

Jewish Evangelism (LOP 67)

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Introduction: Why Jewish Evangelism?

The year was 1980, the city was Pattaya, and the occasion was a Lausanne Consultation on World Evangelism-sponsored (LCWE, today known as the Lausanne Movement) conference that was focused on ‘reaching the unreached’. One of the many outcomes of this monumental conference was the birth of a network seeking to reach an unreached people group, the Jewish people. This network is called the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism (LCJE). LCJE is the longest functioning network among the other networks within the Lausanne Movement.

In 2004, the Lausanne Movement sponsored another gathering focusing on the task of world evangelization. At this consultation, members of the LCJE network produced a paper called: ‘Lausanne Occasional Paper 60, Jewish Evangelism: A Call to the Church’ (LOP60). Since its production, LOP60 has been used by the

LCJE network and by its members to present Jewish evangelism to the global church, explaining its importance. In this paper the words of the apostle Paul, 'For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek', (Rom. 1:16) are echoed, challenging the global church to bring the good news of Messiah Jesus to Jewish people as well as to all peoples. In LCJE we often say, 'If Jesus is not the Jewish Messiah, neither is he Christ for the nations.' The point being that it is a contradiction to believe that that Jesus is the Saviour of the world and not the Saviour of Jewish people.

As we write these words, the year 2020 is about to conclude, the year that marks the 40th anniversary of LCJE. We prayed about ways of commemorating God's faithfulness to our network over these past 40 years and decided to engage in rewriting LOP60. Since 2004, the rate of change in our global world has been exponential and so is the change within the field of Jewish evangelism. We recognize that for LCJE to remain a relevant voice within the global church we needed to recast the ancient unchanging call that was given to us to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19). This includes the Jewish people.

We present this paper, thanking you for taking the time to read it. We believe that your reading it is not a coincidence, but rather providential. You might be familiar with Jewish ministry or maybe this is the first time that you have heard of Jewish people needing Jesus or Jewish people believing in Jesus, but all the same, our prayer is that God uses these words to bring glory to his name and to further his kingdom.

Many sacrificially laboured in contributing to this booklet. From the beginning, our desire was for as many people as possible to be involved in this project to represent the diversity of voices and convictions within our network all the while focusing on what uniquely unites us: a passion for the salvation of the lost sheep of Israel. We assigned general editors to each chapter to collect the different views within LCJE and to bring them together into one single work. It's not an easy task

but the job has been well done. We want to express our gratitude and thankfulness to these hard-working editors: Rev Alex Jacob, Dr Tuvya Zaretsky, Dr Darrell Bock, Dr Richard Harvey, Susan Perlman, and Dr Rich Robinson.

Our prayer is that your reading will result in action. May you be moved to pray and intercede for the salvation of the Jewish people. You might know someone who is Jewish and in need of the gospel; we encourage you to share with them the grace of God given to mankind through Messiah Jesus. Engaging in Jewish evangelism is a call to the church, and we hope that this will be the fruit of our labour.

For His Glory,

Bodil Skjott & Dr Dan Sered

Lausanne Catalysts for Jewish Evangelism

Chapter 1: The History of Jewish Evangelism

—Rev Alex Jacob

This opening chapter will provide a historical context, and the chapters that follow build upon this history as we add dimensions to Jewish evangelism by focusing on the make-up of the global Jewish community (chapter 2), the biblical and theological bases for such outreach (chapter 3), the challenges of witnessing to the Jewish people (chapter 4), and the practical strategies and initiatives currently being employed worldwide (chapter 5).

This chapter seeks to provide an historical overview of Jewish evangelism.^[1]

Clearly this is a huge subject—especially as evangelism is embedded into the wider history of mission and mission, in turn, is embedded into the overarching history of the church. The history of the church stretches over two millennia and impacts every part of the world as the church seeks to participate fully and faithfully in the huge and significant task of the Missio Dei, a Latin term meaning the mission (or work) of God and often linked to the idea of God sending his people out to witness. However, this chapter will identify some key markers within Jewish evangelism, with

an emphasis on the early church, alongside some core evangelism principles. In all of this the chapter will provide some useful ‘stepping stones’ for further prayer, historical study, theological reflection, and action.

The ministry context of Jesus and the evangelism practice of the early church

Jewish evangelism is historically and theologically the first area of evangelism, and therefore, it is the catalyst for all subsequent wider evangelistic initiatives and actions undertaken by the church. When Jesus (commonly referred to as Yeshua in Jewish faith communities) called his first disciples, there was within this initial calling a clear focus on discipleship and becoming effective witnesses for him (Matt. 4:18–19). At the conclusion of his earthly ministry, Jesus again gave a wider invitation to all his disciples (Matt. 28:18–20):

And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold I am with you always, to the end of the age.’^[2]

This teaching (calling) from Matthew 28:18–20 has become known in the history of evangelism as the Great Commission, and this commission has helped shape and inspire the mission and ministry of the church throughout the centuries. We see therefore the importance of being witnesses to Jesus and how this ‘evangelistic imperative’ is rooted in and developed throughout the New Testament and the practice of the church.

Sharing the gospel with Jewish people is how the church began, and from there worldwide evangelism was soon to flow. At the first stage of church history there is ‘Jewish Christianity’ and only ‘Jewish Christianity’. This is because the gospel message is rooted in the Jewish biblical world. Jesus, the Jew, and his apostles (and the wider emerging early church community) ministered primarily to Jewish people. This ministry at one level was ‘wonderfully new’, ground-breaking, and transformative news. Discontinuity with the past, the dawning of a new day, and new realities of the coming kingdom are being proclaimed, displayed, and

established. However, at another level, the teaching of Jesus and the wider New Testament makes clear that this gospel message is part of a continuous revelation of God's faithfulness. The ministry of Jesus is rooted in the promises and prophecies of God^[3] and in God's faithfulness reaching back through the covenantal history of Israel and back to creation itself.

The ministry of Jesus, as recorded in the canonical gospels, is far-reaching and multi-layered, but a helpful simplification of his ministry is that Jesus proclaims the kingdom (of God)^[4] and invites people to become his disciples. This journey of discipleship contains many steps, yet the New Testament frequently emphasises four key facets: repentance, faith (trust) in Jesus, baptism, and a radical openness to the person and work of the Holy Spirit. The kingdom is, therefore, the message of the Messiah's lordship, and discipleship is the method of working this out in practice. Both kingdom and discipleship are best understood in the historical and theological context of biblical Second Temple Judaism.^[5] The vast majority of the disciples of Jesus in the first generation of the church was Jewish, many of whom are well established within Jewish religious structures as Acts 6:7 and 21:20 and James 2:2^[6] affirms. The church was born and began to grow within this Jewish world, and these new disciples of Jesus rightly claimed legitimacy as faithful Jews. Evangelism took place within this Jewish context and is understood as being continuous with the wider Jewish narrative of God's covenantal faithfulness.

Evangelism did not remain in an exclusive Jewish context for long. Soon Jewish believers in Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit, began to witness among and evangelize non-Jews (Gentiles), and the Great Commission given by Jesus (Matt. 28:18–20) began to take shape. Furthermore, through these actions (which took the gospel beyond the Jewish world) there were connections being made by those evangelists (most of whom were Jewish), between their own evangelistic ministries and with the irrevocable calling of Israel—to be a light to the nations and the channel for God's salvation in reaching out to the ends of the earth (Isa. 49:6).^[7]

The book of Acts tells of this reaching out, beginning in Jerusalem and ending with the apostle Paul witnessing in Rome, the very centre of the pagan Gentile world. In one sense, the book of Acts is a bridge from the Jewish world to the wider Gentile

world,^[8] and much of the context of the New Testament letters deals with issues around the celebrating and maintaining of unity within the growing diversity of the 'church', in which both Jews and Gentiles together sought to honour and serve Jesus as Lord.

As the church moved beyond the contours of the Jewish world, one thing that history clearly tells us is the significant speed and spread of this extension. The Christian Historian and Theologian N.T. Wright writes:

The single most striking thing about early Christianity is the speed of growth. In AD 25 there is no such thing as Christianity; merely a young hermit in the Judean wilderness and his somewhat younger cousin who dreams dreams and see visions. By AD 125 the Roman Empire has established an official policy in relation to the punishment of Christians, Polycarp has already been a Christian in Smyrna for half a century; Aristides (if we accept the earlier date) is confronting Emperor Hadrian with the news that there are four races in the world, Barbarians, Greeks, Jews and Christians; and a young pagan called Justin is beginning the philosophical quest which will take him through the greatest pagan thinkers and lead him, still unsatisfied to Christ.^[9]

The 'parting of the ways'?

Within the early years of the emerging church, Jewish believers in Jesus and their wider faith community were largely seen by other Jews (and by the wider Roman authorities) as a 'party' or 'movement' within Judaism. This was possible in part because of the way in which many Jewish believers in Jesus maintained key Jewish practices and beliefs and partly because the wider Jewish community was far from uniform—many diverse Jewish groups and identities existed. In order to reflect this diversity, it is better perhaps to speak of Second Temple Judaisms rather than a single Judaism.^[10]

The journey by which Rabbinical Judaism and Christianity emerged as institutionally and theologically separate religious realities was complicated. There was no defining event or moment in time or place when the 'parting' occurred. The book of Acts chronicles the rejection of the gospel message in a number of

synagogical contexts, and following the fall of Jerusalem (AD 67–70) and the various developments leading up to, and immediately following, the Bar Kochba revolt (AD 135), the demarcation lines between Jewish believers in Jesus (and the wider church) and emerging post-Temple Rabbinical Judaism became much clearer, sharper, and much more widely established. This ‘parting’ is widened and deepened as the church became progressively ‘more Gentile’ in terms of numbers of believers, their subsequent cultural identity and practice, and also as emerging Rabbinical Judaism redefined Jewish faith and practice in ways which began to marginalize, or fully reject, the legitimacy of Jewish believers in Jesus.

As a consequence of this, the church became more isolated from its biblical roots and New Testament practice. It is as if the truth and beauty of the gospel was slowly being poured into moulds of thought and practice from the second century onwards that subtly subverted the gospel and redefined Christianity as alien to Jewish life. This fuelled a growing conflict based upon a ‘contested identity’ between the church and Rabbinic Judaism. In this conflict there was much polemic and wider disputes (from both sides) over who the true keepers of biblical revelation are and who are now truly ‘God’s chosen people’. The largely persecuted church also becomes in some contexts the persecutor (in the post-Constantine period), and new expressions of status and power in favour of Christianity began to change many of the dynamics within ongoing relationships between Christians and Jews.

There is clearly much disputed history over how and why the ‘parting of the ways’ took place and how this should be interpreted.^[11] Yet what is clear is, although Jewish evangelism continued and Jewish believers continued their discipleship, by the end of the fourth century there were no obvious expressions of vibrant Jewish identity and community life within the church, and the separation between church and Rabbinic Judaism was almost complete. The church representing Christianity became seen as a separate religion from Judaism, and Jewish believers in Jesus were a marginalised group, often misunderstood and at times persecuted by both church and synagogue.

This 'parting of the ways' resulted in subverting Jewish evangelism from the New Testament pattern and made the evangelistic Jewish call often appear to be an 'alien scream' motivated at times by a theology distorted by supersessionist teaching, which believed that the church had replaced Israel as 'God's chosen people'. This teaching was fuelled by a number of factors, such as a moving away from a 'Hebraic worldview' and adopting a more 'Greek-focused' way of thinking, antisemitic agendas, and the misuse of power. In all of this the 'hope for Israel' was cast aside. However, despite all of this, Jewish believers in Jesus can be identified in every century of the church's history, often providing a testimony to God's faithfulness and providing a challenge to both church and synagogue.

A new beginning and a renewed call?

The Reformation awakened in parts of the church a love for and a commitment to the teachings of the Bible. As Christians read (often in their own languages for the first time) and reflected upon the message of the Bible, minds and hearts were stirred in many ways. One clear way was in receiving a calling to engage in evangelism, and in wider mission in new, dynamic ways. Part of this included a focus on reaching out to the Jewish people, who were scattered among the nations. This focus on Jewish people can often be linked to an emerging *philosemitism*, a love for Jewish people, and within that was the core theological belief that Jewish survival, renewal, and restoration is the will of God.

This renewed interest in Jewish people and this underlying philosemitism was not however something held by, or was intrinsic to all reformers. This should not be surprising when we consider Martin Luther's (1483–1546) polemics against the Jewish people,^[12] and the indifferent attitudes in much Reformation history and theological writings towards Jewish issues (and associated wider Christian issues), such as Jewish-focused evangelism and 'Israel-centred' eschatology, the theology of the end of the world.

Furthermore, philosemitism and ongoing engagement with Scripture fuelled the desire in some Christians to pray for and to seek the restoration of the Jewish nation. The vision of restoration for the Jewish nation can be seen clearly in the writing and preaching of some of the early reformers, such as Andrew Willet (1562–

1621), Thomas Brightman (1562–1607), and Pierre Jurieu (1637–1713).

Brightman's book published eight years after his death was titled: *Shall They Return to Jerusalem Again?* This book argued strongly for the return of the Jewish people to the Holy Land in fulfilment of Scripture. It was seen by many as pioneering in its advocacy, and it was greatly influential in many Christian circles.

Jewish evangelism and Israel's restoration (often within a specific biblical eschatological context) were for many Protestant Christians the 'two foundational pillars' on which new and emerging Jewish mission initiatives and institutions were to be built. Much initial pioneering work was done in Germany, drawing upon both pietistic Lutheran and Moravian networks. In 1656, Esdras Edzardus (1629–1708) opened in Hamburg a mission initiative, which sought to provide Christian teaching, discipleship, and practical assistance for Jewish people. This initiative inspired later Lutheran mission workers such as Philipp Jakob Spener (1635–1705) and August Hermann Francke (1663–1727).

In 1728, the Institutum Judaicum was established at the University of Halle. This pioneering mission institute had three main missionary aims: to establish a printing press, to provide pastoral and practical support to Jewish believers in Jesus, and to appoint and resource travelling Jewish evangelists. Although the institute closed in 1791, it was considered to be the catalyst for a number of later projects, including the Berlin seminary in which Joseph Frey (1771–1850) was a missionary student. Joseph Frey (whose given last name was Levi) was the son of a rabbi and came to faith in Jesus in 1798. Frey went on to be the founder of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews (LSPCJ) in 1809.^[13]

Another important Jewish evangelistic work in this period was established and led by Johann Dober (1706–1766) in the Netherlands, this work began in 1738. A quote from the *History of the Moravian Church*,^[14] gives a useful glimpse into this historically and theologically significant ministry:

... [H]e was a master of the Hebrew tongue, he was expert in all the customs of the Jews, he was offered a professorship at Königsberg; and yet, instead of winning his laurels as an Oriental scholar, he preferred to settle down in humble style in the Jewish Quarter of Amsterdam, and there to talk to his friends the Jews about the Christ he loved so deeply. his method of work was instructive. He never dazed his Jewish friends with dogmatic theology. He never tried to prove that Christ was the Messiah of the prophecies. He simply told them, in a kindly way, how Jesus had risen from the dead, and how much this risen Jesus had done in the world; he shared their hope of a national gathering in Palestine; and though he could never boast of making converts, he was so beloved by his Jewish friends that they called him, 'Rabbi Schmuel'.

The re-emergence of 'Jewish-Christianity'

It is of interest to note in reviewing some of these new emerging evangelistic ministries and the various associated agencies and institutions, to see the relatively high percentage of Jewish believers in Jesus, who held significant leadership roles in these ministries. This number grew significantly throughout the nineteenth century.^[15] In addition to Frey, some other contributors during this period are Michael Solomon Alexander (1799–1845), Joseph Wolff (1795–1862), August Neander (1789–1850), Isaac Da Costa (1798–1860), Alfred Edersheim (1825–1889), Ferdinand Ewald (1802–1874), Henry Aaron Stern (1820–1885), John Moses Eppstein (1827–1903), Paulus Cassel (1821–1892), Samuel Isaac Joseph Schereschewsky (1831–1906), Isaac Hellmuth (1819–1901), Mirza Norollah (1855–1925), David Baron (1855–1926), Leon Levison (1881–1936), and Arnold Frank (1859–1965).^[16]

Following this relatively high percentage of Jewish believers in Jesus within these evangelistic ministries was the associated question about the validity and desirability of developing a distinctive 'Hebrew Christian' identity within (or beyond) existing ecclesiastical commitments and structures. This question challenged both the church and Jewish communities that had held the strongly established view that faith in Jesus and Jewishness were mutually exclusive. The first stirrings of this Hebrew Christian identity can be traced back to the initial meeting of the *Beni*

Abraham (Sons of Abraham) in London in 1813.^[17] Many within the emerging Hebrew Christian movement held inclusive views of identity as Jewish believers in Jesus and sought to be conciliatory in regard to relations with existing church commitments and structures, yet others pursued a more separatist (or independent) agenda.

Those who championed the vision of a solely Hebrew Christian identity sought to work towards a Hebrew Christian community that was ethnically Jewish and theologically, liturgically, and institutionally independent from the wider church. It was argued that such independence would allow for the freedom of Jewish Christians to be faithful to their national customs, to create new liturgical and theological expressions of their faith, and to allow for closer links to be forged potentially with various other Jewish groups. This would possibly also act as a vital catalyst for new Jewish evangelistic initiatives. Within this emerging vision, there were many different models of religious and community life, and, from some of these models, embryonic forms of some of today's Messianic Jewish congregations can be traced.

The majority of these Jewish believers who sought to champion renewed forms of Hebrew Christian identity came from traditional (observant) Jewish religious homes. At the heart of their calling were two core epistemic priorities: first, the continued outreach to the Jewish people, and second, the faith declaration that Jesus is the risen Messiah and the eternal Son of God. At the heart of all of this is the profound insight that if Jesus is not the Messiah for Jews, he is not Christ for the nations. Significant momentum to this emerging vision was also given by a range of other factors, such as the relative 'success' of Jewish evangelism;^[18] the continuing support from many Gentile Christians;^[19] the growth in Christian Zionism; the establishing of the first modern Jewish bishopric (Anglican) in Jerusalem; the influence of key figures such as Ridley Haim Herschell (1807–1864), Stanislaus Hoga (1791–1860), Joseph Rabinowitz (1837–1899), Carl Schwartz (1817–1870), and Paul Philip Levertoff (1878–1954); elements of Jewish emancipation; and the overall increase of the worldwide Jewish population.

The debate over the legitimacy of this vision raged in many church circles,^[20] and those opposed to such a vision felt that pursuing it would be impracticable, undermine true unity, and significantly distract many away from the prime focus of Jewish evangelism. Also, many established church groups were much more comfortable with Hebrew Christians who placed their church allegiances before their Jewish identity. In such cases Jewish identity would often be ‘lost’^[21] in the following generations. Additionally, there was the theological conviction held by some within the church that all the civil and ceremonial aspects of the Torah had been abrogated by the coming of the gospel.

The Holocaust and the rebirth of Israel

The Holocaust and the rebirth of Israel caused a fundamental change in many aspects of Jewish identity and self-perception. This change echoed in areas of Jewish evangelism as the Holocaust and the rebirth of Israel began to reshape Christian thinking and mission practice. Today it is popularly held that all Jewish-Christian encounters always are shaped to some degree by the Holocaust.

The reality of the Holocaust has led some church groups and missionary institutions to turn away from direct Jewish evangelism and towards a ministry with a greater focus on dialogue, mutual learning, and support. This shift is often underpinned by a theological realignment, namely the endorsing of a two-covenant position, also known as dual-covenant theology, which holds that the Old Testament applies to Jews while the New Testament is for Gentiles, providing two separate ways of ‘salvation’—a Jewish way (through faithfulness to Torah and the maintaining of Jewish identity) and a way for the Gentiles (through personal faithfulness to the message of Jesus and the gift of the New Covenant). In a few cases this is linked to extreme forms of dispensational theology. This shift is a timely reminder that the importance and validity of Jewish evangelism will not always be apparent (let alone a priority) to many within the church.

The rebirth of Israel as a nation also significantly has impacted Jewish evangelism. Arguably the most significant growth in recent years in Jewish evangelism has focused upon new ministry initiatives in Israel, which has resulted in growth in the numbers of Jewish believers in Jesus. Although there is often debate over specific

numbers, it seems reasonable to state now that there are in Israel, about 30,000 believers in Jesus who would define themselves as Messianic Jews,^[22] most of whom would be part of Messianic Jewish congregations throughout Israel. At times some of these congregations face hostility and persecution from other Jewish groups, who seek to undermine their legal rights and restrict key aspects of congregational life. While 30,000 might not sound a large number, it is a major increase from only a few decades ago. This growth has resulted in many significant landmarks, such as the establishing of the first Hebrew-speaking Messianic Bible College, based in Netanya.

Chosen People Ministries Chief Executive Officer Mitch Glaser explains their involvement in Israel:

The growth of Chosen People Ministries in Israel reflects the changing demographics of the country. We first served European and Sephardic Jews, especially after 1948. Chosen People Ministries sent missionaries to reach the growing *Aliyah* movement (the emigration of Jews to Israel) among young people through the 1970s and 1980s, and within a decade our ministry was focused on evangelism, congregational planting, children's camps, and more among Russian Jewish immigrants.

In 2005 we purchased the Jerusalem Messianic Centre in the German Colony, which has served as our headquarters in Israel from that time onward. Those who work with Chosen People Ministries in Israel, where we are called Beth Sar Shalom, include many who made *Aliyah* from a variety of countries and some who are *Sabras* (Jews born in Israel).

Our current staff of 24 people operates Messianic centres in both Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. These centres host Bible studies, leadership training, relational evangelism, and special outreach events and provide benevolence programs to support elderly Holocaust survivors. We also maintain food distribution centres in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Sderot, and Ashdod.

We are building a ministry presence in Tel Aviv via a community that borders downtown. Ramat Gan is an 'urban' suburb where families live when they cannot afford the high cost of rent in the centre of Tel Aviv. The total number of Israelis living in similar communities within close proximity is more than 300,000. The need is great, as this community is full of young families with children, many Russian Jewish immigrants, as well as an 'old guard' that includes some of the original settlers within Israel.

In 2016 we leased a 1,600-square-foot office space in a highly trafficked, commercial area of Ramat Gan, which we have now renovated and become the focus of our work in the greater Tel Aviv area. We hold Bible studies, public lectures, an outreach café, groups for mothers, children's ministries, as well as various benevolence ministries.

We look forward to continuing and expanding our ministries within Israel until the promise of Romans 11:25-29 is fulfilled.

Jews for Jesus Executive Director David Brickner discusses their work in Israel:

I became the executive director of Jews for Jesus in 1996 before Jews for Jesus had an official work established in Israel. I was convinced of the importance of establishing an indigenous work in the land of Israel as a major priority. In my first vision statement in 1996 I said the following: 'There used to be more Jews in the New York City area than anywhere else in the world. Today 4.4 million Jews live in Israel and the population is growing. We must move aggressively and strategically into this new frontier of ministry. Tuvya Zaretsky, our Israel portfolio holder, has eloquently stated in a recent *Christianity Today* article that Israelis will be best reached by other Israelis. I believe Tuvya is right. We must cultivate and train Israelis to reach their own. We have moved slowly and deliberately, but now is the time to apply greater energy to our work in Israel.'

