UPLOOK

NOVEMBER 1995



Shalom, Haver
Goodbye, Friend

Why You Should Go

See Conference Update on Back Cover

J. B. Nicholson, Jr.



Why You Should Go



Come with me on an armchair trip to Bible Country. No tired feet, no long flight, no fees. Of course it's not quite the same as being there, either.

It's already dark as our 747 thunders in over the Israeli coast at Tel Aviv. I'm here on a ten-day trip with thirty-five others to explore and learn in the land that is like no other.

I never intended on coming even once (pre-rapture), but here I am on another journey to the "holy fields" of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. My first trip to Israel, with my wife, was a gift from friends who wanted to invest in our ministry. I had no idea what it would do for my Bible study. But once I saw the help I could gain from being there, I was quick to encourage others to go.

As we traverse the dusty hills and crowded bypaths of the land, I can almost see Nehemiah walking the ramparts of old Zion or Elijah praying down heaven's pyrotechnics at Carmel. And there are just some things you can't put into words: like the brook chortling its way over the rocks at the Spring of Harod where Gideon's minutemen were selected, or the wind in the myrtles still growing along Emek Rephaim, a sound that was the sure sign of victory for David in his hour of need.

And how can you, without having been there, catch the lively smells of the spices wafting from an Arab souk, or believe the blazing reds and purples of Moses' Nebo at sunset, or understand the thrill of walking by Galilee or musing at Gethsemane, or—dare I say it—singing at Calvary?



A shepherd and his sheep

In spite of the shortness of the trip ahead, the dizzying pace, and the information coming at you so fast you feel you're trying to drink at a fire hydrant, the whole experience is nothing less than exhilarating.

Meeting the Christians who live there, breaking bread with the assembly in Jerusalem on the Lord's Day, witnessing to Jews and Arabs, locals and pilgrims—it is the journey of a lifetime.

Of course, you don't have to travel seven time zones away to understand your Bible. It is far more important to walk *as* our Lord walked than *where* He walked. Much better to look forward to being where He is than seeing where He was. True, all true. However...

Come with me on this journey to get a taste at least of such a tour through the land of Israel from Dan to Beersheba, from Joppa to Jericho, from Bethlehem to Olivet. It is, as I say, only a taste. But it might stimulate your appetite, if not for a journey to Israel, at least for a more serious study of the geography of the Bible, a more vigorous prayer investment for the people who live there, and a greater desire to see the Lord reign there, from the very city whence He was taken to be crucified.

Of course you should go to Israel, and you will go—sooner or later. The way world events are looking, it probably will be sooner than later. As one worker in the land said to me, "The only answer for Israel now seems to be the Antichrist. Jerusalem is a cup of trembling; her leaders are giving away her hard-fought-for land; there could be a civil war. The Lord's coming is surely soon."

Maranatha. Come quickly, Lord Jesus! U

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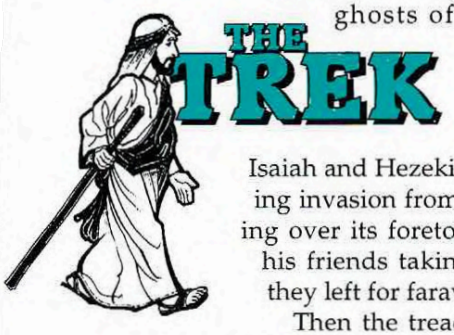
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Peace & Safety

They cry, "Peace, Peace," but there is no peace. Without the Prince of Peace, that is.



Is Middle East peace an oxymoron?* It certainly seems so. Jerusalem (meaning, the city of peace) has heard the march of earth's armies through her streets perhaps more than any other. As Charles Gulston writes in his classic *Jerusalem: the Tragedy and the Triumph*, "It has been said that if blood were indelible, Old Jerusalem would be red, all red. The words, weighed against the stark facts of history, appall in their degree of accuracy. But of course the city is not red. The sun and the rain have erased the scarlet stains. It is tawny-colored, 'the colour of a lion skin,' as H. V. Morton describes it."

The mind can hardly contain the fleeting ghosts of the past while viewing Jerusalem: Joab taking it for David; Solomon displaying it "in all his glory" to Sheba's queen; Isaiah and Hezekiah fortifying it for the coming invasion from the north; Jeremiah weeping over its foretold destruction; Daniel and his friends taking one last, wistful look as they left for faraway Babylon.

Then the treading underfoot during the times of the Gentiles: the glory of the golden-headed Nebuchadnezzar; the proud Persians; the haughty Greeks; Ptolemies and Selucids; and the iron heel of Rome. Then followed the fulfillment of the Saviour's prophecy as He wept over the city that knew not the day of its visitation, "[They] shall lay thee even with the ground" (Lk. 19:44), He lamented.

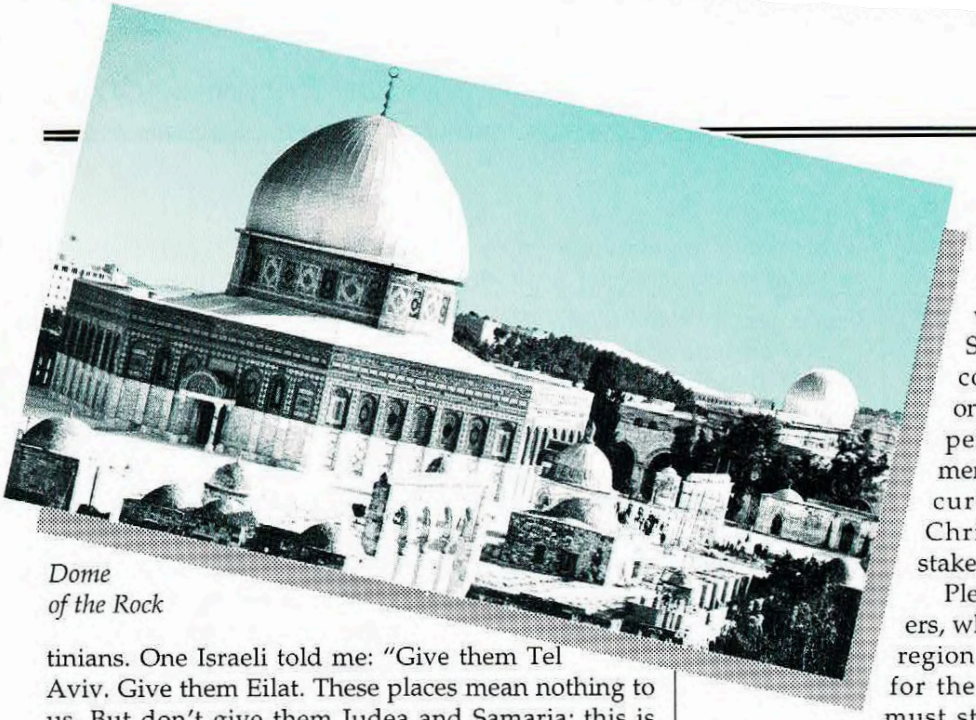
But Jerusalem was rebuilt—by strangers. Hadrian the Roman, Omar, Saladin, Suleiman—Mongul, Mamaluke, Egyptian, Ottoman and British, they were all here. Yet in spite of good intentions and mighty armies, there has been little of real peace here. And the reason? "If thou hadst known," the Lord addresses the city, "even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!"

Gulston concludes: "Instead, you remember, if you are a believer, only that the Prince of Peace died here, and that the full significance of this is beyond human comprehension. Only from a distance, and in retrospect, does the other side of the picture take shape. Stretching back to Abraham, there emerges the portrait of a city unique in its vicissitude of fortunes, its fury and its violence, its perfidy and its glory. And in contemplating a historical record that never fails to amaze and mystify, there comes also the realization that it was on a hill outside these walls that violence climbed to its most awful height. When man put to death the Son of Man, God hid the deed from human eyes for three hours. Nothing could ever again equal the terribleness and monstrous iniquity of that act. Yet in it lay the secret and means of man's redemption."

Almost two millenia have swept their sullen waves against Jerusalem's ramparts. Yet little has changed. The Gentiles still determine, in large part, what happens in The City. The Temple Mount echoes to the cries of a thousand Moslems' prayers. World leaders exert tremendous pressure on the Israeli government to give back Judea, Samaria, Gaza and the Golan. Most countries refuse to acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, leaving their embassies in Tel Aviv (see news report in *What's Going On*, p. 10, on the move to bring the American Embassy to Jerusalem by May of 1999).

Today tension is at fever pitch in Israel over the "land for peace" initiative. Although the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin has been roundly condemned by most across the political spectum, there are many (some polls indicate most) who do not want what they consider their land to be given back to the Pales-

*An oxymoron is defined as a figure of speech with pointed conjunctions of seeming contradictions, e.g. "sovereignty association" or "falsely true."



Dome of the Rock

tinians. One Israeli told me: "Give them Tel Aviv. Give them Eilat. These places mean nothing to us. But don't give them Judea and Samaria; this is our biblical land."

Unfortunately for the sons of Abraham, this land is where the majority of the other sons of Abraham live. And it is not only the territory being given "back" (when did the Palestinians ever have it?), it is also the strategic high ground. If Israel returned to pre-1967 days, their land would return to a strip ten miles wide along the coast joining Galilee with the south, a thoroughly indefensible position.

However, it should be noted that many of the Christians in the Middle East are Arabs living in these territories. The Arab Emmaus correspondence work is sent out from Samaria. If the peace process continues, more than likely one of the first things to happen would be the establishment of a Moslem state and the curtailing or ending of any Christian activity. A lot is at stake.

Please intercede for the believers, whether Jew or Gentile, in this region today. It is not easy. Pray for the Christians' children who must stand virtually alone in the military, in college, in their neighborhoods. Pray for the growing work among Russian Jews and Moslems, both curious to understand what the Bible is all about.

There is a peace being offered in Israel, the only lasting peace. Through quiet witness, book shops, correspondence courses, clinics and charity works, ambassadors for Christ offer men and women God's peace initiative: *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Rom. 5:1). Blessed are the peacemakers. **u**

Shalom, Haver. Goodbye, Friend.

"I'm in shock, total shock," mumbled Tzipora Fein, 60 (as reported in the Nov. 11/95 *Jerusalem Post*). "I can't believe it—it is an utter disaster. How in the world did someone get so close to Rabin? And what in the world are we going to do now?"

What indeed. When Yitzhak Rabin, 73-year-old Prime Minister of Israel, was gunned down at the conclusion of a massive peace rally, it seemed as if the tenuous peace he had been fostering might die with him. The assassin was a Jew, 27-year-old Yigal Amir of nearby Hertzliya. One of the three shots he fired at point-blank range left a blood-spattered hole through the song sheet Rabin had just used to sing "The Song of Peace."



That night, Rabin made the following comments in a speech: "I was a military man for 27 years. I waged war as long as there was no chance for peace. I believe there is now a chance for peace, a great chance, and we must take advantage of it...This rally must broadcast to the Israeli public, to the world Jewish public and to many in the western and outside world that the people of Israel want peace, support peace. Thank you." Ninety minutes later he was dead.

Front Lines

BRINGING IN THE NEW YEAR

Eddie Schwartz (NC) will be the speaker for a New Year's Conference held at Park of the Palms (Keystone Heights, FL) on December 28-31. Other conferences to be held throughout January and February include: David Glock (IA), Dan Smith (IA), Rob Linsted (KS), Donald Hubbard (FL) and William Raws (NJ). Contact:

Park of the Palms
706 Palms Circle
Keystone Heights, FL 32656
(904) 473-4926

WINTER CONFERENCE

The 9th Annual Winter Conference will be held at Galilean Bible Camp (ON) on February 23-25, 1996. J. B. Nicholson (MI) will be speaking. For more information, contact:

James Martin
1761 Rutherglen Cr.
Sudbury, ON P3A 2K4

COMMENDATION

The saints at the Bethel Bible Chapel (Shelburne, ON) have informed *Uplook* that *Terry Smith* has returned to secular employment as a public accountant, and will be no longer serving at Guelph Bible Conference Grounds.

The believers at the Marathon Bible Chapel (Marathon, ON) have commended *Gary Goodkey* for one year to the Lord's work in Peterborough, ON. He will be the administrative assistant to the president of Kawartha Lakes Bible College. He will continue to be involved with Northland Bible Camp near Kirkland Lake, ON.

The believers at Highpoint Bible Chapel (Davenport, IA) have recently commended *Stacy Hawley* and *Jim and Shirley Iverson* to the work of the Lord at the assembly and abroad. Stacey recently completed a two-year missionary term in the Philippines. Jim and Shirley Iverson have served faithfully in the assembly for the past 23 years.

The saints at the Albany Gospel Chapel (Albany, GA) have commended *Robert and Willene Spicer* to the work of the Lord in the US, Canada, and elsewhere as the Lord leads. Robert was commended to the work in 1964 and has continued preaching the Word to the Lord's people for 31 years. His wife, Willene, was active in the assembly from 1953-1965, and has continued to be active in her husband's ministry.

SOME NEW WORKS

Some of the Lord's people in Whitby, ON (25 miles east of Toronto, ON) have started a new assembly. Lynde Creek Bible Chapel commenced meetings on September 17, 1995. The address for the assembly is:

Mr. Kirk Dupre
39 Meadow Crescent
Whitby, ON L1N 3J2

The saints in Davenport, IA have extended a ready welcome to anyone who would like to meet with them in their new assembly. Whether you are passing through the Midwest or are looking for a place to remember the Lord, especially in the Davenport, IA area, contact:

Davenport Bible Fellowship
4014 Greenway Drive
Davenport, IA 52804
(319) 388-0719

DO YOU HAVE A PIONEERING SPIRIT?

