



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE  
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

*Preserving American Jewish History*

MS-603: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Collection, 1945-1992.

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

Box 44, Folder 15, Rudin, James, 1979.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date July 16, 1979  
to Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
from Rabbi A. James Rudin  
subject

U R G E N T !

As the enclosed news articles indicate, the LCMS at its recently concluded convention voted to "continue to carry out the various aspects of the Dallas resolution" whose intent is to "encourage evangelism among the Jews."

I spoke today with Jordan Harburger who was an observer at the convention, but because of many changes in schedule, was not able to be present when the resolution was actually voted upon. However, he confirmed the RNS report that two amendments were voted down by the LCMS delegates:

1. An amendment to condemn Martin Luther's anti-Semitic writings.
2. An amendment which would have disavowed the accusations of anti-Semitism applied to the Church's missionary campaign.

I believe we should immediately issue a statement on the action of the LCMS, and I have prepared the enclosed draft. I think we should get it out as soon as possible.

Jordan shares my views. Any silence on our part, given the Washington Post story and others that will surely appear, will be taken as a sign that the AJC is passive to, or even accepts the LCMS's action.

I hope we can get this out immediately.

AJR:FM  
Encls.

DRAFT

The American Jewish Committee is deeply disappointed that the ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ national recently concluded convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod reaffirmed its program "to encourage evangelism among the Jews." "Since that program was formally adopted two years ago, the AJC has raised <sup>STRONG</sup> ~~serious~~ objections to making Jews a special target for conversion efforts. We believe such efforts are a repudiation of the many Christian bodies and leaders throughout the world who have, over the past decade, affirmed their respect for the authenticity of Judaism as a living faith," declared Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, ~~The~~ AJC's National Interreligious Affairs Director, and Rabbi A. James Rudin, the Assistant National <sup>Interreligious Affairs</sup> Director.

"We are dismayed that the LC-MS intends to continue its ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ conversion campaign among the Jewish people. Although the delegates at the St. Louis convention approved a 'Statement of Jewish-Lutheran Concerns' that calls for 'sensitivity' and 'understanding' on the part of the LC-MS towards the Jewish community, nonetheless, the Church voted 'to continue to carry out the various aspects' of the Jewish conversionary program", the two rabbis asserted.

"Finally, we regret that the delegates defeated efforts to add an explicit condemnation of Martin Luther's anti-Semitic writings to the resolution. The actions taken at St. Louis are serious <sup>Christian-Jewish</sup> impediments to building positive relations in this country, and to establishing a true dialogue that will advance mutual respect and understanding between Lutherans and Jews. We ~~stand ready~~ are committed to that task and will continue to work cooperatively with like minded Christians, and we express the hope that the LC-MS will yet abandon its present missionary campaign directed at the Jewish people," Rabbis Tanenbaum and Rudin said.

TAG LINE

Anything about Jordan Harburger who attended the convention?

Subject: To Recommend Expansion of the Synod's Evangelism Staff

RESOLUTION 1-28

Overture 1-24 (CW, p. 51)

WHEREAS, Anaheim Res. 1-07 requested "the Board of Directors to authorize the calling of an additional staff person to the Board for Evangelism within the next fiscal year," but the third staff person has not been authorized; and

WHEREAS, Dallas Res. 2-20 urged the Board of Directors to consider this a high-priority need and to authorize and fund the calling of another Associate Secretary of Evangelism as soon as possible; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention again request the Board of Directors to expedite the expansion of the Synod's Evangelism staff by adding a third member.

Subject: To Clarify Relationships with Ongoing Ambassadors for Christ

RESOLUTION 1-29

Overture 1-31 (CW, p. 53)

WHEREAS, Ongoing Ambassadors for Christ, Inc., has been a blessing to many of our congregations and other ministries of the Synod in sensitizing and training young people in youth evangelism; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention urge O AFC to coordinate its planning and programming with the synodical and Districts Boards for Missions, Evangelism, and Youth Ministry; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Synod in convention ask the Board of Directors of the Synod to arrange a meeting with the Council of Administrators and the Board of O AFC, so that future relationships between O AFC and the Synod can be clarified.

Subject: To Adopt "Statement of Jewish-Lutheran Concerns"

~~RESOLUTION 1-30~~

Overtures 1-26-1-28 (CW, pp. 51-53)

WHEREAS, When the Board for Evangelism sought to carry out Dallas Res. 2-27, "To Encourage Evangelism Among the Jews," strong objections were received from various Jewish organizations and from some pastors and congregations; and

WHEREAS, The position of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in its relationship to any group is one of love and concern patterned after the example of our Lord and is not based on personal opinions or prejudices; and

WHEREAS, The efforts to provide materials and workshops to understand the American Jew and to help find ways to share the Gospel with him was received by some Districts, pastors, and congregations with great interest and enthusiasm; and

WHEREAS, The truth of Scripture remains unchanged that there is no other way to salvation but through Jesus Christ (John 14:6, Acts 4:12); and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is committed to carrying out the Great Commission of "making disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:18-20); therefore be it

Resolved, That the Board for Evangelism and its Committee on Witnessing to Jewish People continue to carry out the various aspects of Dallas Res. 2-27; and be it further

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2  
3 Resolved, That the Board for Evangelism refer official requests for Jewish-Lutheran dialog to  
4 the Commission on Theology and Church Church Relations; and be it finally  
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6 Resolved, That the Synod adopt the "Statement of Jewish Lutheran Concerns," which reads as follows:  
7

8 I. We Desire to be Sensitive  
9

10 1. To the priority place of the Jews as chosen people of God both in the past, wherein lie roots of  
11 our own religious beliefs and practices, and in the present, where God's plans for both the Jews and  
12 Gentiles continue to unfold.  
13

14 2. To the unique history of the Jewish people, in which they have suffered much injustice and  
15 cruelty at the hands of the Christian church and non-Christian Gentiles. We deplore and repudiate this  
16 most unfortunate history and pray for a new understanding and spirit.  
17

18 3. To the danger that witnessing to Jewish people can result in misunderstanding and potential  
19 nurturing of anti-Semitic attitudes.  
20

21 II. We Plead for Understanding  
22

23 1. That we are not singling out the Jewish people as a special target for our evangelistic  
24 endeavors. We are committed to a parish approach in which the local congregation is committed to share  
25 the Gospel with all people in its community, Jew and Gentile alike. In the past we have often bypassed  
26 some segments of the community, such as the Jewish people.  
27

28 2. That we are not mounting a campaign to convert Jewish people with techniques of evangelism in-  
29 volving manipulation, pressure, and disrespect of the individual. Unfortunately, most of our people  
30 are not aware of the past injustices.  
31

32 Therefore we seek to help our congregations understand the contemporary Jewish people who live with  
33 them in the community and share their faith with them in a sensitive and respectful way. We need to  
34 provide special helps for this purpose just as we do for other groups of people, such as Blacks,  
35 Hispanics, Indians, cults, etc. We have full-time pastors to deaf, Estonians, Puerto Ricans, etc.  
36

37 III. We State our Commitment--  
38

39 1. That Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah, who fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament  
40 and by His life, death, and resurrection provided complete atonement for the sins of all people, Jew  
41 and Gentile alike.  
42

43 2. That since the New Testament, as well as the Old Testament, is the verbally inspired Word of  
44 God, the words of Jesus remain true for us today: "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life; no one  
45 comes to the Father but by Me" (John 14:6); as do the words of Peter: "There is salvation in no  
46 one else, for there is no other name [than the name of Jesus] under heaven given among men by which  
47 we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).  
48

49 3. That we are obligated to share the Gospel of Jesus as Lord and Savior with all people, Jew and  
50 Gentile alike (Matt. 28: 18--20; Luke 24: 46--49), and we seek to follow the example of our Lord  
51 and the early apostles with the zeal expressed by St. Paul when he said, "My heart's desire and  
52 prayer to God for them [Jews] is that they may be saved" (Rom. 10:1).  
53

54 4. That we do love the Jewish people, that we stand with them in opposing all forms of anti-  
55 Semitism and injustice, that we join them in humanitarian concerns, and that we will continue to love  
56 them even when they choose not to accept our witness.  
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**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** August 1, 1979  
**to** Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
**from** Rabbi A. James Rudin  
**subject** Revised Script for Friendship Press Film Strip  
 "Many Yet One"

The original script for this film strip was especially troublesome in several areas. I am enclosing pages 6 and 7 from the earlier draft and the bracketed sections indicate the problematic captions.

Inge, Judy and I met with the producers earlier this year and our intervention has brought some positive changes. I am enclosing the final script beginning with frame 62 through 76. You will note that a great deal of anti-Israel material spoken by Gabriel Habib has been removed. In addition, "Abraham is the father of the Jewish people," not merely "Jews acknowledge Abraham as the patriarch of their faith." We had suggested some language for frame 76 and although we didn't get all that we wanted, it is a great improvement over the original draft for frames 70 and 72 which are harshly anti-Israel as was the original material for frames 66 and 67.

Once again, it is clear that without our involvement and intervention some anti-Israel material would have appeared in the final text. We can draw satisfaction from our extensive work with Friendship Press and although we didn't achieve all of our goals, certainly the "before and after" comparisons show how successful we were.

With the exception of the Elfers' novel, we "scored points" in every publication, film guide or film script.

AJR:FM  
 Encls.

*Jim*  
 J.M.

cc: Judith Banki  
 Inge Gibel

- 57 (22) Communi- This is the beginning of true service,  
cant to God and to others.
- 58 (61) Jerusalem What of the future? It is common knowledge  
that the Middle East is the cradle of the three  
great monotheistic faiths: Judaism,  
Christianity and Islam.

- 59 (62) Jews at Jews acknowledge Abraham as a patriarch of  
Western their faith, as do Christians and Muslims.  
Wall
- 60 (63) Priest Christians acknowledge the work of the  
prophets, as do Jews and Muslims, and the words  
of the prophets as the inspired message of God  
to his people.
- 61 (64) Muslims The faith of Islam has sprung from the life  
at Prayer of Semitic peoples, as have Judaism and  
Christianity.
- 62 (To be VOICE: "I am Jehovah, thy God. Thou shalt have  
procured) no other Gods before me."  
Hebrew  
Scroll
- 63 (66) Greek SAME VOICE, CONTINUING: "You shall love the  
Bible Lord your God with all your heart, and with  
all your soul, and with all your mind, and  
your neighbor as yourself."
- 64 (To be SAME VOICE, CONTINUING: "There is no God but  
procured) Allah."  
Koran
- 65 (To be NARRATOR: Our common beliefs have not auto-  
procured) matically brought peace among the three great  
War-Damage communities of faith. The issue which faces  
us now as Christians is: "To what degree  
shall the Church exist as a political power,  
and what is its role as the Church?"
- 66 (69) Muslims Neither Islam nor Judaism want to separate  
at Prayer the secular and the religious life. These  
faiths do not recognize the separation of  
church and state.