We began to work diligently to follow through on this objective. We opened up our first office in Tel Aviv shortly thereafter. By 2002, we had secured official nonprofit status in Israel (an *amutah*) and had appointed Dan Sered, our first native-born Israeli to lead the work. Soon after we launched Massah, an evangelistic outreach to the Israeli traveler community and began training Israelis to do this outreach. We also began to train Israelis in Hebrew to do fulltime evangelism utilizing a training centre (the Moishe Rosen Centre) that we purchased in Florentin on the southern end of Tel Aviv.

In 2008, we launched Behold Your God Israel, a commitment to hold saturation evangelism in all 12 regions of Israel, climaxing in 2018 with Behold Your God Jerusalem, a 10-pronged, multifaceted outreach to the city with more than 70 staff and volunteers. This event coincided with the 70th anniversary of the modern state. As a direct result we have now opened our second Jews for Jesus branch in Jerusalem. We currently have eight fulltime missionaries in Jerusalem and 25 fulltime missionaries in Tel Aviv along with a full complement of administrative staff and an active internship program.

Israel has a population of nearly seven million Jews in 2020. Our ministry there is now the largest work of Jews for Jesus anywhere in the world.

This focus on Israel is very important although it should not distract from the very important narrative of significant Jewish evangelism taking place throughout many other nations. For example, significant and pioneering Jewish evangelism has taken place (and continues to take place) within in the United States, which contains a large percentage of the worldwide Jewish population,^[23] the United Kingdom, South Africa, Australia, Ethiopia,^[24] and in key parts of the former Soviet Union, especially in former provinces such as Ukraine, Moldova, and Kazakhstan. The work in the former Soviet Union impacts the work of evangelism in Israel, as many Russian-speaking Jews have made *Aliyah* to Israel in recent decades.

Avi Snyder, who has played an important role in outreach in Russia after the collapse of the former Soviet Union, explains:

The collapse of the Soviet Union provided unprecedented opportunities to bring the gospel to our Jewish people in that part of the world. Those of us who took hold of those opportunities quickly discovered a remarkable openness to the good news. God certainly stood as the architect of that receptivity. But from the human point of view, the openness could be traced to at least the following factors. The collapse of the Soviet regime brought about a discrediting of the belief system that had undergirded it; that left a vacuum that needed to be filled. Throughout the Soviet era, the ban on religious belief had made the gospel a 'forbidden fruit'; now, that fruit had come into reach. In a curious way, the Soviet blackout on the gospel had also barred a familiarity with many of the traditional Jewish objections to Jesus that we still find in the West.

God graciously used all these and other factors to prepare the hearts of post-Soviet Jews to hear and receive the news that Yeshua had died for our sins and had risen from the dead. Very soon, the faith born in the hearts of Soviet-raised Jewish people spilled over to the U.S., to Germany, and to Israel, as Jewish people moved to these countries and carried the gospel with them. To this day, the message continues to bear much fruit wherever Russian-speaking Jewish people are found.

Without doubt the rebirth of Israel has impacted significantly the ongoing history of Jewish evangelism. Space does not allow for a full analysis of this, but five key points should be emphasised:

First, the rebirth of Israel deepens the hope of those Christians who always have held together the twin foundational pillars of Jewish evangelism and Jewish national restoration. For if the Lord has restored the people to the land in fulfilment of Scripture, how much more can we trust that the Lord will restore his people to himself through the Messiah.

Second, the rebirth of Israel changes how Christians might read some of the prophetic Scriptures. For example, Isaiah 19 now has a renewed immediate, as well as a future, eschatological context. This might strengthen evangelists working in both Jewish and predominantly Muslim contexts as well as those among the nations listed along the Isaiah 19 highway. One of the hoped-for missional outcomes of Isaiah 19, is that many 'sons (and daughters) of Ishmael' will become believers in Jesus and help many 'sons (and daughters) of Isaac' find saving faith in Jesus, and equally in turn many 'sons (and daughters) of Isaac' will find faith in Jesus and help the 'sons (and daughters) of Ishmael' to do so as well.

Third, the rebirth of Israel changes the focus of Jewish evangelism. This is the first time in more than 2,000 years, that more Jewish people live within (or identify primarily with) Israel than any other nation beyond Israel's borders. This requires Jewish evangelistic institutions, which previously would have focused primarily in reaching Jewish communities in Europe (or elsewhere), to redeploy resources to address faithfully the new opportunities and challenges of working within an Israeli context. This redeployment also has another potential dimension: Namely it simply is not bringing the gospel back to Israel, but also resourcing the work to enable the gospel to go forth from Israel. This 'going forth' from Israel replicates in many ways the pattern of the New Testament, and this two-dimensional flow of evangelism and wider mission work has important spiritual and theological dimensions.

Fourth, the rebirth of Israel often changes (or should change) the relationship between the sent mission worker (and his or her ecclesiastical support stream) and the receiving community, especially when such receiving communities are indigenous and to some degree function as independent Messianic congregations. In the past, the established pattern would be for mission workers to be sent to work in projects linked with or sponsored by their own 'denominations', 'agencies', or 'supporters' from 'back home'; however, now many indigenous and independent Messianic Jewish groups are functioning and developing their mission initiatives. This leads to the inevitable changes in practical issues such as the recruitment, accountability, and fundraising for mission workers, alongside more 'spiritual' issues such as the values and desired 'outcomes' from such missionary activities.

Finally, the reality of a Jewish state has given to many Jewish people a renewed confidence in their own identity. Maybe a gospel message, which was once anathema to a Jewish person in the context of a closed and marginalised ghetto community, becomes a possibility worth exploring as an Israeli citizen within a democratic secular state on a sunny Tel Aviv beach or within a vibrant Jerusalem, the city which is the focal point for so much of the teaching and ministry of Jesus as recorded in the gospels. Alongside this possible personal openness there has been a similar openness identified in some areas of Jewish theological and historical scholarship in what is often referred to as the 'Jewish reappraisal of Jesus'. However clearly, we must not overstress this 'openness' or downplay the ingrained opposition to the gospel, which resolutely remains in many contemporary Jewish settings, especially among the more closed Hasidic communities.^[25]

The history of Jewish evangelism cannot be changed; there is much to learn from successes and failures of the past. There is much from this history for all practitioners in Jewish evangelism today to reflect upon and, in some cases, seek forgiveness for. This spirit of honest reflection is shown in the numerous documents and statements made on the subject of Jewish evangelism (and on the wider issues of Jewish-Christian Relations) by various churches and mission networks in recent years.

Listed below are a sample of documents that give a broad understanding of the topic:

Nostra Aetate, from The Second Vatican Council (1965).

The Church and Jewish People, from The Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches (1964–68).

Israel, People, Land and State, from The Synod of the Reformed church, Holland (1970).

The Church and the Jewish People, from The Lutheran World Federation Consultation, meeting in Neuendettelsau, Germany (1973).

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Conclusion

The history of Jewish evangelism weaves a complex and at times turbulent course through the history of the church. Within this history and the outworking of associated theological positions, there is much to study, such as the analysis of Jewish demographics, group identities, evangelistic strategies, different expressions of Jewish faith, etc. In all of this study and analysis, it is good to be reminded that all evangelism begins with an individual—an individual who

encounters the gospel. In every such encounter, there are historical insights, lessons to be learned, and reasons for thankfulness. It only seems appropriate to close this first chapter with a Jewish individual's encounter with the gospel. The person concerned in this account and the 'evangelist' involved were well-known to many within the field of Jewish evangelism in the twentieth century:

... Eric was born into an orthodox Jewish family; his father was the minister of the Hammersmith (West London) Synagogue and Chaplain to the Jewish forces during World War I. Eric himself went to the Jews College and ran a settlement in East London during the 1930s. Subsequently he worked as a resettlement officer in Sheffield, returning to London after the Second World War.

There followed a period of disruption and unhappiness in his personal life, which led him to question his foundations and embark on a period of searching for truth, help, and answers.

One Sunday afternoon in his late 40s, Eric went for a walk on Hampstead Heath and decided to visit Keats' House. Finding it closed, he was drawn up the hill to the interesting looking church of St John's, Downshire Hill. The minister 'happened' to be there and engaged in conversation. 'You should come and talk to our people,' he said to Eric. 'I'm not suitable. I'm a Jew.' 'So am I', responded Rev Dr Jakob Jocz!

So began a friendship, which lasted until Jakob's death many years later. Eric poured his heart out to this fellow Jew over the following months until one day he said, 'I suppose it doesn't matter how other people have hurt me—it's where I have done wrong.' 'Yes', answered Jakob, 'You have to become a *baal teshuvah* (a master of repentance).'

That was it! Eric the Jew yielded his life to Jesus the Jew through the ministry of Jakob the Jew. Eventually Eric became President of the British and then the International Hebrew Christian Alliance and himself ministered tirelessly to other Jews—understanding where they came from and was trusted by them.^[27]

The past history of Jewish evangelism must be studied, the present reality must be lived, and the future hope must be prepared for based on the assurances of Scripture. Scripture witnesses to the salvation of all Israel (Rom. 11:26) and a full number from the nations (Rom. 11:26) as well as the eternal 'unity in diversity' of those saved from the tribes of Israel and the 'great multitude' from every nation, tribe, people, and language (Rev 7).

In all of this the Scripture points to a deep mystery and a profound reality, namely the interdependency and mutuality between Jew and Gentile and between Israel and the church in the redemptive purposes of God. It is to these redemptive purposes and for the glory of God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that Jewish evangelism has sought to bear witness to in the past and seeks to bear witness to in this generation and those to come.

Chapter 2: The Jewish Community and Jewish Evangelism

—Dr Tuvya Zaretsky

This chapter seeks to acquaint you with the multicultural global Jewish community of today. You should find it helpful to explore these variations if you want to present the gospel in meaningful and appropriate ways. The following are practical observations of global Jewry, provided by Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism (LCJE) network members currently engaged in Jewish ministry.

We will describe contemporary Jewish communities by some of their generational differentiations, religious distinctions, and geographic concentrations. That is followed by four brief ethnographic descriptions of changing contemporary Jewish subgroups and those implications for Jewish evangelism. The last section provides five descriptions from LCJE members regarding unique Jewish evangelism opportunities in their international locations.

Meet the global Jewish community

For Christians to grasp the intersection between global Jewry and the gospel, in the first decades of the twenty-first century, we must understand that there are many facets to and varieties within contemporary Jewish cultures. Since all communication is cross-cultural, be prepared to learn new and complex cultural distinctions between the various Jewish communities around the world.

Therefore, you should look to identify some of these different factors if you hope to build a meaningful relationship with Jewish people. For example, is your Jewish contact from an English-speaking country and/or are they multilingual, able to communicate in language(s) from countries throughout Europe, Africa, Asia (i.e., Turkish, Farsi, Arabic), or Israeli Hebrew? Are they intermarried, from an intermarried family, or Jewishly in-married? Or are they in a serious relationship with a Gentile? With what generation do they most closely identify: baby boomers, Generations X (born between 1965-1980), or millennials? What is their spiritual outlook, if any, or do they identify with a 'religious' affiliation?

Jewry by generations

To understand world Jewry today, it is important to distinguish our thinking both by generation, geography, demography, and historic context. For simplicity's sake, we look at the post-Holocaust generation born from 1945 to 1965. In the United States, they are called the 'baby boomers'. Their Jewishness was often viewed as a religion, or 'racial' identity, and early on, they were treated as social outsiders. Their identity was impacted by the founding of a Jewish homeland in 1948 and the Israeli military recapture of the ancestral capital of Jerusalem in 1967 while outnumbered by Arab armies and censured internationally. Jewish baby boomers saw their Jewishness as an ethnicity that was unique, powerful, and now a matter of pride. Their activism against antisemitism and the oppression of Soviet Jewry engendered an empathy for black Americans' struggle for civil rights in the 1960s and 1970s. Jewish identity went beyond religious and cultural determinants to allow for a much broader definition of Jewish ethnicity.

Jews born between 1965-1980 are described as 'Generations X' and those born between 1981 and 1996 are referred to as Jewish Millennials and "Generation Y." During this period, Diaspora Jewry experienced stark cultural identity shifts as a

transition time between the post war boomers and their grandchildren, the millennials. Diaspora Jewry, in this generation, was becoming more secularized, disaffiliated from Judaism, and saw a declining birth-rate. The 1990 National Jewish Population Survey in America indicated that 63 percent of American Jews were unaffiliated with any Jewish institution. The Diaspora birth-rate was hovering around 1.8 children per couple among non-Orthodox families.^[28] Most surprising was the intermarriage rate from 1985 to 1990 in North America and Europe running above 52 percent.^[29] It has continued to rise throughout subsequent surveys, including the 2013 Pew Research of American Jewry. Throughout the former Soviet Union, by the early 1990s, the Jewish intermarriage rate was estimated at between 70 percent and 80 percent.^[30] In 2018, the state of Israel acknowledged 400,200 non-Jewish residents who previously made *Aliyah* as family members of Jewish-Gentile couples.^[31]

Jewish Millennials, or “Generation Y Jews,’ born between 1981 and 1996, are the children of the accelerating assimilation and intermarriage first observed in the late 1980s. Throughout the United States, Europe, and especially in Eastern Europe, intermarriage became the dominant pattern after 1985. Jewish Millennials have entered the work-force, started families and have continued to intermarry at a rate equal to and exceeding that of their parents. Their children, Generation Z, are the college-age Jewish students we are currently meeting on campuses. In more than half the cases, they are from intermarried parents and a hybrid, or mixed-identity family. While Pew Research reports 68 percent of millennials never doubted the existence of God, Messianic Rabbi Joel Liberman counselled Gen. Z children from Messianic families, ‘... If you never struggle with your faith, you will have “borrowed” convictions.’^[32]

For millennials, the Holocaust is not the historic formative event that it was for their parents and grandparents. The phrase ‘Never again’ doesn’t have the same force against antisemitism and ethnic injustice that it did for Jews who endured antisemitism and fought civil rights battles alongside African Americans in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s. The founding of the Jewish homeland in 1948 and the 1967 Six-Day War do not have the same significance associated with Jewish survival as they do for the two previous generations. Whereas their

grandparents and parents were shaped by these historic and cultural forces, Generation Y Jewish adults are faced with much more complex cultural influences and very different Jewish identity factors. Stephen Cohen and Ari Kelman observed:

Members of the oldest generation of American Jews... can remember the Holocaust and the founding of the state of Israel... But the same cannot be said for younger Jews especially today's younger adult Jews. The loci of Jewish identity have shifted from the public to the private... Many American Jews are claiming... their identities as proud equal Diaspora Jews.^[33]

Identity formation for Jewish millennials, and their children, is determined now more by external connections and personal choice than by the social authorities of traditional institutions. Therefore, Jewish millennials have a lot more choices about what their Jewish identity is, and those choices are augmented by technology, media culture, and globalization. Post-Holocaust Jewry in America was perhaps 80 percent or higher from Ashkenazi or East European background.^[34] Jewishness was defined by a culture of *Yiddishkeit* for an Eastern European Jewish culture. Today, Jewish millennials and their children are exposed to postmodern ideas that gender identity, sexual orientation, and their ethnicity are constructions of their own choosing rather than essential or imposed categories.

The 2013 Pew Research Centre's 'A Portrait of Jewish Americans' found that fully 44 percent of American Jews **currently married** are wed to non-Jewish spouses. While the **rate** of Jewish out-marriage is 58 percent, one sociologist noted, 'If one were to remove the small community of Orthodox religious Jews from the American Jewish population sample, the intermarriage rate is actually a whopping 73 percent.'^[35]

Jewish hybridity is a normative condition especially for millennials and their children, growing up now as Generation Z. Intermarriage in the Jewish community was, until the last two decades, a taboo. However, Jewry has historically survived

intermarriage throughout biblical and post-biblical history. Both within Israel and among Diaspora Jewry, Jewish-Gentile intermarriage is a laboratory for hybridity case studies.^[36]

Globalization, hybridity, and intermarriage are changing the face of not only global Jewry, but also Jewish identity. Global Christians will struggle now to discover what Jewishness and Jewish identity means to the people they meet. Old assumptions about what Jewish culture is like might need to be set aside and allow for safe non-judgmental conversations. In that way you might discover very different definitions for what Jews consider as *Jewish* today between boomers, Generation X, millennials and their children born between 1995-2010. See for example a book that explores the question, 'Has Jewish nostalgia replaced the synagogue as the way to find religious meaning and experience?'^[37]

Antisemitism was once experienced in the United States as prejudice or social injustice against Jewish immigrants; it is now showing up as terrorist attacks against Jews in synagogues of Pittsburgh, Northridge, and San Diego, and against Parisian Jews simply walking their streets or shopping at a kosher market.^[38] Increasingly, we are witnessing antisemitic actions on college campuses directed at Israel but with a clearly global anti-Jewish agenda. Watch for demonstrations that call for boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) against the state of Israel.^[39] Justin Kron has been working to warn Christians, especially students, from groups which seem to promote Middle East peace, but are in fact antisemitic efforts working to do away with the Jewish state.^[40]

Jewry by religion

In both the United States and Israel, which combined account for 84 percent of world Jewry, it is currently believed both populations are about 72 percent to 75 percent secular. In religious categories, the Pew Research Study on American Jewry in 2013 found of those who identify as 'religious Jews' 35 percent are Reform, 18 percent are Conservative, 1 percent are Reconstructionist, and 10 percent identify as Orthodox. In addition to those traditional American percentages were another 30 percent of American Jews who consider themselves 'religiously Jewish' but do not belong to any branch of traditional Judaism. In contrast,

Orthodox Jewry is the largest branch of religious Jewry in Europe and right behind them are Liberal or Progressive congregations, synonymous with Reform Judaism, in Europe.^[41]

In Israel, the American Reform Movement gained some standing in 1971 as the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism. However, only Orthodox-officiated marriages have government authorization.

Whereas Diaspora Jewry is viewed as either 'secular' or 'religious,' Israel has a large population segment that falls in the middle of these two categories. *Masorti*, or 'traditionalists', identify in between strict Orthodox covenantal practice and a purely secular lifestyle. *Masorti* Jewry attribute what they are doing as the best they can to fulfil religious observance while accommodating to modern Israeli life. For example, they might insist on not working on *Shabbat* but have no problem lighting a cigarette (making a fire) on that same Sabbath.

As noted above, the Pew Research found 30 percent of American Jews identify as 'religious' but not adherents of traditional Judaism. One group that could fall into that category would be Messianic Jews, Jewish believers in Yeshua. There is a growing and vibrant Messianic Jewish community that exists in the Diaspora and in Israel. However, there is no official demographic data on these communities. In the United States, 100,000 would be a safe estimate with approximately 300 to 350 Messianic congregations. A population of Messianic Jews also has been in Israel since the founding of the state and is estimated at less than one-tenth of 1 percent. In 1998, a survey of Messianic congregations and small 'house churches' in Israel suggested the presence of some 5,000 Messianic Jews.^[42] Current reports put the number of congregations in Israel at 300 and estimate 'over 30,000 believers today'.^[43]

More later will be provided about the significant presence of Jews who love Jesus throughout the Diaspora and prominently in the state of Israel.

Jewry by geography

At the beginning of 2018, the world's Jewish population was estimated at 14,606,000. That takes into account Jews living within the state of Israel and in the rest of the world (the Diaspora). Shortly after the Holocaust in 1945, the world's core Jewish population was estimated to be 11 million.^[44] In the years since, two very different demographic trends, within Israel and out in the Diaspora, have shaped Jewish population growth.

In 1945, just prior to the establishment of the state of Israel, the Jewish population there was barely half a million. In 2018, there were 6.5 million Jews living in the state of Israel. The Diaspora Jewish population in 1945 was 10.5 million. By 2018, that population had decreased to 8.1 million.^[45] Some of that population growth in Israel is due to transfer or emigration of Jews from Diaspora making *Aliyah* into Israel.

To put into historical perspective, while the overall Jewish population growth to 14.6 million is a significant increase since World War II, world Jewry has not recovered its size on the eve of that war, which stood at 16.5 million. That, demographers believe, will take decades more if it ever will be achieved.^[46]

As of 2018, two countries, Israel and the United States, account for 84 percent of the total Jewish population. Another 17 countries host Jewish populations of 18,000 or more, accounting for 14.7 percent of world Jewry. Israel's core Jewish population then was counted at 6,558,000, or 44.9 percent, of world Jewry. The United States' core Jewish population at the same time was assessed at 5,700,000, or 39 percent, of world Jewry. That was approximately the same figure reported by the Pew Research Centre Study of American Jews in 2013. Those figures reflect not only Jewish *Aliyah* to Israel, but also a declining birth-rate and assimilation of Diaspora Jewry, a trend reported as early as the National Jewish Population Survey in 1990.

Meanwhile, the Jewish population in Europe has fallen to its lowest level in a millennium. The number of Jews in Europe, including Britain, Turkey, and Russia, is only 1.3 million people. That is the same number determined by Jewish Traveler and Scholar Benjamin of Tudela in 1170.^[47]

Four changing contemporary Jewish subgroups and their implications for Jewish evangelism

Spiritual but not religious (SBNR)

In America, Jewish millennials and their parents have a higher regard for personal experience than for the previous traditions and structures within Judaism. That was evidenced by the disaffiliation level reported trending upward in the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey. Hence, among Jewish adults we hear an increasing use of the phrase, 'We are spiritual but not religious' (SBNR).^[48] Pew Research found that 90 percent of American Jewish millennials also say that they are 'proud to be Jewish'.^[49]

Those findings, when taken together indicate a prevailing longing among American Jewry to participate in *Jewishness*, or the 'covenantal obligations towards God' that are associated traditionally with being a Jew. It is that spiritual longing for connection with God that creates an appropriate approach to the SBNR Jewish individual. Jews for Jesus Newsletter Editor and Missionary Ruth Rosen observed, 'God is looking for people who want to understand their obligations to him, and, amazingly, he has obligated himself to those who will trust him.'^[50]

God is the creator who formed man out of the dust of the ground and breathed 'the breath of life' into him and all humanity, a process by which he made all living beings (Gen. 2:7). He offers eternal life to all who would know him through his Messiah Jesus (John 17:3) and by him, those who believe will receive the gift of God's Holy Spirit (John 7:37–39). Jewish resistance to the gospel then is reduced when it is presented as a message of hope and biblical spirituality, not a religion.

Personal experience over traditional authority structures

In the ministry of Jewish evangelism, we must take into consideration Jewish cultural experiences of guilt, shame, and fear; Jewish interconnectedness; and survival instinct. These factors are present in various expressions among global Jewry. However, they present differently in the highly collective Jewish communities, as in Israel, or fiercely individualistic Jewry of the North American Diaspora.

Contemporary Jewish perceptions of Christianity often misappropriate historic persecution of Jews and nationalist antisemitic attacks with 'Christian' sources without understanding the actual term or faith of the associated individuals. Many Jewish cultures confuse the terms *Christian* with *Gentile*. Personal experience with an evangelical Christian might dispel some formerly fearful assumptions and could demonstrate personal virtues of a faith lived in relationship with Messiah Jesus.