Pray for the Lord's work in Sioux Falls, SD. Presently there is one family and one single man meeting to remember the Lord. Pray for the Lord's encouragement on our brethren in South Dakota. If interested, contact:

Tim Jordeson
RR #1, Box 53
Humboldt, SD 57035
(605) 297-4059

CHANGES

The Oak Bay Gospel Assembly (Victoria, BC) has informed *Uplook* that their assembly correspondent has been changed to:

John H. Jobbins
#1 - 3951 Bethel Place
Victoria, BC V8Z 6J2
(604) 744-5068

The saints at South Emporia Bible Chapel (Witchita, KS) have changed name and address to:

Westside Bible Chapel
12050 West Central
PO Box 9323
Wichita, KS 67277-0323
Correspondent: Arnold Burkle
(316) 721-3649

SURFING THE NET

Brother Harold Smith (NS) has set up a Mailbox Club on the Internet and has been getting good worldwide response. If you spend time in cyber space he can be reached at his e-mail address:

<nstn2705@fox.nstn.ca>

A NEW WING

The Board of Directors at Pittsboro Christian Village (NC) have recently approved a new building program which will enable them to increase their care of the Lord's people. This new wing will consist of 12 rooms (14 beds) ranging from independent living to care unit beds. Please pray for God's continued guidance and provision in this undertaking.

MORE THAN GOLD

With the 1996 Summer Olympic Games scheduled to be held in Atlanta, GA, this coming summer, DIME publishers (CA) has introduced its *Interactive Pocket Guide* for mass distribution before and during the Games. With such an excellent response from the "Up for the Cup" booklet, DIME expects many to write for a free Emmaus Correspondence Course and be reached with the gospel. If your assembly would like to have a part in sowing the seed, contact DIME for your supply of the *Interactive Pocket Guide.*

DIME Publishers
PO Box 490
Cupertino, CA 95014
(408) 253-9096
(408) 446-4455 (fax)

FINISHING WELL

Walter Gammon (South Africa) who served the Lord faithfully for over 50 years, first in Angola and later in South Africa, went home to be with the Lord he loved on August 28, 1995. During the past few months our brother's condition weakened, and finally the Lord took him home to rest from his labors. We salute a faithful warrior on his homecall.

On September 7, 1995, *Celoa Brown* (Chile) was called into the presence of her Master, having suffered from many health problems in recent years. Celoa tirelessly labored in Chile for almost 40 years. She will be missed.

Elizabeth Ruth Welstead was born December 11, 1894, and born again in 1907 following a gospel message by William Matthews, an Irish evangelist.

In March 1926, while vacationing in Miami, FL, she met the man who would later become her husband, W. G. Smith, a pioneer preacher from Forfar, Scotland.

In January of 1946, the Smiths moved to North Carolina and labored together in the Burlington assembly. William preceeded his wife Ruth into the Lord's presence in 1976, while Ruth remained a constant inspiration and encouragement to those who knew and loved her. On April 2, 1995, at 100 years of age, Ruth entered the land of the living. Although very frail, she remained conscious until shortly before her death. An hour before she died, she smiled and whispered, "Home."

Jean Mable Bennett passed into the presence of her Lord from her residence at Rest Haven Home (Grand Rapids, MI) on October 14, 1995.

Jean accepted Christ as her Saviour at the age of 11, and was baptized one year later in 1925.

From March 13 to August 5, 1973, she wondered what the Lord's will was for her life, having been bereaved of her husband, George, in 1969.

The Lord finally and graciously answered her prayer through Rest Haven Home. Jean helped in the kitchen and was active in leading the women's Bible study until the spring of this year.

She was a real prayer warrior and a tremendous encouragement to the Lord's people over the years. We will miss her.

Our condolences go out to each of these families during their bereavement.

GRATEFUL TO GOD

The brethren at the Grace Bible Chapel (Niceville, FL) are grateful for the Lord's protection during Hurricane Opal. Despite major devastation to some areas, lives were spared and the chapel and attendees' homes were not disturbed.

The Lord continues to encourage the work in Northwest Florida. Three men now share the teaching responsibilities, and attendance at the meetings is good. A weekly outreach to the community is held each Wednesday night. In late February 1996 they plan to hold special meetings on the book of Revelation with Harry Pilkington (WV).

SING HIS PRAISES

Bethany Bible Chapel (Lanoka Harbor, NJ) invites the Lord's people to a special evening of fellowship and music with Alan Parks (MD) on December 9, 1995. The evening will include a deluxe dinner meal at America's Keswick followed by a sacred concert by Alan Parks. Register early, seating is limited. For more information and cost, contact:

Bethany Bible Chapel
c/o Mark Kolchin
P.O. Box 305
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734

Mark Kolchin



Health Care Information

With the recent announcement that Stewards Foundation is unable to continue to provide self-funded health care coverage for commended workers, effective January 1, 1996, many have asked how they can assist those commended from their assemblies to secure reasonable and adequate coverage while at home or abroad.

Although health insurance needs and regulations may be different in various countries and from state to state, a few important items should be weighed carefully when considering this matter, should coverage be desired:

FOREIGN WORKERS

If serving in a country that offers socialized medicine, there may not be an immediate need to purchase coverage. In countries not having this arrangement it is advisable for the worker to obtain a policy as soon as possible that will offer coverage while working abroad. (In this case, the worker is often considered a national working on foreign soil.)

Some policies allow coverage to commence with payment and a signed application from an authorized individual in the assembly in order to accommodate the worker on the field who may have difficulty in making application expeditiously. Further, it may be necessary for the worker to purchase a short-term policy when returning home for an extended period of time based on that policy's specific provisions. Be advised, however, that the purchase of a short-term policy may constitute a break in coverage and therefore pre-existing conditions may not be covered.

DOMESTIC WORKERS

In the case of the home worker, it is important to determine if there are any specific state-mandated insurance regulations. Some states* have guaranteed issue. Workers in these states have the option of choosing from a number of predetermined insurance coverages set by the state. In this case, it is a matter of locating the company offering the coverage desired at the best price. Workers in these states over age 65 generally are exempted from this requirement and should consider purchasing Medicare B coverage and possibly a supplemental plan to Medicare (such as AARP, BC/BS, etc.).

Otherwise, the home workers residing and working domestically should search for the coverage of their choice, carefully looking to see if the policy they are considering has the following: 1) guaranteed rates for six months, twelve months, or only on a monthly basis; 2) if pre-existing conditions are covered when transferring from the Stewards Foundation plan; and 3) what the potential maximum out-of-pocket expense would be per individual and family.

Foreign workers and home workers in states not offering state-mandated coverages should investigate their options as soon as possible. The best possible scenario is to have the new program begin before the existing self-funded Stewards Foundation plan expires. This may allow some of those with pre-existing conditions to obtain coverage, as well as for all to receive more competitive rates.

CAUTION

In health care there is a variety of choices other than those below. Please check to see if the option you are looking at is subject to state regulations. You can contact the department of insurance for your state, or Stewards Foundation at 1-800-597-6550.

Stewards Foundation is in the process of making the following information available. You may want to investigate the following companies for rate and coverage information:

US Overseas & Over 65: National Association of Evangelicals at 800-488-4302

Overseas Only: International Medical Group at 800-628-4664

Over 65 with Medicare in US Only: AARP (Prudential) at 800-523-5800.

** The following states are listed by the Department of Insurance as those that offer guaranteed issue: Florida, Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Vermont, and Washington.*

What's Going On?

IT'S A SONY—I THINK

Yoichiro Sako, a graduate of Tokyo University, has for the past four years been director of Sony's ESP laboratory. The world according to Sako is full of supernatural phenomena being ignored by "traditional science." Some people believe in the supernatural, but Sako is researching the development of products to incorporate its use. —*Pulse*

HYMN A FEW BARS

Galcom International, The Evangelical Alliance Mission, and CAM International have developed a device that will play any hymn number entered on a keypad, play a requested number of verses, can transpose to higher or lower keys, can play hymns in the alto, tenor, bass, and soprano lines separately, even change tempo, and can play in several musical modes. This product was developed to aid churches where musical accompaniment is not available. Contact Galcom International at (905) 574-4626.

URGENT REQUEST

Milton and Marjorie Haack have asked that the Lord's people pray for their brethren in the Philippines. Torrential monsoon rains have washed huge amounts of volcanic debris from Mt. Pinatubo, flooding and completely covering towns in Pampanga. The Christians from all 16 assemblies are hurting. Please pray!

—*MSC of Canada*

JIHAD REVENGE

Islamic Jihad leader Fathi Shakaki was gunned down in Malta on October 26, 1995. Palestinians blame Israel for his death, and the Islamic Jihad (holy war) has called for revenge against the Mossad, the Israeli Intelligence Agency, as well as Israeli targets around the world.

Intelligence reports indicate that Islamic militants were planning a suicide attack in Israel. As a result the government has tightened restricitions on Palestinians entering the Jewish state. Palestinian students from the Gaza Strip were barred from entering Israel, and cars with Gaza plates were turned away at the border.

Trouble may be brewing over the decision by the United States to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Next year Jerusalem's 3000th year celebration of being the Jewish state's capital will be in full swing. Many Palestinian factions are upset by this decision and see it as a real threat to the peace process. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

PRAYER HANDBOOK

CMML's *1996 Missionary Prayer Handbook* will be available towards the end of December. If you would like to get a copy, all orders must be pre-paid. The cost for the new handbook will be $3.00 US (this price includes shipping via first class mail and handling; quantity discounts available). Contact:

Christian Missions in
Many Lands, Inc.
P.O. Box 13
Spring Lake, NJ 07762-0013
(908) 449-8880

JAILTIME IN NEPAL

On August 21, 1994, eleven Nepali Christians were incarcerated on charges of proselytism. Almost one year later they received two-year sentences. The eleven months they have already spent behind bars will count as time served, however. Five of the 11 are women, with the three youngest being 16, 17, and 18-years of age.

CAVING IN

Archaeologists in Israel claim they have discovered four man-made caves in the chalky hills of Qumran, not far from the former resting place of the Dead Sea scrolls. Excavators are optimistic that the new caves contained more manuscripts written by the Essenes, a Jewish dissident sect.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE?

Was a question that the Far East Christian Communications Association (Oak Park, IL) asked in a survey to China's youth recently. In answer to that survey, 60% of the youths polled said they do not believe communism.

Here is what they said they do believe in:

Science	59%
Truth	53%
Freedom	44%
Nothing	5%
Christianity	4%

Excavation is scheduled to begin in this month.

—*Something Better News*

FLEEING HUTUS

Approximately 800 mainly Hutu students fled from campuses in August, including more than 40 students from the group International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. Many have taken shelter in the mountains due to 18 Hutu students which have been reported killed on college campuses this year.

CLOSING ITS DOORS

The Fuller Evangelistic Association is shutting down operations after 62 years of ministry. The FEA is $1.5 million in debt and plans to satisfy its creditors by disposing of its inventory of ministerial products and other assets. The closing does not affect the Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, or the Charles E. Fuller Institute of Canada, both of which are independent organizations. —*Christianity Today*

POLITICALLY CORRECT?

Oxford Press, long known for publishing Bible translations, has now come up with a very politically correct version. The New Testament and Psalms English translation eliminates references to God the Father, changing the Son of Man to "the human one," and removing accusations that Jews killed Jesus.

The new version says that children should not "obey" but "heed" their parents. Wives are no longer to be "subject" to their husbands, but are to be "committed" to them. The Lord's Prayer begins, "Our Father-Mother in heaven." "Darkness" no longer is equated with evil because of racist overtones.

People that are left-handed will not be embarrassed anymore because all references to "the right hand of God" have been deleted. The popular Twenty-third Psalm, which used to begin "The Lord is my Shepherd" now starts "God is my Shepherd" and the pronoun "he" is dropped entirely from the verse. *The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version*, published by Oxford Press in September, is a version that the people of God should find distasteful and compromising in the extreme.

—*So. Baptist News*

A FAIR TURNOUT

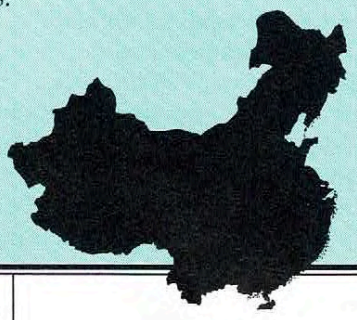
The first ever Christian Book Fair was held in Moscow during July and August, and featured 60 book publishers in the Moscow area, all of whom had published at least one Christian book in the past two to three years. Several hundred book titles were on display and people had an opportunity to order them.

Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, Russia and the other former Soviet Republics have been accessible to missionaries from the West. Please pray for those who have been commended to the work there: Paul and Carol Beverly, David and Nancy Booth, Paul, Betty, and Jennifer Freeman, Brad and Alexandra Grendahl, Clyde and Evelyn Johnson, and Rodney and Jayne Libby *(Source: CMML Missionary Prayer Handbook).*

BULL IN CHINA'S SHOP

According to ASIAWEEK, *China is facing an unprecedented crime wave. Illegal drugs and weaponry are pouring across the country's southern and southwestern borders. The percentage of increase of crime in China from 1985-1993 is:*

Murder	143%
Robbery	1,886%
Assault	314%
Theft	206%
Fraud	386%



GETTING READY TO GO

Floyd and Helen Pierce were commended to the work in Brazil in 1982. Since that time they have labored faithfully there.

Presently, they are in the process of packing their belongings to move back to the States. The main reason for this decision is to avoid becoming a burden to the Brazilian Christians, especially due to Floyd's health.

