

# The Chosen People

MAY 1984 ISSN 0164-5323



## Jerusalem, My Turning Point.

THE TESTIMONY OF  
MARLENE LEWIS





## The Chosen People

**"Happy birthday, Israel!"** No sooner had the words left my mouth than I realized that Israel's thirty-sixth anniversary, celebrated this month, would in all reality not be a happy one.

Israel's troops continue to sustain heavy casualties as her armed forces have been forced, because of political pressure, to remain in Lebanon. The so-called peace plans have failed, and Israel continues to remain an isolated state in the midst of hostile neighbors.

There is no happiness where Israel's economy is concerned either. Inflation continues to run rampant. The continuing devaluation of the shekel is bringing the tiny nation of Israel to the brink of fiscal disaster.

Happiness is not seen in the faces of many Israelis as they live daily with the perpetual struggle against terrorism, both religious and political. No, it is not a happy birthday for Israel.

We are reminded in the Bible to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. "They shall prosper that love thee" (Ps. 122:6). The psalmist then went on to state, "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good" (vv. 7-9).

We as believers know that true happiness and peace can only come when the Lord Jesus, the Prince of Peace, is recognized.

How thankful we are for the testimony of our faithful missionaries, who are declaring to the Jewish people that they can have peace within, through the Lord Jesus. Whether they are ministering in Israel, South America, Europe, the United States or Canada, our missionaries are faithfully and lovingly bringing the message of salvation, joy and peace to the Jewish people.

This was vividly demonstrated a few weeks ago when Israel Cohen went to Rochester, New York, to teach his monthly Bible class. After a time of prayer and study together, they went out door to door in order to witness to the Jewish people.

On this particular Friday evening, one Jewish man felt led to stay home and not go to his synagogue. In God's perfect timing, and by God's direction, they knocked at this man's door. He was open and receptive to the Gospel. That evening, he accepted Jesus as his Messiah and Savior. For the first time in his life, he experienced the joy and happiness of having his sins forgiven.

"Happy birthday, Israel!" Perhaps one of these days when the Messiah, the Prince of Peace, returns, her birthday will be happy. In the meantime, because of your prayers and your faithful support, we can continue to send our missionaries to all Jews everywhere, proclaiming the Gospel message. Proclaiming the fact that, despite persecution, warfare, economic unrest and the sinful condition of mankind, one can find peace through the Lord Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Let us pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Let us help to usher in that happy birthday!

Shalom, shalom,

HAROLD A. SEVENER

*THE CHOSEN PEOPLE is published monthly (except August) as a medium of information concerning the Jewish people, Israel and the work of the American Board of Missions to the Jews, Inc., 100 Hunt Road, Orangeburg, New York 10962.*

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MAY 1984, Vol. XC, No. 9,  
THE CHOSEN PEOPLE (ISSN 0164-5323)  
published monthly except August.  
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paid at Orangeburg, N.Y. and at additional  
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a copy. CREDITS: Contact, 3, 4, 5; Photo  
Researchers, 6 (Arthur Tress); YIVO, 8.





# Why We Need To Understand ISLAM

by Harold A. Sevener

A giant mushroom-shaped cloud hung with ominous silence over the Judean mountainside. The cloud blocked out the sun. The day quickly became enshrouded in darkness. The searing, scorching wind quickly devastated the landscape. In the strange, eerie silence it seemed nothing could survive. Devastation and death reigned supreme. The world was plunged into Armageddon.

Speaking of that future day in Israel, the prophet Zephaniah wrote, "That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness" (Zeph. 1:15).

The prophet Joel caught a glimpse of that awesome day when he wrote, "And I will shew wonders in the

heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come" (Joel 2:30, 31).

Such is the biblical account of the final scenario—the final battle of the nations which plunges the world into Armageddon.

According to God's Word, this final period begins with increasing conflict in the Middle East. Right now, fighting continues to erupt in Lebanon, bringing with it the potential for a major confrontation between the superpowers—Russia and the United States. I believe that the world today is poised on the brink of nuclear Holocaust and with it the awesome and climactic battle of Armageddon. Since the establishment

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of the nation of Israel in 1948, there has been a steady buildup of nuclear armament by the superpowers of the world. It would appear that the Middle East will become the testing ground for those weapons.

What is causing this buildup of tension in the Middle East? A few years ago, some Bible teachers stated that it would be the rich oil fields that would draw Russia and the Western nations into Israel. Others said it would be the riches of

to be the collective revelation of God to Muhammad, and thus to be the literal "word of God." There is also the *Sunna*, which is the practice of the prophet. It is believed that Muhammad was divinely inspired in all his deeds and sayings. These were handed down by oral tradition (*Hadith*). They were later collected and given authority second only to the Koran. It is from these two sources, then, that the Islamic religion, life style and practices have developed.

Unlike other religions, Islam has no priesthood, but it does have the *ulema*, which literally means "the learned." The *ulema* are the authorized interpreters of the Koran and of its application to everyday life. The *ulema* supply the *muftis*, who are officially charged to give *fatwas* (or rulings) on problems of doctrine and law, and the *qadis*, or judges, who administer the holy law (*Sharia*).