- 67 (To be They do not support a society in which all  
procured) three faiths are given equal status, and in  
Israeli in which no one faith is favored. Gabriel Habib,  
Prayer whom you heard earlier, speaks to this point.  
Shawl

- 68 (19) Habib at Desk HABIB: "All the churches find themselves now at a turning point in their history. They have always behaved as if the Middle East is changing towards a type of secular society where the political power, to a great extent, will be separated from the religious power, in order that people from various religions could live together in a national entity.
- 69 (72) Minaret "Today all these assumptions are challenged by, on one hand, this Islamic revival which wants to revive Islam as a political and a religious power, asserting itself against any influence against this concept;
- 70 (To be procured) Synagogue "and the Israeli assertion against anything which goes against that concept of existence that the Jews have projected in the Middle East."
- 71 (74) Man NARRATOR: As I have already said, we Christians are a small minority within our own lands,
- 72 (75) Woman and we do not have equal status either with Muslims in the Islamic states, or with Jews in Israel.
- 73 (76) Bible and Cross There is a real temptation for us to align ourselves with political power in order to assure survival. How shall the Church remain faithful, as in the past, knowing that faithfulness may lead to a cross?
- 74 (77) Dome of the Rock HABIB: "The question is whether the type of government that Islam is proposing can continue to accommodate a Christian Church. This is where the debate is going on,
- 75 (78) Church Building "because some would say the Church doesn't care within which structure it is living, because after all the Church doesn't belong to the society. It is in the world, but it is not from the world.
- 76 (79) Priest and Bread "We have to participate to make it better for everybody, but we don't try to acquire power in order to fight power. Power, political power, cannot be fought with a Christian political power.
- 77 (80) Cross "It can be challenged by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is how Jesus Christ himself challenged the power at that time and led him to the cross."

Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon located at Sidon in Lebanon.

The church tower in frame 6 is of a Coptic Orthodox church in Egypt. The large congregational scene in frame 7 is in St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox Cathedral in Cairo, Egypt. The tower of that church is seen in frame 12.

The ancient church archway in frame 11 marks the entrance to a church in Cairo. The priest and communicants in frame 20 are at St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church in Beirut.

Frame 22 pictures a Presbyterian church on the school compound near Hamadan in Iran and frame 23 is an Anglican church.

Black-hooded priests in frames 28 and 29 are from the Armenian Orthodox Church and are pictured at an ecumenical service held at St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church in Beirut. The congregation in frame 30 is in a Coptic Orthodox Church in Cairo.

The scenes of the Holy Fire on the Saturday before Easter were photographed at the Church of the Holy Sepul-

chre in Jerusalem and the Holy Fire procession is at Tybeh, near Jerusalem. These are in frames 31, 32 and 33. Frames 34 and 35 conclude the scene with the fire being presented before the altar and the oil lamp being lit at Tybeh Church near Jerusalem.

School children in frame 36 are from the Greek Orthodox Church in Amyoun, Lebanon, and the young man with the book in frame 37 is at Beit Kahil, near Hebron.

The prayer group of frame 38 is at Kumbuha, Egypt. The Near East School of Theology pictured in frames 39 and 40 is at Beirut. The Family Clinic in frame 46 is also at Kumbuha, Egypt. Frame 45 views an Evangelical Coptic Church in downtown Cairo. Frames 48, 49, 50, 51 and 52 are at Beirut in war-torn Lebanon.

Students welding as pictured in frame 53 are at a vocational school in Gaza. Rock terraces in frame 54 are in Hebron and frames 55 and 56 are from the West Bank. Frame 63 is a scene of prayer at the Jerusalem Western Wall, a place sacred to Jews. Muslims at prayer in the courtyard of the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem are pictured in frame 65.

Gabriel Habib in frames 70 and 71 is General Secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches with headquarters at Beirut, Lebanon. This council represents Orthodox and Protestant churches with affiliated interests from Catholic groups, and carries an active program in many countries throughout the Middle Eastern region. The Middle East Council sponsors programs of Family Service Centers in Lebanon, Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza. A sampling of these programs include a medical clinic, a pre-natal clinic, supplemental feeding for infants, and courses in home economics, home gardening and literacy.

Another group carrying out rural development work in Egypt is the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services known as CEOSS. Also a rural development program serves the Nile villages through leadership training, literacy programs, women's meetings and medical and family planning clinics.

Frame 73 shows a minaret above an Old City Street in Jerusalem, and frame 75 is another view of St. Mark's Cathedral in Cairo.

The prayer shawl worn by devoted Jews at prayer is seen as the attire of a man at the Western Wall in frame 76.

The Bible and the Cross in frame 77 are on the Communion Table at Hamlin Hospital in Lebanon. The cross viewed in frame 79 is at St. George's Cathedral, Anglican, at Jerusalem. School children in a town on the West Bank, are seen in frame 82. The child in frame 83 is from the same group.

The Holy Fire in frame 86 is another view of the Greek Orthodox Tybeh Church, near Jerusalem. Frame 88 provides an additional view of the church building at Sidon in Lebanon.

#### **Some Items to Consider for an Effective Presentation**

Although filmstrips are now a familiar form of media, leaders should be reminded to make adequate preparation for their use. The following suggestions will assist you in making more effective presentation.

**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**memorandum**

**date** July 30, 1979  
**to** Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
**from** Rabbi A. James Rudin  
**subject**

Just in case there is any doubt, the attached article reveals David Bowman's true feelings about the State of Israel. Bowman was the author of the terrible Friendship Press study guide on the Middle East that had to be practically thrown out because of its one-sidedness and inadequacies.

His theological bias against Israel is very deep and he takes the conventional Christian line of the coming of Jesus and the rise of Christianity as "fulfilling" the promises of the "Old Testament."

It is obvious that the works of W.D. Davies and others are either nothing to him or simply never touched and the choice of Bowman to write the teachers guide gives us a clear insight into the policies and thinking of Friendship Press.

AJR:FM  
Encl.  
cc: Inge Gibel  
Judith Banki



## THE BIBLE AND THE LAND

David H. Bowman

Can the Bible be used to justify the occupation of the land by the modern state of Israel? In other words, does the word of God contain an unambiguous grant of land for the contemporary state of Israel? The Presbyterian Church's response to the challenge of the Middle East Crisis will be affected by our answer to these questions.

The Church's response to the human tragedy of continued conflict in the Near East, to the legitimate claims of the Palestinians for a land of their own, and to the just claims of Israel for territorial security will arise out of the Church's understanding of Scripture, theological heritage, historical experience, and particular sociological circumstances. Among these various factors, this paper is primarily concerned with the believer's understanding of the Biblical witness for "the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the Word of God, the only rule of faith and practice."<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the purpose of this paper will be to explore the Biblical witness as it pertains to the land and life of Israel.

At the outset, it will be necessary for the reader to draw a clear distinction in his or her mind between the Israel of the Old Testament and the contemporary political state of Israel. They are not necessarily identical. To combine these two historical entities is to confuse the issue. "...To interpret Biblical passages is never easy," warns Hans Ruedi Weber, "but it becomes particularly risky if the texts about the promise of land are interpreted with a view to the contemporary Middle Eastern situation."<sup>2</sup> The Church is committed to a mission and life centered on the Word. However, it has also learned from bitter experience that "The Bible can...be grossly misunderstood and misused."<sup>3</sup> The Church affirms that "the Scriptures principally teach what man (a person) is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man (a person)," but it does not yet know what God desires of it in particular relative to the crisis in the Near East. Consequently, the interpretive quest is a risky adventure, and it will be best to let scripture speak for itself. Participation in this quest may well lead the Church down paths which betray its Lord's love and hurt its neighbors. Yet it is also an exciting opportunity which may lead to the contemporization of the Risen Lord in the lives of victims and in the life of a victimized land.<sup>5</sup>

The interpretive enterprise may lead to a dramatic witness which claims that the force of right can and has replaced the right of force.

### The Interpretive Enterprise

The interpretive enterprise is similar to a journey. It involves us in traveling to several different spots, looking around, and reflecting on the sights. Among the various locations we will need to visit in our journey are the Old Testament's use of the promised land motif, the New Testament's reconstruction of this theme to fit its particular message, and the Reformed Community's hermeneutical or interpretive principle.

#### I. Land and Life in the Old Testament

The "land" was occupied by various means such as gradual immigrations and fierce war by various groups over several decades. The conquest was an event or series of events which seemed to demand theological interpretation. Consequently, the Biblical witness as it pertains to the "land" is a theological history. It is a theological interpretation of the events that stand at the beginning of Israel's existence. Yet, it is not solely concerned with God's actions in the past, but also present and future.<sup>6</sup> The goal of the Biblical historian was to "help his community live faithfully in the present... and choose responsibly a future in covenant with Yahweh" by interpreting the past. Therefore, in the very beginnings of the Biblical witness we find that "the Lord appeared to Abram and said, 'To your descendents I will give this land' (Gen. 12:7), and again, "The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, 'Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward: for all the land which you see I will give to you and to your descendents forever!" (Gen. 13: 14-15)

The important element within the land formula is that God is the giver of the land to Abram.. "For I (God) will give it to you" (Gen. 13: 17b). The purpose of God's dealing with Abraham is found in the granting of land for "I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess" (Gen. 15:7). The authors of Genesis wanted their readers to understand that God is the giver of the land and life. The thrust of the message is not that God promised the land to Abraham at a certain long ago time or in a particular location, but rather that their present occupation of the land is an act of Divine involvement in their lives. They do not possess the land by merit but by God's sustaining hand. For the authors of Genesis the promise of land

functions as a mandate which intelligibilizes, or explains, their readers presence in the land. However, we must move beyond Genesis in order to find a fuller exposition of this "territorial doctrine."

The Book of Deuteronomy and to a lesser extent Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings are concerned with a theology of the land. In particular:-

"...Deuteronomy is dominated from the beginning to end by the idea of the land which is to be taken in possession. It forms the theme both of the laws and of the paraenetic discourses: The deuteronomic commandments have no other purpose in view than of laying down the new style of cults and the new way of life for the radically altered circumstances arising from the settlement. "When you come into the land which Yahweh your God gives to you, then you shall...."<sup>8</sup>

If the dominate theme in Deuteronomy is the theology of land, then what are the component parts of that theology? What was Deuteronomy's understanding of the land and what implications did he draw from it for the faith and life of his readers? The questions can be answered in terms of three categories: 1) Land as good gift 2) Land and the Covenant and 3) Land the the Future.

#### A. Land as Good Gift

The theology of the land developed when the continued settlement of the land became problematic.<sup>9</sup> The exact nature of the threat is an area of dispute among Biblical scholars, but there is agreement that a sense of crisis permeates the Deuteronomic historians' message. In the midst of this crisis, the historian's central theme is that the land is the gift of God to Israel.<sup>10</sup> (Deut. 1:8, 35: 6:10, 18, 23: 7:13: 8:1, 9:5: 10:11: 11:9, 21:19:8, 26:3, 15: 28:11: 30:20: 31:7: 34:4)<sup>11</sup> God is the agent who brought Abraham into the land and who has given it to the readers of Deuteronomy. While the recipients of the land appear to vary from "to them" or "to you" or "to us", they nevertheless share a common identity. "The promise to the Fathers," observes P.D. Miller, "was a promise to us. The gift to the fathers was a gift to us. The recipients coalesce, that is, the fathers, those entering the land in conquest, and the present hearers. This last group, which has been there for centuries, must hear the fact that even now they have no claim on the land but receive it and its benefits only as gift by the grace of God."<sup>12</sup> Whatever else may be said about the land, the Deuteronomic historian wants his readers

to believe that it was a divine gift. They possess no claim to the land but rather receive it and enjoy it only because of God's love for Israel (Deut. 7:8).