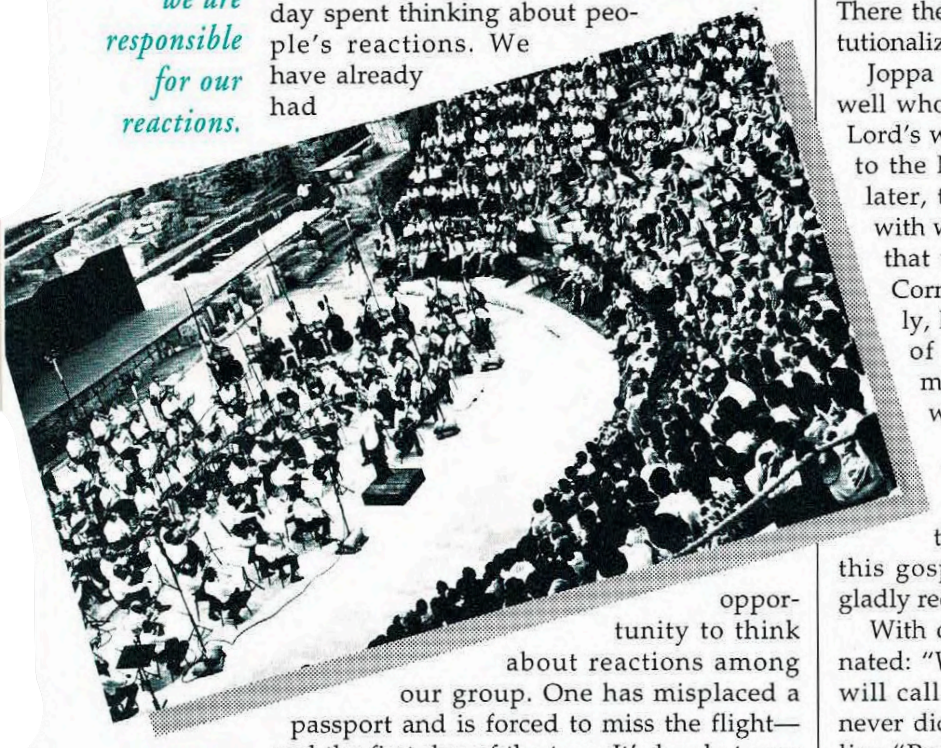
Leaving the missionfield will not be easy for the Pierce's, but they plan in the will of the Lord to continue with the preparation of gospel literature, Bible courses, booklets, articles, etc., from their home in the United States. They value your prayers for them at this time.

Reactions

The morning dawns clear and brisk as the salt sea breeze off the Mediterranean awakens us to our first full day in Israel.

We cannot control others' actions but we are responsible for our reactions.

We will be journeying along the coastal plain today, then around the end of Carmel to Haifa, across the western Jezreel valley, and up through Nazareth and Cana to our hotel on the shores of the Galilee. It will be a day spent thinking about people's reactions. We have already had opportunity to think about reactions among our group. One has misplaced a passport and is forced to miss the flight—and the first day of the tour. It's lovely to see the Christian grace with which she accepted the problem, a stark contrast to the attitudes evident among other travellers on the plane.



A modern cultural event in the 2000-year-old Roman theater at Caesarea by the Sea.

Another of our group will wait several days for her luggage (one of the joys of international travel). I overhear some of the ladies offering to share their own clothes with her. That's what it means to belong to The Family.

Our first stop is Joppa, the seaport town of ancient Israel. It is noted in Scripture as the place where people—God's people—reacted against fulfilling their commission to share the good news, especially with the Gentiles.

The Danites were given this land after the conquest and had the privilege of sharing the good news of the one true God with the sailors from scores of nations who would visit Israel to trade with her. The Danites, by and large, rejected this opportunity and—thinking they knew better than the Lord—moved to the extreme north, on the Syrian border. There they adopted the Gentiles' gods, institutionalizing idolatry in Israel.

Joppa was the departure gate for Jonah as well who tried an early retirement from the Lord's work rather than take God's message to the Ninevites. And hundreds of years later, the son of another Jonah grappled with what it would mean to associate with that which was ceremonially unclean—Cornelius and his household. Thankfully, he went, and thus began the spread of the evangel to your door and to mine, sinners of the Gentiles though we were.

Further up the coast, at Caesarea-by-the-Sea, where Cornelius was stationed, we have a city noted for the reactions of its Gentile citizens to this gospel. Cornelius and his household gladly received the good news.

With others it was not so. Felix procrastinated: "When I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." As far as we know, he never did. Festus mocked, with a curl of his lip: "Paul, you're beside yourself. Much learning makes you mad!" Saddest of all, Agrippa was almost persuaded but not altogether.

And what was Paul's reaction here when the Christians wept as they heard what it would cost Paul to take the gospel all the way to Caesar in Rome? "I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

Less than ten miles north of Caesarea looms Carmel (the vineyard of God), a range of hills forming the southern edge of the

Jezreel Valley. Cascading down its northwest end, overlooking the Mediterranean, is Haifa. Here we visit a meeting hall in the German colony where we hear the deeply moving testimony of a Jew who grew up with a curried hatred of Jesus of Nazareth. While working at a hospital in South Africa, he met a woman on the staff whose life was so different, so other-worldly, that he asked her what made her like that. Her two-word answer rocked him to his foundations: "Jesus Christ," she answered simply.

Surreptitiously, he procured a New Testament and began to read the account of his Messiah. "It took me seven months," he adds with a warm smile, "but I fell in love with the Lord Jesus."

Having been refreshed by the news of a healthy assembly of believers in this city, we make our way along the street to a falafel stand. To mixed reviews (mostly favorable), we sink our teeth into a Middle Eastern pita sandwich filled with chick-pea patties, salad, sauce, and spices. Then back to the bus for a view from the top of Carmel at the traditional site of Elijah's Battle of the Gods. Is it the place? Never mind. It's close enough. Here Baal's prophets fought against the God of heaven and lost, and here the people fell on their faces, crying, "Jehovah is the El! The Lord He is the God!"

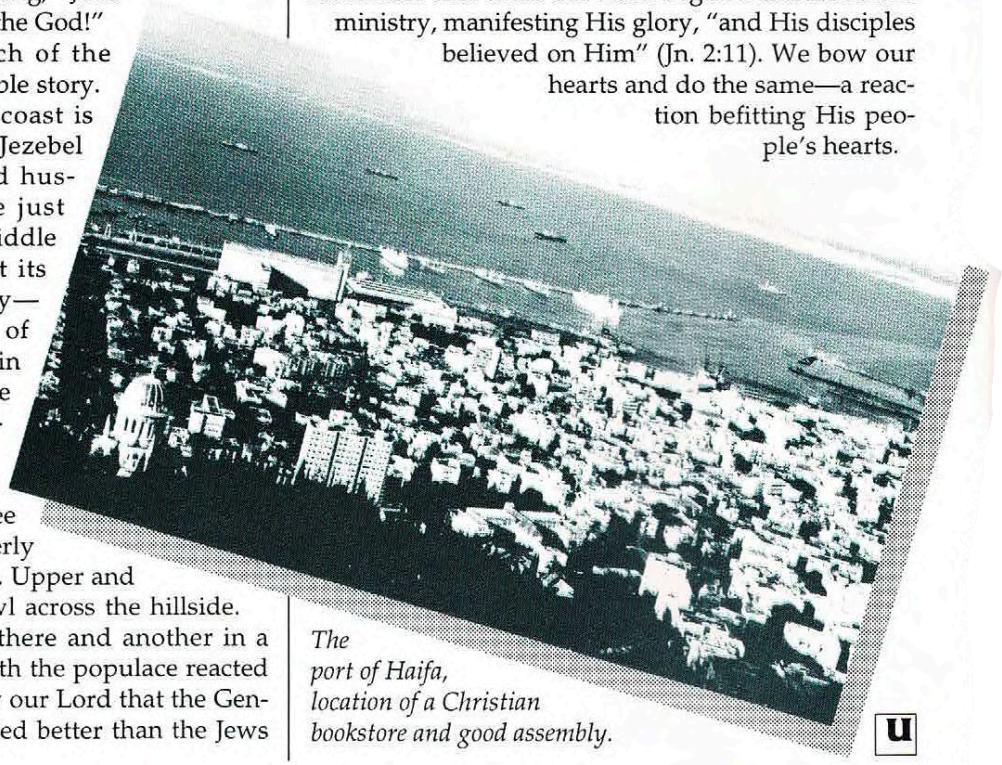
What a view! Every inch of the panorama reminds us of a Bible story. Far to the north along the coast is Sidon, home of the wicked Jezebel who, with her weak-willed husband, Ahab, had a palace just down to our right in the middle distance, the town that lent its name to the whole valley—Jezreel, God will sow. And of course God will also reap, in fact in this very valley, for the valley's other name is Armageddon!

Straight across the valley we see the first of the Galilee Hills and on the most southerly crest the city of the Nazarene. Upper and Lower Nazareth today sprawl across the hillside. There is an Arab assembly there and another in a nearby town. Here at Nazareth the populace reacted violently to the suggestion by our Lord that the Gentiles had historically responded better than the Jews to God's servants. He used the examples of Naaman and the Phoenician widow. He could have added Jonah and Himself—which was the point, no doubt. The people of His day cast Him out of the city, trying to stone Him. The Lord left the city and moved His residence to Capernaum on the northern shore of Tiberias.

Along the Carmel ridge to the south-southeast is the hilltop fortress of Megiddo, site of endless battles throughout history. Here it was that king Josiah, after all the good he had done, meddled with God, as Pharaoh Necho warned "from the mouth of God" (2 Chron. 35:22). Wounded in battle, he was DOA by the time his chariot reached Jerusalem.

Behind us in the Samaritan hills we see Dothan, the place where Joseph sought his brethren and began a journey that finally ended with his bones being brought back for burial by Israel's wandering generation. Here too Elisha showed his servant the prancing steeds and angelic warriors that, as ministering spirits, care for the people of God.

As we leave Carmel and Jezreel, wending our way up through Nazareth on our way to Tiberias, we pass through the little dusty town of Cana. We remember that there our Lord began His miraculous ministry, manifesting His glory, "and His disciples believed on Him" (Jn. 2:11). We bow our hearts and do the same—a reaction befitting His people's hearts.



The port of Haifa, location of a Christian bookstore and good assembly.

John Bjorlie



Christmas Evans

While mocking Evans, a jester finally gave this crowning insult, "And he only has one eye!" "Yes, sir," answered Robert Hall, "but that's a piercer; an eye, sir, that could light an army through a wilderness in a dark night." Evans could have also said, "From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

The man called the John Bunyan of Wales was born on Christmas day at Ysgaerwen, near Cardigan. The parents named the new gift package Christmas Evans (1766-1838). His family was poor and became even poorer when the father died. Young Christmas was nine years old at the time. Before long he was sent to work for his mother's brother, an unfeeling, uncaring, ungodly drunkard.

The next years witnessed repeated calamities. He was once knifed in a quarrel, almost drowned, once he plummeted from a tree while holding an open knife, and once he was almost killed by a runaway horse.

His uncle's employ lasted six years, during which time Christmas forfeited an education. At the age of seventeen the illiterate youth left his uncle. Shortly thereafter he heard the gospel preached by David Davies and Evans discovered the Friend, the home, and the decency that he had never known on his uncle's farm. Of the group of young people that were converted at that time "scarcely one person out of ten could read at all, even in the language of the country. We bought Bibles and candles and were accustomed to meet together in the evening, in the barn of Penyralltfawr; and thus, in about one month, I was able to read the Bible in my mother tongue."

Soon after he was converted, six erstwhile friends ambushed him at night and pummeled him with sticks and clubs. He lost the sight in one of his eyes. But Christmas held on to his course. Intent on spreading the gospel, he would memorize sermons he had heard and preach them to others. By 1790 he was "ordained" by the Baptists to preach. As he went out heralding the gospel, he was surprised to see others coming to God under his ministry. When he began he confessed, "The very sound of my voice discouraged me." He also struggled with his own nagging doubts about the reality of his own conversion, but these rolled away as began to believe the very message he preached. Then he received "the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

Initially he worked among backward, impoverished congregations in the south of Wales. And no individual among them seemed as impoverished as he was himself. He tramped by foot from place to place, often preaching five times on a Sunday. The dear man did not care about his poverty; he neither attempted to conceal it, or to grumble at it. It was a rough life, but he shared the Apostle's attitude: "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." Crowds came to hear the tall, shabby, awkward, one-eyed preacher whose own tears helped them wash out their own tear ducts.

By the second year he wrote, "I now felt a power in the Word, like a hammer breaking the rock, and not like a rush...The work of conversion was progressing so rapidly and with so much energy in those parts, that the ordinance of baptism was administered every month for a year or more, at Kilvowyr, Cardigan, Blaenywaun, Blaenffos, and Ebenezer, to from ten to twenty persons each month. The chapels and adjoining burying grounds were crowded with hearers of a weekday, even in the middle of harvest. I frequently preached in the open air in the evenings, and the rejoicing, singing, and praising would continue until broad light the next morning."

Once, at a church meeting an offering was to be taken for a building project. There had been a bit of sheep stealing in the vicinity. Knowing the characters he spoke to, Evans cautioned the audience that none who had been involved in sheep stealing should put anything into the offering. The platter passed and the result was a record setting collection.

At twenty-six he went to the island of Anglesea on the Welsh coast with his wife Catherine where they remained for more than thirty years. At this time a curious teaching held sway there called Sandemanianism. It had begun with a Scotsman named John Glas and was championed by his eloquent son-in-law, Robert Sandeman.

The appeal of Sandeman's doctrine was a strict return to New Testament simplicity. His followers claimed to reject all creeds except the Bible. They believed in a strict separation of church and state, they practiced a regular celebration of the Lord's Supper (along with foot-washing and greeting one another with a holy kiss) and their preachers were not salaried. They also held to plurality of elders over each congregation.