Islam has five tenets which serve as the "pillars of Islam." They are (1) the profession of faith contained in the formula, "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet"; (2) prayer, consisting chiefly of five daily ritual prayers which the believer must perform facing in the direction of Mecca, wherever he finds himself, and prayers in the mosque on Friday; (3) alms; (4) fasting; and (5) pilgrimage.

Other tenets of Islam are circumcision; abstention from alcohol; and a ban on certain kinds of meat, such as pork; and on gambling and usury. After the death of Muhammad in A.D. 1632, a dispute arose over the succession of the prophet between the two major Islamic divisions. These two divisions are the *Sunnis* and the *Shi-ites*. The *Sunnis* are the followers of the "*Sunna*," which is the practice of the prophet. They compose the great majority of Muslims in almost all countries. The second group, the *Shi-ites*, take their name from the party of Ali (Shiat Ali). This group believes that Muhammad should have been succeeded by his son-in-law and cousin, Ali.

The *Shi-ites* are further divided into two distinct groups—moderate

Muslims and extreme Muslims. The extremist groups include the *Ismailis*, the *Druzes* and the *Alawis*, also called the *Nusayris*, and have been popularized in recent years with the rise of the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran. He and his followers are members of the extremist Shi-ite sect. The former Shah of Iran was a member of the Sunni sect.

It is this religious struggle between the Sunni and Shi-ite Muslims that is fueling the fire for armed conflict in the Middle East. This is apparent in the present conflict in Lebanon, where the fanatical Druze militiamen, along with fanatical Shi-ite and Sunni Muslim followers, are fighting one another for control of the government. It is in every sense a religious war, based upon the ideological and the theological teachings and interpretation of the Koran.

The inability of the Western nations to maintain a peace-keeping force in Lebanon is directly related to the teachings of the Koran. The Koran teaches, "The unbelievers among the People of the Book [the Jews] and the

**"The Koran envisions a day when the entire world will be Muslim: 'The day will surely come when the unbelievers will wish that they were Muslims.'"**

**KORAN; AL-HIJR, 15:1-3**

the Dead Sea. While these certainly could be possibilities, let me suggest that the buildup of tension in the Middle East is directly related to an ideological and theological war that has been raging in the minds and hearts of men for centuries.

The armed conflict is the result of this ideological battle; it is not the root. This ideological and theological struggle centers around the revival of the militant Islamic faith. To understand what is happening and perhaps try to prevent the minute hand of the doomsday clock from moving another minute closer to the midnight hour, we need to learn something about the Islamic world.

The term *Islam* is an Arabic word which originally means "submission." In a religious sense, it refers to those who believe that Muhammad is the final revelation of God's will to humanity and that the *Koran* is the word of God, given through Muhammad to mankind.

The word *Islam* also defines the social, cultural, legal and political system that has grown up around this religious belief. The Koran is believed by Muslims





pagans shall burn for ever in the fire of Hell. They are the vilest of all creatures.

"But of all creatures those that embrace the Faith and do good works are the noblest. Allah will reward them with the gardens of Eden, gardens watered by running streams, where they shall dwell for ever."

Koran, The Proof, 98:7, 8.

**T**he Koran sanctions war against all unbelievers. It states, "When you meet the unbelievers in the battlefield strike off their heads and, when you have laid them low, bind your captives firmly. Then grant them their freedom or take ransom from them, until War shall lay down her armour.

"Thus shall you do. Had Allah willed, He could Himself have punished them; but He has ordained it thus that He might test you, the one by the other.

"As for those who are slain in the cause of Allah, He will not allow their works to perish. He will vouchsafe them guidance and ennoble their state; He will admit them to the Paradise He has made known to them."

Koran, Muhammad, 47:4-8.

The Koran envisions a day when the entire world will be Muslim: "The day will surely come when the unbelievers will wish that they were Muslims. Let them feast and make merry; and let their hopes beguile them. They shall know the truth.

"Never have We destroyed a nation whose term of life was not ordained

beforehand. Men cannot forestall their doom, nor can they retard it."

Koran, Al-Hijr, 15:1-3.

The Koran teaches that a true believer in Allah does not make friends with those who have fought against Islam. "Allah does not forbid you to be kind and equitable to those who have neither made war on your religion nor driven you from your homes. Allah loves the equitable. But He forbids you to make friends with those who have fought against you on account of your religion and driven you from your homes or abetted others so to do. Those that make friends with them are wrongdoers."

Koran, She Who Is Tested, 60:8-10.

The fanaticism which leads to such suicide and terrorist attacks upon peace-keeping forces in Lebanon is revealed in the Koran where it states, "Allah and His apostle are free from obligation to the idolaters. If you repent it will be well with you; but if you give no heed, know that you shall not escape His judgement.

"Proclaim a woeful punishment to the unbelievers, except those idolaters who have honoured their treaties with you and aided none against you. With these keep faith, until their treaties have run their term. Allah loves the righteous.