Christian effort towards evangelistic engagement with Jewish people best begins by establishing solid personal relationships. Recognizing that all communication is cross-cultural, take the initiative to advance across the metaphorical cultural bridge. Seek to know and better understand Jewish perceptions of the 'Christian worldview'. Honest and safe conversations can resolve fears, guilt, or shame that could prevent you from sharing the gospel or hinder a Jewish person from pursuing Jesus. Galen Peterson's excellent and practical paper on intercultural communication in Jewish contexts, 'Shifting Cultural Trends and the Impact on Communicating the Gospel',^[51] is worth exploring to help bridge the gap.

Millennials: A change in Jewish identity

A recent study has shown that Jewish identity among American Jewish millennials (born between 1981-1996) has changed significantly from previous generations. The Barna Group conducted a survey of American Jewish millennials in 2017. Taken just four years after the intergenerational Pew Research study, the Barna Group findings revealed how strikingly different Jewish identity is presenting among the current generation of young Jewish adults.

A few of the observations were striking in their degree of departure from traditional elements. More than one-third, 38 percent, of American Jewish millennials said they were 'not religious', yet 82 percent said they were 'somewhat' or 'very interested' in 'spirituality'. What kind of spirituality? Surprisingly, 73 percent were interested in learning about the spirituality of other faiths besides Judaism, including Christianity.

American Jewish leaders, like Ari Kelman, a Jewish Studies Professor at Stanford University, openly expressed his surprise that American Jewish millennials had changed so dramatically. Reacting to the Barna report he said, ‘These don’t look like Jews I recognize ... Maybe they are Jews we’ve never seen before.’^[52] *The Jerusalem Post* expressed shock and incredulity at the Barna finding that one-fifth of American Jewish millennials had a very non-traditional view of Jesus. It cited Barna online, ‘The Jewish survey found that 21 percent of Jewish millennials believe that Jesus was “God in human form who lived among people in the first century”.’^[53]

Sara Weissman, Editor of the web-zine *New Voices*, expressed her doubts, yet admitted that she knows this unorthodox assessment is true. She confessed that she knew *that millennial Jew*. She said that person could be ‘dating a Buddhist, laying tefillin daily even though the guy couldn’t find a synagogue’, or ‘out clubbing on a Friday night, but insisting on turning off her cell phone and computer.’^[54]

Jewish resistance to learning about Jesus has eroded with the rising rate of Jewish intermarriage and changes in the influences on identity formation. While nearly half of all American Jewish people say being Jewish is ‘very important’ to them, 80 percent of Jewish millennials in the Barna survey self-identified as ‘religious Jews’. Weissman conceded, ‘The point is, our Judaism looks different ... as millennials stray from traditional Jewish institutions and movements.’^[55]

The fact that American Jewish millennials have a low interest in traditional religious affiliation, yet a high degree of spiritual interest, means we ought to take time to ask about their personal spiritual desires. What *spiritual elements* do younger Jewish people want to discover? Are they comfortable with biblical spirituality? What do they want from God? What spiritual obligations would they observe in response to the Lord’s desires? Jesus defined that in the Hebrew Scriptures:

‘Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?’ And he said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.’ (Matt. 22:36-40)

What meanings do they draw in Bible-based observances like Passover or the fall High Holy Days? And how do they engage a biblical perspective on their destiny as part of the Jewish people?^[56] Creating cross-cultural understanding, starting with a listening relationship, is a first step towards sensitive communication of the gospel, a new truth for them.

Implications of Jewish intermarriage for Jewish evangelism

We have referenced the extensive pattern of intermarriage among Diaspora Jewry. Social research has shown that intermarriages between people of different ethnicities and religions stand at a very high percentage, some say as high as 75 percent, of disillusion or dissatisfaction.^[57] Not only is family and marital stability threatened, but also some, such as the state of Israel, have said the existence of the Jewish people is threatened.

Diaspora studies focus on people undergoing transitions in their geographical, social, and cultural settings. Intermarriage is one indicator that is often overlooked as a transitional state that produces openness or vulnerability to culture change. Jewish people are exposed to new cultures and spirituality through the social integration of dating, partnering with, and marrying non-Jews. Original social research into the challenges of Jewish-Gentile couples found one of the greatest threats to their relationships was rooted in the inability to find mutually acceptable spiritual harmony. We are finding, with a sensitive and mutually respectful approach, this segment of Jewish people is receptive to this cross-cultural ministry.

Jewish evangelism around the world

We conclude our survey of global Jewry with a brief look at Israel and the four largest Diaspora communities after the United States. What changes have taken place in the last 20 years that have affected Jewish evangelism in these locations?

Israel

At the turn of the millennium, Jewish people in Israel wondered whether there was any hope for peace. Their perspective was largely focused on political peace. Over the past 15 years, millennial Israelis have prospered during a relative peace 'within

the security fence', due to a booming economy driven by technological and biomedical scientific advances. They are also quite mobile.

Jewish evangelism efforts have shifted to meet Israelis living outside of the country in places like Germany and the United Kingdom, but also traveling post-army in Southeast Asia, Latin America, India, or Europe. Often the cross-cultural efforts are collaborative ministries between Christian nationals and Jewish evangelism workers who are sent out to connect in these remote settings. During the last seven years, Israeli Messianic Jews, especially post-army age young adults are leading the efforts to engage their own people.

Within Israel, we see the proliferation of the previously mentioned Messianic congregations' extension ministries. Many are collaborations between congregations and often involve multiple languages, like Hebrew, Russian, Amharic, Arabic, Spanish, and English. A new generational expression of indigenous Israeli Messianic music and liturgical style is rising up and successfully appealing to younger Israelis.

Ministry to Israeli soldiers has become common. Collaboration among congregations have led to ministries in several major Israeli cities. Soldiers, men and women, on weekend respite are regularly hosted for meals, housing, clothes-washing, and spiritual care. Young Messianic Jews in the Israeli Defence Force can bring friends from their military units for weekend retreats that include spiritual ministry. This is now possible because the Israeli military has taken a much more open and accepting attitude towards diversity among their ranks. We also are finding very unique Messianic efforts for outreach to address homelessness, crisis pregnancy care, and needs among the Israeli LGBTQ+ population. This is just the tip of the iceberg taking place in Israel today.

France

Paris' Director of Jews for Jesus Joshua Turnil reports:

France has long been known as home to Europe's largest Jewish population. Over the past 20 years that has been drastically dropping. Before the 1980s, French Jewry numbered somewhere around 800,000. Today, it is trending toward half that number. Antisemitism, particularly at the hands of Muslim immigrants to France, is prompting a Jewish exodus to Israel and a few other Diaspora destinations.

A growing trend of antisemitic graffiti and acts of violence against Jews has finally prompted the Christian community in France to stand up against antisemitism. Though a call went out to French Christians in 2004, a response did not take place until 2019 when a National Council of French Evangelicals (CNEF) organised a colloquium on antisemitism.^[58] It invited leaders of the Jewish community to meet with Christian leaders. More than 150 people attended. Approximately 60 percent were from the evangelical community, and 40 percent were from the Jewish population. They met for discussions and solidarity. That conversation produced ongoing interreligious contacts between French evangelical and Jewish community leaders. The meetings included open, honest, and friendly discussion around the Bible and the gospel to increase their mutual cross-cultural understanding. CNEF, including its Messianic Jewish members, continue regular participation in Jewish events and demonstrations that impact the Jewish community. In 2020, Jews for Jesus staff participated, by invitation, in hosting synagogue services during the High Holy Days in Paris.

United Kingdom

Director of Ministry for International Mission to the Jewish People Richard Gibson reports on the 290,000 Jewish people in the United Kingdom:

There is no surprise that the fastest growing sector of British Jewry is the Ultra-Orthodox, or *Haredim*, Jewish population. In 2015, the Institute for Jewish Policy Research noted that the Orthodox community in England is growing by about 5 percent per year while the rest of United Kingdom Jewry is decreasing by 0.3 percent per year. At that rate, it is believed they could double in size every 18 years. The challenge in England, then, is to train workers who possess a skill set, such as Yiddish language, to reach the Orthodox population.

There is also growing interest in reaching an increasing population of Israeli expatriates who are moving and settling in the United Kingdom. They tend to be secular, preferring Eastern spirituality or none at all. A growing community of Israeli Messianic Jews are moving to the United Kingdom to participate in this area of ministry among Israeli seekers.

The former Soviet Union, specifically Russia and Ukraine

Perhaps the largest population shift in global Jewry over the last 30 years has been from the former Soviet Union. Between 1990 and 2015, especially Russia, Ukraine, and the rest of the Soviet Union saw a population drop from more than 2,000,000 Jews down to 285,000.^[59] The largest dispersion went to Israel and the United States and currently into Europe.

The transitions of those communities made that Jewish population some of the most accessible to exposure of new spiritual truth in the gospel of Messiah Jesus. Beginning in the 1990s, Russian-speaking Messianic congregations sprang up in the former Soviet Union. Many of those congregations continue today as indigenous centres of spiritual life even as the populations continue shifting to other parts of the world. Russian-speaking Messianic congregations are established in Israel, the United States, and now in Germany.

A second major factor impacting the Russian- and Ukrainian-speaking Jewish communities is the high percentage of intermarriage. Demographers who track those numbers found in 2015, the Jewish intermarriage rate in Russia and Ukraine was at 80 percent, and the rest of the former Soviet Union was between 65 percent

and 75 percent.^[60] Those factors have enabled cross-cultural ministry among that segment of Jewish population in Israel and all the Diaspora communities where they now live.

Germany

German Director of Jews for Jesus Aaron Lewin, reports from Berlin:

The German Jewish community has changed dramatically over the past 15 years. After the vast majority of Germans fled or were murdered during the Holocaust, a minute German Jewish population remained through the 1990s. When the former Soviet Union opened up, a mass migration of Russian-speaking Jews, especially from Ukraine, headed to Germany. Many settled in the Rhein-Ruhr region. Those groups were slow to integrate into German society. This Russian-speaking Jewry continue the trend of intermarriage, now at a rate of about 75 percent with Germans.^[61]

By 2010, a third Jewish identity group came into Germany from Israel. Many settled in Berlin, where they become a thriving scene of liberal, secular, and sometimes LGBTQ+ Israeli Jews, who were seeking acceptance in the more open society. It is estimated that now as many as 20,000 Israelis live in Berlin among a German Jewish population of 117,000. It has been observed that secular Israeli Jews are not particularly interested in social connections with the Russian-speaking Jewish community and their more traditional culture.

Antisemitism in Germany, despite strict laws against it, has been on the rise. In 2019, antisemitic acts saw the highest reported number since a registry was formed 20 years ago. It should be noted that only 2,032 acts were reported the ones that were reported. As a result, Israelis have become sensitive about speaking Hebrew in the streets, and Jews in Germany are generally feeling more vulnerable as Germany embraces a population of refugees from Middle Eastern Islamic countries.

Lewin reported that outreach to Israeli Jews or Russian-speaking Jews in Germany requires different cultural sensitivities. Whereas England sees an increase in Orthodox Jewry, the same expansion of that population is not happening in the more secular climates of Germany and France. Intermarriage ministry is appropriate but it's still in its early stages in Germany.

Summary

What does this mean for Jewish evangelism?

This chapter should help the Christian reader understand how engagement with Jewish people today will best begin with greater appreciation of cross-cultural Jewish perspectives. Because all communication is cross-cultural, it is helpful to notice the complex differences between Jewish generations, religious communities, and geographical settings. Messianic evangelistic ministries and congregations are helping to bridge cross-cultural understanding between gospel messengers and Jewish people. Messianic Jews now are proving to have close cultural connections with Jewish Diaspora populations and Israelis *on the go*.

We have noted how globalization, hybridity, and intermarriage are all impacting Diaspora and Israeli Jewry. We have shown how these populations are often in intellectual transition and identity reevaluation. That enables them to be more open to new ideas, like the gospel of Jesus or repentance and belief in response to it.

And we have shown current ministries among spiritually open Diaspora communities of Jewish-Gentile couples, Haredi Jewry, Israeli travelers, American Jewish young adults and college-age students, and Russian-speaking Jewish migrants. We don't want to forget that younger Jewish people, who do not identify with attachment to legacy Jewish institutions are now highly interested as Jews who are *spiritual but not religious*.

This small chapter is an ethnographic *screenshot* to acquaint you with the multicultural global Jewish community of today. With this information you should be able to identify more opportunities for thoughtful, appropriate, and cross-culturally sensitive gospel presentations among Jewish people.

Chapter 3: Theological Considerations and Jewish Evangelism

—Dr Darrell Bock, with contributions by Elijah Cohen, Gregg Hagg, Ryan Karp, Charlotte Machado, Jennifer Miles, Robert Walter

After reviewing the historical considerations of Jewish evangelism as well as the current makeup of the Jewish community, it is necessary to analyse how our biblical and theological framework impacts reaching those within the Jewish community with the gospel. How we view how God has intertwined his reconciliation of the world with the spiritual history and covenantal promises given to his chosen people can provide enlightening insight and perspective on how we can witness to the Jewish people and highlight their continuing role in God's promise to bless the world through them.

The Cape Town Commitment says this about evangelism in its section on loving the world and its cultures:

Such love also demands that we seek to make the gospel known among every people and culture everywhere. No nation, Jew or Gentile, is exempt from the scope of the Great Commission. Evangelism is the outflow of hearts that are filled with the love of God for those who do not yet know him. We confess with shame that there are still very many peoples in the world who have never yet heard the message of God's love in Jesus Christ. We renew the commitment that has inspired The Lausanne Movement from its beginning, to use every means possible to reach all peoples with the gospel.

This biblical call to evangelism means that Israel and the Jewish people are not excluded from the need to respond to God's call for all people to be reconnected to him. Israel's central place in the story of the Old Testament, as well as Jesus' role as the promised one within the divine covenants made to her, necessitates a look at Israel from a theological perspective that undergirds why Israel is still a part of God's call and program.

This chapter has five sections: 1) key terms, 2) why Israel matters, 3) current discussions, 4) God's program of reconciliation and Israel, and 5) questions about land and a future for national Israel. The addition of Israel as a nation might not seem relevant to evangelism; however, how God sees groups is a key part of what the restoration work of salvation accomplishes. Seeing how Israel fits in God's overall program helps us to appreciate why evangelism to the Jews is an important calling for the church even with complexities unique to that calling.

Key terms

Jewish evangelism

Jewish evangelism is rooted in a series of key biblical exhortations. Matthew 28:16–20 gives the Great Commission to go out into all the world to make disciples, teaching people to obey all the Messiah had commanded people to do. The Lucan version of the commission in Luke 24:44–47 saw this task as starting with Israel as a program that would launch through witnesses to the gospel from Jerusalem, something reaffirmed in Acts 1:8. There was no assumption in the text that because Jews had a tie to Abraham and his promise that somehow this would exempt them from the message of the gospel. In fact, Matthew 3:9, with its parallel text in Luke 3:8, challenges such a view. All of this explains a text like Romans 1:16, which says the gospel goes to the Jew first and also to the Greek. Evangelism of the Jewish people is a starting point for evangelism of all. Salvation itself is seen as a restoration of a fallen creation that includes the restoration of the original people who were to be the example of God's work and grace (Acts 1:6; 3:19–22). God's covenantal commitment in the Abrahamic (Gen. 12:1–3), Davidic (2 Sam. 7:8–17), and New covenants (Jer. 31:31–37) were made with Israel and were not designed eventually to exclude her as blessing went out into the world. God is faithful to his promises and to the people with whom he made those initial core promises (Rom. 9–11).

Israel

When we think about Israel in Scripture, we think about Israel as a people and as a nation. On the one hand, it is a group often contrasted with Gentiles, pointing to Israel as a people group. This is not merely about genetics or race. It is about a

long-standing monotheistic faith that stood in contrast to the world of multiple gods of its neighbours. It is rooted in customs, practices, and a distinct calendar that also served to form their identity as a people of the God of Israel. These elements form a key part of Jewish identity extending to the practice of many Jews today, a factor that is important to appreciate about Jewish heritage when doing evangelism.

The term also refers to a nation, a people with a land and location. Much of this is the story of the early part of the Scriptures—with Genesis giving the promise of a people and a land in the Abrahamic Covenant, then Exodus through Deuteronomy showing the formation of this people and their journey to the land, and with Joshua focusing on their entry into the land of milk and honey God had promised and provided them. Here, Israel stands alongside other nations like Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon. Her pain in exile and the Diaspora looks back to longing to be a people in their land.

Jews as a people and a nation

The history of the Jewish people has been one of engaging God and suffering at the hands of others. The history and unevenness of that engagement is well-chronicled in the Bible. Their focus on one God also brought challenge from other nations, starting with Egypt but extending to Assyria, Babylon, and Rome. In more recent times, Jews in Europe have experienced challenges and conflict, some of it coming from the church itself. Such pressure has caused many Jewish people to long for their own land again. The horror that was the Holocaust created sympathy for Israel's right to self-determination. So many Jews moved to what has become the nation Israel, making her an identifiable nation, as well as a people group. Salvation is both individual and corporate, so this means that when we think of Jewish evangelism, we have to think about the people and the nation. The nature of God's promises to her means thinking about these two dimensions in reflecting on Jewish evangelism.

Why Israel matters to God

God's word of promise in covenants to Israel (Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and New)

In Ephesians 2:12, Paul uses the phrase ‘covenants of promise’ to describe the various covenants that defined Israel’s historical relationship with God. Interestingly, this phrase suggests that those multiple covenants, each with their unique terms and context, contain a common singular promise. Ultimately, that promise refers to the Messiah Jesus and the redemptive and restorative blessings that come through him. For the people and nation of Israel this includes ‘a national existence, a land, a King, and spiritual blessings’.^[62] What follows is a brief analysis of each of the Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and New covenants and how the promises made to the people and nation of Israel contained in each have found or will find their ultimate fulfilment in the Messiah Jesus.

Abrahamic. The covenant that serves as the foundation of Israel’s relationship with God is the one made with Abraham. Here, the Lord called and set Abraham apart to be the miraculous progenitor of the family, tribe, and eventually the nation through which the Messiah would be born. In Genesis 12:1–3, God promised to bless him, to make his name great, to execute divine justice and protection on his behalf, and to bring him to a special land, which is later deeded to Abraham and his descendants by God (Gen. 15:18–21; 17:8). Perhaps the greatest of these promises is that Abraham would become a blessing to others. With Messianic underpinnings, God declared, ‘In you all the families of the earth will be blessed’ (Gen. 12:3). The generational and everlasting nature of this covenant is made clear in Genesis 15 and 17 and is also evident in that the same promises made to Abraham are reiterated to both his son Isaac (Gen. 26:3–5) and grandson Jacob (Gen. 28:13–15).

Mosaic. While at first it may seem difficult to find a specific Messianic hope or promise in the Mosaic Covenant and some question whether to place it in such a category, it’s not impossible. Following the Suzerain-Vassal template of ancient Near Eastern treaties, the latter chapters of Deuteronomy 27–29 contain a series of covenant blessings and curses for the people and nation of Israel to follow in order to maintain possession of the land of Israel. In chapter 30 there is a slight departure from the cultural norm as God introduces a series of promises for the nation after the blessings and curses come upon them (Deut. 30:1). These blessings include a physical regathering of the people to the land (Deut. 30:3–5), as well as a spiritual

renewal and restoration when the hearts of the nation are circumcised *en masse* (Deut. 30:2, 6–10), blessings that are only possible through the Messiah. We also can find a hint at Israel and the nations unified in their worship of the God of Israel at the close of the Song of Moses (Deut. 32:43). The Torah itself contains the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant, which places the hope of promise before the creation of the stipulations of the Law (Gal. 3).

Davidic. In the Davidic Covenant, God provides a very specific characterization of the Messiah as having a Father-Son relationship with God, suffering for iniquity, and serving as the eternal King, sitting on an eternal throne, ruling over an eternal kingdom (2 Sam. 7:12–16; 1 Chron. 17:11–14). The passage in 1 Chronicles 17 gives additional information as it relates the impact of this promise on the people and nation of Israel. Israel would receive a permanent secure dwelling place free from threat (1 Chron. 17:9–10), and David further reflected on how Israel is blessed among the nations as a result of God’s promises and faithfulness (1 Chron. 17:21–22, 24). Furthermore, this Davidic Messiah figure plays a major role in later prophecies concerning Israel’s national physical and spiritual restoration (Ezek. 37:24–28).

New Covenant (Jer. 31:31–36). The most obvious blessing that comes with the New Covenant is the personal salvation that we experience through the crucified and risen Messiah Jesus. As the New Covenant relates to the people and nation of Israel, there are additional specific elements that echo what has been mentioned in the prior covenants discussed. These include God’s preservation of the Jewish people (Jer. 31:35–37), his promise to forgive their sins and transform the hearts of the nation (Jer. 31:33–34; Ezek. 36:25–27; Rom. 11:25–27), and his promise of Israel’s presence in the land into the eschaton, or the Millennium (Ezek. 36:24; 37:25–26; Matt. 23:37–39; Luke 13:34–35). In summarizing his understanding of Israel’s place in the fulfilment of New Covenant promises, Paul stated it best, ‘The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable’ (Rom. 11:29).

Jesus as a Jew and as Israel’s Messiah

To properly understand the heart of Christ, one must understand first and foremost that he was born, lived and died a Jewish man, and was raised to life again on the third day as Israel's Messiah as the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Birth. Jesus was born of a Jewish virgin, Mary (or Miriam in Hebrew); his birth was in fulfilment of Genesis 3:15, in which the 'seed of the woman' would come to crush the head of the serpent as a son of David born in the city of David (Luke 2:4, 11). Isaiah 9 speaks of a child being born, who would be called 'Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace'. Matthew speaks of him as Immanuel, which means 'God with us' (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23). In Deuteronomy 18:15, Moses tells the people, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him.' In a speech rooted in Torah promise, Peter proclaims Jesus as this promised figure (Acts 3:1–26).^[63]

Early life and ministry. We do not know much about the childhood of Jesus, but we do know that at age 12 he debated with rabbis in the Temple and spoke with great wisdom and authority. We do know that he 'grew up like a tender shoot' in accordance with Isaiah 53 (Isa. 53:2) and was one with his people. The gospels show Jesus' parents following the Law (Luke 2:21–24). In his own ministry, he spoke at the synagogue (Luke 4:16–30) and told a healed leper to report the healing to the local priest in accordance with the Law (Mark 1:40–45). He taught in the Temple precincts (Matt. 26:55). In the last century, many scholars working on Jesus have reminded us just how Jewish he was.