Much of this attracted Evans. But the poison was slipped into Sandeman's ideas about faith. To Glas and Sandeman (both fatalistic Calvinists) faith was a purely intellectual assent to the historical facts of the gospel. When Sandeman read Romans 10:9, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved," he saw belief with the heart as totally divorced from the will and emotions. He loathed anything emotional.

Of course it is not hard to show Sandeman's error. Faith with the heart involves a decision of the will that cannot be isolated from our feelings.

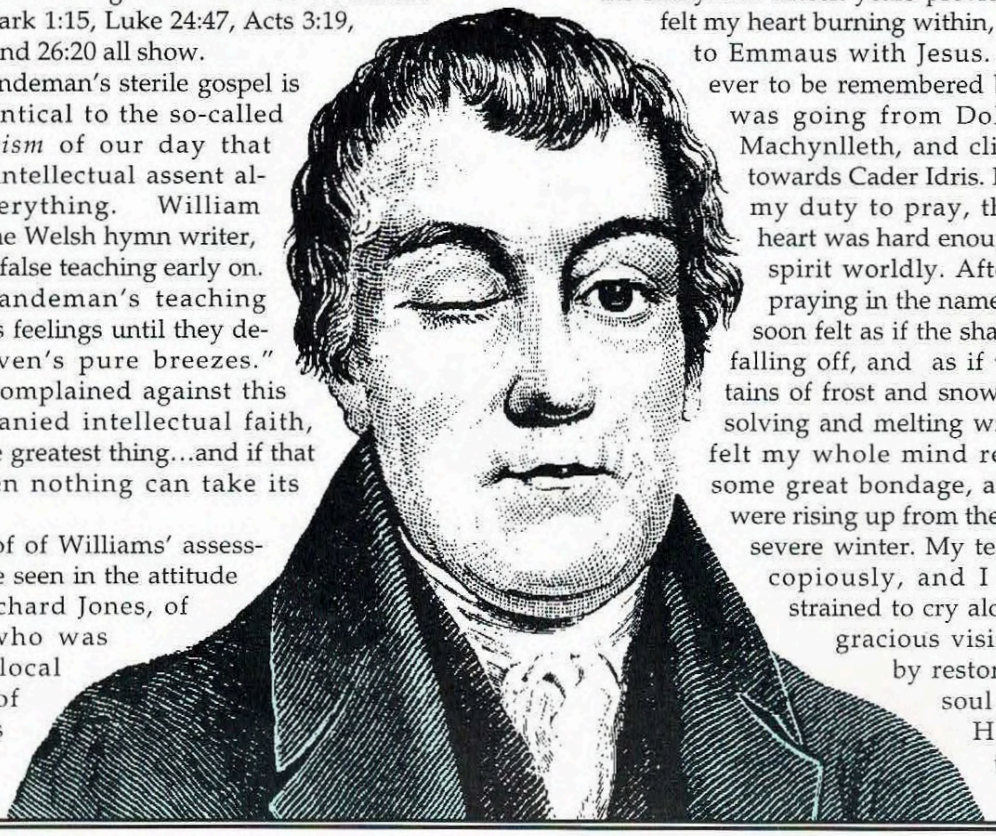
Sandeman also taught that repentance always came after true saving faith. This also would not stand, as Mark 1:15, Luke 24:47, Acts 3:19, 5:31, 20:21 and 26:20 all show.

In all, Sandeman's sterile gospel is almost identical to the so-called *easy-believism* of our day that makes an intellectual assent almost everything. William Williams, the Welsh hymn writer, battled this false teaching early on. He said Sandeman's teaching "chills one's feelings until they despise Heaven's pure breezes." Again he complained against this unaccompanied intellectual faith, "Love is the greatest thing...and if that is forgotten nothing can take its place."

The proof of Williams' assessment can be seen in the attitude of John Richard Jones, of Ramoth, who was the chief local advocate of Sandeman's ideas. He was a vigorous orator and a craftsman of bitter wit. He liked to talk about Latin, Greek and Hebrew; he spoke English, but with Welsh he was masterful. Sample this bit of Jones' sarcasm: "If every Bible in the world were consumed, and every word of Scripture erased from my memory, I need be at no loss how to live a religious life, according to the will of God, for I should simply have to proceed in all respects in a way perfectly contrary to the popular religionists of this age, and then I could not possibly be wrong." So in this arrogant tone he bullied his hearers into abandoning any Christian fellowship except the Sandemanians. Jones was so narrow, one had to assume that some injustice had embittered him. His dogmatic pronouncements only encouraged elitism.

For five years Evans was drawn along by this high sounding, but arid view of faith. Its influence withered Evens' soul. The spirit of prayer and sweet enjoyment of Christ was gone. He began to crave close fellowship with God.

Evans said, "I was weary of a cold heart towards Christ, and His sacrifice, and the work of His Spirit, of a cold heart in the pulpit, in secret prayer and in the study. For fifteen years previously I had felt my heart burning within, as if going to Emmaus with Jesus. On a day ever to be remembered by me as I was going from Dolgelley to Machynlleth, and climbing up towards Cader Idris. I felt it was my duty to pray, though my heart was hard enough and my spirit worldly. After I began praying in the name of Jesus, I soon felt as if the shackles were falling off, and as if the mountains of frost and snow were dissolving and melting within me. I felt my whole mind relieved of some great bondage, and as if it were rising up from the grave of a severe winter. My tears flowed copiously, and I was constrained to cry aloud for the gracious visits of God, by restoring to my soul the joy of His salvation, and



that He would visit the Churches in Anglesea...I embraced in my supplications all of the churches, and prayed by name for most of the preachers in the principality. This struggle lasted for three hours. It rose again and again, like one wave after another, or a high flowing tide driven by a strong wind, until my physical power was weakened by weeping and crying. Thus I gave myself up wholly to Christ, body and soul, gifts and labors—all my life—every day, and every hour that remained to me, and all my cares I entrusted into the hands of Christ. The road was mountainous and lonely, so that I was alone, and had no interruption in my wrestlings with God.

Evans would say, "The water flowed from the rock, not pumped by human labor, but drawn by the hand of God."

"This event caused me to expect the goodness of God to the churches and to myself. Thus the Lord delivered me and the people of Anglesea from being swept away by the evils of Sandemanianism. In the first service I held after this event, I felt as if I had been removed from the cold and sterile region of spiritual frost, into the verdant fields of divine promises. The former striving with God in prayer, and the longing anxiety for the conversion of sinners, which I had experienced at Lleyn, were now restored. I had hold of the promise of God. The result was, when I returned home, the first thing that attracted my attention was, that the Spirit was working in the brethren in Anglesea, inducing in them a spirit of prayer, especially in two of the deacons, who were particularly importunate that God should visit us in mercy, and render the Word of His grace effectual amongst us in the conversion of sinners."

After this holy session between Dolgelly and Machynelleth, Evans witnessed a remarkable work of God, first on the island of Anglesea and then spreading throughout all Wales. One preaching session in Velin Voel (which lasted three hours) was especially remarkable. In his vivid portrayal of the Demoniac of Gadara, he wondered out loud about the reaction of the people of Gadara, and especially the joy of the demoniac's family when he arrived sane and saved. The audience wept and laughed alternately. "The place was a perfect Bochim for weeping." One who heard that message said that the people seemed like the inhabitants of a city which had been shaken by an earthquake, and that in their escape, they rushed into the streets, falling upon the earth screaming, and calling upon God!

Evans' dependence on the supernatural working of the Spirit of God did not mean that he disparaged learning and preparation. There is one thing worse than pride of learning, and that is pride of ignorance, and Evans of that did not want to be guilty. He became a fair Hebrew student, and then took up the Greek language. His library was slender but well used. He did not disdain books, and enjoyed the old Puritans like John Owen. In a playful mood he was known to shame an arrogant clergymen who disparaged the unlettered evangelist. Evans was all too aware of highly educated preachers whose ministry was lackluster and lukewarm. He prayed, "Grant that I may feel the power of Thy Word before preaching it, as Moses felt the power of his rod before he felt the effects of it on the land and waters of Egypt."

Evans was "a man the spell of whose name, when he came into a neighborhood, could wake up all the sleepy villages, and bid their inhabitants pour along up by the hills, and down by the valleys, expectant crowds watching his appearance with tears, and sometimes hailing him with shouts."

His beloved Catherine died childless in 1823. "Somewhat younger than her husband, she supplied many attributes of character, to him most helpful; she was not an enthusiast, but she was a Christian, with real, deep, and devout convictions." The believers saw that he did not fair well as a widower, and soon persuaded him to marry. His second wife, Mary, served with him in his last and most fruitful years. Laboring to the end, his prayer had been, "Let not my days be longer than my usefulness. Let me not become, at the end of my days, like a piece of lumber in the way of the usefulness of others."

MATERIAL FOR THIS ARTICLE HAS BEEN GATHERED FROM:

Paxton Hood, *Christmas Evans*, Hodder & Stoughton
D. M. Evans, *Life of Christmas Evans*
Joseph Cross, *Sermons of Christmas Evans*, J. Harmstead
Thomas Armitage, *History of the Baptists*
D. M. Lloyd-Jones, *The Puritans: Their Origins and Successors*, The Banner of Truth Trust

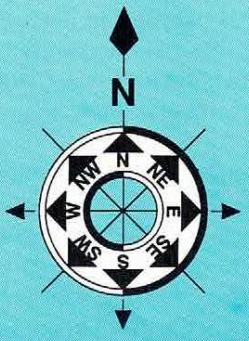
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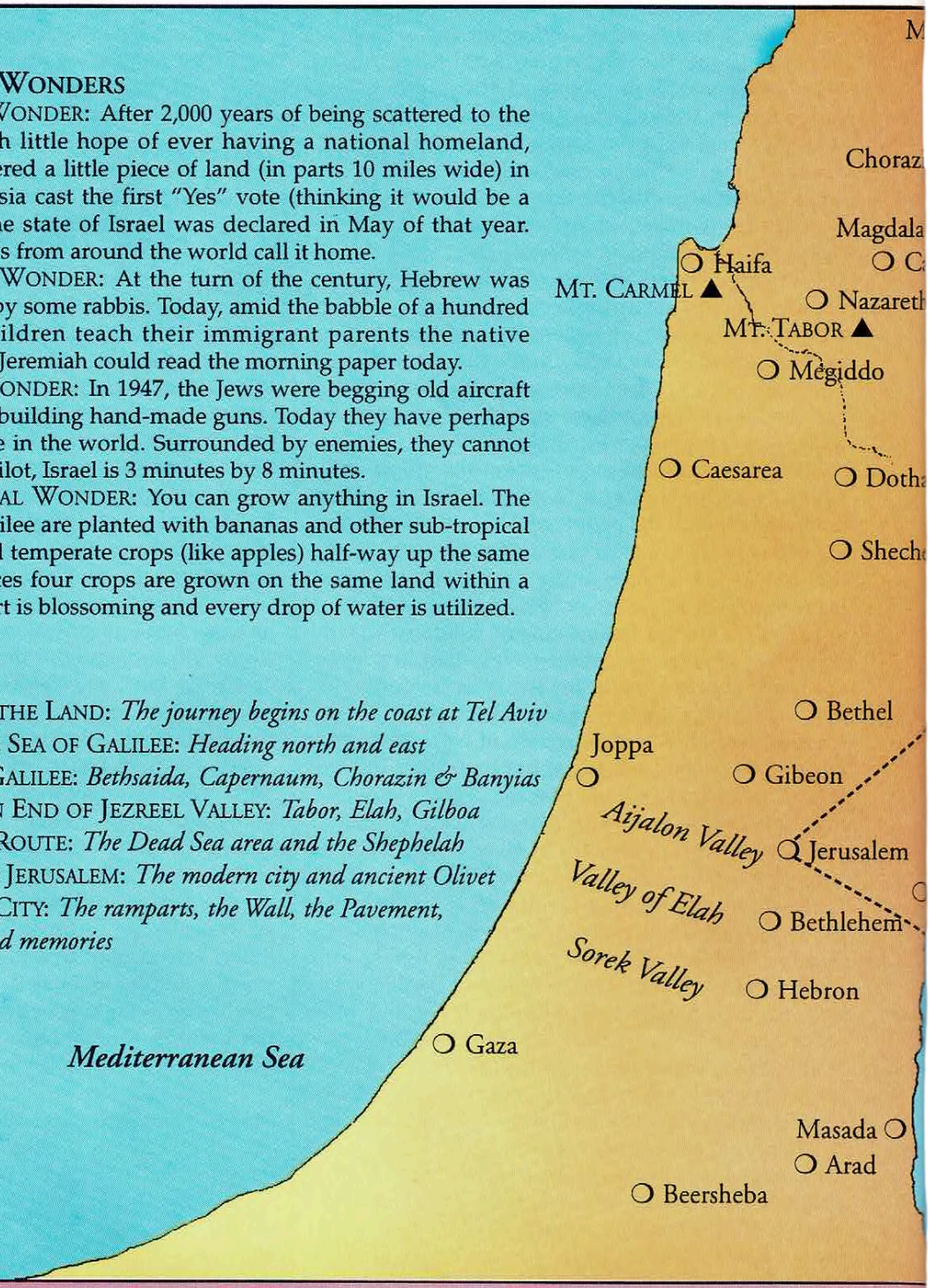
Israel: Land of Wonders

1. The National Wonder: After 2,000 years of being scattered to the four winds, and with little hope of ever having a national homeland, world Jewry was offered a little piece of land (in parts 10 miles wide) in 1948 by the UN. Russia cast the first "Yes" vote (thinking it would be a socialist country)! The state of Israel was declared in May of that year. Today millions of Jews from around the world call it home.
2. The Linguistic Wonder: At the turn of the century, Hebrew was forgotten, used only by some rabbis. Today, amid the babble of a hundred other languages, children teach their immigrant parents the native tongue. It is said that Jeremiah could read the morning paper today.
3. The Military Wonder: In 1947, the Jews were begging old aircraft from the Czechs and building hand-made guns. Today they have perhaps the best fighting force in the world. Surrounded by enemies, they cannot afford to blink. To a pilot, Israel is 3 minutes by 8 minutes.
4. The Agricultural Wonder: You can grow anything in Israel. The hills surrounding Galilee are planted with bananas and other sub-tropical crops at the shore and temperate crops (like apples) half-way up the same hillside! In some places four crops are grown on the same land within a year's time. The desert is blossoming and every drop of water is utilized.