The Deuteronomic historian did not consider God's gift to be cheap. Rather, it was "good land". This "good land" is described as worthy, beneficial, and rich (Deut. 1:25, 35: 3:23: 4:21: 6:18: 8:7, 10: 9:6: 11:7). Elsewhere it is pictured as a land "flowing with milk and honey" (6:3: 11:9: 26:9, 15: 27:3: 31: 20)<sup>13</sup> The "good" can also be defined in terms of "shalom", "life", (Deut. 30:15), abundance, prosperity (6:11: 8:12f; 26:11), of cattle, children, produce and rain (Deut. 6:11; 8:12f; 26:11).<sup>14</sup> The designation of "good" encompasses everything which is involved in the continuation of and enrichment of life. But there is more to it than simply an affluent, secure, and prosperous existence. The imagery seems to suggest a "kind of paradise" or utopian state.<sup>15</sup> Possession of the land and life in it are, "reasons P.D. Miller, "therefore, the gifts of salvation."<sup>16</sup> The land, hence, becomes the concrete representation of God's saving love. It is the embodiment of Divine Love which excels all other loves. Israel's settlement upon the land is the incarnation of God's grace.<sup>17</sup>

However, land is only the sphere in which life occurs. The Divine gift is not simply land, rather, it is land and life. In such passages as Deut. 30:15 God speaks through Moses, saying, "See I have set before you this day, life and good, death and evil." Similarly He says, "Behold, I set before you this day, a blessing and a curse (Deut. 11:26)." The blessing is good life in the land (Deut. 4:1). For the Deuteronomic historian life and land are equally gifts of God. They are the blessings of salvation which God's grace has bestowed upon a fallen humanity.

#### B. The Land and the Covenant

God, life, and land are intimately tied together by the Deuteronomic historian by means of the idea of covenant. The covenantal motif encompasses a treaty relationship between a King (God, who gives land and life) and his vassals (those who settled on the land) The traditional treaty included a list of obligations and concluded with a promise of blessing or curse. If the vassals do "good" or keep the commandments, then they shall prosper in the land. If they depart from the "good", then the gifts of life and land will be withdrawn. Land and life are "completely and totally contingent upon the character of Israel's response to her giving Lord,...."<sup>18</sup> Consequently, "The land is not only the sphere in which blessings takes place", but" it is also the sphere in which Israel does what Yahweh requires..(where) the obedience of the people shall be visible (Deut, 4:5, 14; 5:32; 6:1; 12:1)."<sup>19</sup>

In short, Israel's "goodness" is the condition of God's doing good to Israel, or as Walter Brueggemann has observed:

Israel's survival is linked to her honoring this oath to do "good" towards Yahweh. Israel lives because she does "good." This is the meaning of law in Deut.. Obviously, when she does not do "good", she may expect punishment (as in 587), if not death. 20

Obedience is, therefore, a question of life or death, blessing or curse, settlement or exile. Yet, what form should this obedience or doing "good" take?

The obedience which the Deuteronomic historian desires consists in fulfilling the covenantal obligations. Again and again, the historian assures his audience of the graciousness of God in order "...to motivate Israel to full covenant obedience (Deut. 12:25; 28; 19:13; 22:7)."<sup>21</sup> These covenantal obligations not only involve Israel's relationship with God but also the mutual obligations of settler to settler. Israel worships God, the giver of life and land, not only in the cult but also in the law court and the market place. "All the members of the community must have access," exhorts P.D. Miller, "to the benefits and produce of the good land which comes as God's gift to all Israel and is to be used in that light."<sup>22</sup> Consequently, worship and work, faith and practice are intimately tied together. The style of living and mode of worship required by the enduring effort to insure that all who live in the land shall be treated justly."<sup>23</sup> If justice is not maintained in the gate or if God is not worshiped, then the implicit consequence is loss of the divine gifts of land and life.

### C. The Land and the Future

The land was lost in 597 B.C. King Jehoiachim of Judah and the leaders of the nation were deported to Babylon. In 587 the temple was burnt and Jerusalem was destroyed in an ill conceived revolt against the conquerors. The Deuteronomic historian provided the theology which made this loss intelligible. His history"... explains that Israel lost the land because it did not obey the demands of the covenant."<sup>24</sup> Yet there is more in Deuteronomy than simply a theology of retribution. God is the gracious giver. Consequently, "the whole Deuteronomic history is one great call to repentance."<sup>25</sup>

The divine drama was still being played out. Even in exile the gracious word is operative. The author of the original "good" again offers his "good" to Israel. Deut. 30: 1-10 capularizes

this basic affirmation about the "Good God" of the future. In these verses there is a threefold call to repentance--to return to the Lord your God, with all your heart and with all your soul (Deut. 30:2, 10). Alongside these exhortations are two significant affirmations about the future:

...and the Lord your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, that you may possess it; and he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers. (vs 5)

The Lord your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your body, and in the fruit of your cattle, and in the fruit of your ground; for the Lord will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers.... (vs.9)

The "good" to be bestowed upon Israel in the future will be "greater than and superior to anything known prior to 587."<sup>26</sup> The call to repentance is informed by "...the more fundamental statement of Yahweh's intention for Israel."<sup>27</sup> God is the gracious giver not only during settlement and exile, but also in the future. He is "forever" Israel's benefactor.

The "forever" clause was not only applied to the "land" but also to the Davidic house (II Sam. 7: 24-28)<sup>28</sup> Both the land and the royal house are vehicles for the "good" of God. They will become embodiments of the promise of salvation. God's good word endures and does not end in 587 or any other historical failure. In spite of exile and the decline of the royal house, God's "good word" is trustworthy. It is the source of faith and hope when all else has collapsed and the land is lost. The loss of the salvation gifts of land and Davidic house are not the conclusion of the divine drama. Rather, the historian points toward an even greater gift in the future when the "land" and the royal house will furnish the occasion and operate as a sphere for a superior and "forever" embodiment of God's Good Word.

## II: The New Testament

"The New Testament announces," writes John Bright, "with one voice and with unshakable assurance that all the Hope of Israel has become present in Jesus Christ."<sup>30</sup> The promises of a superior good has been actualized in the midst of the land and life of Israel. The Divine "good" which lies at the very heart of the Deuteronomic message has become present fact. The promise of life became life or as John Bright again writes:

The future tense of the Old Testament ("behold the days are coming" and the like) has now become an emphatic present: "The kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark 1: 15). The final act of the drama has even now begun, the messianic age has dawned; he who is greater than Solomon, greater than Jonah (Luke 11: 31-32), Nay greater than the temple and the law (Matt. 12:6-8), is here. The Servant is even now on the scene (Luke 4: 17-21), and his work may be seen by all (Matt. 11: 2-6). This is the day which all the past desired to see, but did not (Luke 10: 23-24). No need anymore to look wildly about for signs of the Kingdom's imminent coming: it is right here "among you" (Luke 17:21). In the person and work of Jesus the Kingdom of God has intruded into the world. 21

The intrusion of the Kingdom into the life and land of Israel is the realization of that which preceded it. To the extent that land and life are the gifts of salvation, they are now actualized in Him whom the synoptic writers proclaim. Yet, there is still a tension. Jesus is not only the fulfillment of the salvation gift but he occurs within the confines of the land. Like the Hidden Treasure which the farmer stumbles upon, the Lord is of the Land. The unfaithful servant is punished because he buries His talents (the Kingdom) in the land. If the land is not used properly then judgment ensues. The Prodigal Son (Israel) returns to his land (inheritance) and there discovers a greater wonder in the surprising grace of His Father. Jesus is not only the fulfillment of the promise forever, but this fulfillment takes place in the midst of Israel's land and life. In this manner the promise to Abraham which Deuteronomy addresses to his readers, is fulfilled without negating or excluding those to whom the promise was made. 32

If Jesus is the "emphatic present" of the Kingdom and the promised Messiah, then a major reinterpretation of the Old Testament is required. "The continued rejection of the gospel by those who considered themselves to be the people of God raised," claims Richard Batey, "for Paul a question that challenged his self-understanding in Jesus Christ." 33 How are Christians who stand on the other side of the cross to understand the Old Testament in general and the refusal of the people of God to accept Jesus as their Messiah?

Paul was particularly interested in this problem and the manner in which he handled it is illustrative of the early Church's approach. In Romans (9: 1-14) Paul explicitly deals with the relationship between the promise made to the fathers (to Israel), the failure of his religious contemporaries to accept Jesus as messenger, and the Church. Paul concluded that his acceptance of the Gospel "...as well as by a few other Jews, was an indication that Israel as a

nation was not rejected."<sup>34</sup> God's word has not failed. It is not inadequate. Consequently, Paul sees in the apparent failure of his Jewish contemporaries to adopt the Gospel a victory.<sup>35</sup> "Paul's proposition is," writes John Calvin on this passage, "that the Promise was given to Abraham and to his seed, but in such a way that his inheritance does not relate to all of his descendents without distinction."<sup>36</sup> Isaac as opposed to Ishmael, Jacob as opposed to Esau become the vehicles of the promise. Therefore, the "appellation 'children of the promise' properly belongs to those in whom its power and efficacy is found. On this account Paul here asserts that not all children of Abraham are children of God..."<sup>37</sup> Consequently, Calvin believes that Paul is drawing a distinction between the "True Sons of Israel" and those who have "fallen from their position", between the "children of the flesh" and the "children of God."<sup>38</sup> This distinction is based on the person's response to the gospel--to the good gift of the Giving God. Those Jews, as well as Gentiles, who respond to the gift are the true Israel and the witnesses to the fulfillment of the promise of salvation. The early Church perceived itself as being "Israel according to the Spirit, the true heirs of Israel's hope."<sup>39</sup> "Israel is not Israel simply because it boasts," writes John Bright, "that is Abraham's seed (Rom. 9: 6-8)... (rather) he is a Jew who in his innermost heart has surrendered himself to God (Rom. 2: 28-29)."<sup>40</sup> Indeed, the true Israel is a "remnant chosen by grace" (Rom. 11:5). Hence, all who are Christ's are Abraham's seed and heirs of the promise.

In Rom. 11: 25-32 Paul writes, "so all Israel will be saved." This affirmation is preceded by the observation that "a hardening has come upon part of Israel." The clause between the affirmation and the observation indicates that the "hardening" occurred in order for the Gentiles to enter the Kingdom. Yet who or what is Israel? "...I extend the word 'Israel' ", Calvin answers, "to include all the people of God."<sup>41</sup> Both Jew and Gentile are the people of God and both are the recipients' of a superior good which "takes away their sins." "In the same way," Calvin continues, "in Gal. 6:16, he (Paul) calls the Church, which was composed equally of Jews and Gentiles, the Israel of God..."<sup>42</sup> The faithful who had received their hope through the Deuteronomic historian and the later prophets are still participants in the divine promise which is fulfilled in the Christ. However, God's grace is not limited by merit. In some mysterious manner God will still effect their redemption. Like the cross, their rejection of Jesus appears as a defeat, yet the cross was not a horrible failure. In spite of all appearances, God's grace is capable of overcoming all obstacles. In conclusion, it is important to notice that Paul did not exclude non-Jews in his description of Israel.

In Gal. 3: 6-9 Paul declares that it is the "men of faith who are the sons of Abraham." The promise to Abraham is taken over by the Church as the rightful heir. All who embrace the faith through grace are heirs of the promise and children of Abraham forever. "Here in Jesus and the community of his followers is the true Israel."<sup>43</sup> Consequently, the Church can observe no formal anniversary for "...it began in the Old Covenant itself and in the Old Testament longing for the true Israel of God's purpose."<sup>44</sup> It is the remnant chosen by grace, and hence, heirs of the promise. God's good word is spoken to and manifested in an old yet new nation--to a new yet old creation, and to an international yet national audience. It is the vehicle through which God is blessing the nations.