The Second Temple period was a time of division, and the Temple practice was split between the Pharisees and the Sanhedrin. Jesus was considered a rabbi who had disciples, just as other rabbis had followers. Jesus had a very close relationship to the Temple and prophesied about it, taught in it and about it, and, of course, cleansed it when he turned over the tables of the money-changers after his triumphal entry into Jerusalem upon the back of a donkey, in fulfilment of Zechariah 9:9. Jesus' close relationship to the Temple speaks to his ultimate authority over the Temple and its priesthood and offices; the Temple was considered the very dwelling place of the Most High God. Jesus died with the sign stating 'King of the Jews' hanging on the cross, showing his claim to be Messiah (Matt. 27:37). His

resurrection is the ultimate sign of the power of the Messiah over death and the wages of sin. God's raising him from the dead is the vindication by God of his Messiah-ship since the resurrection took him to the right hand of God and made him a mediator of God's salvific blessings, including the indwelling presence of God's Spirit to those who accept the forgiveness of sins Jesus offers (Luke 23:47; Acts 2:16–38; 10:34–48 with 11:1–18, where Gentiles share the same benefits as believing Jews had received).

Jesus and the apostles' teaching on Israel and hope for her restoration. Jesus spoke of the nation missing her time of visitation (Luke 19:41–44). Yet as the one who fulfils the promises of salvation, he also held out hope for her eventual response to him. This is seen especially in three 'until' texts, two come from Jesus and one comes from Peter. In Luke 13:34–35 and in its parallel in Matthew 23:37–39, Jesus proclaimed an exilic-like judgment over the nations where her house was to remain desolate *until* she said, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'

The language is from Jeremiah in reference to the desolate house (Jer. 12:7; 22:5), while the blessing is from Psalm 122:26. Jesus sees a temporary judgment on the house of Israel until she responds as a people. That holds out hope for the nation. Luke 21:20–24 looks at Jerusalem being overrun by the nations *until* the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. This suggests an end to their rule over the city and then a time to follow when Jews will be back contrasting the Gentiles in Scripture with Israel.

Peter preached in Acts 3:18–22 that heaven would hold Jesus *until* the times of restoration would come. That restoration, he says, is described in the Prophets of old, who depicted a role for the nation in the future culminating salvation. Texts like Isaiah 2:1–4 and 19:18–25 are in mind with the world gathering in Israel in peace to worship God. In the 40 days he was with the disciples after his resurrection, nothing Jesus taught them dissuaded them that Israel would have a role in the kingdom. This is illustrated in their question in Acts 1:6.

These texts show that Jesus is the one at the centre of God's plan and as the fulfiller of promise held out hope and promise for those of Israel and for the people as a whole. Whatever fulfilment claims are tied to Jesus and salvation cannot bypass what he said about these themes. It is no accident then that Paul always starts his evangelistic missions in the synagogues. The fact that he does shows there is no two covenantal approach to salvation. These ideas make an important theological case for evangelism to the Jewish people.

Paul's hope for Jews (Rom. 9–11). Romans 9–11 comes after the apostle Paul lays out a clear foundation: a theology of creation and a comprehensive doctrine on life, death, salvation, discipleship, and new life in Christ. Chapters 9–11 specifically address the role of the Jewish people in God's redemptive plan, namely that the Jewish people still have a place—that God has not forsaken them because of the everlasting covenant made with them in Genesis. These chapters are framed within the general context of the events of the gospel, in light of the Jewish people, 'not knowing the time of their visitation' (Luke 19:41–44), *ie*, as a nation... not recognizing the Messiah, and not embracing him. Paul describes his anguish (chapter 9), his prayerful exhortation towards evangelism (chapter 10), and his everlasting hope in the sovereign plan of God (chapter 11). These chapters are pivotal in understanding God's heart towards the Jewish people, which comes out so emphatically in these words of the apostle Paul.

Romans 9 begins with Paul's anguish and sorrow regarding his people, Israel. 'I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites' (Rom. 9:1–4). Paul yearned for the Jewish people's salvation to the extent that he was willing to forgo his own salvation if it meant his people would be saved. The thought of their eternal damnation brought him great emotional, mental, and spiritual agony. As a whole, the Jewish people did not recognize Jesus as their Messiah at the time of his First Coming. This chapter is often discussed of in terms of election and predestination generally, but it is important to understand the grief Paul feels because of Israel's election and her having received the revelation of God's Torah (Rom. 9:4–5), did

not result in saving faith in Jesus (at this exact historical moment). If it were permissible, Paul wishes that he could in fact, lose his salvation so that his brothers and sisters could be saved. Yet in this anguish, we see that Paul has hope, in the justness and mercy of God, for 'not all who are descended from Israel are Israel', meaning that the lineage is drawn through faith, rather than a physical descent (Rom. 9:8–9). Throughout the rest of the chapter, Paul continues to expound upon election, and God's sovereign mercy and justice (Rom. 9:21–22). The paragraph ends on a rhetorical question on Israel's present state. The anguish shows that Paul is not discussing how Gentiles are incorporated into Christ, but the problem of unbelief among those who belong to Israel.

Paul reiterated that his 'heart's desire' and 'prayer to God' was for Israel's salvation (Rom. 10:1). He explained the Jewish people have a 'zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge' (v. 2), much like his own zeal for God prior to meeting Jesus on the road to Damascus. Romans 10 is perhaps the clearest chapter on righteousness by faith alone, and the need for everyone, Jew and Gentile alike, to receive the good news of salvation, to hear it, and believe it in their hearts (Rom. 10:9)—but in order to hear it, the word must go forth through preaching. These words oppose a rationale that would suggest that Judaism itself, the Mosaic covenant, is enough to bring salvation to the Jewish people. Such rationales became much more popular after Vatican II, to quell Christian anti-Judaism which had attached to racial antisemitism, abetted by the Holocaust. To prevent such a thing from happening again, it became more germane to downplay the role of Jewish evangelism, so Jewish people would never feel 'forcibly converted' again and to justify said rationale with supposed theological backing. However, as understandable and well-intentioned as such a motive might have been, it doesn't make it theologically sound. The only way for a Jewish person to made right with the Father and receive salvation and eternal life is through Jesus the Messiah. In fact, Jesus as Messiah was intended especially for the Jew first (Rom. 1:1–17).

Romans 11 concludes this anguish, prayerful hope, and exhortation to preaching with a magnum opus on the future hope for Israel and the Jewish people. Here, the hope is expressed in this opening word: 'I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of

Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew' (Rom. 11:1–2). Paul used his own testimony as evidence that God had not rejected the Jewish people as a whole. God was continuing to save a remnant of Jewish people in the same way he did in Elijah's day when he reserved for himself 'seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal' (Rom. 11:4; cf. 1 Kings 19:18). Paul clarified this believing remnant of Jewish people is 'according to God's gracious choice' (Rom. 11:5). The current remnant is not the end of the story for Paul. As Romans 11:15 goes on to say, 'For if their rejection brings reconciliation to the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead.' What is key to understanding the audience here is that it is the prospect of natural branches being regrafted that makes it clear Paul is still concerned with the eventual embrace of Jesus by a larger mass of Jews at some future point.^[64] This will allow for 'all' Israel to be saved. Jews are included in this no matter how we interpret 'all Israel' in the passage, as the branch metaphor makes it clear that Paul foresees a renewed faith by a larger group of Jews. The apostle Paul gives us a hopeful picture of an even larger faithful remnant of Israel than currently exists, who will come to faith at the time of the Second Coming, in accordance with God's everlasting promises and covenants (Rom. 11:28–29). Paul also exhorts the Gentile believer in Romans 11 not to become boastful and to understand that a 'partial hardening' has come upon the Jewish people until 'the full number of Gentiles has come in'. Jewish people's hearing the gospel and accepting it won't necessarily be common until then, but will require patience, love, steadfastness, and even an anguished, broken heart.

Though some interpret 'all Israel' spiritually to mean both Jewish and Gentile believers, we believe the context does not permit such an interpretation because Paul clearly differentiated between Jews and Gentiles as separate ethnic groups throughout the entire section. In addition, as already noted, Jesus himself likewise spoke of Jerusalem's being trampled 'until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled' (Luke 21:24), and connected his return with the national repentance of the Jewish people (Luke 13:35). Similarly, the prophet Zechariah wrote of the future salvation of the Jewish people connected with the return of Jesus: 'And in that day I [Jesus] will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and

supplication, so that they will look on me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for him, as one mourns for an only son' (Zech. 12:9–10). It is Jesus who will return to judge just as it was him who was pierced (Matt. 24:29–31; Mark 13:24–27; Luke 21:25–28; Acts 3:18–22). Paul looked forward to that day of Israel's national salvation with great hope, and that hope moved him to preach the gospel to the Jewish people and encourage other believers to do the same.

Overall, these chapters encourage us to never lose hope for the Jewish people and to keep our hearts soft. Jewish evangelism is no easy task, and since we are preaching to a remnant people, whose hearts, like many others, are 'hardened' to the message, there will be many hard days and even discouragement, but as the apostle Paul tells us, we must never give up. No Jewish person is beyond hope for salvation. These chapters come alive when you can see names and faces when Paul says 'Israel'—I think this is what he wants to evoke in us, to recall our Jewish family and friends who do not yet know Messiah Jesus and be filled with passion, prayer, and gumption to share the gospel—for there is only one way to the Father, there is no other way or name under heaven (Acts 4:12). Understanding these chapters in their fullness encourages us to go forth and continue to share the good news, to the Jew first and also to the Greek (Rom. 1:16).

Israel: A sample of God's persistent grace. Everything about Israel is a reminder of God's grace. Abraham was chosen to be the father of a people by the grace of God. The formation of a nation and God's steadfast support of the emergence of the people is the story of the Pentateuch. The history of the nation resides in the historical books. The continued support of Israel and her responsibilities before God shows up in the Prophets. Perhaps the most important theme of God's support in grace is the book of Hosea. It depicts God's continual faithfulness to his people Israel in the midst of her repeated unfaithfulness. Hosea's marriage to Gomer is a metaphor for God's relationship to the nation. He will be faithful to her even in the face of her unfaithfulness. Hosea 14 holds out hope even for wayward Ephraim. God holds out hope for Israel because his faithfulness is an example of grace, which points to his steadfastness in regaining the lost. This picture shows how God reaches out to all of us when we did not deserve it.

Current Discussions

The following samples some denominational statements where Israel has received attention. The Cape Town Commitment is discussed as providing a global perspective, followed by a look at the current issues and views surrounding the nation of Israel. The need for a global perspective on Jewish evangelism is necessary because many regions of the world do not speak to this as directly as they could.^[65] That need is one of the justifications for this document.

Denominational and evangelical positions on the state of Israel and the impact on Jewish evangelism

Southern Baptists. The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC, or Baptists) is by far the largest Protestant denomination in the United States. For well over 100 years, Baptists have been supportive of evangelism to the Jewish people. Prior to the establishment of the state of Israel, Baptists voiced their concerns regarding the treatment of Jewish people and the need for their salvation through Jesus Christ. This was especially notable when viewing the local state convention statements and resolutions leading up to and during the Holocaust. One example from the North Carolina State convention in 1938 reads thus:

The most flagrant expression of racial antipathy at the present time is found in the universal prejudice against the Jew and the terrible persecution now inflicted upon the Jews in Germany, Poland, and other countries. We rejoice that the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ offers an adequate remedy for racial hate, and we believe that only as this gospel is preached and accepted by all nations can we hope to see racial hatred disappear and to see all races living together in peace.^[66]

At the time of this statement, the majority of the global Jewish population lived in Europe. The North Carolina Southern Baptist State Convention contended that the most apparent form of racism was found in the persecution of the Jewish people there. The state convention additionally added that the cure to any source of racism is the gospel of Christ. This demonstrates the Baptists' dual concerns; they didn't merely care about security of the Jewish people because they were linked to Christ in history but that they were distressed about their eternal security as well.

The concern for the Jewish people, both physically and spiritually, has been consistent within the Southern Baptist Convention. At the 2016 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, a resolution was produced regarding Israel and the Jewish people. They raised alarm concerning the movement known as Boycott, Divest, Sanction (BDS), which seeks to remove financial ties and investments from Israel and companies that do business there. It also stated that Israel had a right to exist and supported her ability to defend that right. Finally, in multiple places, the resolution declared that they pray for the 'salvation of Israel', and for, 'the peace of Jerusalem', because the 'Gospel is, 'God's power for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew' [Rom. 1:16]'.^[67]

The Southern Baptist Convention consistently supports the Jewish people; upon its founding, the state of Israel's right to exist; and regardless of a Middle Eastern political presence, the need for the Jewish people to receive the gospel.

The Anglican Communion. The Anglican Communion, also known as the Church of England and the Episcopal Church as well as many other names depending on where it is located, is comprised of tens of millions of members and is the third largest Christian denomination after Catholicism and Orthodox Christian churches worldwide.^[68] One of the earliest and most notable Christian missions to Jewish people was birthed by the Anglican church in 1809. Known as the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews (London Jews Society), the Anglican Church founded one of the largest evangelistic efforts to reach Jewish people globally^[69] by the beginning of the twentieth century. Their efforts to share Christ with Jewish people continued into the twentieth century from the Middle East to the United Kingdom.

However, there were shifts in attitudes towards Jewish evangelism. In the 1990s:

Dr George Carey, 103rd Archbishop of Canterbury in office from 1991–2002, became the first Archbishop of Canterbury in 150 years to decline to be the Patron of the Anglican Church’s Ministry Among the Jewish People. Reports at the time confirmed that the archbishop, the most senior figure in the Anglican Church, did not wish to endorse the organization’s missionary work, which he felt was damaging to interfaith relations.^[70]

His successor, Dr Rowan Williams backed a synod decision to divest financially from a company whose bulldozers were used by the Israeli army.^[71] In regard to the state of Israel, this began a trend of criticizing the country’s actions. Rt Rev Julian M. Dobbs states it this way, ‘Both the General Convention and the Executive Council have exhibited a marked tendency to hold Israel to a utopian standard of conduct and its adversaries to no standard at all.’^[72]

While this might be the case, in 2002 Dr Carey also made declarations proclaiming that the church must, ‘... honour the deep Israeli yearning for peace and security and for an end to the hostility towards Israel’s very existence’.^[73]

In recent history the Anglican Church has straddled both sides of the debate regarding Israel and Palestine, seeking to understand the desires of both sets of people and voicing the desire for peace.

God’s Unfailing Word, a book released by the church in 2019, demonstrates its commitment to reaching Jewish people with the gospel while being sensitive to their unique history and connection to the state of Israel saying:

While Christians will take different approaches to a number of contemporary questions regarding the state of Israel, all should accept that a) most Jews consider Zionism an important and legitimate aspect of Jewish identity, b) the state of Israel has a right to a secure existence within recognized and secure borders according to the common principles of international law ...^[74]

And:

Called to bear witness to the saving love of God in Jesus Christ for all people, Jews as well as Gentiles, the Church remembers with gratitude that Jewish people stand in a unique relationship to the God of Israel who has drawn near to us in Christ. There is a particular responsibility to be attentive to the ways in which ... can be seen as threatening to Jews and ignorant of that unique relationship to God.^[75]

Today, the London Jew Society is known as the Church's Ministry Among Jewish People and is still listed as one of the ten major mission efforts in the Anglican Communion.^[76]

Beyond denominations: Polled evangelical Christians in the United States

While not a denomination, evangelical Christians constitute a significant number of Christ-followers in the United States. Evangelical Christians attend a myriad of types of churches and consist of multiple races. Some attend Southern Baptists churches, for example, while others attend denominationally unaffiliated churches. They number somewhere between 90 and 100 million in the United States.^[77]

According to Lifeway Research from 2017, 73 percent of evangelical Christians agree that Christians should support Israel's defence of itself from terrorist and foreign enemies while the same amount are concerned with Christians in Palestinian-controlled areas. Seventy-six percent of those polled believe that Christians should support the Jewish people's right to live in the sovereign state of Israel.^[78]

To qualify as an evangelical for this poll, participants had to affirm core evangelical beliefs including the supremacy of the Bible for how to live and the need for witnessing to non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as the only means for salvation.

Part two of the survey asked questions regarding evangelical attitudes towards the gospel and the Jewish people. Seventy-one percent strongly agreed that sharing the gospel with Jewish people is important.^[79]

The numbers regarding evangelical support of the Jewish state and the attitude of a need for Jewish evangelism parallel each other closely while only 30 percent of the respondents had Jewish friends.

The Cape Town Commitment

The Third Congress on World Evangelisation was held in Cape Town in 2010 by more than 4,000 evangelical leaders hailing from 198 countries throughout the world and thousands more online.^[80] Broadly, the conference focused on calling the church to devote themselves to unity, evangelism, justice, and standing for biblical truth.^[81] At the end of this congress, a set of commitments was agreed upon as goals for the evangelical church to collaboratively work towards. Although these commitments address many things, they only address Israel and the Jewish people in passing.

The first place that the commitments address Israel is how they are mentioned in the Bible (*CTC I-2-A*). Israel is introduced in the context of the dangers of syncretism and sin, emphasizing the connection between today's church and Israel in their need for repentance. Israel also is referenced in regard to the promise to Abraham that through his descendant God would bring salvation to the nations (*CTC I-4-A*). The relationship between Jews and Gentiles also is discussed, with unity being emphasised without ending distinctions (*CTC IIB-1-A*). In fact, the commitments specifically address the necessity of Gentile Christians to love and support their Messianic Jewish family.

The commitments also discuss non-believing Jewish people and their relationship to the church. Christians are called to evangelize Jews, as they too are a part of the Great Commission. Historical atrocities against Jews are condemned as well as the false theologies that encouraged them (*CTC IIB-2-A*). However, in the same part of the commitments, the suffering of the Palestinians also is mentioned as continuing because of Christian inaction, potentially implying a connection between Christian Zionism and Palestinian hardship. A challenge of the region is to balance the safety and security of Israel and her rights as a people and the need to honour commitments of justice for all peoples in the region.

The commitment does not address the various views of believers about the continuing place of Israel in God's plan. In fact, there is minimal commentary on the future of the world or the 1,000-year kingdom besides an affirmation that when Jesus returns, he will establish his reign and fix the world (CTC I-4-A). This statement on Jewish evangelism and the theological roots for it addresses that lack.

The current situation and array of approaches

How we approach Israel as a nation and gathered people often impacts how we see Jewish evangelism. Anyone working in the Middle East or in Israel knows the array of views that exist about the region. They operate on a spectrum usually seen as moving from pro-Arab/Palestinian views to those that are pro-Israeli. Land, peace, security, justice, reconciliation, and reparations are parts of the conversation. At least six different positions exist: justice for Palestinians, Palestinian liberation theology, Israeli-Palestinian Ubuntu/reconciliation perspectives, peacemakers and observer groups, pro-Israel lobby groups including Christian Zionism, and Messianic Jewish positions.^[82] Among the issues in discussion are: Israeli settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, the right of return for Palestinians and their refugee status, recognition of Israel by her neighbours, what to do about Jerusalem, life in the Palestinian territories, Hamas and the challenge of suicide attacks and acts of violence, issues of security in Israel, and the split in Israeli society about how to deal with the situation. This listing alone shows the complexity of the area. Its long contentious history also feeds into these questions because that history is seen in very different light by the various factions in the region. The challenge of the region involves the challenge of sorting out all these perspectives within the region.

Aspects of this diversity exist within The Lausanne Movement itself, but the LCJE was formed to be sure the concern for Israel did get the attention of the movement as a whole. That is another rationale for this document as a whole with the discussion from various views being a part of that commitment. What follows is a summary paragraph on our commitment within the LCJE with the rest of the chapter explaining why we have this commitment within the LCJE.^[83]

The hope of the Jewish people's salvation—both on an individual scale and on a national level—moved Paul to share the gospel with his people. We maintain it should likewise give us an urgency to share the gospel with Jewish people in ways to make them jealous for our relationship with God (Rom. 11:11, 14).^[84] Paul clarified that in order for Jewish people to be saved today, they must put their faith in Messiah Jesus; and in order to put their faith in Jesus, they need to hear the gospel message. In order to hear the gospel message, believers need to preach it to them (Rom. 11:14–17). That is why we hold to God's future plan for the Jewish people and the necessity of Jewish evangelism as a part of the great work of total reconciliation God's salvation intends to bring.

The importance of God's program of reconciliation involving Israel in salvation (Eph. 2:11–22): Missiological and theological significance of Israel for the church and God's people

Beyond Romans 9–11, the importance of Israel as a people identified as Jews and possessing an identity as Israel is seen in Ephesians 2:11–22. Coming off of the central doctrinal teaching about salvation coming 'by grace' and 'through faith' in Ephesians 2:8–9, this text builds on this being God's plan, namely, that believers are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works that we might walk in them (Eph. 2:10). This perspective is seen through corporate eyes as the Gentiles as a group are taken up next in Ephesians 2:11–12 as having been outside of blessing, and among other things, 'alienated from the citizenship of Israel' and 'those who formerly were far away' according to Ephesians 2:13. But now something fresh is taking place in Christ Jesus. Those who were far away (Gentiles), and those who 'were near' (Jews), have been made into one group, into one new humanity with the barriers of hostility removed (Eph. 2:14–18). At the core of salvation at a corporate level is reconciliation between two formerly estranged groups. The result is both have access in one Spirit to the Father through the work of Christ (Eph. 2:17–18).

This work of reconciliation is the first specific good work we have been prepared to walk in as a result of our salvation. The peace that emerges is not just between the individual and God but between groups and God, namely the nations and Israel, Gentile and Jew. The one new man is a corporate new reality God is forming to

show the movement from estrangement to peace within the whole of creation, between people groups of which Gentiles and Jews are the prime example. Without Israel, some of this historic, comprehensive theological picture of reconciliation is lost. All who respond to the gospel become sharers in the rich blessings of God and the picture of reconciliation becomes a testament to the world that God is at work. This means that Jewish evangelism is an important, theologically rooted part of God's plan and testament to God's work in the world (Eph. 3:7–10). Just as Gentiles are now a fresh audience for blessing in Christ, so also the one new man is incomplete without those who 'are near' (Luke 2:30–32). God's faithfulness in restoring all of the creation shows itself in this aspect of God's plan, making outreach to any and all, including Israel, imperative.

Questions Tied to a Land and a Future Role for National Israel

Why is the role of the land and Israel in God's plan an important, debated issue among Christians these days? Three issues impact that discussion. The first involves the meaning of covenant. The second is thinking of God as a promise-keeper. The third is the discussion on hermeneutics, the interpretation of biblical texts. They help to frame the question of how to see the role of a national Israel in the future and its potential impact on Jewish evangelism. Although the issues in this section are debated among Christians, this discussion forms an eschatological dimension to issues of evangelism. A case for Israel as a people and nation needs to be made and appreciated in order to understand the scope of restoration that is a part of salvation, potentially impacting how we see the importance of Jewish evangelism.

The nature of a divine promise: Covenant. Covenant is a crucial element in this discussion. The very concept itself speaks of an agreement in which two parties form a 'partnership' delineating the terms of the agreement. The illustration of wedding vows might help explain this dynamic.

If only the husband takes a vow, with no requirements placed on the bride, it becomes an unconditional covenant. Certainly, the benefits of the relationship would be affected if either partner were unfaithful. The joy and blessing of the marriage would be missing when faithful love goes missing. However, a partner

remains true to the covenant made and remains faithful to the partner regardless of the other's choice to do so. This pictures the Abrahamic Covenant. Paul distinguishes between the two covenants in Galatians 3:17, one a covenant of promise and the other an administrative covenant tied to Law.