"When the sacred months are over slay the idolaters wherever you find them. Arrest them, besiege them, and lie in ambush everywhere for them."

Koran, Repentance, 9:3-6.

**T**he Koran teaches the only solution for dealing with unbelievers is a holy war. For those who do make war on the unbelievers, they are guaranteed a place in paradise. The Koran states, "Allah has purchased of the faithful their lives and worldly goods and in return has promised them the Garden. They will fight for His cause, slay, and be slain. Such is the true pledge which He has made them in the Torah, the Gospel and the Koran. And who is more true to his promise than Allah? Rejoice then in the bargain you have made. That is the supreme triumph."

Koran, Repentance, 9:110, 111.

When one has been brought up on such teachings, and when men who believe such teachings are in positions

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**"The inability of the Western nations to maintain a peace-keeping force in Lebanon is directly related to the teachings of the Koran."**





**“The Koran teaches the only solution for dealing with unbelievers is a holy war.”**

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of power and authority, the world will be thrown into an ideological and theological struggle that can only result in armed conflict. This is the present struggle going on in the Middle East. Unless God intervenes, it will continue to escalate until we are faced with Armageddon.

What can we do? First of all, we can pray. We should be praying for the salvation of those in the Shi-ite and Sunni movements. We should be praying for the salvation of the Israelis. We should be praying for the salvation of the nations who are presently involved in the Middle East struggle. We should bear witness to the reality of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. By proclaiming the message of the Lord Jesus, we demonstrate love, not armed conflict. We should actively support the spread of the Word of God to the Muslim world, so that they may have Bibles, tracts and other materials that relate to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in Arabic.

At the same time we should see that the Israelis receive Hebrew New Testaments, tracts and literature relating to the finished work of Christ at Calvary. Peace can only come to the Middle East through the Person and power of the Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ. We need to make Him and His message known. You can help us accomplish this task. Pray for us and for our missionaries as we seek to bring the Gospel, not only to the Jew, but to the Muslim world as well.

If we do nothing, the day will surely come when a giant mushroom cloud. . .

□



The  
Tenement  
Only God Could  
Love.





**"If you're not out of here in two minutes, I'll throw you down the steps head first!"  
My "friend" shook his fist and spat obscenities.  
"Perhaps I should leave this building," I thought.**

By SEYMOUR BOTTSTEIN,  
MISSIONARY, NEW YORK

"If you're not out of here in two minutes, I'll throw you down the steps head first!"

I was knocking on doors in an apartment house in Jackson Heights, a section of Queens, New York City. My "friend" shook his fist and spat obscenities and for a second I even got a little nervous. I envisioned myself being hurled down the stairs—certainly no one in this building would care. Doors slammed and hateful voices screamed the foulest of epithets as I continued to call on other apartments explaining the Good News. I felt as though I had stumbled upon a fortress erected against the Word of God.

Discouragement began to set in. "Perhaps I should leave this building," I thought.

Yet this was not merely a building of 48 apartments. Somewhere behind one of these doors was someone hungry for God. Deep down I felt determination welling up inside me, lifting my depression. I sat down for a moment right there in the hallway and prayed.

"Lord, I know You have something in mind. I believe I am here for You. Please show me what to do, lead me to a home where the way has been prepared."

I headed for another door. Reaching for the doorbell, I remembered that the Lord was in control and I prayed for these people.

"What are you selling?" A woman in her thirties stood there, smiling, but cautious.

"I'm not selling anything. I'm a missionary and I've come with a free gift and good news."

"I don't understand. Please come in."

She led the way through the hallway and into the living room. An older man, whom she introduced as her father, sat off to one side of the room, deeply involved in a book. I realized it was a prayer book and then noticed he was wearing the prayer shawl which Orthodox Jews wear when they pray. Her mother was sewing in another part of the room, a basket and some clothes neatly arranged at her feet. They smiled at me but went on with their business.

The woman introduced herself as Anna and explained they had come from

Russia only six months before. She knew English but her parents didn't. Her father spoke Yiddish, which, fortunately, I also speak. Anna explained they were Orthodox Jews who knew nothing of Jesus. Because Bibles were not allowed in Russia, they had never read the New Testament, nor had they ever heard of Jews who believe in Jesus.

I explained my beliefs to Anna, sharing Scriptures and Messianic prophecies. I told her of the living God, of Jesus the Messiah, and showed her the Scriptures which spoke of Him. When we read Isaiah 53, I asked, "Anna, who do you think this talks about?"

Anna's eyes filled with tears. "How can I know God?" she asked. "I want to find Him; I want to receive His gift."

Anna's mother and father, apparently oblivious to Anna's emotional confession, continued reading and sewing. Anna and I bowed our heads, and she pleaded words I will never forget, "O God, whom I haven't served nor ever known, come into my life."

As if moved by the Spirit, her father suddenly looked at her. He spoke in Russian. "He wants to know what I'm doing," she told me. Speaking rapidly, she quickly explained to her father what she had done. "I told him I'm accepting Jesus and will be with God for eternity," she smiled.

