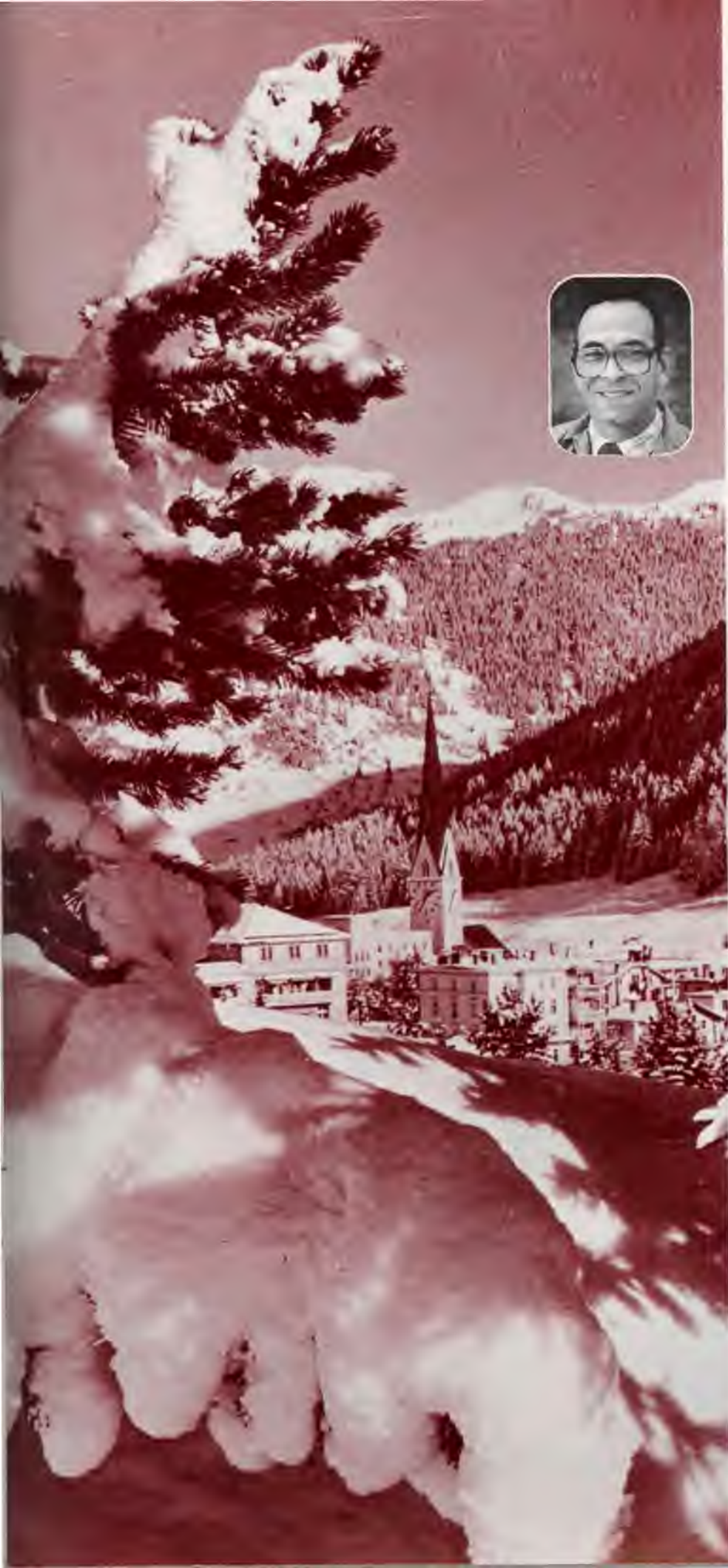
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Testimony of Herb Jaffee

EVEN SOMEONE BORN ON CHRISTMAS DAY HAS TO BE BORN AGAIN!

Harry had a way about him. In his own gentle way he told me of his faith in Christ.

"I'm a forgiven Jew," he told me softly. "And I know I have eternal life."

"'A forgiven Jew!' Hah! He is a traitor to Judaism!" I angrily thought. But why then, deep down inside, did I believe this stranger's words? Only a few hours ago I had forbidden my wife to even let him enter my home. Now I was agreeing with half the things he said!