When God entered into covenant with Abraham, it was unilateral (Gen. 15), and the terms of God's part of the covenant were unconditional. It was initiated by his love, not by Israel's attributes or even her obedience (Deut. 7:7–8). God expected loving obedience on the part of Israel. When Israel did not love God in return by being unfaithful, by being openly rebellious, and/or by loving other gods, the covenant still remained intact. At every turn, the nation proved unfaithful. This culminated in the rejection of the Messiah who provided atonement for their sins through his willing sacrifice for the nation. After all, this plan was for the removal of sin and the provision of forgiveness. There remains a call to Israel tied to covenant. An irrevocable call of this kind is described in Romans 11:29 and clearly extends from the time of Paul's writing through and beyond the present day.

Salient features of this passage include the reference to a physical location, Zion, a topological place name in the land of Israel. Also, figuring prominently is the purpose of the return, removing ungodliness and taking away sin from Jacob based on Hebrew scriptural commitments. This covenant is even called God's covenant with all Israel. Furthermore, as Paul continues, the Jewish people of then and today who reject Yeshua may still be contrasted to the Jewish people who accept Yeshua, but from the long-term perspective of God's 'choice', Jews are still the beloved 'chosen people'. All of this is because of the ancient unconditional covenantal commitments God made expressly with them.

The matter of faithfulness about God's Word to Jews: He keeps his Word. Making a covenant is one thing, but keeping it is another. If God had failed at any time to make good on his covenant promises, there would have been no reason to believe that he would have been true to his Word given to others in the future. This is essential in the discussion of the theology of the nation and land, both of which were part of the original covenant promise. If this promise to Israel is not kept, God's promise to believers of today on issues tied to eternal life might not be kept.

The connection between promise and covenant is subtle. The stated agreement is the actual covenant, which contains promises to be fulfilled either unilaterally or conditionally. The covenant with Abraham rewards obedience with blessings, but it does not rescind the promises, which included a land, due to disobedience (unilateral). The covenant with Moses requires obedience to receive blessings and avoid curses (conditional). Some have considered the Abrahamic Covenant to be archaic, suggesting that all of its promises have been fulfilled in Jesus. This is true, but fulfilment in him and blessing for the church does not mean Israel's hope has been lost. Paul says that all who believe in Messiah Jesus are the spiritual children of Abraham, inasmuch as righteousness was reckoned to both Abraham and all believers by faith (Gen. 12:3 and Gal. 3:6–7). He links 'covenant and promise', in that salvation is based upon believing that God will do what he says he will do. For Abraham, it was not simply that he would be a blessing to all nations, it was also the inheritance of a particular land with boundaries for the nation God was forming through him (Gen. 12:1, 7; 13:15; 15:18; 17:8). These boundaries have never been realized in Jewish history.

Were the promises repeated? Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, such promises are reaffirmed but not just to Abraham. God made the same promise to Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 28:38; 35:12), and the author of 1 and 2 Chronicles reiterates that the promise was an everlasting covenant to Israel (1 Chron. 16:16–18; 2 Chron. 20:6–7).

An important word of caution is in order here. As we look at the state of Israel today with the excitement that its existence has created, it is tempting to minimize or even exclude the non-Jewish inhabitants of Israel in favour of only Jews in this discussion. However, all Christians must note that the people in the land promised to Abraham is today comprised of Jews, Palestinians Arabs, and other ethnic groups. Regardless of the view we take of the future for Israel, all believers must respect the current inhabitants of the land, including the promotion of love and justice, and seek to share the gospel. All are made in the image of God, and all are, therefore, precious to him. The love of the Messiah does not know any bounds with reference to ethnic or racial background. The crucified and resurrected Christ is available to all.

That said, the present return of the Jewish people in unbelief (Ezek. 36), and the rebirth of the nation heighten the enthusiasm concerning the Messiah's return and the hope of God completing his full program. Evangelism becomes a matter of urgency if these events are a foreshadowing of the end times. The importance of God keeping his word to the original recipients cannot be overemphasised. The truth of the gospel is based on whether or not God keeps his promises.

Thankfully, God's faithfulness to believers of today is not dependent upon complete obedience. Just as Israel rebelled and sinned against God, believers of today fail their God. Just as Israel will ultimately possess and inhabit the land, believers in Messiah also ultimately will reside in peace and reconciliation with God and others. If God is not faithful to keep his promises to the nation of Israel, there is no guarantee that he will keep his promises to any believer. This is an integral part of Paul's transition from Romans 8 to 9–11 where he vindicates the promise keeping God and explains the program at a corporate level.

Views and the hermeneutical discussion: Verses to consider. Those who minimize the importance of the land in the discussion of the future role for national Israel risk misapplying the idea of covenant, especially the unilateral nature of the Abrahamic Covenant, and truncating the scope of God's salvation.

Now some argue that Abraham is promised by God to be heir of the world (not just Israel), according to Paul in Romans 4:13. This expansion of the gospel offer to the entire world, far beyond the confines of Israel, indicates that the promise of the land is passé. There should be no territorial emphasis with regard to future Israel. Such an interpretation focused on the future of Israel, they claim, might inhibit the gospel witness to all the nations.

Furthermore, sometimes it is argued that Jesus nowhere repeats the promise of the land to be given to Israel. His spiritual mission to Israel has nothing to do with a political entity called the state of Israel. Every time he was challenged to establish the kingdom and take political control, he refused (John 6:15). He told Pilate that his kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36). After the resurrection, when the apostles asked him if it was time to restore the kingdom to Israel, he said that the

Father has 'fixed' the times and epochs, and evidently that was not the time. Many arguments could be made against the emphasis on the land of Israel with its well-defined boundaries of Genesis 15 during the time of Christ's earthly ministry. This view is variously labelled as a supersessionist or a fulfilment view that many faithful Christians hold. We question whether holding to these ideas necessarily excludes a hope of Israel as a people or as a nation.

It should be noted that there is an interim period in which Jesus, the True Vine, is contrasted with the vineyard which was Israel. Jesus, the Temple that is raised, exceeds the Herodian Temple. The body of Messiah is the dwelling place of God today. The High Priest is Yeshua, not the mere human priest of Levi. All may come to know God intimately, not just those members of the Jewish race. All these things are certainly true, but do they preclude or exclude a future land promise? Are these ideas either/or propositions, or can it be both/and? What should we think when New Testament texts tell us that what these prophets said is still a part of the plan (Acts 3:18–22), and Jesus, the fulfiller and executor of the promise, holds out hope for the nation (Luke 13:34–35)? Or do we rejoice in the beauty of the analogies presented by its authors with each presenting a reality that is a part of the whole?

Furthermore, important are the words of the fulfiller Jesus when he declares to the apostles, 'at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel' (Matt. 19:28). A normal reading requires the reader to take Jesus at his word of a recognizable people and an organized nation of twelve tribes. The rule of the King anticipates a realm including the nations of the world over which he (and the apostles) will exercise their authority. The words of the Bible highlights a future for the Jewish people and a nation called Israel.

A concluding note: Evangelism remains the call

As complex as the discussion about Israel is in Scripture, it is clear the Great Commission is for all people of all nations. As such, evangelism of the Jewish people is part of the call of the church. Part of the concern of the LCJE is that outreach to the Jewish people can get lost in the many issues that consume the church, even though these people have a deeply rooted historical and theological

link to the Christian faith. Jesus came as Messiah to Israel, in part to reach his own people. Nothing about that has changed, despite her current stance of significant rejection. God has always had a remnant from within Israel. In addition, God reaches out to all of us despite our initial opposition to him. An appreciation of the theological roots of faith in the Messiah can prevent any sapping of enthusiasm for this aspect of the church's call. The theological roots of the church's call and our faith's historic backdrop require us to care about bringing Jewish people into the reconciliation that is so fundamental to the comprehensive divine program of salvation and restoration. The next chapter treats many practical objections people raise to such outreach and the final chapter, in contrast, shows the array of ministry efforts and opportunities currently underway to fulfil this dimension of the Great Commission.

Chapter 4: The Top 10 Challenges Facing Jewish Evangelism and How to Respond

—Dr Richard Harvey

The previous chapters have highlighted our past and present call to the share the good news of Jesus with Jewish people, addressed some of the practical and theological issues that arise and introduced us to the Jewish community today. But unless we actually get involved in practical ways, such considerations remain theoretical. This section addresses, from a personal and storytelling perspective, the challenges facing those who are thinking about getting involved and how these roadblocks can be overcome. From our experience as well as surveyed responses, we look at ten particular challenges to overcome. Each scenario has a basis in fact and experience, but the names have been changed and their situations expanded to speak to a wider context—as we respond to the challenge of Jewish evangelism.

1. It's too hard!

Challenge: Why bother with Jewish evangelism? It's too hard, it's not high on my list of priorities, and I wouldn't know where to start. I can't reach out to everyone, and it's easier for me to reach out to people I know locally, where I already have relationships. I've never met Jewish people and don't think I'm called to reach them.

Response: Many Christians feel out of their depth when it comes to sharing their faith with Jewish people and don't know where to begin. Ignorance, lack of training, and past experiences generate our apathy and lack of interest. What can we do to put right this 'great omission from the Great Commission'?

The gospel was and continues to be 'to the Jew first' (Rom. 1:16). Sharing our faith with Jewish people is a great way to learn how to share our faith with everyone from whatever background they have. It's not as complicated as we might think—we just need a love for God, a love for the Jewish people (and everyone else), and the desire to bring the two together.

There are many ways to become involved. Training at your church, in person, or online is easily available. There are inspiring stories of Jewish people finding the Messiah, and plenty of materials on Jewish life, practice, and views of Jesus, beginning with the Scriptures.^[85] 'A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step', or as Jewish tradition says, 'All beginnings are difficult.'

Scenario: Marlene led a discipleship group at a large campus in the United States. She was surprised to find a significant number of Jewish students on campus, and when she invited them to a meeting, they invited her to a Friday night Sabbath meal at the Jewish student centre. She went in fear and trepidation but was given a very warm welcome, had a great time, and met many new friends. They invited her to come regularly, and she learned so much about Jewish faith and identity. She already knew Sarah from class but had not realized she was Jewish. It was when she met up with Sarah for a coffee later, she discovered that Sarah wanted to meet a real Christian and had been reading the New Testament in secret. She asked Marlene if she could have a private study with her, and together they studied the Gospel of John for the whole year, at the end of which she began to attend Marlene's local church. Marlene took a training course with the local Jewish ministry, Messiah's People, who gave her lots of helpful advice.

When Sarah told Marlene she wanted to become a Christian but was concerned how the Jewish student group would react, Marlene sought out the help of Messiah's People, who gave her lots of good advice and practical wisdom to share

with Sarah, who also wanted to meet other Jewish disciples of Jesus. Together, they prepared for Sarah's baptism, and several of Sarah's Jewish friends and her parents came to the service. The pastor was very sensitive to the guests at the service, who were all impressed and moved, and two of Sarah's friends are now meeting with Marlene for Bible studies.

2. I don't have any Jewish friends.

Challenge: There aren't any Jewish people where I live, and from what I've heard, Jewish people keep to themselves and I don't think I would be welcome. I'm not prejudiced, but don't Jewish people look down on non-Jews?

Response: If we love Jesus, he is the best Jewish friend any of us can have! So we already have at least one Jewish friend, and he wants us to introduce him to everyone!

The apostle Paul spoke of his heart's desire and his unceasing anguish for his people to know the Messiah (Rom. 10:1). If we share Paul's compassion and desire to share his faith with all, we can allow his concern to motivate us to pray for the Jewish people and reach out to them if we can.

For some of us, this means being informed about Jewish evangelism and getting to know others who are more directly involved. There are many prayer networks that provide help and resources, information about Jewish people and culture, and opportunities to engage with them. A trip to Israel can be a life-changing experience when we see the places where Jesus lived and the needs of the region today.

Sharing our faith with Jewish people is like sharing our faith with anyone else. It's the bringing together of three stories: the story of God, our story, and our neighbour's story. We need to learn how to tell God's story by showing his creation of the world, the sin of Adam and Eve, the call of Abraham and Israel to prepare for the coming of the Messiah, and our own place in the story as the church is the grafted in to renewed people of God. Our Jewish friends should see how their place

in God's story is through calling to be part of his people and become a disciple of Jesus. By sharing our stories, we bring God's story together with that of our neighbour.

Scenario: Steve was a shy young man studying graphic design. He had never met any Jewish people where he lived in a rural area in Idaho. He usually spent his summer break on a mission trip but always had wanted to visit Israel. He signed up for a three-month internship with a Christian graphic design company in Tel Aviv. As he boarded his flight, he found himself sitting next to Jacob, an Orthodox Jew who told him why he would never believe in Jesus. After a long flight and a lot of listening, Jacob invited him for a Sabbath meal to meet his family in Jerusalem.

Steve met for daily prayer and Bible study with his team, and they helped him prepare for his meeting with Jacob, explaining how Orthodox Jews lived, celebrated the Sabbath, and did not believe Jesus was for them. Steve made a good impression on his visit, and Jacob invited him back while he was in Israel. 'Perhaps they are trying to convert me to their religion,' Steve thought, but he kept visiting, learning, and being a respectful guest. It was only on his last visit before he returned home that the family asked him to share why he believed in Jesus. He was able to talk about the prophecies of the Messiah and his own personal experience of God. The conversation went on into the early hours of the morning, and when Steve left, they assured him that the next time he came to visit, they wanted to continue to meet with him and find out more because they had never met a real Christian who had impressed them so much.

3. I don't know the answers.

Challenge: I've tried sharing my faith with a Jewish friend but couldn't answer their objections when they said things like Isaiah 53 referred to Israel as God's Suffering Servant, not Jesus, and that the prophecy of the virgin birth in Isaiah 7:14 was a mistranslation of the Hebrew.

Plus, I've heard that Jewish people have different ways of translating and interpreting the Old Testament, so when it comes to showing how Jesus fulfilled the prophecies about the Messiah, I'm not familiar with the Hebrew translation. Also,

another Jewish friend of mine told me that since Jesus did not bring peace on earth, how could he be the Messiah. I like apologetics, but I don't know how to answer questions like this. I prefer to debate with atheists, but most Jewish people seem to believe in God already. It's also intimidating because when I do discuss my beliefs, I realize that my friends are looking at my integrity and authenticity, not just whether I have answers to their questions.

Response: Jewish people have had 2,000 years of experience of Christians trying to share their faith, often accompanied by prejudice and persecution, so it is not surprising that for some Jewish people, there are many arguments as to why they don't believe in Jesus or a basic assumption: 'Jesus is not for us'. However, this is not the main reason why Jewish people do not believe. Many have never met a real disciple of Jesus who has shown the love of Jesus in practical ways and been able to answer some of their intellectual objections. It takes time to develop evangelistic friendships and learn how to answer some of these hard questions.

Scenario: Brad was a rising star in the campus apologetics club. He used social media to reach out to many on campus from all religious and non-religious backgrounds and share his faith. He tended to be argumentative rather than conciliatory, and when a local rabbi heard that he was 'harassing' Jewish students, he called Brad's pastor, Pastor Jo, and asked for a meeting with Brad and Pastor Jo. Pastor Jo was all for good relations within the community and invited them to meet in his office.

'Do you realize the offence you are causing', began the rabbi. 'The Jewish students on campus are already feeling the pressure of the anti-Israel groups advocating BDS. Now, you Christians are telling them to believe in Jesus or they are going to hell. Isn't it time you toned down your rhetoric and we all learned to get along with one another'?

Brad hadn't heard anything like this before and did not know what to say. But Pastor Jo came to his aid. 'I'm sorry, Rabbi, if we have caused any trouble. It's certainly not our desire to give any offence, and we do appreciate your making your

concerns known. We love the Jewish people and want to stand by Israel in these difficult times. But we also love God and want to share our faith with all.'

The rabbi responded, 'By all means share your faith with everyone you meet—but you must realize how inappropriate it is for Jewish people to believe in Jesus after 2,000 years of spiritual genocide. You are trying to finish the job that Hitler began.'

Both Pastor Jo and Brad felt the pain and anger of the rabbi's response. The meeting did not get anywhere, and no follow-up was planned. But for Brad, this was a deep learning experience. He was tempted to avoid the difficult and painful issues he had just encountered but sensed this might be the Lord's direction as a way for him to mature as a disciple and an evangelist. He began to study Jewish history and went on to train further with a Jewish ministry. Now, he heads up a campus-based ministry based on building evangelistic friendships. His experience was what qualified him to share his faith now with love, understanding, and empathy.

4. I don't want to be antisemitic.

Challenge: Evangelizing Jewish people today is antisemitic. 'Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed towards Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, towards Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.'^[86]

Some people think that passages in the New Testament, such as when Jesus condemns the Pharisees (Matt. 23:1–29) and where he tells the Jewish leaders they are children of the devil (John 8:39–47), have led to the church's persecution of the Jewish people, accusing them in the Middle Ages of being 'Christ-killers' who deserved to be punished for their rejection of Jesus.

Response: The New Testament is not anti-Jewish or antisemitic any more than the prophets in the Old Testament, who strongly condemned Israel for failing to keep their covenant obligations in the hope that they would turn back to God. When Jesus argued with the Pharisees and other Jewish groups, he was having an internal 'family argument' where voices are strongly raised but never in an anti-

Jewish way. Later, Christians such as John Chrysostom and Martin Luther interpreted such passages in ways that justified their shameful treatment of the Jewish people, leading to persecution, forced conversions, and massacres. This is something that all Christians should be aware of and seek to make amends for by showing practical love. The best way to do this is to share the good news that Jesus truly is the Messiah who died for the sin of all humanity and to reconcile us back to God and to one another.

Scenario: Serena was invited by her local Hillel group on campus to join the Jewish students on a march against the boycott, disinvestment, and sanctions (BDS) levied against Israel. A keen advocate of social justice with a desire to hear both sides of the argument, she sat down with Arab and Jewish friends to discuss the issues. As a leader of a Christian group on campus, she wanted to be well-informed and up to speed with all the arguments. Her home church had always taught her to love and pray for Israel and the Jewish people, and because she was studying international relations, she wanted to have first-hand experience of the questions she would face.

Serena was surprised by how appreciative her Jewish friends were that she joined them on the march and how welcome she felt at the local Hillel meetings. When she told them about her faith in Jesus, they said, 'That's fine for you, but please don't try and convince us. We are taught to respect Christians and all faiths—they are all equal ways to God—but we see Christianity as a danger. It has always taught that the Jews killed Christ, and God is finished with the Jewish people, and that when Jewish people convert to Christianity, they stop being Jewish.'

Serena had never heard that before and, after several nights of discussion and days of study, came to understand and empathise with how her new Jewish friends were thinking. It took her a while longer to reflect on whether she did believe in a faith that was 'anti-Jewish'. The more she studied the life and teachings of Jesus, the more she realized how Jewish the gospel is, and yet how little she and her Christian friends emphasised that. She began to think about Jesus' social teachings and calls for justice in a new way and asked her Jewish friends to help her make

sure that what she was teaching in her Bible study group was not in any way offensive to Jewish people, but something they agreed with. Several agreed to come to the group discussions, and some kept coming back on a regular basis.

5. It's bad for Jewish-Christian relations.

Challenge: Jewish evangelism is bad for good relations with our Jewish neighbours. We tried to invite a Jewish Christian to a forum discussion on different religions, and because of that, the local synagogue refused to participate. They want us to work together on humanitarian projects like the food banks, night shelters for the homeless, and treatment centres but don't want us to discuss our faith.

Many Jewish leaders are not sympathetic to Jewish disciples of Jesus and want to shield their congregations from contact with them, so they ask us to stop evangelism and find new ways of sharing activities together for the good of society.

Response: Sadly, it has often been the case that Christians have not shared their faith with goodwill, love, and concern for their Jewish neighbours. But effective evangelism is motivated by love, the love of God and our neighbours. The fruits of our witness will be that others see God in us and will become disciples. It takes time to win the confidence and friendship of anyone, and many Jewish people have never had a Christian friend who demonstrates the humility, integrity, and simplicity that we see in Jesus. We need to show practical love and build good relations despite a legacy of suspicion and distrust.

Scenario: Günther lives in Germany where the history of Jewish-Christian relations reached an all-time low at the time of the Holocaust when 6 million Jewish people were murdered in the concentration camps. His family helped Jewish people hide and escape from the Nazis, and he was brought up to have a great love and respect for the Jewish people. He has visited Israel several times because his church partners with a town in Israel where they have built and maintained retirement homes for Holocaust survivors. He loves sharing his faith in his hometown in Dortmund and is active in the evangelistic team but does not think it

appropriate to talk about his faith with the Jewish people he meets in Israel. He is overcome with feelings of guilt and wants to show his love for Jewish people in practical ways, not by preaching at them.

When he is in Israel, Günther regularly visits Jakob, an elderly Holocaust survivor originally from Dortmund, to hear his story and meet his children and grandchildren. On those visits, he does not know what to say about his faith but longs for the opportunity to talk about what Jesus means to him. What advice would you give him?

6. They have asked us not to evangelize.

Challenge: Our church supports the state of Israel and wants to bless them with our financial and political support. We pray every day for God's people, but we have given a commitment not to evangelise. We know that God is bringing them back to the land of Israel and will bring them all to know Jesus, so we can leave the rest up to God.

Response: We should not let our love for the Jewish people or our support for the state of Israel detract from the main issue, the call to share the good news of Jesus with all and make disciples of all nations. Christians have different views on the prophecies of Jesus' return and how this involves the Jewish people, but all should agree on the need for the preaching of the gospel. 'How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?' (Rom. 10:14).

The apostle Paul made it his priority on his travels to share his faith with the Jewish people first, and we can follow his example. Although some Christians want to support the Jewish people politically, others support the Palestinian cause. There are many different views on this long-term, violent, intractable conflict. Whatever we think of the contemporary Israeli-Palestinian conflict and how it might be resolved, we need to focus on the priority of the Great Commission, not on secondary issues.

Scenario: Felicia lives in Brazil and attends a Pentecostal church, Horizons of the Holy Spirit, which has a great love for the Jewish people. Every year it hosts a Solidarity with Israel convention where Israeli products are showcased and investment in Israel is encouraged. She comes from a Roman Catholic background, and there are rumours that her family is descended from *conversos*, Jews who converted to Christianity and settled in Brazil hundreds of years ago. Some are even following Jewish practices like keeping the Sabbath and observing the food laws and thinking of converting to Judaism and moving to Israel. Felicia is very confused because she loves Jesus and wants to be a missionary, but her church does not want her to be involved in evangelism as it might give offence. What should she do?

7. It's not cost effective.

Challenge: Some churches plan their mission strategy based on areas of response and are reluctant to invest funds and personnel in what they see as non-responsive fields. The world Jewish population of 16 million is less than 0.01 percent of the 7.8 billion people on the planet, of whom 4 billion are not yet Christian. The estimated number of Jewish disciples of Jesus is 150,000, less than 1 percent of that. Couldn't the church's resources be better used elsewhere?

Response: We are called to take the gospel to all nations, especially those seen as hidden, unreached, or resistant. We should not measure success just by results but by faithfulness to the Great Commission. Churches that share the gospel with the Jewish people have often been greatly blessed in their mission to all nations.