The Trek

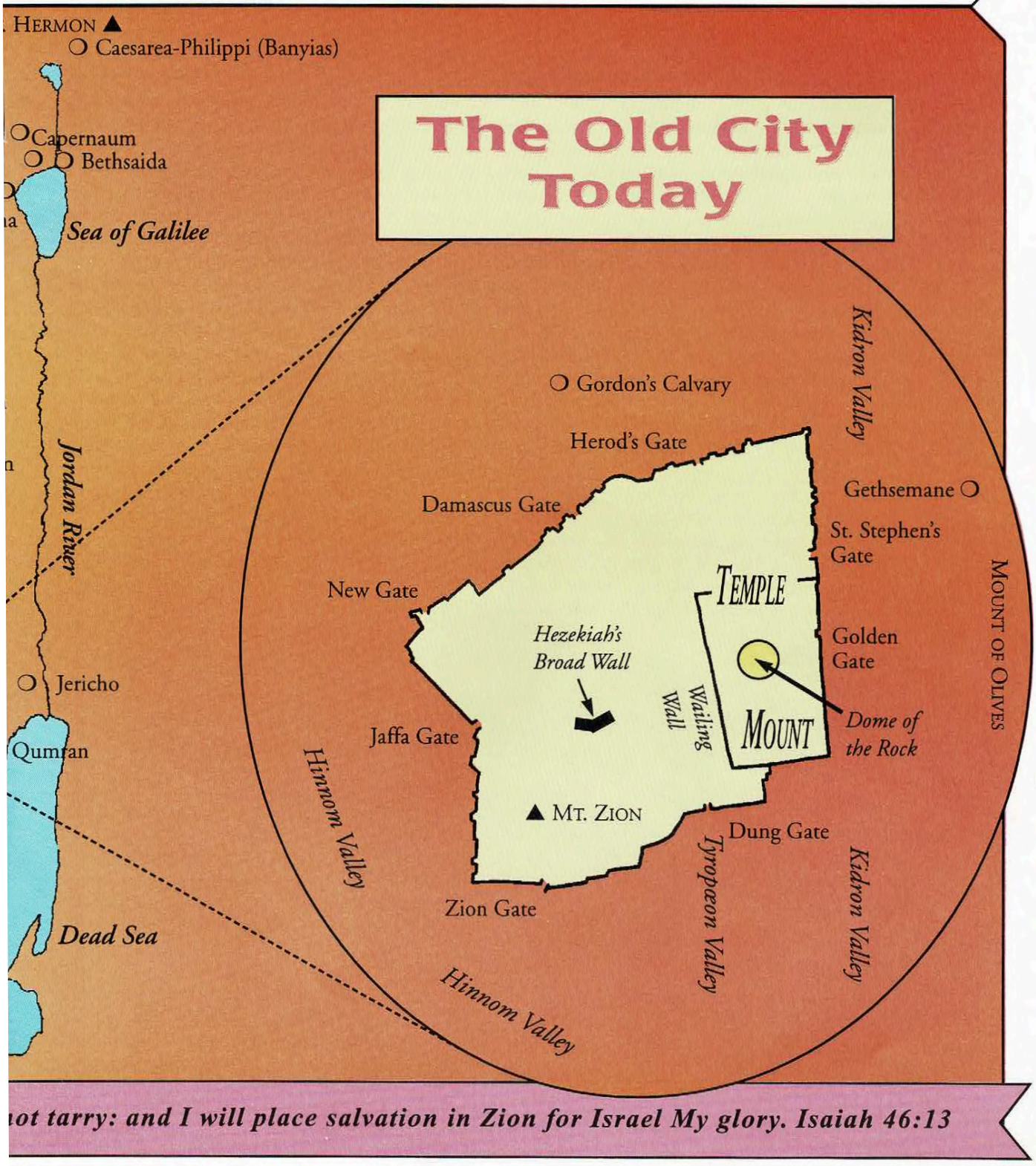
Day 1: Arriving in the Land: *The journey begins on the coast at Tel Aviv*
Day 2: Joppa to the Sea of Galilee: *Heading north and east*
Day 3: Northern Galilee: *Bethsaida, Capernaum, Chorazin & Banyias*
Day 4: The Eastern End of Jezreel Valley: *Tabor, Elah, Gilboa*
Day 5: The Circle Route: *The Dead Sea area and the Shephelah*
Day 6: Environs of Jerusalem: *The modern city and ancient Olivet*
Day 7: In the Old City: *The ramparts, the Wall, the Pavement, and a thousand memories*





I bring near My righteousness; it shall not be far off, and My salvation shall

n in Zion



not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel My glory. Isaiah 46:13

Prepared by J. B. Nicholson Jr. & Scott Tucker

THE TREK

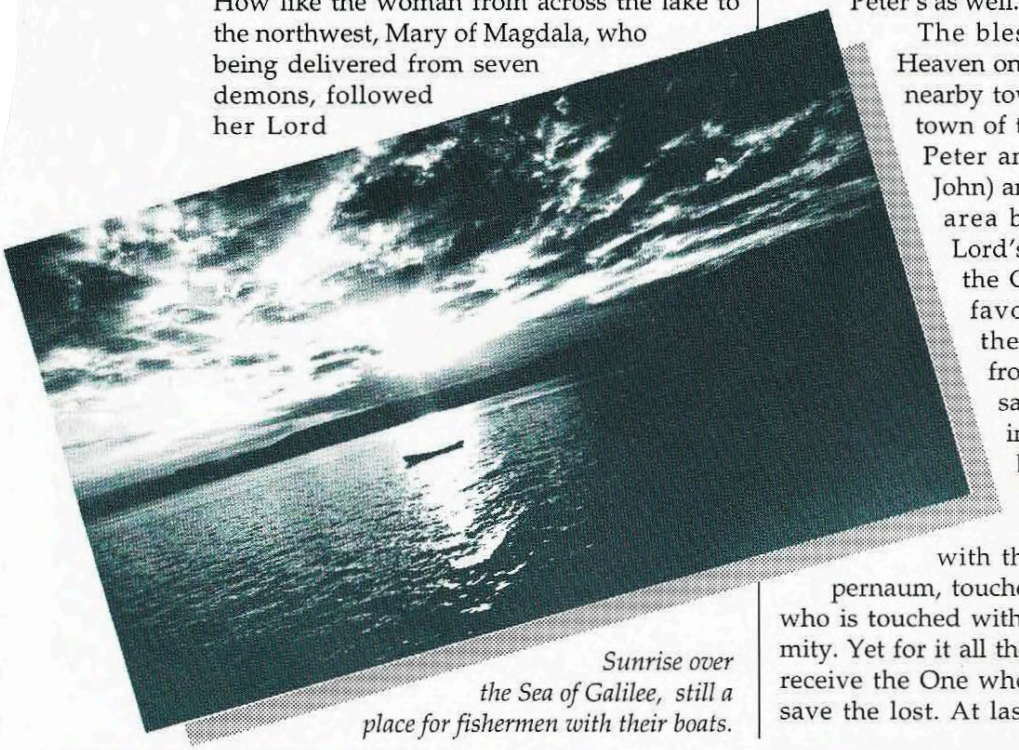
The Curse and the Blessing

If the truth were known, even man's blessing is a curse and God's curse can turn into a blessing.

I am awake early to watch the sun spread its rippling sheet of gold across the surface of the Galilean lake. Palm fronds stir in the morning breeze along the edge of this subtropical inland sea. A few fishing boats are pulling into the harbor of Tiberias after a night of toil in the deep.

To the south the Greek cities of the Decapolis once stood in their splendor, now crumbling heaps of stone. To these the Saviour, when He was here, brought the news of Heaven's matchless love. Don't be surprised to meet some of their former inhabitants in glory.

Across on the eastern side, now called the Golan Heights, are the lands of Gergasa and Gadara, where the Lord worked miracles and saw a few lost sheep come to the arms of the Shepherd. Among them was a demoniac who was liberated from the chains that bound his soul only to be bound by love to his Master. How like the woman from across the lake to the northwest, Mary of Magdala, who being delivered from seven demons, followed her Lord right to His grave—and then on to glory.



Sunrise over the Sea of Galilee, still a place for fishermen with their boats.

Today the west, east, and southern shores bustle with activity. But the northern shore, running at an angle from the plains of Gennessaret to the Golan, is strangely silent. During our Saviour's earthly sojourn it was the location of three key cities: Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Chorazin. You can visit their ruins as we do today—at least we will see two out of three.

Capernaum is the best known of the three, and rightly so, for here the Lord Jesus lived for three-and-a-half years, administering the blessing of Heaven upon its citizenry. Here He healed Peter's mother-in-law, the centurion's servant, the nobleman's son, the man with the withered hand, and many more. Here He commissioned Peter to catch one fish down at the harbor after Peter had answered rashly that, of course, his Master paid temple tax. The fish he caught that day was worth enough to not only pay the Lord's tax but Peter's as well.

The blessing of those days of Heaven on earth spilled over to the nearby towns of Bethsaida (hometown of the Lord's first disciples, Peter and Andrew, James and John) and Chorazin. This tri-city area became the hub of the Lord's dealings in "Galilee of the Gentiles." These highly-favored inhabitants heard the spoken Word coming from the living Word. They saw the visible glory of the invisible God. They tasted bread provided by the Bread from heaven. They, like the woman with the issue of blood at Capernaum, touched the Great High Priest who is touched with the feeling of our infirmity. Yet for it all they, by and large, did not receive the One who had come to seek and save the lost. At last, He had to say: "Woe

unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes...And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell..." (Mt. 11:21-23). The place of untold blessing had fallen under the divine curse.

To the north of these cities, at the foot of mighty Mount Hermon, lies the ancient city of Laish, renamed Dan by the tribe of Dan when they chose this site (furthest from Jerusalem) instead of the land the Lord gave them near Joppa. They had been the first to institutionalize idolatry in Israel and this great rock face at present-day Banias, from which issues one of the main sources of the Jordan, was dedicated to idol worship. Here one of the golden calves was located in the days of King Jeroboam, the people-pleaser. You can still see the niches in the rock that were used to house images. If ever there was a place under the curse of God, surely this would be it.

How symbolic, then, and how spiritually invigorating, that the Lord chose this as the backdrop for His earth-shaking announcement: "Upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mt. 16:18). To the place of the cursed devil-worshippers came this magnificent revelation that God also has a Rock—the unshakeable Christ. Upon this foundation would be erected the only structure that will survive the collapse of the universe. Indeed this whole world under the curse received in this announcement the hope of a blessing so wonderful that only God would have conceived it, so expensive that only God could afford it.

Then the sacred writer adds, "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that He must...suffer...and be killed." Ah, the true place of the curse and the blessing: "Christ...made a curse for us:...Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ" (Gal. 3:13-14). **u**

Capernaum

Near where Jordan, rippling, joins the lake,
And towering hills a wider aspect take,
Dark groups of ruins draw the traveller's eye,
And, while they prompt reflection, ask a sigh.
Frieze, cornice, pillar, lie in mouldering heaps,
Where in the sun the listless adder sleeps.
Where ivies hung by Ruin's mocking hand,
A huge black pile o'erlooks the wave-kissed sand;
Here frowns a building, pierced with arches gray,
Temple or royal palace, who may say?
Bright pleasure's town, where sorrow shed no tear,
'Tis proud Capernaum, all thou seest here!

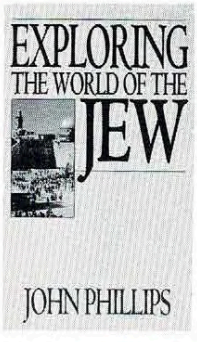
–Nicholas Michell

Jim McKendrick



The World of the Jew

Frederick the Great once challenged Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf, a Moravian Christian at his infidel court, to defend the Bible. The Count replied in two words: "The Jew!" That was an insightful reply.



Turn on the TV on almost any night to watch the news and Israel, her people and land will be mentioned at some point. Why does this nation, few in number by comparison, and this land, tiny by any standard, command so much world attention? Israel, after all is a small arid land much of which is desert or mountains with few natural resources outside of the chemicals mined from the Dead Sea. The resorts along the Mediterranean Sea would attract some visitors naturally, but this country is teeming with visitors, making tourism one of its major sources of income. Why? Obviously we must look further than the terrain or industry to account for this fascination politically or personally. This is God's people and God's land.

Many centuries ago God chose one man from Mesopotamia and gave him far-reaching promises concerning descendants and land and blessing. From this beginning the Jewish people rose. Among Abraham's descendants was The Seed, through which all the nations were going to be blessed. From Abraham until the present, the Jewish people and the land of Israel have been a major force in world history. One day in the future it will be the center of government for the entire world and Abraham's Seed will rule in righteousness and peace from its capital, Jerusalem.