I didn't accept Christ that day. But Harry's words kept ringing in my ears. I tossed and turned all that night. I was under such great conviction that I found it impossible to sleep.

For someone born on Christmas day, I should've had an easier time warming up to Christ, but I still fought Him.

Where was Christ or God, for that matter, when I turned 12 and the doctors told us my father had terminal cancer? My father lived on, suffering for the next two years; then he succumbed. The medical bills took just about all our money.

As the oldest male I should have taken more responsibility for my mother, my younger brother and my sister. But I didn't. I was having too much fun getting into trouble with my friends.

The Army might have straightened me out, but they classified me 4F for the asthma that plagued me all my life.

When I was 25, I brought Arleen home to meet the family. I loved her

continued from previous page

and wanted to marry her. Arleen was a Gentile, and my mother couldn't have been more against our marriage. I married Arleen anyway. We were in love, and that's all that mattered.

Feelings, however, fade fast. We moved into an apartment, had a fairly new car and even a stereo. I was working two jobs, and we were comfortable. But not even the birth of our daughters could lift us out of our unhappiness.

We were bored and kept looking for something to make us completely happy. My wife would keep me awake at night wondering if she should start a career to compensate for her despair.

While recuperating from a heart attack, my mother decided to live with us. Mom found a sympathetic listener in my wife. "Why do people suffer?" she would question Arleen. "Why is life so difficult?"

These questions began to bother Arleen. She didn't have the answers for my mother or herself. But she knew her dad, a Christian, did.

Arleen's dad came over to our house a few days later. He sat down with Arleen and my mom, Bible in hand, and explained that because of man's sin there is suffering in the world. Because of sin man is separated from God.

He told them the way back to God was through His Son, Jesus Christ, the Jewish Messiah.

When my brother and I heard about this meeting we were incensed. My mother was Jewish—why was he bothering her with this?

My wife responded differently. In spite of my anger, my mother's questions and the turmoil in the house, she saw what she wanted—Jesus. The next day she accepted Him.

I didn't know what was going on! I sensed a change in Arleen, but I couldn't put my finger on it. She began telling me I had to receive Christ as my Messiah and then I too would have complete assurance of heaven. I tried to avoid her words, but the Holy Spirit was convicting me of my sin.

That's when Harry came into the picture. My father-in-law thought it would be good for me to talk with a Jewish believer. So he called the American Board of Missions to the Jews. They sent Harry Burgen over. Now I had my wife *and* Harry on my back.

I figured a good, hard day's work would clear my head and remove this heaviness from my soul. But I couldn't even work! I asked to be excused early and went home. At dinner time I just picked at my food.

The next day I came home from work and told my wife I didn't want to hear about Jesus anymore. Within her heart she purposed that she would say no more; it was my decision to make.

She crawled into bed determined to be silent, but the Holy Spirit compelled her to witness to me again.

Finally at 5 o'clock in the morning, I could take it no longer. My wife and I kneeled at the side of the bed and prayed. I acknowledged that I was a sinner and asked Jesus, the Messiah, to be my Savior.

Before I knew it, I had dropped off to sleep. Three hours later I awoke for work.

Something was really different inside! I had lost that heaviness and in its place I felt a great lightness of heart! At lunch time I called Arleen and told her what I was feeling. We rejoiced that we'd both found the missing piece in our lives. The Lord even healed me of my asthma!

What about my Jewishness? Being a Jew has been more meaningful to me than ever before. I understand how all the sacrifices of the Tenach point to a Jewish Messiah. He is the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," but first He came as the "Lamb of God."