Scenario: JK leads an all-night mission prayer group in a large church of 250,000 people in Southeast Asia, the Prayer for All Nations Missions Church. The church mission plan is to send out 1,000 missionaries in the next five years and complete the Great Commission in the next 20 years. His plans for the prayer group are to marshal 1,000 people per night to pray for each mission venture and help the Mission Sending Committee identify candidates to send out from the church. Betty Lim, a young student from a leading church family, came to him with the request that she be considered to become a missionary to the Jewish people, but the budget for training and sending was limited to the six most responsive mission

fields, in China, Africa, and South America. JK asked the prayer group to pray and fast for seven days about a mission to the Jewish people, at the end of which they would decide whether to call Betty to this particular ministry. At the end of the seven days, one of the prayer group leaders had a vision. 'There will be no fruit from this field', he said, 'as the Lord's time is not yet, and we need to discern the times and seasons of the sowing and reaping. Right now, the nations are the harvest field, and the people of Israel are not yet ready to receive the gospel.' Betty was puzzled because she was convinced that God was calling her to share the gospel with the Jewish people and the church would be blessed if they were to put a mission to the Jewish people on their agenda. How would you advise her?

8. They'll all believe when Jesus returns.

Challenge: Prejudice and antisemitism have prevented Jewish people from accepting Jesus, and those who do are treated as apostates and traitors. Many Jewish people say that 'Jesus is for the Christians, we have our own religion', so we should wait until God changes their hearts. Most Jewish people don't believe in Jesus, don't want to, and aren't likely to until Jesus returns—can't we wait till then? There is a 2,000-year disconnect between the Jewish people and the gospel.

Response: Today, more Jewish people are becoming disciples of Jesus than perhaps at any time since the early church! There always have been Jewish disciples of Jesus. Being Jewish and Christian, especially when the Jewish and Christian communities were hostile to each other, is a challenge but brings tremendous blessing. Jewish disciples of Jesus are the 'missing link' between the church and Israel.

The Scriptures look forward to the Second Coming of Christ when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord (Phil. 2:10–11). Paul links that to the day when 'all Israel shall be saved' (Rom. 11:26), so we can have confidence that God has not rejected the Jewish people (Rom. 11:1). Our mandate is to 'make disciples of all nations' today, beginning with the Jewish people. Jewish people need to believe in Jesus as much as everyone else because there is no other way of salvation (Acts 4:12).

Scenario: Tunde is a young minister in a large church in Ibadan, Nigeria. He was preaching through the book of Romans and was dealing with Romans 9–11 when he reached Romans 11:26: ‘and so all Israel will be saved’.

He pondered the mystery of God’s ongoing election of the Jewish people but after he read some of the commentaries, he was confused. Did this mean that the Jewish people are already saved? Or was it true that ‘Israel of God’ was made up of believers from all nations? Why wasn’t Paul clearer, and why did so many Christians disagree on the interpretation of these passages?

A keen runner, one day, he came up alongside Aaron, an Israeli computer programmer on attachment to an oil company, who was out jogging. Over their 10-mile run, he asked Aaron about being Jewish. Aaron had grown up secular, but his parents had taken him to synagogue each year for the Jewish New Year services and to hear the blowing to the *shofar*, the ram’s horn. Tunde had never met a Jewish person before and realized that this young Israeli was nothing like what he had imagined Jewish people were like. He wasn’t dressed like an Old Testament prophet and certainly did not seem to live like one. He had read the New Testament at school and thought Jesus was a good teacher but did not believe in God. How would you advise Tunde to continue the conversation?

9. They are saved through keeping the Law of Moses.

Challenge: Don’t Jewish people have their own religion—isn’t that enough? Doesn’t their covenant guarantee salvation? Some Christians teach that the Jewish people’s way to God is through keeping the Torah, the Jewish law, and that Jesus is for the nations. God’s covenant with Israel still stands, and that is their guarantee of election and salvation.

Response: Although it is true that God’s choice of Israel still stands, this does not guarantee salvation because Jesus is the Messiah who fulfils the promises and prophecies of salvation for Israel. Some have suggested that Jewish people have their own way to God through keeping the Torah. This two-covenant theology is based on a misunderstanding of the role of keeping the Law as a means of making ourselves right with God. It leads to a pluralistic view of salvation, which downplays

the uniqueness of Christ as Son of God incarnate who is the fulfilment of the Law. It also creates apathy towards Jewish evangelism for a people who need to know Messiah Jesus. Although Christians should never be arrogant in putting forward this claim, we should humbly and lovingly share this good news with all, especially the Jewish people. Jesus brings us forgiveness of sin and peace with God through his death on the cross and his resurrection from the dead—something we all need that only he can give.

Salvation is by faith alone, in what Jesus has done for us on the cross and by the power of his resurrection. Jesus is the only way of salvation for all and is uniquely Son of God incarnate. Jewish disciples of Jesus bear witness to the uniqueness of Christ and confirm that the riches of their Jewish heritage are fulfilled and confirmed by their faith in Jesus.

Scenario: Ron was brought up in a Bible-believing church where they preached on the Second Coming of Christ every second Sunday of the month, and Pastor Wayne preached on the future restoration of the Jews but never on sharing Jesus with them today. Ron was taught that everyone needs to believe in Jesus but thought the Jews were a special case that God would handle when the time came. A trip to Poland, where he visited the concentration camp at Auschwitz, profoundly moved him because he became aware of the suffering of the Jewish people. Being from a Polish background, he began to feel guilty that his own family might have been involved in the Holocaust, the mass murder of 6 million Jewish people, and asked God to show him what he could do. The next day he met Mike, as they both played soccer at the college where he was studying, and it turned out that Mike was of Polish Jewish descent and was fascinated to hear about Ron's recent trip to Poland. When it came to his visit to Auschwitz, Ron did not know what to say, but Mike pushed him, 'Do you think my ancestors are going to hell because your family herded them into the gas chambers and they did not believe in Jesus'? Ron did not know how to respond but said he would speak to his pastor and get back to him.

The following week they chatted after soccer practice. 'Look, I know that terrible things have been done to your people, and I'm really sorry that the people who did this called themselves Christians', Ron said with an embarrassed hesitation, 'but

the Jesus I love would never have agreed to the things that have been done in his name, and he would have been arrested, deported and put to death with his own people.’ Mike had never heard that because he hadn’t ever had this conversation with a real Christian.

Ron and Mike maintain a good friendship today and continue to have many conversations. The story continues...

10. Conclusion: More questions than answers?

The man who asks a question is a fool for a minute; the man who does not ask is a fool for life. —Confucius

The challenges above, and others, all contribute to the need for Christians to share their faith in the Messiah of Israel with Jewish people with humility, patience, and discipline. As disciples of Jesus, we want to overcome the challenges to sharing the gospel with Jewish people with thankfulness, prayer, and hope. Evangelism is a journey where we bring God’s story and our story together with that of our neighbour and in doing so are mutually enriched. Although questions remain and other challenges are there to be overcome, anyone who begins to share their faith with Jewish people will grow in their faith and understanding, their love for Jesus, and their love for his people. ‘He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God’ (John 1:11–12).

Chapter 5: Strategies and Initiatives in Jewish Evangelism

—Susan Perlman with Anna Beth Havenar

Armed with the history, an understanding of the people, the theological basis, and the challenges, we turn to how to practically minister to the Jewish people in the hope of sharing the good news with them. The following is a selection of current Jewish evangelism initiatives that are bearing fruit. The contributors are from the larger LCJE network, and it is our hope that whether you are a practitioner in this field of missions or you are part of the larger body of Christ and want to learn about

this aspect of Great Commission strategy, this will be helpful. It should be remembered that each of these initiatives needs the ongoing support of the body of Christ, through prayer, finances, and volunteer help.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of what is being done in the categories listed to reach Jewish people, nor is it inclusive of all the categories of outreach. It is an attempt to show that God still is at work among Jewish people, and they are hearing and receiving the good news of Messiah Jesus. The continued involvement of Jewish people in Jewish evangelism is a living testimony that God is faithful in executing his plan to make Israel a light to the nations.

Classic strategies

While we are attempting to showcase some of the innovative and adaptive strategies employed in recent years, we would be remiss to leave out some of the conventional materials and methods still proving effective in reaching Jews with the gospel. Evangelistic literature distribution and regular one-on-one visits with Jewish people continues; a systematic study of Scripture goes on in most Jewish missions. There is no consensus as to which books of the Bible are most effective, though study on the life of Yeshua through the gospel accounts is often employed, as is study of looking at God's plan for Israel in the Hebrew Scriptures. In addition, weekly and monthly Bible studies held at mission centres, in homes, or online also continue. A more recent innovation on home studies is *Shabbat* dinners where seekers are invited to experience a Friday night holiday dinner and hear a *drash*, or talk on the weekly Scripture readings. The relational aspect present in *Shabbat* engagements has seen some encouraging fruit.

Apologetics

Apologetics, while a mainstay in most Jewish missions training, has been aided in part by the writings of Michael Brown, Michael Rydelnik, and others whose works can be found in the bibliography we've provided at the end of this paper. There also continues to be an increase in online content in the form of podcasts, blogs, and interactive communications through live chat. Below is one good approach we can highlight:

Lead Apologist and Chosen People Answers Site Director Brian Crawford explains:

As the apologetics arm of Chosen People Ministries, Chosen People Answers^[87] seeks to reason with and persuade Jewish people that Yeshua is the Messiah (Acts 17–18). Jewish people often have unique questions or objections about faith in Yeshua, and believers are called to give a ready defence to the hope that is in them (1 Pet. 3:15).^[88] We take an epistemological approach [exploring the nature of how we know] of segmenting our work between mainstream (secular) and traditional (religious) Jewish audiences. Most of our initiatives are focused online, with fulltime digital missionaries writing and responding from their computers. We have found that Jewish people are often willing to discuss matters of faith through the medium of the Internet.

Other ministries focusing on apologetics strategies include Ariel Ministries and Jews for Jesus.

Bible translations

Field Director of International Mission to the Jewish People David Zadok describes how Bible translation can be an evangelistic tool:

In the Scriptures, we have the promise that the word of God will never return void but will accomplish the purposes of God (Isa. 55:10–11). HaGefen Publishing's strategy in Israel has a twofold mission: first, to make it understandable and, second, to make it accessible. Years ago, we translated the Old Testament into modern Hebrew, since the average Israeli who will read it in Masoretic text will not understand much of it. Once we completed the translation, we printed it, and in recent years, we have made it available digitally through free apps. Soon, we plan to make it available on audio as well.^[89]

Bible distribution

Christian Stier, Executive Director of Israël en de Bijbel, helps us understand the power of access to a New Testament for reaching the Jewish people:

‘And for the first time of my life I began to read the New Testament ...’ In almost every Jewish testimony a moment like this occurs, which often turns out to be a crucial step in someone’s personal search. Apart from having good conversations in person, the Bible remains the most important means to reach the Jewish people. At all times and in every circumstance, God speaks directly through his word. When our conversation stops or fails, God’s word finds a way to someone’s heart. It is God’s ‘evangelist’, sometimes sitting on a bookshelf waiting to be taken up, but God’s word is always ready and prepared to bring the message of salvation. Moreover, a beautiful bilingual edition of the Tanakh or a New Testament is often considered to be a precious gift.^[90]

Geography-based strategies

Some strategies are, by design, geography-based, particularly as many Diaspora Jewish communities continue to relate within their home country context. Here are a few examples of an approach to these subsets of Jews within a geographic space:

Israelis outside of Israel

Jews for Jesus Missionary Boris Skvortsov tells of his experience with Jewish communities in the United Kingdom:

My wife and I moved to London just before COVID-19 hit. We started a new team reaching Israelis in London. As circumstances have it, we mostly pray, research, and slowly meet Israelis to observe and learn more about the community. Our goal now is to make friendships and build relationships with people who are open to us and what we believe in. We have volunteered, hosted meals, joined sports groups, and played music together: All of which provide natural, genuine ways to cultivate meaningful gospel conversation. We strive to be part of the Israeli and Jewish community and to invite open discussion about spirituality and faith without taboo.

Russians in Israel

Israel Director of Jews for Jesus Eli Birnbaum gives insight into his ministry in Israel:

We provide a platform where immigrants to Israel can learn Hebrew and about the land of Israel on day tours. We can share the gospel at biblical sites. We conclude the day with a meal, a testimony, and an opportunity for the participants to consider Jesus. They sign up for the tours, aware of our faith in Jesus, and this does not seem to deter them from participating.

We also minister to Russians in Israel through Hebrew lessons or just through relationships. We work with the local congregations who often host or provide the Hebrew teacher. A good example is Michael, who immigrated to Israel in November 2019. He hadn't studied Hebrew because of COVID-19, so he eagerly joined our class. We invited the class to a Shabbat congregation meeting. Michael now attends the congregation despite not being interested in religion before. On a recent day tour, staff member Valery opened up the Bible in-depth with him.

Unique demographics

We also employ strategies that speak into unique segments of the Jewish community from Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox) Jews to Jews who are Holocaust survivors or children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors.

Haredi communities

Life in Messiah Ministries Executive Director Levi Hazen unpacks his philosophy for relational evangelism with Ultra-Orthodox Jews:

Without giving too specific details about my outreach to the *Haredim* (Ultra-Orthodox), these are the basic components of my strategy: 1) Learn about them, 2) seek proximity [close contact], 3) be open about your own identity, 4) talk with them, 5) seek points of contact for gospel conversations.

First of all, it is good to recognize that we are outsiders and will remain outsiders. It is important though to learn more about them, become more familiar with their world, and become a little bit familiar with Rabbinic literature. It gives credibility in conversation (they will be impressed), and we can always be looking for points of contact for gospel connections.

Try to find places or create opportunities (eg, by giving somebody a ride) to get close to them. First, it might take regularly 'hanging out' in places. As this is a relational approach, I believe it is important to be transparent about who you are from the beginning. Being open about your own identity (eg, being a Christian Bible teacher) provokes questions, which can open doors for sharing.

*Other ministries that have done extensive work in this area include Jews for Jesus and Chosen People Ministries.

Haredi Women. Jews for Jesus Missionary Laura Barron has an even more specific demographic of Haredim she ministers to and explains her team's approach:

Our team has been researching and reaching out to the insular world of Haredi women. The work is built on consistent and strategic prayer as well as communicating with Haredim to change their narrative. Our strategy is 'love and serve.' Women who have left the community have different felt needs than those who would like to leave but do not see a way out. There are those who are in the community but are asking questions or living a double life—religious on the outside but unbelieving in their hearts.

As I'm writing this, we are prototyping a highly confidential project supporting a young woman who has recently left the community. We have paired her with a believer, who is mentoring and supporting her through her transition into a successful survival in secular society. Our team has been blessed with involvement from a church, partnership with other Jewish ministries, and professional support for counselling. We are in the process of building resources to bring others alongside us in this pioneering work.^[91]

Jewish student ministry

New York Director for Jews for Jesus talks about the unique nature of evangelising Jewish students:

Reaching Jewish students isn't the sole aim of any Messianic or Christian organization but reaching Jewish students with the gospel is reaching future leaders, thinkers, professionals and, ultimately, future generations with the gospel. Jews for Jesus has situated its operations close to key campuses to reach Jewish students. Los Angeles' Upside Down Café serves the UCLA student population. New York City's West Eighth Street facility will reach New York University students through its café and community-building activities.

Young adults take in many new ideas during their time in higher education. Though many reports focus on young adults abandoning faith traditions, that's often among those who came in with a faith viewpoint. It doesn't speak to those who discover faith while in college.

Through InterVarsity at the State University of New York in Binghamton, a young Jewish woman came to faith in Jesus in 2018, and they discipleshiped her. She did an internship with Jews for Jesus—NYC in summer 2019. She returned to Binghamton for her senior year of college in 2019 and was leading Bible studies through InterVarsity that included other Jewish students.

EveryCampus is a partnership of ministries reaching college students in the United States, beginning with prayer movements for each campus, with the goal of seeing gospel movements regularly on each campus. They have included a prayer guide for Jewish students among their resources.^[92]

Seasonal

Some strategic approaches are tied to the season of the year. Most Jewish missions, either through partnerships with local Messianic congregations or through their own services, provide entry points for Jews at the High Holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, with Hannukah events, Passover meals that are either in homes or on a larger scale, Yom HaShoah (Holocaust remembrance) events, and even outreaches at Christmas. For example, Christ Church Jerusalem has one of its largest opportunities to minister to Israeli seekers who come to see their Christmas display.

Holiday baskets

Founder and Director of Light of the Messiah Ministries Murray Tilles explains about their unique holiday outreach:

For more than 25 years, we have been building beautiful holiday-appropriate gift baskets for Christians to give to their Jewish friends at Rosh Hashanah and on other Jewish festivals. It is deeply meaningful when a non-Jewish person recognizes their Jewish friend's holidays, especially in regions with a smaller Jewish population. Either the Christian friend delivers the basket themselves, or we deliver it and have a chance to connect with the Jewish person. This outreach has opened many doors for the gospel. By encouraging Christians to contextually love their Jewish friends, bridges are built, hearts are disarmed, and people are open to spiritual conversation. This outreach has been replicated successfully in Argentina, France, Australia, and other countries around the world.^[93]

Dual identity

Very specialised strategies need to be employed when reaching out to dual identity Jews. Examples of such Jews include those who are biracial, Jews with one non-Jewish parent, LGBTQ+ Jews, and Jews married to, contemplating marriage, or cohabiting with a Gentile partner.

LGBTQ+ Jews

German Director of Jews for Jesus Aaron Lewin talks about their ministry in Berlin:

Most Israelis who come to Berlin are young, liberal, secular, and from the greater Tel Aviv area. Berlin also has a history of having a large LGBTQ+ scene. As a result, many of the Israelis we've ministered to in the past years have been from this scene. It's forced us to develop an understanding for the LGBTQ+ person, who is often hurt, feels misunderstood, and is looking for love and acceptance. Dialoguing with them about the gospel in a respectful and loving way but without compromise has even borne fruit among Israelis who are not part of this scene but are amazed at how we treat them.

Jewish-Gentile couples

Director of Staff Training and Development for Jews for Jesus Tuvya Zaretsky strategizes how this situation provides a great opportunity to reach hybrid couples:

Jewish-Gentile couples ministry is a strategic initiative of Jews for Jesus globally. Beginning in 1990, the U.S. National Jewish Population Survey showed the Jewish intermarriage rate at 52 percent. Social research revealed those marriages face risks of disillusion or dissatisfaction in 75 percent of cases. Our strategy is to engage couples to introduce hope of their finding spiritual harmony through Jesus (John 14:6).^[94]

We create engagements through social media platforms.^[95] Couples receive counsel to increase their cross-cultural understanding as well as encouragement to seek mutually satisfying spiritual oneness in Messiah Jesus. Creating safe relationships is essential to stimulate conversations about knowing God (John 17:3). What's needed? Counsellors need emotional intelligence, cross-cultural communication skills, and training.^[96]

Partnerships and Other Efforts. A few Messianic congregations globally have focused on Jewish-Gentile couple ministries. Jewish Voice Ministries International (JVMI) recently planted a congregation, Heritage-Los Angeles, with that ministry as its prime focus. And Church Ministry Among Jewish People—USA (CMJ/USA) has been working in partnership with Anglican churches in North America to make Jewish-Gentile couples feel welcome.

Digital evangelism

Perhaps no other area of strategy for evangelism (Jewish or otherwise) has had a greater overhaul in recent years than the digital world. It is both a strategy and a method for Jewish evangelism going forward. Since COVID-19, it has taken on even more importance than we could have imagined.

Evangelistic podcasts

Lewin reports:

Podcasts, both audio and visual, have gained enormous popularity over the last few years across a wide variety of different fields. A few years ago, we produced a weekly evangelistic podcast on the *parasha* [Hebrew for 'portion' and means a section of a biblical book] and recently we started a visual podcast for Christians to learn about Messianic Judaism. Podcasts are great because they can be released on a variety of platforms, can be produced on any budget, and can be as in-depth as you want. Sending our podcasts^[97] to our contacts was a way to engage them more directly with the gospel.

Chat ministry

Jews for Jesus Web Evangelism Missionary Emmanuel Mebasser expounds on how the Internet can provide a safe avenue for connectivity and conversation:

We consider anyone who identifies themselves as Jewish and comments on our posts or sends us a message to be engaging in a spiritual dialogue with us. One of the most fulfilling things is when Jewish people make angry comments, but then we can see them soften when we respond in an approachable but confident way. We can be an effective witness to that individual and to many others who will read that public exchange. People have questions of faith that they aren't willing to ask people that they know. Our website^[98] employs an artificial intelligence chat greeter, which connects seekers with our trained Jewish-believing volunteers and staff to answer questions and share the gospel in a welcoming environment. This allows for an immediate 24/7 response from an enquirer.

Matthew, a married conservative Jewish man from Boston, was able to ask his questions in anonymity. After a good chat experience, he was comfortable enough to meet regularly with one of our missionaries to learn more about Jesus.

Cru^[99] and Global Media Outreach^[100] are two other ministries that have a vast network of volunteers and have a large volume of evangelistic ministry through chat as well.

Social media engagement

Jews for Jesus Director of Communications Arielle Randle explains how connecting with potential enquirers over social media can be a helpful avenue for evangelism:

Social media is a viable way to have spiritual conversations, just like street outreaches or evangelistic events. Online, as in-person, our mission remains the same: to engage with Jewish people with the gospel where they are and inspire others to do the same. Our main social platforms for engaging with unbelievers are Facebook and Instagram.

Social media platforms can provide a local online community that is safe for all to gather, have open discourse, and engage with us and others. They also create opportunities for the gospel to be proclaimed right on the platforms themselves in the form of articles, media, posts, advertisements, and events, as well as through follow-up. Social media can also be used to build relationships with other organizations, communities, and influencers.

Digital content

One of the forerunners producing digital content for the purpose of Jewish evangelism is One for Israel Ministries.^[101] With the help of cutting-edge technology and a team of trained Israeli believers, the gospel message is broadcasted throughout Israel from their media centre, using websites, radio, videos, and social networking. They make sure that when Israelis search for Yeshua on the Internet, the truth is easy to find. They also ensure that Israelis will find the message in their own language and in a manner sensitive to their culture. For those who express interest, the One for Israel team is ready to help them process through their thoughts and questions, and connect them to local believers in their own area.

Broadcast

Broadcast media is an excellent way to get the gospel message out to a large audience of Jews. Zola Levitt Live, Jewish Jewels, The Christian Jew Hour, and IRRTV in Finland are some who have pioneered the way.

Radio

Michael Brown, Host of *In the Line of Fire*, sees the benefit of the airwaves to promote the gospel:

For the last twelve years, I have aired a daily talk radio show,^[102] covering a wide range of topics, with a weekly focus on Israel and the Jewish people. It also airs online. Over time, I have developed a regular Jewish listening audience, from a gay Reformed rabbi to a Hasidic rabbi (among others). Some would write to me secretly, telling me they were listening. Others would call in to question^[103] or debate.^[104]

Some have called to announce^[105] their new birth! Radio has provided a way for them to listen secretly and to interact anonymously—often an essential key in Jewish outreach.