The Crucial text which summarizes Paul's whole approach is found in Gal. 6: 15-16, where the apostle writes, "For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God." Those who were earlier identified as the "children of Abraham by faith, and this includes all believers whether Gentile or Jews, who are united in..." Christ are the new Israel of God.<sup>45</sup> The New Testament writers in general and Paul in particular "...affirm that the Church is the true continuity of Israel..."<sup>46</sup> Israel's past is now the Church's past and the Church's future is now Israel's. The New Testament affirms with one voice that those who have obeyed the call of Christ are his true church and heirs of all the promises given to Israel (Rom. 4: 13-15; Gal. 3:29; Tit. 3;7 James 2:5).<sup>47</sup>

In summary Paul calls the Church at various times and in different places the "Israel of God," "Abraham's seed", "heirs according to the promise", "heirs in hope", and applies the promise "in thee shall all nations be blessed" to her mission. The Church has not only appropriated the Old Testament, but it also declares that Christ has confirmed and fulfilled its fundamental message about God as the giver of the good. Paul has reoriented the Old Testament in light of the Resurrection and has concluded that "...its (the O.T.) deepest and most genuine meaning (is) not in the tradition of the Elders, but in Jesus Christ as its fulfillment."<sup>48</sup> While God's saving grace was embodied in the land and life of the Old Testament Israel, now, this same saving God is incarnate in the flesh and blood of Christ. While the land was the arena of salvation for the Good Word in the Old Testament, now, the arena and salvation have become one in the person of the Messiah, who is the Word made flesh. The New Israel has neither taken back his promises, abolished the law, negated the covenant nor rejected His people. The Israel of the Fathers is not excluded from participation in the fulfillment of the promises. Rather, the intention of the

land, the covenant, and the law are fulfilled and are being fulfilled in the Christ, who is the actualization of the promise. "The essential message (of Deut.) is the offer of life in the land and all that it entails."<sup>49</sup> In Jesus Christ the "offer" has become realized by God for all persons in all times.

### III: The Hermeneutical or Interpretive Relationship

How have Christians understood the relationship between the Old and New Testament, between the promise of the Land and Jesus Christ? At various times this relationship has been described as a preparation or propaedeutic. The Old Testament's law motif prepared the heart for the Gospel of grace, according to Martin Luther. Others have seen an evolutionary relationship that begins with a primitive "ethical monotheism" and moves toward an even higher universalistic religion in the New Testament.<sup>50</sup> Still others have rejected the Old Testament completely. However, the main thrust of Reformed Theology has focused upon the promise/fulfillment motif while maintaining the essential unity of Scripture at the same time. Calvin, for example, affirmed the basic unity of the Biblical witness. For Calvin, "the only real difference between the Testaments is the degree of clarity in the revelation of Christ."<sup>51</sup> This "...meant that the Old Testament is to be read in the light of the New and that the New is to be interpreted in continuity with the Old."<sup>52</sup> Consequently, the hermeneutical, or interpretive, principle which has consistently informed the Reformed Community's understanding of Scripture and which must be applied to the problem of the land is according to John Bright, the claim that:

The two testaments have to do with one and the same God, one history, one heritage of faith, one People.<sup>53</sup>

### CONCLUSIONS

Together, Deuteronomy's theology of land and life, the New Testament's emphasis upon the Israel of God as heirs of the promise, and the Reformed Tradition's hermeneutical principle that the Church is the extension of the Israel of the Old Testament suggests the following conclusions:

- 1) The Old Testament writers were addressing a specific audience in a particular historical context. Their imagery and message was taken over by the early Church and re-interpreted in light of Christ, who is declared to be the fulfillment of the promise. To uncritically change the audience and the context is to

damage the intention of the message. In order to be faithful to the Biblical witness, it will be necessary for the reader to draw a clear distinction in his or her mind between the Israel of the Old Testament and the contemporary political state of Israel. Consequently, the promise of the land is applicable to a specific point in Israel's history (the Israel of God) and is not directly pertinent to the present state of Israel.

2) While it may be possible to rejuvenate portions of Deuteronomy's theology of the land in order to defend or justify the present occupation of the historic land, such an effort functions as a rationalization of defense over against the claim of others. The original promise functioned as a confessional affirmation concerning the graciousness of God and not as a defense of privilege. Consequently, the present referral to scriptural promises as justification for occupation is directly opposed to and contradicts the scriptural intent.

3) A Christian or anyone can utilize Deuteronomy's theology of the land and life as a means of understanding the graciousness of God and his or her duties toward neighbors. Although land may be bought, worked for, inherited, it ultimately comes into our possession as God's gift. The owner can never stake a final claim to the possession of the land by reference to legal right, family heritage, or physical or mental efforts. Rather, the land came, comes, and will always come to us as the gracious gift of God who is the giver of land and life.<sup>54</sup> In the particular instance of the Middle East, the "land" is the arena in which the just claims of the Palestinians for a national homeland and the legitimate desire of Israeli citizens for security will have to reach a just accommodation. God wills that justice should prevail in his "land". Conversely, territorial injustice will not only block reconciliation but also contribute to the mutual estrangement of the conflicting parties and eventually prompt renewed conflicts in the area.

4) The promise of land and life contains a significant implication for the Israel of God. The offer of the land was essentially an offer of life. While Christ has fulfilled and is perfecting that promise, the Church is called upon to embody his grace in a concrete ministry that deals with land and life and that occurs in the midst of land and life. It is called to proclaim the "good word" in actions which are as earthy and vital as its progenitor's ministry.

- 1) The Confession of Faith: Larger Catechism, Q 3, A 1.
- 2) Hans-Ruedi Weber, "The Promise of the Land," Study Encounter, VII (Nov. 4, 1971), p. 1
- 3) Weber, p.1
- 4) Larger Catechism, Q 5, A 1
- 5) The answer to the question "What is meant by the contemporization of the crucified God in the political religions of society?" forms the basis of Jurgen Moltmann's essay, "Ways Toward the Political Liberation of Mankind" in The Crucified God (New York: Harper and Rowe, 1973). His answer is based upon the affirmation that "faith gains substance in its political incarnations and overcomes its un-Christian abstractions, which keeps it far from the present situation of the crucified God." p. 318
- 6) Walter Brueggemann, "The Kerygma of the Deuteronomistic Historian," Interpretation, XXII (Oct. 1968), p 387-88
- 7) F.F. Bruce, Review of The Gospel and the Land, by W. D. Davies, Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XXVI (July 1975), p 323
- 8) Gerhard van Rad The Problem of the Flexateuch, (Edinburgh: 1965) p. 90-91
- 9) North maintains that Deut. was written in the Exile while Van Rad believes that it was written on the eve of the Exile
- 10) Patrick D. Miller, "The Gift of God: The Deuteronomic Theology of the Land" in Interpretation (Oct. 1969), p. 453
- 11) Miller, p. 454
- 12) Miller, p. 454
- 13) Brueggemann, p. 391
- 14) Brueggemann, p. 391
- 15) Miller, p. 457
- 16) Miller, p. 453
- 17) Brueggemann, p. 395

- 18) Miller, p. 453
- 19) Miller p. 459
- 20) Brueggemann, p. 390
- 21) Brueggemann, p. 391
- 22) Miller p. 460
- 23) Miller, p. 461
- 24) Weber, p. 5
- 25) Weber, p. 5
- 26) Brueggemann, p. 393
- 27) Brueggemann, p. 393
- 28) Brueggemann, pp. 397-401
- 29) Brueggemann, p. 399-400
- 30) John Bright, The Kingdom of God, (Nashville, 1963), p. 215
- 31) Bright, p. 216
- 32) See "Proposed Declaration of Faith" chapter 7, sect. 3
- 33) Richard Batey, "So All Israel Will be Saved" in Interpretation, (April 1966), p. 226
- 34) Batey, p. 224
- 35) Batey, p. 228
- 36) John Calvin, The Epistles of Paul to the Romans and Thessalonians, Vol. 8, Calvin's N. T. Commentaries (Translated by Ross Mackenzie) 1973, p. 197
- 37) Calvin, p. 197
- 38) Calvin, p. 198
- 39) Bright, p. 226

- 40) Bright, p. 226
- 41) Calvin, p. 225
- 42) Calvin, p. 225
- 43) Bright, p. 226
- 44) Bright, p. 225
- 45) John Calvin, The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians,  
Vo. 2, (T.H. Parker, translator) 1965, p. 118
- 46) Herbert B. Huffmon, "The Israel of God" in Interpretation,  
Vol. 23, Jan., 1969) p. 66
- 47) Bright, p. 224
- 48) Warren Quanbeck, "Theological Reorientation" in Interpretation,  
Vol. 14 (July 1960) p. 261
- 49) Miller, p. 458
- 50) Huffmon, p. 67
- 51) John Leith, "John Calvin - Theologian of the Bible" in Interpretation  
Vol. 25 (July 1971) p. 340
- 52) Leith, p. 344
- 53) John Bright, The Authority of the Old Testament, p. 199
- 54) Miller, p. 463

**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** July 31, 1979  
**to** Marc H. Tanenbaum  
**from** A. James Rudin  
**subject** Revised Film Guide for "Hope For Life"

Dr. Beverly Chain, the Assistant General Secretary for Communication of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, has sent me a copy of the revised study guide for the Methodist film, "Hope For Life." I am enclosing the revised study guide along with the original and my analysis of the film guide. The revised version is a great improvement over the original.

As you know, I was especially concerned with the section entitled "The West Bank and Gaza." There have been many significant changes, many of which are based on my critique of May 10, 1979. Some of the changes include:

1. Jerusalem is now included within Israel on the map cover.
2. There is specific mention about the Jordanian annexation of the West Bank and the Egyptian administration of Gaza from 1948-9 until 1967.
3. The term "Israelites" has been replaced with "Jews."
4. There is a much more balanced description of the Christian population in Jerusalem.
5. The original film guide talked about "a modest return of Jews to the land." This has now been taken out.
6. There is specific mention of the 130,000 Arabs who remained in Israel after 1948.
7. There is for the first time a reference to the "about 800,000 Jews have fled Arab countries to find refuge in Israel."
8. The original film guide talked about West Bank Arabs taking jobs in Israel that Israelis "shun." That expression has now been removed.
9. The original film guide talked about Israelis having an "eternal" right to Israel as well as speaking of a "unified" Jerusalem. These two quoted terms have now been removed and there is a much more balanced description of the New City of Jerusalem. Not only does Jerusalem have "highrise hotels, apartments and office buildings," but it also has "holy places, artists' colonies and museums alongside universities, hospitals...."

10. The original film guide demanded that Palestinian refugees "be allowed to return to their former homes in Israel or be compensated financially and that all Israeli settlements be removed from Arab land." All of this has now been removed and there is no mention of compensation or Israeli settlements in the new film guide.

There are still problems, in my opinion, with the description of the Palestinian refugee problem but, by and large, this film guide is a great achievement.

AJR/es

Enclosures

cc: Judith Banki  
Murray Friedman  
Inge Lederer Gibel  
Roger Meltzer



REVISED

## The West Bank and Gaza

Before 1918, Palestine was a part of Greater Syria, a territory now encompassing the contemporary states of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Israel. In November 1947, the United Nations General Assembly approved a resolution which called for the partition of Palestine into two states, one Jewish and the other Arab, but took no effective action to carry it out. The Jewish Agency for Palestine accepted partition. Arab states intervened militarily to oppose it and the war of 1948-49 followed.

A 1949 armistice left the newly-declared state of Israel holding 20 percent more land than had been proposed under the U.N. plan. Jordan annexed the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Egypt administered Gaza. The Palestinians wound up with no state at all.

The indigenous inhabitants of Palestine are the descendants of the various people who have occupied the area beginning with the Canaanites, Philistines, Jews and other Old Testament tribes, and continuing with the Greeks, Romans, Moslem Arabs, European Crusaders and Turks. At the time of the Moslem Arab conquest in A.D. 637, the population of Palestine was largely Christian and at least 10 percent of Palestinian Arabs remain such today. About 100,000 Christians live in Israel and the occupied territories. Jerusalem has about 11,000 Christian residents.

Throughout the many centuries of the *diaspora*, or scattering of the Jews, which began in A.D. 132, there always was a small native Jewish population in Palestine. Under the British-administered League of Nations mandate following World War I, the Zionist movement implemented a major Jewish resettlement program in Palestine. Nevertheless, by the time of the 1947 partition plan, Jews represented only one-third of the population.