"What will happen next?" I wondered. "Will this mild man be the one to throw me down the stairs?" Then he spoke to me in Yiddish. "Show me what you have shown my daughter. Teach me the Bible too," he asked.

"Could this really be happening?" I thought. We opened his Bible to Isaiah 53. He read it and called his wife over to discuss it. Anna's father asked his wife in Russian if the passage talked of Jesus.

As Anna's mother and father continued to discuss Isaiah 53, I could tell by the nodding of their heads that they understood that this passage spoke of the Messiah. He turned toward Anna, speaking excitedly in Russian.

"My father says he has never seen this before. He can't believe what his eyes tell him," Anna said.

Then her father turned to me. "Tell me more verses which teach of the Messiah," he asked. His heart was like a parched land in a spring rain. As I shared the words of life with him, he patiently interpreted everything for his wife who also sat transfixed by the message of Scripture.

Anna's father took my hand. "Do you think," he asked quietly, "Jesus would allow me to wear my yarmulke and prayer shawl while I accept Him?"

My heart leaped! I assured him that it was the attitude of his heart that mattered, and I grasped his hand. Together we prayed and he asked Jesus into his life.

Until this point, his wife had stood silently by, but now she demanded to know what was happening. Anna's father explained to his wife he had been born again. Anna conferred with her mother and then shared with me that now her mother also wanted eternal life.

"Tell my father what she should say, so he can tell her in Russian how to pray," Anna begged. The message went first in Yiddish and then in Russian as Anna's mother also prayed to accept the Lord.

Then a sad look crossed Anna's face. "My 14-year-old son is not here today. Could you come back so he can hear this good news too?" Of course I agreed, and we spent several minutes talking about the new Lord in their lives. By the time I was ready to go, they were all talking animatedly about this "miracle" they had never heard about but had still experienced!

When I returned a week later, to speak with Anna's teenage son, they were even more joyful. I wondered what Anna's 14-year-old would think of it all, considering that he was at an age when both materialism and scepticism were big influences.

I need not have wondered. He was eager to know God! With his entire family looking on, he asked Jesus into his life. Tears rolled down every cheek in the room, including my own. I could almost hear the angels rejoicing.

Four new souls had entered the family of God. Four souls behind a blank door in an apartment building which had almost defeated me. As I walked out, I knew I would never forget this day and the lesson it taught me: When you hit bottom, that's the time to ask the Lord for a miracle! □



# The HOLOCAUST: Setting the Record Straight.

by Dr. Daniel Fuchs

The new state of Israel is 36 years old. It seems it was only yesterday when, on May 14, 1948, we listened to the radio as the nations of the world were polled one by one and Israel was finally admitted to the United Nations. We thought that the Holocaust was over.

We forget so easily. We have already forgotten what the Holocaust was. *Holocaust* is the term used to describe the Nazi extermination of more than six million Jews during World War II. It's so easy to say "six million Jews." It might help us begin to visualize this horror by reading the description of one large mass grave. There were hundreds of others. (Remember, a kilometer is five-eighths of a mile.)

"It was discovered that this trench, one kilometer in

length, four meters wide, and two meters deep, was filled to overflowing with bodies of women, children, old men, and boys and girls in their teens. Near the trench were frozen pools of blood. Children's caps, toys, ribbons, torn off buttons, gloves, milkbottles, and rubber comforters, small shoes, galoshes, together with torn off hands and feet, and other parts of human bodies, were lying nearby. Everything was spattered with blood and brains."

*Trial of Major War Criminals*, vol. 7, p. 494.

On May 14, 1948, we thought the fires of Auschwitz had been quenched, that the Holocaust was history, not prophecy. But let's face the facts. The fires of Auschwitz did not satiate the bloodthirstiness of the anti-Semites! In the 1930s, it was one nation, Germany; now, in the 1980s, more than half the nations in the United Nations would happily destroy Israel. Israel no longer faces Auschwitz; she faces Armageddon!

Evangelical Protestantism has not learned much from the Holocaust. True, it has bolstered our faith in some of our teaching. Auschwitz proves that the Bible is right in stressing the fundamental sinfulness of man. Apart from God's grace, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (Isa. 64:6). As a corollary to this truth, we have proof of the utter inability of humanism to solve human problems.

"... There is none righteous, no, not one: There is





none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable: there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10-12).

The Holocaust also gives credibility to the New Testament teaching "on a final heading up of human sin led by one called 'the man of sin,' 'the antichrist' or 'the Beast.' Auschwitz showed that while God will guarantee that evil will not finally triumph, yet He permits human sin to work itself out in all its beastliness."

H. L. Ellison.

Auschwitz should remind us that there will be a Holocaust in the future. I believe that "the man of sin" will use the same methods that Hitler used.

We forget that Adolf Hitler was a deeply religious man. He said, "I believe that I am acting in accordance with the will of the Almighty Creator by defending myself against the Jews, I am fighting for the work of the Lord." Hitler was not the first, nor the last, ruler of the world who justified his persecution of the Jews in the name of God.