Television

JVMI President and Chief Executive Officer Jonathan Bernis explains how television is an important medium for evangelism:

We produce a weekly syndicated television show on Christian networks intended to share the Jewish roots of the Christian faith and the importance of Israel with a Christian audience. Our television show has highlighted testimonies of Jewish people coming to faith in Yeshua. We also regularly highlight the meaning of the festivals and Jewish context of the gospel. Though not primarily a tool for Jewish evangelism, we do believe that highlighting the Messianic Jewish community and the need for Jewish evangelism has had an indirect impact on Jewish evangelism by stressing the need for it in the broader Christian world. Additionally, our broadcast has enabled us to raise funds to support the work of hundreds of other Jewish evangelistic efforts over the last three decades. Our program has attracted hundreds of thousands of Christians to support the cause of Jewish evangelism and engaged many hundreds in direct Jewish evangelistic efforts.

Film

Experience Israel Program Director Justin Kron, posits:

Well-produced faith-based films^[106] can tell a story and convey relevant information in a concise and entertaining manner that provokes people to consider a different perspective about Jesus, his teachings, and even those who follow him. Let's face it, life is busy, but your Jewish friend may be willing to watch a film for a couple of hours on their portable device while on a flight or in the privacy of their home, especially if someone they respect told them, 'You have to see this'! After they watch the film, you then have the opportunity for conversation, and you may just discover, as I have, that your friend is one step closer to believing that Jesus and his followers are not as out of touch with reality as they once believed.

Compassion strategies

There was a time when the Jewish community worldwide was viewed as a self-sufficient, even affluent community, but today's realities show that, like the rest of the world, they have their share of poor, marginalised, and exploited people.

Ministry to poor and addicts

Jews for Jesus Tel Aviv Missionary Valery Bolotov reports:

Twice a week, we go out with our Mekomi Food Truck that is recognizable to those in need. The truck is stocked with food and water, but its purpose is to bring hope to those on the streets of Tel Aviv. Some team members stay with the truck, but others make their way onto the streets to talk with the homeless and offer them both sustenance and substance in the gospel. It can be the first step towards rehabilitation.

Simon met our team at the truck but said Jesus goes against his Jewish faith. The next time we met with him after reading Psalm 22, he said, 'Only God can change me.' Three days later, he asked me to take him to rehab because his wife was about to give up on him. There, he prayed to accept Jesus.

Medical clinics

Bernis believes that medical humanitarian efforts can be an important part of Jewish evangelism:

We use large humanitarian and cultural events to proclaim the gospel and plant Messianic Jewish congregations.

Our medical clinics began first with our historic work in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (FSU), where we held large celebrations of Jewish music and dance to draw crowds and proclaim the good news. We have adapted that model to reach the Jewish communities of Ethiopia and Zimbabwe through short-term medical care and humanitarian aid. The most critical element for these efforts is to have effective follow-up with those who responded to the gospel invitation. We then plant new Messianic Jewish congregations made up of new Jewish believers in a common geography. An additional component is a symbiotic relationship with the local and/or national Christian church.

In Eastern Europe and the FSU, there are about 30 congregations that were planted out of our efforts in the 1990s and continue to this day. In Ethiopia and Zimbabwe there are more than 150 congregations that have been planted since our first medical clinic in 1999.

Other creative venues

The work of Jewish evangelism has always looked to find creative venues to reach out to Jewish people. Today, that can be seen in inviting settings such as coffee shops, art galleries, guest houses, and even our own couches.

Coffee shops

Los Angeles Branch Leader Isaac Brickner of Jews for Jesus discusses a different way to do Jewish evangelism, by creating ‘third spaces’:

The goal of creating Upside Down was to engage Jewish college students at University of California, Los Angeles who are the furthest away from belief. We determined that coffee shops and other ‘third spaces’ were the places where our audience has meaningful conversations that affected their worldviews.^[107]

For Jewish people who might be reticent to have a meaningful spiritual conversation with a missionary, the discovery that Jews for Jesus operates a good café/art gallery with friendly staff and a cool aesthetic causes them to think twice about their presuppositions.^[108] Soon after we opened in 2019, I had an in-depth spiritual conversation with a religious graduate student named Daniel, who specifically wanted to know why we, as Jews for Jesus, would operate a café—this was an initial confirmation of our theory.

Visual and performing arts

Chosen People Ministries Writer Elisabeta Karp believes:

The goal of the arts in evangelism is to inspire people to see and experience the gospel. Thankfully, Jewish millennials are constantly looking for something to be inspired by. Two initiatives not being fully taken advantage of are:

1) Placed in a Jewish area, a hipster but kosher coffee shop with a stage for live performances/events and a playpen for kids targets all Jewish people, but especially Jewish millennials and Orthodox parents. Artistic performances and interfaith events provide a neutral platform to hear and be inspired by the gospel story.

2) Film is the pulpit of our day. It smuggles beliefs into people’s minds en masse as it tells a story. It’s time believers harness film with excellence, sharing Jewish-Christian and Messianic stories, true or fiction. Some examples are writing and submitting screenplays, founding a Messianic production company, or just connecting people together.

Guest houses

Reach Initiative International Founder Stewart Winograd discusses how to minister to Israelis:

Every year, we 'love on' and develop relationships on different levels with more than 100 Israelis traveling to India. Most of these Israelis will hear the gospel in one way or another. Our SunRise house team members are in regular contact via WhatsApp with about 350 Israelis we have ministered to in India. We do India reunion nights in Israel. However, to enhance and increase the effectiveness of our work, we are in need of more Israeli staff members with a heart to reach their generation with the good news of Yeshua.

Other ministries around the world that also are reaching out to Jewish people through guesthouse ministry, include Mocha Cafe in Goa, India; The Shelter in Argentina and Israel; and HIT in New Zealand.

Couch surfing

Israelis are avid travellers, and those travelling outside of Israel, especially in their years after the army, tend to be spiritually seeking. All over the world (especially for believers who live in tourist destinations), hosting Israeli travellers,^[109] who are couch surfing, is a wonderful opportunity to make meaningful connections and share the gospel.

Camp Ministry

Director of Devar Emet Messianic Jewish Outreach Kirk Gliebe about Camp HaDerekh says:

HaDerekh Youth,^[110] a division of Devar Emet Messianic Jewish Outreach, focuses on meeting the spiritual needs of teens and young adults in the Jewish community at large as well as providing spiritual mentoring for Messianic Jewish youth to grow faith in Yeshua and encourage Jewish identity. Our Camp HaDerekh program is a one-week overnight summer camp in Reading, Michigan, for Jews ages 8 to 18 to grow their personal relationship with God through faith in Messiah Yeshua, to strengthen their understanding and commitment to their own Jewish identity, and to make friends with other Jews like themselves who believe in Messiah Yeshua. As a result of our local youth outreach, each year about a third of the campers come from Jewish homes that don't yet believe in Messiah Yeshua. We also staff our camp with Jewish believing young adults who are active in our spiritual mentoring program to continue the process of raising up Messianic Jewish leadership.

Children's ministry

East Coast Director of Children and Youth ministry and the Director of Camp Gilgal East Rebekah Rood explains:

Jewish young people have particular discipleship challenges, and often we assume that young people growing up in homes with parents who are strong believers will be able to successfully navigate faith and identity. Young people need mentors who have gone before them who can help them learn to read the Bible, figure out who Jesus is, and take hold of Jewish identity in a meaningful way.

Ketzia is a recent college graduate whose parents are missionaries with a Jewish ministry. We've met regularly throughout her high school and university years as she's developed a love not just for God's word, but also for serving and teaching God's word.

Partnership as a strategy for Jewish evangelism

While partnership has always been a goal in Jewish ministry, it has never seen more expression than now. Jewish missions are a small field with an enormously hard task, and the more we find ways to work together, the more we please God and thus are more fruitful in our endeavours. While not highlighted here, there also is progress in the cooperation of Jewish missions and Messianic congregations. Groups like the Fireside Chat provide a forum for Messianic leaders and Jewish missions leaders to discuss ways of partnering.

Seconding workers to one another

Seconding is when two organizations working in partnership loan one of its missionary to another for a long-term investment in a region.

International Mission to the Jewish People Director of Ministry Richard Gibson recounts how these partnerships have been productive for their organization:

Seconding some of our International Mission to the Jewish People missionaries into other missions organizations is driven by a kingdom vision to lift the name of Jesus above all. There is a mutual strategic benefit as we are able to place individual missionaries into local missional communities for more effective gospel outcomes for both organizations.

Our missionaries were able to hit the ground running as we seconded missionaries to Jews for Jesus in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Budapest. We also have a missionary in Jaffa working in partnership with Hope of Israel, a local Israeli Messianic congregation. Seconding missionaries in countries where International Mission to the Jewish People does not have any appropriate infrastructure facilitates better stewardship of our supporter's generous gifts. We don't need to reinvent the wheel as we plug into existing administrative infrastructure.

Joint projects

Norwegian Mission to Israel Missionary Vegard Soltveit discusses how joint ventures in missions have an impact:

Our strategy when it comes to joint projects is to bless each other, benefit from each other, and together find strategic and good ways of sharing the gospel with the Jewish people. One example is the Caspari Centre^[111] in Jerusalem. We experience that the partners have different kinds of skills, distinctiveness, and expertise. At the Caspari Centre, we see that together we become stronger and more effective. This way we see a clear synergy effect. In 2020, we experienced that when one of the partners could not donate what was promised because of COVID-19, other partners could help. We carried each other, and more importantly, we carried the joint project, Caspari Centre, together.

Utilizing one another's materials

Tel Aviv Jews for Jesus Missionary Maayan Shoshani explains the blessing of being able to share resources among different mission groups:

Some of what we use in Israel Jews for Jesus to train our volunteers for street outreach is from Hope for New York materials. Hope for New York is a branch of Redeemer Presbyterian in New York City and has a robust training curriculum for its volunteers.

There are many strategies not included in this brief chapter, but we wanted to emphasise the following three as they touch on some of the key Lausanne interest groups we want to affirm:

Social justice

Danish Israel Missions Director Arne Pedersen discusses how social justice can go hand in hand with evangelism:

My strategy is to actively seek involvement in social justice and creation care issues. For example, trafficking, equality work for gender and ethnicity, reconciliation—especially in Israel-Palestine (but not exclusively).

I believe that such a strategy could help the larger work of Jewish evangelism to bring a larger gospel to the Jewish people. A gospel that doesn't just rearrange the mental furniture in their head but actually makes a concrete difference in the society and world we all inhabit. It reminds us that by bringing social justice and creation care to the society, we bring resurrection. And God is in the resurrection business.

A concrete example from reconciliation work in Israel-Palestine: A soldier encountered a group of Messianic Jewish believers and Christian Palestinians in the desert. He thought, No, way! He asked the group what was going on, why 'enemies' seemed to be friends. He walked away with a New Testament.

Congregational approach

Jason Menarchik, Co-Lead Pastor of Heritage Los Angeles, underscores how their congregation is an example of this approach:

We are initiating an effort to shift the paradigm of the American Messianic Jewish congregation. Our goal is to engage a younger Jewish audience, adapting strategies used by successful church planting models for application with a modern Jewish context. The archetype is designed to be a holistic ministry that provides real connection via opportunities to share personal stories in intimate settings. Those connections will then foster genuine relationships that promote a growing relationship with the Lord and the importance of living out our Jewish heritage in modern life.

From meeting people out in the broader community to Shabbat table experiences, we want to develop creative ways to engage millennials with a Jewish parent who may not identify as Jewish. The weekend service also will be a high-quality production with dynamic worship and concise messages that reflect the rhythms and values of Messianic Jewish life in a 70- to 90-minute format. As this is a new endeavour, we are hoping that a congregation in West Los Angeles that tests and refines this new paradigm can serve as a model.

Rabbi Loren Jacobs and Rabbi Glenn Harris of Shema Yisrael in West Bloomfield, Michigan, highlight what they had observed in their congregation:

Our congregation doubles as a mission, albeit ‘unofficially’, and the call to personal evangelism is emphasised in our teaching. Our members make it a point to go out to major events, wearing matching T-shirts that read ‘Jesus Made Me Kosher’! These events include art festivals, the Woodward Dream Cruise, and Detroit’s Thanksgiving Day parade. We do less tract distribution than in previous years but try to personally engage with people in conversation.

High Holiday-based evangelistic mailings to the local Jewish community are another way we have been trying to reach our people, though they have yielded comparatively limited results.

We have had some exposure via guest-hosting on local radio. But without a doubt, the biggest impact we’ve seen (if measured by Jewish people inquiring and visiting our services) has been by getting ahead of the technology curve—through our website and the use of online streaming and social media.

Business as mission

Yadayim Operations Manager Aden Friedman unpacks how business has become an arena through which Jews for Jesus has done Jewish evangelism:

Yadayim was set up as an immersion arm of Jews for Jesus in South Africa. Yadayim is designed to engage in projects that aim to uplift the local Jewish community. We would put together teams with different skill sets to help the Jewish community and show them the love of Yeshua. We use this opportunity to build relationships and share our faith at the same time.

For example, we produced a cookbook that captured the stories and heritage of the local Jewish community, recording their stories, sharing our own, and then producing a book that has a commercial edge. The funds raised go back into the community.

One last look at strategy—a glimpse into the future

When asked what they would like to see happen as we enter our next 40 years of ministry (should the Lord tarry), here are some of the reflections. They are in no particular order or priority, but perhaps they will spark interest for your mission, congregation, or Lausanne network as we reach the world with the gospel.

Imagine Jewish evangelism going forward...

Friedman dreams:

I would like to see a Messianic *yeshiva* [a Jewish college or seminary] set up. For students to have the same kind of program that yeshiva students get from all over the world. It would also help to show that Messianic Jews have the same passion for learning and embracing their Jewishness. I envision it being used as a training facility as well as a platform to grow.

Pedersen imagines:

What I would absolutely love to see is a stronger commitment to reconciliation especially between Jewish believers and Palestinian Christians. The Bible speaks about a God who reached out to his creation 'while they were still enemies' of him. Are we not called to love our brothers and sisters in our risen Messiah—wherever they may live? Ministries involved in Jewish mission should be frontrunners in this endeavour.

Crawford believes:

There are two major areas that I believe are lacking in Jewish evangelism today that I am hoping will change in the future: excellence in using the internet as an evangelistic medium (Jewish evangelism has been behind the curve online, in my opinion), and theological foundations (the Messianic movement has yet to produce an academic-level systematic theology that is in conversation with Protestant orthodoxy and historic Judaism).

Rood envisions:

I would love to see more partnership and more collaboration among Jewish ministries who are ministering to children and youth.

Winograd opines:

I would like to see Messianic Jewish congregational leaders impart vision and invest a lot more into training their members in evangelism and making disciples. I also would like to see congregations and churches invest much more time and focus in prayer for the salvation of the Jewish people. And finally, it would be wonderful if many more churches would embrace the heart of God for the salvation of the Jewish people and invest both human and financial resources in a much greater way in this strategic, prophesied, end-time spiritual restoration of the people of Israel.

Isaac Bricker dreams:

In the future, I see a generation of Jewish believers thinking deeply about what it means to follow Yeshua as Jews, creating meaningful cultural artifacts through the arts and academics—ones that do not capitulate to culture or conform to a definition of Jewishness imposed by the mainline Jewish community. This requires thoughtful scholarship, theological reflection, movement-driven prayer, and discipleship of Jewish believers that casts vision for the ability to serve God with excellence through their vocations.

Kron envisions:

More resources that are geared towards a Jewish sceptic who has little-to-no interest in the claims of Jesus (or his followers) that help take them from 'no, not interested' to 'maybe, just maybe, Jesus and his followers aren't as dumb, crazy, or weird as I thought they were.' I find that most evangelistic resources geared to Jewish people attempt to take them from 'no, not interested' quickly to 'yes, Jesus is the Messiah'!

Randle hopes:

My dream for the future is to engage in more online partnerships with other voices within the Jewish community. Our hope is that through the broader effort of Jewish evangelism, Jews who believe in Jesus won't have a stigma that stifles open dialogue and exchange of ideas on social media.

Lewin posits:

A podcast that seeks to actively dialogue with different members of the Jewish community to discover commonality between Judaism and Messianic Judaism. I would also like to see a thought-out and detailed strategic framework for actively engaging and reaching Jewish people in the LGBTQ community.

Zaretsky opines:

Churches and Messianic congregations could be more focused on cross-cultural ministry as an intentional expression of the global church today. Intermarriage and inter-ethnic relations are rapidly changing the face of formerly monocultural and monoethnic communities. Church communities can take leadership and model ethnically diverse community in the body of Christ.

Conclusion

We hope that you are encouraged and provoked by the strategies and initiatives featured above. They are by no means inclusive of all that is happening in Jewish evangelism around the world. Still, we hope that these will be an impetus for new God-given strategies to help bring about the evangelization of Jewish people in *your* community and region of the world. Whether you are a mission leader, practitioner, or congregational leader or teacher, effective Jewish evangelism will be better for your involvement. Let's continue, through the LCJE platform, to share what we are doing and make this 'chapter' an ongoing living document.

For Further Reading

—Dr Rich Robinson

Israel, Zionism, and Supersessionism

Bock, Darrell L., and Mitch Glaser, eds. *Israel, the Church, and the Middle East: A Biblical Response to the Current Conflict*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2018.

Produced in celebration of Israel's 70th anniversary, 13 authors write on the biblical foundations of Israel, the current conflict, and theological issues. This publication includes much-needed discussions of Messianic Jewish and Palestinian Christian movements in Israel and reconciliation.

McDermott, Gerald R. *Israel Matters: Why Christians Must Think Differently About the People and the Land*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2017.

McDermott, Gerald R., ed. *The New Christian Zionism: Fresh Perspectives on Israel and the Land*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016.

The two above works contain an explicitly non-dispensational case against supersessionism and for a positive future for Israel—both the people and the land. The first volume is a personal manifesto of sorts; the second is a collection of essays by diverse scholars. This work is important and challenging to large segments of the church.

Jewish Missions and Evangelism

Barron, Andrew, and Lindsey Gallant. *Dared to Believe: The Story of Maisie Pillemer, a South African Jew for Jesus*. KwaZulu Natal, So.Afr.: Viking Publications, 2014.

Turnil, Josué, ed. *Ils ont découvert leur Messie: des Juifs témoignent*. Romanel-sur-Lausanne: Ourania, 2014. [In French]

Two testimony books tell the stories of converts, one from South Africa and the other a collection about French-speaking Jews.

Congdon, Jim, ed. *Jews and the Gospel at the End of History: A Tribute to Moishe Rosen*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2009.

This book includes 14 essays that cover evangelism, ethics, and eschatology, all explicitly affirming Jewish missions.

Parker, David, ed. *Jesus, Salvation, and the Jewish People: The Uniqueness of Jesus and Jewish Evangelism*. Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2011.

This collection of 14 papers published at the World Evangelical Alliance's Theological Commission Conference of 18–22 August, 2008 that was held in Woltersdorf, Germany. The meeting was intended to address developments since Willowbank. The Willowbank Consultation on the Christian Gospel and the Jewish People, drafted in 1989, was the work of fifteen international scholars and church and Jewish mission leaders who met to clearly state the evangelical position that the gospel is the only hope of salvation for all, including Jewish people.

Rosen, Ruth. *Called to Controversy: The Unlikely Story of Moishe Rosen and the Founding of Jews for Jesus*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2012.

This lively account of the life of Moishe Rosen and the start of the Jews for Jesus organization is important for the modern history of Jewish missions.

Snyder, Avi. *Jews Don't Need Jesus & Other Misconceptions: Reflections of a Jewish Believer*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2017.

In recent years Jewish evangelism has received pushback, not least from some in Germany. Snyder, the European Ambassador for Jews for Jesus, offers articulate wisdom from a veteran missionary to the Jews and helpful responses to 16 objections that are often raised.

Jesus

Moffic, Evan. *What Every Christian Needs to Know About the Jewishness of Jesus: A New Way of Seeing the Most Influential Rabbi in History*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2016.

Evan Moffic, Rabbi of Reform congregation Makom Solel in Highland Park, IL, writes a warm and sympathetic book about Jesus as a Jew. This gives important insight into what some within the Jewish community are saying.

The Jewishness of Christian Theology and Practice

Evans, Craig A., and David Mishkin, eds. *A Handbook on the Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2019.

This wide-ranging collection of scholarly essays divided into 13 topical chapters under the rubrics of soil, roots, trunk, and branches covers Old Testament backgrounds, Jesus and his times, the resurrection, Paul, history, and current developments.

Moffic, Evan. *What Every Christian Needs to Know About Passover: What It Means and Why It Matters*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2014.

Some decry the Christian observance of Passover as cultural appropriation, but Moffic thinks not. He encourages all Christians to learn about and even observe the holiday in a way that resonates with their own traditions and understandings.

Skarsaune, Oskar. *In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish Influences on Early Christianity*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002.

Though nearly 20 years old as of this writing, Skarsaune's book is unique in its approach to early Christianity and especially helpful when he talks about the Jewishness of the early church creeds.

Apologetics

Brown, Michael L. *Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus*. 5 vols. (Vols. 1-4) Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000–2006; (Vol. 5) San Francisco, CA: Purple Pomegranate Productions, 2015.

This resource is the gold standard for modern Jewish apologetics. It includes five volumes, each one devoted to a specific category of objections: general and historical, theological, Messianic prophecy, New Testament, and traditional Jewish.

The Messianic Jewish Movement

Høyland, Knut H., and Jakob W. Nielsen, eds. *Chosen to Follow: Jewish Believers Through History and Today*. Jerusalem: The Caspari Centre for Jewish and Biblical Studies, 2013.

Fifteen essays explore Jewish believers in history and in the modern world and then move on to contemporary theological issues.

Robinson, Rich. *The Messianic Movement: A Field Guide for Evangelical Christians*. San Francisco: Jews for Jesus, 2005.

Though a bit dated and somewhat more critical than seems appropriate for today, this book is still useful as an overview of the Messianic Jewish movement, including Hebrew roots and Torah-observant groups.

Bible

Bock, Darrell L., and Mitch Glaser. *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53: Encountering the Suffering Servant in Jewish and Christian Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2012.

This features 11 essays from top scholars. This book first handles Christian and Jewish interpretations of Isaiah 53 before moving on the areas of biblical and practical theology. This is a necessary resource covering many aspects of Isaiah 53 that are not necessarily found in commentaries.

Levine, Amy-Jill and Marc Zvi Brettler, eds. *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.

The main significance of JANT is that it exists at all; this is the first time the entire New Testament has been presented by mainstream Jewish scholars (some 50 contributors), as a Jewish book that both Jews and Christians need to understand. JANT's reception by the Jewish community has been both welcoming and critical, even sometimes hostile. The annotated text is supplemented by numerous essays on particular topics.

Rydelnik, Michael and Edwin Blum, eds. *The Moody Handbook of Messianic Prophecy: Studies and Expositions of the Messiah in the Old Testament*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2019.