I would like to introduce you to three books that, read together, make this people and this land come alive in a unique fashion. The first one to read is John Phillips' book, *Exploring the World of the Jew*. This unique introduction to the people of Israel is well written in Phillips' unique style. Tracing the Jewish people both historically and religiously, you get a great background to enhance your understanding of this people. But the author does not stop there. He gives a historical overview of anti-semitism (once again on the rise) as well as the great contributions to science and the arts of this brilliant race of people. He finishes with a fascinating look at the Zionist movement and the repatriation of Israel present. It reads like fiction, but it is full of the real facts of this great people.

Then zero in on the future of this people. With this most definitive look at the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 you will trace the nation through its 490 prophetic years from the rebuilding of the walls after its 70-year captivity to the Millennium reign. This benchmark prophecy is expounded by Sir Robert Anderson in his classic work, *The Coming Prince*. Any student of prophecy must have this book not only on his shelf for reference, but in his mind as well. A grasp of Daniel's prophecies is the beginning of a proper understanding of the rise and fall of the Gentile nations and the fall and rise of Israel. One of the accomplishments of this book is the great research into the exact timing of the coming of the Messiah. That chapter is worth the price of the book.

Then when you finish those books treat yourself to one that will make your blood run a little faster than normal. This is a secular book called *O Jerusalem* by two journalists, Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre. A virtual daily diary from the night the UN voted to allow Israel to exist in November 1947 until the tenuous cease-fire on June 12, 1948. Enter the undercover world of the Haganah, the politics of Golda Meier and David Ben Gurion, the secretive world of arms negotiations and the great battles for the freedom of Jerusalem. But most of all see a small, outmanned army of people who, in love for their land, saw the nation of Israel formed.

But we knew that. God had ordained it. Even though in unbelief, the second great exodus had begun. Not just from Egypt as the first time but now from the four corners of the world (Isa. 11:11-12).

The Jew, the land of Israel, the city of Jerusalem. They are *His story* and in that history we read not just of a fascinating people but the greater story of God's great and full redemption and the majesty of the government of God Himself. U

THE TREK



I've Been to the Mountaintop

Montani semper liberi. Mountaineers are always free.

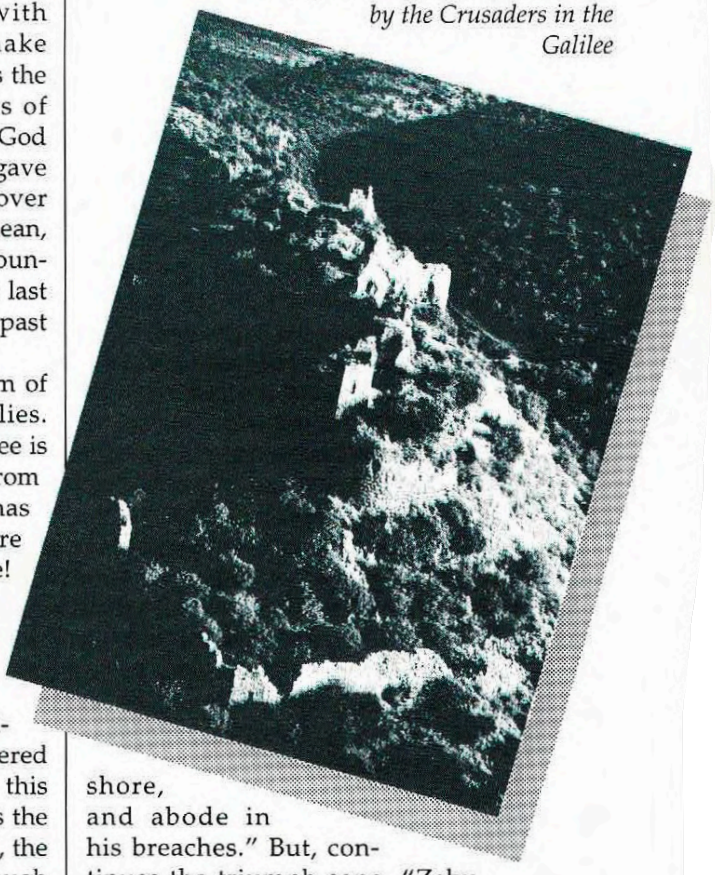
Reluctantly we turn our backs on the sweet Galilee but with mounting expectation make our way south towards Jerusalem. This is the day we will wind our way past scores of mountains and valleys so significant that God included them in the only Book He ever gave to man. Tonight, just as the sun drops over the western foothills into the Mediterranean, we will see Jerusalem straddling the mountains of Zion, bathed in the golden day's last light. But we must not hurry too quickly past the scenes along the way.

Our bus is laboring up the western rim of the basin in which the Sea of Galilee lies. Halfway up we will reach sea level (Galilee is 750' below sea level). We will also pass from the subtropical, where they grow bananas and dates, to the temperate zone, where they grow apples—on the same hillside! What a country!

Our route will take us through the Lower Galilean mountains until we drop down into the eastern end of the Jezreel valley, really the Harod River valley. Looming before us, one of the shattered hills of the Galilee range that spills into this Armageddon valley, is Mount Tabor. It is the place where met, in post-Canaanite Israel, the tribal territories of Naphtali (the land through which we have been driving from the western shore of Tiberias), Zebulun (around Nazareth to our west), and Issachar (in the eastern end of this great valley).

In the days of the Judges, this was the site of the great battle between the forces of the oppressor Sisera, with his chariots of iron, and Deborah and Barak with their small militia from Zebulun and Naphtali (with a few, it seems, from Issachar, Jud. 5:15). Others did not make it to the mountaintop, did not show up for the battle, and therefore did not sing the victory song. "For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart. Gilead abode beyond Jordan: and why did Dan remain in ships? Asher continued on the sea shore, and abode in his breaches." But, continues the triumph song, "Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeoparded their lives unto the death in the high places of the field...Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty" (Jud. 5:16-18, 23).

One of the many strongholds built by the Crusaders in the Galilee



After a prayer-stimulating taxi ride up innumerable hairpin turns to the top of Tabor, we understand in some measure the daunting prospect the soldiers faced in hurling themselves down these slopes to deliver Israel from its foe. Perhaps we also understand a little the descent of the Lord into the depths in order to deliver us, and why Paul used this story to illustrate it in Ephesians 4:8-10. U

If I Forget Thee . . .

David exhorted men to pray for the peace of Jerusalem...Christ died outside her walls for the sins of mankind; and from her ruined precincts a people were finally scattered far and wide. But from Jerusalem now, after 2,500 years, the Jews again rule...The long road went, it seemed at times, to the very brink of hell, and then turned suddenly to the City that had always been waiting. Jerusalem will fall in a last, humbling capitulation before she become "the joy of the whole earth...the city of the great King" (Ps. 48:2). For He who was prophesied to be king of the Jews, who was born king of the Jews, who said He was king of the Jews, will reign as King from the city that set Him at naught. The days of Israel's blindness will be over...this time she will say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." **—C. Gulston**

"Not grieved for Israel!" canst thou stand
Rejoicing in the light;
And nothing care for those who stray
In darkest shades of night?

"Not grieved for Israel!" having lost
Thy load of sin and shame,
Should'st thou not their salvation seek
Through whom thy Saviour came?

"Not grieved for Israel!" thou wast healed,
When broken, sick and sore,
How deep their wounds! Hast thou no balm
On their sad hearts to pour?

"Not grieved for Israel!" What thy cup
With mercy overflows,
Wilt thou not give from thy full store
Some comfort for their woes?

Oh, holy task, His Name to bear
In all its healing power,
To "these His brethren," thus to haste
Their glad redemption hour.

—Jesse F. Webb

In *Week-End Book*, William Norman Ewer (1885-1976) wrote:

How odd
Of God
To choose
The Jews.

Cecil Browne responded:

But not so odd
As those who choose
A Jewish God,
But spurn the Jews.

Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art My servant: I have formed thee; thou art My servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me.
Isaiah 44:21

We Jews have a secret weapon in our struggle with the Arabs—we have no place to go.
—*Golda Meir*

Allenby Bridge was named in honor of Sir Edmund Allenby whom God used to miraculously take Jerusalem from the Turks without firing a single shot. The bridge spans the Jordan River on the main road between Jerusalem and Amman.

At a reception in London, Allenby told how as a little boy when he knelt to say his evening prayers he was taught to say after his mother, "And, O Lord, we would not forget Thine ancient people, Israel; hasten the day when Israel shall again be Thy people and shall be restored to Thy favor and to their land." Allenby added, "I never knew then that God would give me the privilege of helping to answer my own childhood prayers."

For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.
Genesis 13:15-17

THE TREK

Fight the Good Fight

Our journey today will take us in a rough oval south of Jerusalem to view many of the classic battlefields in Bible times. In the process, we will see the widest variety of landscapes in a 50-mile radius perhaps anywhere in the world.

From the moonscapes at the Dead Sea to the lush farmland of the coastal plain, from the black Bedouin tents on the edge of the Negev to the forested foothills of the Shephelah, we will find it hard to take in today the dramatic changes at every turn in the road.

Making our way over Olivet to the east, we come face to face with the stark reality of the Judean wilderness, the place of our Lord's great battle against the Evil One. He not only triumphed, but showed us the way to stand against our Enemy, too: "It is written..." The devil left Him and will leave us too, for a while. But just as surely, our final victory is certain. Then "one little word shall fell him."

We are making our way carefully along the dizzying edge of Wadi Kelt which takes its seasonal waters down towards Jericho. When we let the group out near the cliff-hugging monastery of St. George, I feel like a grandmother, fearing my little ones will come too close to the edge. I'm relieved when my charges are all back on the bus. Is this how an elder feels when we get too close to the edge?

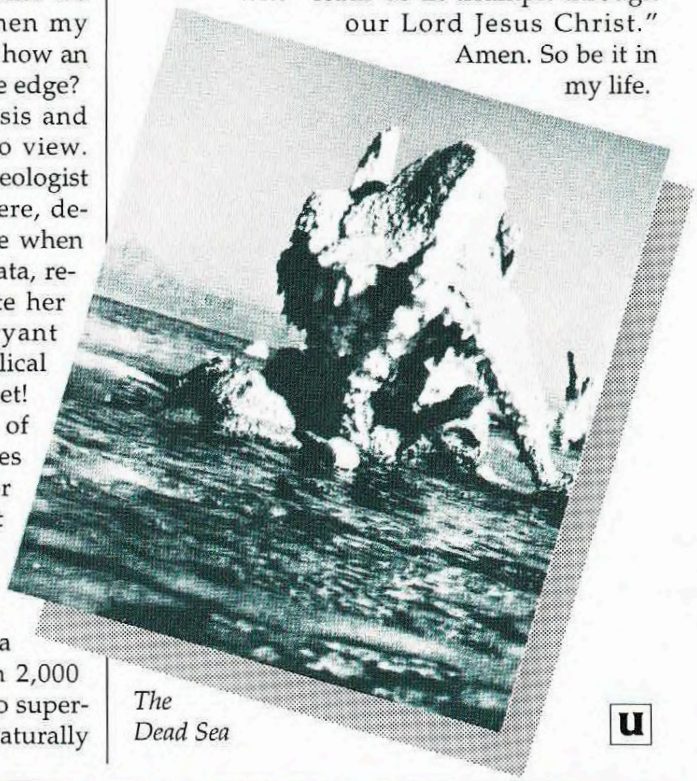
Jericho, city of palms, largest oasis and lowest city in the world, comes into view. What a battle this reminds us of! Archeologist Kathleen Kenyon, who excavated here, denied that such a walled city was here when Joshua led Israel into the land. Her data, recently released, does not corroborate her conclusions. In fact, as scholar Bryant Wood has shown, it matches the biblical story exactly. Keep blowing the trumpet!

Just south of Jericho lies the ruin of Qumran, cloaked in mystery. Theories abound as to who lived here and for what reason (our group concludes it must be a *very* good reason to live here). But our interest is concerned with some caves across the gorge where, in 1947 the fabled Dead Sea scrolls were discovered. More than 2,000 years old, they show that the God who supernaturally gave His Word also supernaturally preserved its dependable message for us.

On our way south along the western shore of the Dead Sea, we will pass En Gedi, where David hid from envy-mad Saul, then past the fortress of Masada, and hear from our guide the defiant Israeli, "Never again!" Never, they say, shall Masada fall to the Gentiles.

A stop at the tepid saline sea does little to refresh our bodies but much to refresh our minds about the story of Lot. We remember Lot's wife. Then heading west towards Beersheba, we see Tell Arad, the city that drove the Israelites back into the desert for 40 years.

Our road turns north as the shadows lengthen. We will see the vale of Sorek, site of Samson's defeats in the flesh, and Elah, where David conquered in the Spirit. We stand at Bethshemesh, reminding our hearts that God is not something to be brought out like a good luck charm in crisis. He is a Person, the most wonderful Person in the universe. He it is who "leads us in triumph through our Lord Jesus Christ." Amen. So be it in my life.



The Dead Sea

Alfred Wiener

The Nail-Pierced Hand

I was born, the son of Jewish parents, in the city of Frankfurt on Main, in southwest Germany. My father, a successful insurance representative, was a loyal subject of the ruling house of the Hohenzollern and felt that he was a good German. My mother was an accomplished pianist. I was brought up in an atmosphere of culture, which actually took the place of religion. Our religious training was confined to two hours a week when a fine rabbinical teacher came to the school to give us basic training in the Judaism. We were taught selected stories of the Old Testament, called Tanach, and some Scripture portions.

The great question came to my mind: "Where will I go after death?" I thought the philosophers would have the answer. Finally I came, in one of Plato's "Dialogues," to the utterance of Socrates where he says: "I know that I know nothing." This was a great blow for me.