**H**itler was able to enlist the writings of thousands of theologians, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Liberal and Orthodox—whose main thesis was one of the greatest lies of history; namely, that the Jewish people murdered our Lord and that the destruction of Jerusalem, which followed 40 years later, was the punishment for this crime. This was not enough punishment, they believed. From that time on, they said, "the Jewish people were dispersed (*Diaspora* in Greek) all over the face of the earth, never to return to Palestine." They were to be a continual witness to the wrath of God because of the Crucifixion!

It is evident that these so-called Christian Nazis who tried to lend "Christian meaning to the struggle against Judaism" in the Third Reich read a lot of books on history and theology but they didn't show much evidence of having seen the New Testament. One of them was Gerhard Kittel (son of Rudolf Kittel, the brilliant German scholar), who is the author of the 12-volume *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, a work of great scholarship and bitter anti-Semitism. Gerhard Kittel stated that "Authentic Jewry remains faithful to the symbol of the restless and homeless alien who wanders the earth."

We have come to expect this brand of theology from Nazi theologians, but what about anti-Nazi theologians? Karl Barth was as courageously anti-Nazi as anyone who ever lived. Of the Jews he says, "According to all the rules of world history they should have disappeared from the international scene after the fall of Jerusalem of our era [ed. because of the so-called Dispersion]. Why were they not swallowed up in the sea of other peoples? . . . There is good reason to wonder seriously whether, after the year 70, one still has a right to talk about a common history of the Jews."

It seems from these quotes that the oft-repeated lie that the Diaspora of Israel was dated in A.D. 70 and was God's punishment for the Crucifixion, was repeated time and time again so that even theologians thought it was in the Bible. It is not!

Eusebius is called the Father of Church history. In the first paragraph of his Church history, he gives his

purpose: "To recount the misfortunes which immediately came upon the whole Jewish nation in consequence of their plots against our Savior."

In early Church history there is one example after another of the Church "fathers" justifying the persecution of the Jews because of the Crucifixion. So Origen writes, "It accordingly (because they committed a crime of the most unhallowed kind) behoved the city where Jesus underwent these sufferings to perish utterly, and the Jewish nation overthrown." The venerable St. Augustine in his most noted treatise, "The City of God," says, "But the Jews who rejected him, and slew him, after that were miserably spoiled by the Romans and dispersed over the face of the whole earth."

Hitler's theologians had thousands and thousands of quotations to bolster their vicious brand of theology. I don't know if Hitler ever read the Church fathers, but his teachers did.

The sad thing is that even our own teachers, many of whom we deeply respect and admire, have been innoculated with the same virus. For instance, Andrew Jukes, in his otherwise excellent book, *Types in Genesis*, says about Cain and Abel:

"I add but a word on the dispensation fulfillment of this. In this view the two seeds, the elder and the younger, are the Jew and the Christian church. That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural.

"First came the fleshly dispensation, and then the spiritual. The Jew seeking to improve the earth; Christ and the church giving a life to God. The Jew slaying righteous seed, which yet is raised up; the Church dying in hope of resurrection.

"Both of these are Adam's sons; both acknowledge the same one God, though in very different life and worship; the one, departing to be with Christ; the other, going out 'from the presence of the Lord' as 'fugitives and vagabonds in the earth'; finding no ease or rest for the sole of their feet, and fearing, where no fear is, that everyone that findeth them shall slay them; but, like Cain, providentially preserved, for the Jew has a mark set upon him, lest he be slain."

pp. 99, 100.

It is interesting to discover Mr. Jukes' source of information—certainly it is not the Bible. It is the same Saint Augustine quoted above. In a footnote, Mr. Jukes states, "Augustine . . . goes very fully into the dispensation application of all this history, dwelling particularly on the fact that the Jew like Cain, was preserved, and had a mark set on him."

**W**e must answer this subtle error. First, the Jewish people did not crucify our Lord. There is absolutely no justification for this canard in the New Testament. Please don't misunderstand, there were some people who were Jewish who plotted His death. Those people are guilty, and unless they accepted the Lord, they must face God's judgment throne. The extent of their culpability is clearly stated by Peter; who did not relieve them of their responsibility.

"The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of

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# Jerusalem, My Turning Point.

*Marlene wanted to know  
the truth; about God,  
about the Messiah.  
But was she really  
ready to accept it?*

I grew up in a Conservative Jewish home in the Bronx where being Jewish meant eating gefilte fish and matzah balls. That's it. We never talked about God because basically none of us believed He existed. I remember once, when I was afraid to sleep because I thought I would die, I asked my mother, "What is life? Is this all we do? Do we live and then die?"

My mother just answered, "Yes, that's it."

As I grew up, I kept looking for meaning in life. Even though there were a lot of things my parents taught me about being good and caring for others, I saw that people were not like that. They were very selfish and just didn't care about anyone else.

When I was 24, a girlfriend and I went to





Israel for the summer. Everywhere we went people said things like, "This is where King David did such and such." I didn't even know who King David was. Sure, I could speak Yiddish and Hebrew and I knew about Jewish foods, but I didn't know about the Bible.