Now, whenever I hear the songs of Christmas, it doesn't remind me of my natural birthday. Oh, I still celebrate my birthday, but Christmas reminds me of my real birthday—the day Christ came into my heart and really gave me life. □

ABMJ missionary Harry Burgen has since gone to be with the Lord. Herb Jaffe continues to work on a volunteer basis with the ABMJ in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



At this time of year all of us become more tax-conscious. In gathering tax data to itemize contributions for their 1983 income tax returns, all United States citizens should list gifts to this ministry as donations to the AMERICAN BOARD OF MISSIONS TO THE JEWS, INC. Even though you may have made gift checks during the year payable to "The Chosen People," "The

Chosen People News Hour" or "Beth Sar Shalom," all such funds have been deposited in the name of ABMJ, which is organized under the nonprofit corporations law of the State of New York. AMERICAN BOARD OF MISSIONS TO THE JEWS, INC. is our official name as recognized by the U.S. Treasury Department.

Canadian citizens should record gifts in the name of BETH SAR SHALOM MISSION, INC., the official name of our ministry in that country. Receipts issued under this registered name are recognized as tax-deductible by the Canada Department of National Revenue.

There is still ample time before year's end to make current gifts of cash, stocks and bonds which can be deductible on 1983 tax returns. However, deferred gifts—gift annuities, life estate agreements for residences or farms, trusts funded with appreciated securities or real property—all require more time to consider, arrange and prepare. We recommend that interested persons begin now to make inquiry for 1984 tax planning.

For confidential assistance, please call or write:
The President, ABMJ, Box 2000, Orangeburg, NY 10962
(914) 359-8535.

Questions and Answers

by DR. HENRY J. HEYDT

QUESTION: Apart from the requirements of fulfilled prophecy, why should the virgin birth of Christ have been necessary?

ANSWER: At least two reasons may be pointed out as necessitating the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, one dealing with each advent: His redemptive work and His throne rights.

The first has to do with the *nature* of the Lord Jesus Christ. To fulfill the work of Redeemer He had to be both man, because it was man who had sinned, and God, if He would be a sufficient Savior for all who would accept Him. One man, however good, could not die for all. So, God had to become flesh and dwell among us. But He could not partake of the sinful nature of man which is imputed by natural generation from Adam (Rom. 5:12-14) and accomplish this redemption, and so the miracle of the virgin birth was necessary.

The second has to do with His *right* to reign on the throne of David. This had been promised but Satan succeeded in so corrupting the royal line that God, in His justice, pronounced a curse upon Coniah (Jeconiah) cutting off all throne rights from his seed (Jer. 22:30). Joseph, the husband of Mary,

was of this line (Mt. 1:11, 16) so the curse of Coniah was upon him and would have been upon the Christ had Joseph been his actual father. But Mary was of the line of David through David's son Nathan. See Lk. 3:31 (Luke gives Mary's line but uses her husband's name in her place in 3:23 according to Jewish custom). So, by the virgin birth the curse was bypassed while the actual blood line was preserved. By the marriage of Joseph to Mary the legal rights were also maintained.

QUESTION: If a member of a Jewish family accepts the Lord Jesus Christ, does he have any contact with his non-Christian relatives?

ANSWER: The strong love the Christian Jew has for the Lord Jesus Christ and for his family prompts him to make every attempt to keep in contact with them and to lead them to the Lord. This is often beset with many difficulties and sorrows, but the Lord gives wisdom and grace, and we are thankful that many have come to know the Messiah through relatives who followed the example of Andrew, Simon Peter's brother (Jn. 1:40, 41).

QUESTION: Please give the chronological order of events from the birth of Christ to the return from Egypt, and explain the difference between Matthew 2 and Luke 2.

ANSWER: Neither Matthew nor Luke gives the full details of the events at the time of our Savior's birth, but they supplement each other. There is a time break between Lk. 2:38 and verse 39 during which the wise men had come and the flight into Egypt had taken place. The order of events was as follows:

1. The arrival at the inn and the birth of Christ, Lk. 2:4-7
2. The arrival of the shepherds, Lk. 2:15-16
3. The circumcision when eight days were fulfilled, and the presentation at the Temple in Jerusalem 32 days later, Lk. 2:21-38
4. Back in Bethlehem the family is found abiding in a house when the wise men arrive, Mt. 2:1-12
5. The flight into Egypt, Mt. 2:13-18
6. The return to Nazareth after Herod's death, Mt. 2:19-23; Lk. 2:39
7. The period of childhood follows, Lk. 2:40

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