The first wave of Palestinian refugees — nearly 800,000 — fled to Arab countries during 1948 and many thousands of them wound up in refugee camps operated by the United Nations. The second great Palestinian exodus came in 1967 when Israel captured East Jerusalem and the West Bank from Jordan, Sinai and Gaza from Egypt and the Golan Heights from Syria. In 1948, some 130,000 Arabs remained within the boundaries of the new state of Israel. With population increases over the past 30 years, that number has more than tripled.

There are more than 3.5 million Palestinians — half of them registered as refugees — scattered throughout the Middle East and beyond (1.2 million in Jordan, 400,000 in Lebanon, 250,000 in Syria, 500,000 in the Persian Gulf States and Saudi Arabia, 100,000 in Europe and the United States). More than 1.1 million live on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. The West Bank is a 2,165-square-mile area (about the size of Delaware) of rolling hills and valleys with 700,000 inhabitants, including 300,000 refugees. About 75,000 of the refugees live in village-like camps near Jerusalem. The Gaza Strip is 140 square miles of flat desert along the Mediterranean, just north of Sinai. Some 300,000 of its 450,000 people are refugees from the 1948 war and almost two-thirds of them live in teeming squalid camps. About 800,000 Jews have fled Arab countries to find refuge in Israel.

The West Bank economy is based primarily on agriculture. The principal crops are tomatoes, olives and cucumbers. There is some small industry. The West Bank buys 91 percent of its imports (\$154 million in goods) from Israel, which takes only 65 percent of the West Bank's exports (\$69.5 million) in return. Nearly half of the West Bank's 90,000 workers hold jobs in Israel. Most of them commute daily to low-salaried jobs in construction, manufacturing and service industries.

On the West Bank and in Gaza there is widespread support for the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), proclaimed by Arab leaders in 1974 as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Not all Palestinians accept that decision, but those who oppose the PLO never have attempted to form a rival organization. The PLO and many Palestinians want an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank and in Gaza and shared sovereignty in Jerusalem.

Greater Jerusalem now has a population of 400,000, including 100,000 Arabs. East Jerusalem is predominantly Arab. Here are the old stone houses, narrow streets and holy shrines that are revered by three great religions of the world: the Wailing Wall of the Jews, the Moslems' Dome of the Rock and the holiest of Christian shrines, all inside the Old City.

To the west, Israel is enlarging the New City of Jerusalem with its holy places, artists colonies and museums alongside universities, hospitals, high rise hotels, apartments and office buildings. There also has been a steady expansion of a belt of new Israeli settlements and suburbs to the east that separate the Old City from the West Bank.

The future status of the city is an important political issue as well as an important religious concern. In many ways, Jerusalem is a microcosm of the entire Israel-Palestine problem. If a means can be found to share the Holy City, then a similar means of sharing the Holy Land might be realized.

## ORIGINAL The West Bank and Gaza

In November 1947, the United Nations recommended the partition of Palestine into two states, one Jewish and the other Arab. The Jews agreed, the Arabs objected, and the war of 1948-49 followed. A 1949 armistice left the newly declared state of Israel holding more land than had been granted her under the partition plan. The Palestinians wound up with no state at all.

Before 1918, Palestine was a part of Greater Syria, a territory now encompassing the contemporary states of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Israel. The indigenous inhabitants of Palestine are the descendants of the various peoples who have occupied the area beginning with the Canaanites, Philistines, Israelites and other Old Testament tribes, and continuing with the Greeks, Romans, Moslem Arabs, European Crusaders, Turks and Jews.

At the time of the Moslem Arab conquest in 637 A.D., the population of Palestine was largely Christian and at least 10 percent of the Palestinian Arabs remain such today. About 100,000 Christians live in Israel and the occupied territories. Jerusalem has about 11,000 Christian residents, down from 25,000 since 1948, while the overall population of the city is increasing.

Throughout the many centuries of the diaspora, or scattering of the Jews, which began in 132 A.D., there always was a small native Jewish population in Palestine. From time to time there was a modest return of Jews who suffered persecution in Europe. Under the British administered League of Nations mandate following World War I, the Zionist movement implemented a major Jewish resettlement program in Palestine. Even so, Jews were still only one-third of the population by the time of the 1947 United Nations partition plan.

The first wave of Palestinian refugees — nearly 800,000 — fled to Arab countries during 1948 and many thousands of them wound up in refugee camps operated by the United Nations. The second great Palestinian exodus came in 1967 when Israel captured East Jerusalem and the West Bank from Jordan, Sinai and Gaza from Egypt and the Golan Heights from Syria. As their claim to the land, Palestinians cite the fact that Arabs have lived there for more than 1,000 years, but Israel claims an "eternal" historical and religious right.

There are more than 3.5 million Palestinians — half of them registered as refugees — scattered throughout the Middle East and beyond (1.2 million in Jordan, 400,000 in Lebanon, 250,000 in Syria, 500,000 in the Persian Gulf States and Saudi Arabia, 100,000 in Europe and the United States). More than 1.1 million live on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. The West Bank is a 2,165-square-mile area (about the size of Delaware) of rolling hills and valleys with 700,000 inhabitants, including 300,000 refugees who still live in camps near Jerusalem. The Gaza Strip is 140 square miles of flat desert along the Mediterranean, just north of Sinai. Some 300,000 of its 450,000 people are refugees from the 1948 war and almost two-thirds of them live in teeming, squalid camps.

On the West Bank there is rich farmland to the north in the Nablus area and to the east along the banks of the Jordan. To the south, in the Hebron area, farmers eke out a living from land that is mostly scrub and rocks.

The West Bank economy is based primarily on agriculture. The principal crops are tomatoes, olives, cucumbers and cotton. There is some small industry. The West Bank buys 91 percent of its imports (\$154 million in goods) from Israel, which takes only 65 percent of the West Bank's exports (\$69.5 million) in return. Nearly half of the West Bank's 90,000 workers hold jobs in Israel, jobs that Israelis shun, and they receive only about 80 percent of the wages an Israeli would get for the same work.

The future of Jerusalem looms large in any discussion of a Palestine Arab entity. Despite Israel's declaration in 1967 of a "unified" Jerusalem, it is still a divided city where Arabs and Jews have separate political and cultural goals. On one side is predominantly Arab East Jerusalem with its old stone houses, narrow streets and holy shrines that are revered by three great religions of the world: the Wailing Wall of the Jews, the Moslems' Dome of the Rock and the holiest of Christian shrines, all inside the Old City.

To the west, Israel has built the new city of Jerusalem with its high-rise hotels, apartments and office buildings. There also has been a steady expansion of a belt of new Israeli settlements and suburbs that cut off the Old City from the West Bank. Jews living in the Old City now number 2,200, nearly double their population in 1947.

On the West Bank there is widespread support for the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), proclaimed by Arab leaders in 1974 as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Not all Palestinians accept that decision, but those who oppose the PLO never have attempted to form a rival organization. The PLO and many Palestinians want an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza. They also demand that refugees be allowed to return to their former homes in Israel or be compensated financially and that all Israeli settlements be removed from Arab land.

# The American



## Jewish Committee

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May 10, 1979

Dr. Beverly Chain  
Assistant General Secretary  
Section of Communications  
United Methodist Board of Global Ministries  
475 Riverside Drive  
New York, New York 10027

Dear Beverly:

It was good to speak with you on the phone. My colleagues, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, Judith Banki and Inge Gibel, and I have carefully read the film guide for "Hope For Life." We are especially troubled by the section entitled, "The West Bank and Gaza" since it contains many errors of omission and commission as well as some critical historical inaccuracies.

I am enclosing our analysis of the film guide. I was pleased to learn that it will be shared with your colleagues at the meeting on May 11th. I do hope that the points that we raise in our analysis will be incorporated into a new improved, and balanced film guide.

I deeply appreciate your continuing cooperation in this matter. Let's stay in close touch. With warm regards, I am,

Cordially yours,

*Jim Rudin* 7.71.

Rabbi A. James Rudin  
Assistant National Director  
Interreligious Affairs

AJR:FM  
Encl.

cc: Judith Banki  
Inge Lederer Gibel  
Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum  
Rev. Lonnie Turnipseed  
Rev. William Weiler

May 10, 1979

AN ANALYSIS OF THE FILM GUIDE, "HOPE FOR LIFE"  
Prepared by Rabbi A. James Rudin in coordination  
with Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, Judith Banki and Inge Gibel

It would be more accurate to state that the United Nations General Assembly in 1947 "voted" the partition of Palestine into two states rather than merely "recommended." There is no mention in this paragraph that the Jordanians annexed the West Bank of the Jordan and the Egyptians took over the Gaza Strip following the 1949 Armistice. Nor is there any mention that the annexation which lasted until 1967 was officially recognized by only two states in the entire world, Great Britain, and Pakistan. No Arab state recognized the Jordanian annexation. "The Palestinians wound up with no state at all" cannot be left standing alone. There must be acknowledgment of the Jordanian and the Egyptian role in taking over Gaza and the West Bank which they could have declared a Palestinian state, into which all Palestinian refugees from the conflict might have been welcomed. Without such facts the reader is led to believe that Israel is responsible for the Palestinians' lack of a state from 1948 to 1967.

In the second paragraph there is mention of the "Israelites" and the "Jews." In point of fact, the Biblical Book of Esther specifically refers to "the Jews" and it is confusing for the reader to see "Israelites" and "Jews" listed as separate entities. Jewish self-understanding is that there is no distinction between the Biblical people and the contemporary Jewish community throughout the world.

The statistics about the Christian population in Jerusalem are somewhat misleading. It should be noted that the Christian population of Jerusalem has actually remained quite stable since 1967, while the Christian population dramatically decreased under Jordanian rule from 1948-1967.

The 4th paragraph suffers from a misunderstanding of the Jewish commitment to the Land of Israel. "From time to time there was a modest return of Jews who suffered persecution in Europe." An English Christian scholar, Dr. James Parkes, has convincingly made the case, as have other Christian and Jewish historians, that the number of Jews who lived in the Land of Israel was directly influenced by the type of government that controlled the land. If there was in fact, "a modest return of Jews" during certain centuries it simply was because the governing authority refused to allow the Jewish people to return freely to their homeland. The return was "modest" because of external pressures, not because of

any lack of Jewish commitment to the Land of Israel. Also, it was not simply "persecution" in Europe that brought Jews back to the Land of Israel, but rather a deep religious commitment based upon thousands of years of tradition. The reader is led to believe that the return of the Jews to the land was a 20th century phenomenon and took place only because of "persecution in Europe." Both assumptions are totally inaccurate. Furthermore, the Jews of North Africa and Asia maintained the idea and practice of return to the land during all the centuries. Neither religious nor political Zionism was foreign to these non-European Jews.

The guide's description of the origin of the Palestinian refugee problem is inaccurate. There is scant attention paid to the many complex issues and conflicting forces that affected the Palestinian refugees. Some mention should be made of Israeli leaders in Haifa and other areas who urged Palestinian Arabs to remain in their homes during the 1948 war. Indeed, nearly 150,000 Arabs did remain and have become full Israeli citizens.

There should also be mention in the film guide of the fact that about 800,000 Jews from Arab countries have come to Israel since 1948 and have been absorbed into the country. Some observers of the Middle East see this as a population exchange. Nearly all of the Jewish refugees from Arab countries came to Israel without property or money. In any refugee settlements the legitimate claims of the Jewish refugees will have to be considered.