One day we went to the Western Wall and my girlfriend ran up to it and started praying. I thought, "I don't believe it."

We've been friends for years and she never mentioned God and here she is praying." Then I looked around. There were almost 200 people praying there. I thought, "Are they right? Does God exist?"

I went to the Wall and said, "God, are You there? If You exist, then I want to know because everything I'm doing is wrong. But if You don't exist that's okay, too, because You won't answer this prayer." Nothing happened that day or the rest of the time I was in Israel, but when I got back to New York I developed an overwhelming desire to understand Israel and Judaism. I bought a Bible. Actually it was a Catholic Bible, but I didn't know the difference.

I was so  
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*page*



*C. Hayward*



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enthralled that I read it five or six hours a day. When I got to the New Testament, I thought, "Well, Jesus says some really nice things." I even read the Sermon on the Mount to my mother, but I didn't understand who He was and I didn't know that the word *Christ* meant "Messiah."

After reading Matthew, I thought, "Jesus was a nice guy but they made up a whole big fabrication about Him being God and all." I went back to the Old Testament and continued to read it like crazy.

Pretty soon I became an Orthodox Jew because I thought, "If God wants me to follow the Law, I can do that much for Him." I went to synagogue every week and I ate only kosher food. My parents thought I was crazy but I didn't care. Until then, I had gone my way, but now I wanted to follow God. I read everything I could get my hands on about Judaism, the Law and the rabbinic writings. I wanted to know as much about God as possible.

After a couple of months, I decided that God was calling me back to Israel. I

After a while, two of them just seemed to disappear. The remaining girl, Sharon, and I started talking.

I talked a lot about God. I was frustrated because no one I met in Israel believed in God. Sharon said she also had met very few people in Israel who acknowledged God.

"Are you Jewish?" I asked her.

"No. I'm a Christian," she replied.

"What? A Catholic or a Protestant?"

"No, I'm a Christian," she stated again.

I figured Christians fell into only two categories, but she told me she was a Christian because of what she believed. I remember feeling very threatened and angry. I wanted her to shut up, but she was so nice that I just let her talk. One thing that really interested me was when she said there were prophecies in the Old Testament that Jesus fulfilled.

When I returned to the kibbutz, I was reading the book of Isaiah and I read Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name

a lot of times before. I told her about Sharon and the verse, and she said, "Well, of course, that's Jesus."

I practically screamed at her, "What do you mean, 'Of course, that's Jesus!' How can you be so sure?"

She told me she believed in Jesus and then she pulled out a Bible. I had roomed with this girl for weeks and had never seen her with a Bible, but here she was showing me Isaiah 53.

I was so shocked I just looked at her and said, "I've got to read this again." Then I read it and suddenly, even though I knew nothing about Jesus, I knew this was Him. But it threatened my whole existence and the reason I was in Israel. Still, I knew if it was the truth, I wanted to know about it.

Then Caroline said, "Why don't you ask God to show you the truth? You know

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**"I hid the New Testament from my parents, but at night, when we were in the hotel, I read Matthew for the second time. I was really falling in love with Jesus!"**

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wanted to be part of the land, so I moved to a kibbutz. Thoughts kept coming to me like, "How come God spoke to Moses and David but not to me?" and "Why aren't there prophets anymore?" I had a lot of questions, but even though I kept asking, God didn't seem to answer.

After about a month on a kibbutz, I had a couple of days off, so I decided to go to Ein Gedi, a mountain region. There were signs warning not to walk alone because of wild animals, so when I saw three girls I went over and asked if I could join them.

shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." I knew this was one of those verses Sharon talked about.

I kept it all inside me, but I was getting very upset. About a week later I started talking to my roommate, Caroline, about it. She was a Catholic, and I figured since she was in Israel studying Hebrew and Judaism that she was going to convert. Though we had talked about God, she never, never mentioned Jesus.

So we got into a discussion like we had





God brought you to Israel and He's been taking care of you, so why don't you ask Him?"

I went outside and looked at the stars. I prayed, "Are You trying to tell me something? For the past six days of my life I've read these two Scriptures, then I meet a Christian, and now my roommate tells me she's one too. If this is what You want, I want one more person to tell me. I want it to be a guy and he will come to my kibbutz and say he's a Christian. Plus, he'll have books explaining how the Old Testament fits in with the New. If You want me to forget about Jesus, then have him bring books about Judaism."

The very next day there was a knock on the door of my room and some guy walked in. It turned out that Greg knew Caroline from Europe, but he hadn't seen her in three or four months. He immediately started talking about Jesus.

"Ugh," I thought, "another Christian," not even thinking about my prayer. He started talking about books and said he had some that I would like. He pulled out *Mere Christianity*, *Basic Christianity* and a couple of others. Then Caroline said, "Oh, I've got another book you'd like," and she handed me *Christianity Is Jewish*. I ran out of the room crying, "Oh, no! O, my God. It can't be. God, it can't be. Show me something else."