These essays largely follow up and further develop John Sailhamer's literary approach to the Old Testament. The scholars included here find that the various Messianic prophecies were intended as such within their original contexts and that therefore, the New Testament does not read anything into the Old Testament text that was not already explicitly there.

While we might take issue with various facets of these expositions and a full scholarly evaluation has yet to happen, these articles prove valuable and stimulating. It is encyclopaedic in scope and critical reading for those engaging with Messianic prophecy.

Endnotes

1. Historical and theological considerations are very closely intertwined. Chapter 3 of this publication will take up and develop a number of theological points raised in this opening chapter. See, for example, endnote 9 in the chapter. ↑
2. All Bible quotations are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV). ↑
3. For further study on this theme, see Richard E. Averbeck, 'The Message of the Prophets and Jewish Evangelism', by in *To The Jew First: The Case for Jewish Evangelism in Scripture and History*, eds. Darrell Bock and Mitch Glaser (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2008) 78–97. ↑
4. For a recent and excellent overview of the biblical theology relating to the kingdom, see Michael J. Vlach, *He Will Reign Forever*, (Silverton, OR: Lampion House Publishing, 2020). ↑
5. Jewish history can be divided into many periods. Second Temple Judaism refers to the period which begins when the Jewish exiles returned from exile in Babylon (538 BCE) and began (under Persian 'rule') to rebuild the temple up until the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in 70 CE. The ministry of Jesus and the subsequent growth of the early church took place within this period. ↑
6. In the case of the Greek text of James 2:2, see the use of the word *synagogue*. ↑

7. It is worth noting that the prophet Isaiah is prominent among the Old Testament authors in regard to his frequent references to the Lord's gracious intentions towards the Gentiles. A similar focus also can be found in many of the psalms. [↑]
8. As the bridge is built from the Jewish world out into the wider Gentile world, it has been suggested that the mission among the Samaritan community (see Acts 8) provided for the emerging church a useful 'halfway' stepping stone between the Jewish and Gentile worlds. [↑]
9. N.T Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 4th ed., (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1992), 359. [↑]
10. There are many streams of Jewish thought and Jewish community life during the Second Temple period—for example, at the time of Jesus, it is generally understood that there are four main Jewish sects who are all seeking to promote and protect their identities, namely the Sadducees, the Pharisees, the Zealots, and the Essenes. In addition to this the influence of Greek ideas and values (called *Hellenism*) is shaping many aspects of Jewish life during this period. [↑]
11. There is much helpful literature on this theme, for example see the following: Marcel Simon, *Verus Israel*, (Liverpool, UK: Littman Press, 1986); The Faith and Order Commission of the Church of England, 'Part 1: A Difficult History' in *God's Unfailing Word*, (London: Church House Publishing, 2019); Hugh Schonfield, *The History of the Jewish Christianity* (Marshfield, MO: Bruce Booker–Biblical Life College and Seminary, 2009); Jakob Jocz, *The Jewish People and the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1949); Oskar Skarsaune and Reidar Hvalvik, eds, *The Early Centuries: Jewish Believers in Jesus* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007); and Alex Jacob, 'The Parting of the Ways' (research paper, Olive Press, Syracuse, NY, 2017) (this last source is free to download from the Church's Ministry Among Jewish People website www.cmj.org.uk). [↑]
12. For further study of this, see Richard Harvey, *Luther and the Jews* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017). [↑]
13. This mission agency continues today and is known as the Church's Ministry Among Jewish People. Following on from the LSPCJ—many other mission agencies among Jewish people were established, often with particular denominational and national links and with specific theological convictions. These include the Irish Presbyterian Mission to the Jews (1840), International Mission to the Jewish People (1842), the Norwegian Church Ministry to Israel (1844), the Mildmay Mission to the Jews (1876), the Danish Israel Mission (1885), Chosen People Ministries (1894), Christian Testimony to Israel (1897), the Christian Jew Foundation (1948), and Jews for Jesus (1973). Many of these mission agencies (and others) with a clear focus on Jewish evangelism continue today and are active within the Lausanne Movement. [↑]

14. J.E. Hutton, *History of the Moravian Church, Book 2* (London: Moravian Publishing Office, 1923; Charleston, SC: BiblioLife, 2008). ↑
15. For example, in the 1830s, there were only eight Jewish Christians in Holy Orders within the Church of England, but by the end of the century, the figure had risen to around 200—statistics sourced from Michael Darby, *The Emergence of the Hebrew Christian Movement in the Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Leiden, Neth., Brill, 2010). ↑
16. All these people and their ministries are discussed in George Stevens, *Jewish Christian Leaders* (Edinburgh, UK: Oliphants, 1966). ↑
17. See Kelvin Crombie, *Three Sons of Abraham* (Mundaring, Austral.: Heritage Resources, 2013). ↑
18. Figures indicate that at the beginning of the nineteenth century in London only 0.2 percent of Jews were believers in Jesus, but at the end of the century, the figure was around 2.5 percent, see Darby, *The Emergence of the Hebrew Christian Movement in the Nineteenth-Century Britain*, 238. ↑
19. See, for example, the ministry and theological insights of the Gentile Anglican clergyman John Oxlee (1779– 1854), who was arguably the main theological forerunner of Joseph Rabinowitz. ↑
20. This debate continues today in many circles and takes on new forms with the emergence of Messianic Judaism. The Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism plays a key role in helping Jewish evangelists and wider missions practitioners to study, reflect, and engage in this ongoing debate. ↑
21. This loss of Jewish identity was not often a deliberate choice but the unintended consequence of ongoing Christian allegiances. ↑
22. In addition to these Messianic Jews, there are many Jewish believers in Jesus who would be embedded in established churches and who would probably not self-define as Messianic Jews but as Hebrew Christians within a Catholic, Orthodox, or Anglican church setting. For further study on the Messianic Movement in Israel today, see the ‘Messianic Movement in Israel Today’, *Mishkan Journal* 46, no. 1 (2006) and consult the Directory of Messianic Organizations in Israel, hosted by Kehila News Israel. ↑
23. Regarding the current Jewish population in the United States, recent research shows that 44 percent of married Jewish people have Gentile spouses. Much important ‘pre-evangelistic’ work has and is taking place in regards to helping such couples grow in their marriages and to thrive well in such cross-cultural contexts. For further study of ministry among Jewish-Gentile couples, see the ‘The Gospel and Jewish-Gentile Couple’, *Mishkan Journal* 47, no. 2 (2006). ↑

24. In the twentieth century, most of the long-established Jewish community in Ethiopia relocated to Israel. A number of Ethiopian Messianic congregations have been established. Often these Ethiopians face discrimination based on their African heritage and find themselves in the poorest economic groupings. Furthermore, some religious Jews question if these Ethiopian Jews are legally Jewish. ↑
25. See Karma Ben-Johanan, *Reconciliation and its Discontents* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2020), and Israel Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, Hebrew ed. (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2000); English ed. (Oakland: University of California Press, 2006). ↑
26. In some ways this Anglican document can be seen as a response in part to the Jewish document *Dabru Emet*, published in 2002, which discussed the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. ↑
27. Account taken from the British Messianic Jewish Alliance, *Chai Quarterly Newsletter* 258, no. 2 (Summer 2020). ↑
28. Barry Kosmin, Sidney Goldstein, Joseph Wakesberg, Nava Lerer, Ariella Keyser, and Jeffrey Scheckner, 'Highlights of the CJF 1990 National Jewish Population Survey', (New York: Council of Jewish Federations 1991)
https://www.jewishdatabank.org/content/upload/bjdb/Highlights_of_the_CJF_1990_National_Jewish_Population_Survey_Summary_Report_v3.pdf. ↑
29. Benjamin Phillips, 'National Jewish Population Survey: 1990 Fifty-two percent intermarriage rate shocks community', 3 April 2015,
www.myjewishlearning.com/article/national-jewish-population-survey-1990. ↑
30. Sergio DellaPergola, *Jewish People Policy Planning Institute Annual Assessment 2005 Executive Report: facing a rapidly changing world*, Yehezkel Dror and Shalom S. Wald, project heads. (Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House, 2005) 12,
<http://jppi.org.il/uploads/Annual%20Assessment%202005.pdf>. ↑
31. Sergio DellaPergola, 'World Jewish Population, 2018', in *The American Jewish Year Book*, Arnold Dashefsky and Ira M. Sheskin, eds., *Volume 118*, (Dordrecht: Springer, 2018), 361–452. 'Israel's Jewish population (*not* including 400,200 persons not recorded as Jews in the Ministry of Interior's Population Register but belonging to families initially admitted under the *Law of Return*) reached 6,558,100 in 2018', in *The American Jewish Year Book*, Arnold Dashefsky and Ira M. Sheskin, eds., *Volume 118*, (Dordrecht: Springer, 2018) 5. ↑
32. Joel Liberman, 'The State of Faith Among Our Youth', presented to the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America, (Mechanicsburg, PA, 2013). ↑

33. Stephen M. Cohen and Ari Y. Kelman, 'Beyond Distancing: Young Adult American Jews and Their Alienation from Israel', *The Jewish Identity Project of Reboot* (New York: Rebooters.net, 2007) 2–3. ↑
34. Jacob Blaustein, chairman, 'The American Jewish Committee Thirty-Ninth Annual Report', (New York: American Jewish Year Book, 1946) 611, http://www.ajcarchives.org/ajc_data/files/1946_1947_13_statistics.pdf. Author's estimate from personal observation of the American Jewish demographic composition. ↑
35. 'The 2013 Pew Research Centre Survey of U.S. Jews: A Portrait of Jewish Americans', *Jewish Federation of North America*, Luis Lago, Alan Cooperman, and Gregory A. Smith, principal investigators, (Washington DC: Pew Research Centre, 2013) <https://www.pewforum.org/2013/10/01/jewish-american-beliefs-attitudes-culture-survey/>. ↑
36. Tuvia Zaretsky, 'Jewish-Gentile Inter-marriage: A Hybridity Laboratory', in *A Hybridity World: Diaspora, Hybridity and Missio Dei*, Sadiri Joy Tira and Juliet Lee Uytanlet, eds. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Publishing, 2020) 75–87. ↑
37. Andrew Silow-Carroll, "Is the Jewish Deli the New synagogue?", (JTA) *The Jerusalem Post*, 12 February 2021, <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/is-the-jewish-deli-the-new-synagogue-658724> . ↑
38. Greff Witte, 'In a kosher grocery store in Paris, terror takes a deadly toll', *The Washington Post*, 9 January 2015, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/paris-kosher-market-seized-in-second-hostage-drama-in-nervous-france/2015/01/09/f171b97e-97ff-11e4-8005-1924ede3e54a_story.html. ↑
39. Tuvia Zaretsky, 'What Should We Think About the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement?' in *What Should We Think About Israel?: Separating Fact from Fiction in the Middle East Conflict*, J. Randall Price, ed. (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2019) 173–186. ↑
40. Noah Summers, 'Telos Group: The True Identity of the "American Pro-Israeli, Pro-Palestinian, Pro-Peace Movement"', *The Jewish Press*, 31 January 2017, <https://www.jewishpress.com/indepth/opinions/the-telos-group-the-true-identity-of-the-american-pro-israeli-pro-palestinian-pro-peace-movement/2017/01/31/>. ↑
41. Luis Lugo, Alan Cooperman, and Gregory A. Smith, 'A Portrait of Jewish Americans: Findings from a Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews', (Washington, DC: Pew Research Centre, 1 October 2013) 10. Available at <https://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2013/10/jewish-american-full-report-for-web.pdf>. ↑
42. Kai Kjær-Hansen and Bodil F. Skjøtt, *Facts and Myths About the Messianic Congregations in Israel 1998– 1999*. (Jerusalem: United Christian Council in Israel/Caspari Centre, 1999). <https://www.caspari.com/2017/10/19/facts-myths/>. ↑

43. Erez Soref, *A Handbook on the Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith*, Craig A. Evans and David Mishkin, eds., (Peabody: MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2019) 299–300, cited by Golan Broshi, Israel College of the Bible, 2020. ↑
44. '2019 Jewish People Public Policy Institute, Annual Assessment of the Situation and Dynamics of the Jewish People', Geltman, Barry, ed., in *Trends: Demography 2018–2019*, (Jerusalem: Jewish People Public Policy Institute, 2019) http://jppi.org.il/en/article/aa2019/trends/netassessment/demography/#.X_9qSC2z00o. ↑
45. 'American-Israel Cooperative Enterprise, and the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics', in *Jewish and Non-Jewish Population of Israel/Palestine (1517-present)*, (Chevy Chase, MD: Virtual Jewish Library, 2021) <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jewish-and-non-jewish-population-of-israel-palestine-1517-present>. ↑
46. Sergio DellaPergola, '2018 World Jewish Databank Executive Summary', in *Berman Jewish DataBank: World Jewish Population, 2018*. (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2108) 5–6; https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-3-030-03907-3_8. ↑
47. Assaf Golan, 'Number of Jews Falls to 1,000 Year Low', *Israel HaYom*, 25 October 2020, <https://www.israelhayom.com/2020/10/25/number-of-jews-in-europe-falls-to-1000-year-low/>. ↑
48. See Ruth Rosen, 'Spiritual but not Religious', *Issues* 22, no. 8, (16 October 2018) 6, <https://www.jewsforjesus.org/publications/issues/issues-v22-n08/spiritual-but-not-religious>. See 'The 2013 Pew Research Centre Survey of U.S. Jews: A Portrait of Jewish Americans', Pew Research Centre, 2013. This study found that 37 percent of American Jews who were religiously unaffiliated would nevertheless classify themselves as 'spiritual'. ↑
49. The 2013 Pew Research Centre Survey of U.S. Jews: A Portrait of Jewish Americans', Pew Research Centre, 2013, 13. ↑
50. *Ibid.*, 12. ↑
51. Galen Peterson, 'Shifting Cultural Trends and the Impact on Communicating the Gospel', a paper presented to The Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism International Conference, (Toronto, ON: 2019). See https://www.lcje.org/papers2/Shifting_Cultural_Trends.pdf. ↑
52. Ben Sales, 'Jews for Jesus Commissioned Study on Jewish Millennials. Here's what it found', *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, 31 October 2017, <https://www.jta.org/2017/10/31/united-states/jews-for-jesus-commissioned-a-study-on-jewish-millennials-heres-what-it-found>. ↑

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58. 'France: Le CNF organise un colloque sur l'antisémitisme', *Évangéliques Info*, 12 September 2108, <https://www.evangeliques.info/2018/09/12/france-le-cnf-organise-un-colloque-sur-l-antisemitisme/>. ↑
59. Sergio DellaPergola, 'World Jewish Population, 2014', in *American Jewish Yearbook, 2014*, Arnold Dashefsky and Ira Sheshkin, eds. (New York: Springer International Publishing, 2015) 301–393. ↑
60. Mark Tolts, 'Mixed Marriage and Post-Soviet Aliyah' in *Jewish Inter marriage Around the World*, Shulamit Reinharz and Sergio DellaPergola, eds. (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2009) 89–104. ↑
61. Aaron Lewin, 'Jews in Germany: Variety is the Spice of Life', a research paper prepared for this report. ↑
62. Harold W. Hoehner, 'Ephesians', vol. 2, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, J.F. Walvoord and R.B. Zuck, eds (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 625. ↑
63. See especially Acts 3:22. ↑
64. Recognition of this emphasis was most emphatically acknowledged by C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans* vol. 2, bk. 2 (Edinburgh, UK: T. & T. Clark, 1979), 448. In New Testament studies today, the efforts to recognize that it took some time for the parting of the ways to develop also underscores how Paul, with his commitment to Christ, also spoke from within a perspective that kept Israel and Jewish hope in that conversation. Chapter 1 of this paper also notes the process historically. In face the book of Acts shows an effort to reach out to Jews, starting in the synagogues and emphasising the fulfilment of the hope of the Hebrew Scriptures that is found in Jesus. The pushback from many in the Jewish community helped to create the eventual historical parting of the ways. ↑

65. Another listing of several global statements on Jewish evangelism appears above at the end of Chapter 1. That listing includes a broader geographic scope than previous statements, but the treatment there does not go into any detail on each piece. Their perspectives can be found by reading the documents listed there. ↑
66. 'Southern Baptist State Conventions', on the *Baptist Holocaust Studies* website, accessed 3 September 2020, <https://www.baptistholocauststudies.org/southern-baptist-state-conventions>. ↑
67. 'On Prayer and Support For Israel' on the official website of the Southern Baptist Convention, accessed 3 September 2020, <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/resolutions/on-prayer-and-support-for-israel/>. ↑
68. Jessica Elgot. 'What Is The Anglican Communion And Why Is It Under Threat?' *The Guardian*, 16 September 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/16/what-is-anglican-communion-why-is-it-under-threat>. ↑
69. Mel Scult, 'English Missions to the Jews: Conversion in the Age of Emancipation', *Jewish Social Studies* 35, no. 1 (Indiana University Press, 1973) 3. ↑
70. Julian M. Dobbs, 'Why I Defend And Support Israel As An Anglican Bishop', on *Juicy Ecumenism*, accessed 3 September 2020, <https://juicyecumenism.com/2015/04/24/why-i-defend-and-support-israel-as-an-anglican-bishop/>. ↑
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72. Ibid. ↑
73. George Carey, 'Archbishop of Canterbury Condemns Latest Middle East Violence, 2 April 2002', *Israel/Palestine—An Unholy War* (Church of England's Board for Social Responsibility), 33, <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/gs1463-israel%20palestine%3A%20an%20unholy%20war.pdf>. ↑
74. The Faith and Order Commission, *God's Unfailing Word*. (London, Church House Publishing, 2019), 74. A response from the Church's Ministry Among Jewish People—UK to this document shows the conversation within the United Kingdom, <https://www.cmj.org.uk/gods-unfailing-word-publication>. ↑
75. Ibid., 51. ↑
76. 'Mission Agencies The Church Of England', on The Church Of England's official website, accessed 3 September 2020, <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/church-resources/world-mission/mission-agencies>. ↑
77. Larry Eskridge, 'How Many Evangelicals Are There?' on the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals at Wheaton College's website, accessed 3 September 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20160130062242/http://www.wheaton.edu/ISAE/Defining-Evangelicalism/How-Many-Are-There>. ↑

78. *Evangelical Attitudes Towards Israel And The Peace Process* (Nashville, Lifeway Research, 2017), 3, <https://lifewayresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Evangelical-Attitudes-Toward-Israel-Research-Study-Report.pdf>. ↑
79. *Evangelicals, The Gospel, And Jewish People*. (Nashville, Lifeway Research, 2017), 5, <http://lifewayresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Evangelical-Attitudes-Towards-Israel-Part-2.pdf>. ↑
80. Matthew Cresswell, 'What Future for the Lausanne Movement'? *The Guardian*, 21 October 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2010/oct/21/lausanne-movement> ↑
81. Cape Town 2010, 'Frequently Asked Questions', *The Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelisation*, accessed 3 September 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20090512221727/https://lausanne.org/cape-town-2010/faq-programme.html> ↑
82. 'Christian Churches and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict', in *Concordis Papers VIII*, (London: Concordis International Trust, 2010) 1-28. This has a series of articles from the array of views. The perspective is from the United Kingdom. A consultation held in Cambridge in 2009 is summarized on pp.14–15. ↑
83. Some of the ideas Chapter 1 alluded to are filled out in what follows. ↑
84. The work by Gerald McDermott and what is called the New Zionism deals with these issues from a multi-denominational perspective. See *The New Christian Zionism: Fresh Perspectives on Israel and the Land* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016). Other issues also are treated in the various Borough Park Symposia. To find these materials, just google Borough Park Symposium for contents of this collection of meetings. ↑
85. For examples of some of these resources, see <http://lcje.flywheelsites.com/>, <https://www.oneforisrael.org/category/jewish-testimonies-i-met-messiah/>, and <https://jewsforjesus.org/answers/why-do-most-jews-not-believe-in-jesus>. ↑
86. 'Working Definition of Antisemitism' on the *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's* official website, accessed 21 December 2020, <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism>. ↑
87. For more information, see chosenpeopleanswers.com/. ↑
88. For a sample of what apologetics looks like, see Brian Crawford, 'Introduction to Messianic Apologetics', a lecture, Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, La Mirada, CA, 2019. ↑
89. For more information, see <http://www.ha-gefen.org.il/en/>. ↑
90. For more information, see <http://www.israelendebijbel.nl/en/giving-back-the-bible>. ↑

91. For more information, see <http://j4j.co/harediprayerguide>. ↑
92. For more information, see <http://everycampus.com/>. ↑
93. For more information, see <http://lightofmessiah.org/shalom-baskets>. ↑
94. See Enoch Wan and Tuvya Zaretsky, *Jewish-Gentile Couples: Trends, Challenges and Hopes* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2004) 12–18. ↑
95. For more information, see <http://www.JewishGentilecouples.com>. ↑
96. Some samples of resources for Jewish-Gentile couples include *He Said Then She Said: Helping Jewish-Gentile Couples Find Spiritual Harmony* and *Finding Spiritual Harmony in your Jewish-Gentile Couple Relationship*, <https://www.jplbooks.com/search?type=product&q=Jewish-Gentile+couples>. ↑
97. For more information about the podcast and its episodes, see <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLUztpMRTqXpnysZFMolHlcJYux5MHZL9B>, For more information about the *Jew in the Pew* podcast and its episodes, see <http://www.jewsforjesus.org.uk/jew-in-the-pew/tag/podcast>. For more information about the *Keeping Jewish Weird* podcast and its episodes, see <http://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/keeping-jewish-weird/id1445226885>. ↑
98. To learn more about Jews for Jesus LiveChat and how to volunteer at <http://j4j.co/lcjechat>. ↑
99. For more information check out Cru's website, NeedHim.org. ↑
100. To find out more, go to <http://GlobalMediaOutreach.com>. ↑
101. For more information, see <http://www.oneforisrael.org/>. ↑
102. To learn more about the radio show, go to <http://thelineoffire.org/>. ↑
103. See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tLewH9qfGIM&feature=youtu.be> for this episode. ↑
104. Go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CT9tnAY2G0M&feature=youtu.be> for this episode. ↑
105. See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Svp2UO8XOBY&feature=youtu.be> for this episode. ↑
106. Some examples of the variety of films are *Hope in the Holy Land: Delving Beneath the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (<http://hopeintheholylan.com/>), *Promised Land: Israel Through the Eyes of Surfers* (<http://walkingonwater.cinevee.com/the-promised-land-t04>), *Patterns of Evidence* (<http://patternsofevidence.com/>), *Covenant and Controversy* (<http://www.covenantandcontroversy.com/>), and *In Our Hands* (<http://www.inourhands1967.com/>). ↑
107. For more information, see <http://designthinking.ideo.com/>. ↑
108. To access *Five Thresholds of Postmodern Faith*, go to <https://intiversity.org/page/evangelism-resources>. ↑

109. For more about hosting Israeli travellers, go to <http://hitinternational.net/?language=en>. ↑

110. To learn more about the camp, go to <http://www.demjo.org/haderekh-youth>. ↑

111. For more information about the centre and what it provides, see <https://www.caspari.com/>. ↑

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