The 5th paragraph cites the fact that "Arabs have lived there for more than 1,000 years but Israel claims an 'eternal' historical and religious right." This is a very unfair and mischievous sentence. It seems as if the Palestinians have a "real" claim to the land which is tangible and firm, while the Jewish claims are more abstract, theological, and ethereal. Why the need for quotation marks around the word eternal?

In all the statistics about the Palestinians there is no mention that nearly 450,000 of them live as citizens within Israel proper. Since Palestine was unilaterally divided by Great Britain in 1922 (what is now the Kingdom of Jordan was always part of Palestine until that year), it might be helpful for the reader to realize that two million eight hundred thousand Palestinian Arabs do live today in historic Palestine.

The phrase "jobs that Israelis shun" is misleading. Israel, like some other developing countries, has an expanding economy and a work force shortage. Thus Arabs from both Gaza and the West Bank have been able to find jobs in Israel. What would the film

guide have said if the Israelis did not permit Arabs to work in Israel? Wouldn't the Israelis have then been accused of cruelty and economic servitude? I also question the figure that Arabs receive only 80% of the wages that an Israeli would get for the same work. What is the source of such a statement? The fact is that all Arabs who are registered with the Israel Labor Exchange receive exactly the same wages as Israelis would get for the same work.

The 9th paragraph deals with the question of Jerusalem. Once more we find pejorative quotation marks in the guide. Israel's unification of Jerusalem is put in quotation marks while the inaccurate statement that Jerusalem is "still a divided city" goes without challenge. The author of the film guide surely knows that the city is not divided but is, in fact, a pluralistic community with many kinds of people living within its limits. Many cities in the world are pluralistic and this is an enriching quality, not a negative one. Suppose the Israelis had not permitted Arabs cultural freedom of schools, language, theatre, etc.?" She would then quite rightly have been severely criticized. In this study guide Israel is often put in a no win situation. If Arabs are pursuing separate "cultural goals", this should be celebrated, not criticized.

Paragraph 10 sets up an unfair comparison between East Jerusalem and West Jerusalem. The reader of the film guide clearly receives positive images from the description of East Jerusalem "with its old stone houses, narrow streets, and holy shrines." Who among us would not resonate positively to such a description? West Jerusalem however, "has high rise hotels, apartments and office buildings." It is a gross distortion and again puts Israel into a no win situation. There is no mention of the hospitals, universities, museums, artist colonies, and holy places in West Jerusalem. The reader comes away rather with a negative view of the new city, and without an understanding that the ancient Jewish quarter of the Old City was destroyed in 1948 by the Jordanians and the Jewish population was expelled.

The last paragraph should also mention that Jewish refugees from Arab countries must be "compensated financially" in any Middle East settlement. There is no statement about what Israelis want, only what the Palestinians want. There is no reference to the Christians who live within Israel proper, nor is there any reference to the PLO charter which specifically calls for the destruction of Israel.

Overall balance and accuracy have often been sacrificed in the guide to achieve certain political aims. Most readers would

conclude that Israel is a highly problematic country, and is the cause of most of the Middle East troubles since 1948-1949. One cannot believe this is what the United Methodist Church wants its members to believe about the Middle East. Such a one-sided view is a distinct disservice to the peace process that is now under way, and only serves the forces of extremism, not those of reconciliation.



## THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

**date** July 13, 1979  
**to** Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
**from** Rabbi A. James Rudin  
**subject** MIDDLE EAST MOSAIC  
Conflict or Community  
By David H. Bowman

This teachers' guide represents an enormous positive change from the original manuscript. Indeed, the final version of the Bowman's Study Guide can be termed a breakthrough on our part. The original manuscript was horrendous. Bowman presented background material on Egypt, Israel, Lebanon and Turkey that was totally inadequate and in many cases downright inaccurate. His original section on Israel was a highly pejorative and negative piece.

Because of our analyses and direct criticism, Bowman's sections on the four countries was scrapped and replaced by outside contributions. Richard Butler's two page introduction is fair and carefully nuanced. Edward Heunemann's contribution is turgid and tortured prose. His ideas are murky and blurred and in my opinion are not very helpful to any systematic study of the Middle East. Our own department's introduction followed by our edited version of Arthur Hertzberg's paper is really a "knockout" since it is the only place in the entire series where positive and authentic Jewish point of view is fully developed. Any teacher who reads our introduction and Hertzberg's piece will have a much clearer understanding of what Israel and Zionism is all about.

The final outside contribution is by Father Youakim Mobarac and is entitled, "Jerusalem's Islamic Calling." It is interesting that there is not a Muslim contribution in the entire series and a Christian clergyman's presentation of Jerusalem's meaning of Islam is strange at best and somewhat distorted at worst.

Mobarac's piece is anti-Israel and anti-Zionist in tone. Several brief examples will capture the flavor of his piece. "Israeli Zionism offers an answer which is surely no more praiseworthy than medieval Crusades...the prestige of the Jewish people is greatly diminished by this parody of the Christian Crusades, as it is by their being in the pay of a colonialist world which is

July 13, 1979

nevertheless on the decline." "The military entry (Israel) into Jerusalem is even more of a sinister parody than the murderous Sinai march--an exodus in reverse--not to say the utmost blasphemy, and gives this empty show of force undue influence."

The second part of the study guide is Bowman's own contribution in which he presents guidance for the leaders and teachers of the Middle East series. We had a great many questions about the original manuscript and by and large the final text is an improvement but some problems still remain. Bowman has removed all anti-Israel study questions from the text, he has added the Holocaust as an important term in Jewish life and he has eliminated the specific reference to "State Department and military people" who have worked in the Middle East as possible guest panelists in the Christian classroom. Instead Bowman has simply suggested that appropriate persons for such a panel may be those who are "from or who have worked or lived in the region."

Two Jewish organizations are now listed as resources, the AJC and the ADL. Bowman still has a somewhat unfair paragraph about Jerusalem, i.e. "Should the representatives of one faith control the entire city with its many shrines? Should the city be under international control with guaranteed access to pilgrims of all faiths?" He never acknowledges that all the Holy Places are open to all peoples today, nor does he acknowledge that Arabs and Jews are both opposed to any form of international control of the city.

Bowman urges the students and teachers to try to "influence other persons or groups about the Middle East including Congress, church leaders, etc."

His suggestions, however, are basically straightforward and represent a great improvement over the original manuscript. There is a brief page of guidance for those who teach children. It is written by Anne Stephens and Constance Tarasar and it represents no real problems.

Finally, there is a bibliography which, although it contains too many pro-Arab books, it still has many positive listings as well including Ed Flannery, Louis Finkelstein, Amos Elon, and Rosemary Reuther. Again in this section the AJC and ADL are listed along with the Embassy of Israel as "additional sources of information" and the PLO is nowhere listed or mentioned in the entire booklet.

Overall this teachers' guide is a dramatic improvement over the original and it is perhaps the clearest example of the "payoff" of our consultations and interventions with the Friendship Press.

AJR:FM - Encl.

cc: Judith Banki - Inge Gibel

*Jim*

An Analysis of David Bowman's Conflict or Community: A Guide on  
the Middle East Mosaic  
Revised Version

Prepared by:

Rabbi A. James Rudin  
Assistant National Director  
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American Jewish Committee  
New York City, New York

January 1979



In November 1978 I prepared an analysis of David Bowman's original manuscript on the Study Guide on the Middle East Mosaic. This report will note what changes, if any, Dr. Bowman has made in his revised version. At the conclusion of this report there will be an overview of the entire revised document. (All page references refer to the revised version.)

Page 1 - "Jewish synagogues" has been added.

Page 5 - The four questions regarding the Middle East are, in my opinion, designed to elicit preconceived answers from the readers.

Page 6 - Although I have personally not viewed the film, "Hope for Life," I understand that there are serious questions about the film's objectivity and balance vis-a-vis the Middle East. It would be helpful if a screening could be arranged so that we could all see the film. Because movies have such enormous influence as a teaching device, it is absolutely essential that a fair film be recommended in the Study Guide.

Page 8 - "If the book is available, you might want someone to read The Zionist Idea..." Books dealing with Islam and Lebanon are specifically assigned. The book on Zionism is an "iffy" proposal. Why not make the suggestion as direct as the other book recommendations?

Page 10 - Dr. Bowman has added "Holocaust" to the list of Jewish terms. I would suggest he also add "Jerusalem" as well since Mecca is listed among the Islamic terms of interest.

Page 12 - Question 3 - There has been no change from the first manuscript. Both Christians and Muslims in Lebanon are Arabs. Dr. Bowman did remove one of the negative questions about Israel but he has not added a balanced Israeli question to his list of fourteen.

Page 12 - There has been no change in the initial paragraph under "A Word of Welcome: to acquaint persons with the political, economic and cultural forces which are affecting the Arab communities in the Middle East." There is no mention of the "political, economic and cultural forces" which are affecting the Jewish communities in the Middle East. A clear case of imbalance.

Page 13 - Why not invite several students from the Middle East instead of "a university student"? It should be specifically noted that both Jewish and Arab university students could serve as guests in a question and answer format.

Page 14 - Dr. Bowman offers suggestions for a panel discussion on the Middle East. "Appropriate persons for such a panel may be a

business person, military personnel or a teacher who has worked or lived in the region." It is unclear whether these guests are to be American citizens (which would include both Christians, Muslims and Jews) or citizens of Middle East countries. In any panel it should be specifically recommended that either Israeli Jews and/or American Jews be represented.

Page 15 - There is no change from the original manuscript regarding the "Israeli and Palestinian positions." There is no guidance as to how materials and resources can be used. Most critically there is no acknowledgment of the fact that there are many Israeli positions and many Palestinian positions as well. There must be some way to acknowledge this diversity of views.

Page 16 - There has been some change from the original manuscript but in the discussion of anti-Semitism perhaps one other sentence should be added in the last paragraph such as "in the light of historic Christian anti-Semitism, is it possible to be 'overly' sympathetic to the Palestinian cause?"

Page 18 - Addresses of Jewish organizations are now clearly listed.

Page 20 - The paragraph dealing with Jerusalem on the top of page 20 needs to be more fully developed. There is no recognition that the city was divided from 1948 to 1967, that the Jordanian Government which controlled the entire old city prohibited Jews from all over the world from visiting their Holy places including the Western Wall, no acknowledgment that this unilateral decision was a violation of one of the articles of the 1949 truce. Nor is there any acknowledgment that the Jerusalem Holy places are open to all peoples and that even Israel's critics admit that the administration of those Holy places has never been better. Nor is there any acknowledgment that both Arabs and Jews who live in Jerusalem are opposed to any form of international control of the city.

Page 21 - I have some real questions about the simulation game that Dr. Bowman has added to the revised manuscript. I am not sure it adds greater understanding to the complexities of the Middle East and in a way it reduces the pain and suffering of all the peoples of the Middle East to a kind of "war game."

Page 25 - Dr. Bowman has added specific reference at the bottom of the page to terrorist attacks but he never says who the terrorists are and who the targets of the terrorists are. In his statement about the refusal of "some Arab States to diplomatically recognize Israel's right to exist," the word "some" should be changed to "most".

Page 26 - If business persons who have economic ties to the Middle East are invited to the class, it should be specifically noted that Jewish business people should also be included.

Page 27 - There is no mention that the Soviet Union and other countries in addition to the United States sell huge amounts of arms to the Middle East. It is not America alone.

Page 33 - (The Lebanon Chapter). Dr. Bowman's description of the differences between Western religious identity and Eastern is somewhat superficial and not completely true. He says regarding Lebanon, "it has to do with the community or clan in which a person is born or raised rather than a conscious choice." Most Christian children in America are Christian because their parents were. Additional material should be added to this paragraph.

Page 38 - Dr. Bowman has removed a highly negative sentence but he has not amplified the Israeli policy of reacting to terrorist attacks as we suggested in our earlier critique.