I read the books, and through each of them God was speaking to me. I still hadn't made a decision when my parents wired that they were going to visit Israel. I decided to leave the kibbutz and travel with them. Caroline gave me a New Testament and off I went.

I hid the New Testament from my parents, but at night, when we were in the hotel, I read Matthew for the second time. I was really falling in love with Jesus! The day we were in Jerusalem at the Western Wall, I just had to go up to it and say hello to God. Before I knew it, I was saying, "Jesus, I believe." As that happened, I felt a wonderful release. All my sin and anxiety disappeared. Suddenly, I knew Jesus was the Messiah.

When my parents' tour was over, I decided to stay in Jerusalem. One day I was in a restaurant and I saw Sharon, the girl from Ein Gedi. She invited me to

church with her the next day.

It was a beautiful service and moved me a great deal. Afterwards, as we walked out of the Old City, Sharon wanted to take a picture. As I stood there, Greg, my roommate's friend, strolled up. He said he was going to meet Caroline later on. There I was in Jerusalem with everyone who'd played a part in my coming to Jesus.

"So, Marlene," Greg said, "did you read the books I gave you?"

"Yeah," I said.

"Well, have you ever prayed to Jesus?" he asked.

Part of me wanted to say no, but I couldn't. "Yes," I admitted.

He started to jump up and down, saying, "You're born again!"

Then I turned to my roommate, Caroline, "How come you never told me about Jesus before that day?" I asked.

Strangely enough, she told me that the day I met Sharon at Ein Gedi was the day she prayed to receive Christ! She was only a believer four days when she witnessed to me.

God continued to work out all the little details in my life in such a beautiful way. He kept bringing Christians into my life, and after two and a half months He brought me back to America, where I've been able to learn more about Him.

It's amazing that I spent my whole life searching for meaning and now I have found it! Following the Lord gives meaning to life. I always wanted God to speak to me like He did to Moses and David. Now through His Word and my personal relationship with Him, that's just what He does!

---

*Marlene Lewis is a schoolteacher in her late twenties. She lives in New York City, where she attends ABMJ's Beth Sar Shalom outreach and the Light of Israel congregation in White Plains, New York, pastored by ABMJ missionary, Sam Nadler.*



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Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses . . . And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers" (Acts 3:15, 17).

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**"There are still countless thousands of people who earnestly believe that the Jews were punished by God for the Crucifixion . . ."**

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Those who instigated the Crucifixion not only did it in ignorance, but they were pardoned by our Lord. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34). In any case, it is gross injustice, unbiblical and unhistorical, to say that the Jewish people crucified our Lord. Most of the Jews in Palestine never knew our Lord and those who did, gladly listened to Him.

"St. Matthew, St. Mark and St. Luke all took special care to impress upon their readers the fact that the Jewish people, their own people, were not responsible for, and were for the most part ignorant of, the events which led up to the apprehension, the trial, and condemnation of Christ."

Hay, *Europe and the Jews*, pp. 12, 13.

How complete the Scriptures are on this subject! "Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas. And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast day, LEST THERE BE AN UPROAR AMONG THE PEOPLE" (Mt. 26:3-5) (capitals here and below added).

"And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because ALL THE PEOPLE was astonished at his doctrine" (Mk. 11:18).

" . . . But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him, And could not find what they might do; for ALL THE PEOPLE were very attentive to hear him" (Lk. 19:47, 48).

Yes, there were Jews who were guilty; but there were also Gentiles. "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done" (Acts 4:27, 28).

The question of "Who killed Christ?" makes the emotions of some people boil. We dare not excuse them. We all need the forgiveness of our Lord. We should change the question from "Who killed Christ?" to "What killed Christ?" As far as I personally am concerned, there is only one answer: "My sin!"

It was sin that crucified our Lord. We should realize, however, that the combined efforts of all sinners since the creation of the universe could never have succeeded in crucifying the Lord of life. The death of our Lord is the greatest miracle in history. After Satan did his worst, our

Lord was still alive while hanging on the cross as expressed in each of the Gospels.

"Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost" (Mt. 27:50).

"And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost" (Mk. 15:37).

"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, he gave up the ghost" (Lk. 23:46).

" . . . He said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost" (Jn. 19:30).

Note the phrases "He yielded up," used once, and "He gave up," used three times. As we read the story of Calvary, we see the terrible power of sin at its worst, but there was a limit. If our Lord didn't voluntarily die, He never would have died.

There are still countless thousands of people who earnestly believe that the Jews were punished by God for the Crucifixion when Titus destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and that at that time, God dispersed the Jewish people all over the earth, never to return. When Titus destroyed Jerusalem, more than a million people were brutally massacred. This has been interpreted as part of God's plan of revenge! So Septimius Severus wrote, "The Jews were thus punished and exiled throughout the whole world, for no other account than for the impious hands they laid upon Christ."

**B**riefly, my answer to this canard is threefold. First, the Diaspora of the Jewish people did not begin in A.D. 70. It began in the sixth century before Christ, when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem. We should realize that the Jews never returned entirely from this dispersion. With the return under Cyrus, only a small portion returned. Even at the time of our Lord, only one-third of the Jewish people lived in Palestine.