Every year on Good Friday I went to the concert hall to listen to one of the master works of music, "The Passion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, according to St. Matthew," by Bach. The best of musicians took part. Many Jewish choir members sang in this oratorio, seemingly unconcerned as to the meaning of the tremendous portions in Matthew 26 and 27.

When I was about 14, having arrived home from this oratorio, I began to think about Jesus. I read Matthew 26 and 27. Gradually the Person of Jesus of Nazareth came into focus. "This, indeed, was a great man, this man Jesus," I argued in myself; "a great example, a great teacher, a great prophet. Too bad that He had to die the death of a martyr; this could have been avoided." That He, the Son of God, had come down from heaven to take my place in the divine judgment of my sin, this, of course, did not enter my mind.

But where was I to turn? Was there any answer at all? Was there any meaning in life? Was there a God? I would have to go through many more testings and trials before, in deepest night and desperation, the answer to all these questions would come from above.

Hitler raised his ugly head in 1923. By 1928, the National Socialist Party returned as the strongest party of the House. Eventually the old president, Marshall von Hindenburg, entrusted Hitler with the government of Germany. This happened on January 30, 1933.

Hitler proceeded with the segregation of the Jewish citizens of Germany, called also the "cold persecution." The so-called "citizenship law" of the German nation decreed that only those were considered German citizens who had no "Jewish blood" in their veins.

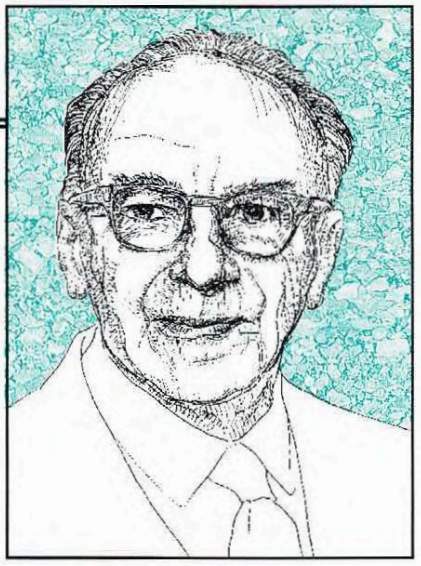
The next step was "Name Legislation." The Jewish men had to add the name "Israel," and the Jewish women the name "Sarah." If Hitler had known their meanings, he would have chosen other names of shame. "Israel" means prince with God, and "Sarah," princess.

The "cold persecution" of the Jews came to an end in November, 1938. In revenge for the shooting in Paris of Legation Secretary Walter Vom Rath by a young Jew named Greenspan, all the synagogues were set on fire. No fire department was permitted to interfere. Furthermore every Jewish man was to be rounded up and taken to concentration camps.

On November 10, I saw the Westend Synagogue in Frankfurt, a beautiful building, go up in flames. Still not aware of what was in store, I went to my office. The foreman saw me come in, and shouted, "Mr. Wiener, you are mad? Don't you know that the Gestapo will be here shortly to take you away?"

Going back through the city, I saw the smashing of the windows of the Jewish stores and the looting. Arriving at home, I was told that my cousin and my second youngest brother had already been picked up from the street when they went out in the morning.

At noon on November 12, the bell rang. There stood two storm troopers and a policeman. They left me about 15 minutes to collect my most necessary belongings. I went quickly into the attic room where I had spent so many times of study and searching for truth. I had a little candle which I always lit before I said my prayers. I kindled it quickly, knelt down, and committed myself into the hand of God. At that crucial moment, I was convinced in my soul that Jesus was the Messiah of Israel,



and that He had come to bring redemption and new life to His ancient people, but I had not yet surrendered to Him. Yet, in that moment of fatal danger, I did not know where to go except to Him!

We were taken to the great concert hall of Frankfurt, the same hall where in former days I had listened to "Matthew's Passion" and the "Messiah" by Handel. But that day, November 12, 1938, there was no music. Black uniformed Hitler guards brought in Jewish men from all the surrounding districts. On November 12, they arrested about 2,000 Jewish men.

At midnight, after they took away our meager belongings, we were taken to the railway station. The populace at the station received us with what sounded like animal noises. Quite a few shouted: "Concentration camp for you dirty Jews!" The guards chased us into the train, and we were on our way.

The morning of November 13 dawned. The train stopped at Weimar, the famous city of high culture, for many years the residence of the world famous poet, playwright and philosopher, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Trucks were ready at the station to ship us to the camp about 20 miles north of Weimar. Anyone not able to climb up fast enough was pitilessly beaten. Many broke their arms and legs. It was Sunday morning. Up we went, in beautiful sunshine, autumn leaves in full color—to the gate of hell.

Buchenwald, as all Hitler camps, was surrounded by barbed wire charged with high voltage. Anyone who touched it was electrocuted immediately. Watchtowers at regular intervals were manned by the guards. They were, as Hitler termed it, "trained for the special duties of the concentration camps." We learned very soon what this meant.

At the time I was captured, I was suffering with an open cyst on the upper right jaw. My nerves were at the brink of exhaustion. A deep depression had taken hold of me, which, if aggravated much more, could easily have deteriorated into a mental disturbance which would have had fatal consequences.

Then came another announcement: "No water, nothing to drink for newcomers for three days!" Three days without anything to drink brings a person to utter exhaustion. At night they gave us the first "meal": a salty soup. More thirst.

It was about ten o'clock when they ordered us into the barrack. Inside were just boards, five stories high. Of course, there was no stairway. Anyone who had to climb higher than the boards next to the floor had to climb up in a very cumbersome way. There were scarcely any water pipes laid, and no latrines. It would lead too far to go into all the details. It was like descending into the abyss. What hope could we possibly have?

During that first night of terror we finally fell exhausted on the planks, dying of thirst, without blankets in the cold air of November; we hoped that now we would be able to sleep. It was dark, terribly dark.

I had searched for truth. Through many avenues of error, I had come to recognize the main issue of our existence as Jews—that the Jews were taken out from among the nations in order to bring the Saviour into this world. Through the prophets, warning after warning was given to God's earthly people not to miss this turning point of the ages. But, "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not"!

Oh, tragedy of our beloved Jewish people! God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, cannot let them go. He told them that unto them "a child [would be] born," unto them "a Son [would be] given," and that His name would be called "Wonderful, Counsellor, *The mighty God,* The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6); that He, the Messiah, would be their sinbearer, that by "His stripes" they would be "healed" (Isa. 53:5). They were told of this wonderful plan of redemption over and over again; but they did not open the door when the great hour of His appearing arrived.

I came to Jesus by night, like Nicodemus. I found, by comparing Old and New Testaments, that all the prophecies concerning the Messiah fitted perfectly on Jesus of Nazareth. I found something else. Our rabbis told us that man can come into the presence of God by keeping the law and doing "mizvahs" (good deeds) to fellowmen. But God says throughout the Old Testament: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17:11).

The question came to me, "Who is right, God or the rabbis?" When I came to Buchenwald, there was

no doubt in my mind that God was right. He says in Malachi 3:6: "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." If He does not change, then His plan of salvation has not changed. Then His means of salvation cannot change, either! I asked: "Where is the blood today? Where is the sacrifice? Where is the altar? It must be somewhere."

During that first night in Buchenwald, the most awful things happened. Minutes after the lights had been switched out, the doors were opened and the guards came in like hyenas, taking out at random Jewish men—honorable men! They ordered them out into the yard and then the "manhunt" began. We heard, first muffled, then louder, the orders: "Run, you Jews! Dirty Jews, run! Run faster!" The guards had dogs with them, snarling German shepherds. If these unhappy Jewish men could not run fast enough, they were caught by the dogs and torn to pieces, or stabbed by the guards who had butcher knives in their hands. Those who were able to run fast enough were chased across the yard of the camp right into the electric wire where they died instantly.

The screaming of those who met their end in this way was so frightening that, during this first night, I came very near to losing my mind. Many went mad.

Here I was, naked before God. There was no escape any more. I knew that I was coming fast to the brink of death. What if I should pass into eternity and should hear the terrible words: "Too late!"? Too late to come the right way! Now I was near the breaking point—no hope any more, no way out, hopelessly fenced in, drawn toward the abyss of an eternity of horror by powerful invisible hands.

But that invisible, hellish taskmaster, Roedl, the commander of Buchenwald, left us no time for even thinking. "Juden auf den Hof!" We dragged ourselves outside. We had to stand, stand, stand. An icy wind made my exhausted frame shiver feverishly. I felt that the end had come. Not only the end of my physical existence, but something much worse, an end—not life, but not death either—in which the soul becomes irreparable, hopelessly damaged, eternally fixed—no sleep at all, but stagnant, staring, timeless wakefulness under unspeakable tortures.

The next day, we were insulted by the commander through the loudspeaker with all the insults which have been hurled against the Jews for centuries. "You Jewish swine, you have stolen all the money. You tried to bring the German people under your dirty rule. You have tried to seize control of all German life. But the Fuehrer is our deliverer from you pests! We will exterminate you like vermin. This is our task. Invincible will be our crusade against you Unterasse (Inferior Race). There will be a holy war against you for the purpose of delivering the world from you!"

Perhaps there are some incredulous readers who might think that we have dreamt up these stories of terror. I can assure you that there is nothing whatsoever exaggerated. Words cannot possibly describe the inferno of a Hitler camp.

But now listen to what happened to me in that most crucial, most helpless moment in Buchenwald, November 14 and 15, 1938.

Again the guards came in. Again they forced Jewish men out into the yard. Suddenly, a horrible sight unfolded before my eyes. I saw my mother dying in the concentration camp. I heard voices accusing me that I had murdered my mother because I was thinking only of myself and had not acted in time to rescue her. The horrors to which I had been exposed were nothing compared to this! It cut to my heart. The accusing voices grew stronger. "You know," someone said, "he refused to register her in time at the American Consulate. He saved his own skin, but did not care for his mother. He has deserved death!"

In reality, my mother was still living in Frankfurt. It was four years later that she and my sisters were deported to Terezin where she died in 1944.

And then, while I was sinking still deeper into what natural reason would have called a delirious condition, or a delusion, but which was exceedingly real to me, the picture changed again. I stood, as it were, at the ramp of the orchestra pit of our opera house in Frankfurt, and I saw how, from all sides, books, books, my books, which I cherished so much, and my manuscripts, were thrown by invisible hands into this orchestra pit. A fire was kindled, and my books and papers were burnt. Nothing remained. I was robbed of all my proud achievements.

Then all these pictures vanished. A terrific abyss opened up. I saw hands reaching out after me, ready to pull me down into an eternity of horror and perdition. I wanted to cry out, but I could not. I was paralyzed. Although I was, as far as this life is concerned, surrounded by the shrieking of those outside our barrack being chased to their death, I did not hear anything anymore from the sounds without. No

noises seemed to penetrate this horrid torment.

Then came a hand from above, one hand from above against many hands from beneath! And in that one hand was the print of a nail.

At this moment, a voice was given to me to cry, and I cried to Him in the midst of this horrible camp: "Lord Jesus Christ, my Saviour, my Redeemer, I die. But Thou, Thou alone art able to help me! Thou alone art able to rescue me from the wrath of God! I am a sinner, a horrible, helpless sinner. But Thou camest down from heaven to rescue me, Thy lost child! Help me, Lord Jesus! I surrender all to Thee." And crying to Him who alone is able to save to the uttermost, I lost consciousness.

Though I know that the Holy Spirit has to reprove the resistant derelict of sin and righteousness and judgment, I am thoroughly convinced, after this experience, that free will was never taken away from man. It was my privilege to have a real hour of decision and to receive the divine confirmation of the words of the Lord spoken to His people in Deuteronomy 30:15, "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil";—mighty words corroborated by God Himself through Jeremiah (21:8).

When I lost consciousness, I was, humanly speaking, doomed to death. Anyone who did, or who went out of his mind, was thrown into the laundry kitchen by the guards and left there to die. How easily I could have been among them!

But I awoke in the camp "hospital," a barrack with about sixty beds. It had to be sufficient for ten thousand men. To get there was next to impossible. To survive there was a greater miracle.

I stayed a few more days in the camp hospital. Then I was released back to the barrack. This was another miracle, but I did not at the time understand just from what I had been delivered. Much later, I read in Dr. Eugen Kogon's hair-raising documentary report, *The Theory and Practise of Hell,* that I had been miraculously delivered from a place from which scarcely anyone ever emerged alive.

Then I heard how I was rescued. The supervisor of our block, a Jewish gentleman from Breslau, had watched over me, and had finally got me to the hospital. This man told me he protected me because I was "in a delirious condition," as he termed it, always crying, "Christ! Christ!" He could not understand how I, a Jew, could ring out this name. He attributed it to my allegedly "delirious" condition.

But there was a deeper reason. Seventeen years later at a conference near Wallaceburg, Ontario, a missionary from India approached me after I had told the story of my conversion. She said: "Mr. Wiener, while you were in these camps in the beginning of the persecution of the Jews under Hitler, we prayed in India that the Lord would stall the flood of evil against the Jews, and that some might see the Light. My prayer is answered."

Two weeks after we had been taken to Buchenwald, in the wake of this first wave of persecution, the releases from the camp started. At that time, about three years before the so-called final solution (complete extermination of the Jews) the Nazis still permitted emigration from Germany under two conditions: that a man was a veteran of the First World War, and/or a document of emigration was provided for the prisoner by relatives or friends in another country. Both these conditions were met in my case. I had been in France with the German army in 1918, and an old friend of my parents, a prominent Jewish man in New York, provided an affidavit for me to emigrate to the United States as soon as my quota number, which was very high, would be called up.

From December 1 on, every day names were called through the loudspeaker—men who were ready for release. Everybody in the camp listened strenuously to these names. On December 13, 1938, I heard my name called. This was the third miracle.