Page 41 - The additions on this page are somewhat illegible and need to be made more clear.

Page 45 - Perhaps it was Nassar who introduced Socialism to the Arab part of the Middle East, but it was the Labor Zionists, especially David Ben Gurion who introduced Socialism to the region at large.

Page 53 - Dr. Bowman has made some good changes at the bottom of this page.

Page 55 - He has removed a highly problematic sentence from this as well as from page 56.

Page 57 - The author has reworked the paragraph describing the Jewish historical link with the Land of Israel. On the second line of page 57 "The people of Palestine rebelled against Roman domination," the word "Jewish" should be added before "people." Unfortunately, this paragraph completely omits any reference to the Biblical account of the Jewish people with the Land of Israel. Bowman's account begins only with the year 67. Thus the reader could come away with an incomplete picture of Jewish historical continuity with the land.

Page 58 - At the bottom of the page Bowman asserts "no one wants to be different." Is this really the author's intent? If so, it is a misreading of human psychology and certainly somewhat arrogant.

Page 59 - The word "persecution" has replaced "discrimination"...an

improvement.

Page 60 - A negative paragraph has been removed but Bowman's reference to Christian culpability for the Holocaust is still quite superficial and weak.

Page 62 - This page has some constructive changes.

Page 63 - A gratuitous and negative paragraph has been removed.

Page 64 - Why refer to the Jewish community in Palestine prior to 1897 as "the small remnant of the ancient conquerors of Canaan?" Why not make it positive - "the Jewish community, despite tremendous persecution and travail, managed to maintain a continuous community in their homeland?"

Page 66 - Bowman has replaced "all attempts at independence" with "most."

Page 69 - No change on the Deir Yassin story. There is a correction on Jewish population in 1948 and some constructive words have been added.

Page 70 - A word change helps this page but Bowman does not note that Jordan's annexation of the West Bank between 1948 and '67 was never recognized by any Arab country.

Page 71 - Bowman has removed a paragraph that contains some important information for the reader, i.e. the continuing Arab attempts to destroy the State of Israel.

Page 73 - Some helpful additions appear on this page.

Page 75 - No change. Still an inadequate explanation of the Arab attack on Yom Kippur 1973, and no mention of the Soviet arms shipments to the Arab countries.

Page 77 - Bowman has removed a very long paragraph but one of the most important sentences in the book has, unfortunately, been eliminated, "the peace process involves great risks for the Israeli people."

Page 78 - No change.

Page 97 - No change.

Page 101 - No mention of the Arab economic boycott of Israel. Also why was the ability of the Arabs to purchase every New York Stock

Exchange company omitted?

Page 103 - Bowman eliminates a highly negative sentence at the top of the page but there is no change from his rather positive description of Yasir Arafat's appearance at the UN in 1974.

Page 105 - There have been some helpful changes.

Page 107 - Some good changes on this page about Yasir Arafat's appearance on "Face the Nation," but this interview was given four years ago and much has changed in the Middle East since this.

Page 108 - Why has the sentence describing PLO acts of terrorism against Israel been omitted?

Page 109 - Why has the statement "While terrorism is indefensible ..." been omitted?

Page 111 - No change. Bowman still persists in calling the Jewish settlements "colonial."

Page 112 - These statistics are now more accurate.

Page 113 - Why was the sentence "people of Israel also have rights" omitted?

Page 114 - The change is a constructive one.

Page 115 - Bowman has improved his description of the Jewish commitment to Jerusalem but it is still somewhat superficial and needs, I believe, more development.

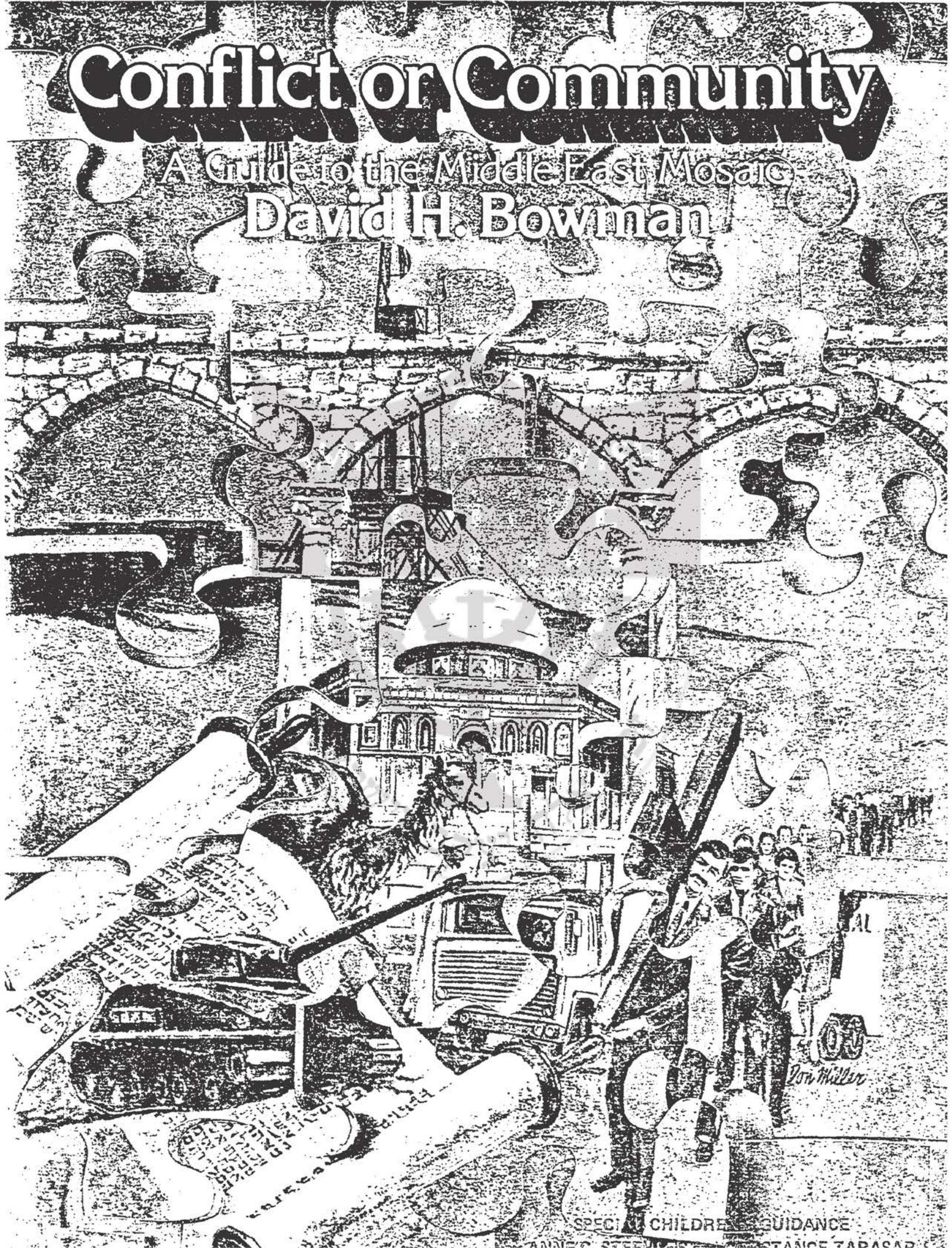
Page 118 - No change. Bowman writes "as long as the people of Israel feel their existence in danger, there is little likelihood of peace." Why not put it the other way "as long as Israel is threatened by her Arab neighbors, there can be no peace?"

In summary: although there has been some constructive changes in the Bowman manuscript, nevertheless it is my judgment that the book is still one-sided, unbalanced and unfair regarding Israel and her position in the Middle East.

# Conflict or Community

A Guide to the Middle East Mosaic

David H. Bowman



Don Miller

SPECIAL CHILDREN'S GUIDANCE

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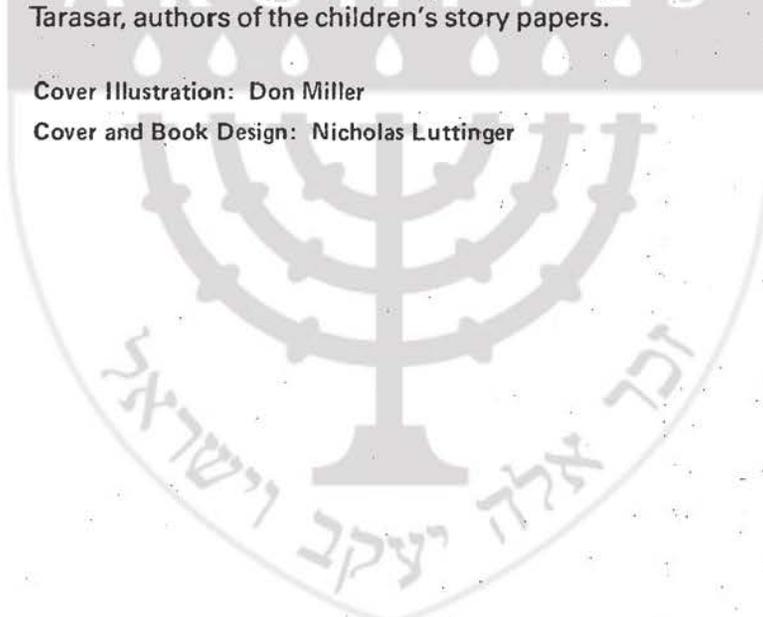
**CONFLICT OR COMMUNITY:  
A Guide to the Middle East Mosaic**

**David H. Bowman**

The cultural, religious and political diversity which constitutes life in the Middle East region is lifted up for study groups in this guide for teachers and leaders of children, youth and adults. Whether people plan a study for one age group or for all age groups together they will find the help they need in these guidance pages. An introductory section gives basic historic and current information, and raises key questions relating to justice and peace. Activities, games and a complete bibliography for all age groups will broaden your study. Special children's guidance is by Anne C. Stephens and Constance Tarasar, authors of the children's story papers.

Cover Illustration: Don Miller

Cover and Book Design: Nicholas Luttinger



# CONFLICT OR COMMUNITY:

A Guide to the Middle East Mosaic

by David H. Bowman

*with contributions by*

*J. Richard Butler*

*Arthur Hertzberg*

*Edward M. Huenemann*

*and staff members of*

*the American Jewish Committee*

*Father Youakim Moubarac*

*Anne C. Stephens*

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*The opinions and viewpoints expressed in the contributed portions of this book do not necessarily reflect the opinions and viewpoints of the publisher. Nor do the opinions and viewpoints represented in any one chapter necessarily reflect those of another contributor. Each contributed portion represents the integrity and perspective of its author.*

*Some of the class session plans in chapter 6 were extracted or adapted from "The Leader's Guide" in The Middle East Study Packet produced by the Division of Corporate and Social Mission, Presbyterian Church, U.S.*



*Author Acknowledgments*

I want to thank Linda, my wife, whose constant encouragement and abiding love moved me from beginning to completion.

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AMERICAN JEWISH  
Part One  
ARCHIVES  
A Background Overview

זכר אלה יעקב וישראל

# 1. "MIDDLE EAST MOSAIC": AN INTRODUCTION

J. Richard Butler

For many North American Christians, the Middle East has been and continues to be a mystery. Our images have been shaped largely by either romantic images in stories such as the *Arabian Nights*, or by Hollywood versions of the "Sheik of Araby" or "Lawrence of Arabia." In more recent years, the image has been one of conflict and bloodshed in what appears to many as an insoluble situation. The people of the Middle East, however, contrary to such stereotypes, are intelligent, rational human beings, motivated by the same basic desires and wants as we in North America. Why, then, the mystery and the difficulty in understanding that appears to plague so many of us?