It is true that this dispersion was punishment for idolatry, but God used it to bring the Gospel to the Gentiles. During the captivity, the Jews saw firsthand the vileness of idolatry. Never since have they tolerated it. During the dispersion, synagogues were built and many Gentiles became Jews. A careful reading of Acts shows that many of the early Gentiles who accepted our Lord did so in the synagogues! The plain and simple fact is that the Diaspora did not begin in A.D. 70.

Second, after the destruction of the Temple, the Jewish people who remained were not scattered all over the world as it is claimed; they were still allowed full rights of domicile in Israel, with the exception of Jerusalem.

Third, from the time of the return under Cyrus there has always been a remnant of Jews in the Land. This bolsters Israel's legal claim to the Land.

No, God does not have a plan of revenge for anyone least of all His chosen people.

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil . . ." (Jer. 29:11).

The acts of sinful man may sometimes prevail but God is even able to use these to serve His purpose. He used the Dispersion to eventually send the Gospel far beyond Judea and Samaria. And from the ashes of the Holocaust, He brought forth the state of Israel.

The only punishment in God's plan is the one we did not bear. He bore it for us. . . . What a Savior! □



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# Questions and Answers

By GARY DERECHINSKY

**QUESTION:** If the Temple is to be rebuilt, does it have to be constructed on the exact spot as the present Mosque of Omar? If not, couldn't both the Mosque of Omar and the Temple coexist in the same area?

**ANSWER:** Scholars are in disagreement concerning the exact location of the Temple site. Some have indicated that it was just to the north of the Mosque of Omar, whereas others are of the opinion that it was just to the west of the Mosque.

These suggestions are based upon the work of Josephus, assuming that he is accurate in his figures and calculations. Until archeologists actually excavate the area, they will not know for certain.

However, even if the Mosque of Omar is not on the exact spot as the Temple, it would still be impossible for both to exist side by side. When speaking of the rebuilding of the Temple, the following two things are in view: (1) the rebuilding of the immediate place of worship, and the Temple proper and (2) the reconstruction of the Temple compound.

The compound area would include what is called Solomon's Porch, as well as a place for the priests and Levites to reside, an area for the officers and judges to officiate, stables for the cattle to be prepared for sacrifice and walking areas for the people to mingle. Add to these the political, sociological and economic tensions that exist between the Arab and Jewish communities in Israel, and the idea that both places of worship could coexist together appears quite unrealistic.

**QUESTION:** What are some references promising the land of Israel to the Jewish people?

**ANSWER:** The following is a list of passages referring to the land promised to the Jewish people: Genesis 12:1-3, 7; 15:18-21; 17:8; Deuteronomy 30:4-5; 2 Samuel 7:4-16; Isaiah 2:1-4; 4:2-6; 11:11-16; 62:1-12; Jeremiah 23:5-8; 31:27-40; Ezekiel 20:33-44; 37:22-28,

40-48; Micah 7:11-20; Zechariah 14:1-21.

**QUESTION:** If a person does not accept Jesus as Savior during his lifetime, will that individual be lost forever or is there the possibility of a second chance?

**ANSWER:** It would appear, on the basis of such passages as Isaiah 66:24; Mark 9:42-50; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 2 Corinthians 2:15, 16; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Hebrews 9:27, that it is during this lifetime that we have opportunity either to accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior or to persist in our estrangement from God and to go into eternity separated from Him forever.

However, it is of equal importance to mention the positive side of this truth. Just as a person who rejects Jesus as Savior and dies has no further opportunity to be saved, a person who does acknowledge Jesus as Savior need never fear of ever being separated from his God (Jn. 10:28-30; 13:1; Rom. 8:28, 29; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:30; Heb. 7:25; 1 Jn. 2:1; 2:25; Jude 24).

**QUESTION:** Could you refer me to Scripture texts which deal with the fulfillment of prophecy concerning Israel at the present time?

**ANSWER:** The overwhelming majority of Scripture texts concerning Israel in prophecy either deal with Israel in the Messianic Age, i.e., the Millennium (Isa. 2:1-4; 4:2-6; 11:11-12:6; 27:1-13; 62:1-12; Jer. 31:27-40; Ezek. 37:1-28; 40-48; Hos. 3:1-5; Amos 9:11-15; Zech. 14:1, 2); or the Tribulation period (Isa. 24:1-23; Jer. 30:1-17; Ezek. 20:33-38; 22-24; Dan. 8:9-14; 9:27; 11:36-12:13; Joel 2:1-11; 3:9-17; Zeph. 3:1-7). Therefore, Scripture texts dealing with current events are lacking.

To be sure the prophets spoke specifically of Israel's dispersion and regathering as a nation prior to the Messianic Age (see Dt. 29:1-29; Isa. 11:11; Ezek. 37:1-14) and many more presuppose these events. However, texts which prophesied of Israel's invasion of Lebanon and the outing of the P.L.O. are nonexistent.





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