We had to sign a document that we had not suffered any bodily harm in the concentration camp, a farce because many who were released had suffered irreparable physical and mental damage.

Finally, we stood at the gate, about sixty Jewish men. Grim had been my reception to Buchenwald, but of incomprehensible blessedness was what I was privileged to experience by the grace of God there. "For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 41:13-14)! If we clasp our right hand—empty of anything we can do—into His nail-pierced Right Hand which reaches out from heaven to rescue us, we are washed in the precious blood of His etemal atonement.

But there is more. Having been thus born again, we are members of a new people called the *ekklesia,* the "called-out-ones," the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. **u**

Outside the Walls

Today there is more of Jerusalem outside the Old City than there is inside its crenelated walls, constructed by Suleiman in the 1500s. We will leave the walk within the city for our finale, but today we visit the sites around it.

There is, as can be imagined, much to interest a Bible student in the bustling, modern city of Jerusalem. We tour the sobering Yad Vashem, the heart-rending Holocaust Memorial, complete with its Avenue of Righteous Gentiles, those who helped the Jews, often at the cost of their own lives. We see the Shrine of the Book where the Dead Sea Scrolls are displayed. We are overjoyed to see the focal point is a replica of the scroll of Isaiah, on which God has provided the most graphic depiction of their suffering Messiah. Yet the veil remains on so many of their hearts.

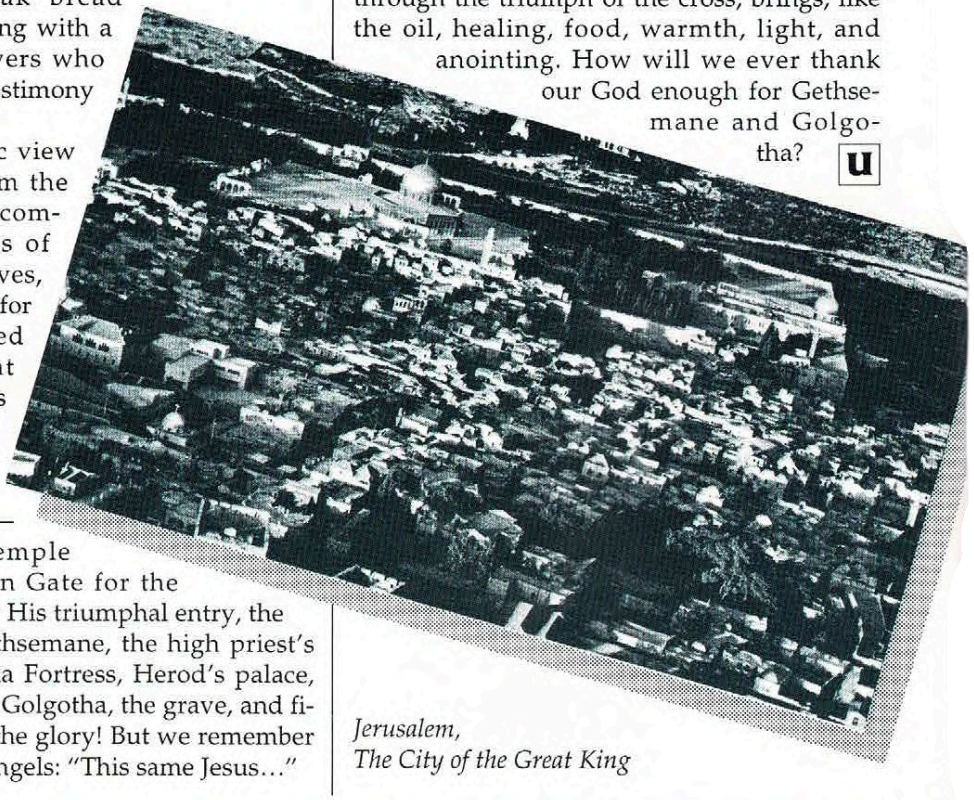
Other stops will include the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, badly divided over the solutions to the grim problems this country faces. We will visit the helpful large scale model of New Testament Jerusalem at the Holyland Hotel. And of course we would not miss meeting to break bread Lord's day morning with a handful of believers who carry on a little testimony here for Him.

Our panoramic view of Jerusalem from the east is from the commanding heights of the Mount of Olives, obviously named for the silvery-leafed olive trees that once covered its flanks. From here we can trace the Lord's last week before the cross—Bethany, the Temple court, the Eastern Gate for the dress rehearsal for His triumphal entry, the Upper Room, Gethsemane, the high priest's house, the Antonia Fortress, Herod's palace, back to Gabbatha, Golgotha, the grave, and finally from here—the glory! But we remember the words of the angels: "This same Jesus..."

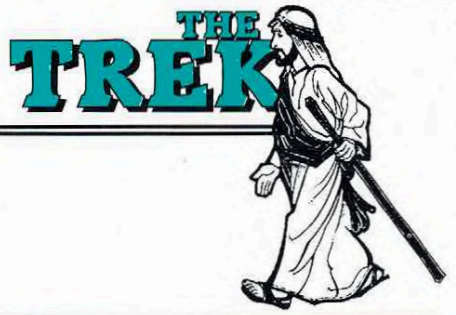
This was the mount of our Saviour's weeping. On the eastern shoulder is Bethany, where the Lord of life wept at the grave of one He loved. Surely it was not because this death had occurred for He could have prevented it and would soon reverse it. No, it seems He wept that day in sympathy, weeping with those who weep.

On cresting the brow one day, He wept at the heartless antipathy of Jerusalem to the call of the Lord. "How often would I," He lamented, "but ye would not." They would have Herod the fox (who also loved Israel's little chickens) rather than the mother hen.

Then, with the shadow of Calvary across His soul, He wept "with strong crying and tears" in the garden called "the olive press." He was anticipating the crushing of the olive berry that we might have the sweet ministration of its oil. The Spirit, who comes to us through the triumph of the cross, brings, like the oil, healing, food, warmth, light, and anointing. How will we ever thank our God enough for Gethsemane and Golgotha? u



Jerusalem, The City of the Great King



At Last!

What can you adequately say about Jerusalem? Words mock us. What can we add to the songs of David about his beloved city? Or to Isaiah's warnings? Or to Jeremiah's lament? Or to our Saviour's tears?

We notice the bullet-pocked walls above the Zion Gate as we enter the confines of the Old City. They are a grim reminder that Yerushalayim, the City of Peace, has hardly lived up to its name. These bullet scars were left in 1948, but war is nothing new to this little piece of real estate. About the only times there seem to be any lasting peace associated with it are the days of the king-priest, Melchizedek; the mighty sovereign, Solomon; and the day yet future when these two will find answer in their Antitype, the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords who shall rule the world from here. For centuries these lines were reality:

Oh! weep for those that wept by Babel's stream,
Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream;
Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell;
Mourn—where their God had dwelt, the godless dwell.

Tribes of the wandering feet and weary breast,
How shall ye flee away and be at rest?
The wild dove hath her nest, the fox his cave;
Mankind their country, Israel but the grave!

When Lord Byron wrote this dirge, the words were all true, sadly true. But not so today. No longer are Jews forbidden to enter on penalty of death or pay their Gentile rulers for the privilege of weeping at the Wall. Jerusalem is again in the hands of the Jews. For how long? It is hard to see how they would ever give it up until their last drop of blood is spilled in its defense.

Yet we do see—though Israeli soldiers are present—that the great paving stones which once upheld the glorious second temple now displays the shrine of the false prophet, Mohammed. Instead of the silver trumpets calling Israel to the house of their God, the muzzein wails for the Muslim faithful to turn their backs on Jerusalem and pray towards Mecca. It is a deeply moving sight to see 10,000 followers of Islam on their faces in prayer on the Temple Mount on the last great day of Ramadan. Our Saviour is the light for these Gentiles, too.

The Jewish quarter has been almost completely rebuilt since it was ravaged between 1948 and 1967. But in the rebuilding process, first the layers of previous civilizations were uncovered. So to the careful visitor almost every turn unfolds another time. You can walk along the Cardo, the heart, the main street through Hadrian's Roman city built over the ruins of the one destroyed by Titus, fulfilling the prophecy of the Lord Jesus that the temple would not have one stone left on another. Near the Wall, recent excavations have found the New Testament street that the Lord and His disciples would have traversed.

You can walk through what is thought to be the high priest's house; look down into the pool of Bethesda with its porticos; linger at the Pavement, the open courtyard of the Antonia fortress where our Lord was put to shame. But you can go back much further than that. See Hezekiah's Broad wall defending the vulnerable northern approach and rebuilt by Nehemiah; look down the old Jebusite water shaft through which Joab climbed to deliver the city to David 3,000 years ago; or think long and hard at the heights of Moriah where Abraham offered Isaac and, said the Lord, he "rejoiced to see My day and was glad."

You can look down into the Hinnom valley where Manasseh erected an idol to Moloch or up to Ornan's threshing-floor where Solomon built a temple to Jehovah; imagine Isaiah and Hezekiah spreading their need before God or Athaliah defying Him with her slaughter of the seed royal. There is no end of possibilities.

But they are all gone now. In their place the city streets are filled with multitudes who have never heard that from this very city went forth the Saviour of the world to die for them. Once more we need to heed the Master's plea: "Beginning at Jerusalem..." **U**

How to Prepare for a Trip to Israel

A trip to the land of Israel ought to be the journey of a lifetime. But how you prepare for it, with whom you go, and the type of tour makes a big difference.

Any tour travels at the rate of the least interested person. If someone comes along "for a holiday," and complains about the food or accommodations, is the last one on the bus every day, gripes about not enough shopping time, etc., the whole tour suffers. A visit to Israel ought to be seen as a "working" holiday, designed for those who want to learn more of the Bible and its Author on location.

What makes for a good tour? Visiting the Christian workers in Israel is a real encouragement to them—and you'll be the one encouraged! Going prepared to witness warmly, discreetly, but faithfully should be seen as both a privilege and responsibility. We have found unlimited opportunities.

Ask if the tour you are considering is going to visit non-biblical sites—the so-called traditional places (meaning those recognized by various religious institutions) like the Via Dolorosa, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, etc. I think visiting such places is not only unprofitable but robs you of the time to see many authentic sites. If you want to see them, you're welcome to them. Oh, don't forget to see Jesus' footprint in the rock when He "pushed off" at His ascension!

Make sure you find out what the cost of your tour will cover. Usually the price is in US dollars per person, double occupancy. A single room supplement will be extra. Also some prices do not include some or all taxes and/or tips or personal items.

How do you get ready for a trip like this? Make sure you have a valid passport. No visas are required for Canadian or American citizens at this time.

I suggest preparing for your tour by reading the sections of the Bible that are set in the Land: Genesis 12-38; Joshua-Ezra; Matthew or Luke; Acts 1-12. This covers 90-95% of the events in Israel. As you do this, make notes in a small loose-leaf notebook. Each page will have a separate listing for a city, mountain, valley, river, etc.

For example, beginning in Genesis 12, Abram enters the Land and builds his first altar at Sichem (Shechem). Write SHECHEM at the top of the page, under which leave room for a short description, and then begin your list of events which occurred there. It should look something like this:

SHECHEM (meaning "shoulder"); also Sichem. In a valley between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim in the Samaritan Hills. Often a place of decision for the children of Israel.

1. Abram's first camping spot in the Land; built his first altar where "the Lord appeared unto" him (Gen. 12).

So you will continue. This is very helpful because our Bible knowledge is arranged chronologically, not geographically. This study will bring the events together at each site and prepare you to visit. You will have no time there, with listening to the guide, taking pictures, keeping notes of your shots (essential!) and trying to absorb the sights.

When the time gets closer, you will want to buy your film here (much cheaper than over there)—I use about a roll per day. You will want to pack casual clothes (some sites will not allow shorts or sleeveless tops), comfy walking shoes, Bible, camera, sunglasses, a hat, bathing suit, and other usual provisions. But remember the traveler's rule of thumb: bring half the clothes you think you'll need—and twice the money!

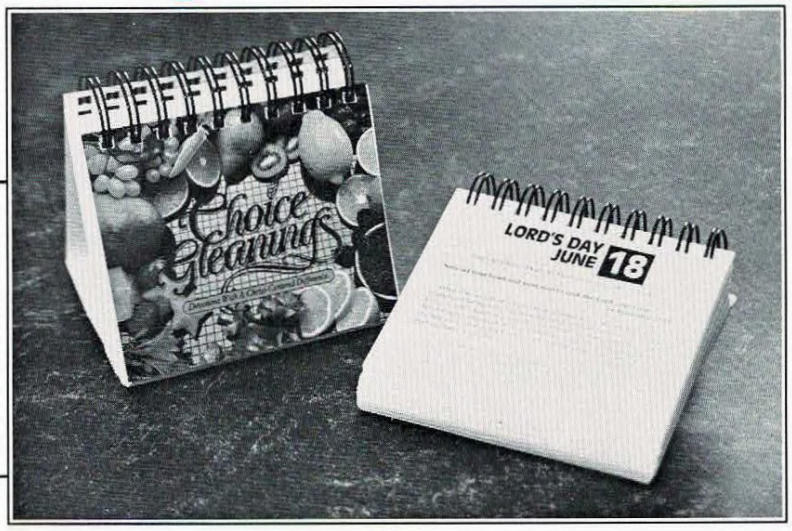
What about safety? Of course there are no guarantees—here or there. But everything is done to look after tourists. Of course there are areas of your town you would not visit late at night either. You will be joining thousands of other tourists there. The trouble spots—the Gaza Strip and the West Bank—are not on most itineraries, and much of the news, as in this country, is sensationalized anyway.

It will be impossible to leave the Land behind; you will bring it home with you! In fact, your tour through the Book really begins when you get back. **u**

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