The choice of the term "mosaic" for a theme title of a study of the Middle East was indeed a wise one, as the image of the mosaic provides some clues to our study and understanding of this region of the world. The mosaic as an art form had its origins in the eastern Mediterranean area and was carried to Europe by the Romans as well as by the Arab armies who marched across North Africa into Spain. But this style of creating images from special placement of small stones or pieces of terra cotta was a manifestation of creativity from the "East."

One of the clues to understanding the Middle East, then, is to remember that it must be seen through "eastern" eyes. What this means is that many of the basic assumptions which we in the West have as we view life are simply not operable in the Middle East. This stems from the different historical experience as well as philosophical developments of the two parts of the world. One brief example can be found in our use of the term "Middle East" itself. The original use of the terms Middle East or Near East helped to define the eastern Mediterranean from a European perspective: it was midway between Europe and east Asia. For the persons involved, however, other terms were more appropriate, such as, the Muslim world, the Arab world, or from a geographic perspective, Southwest Asia and North Africa. The point of this illustration is to emphasize the need to see and hear the people of the region from their points of reference and perspective and not only in relation to our perceptions of them. To put it crudely, or even from a Christian perspective, the people of the Middle East have a value in and of themselves, and do not find their value only because we need their oil.

To shed our assumptions, while difficult, and to attempt to view questions through the eyes of Middle Easterners will help us as we begin to look at such issues as the role of religion in the Middle East; the relationship of religion and state; the role of religion in self-identity, and many

others. As we understand that different historical experiences and developments have led persons to approach these issues from different positions and come up with answers different from ours, we'll begin to unlock what has appeared as an insoluble mystery. This need for a new perspective was addressed recently by Meg Greenfield in a *Newsweek* editorial entitled "Islam and Us":

It is testimony to the almost touchingly naïve arrogance of our perceptions that we automatically equate betterment, fulfillment and liberation for these people with acceptance of Western modes of behavior, dress, government and thought. It simply does not occur to us that their rejection of any of it can have a basis other than ignorance or refusal to face the imperatives of the twentieth century. Thus 'progress,' 'reform,' 'modernization,' are all geared to Western meanings in our discussion of the Islamic world.

The second way in which the mosaic image provides clues for us can be found in the fact that to the casual observer the mosaic appears to be one-dimensional until given closer scrutiny and inspection. When viewed at close range, the mosaic can be seen to be made up of different pieces of tile, each set at an angle to catch the light, and each having a distinctive nature of its own.

The same would appear to be true of a conventional understanding of the Middle East. For too many persons it is a region inhabited by monolithic blocs of people: Arabs, Jews, Muslims, to whom are ascribed single-mindedness. Such categorizing of people does violence to their individuality and to the diversity and richness of culture and history found in the Middle East.

For example, it comes as a surprise to many North Americans to learn that Arab and Muslim are not synonymous and that there is a sizable body of Christians in the Middle East who consider themselves Arab. Further surprise is expressed when we learn that the presence of these Christians in the Middle East is not a result of our missionary activities. The majority of Christians in the Middle East are members of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches that have a direct line of descent from the first churches in Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria and Constantinople. They have a history of continued life and witness in the Middle East and today are vigorous, lively churches. There are also small Protestant and Catholic churches which have resulted from missionary activity, but few represent converts from Islam or Judaism, rather having backgrounds in the Orthodox churches.

In recent days, thanks to the Iranian revolution, many North Americans have come to know the different groupings within Islam, such as Sunni and Shi-ite. However, beyond being names and suggesting images of violence, we need to learn more of the differences and similarities both within Islam as well as between Islam, Christianity and Judaism. Similarly, there are differences within the Jewish community as it is found in the Middle East which need exploring. While in North America we think largely in terms of the divisions of Judaism being Orthodox,

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Conservative and Reform, we fail to understand that these latter two are primarily European and North American distinctions having little meaning in the Middle East. There the major categories of Jews derive from two origins, Ashkenazi and Sephardic. The former are generally from Eastern or Western Europe and the latter have their origins among the Jews expelled from Spain in the 1400s who found asylum in North Africa, as well as those who lived in the Middle East.

Another generalization many assume regarding the Middle East is that the major, if not exclusive, concern of the area is the Israel-Palestine or Arab-Israel conflict. Again, closer examination reveals a different reality. Many points of tension and potential conflict exist in the area: the Cyprus conflict; the Lebanon civil war; Kurdish nationalism now unsettling parts of Iraq, Iran and Turkey; a re-emergence of Assyrian nationalism; a continuing Armenian nationalism; the Iranian revolution and potential tribal civil war; tension and intermittent fighting between North and South Yemen; various inter-Arab rivalries on occasion breaking out into open hostilities; and finally, big power rivalries and manipulation fostering proxy conflicts between nations of the area.

Far from intending to indicate that there is something in the people of the region that thrives on conflict, this cataloging of conflicts and tensions simply shows that the region is more diverse and complex than a singular focus on the Israel-Palestine conflict suggests.

A third clue to the Middle East provided by the mosaic image stems from an understanding that in order for the mosaic to be clear, one must look at the whole picture. If one looks at just one piece of tile or a portion of the mosaic, the meaning will be unclear. Similarly, if one takes a partial look at the Middle East and ignores the totality of the area, understanding and comprehension will be distorted, if not denied.

The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. recognized the need for a wholistic approach to the Israeli-Palestine conflict when it adopted a policy statement stating, in part, that it is the responsibility of Christians "to transcend partial sympathies with the Israeli or Arab sides." In other words, if one approaches this conflict only from the Israeli perspective, or the Arab perspective, the whole picture will not appear.

There are a variety of issues to be found in the Middle East today, necessitating a wholistic view and cutting across the entire region. For example, in the context of political change a contest is ensuing between those adopting and espousing different political models, monarchies, republics, military regimes, and others. Similarly, various economic models ranging from Algerian state socialism to the *laissez faire* economy of Lebanon and the free enterprise capitalism of Saudi Arabia are being tested.

Another issue of importance throughout the region is the future of the Christian community. This brief introduction cannot spell out fully the role which Christian Arabs have played in political developments of the area. But it should be pointed out that from the late nineteenth

century until the present, Christian Arabs have championed the concept of nationalism and secularism in the Middle East. This stance placed Christians and other minorities in a position of seeking full equality in a nation-state where religion would play a secondary role, as distinct from the traditional Islamic political entity where Christians were not given full citizenship status. In recent years this move toward secularized or deconfessionalized states has received several serious setbacks. The creation of Israel as a Jewish State in 1948 was opposed by many Christians, seeing this as undercutting the move toward secularism. It is from this perspective that many Christian Arabs have supported the Palestinian movement calling for a secular, democratic state. More recently, the drift from secularized states has been given further momentum by some Lebanese Christians calling for the establishment of a Christian state in that country. Most recently, the decision to establish Iran as an Islamic Republic represents a further blow to the secular dream of many Middle East Christians.

Thus for the entire area a serious issue focuses on the role of religion in relation to the state. Within each of the major religious groups, Jewish, Christian and Muslim, there are those favoring secularism and those favoring religious identification of the state. A comprehensive view of the entire region, rather than a partial perspective, is essential if this issue and other similar ones are to be understood.

In summary, the challenge to North Americans studying the Middle East Mosaic is first to recognize the need to set aside western assumptions in approaching the area, and second, to recognize the diversity and richness of culture and history in the area and go beyond any one-dimensional view.

Finally, we must adopt a wholistic as opposed to a partial perspective of the region in order to gain real understanding. The challenge, then, is to broaden our perspective and knowledge of a region of the world and its peoples increasingly important to all of us, resting on the simple fact that our futures and our hopes for life are completely interwoven.

## 2. MIDDLE EAST PLURALISM

Edward M. Huenemann

A recent article in *Newsweek* (March 26, 1979) points to a widely shared western impression of people in the Middle East. "The assumption, to be brutal, is that they are backward Westerners, Indo-Europe's slow learners." The reality, that we might be "witnessing the turmoil of a great civilization seeking to reassert and rediscover and—yes—ultimately reform itself," never occurs to us. Islamic revival, for example, can too easily be seen as retrogression, while it may in fact be a rebirth of life and light with its own internal promise. Without internal examination, its promise cannot be discovered. The challenge of new promise, whether Islamic, Jewish or Christian, demands a shift of perspective.

The correlate of such experience is a kind of humbled and modest probing of all matters with a new awareness that things can be seen and understood differently. My present judgments are not yet ultimate judgments. The biblical perspective teaches me that I do not yet stand at the end of the road, but that I am invited to walk on the way to God's point of viewing. "Then shall I know, even as I am known." Until then I am invited to pilgrimage.

Theological understanding, biblically based, does not translate as dogmatic answers. It translates as a willingness to make honest and humble inquiry in the confidence that movement "toward the light" is possible. Trans-cultural, trans-religious, trans-national, trans-ethnic, trans-economic risks may be well worth taking. This does not infer denying all validity to present particular starting points. On the contrary, it hopes for coming to full awareness of our tradition and present particularity in order to move intelligently toward that ultimate point of viewing by which all our present perspectives are judged.

According to the Christian faith this movement is no mere intellectual or academic exercise. It is best seen in the flesh and blood story of Jesus of Nazareth whose "against the stream" transvaluation of human values and judgments ended in the paradox of death and resurrection. To engage in an effort at *theological* understanding, therefore, means not merely thinking about others, but venturing entry into their lives to share their point of viewing sufficiently to make the movement together toward a more ultimate point of viewing. The theological quest for understanding means risking entering into flesh and blood communion with the other. It means risking the loss of one's life in the other in order to find it again together in God. Theological understanding is incarnate adventure toward liberation and reconciliation.

### Middle East Pluralism

To approach the Middle East situation with such *theological* commitment and openness is not easy. As devel-

oped in Richard Butler's introduction, our first glance at the region is too loaded with pre-judgments. To no small degree the area has been regarded as the object of our mission effort in an old and even backward region which is in deep need of salvation by our progressive culture of the West. That basic assumption is often baptized with an overlay of religious superiority which assumes that our culturally conditioned western forms are more "advanced" than the tradition bound forms of the East. To make open inquiry even more difficult, our own insecurity about the depth of our own point of viewing tempts us to a certain defensiveness. Our open inquiry is easily turned into a desire for, and even demand for, approval of our present point of viewing. We are tempted to look for conversions, without being converted ourselves.

So our first look at the Middle East is inevitably stereotyped. From our distance we see the Middle East as a single, vague, generalized region with only broad differentiations. Many see it as that entity between the United States and Russia from which we get our oil. All other particular designations or differentiations take second place to the dominant interest which determines our point of viewing. To be sure, as we look more closely, other features come to light even when our primary focus is on oil. The memories from childhood make us aware that this is the region where the Hebrew-Christian tradition has its source and where the Muslim movement began.

It is also the region where the rich theological heritage of the Christian church was first developed and where the richest traditions of liturgy and worship are alive to this day for twelve to eighteen or twenty million Christians. If we sense the significance of political pressures and alignments we may begin to see both leftist and rightist movements and governments struggling for power to determine public order for a particular area, the whole region, or even the world. We begin to see political stirrings significant to all of us. We keep looking and begin to realize that these political stirrings are linked to economic differences. Per-capita annual income ranges from \$250.00 in Egypt to some of the highest incomes in the world, higher than in the U.S., in Kuwait and Arabia. By reading the newspapers we become aware of the increasing tension arising from the confrontation between traditional, cultural and social patterns and the requirements of modern, industrialized society.

These distinctions and broad categories generated out of our point of viewing may, or may not, be shared by those living in the Middle East. They may have little interest in seeing their whole region as a pawn between the Soviet Union and the United States for control of oil. In fact they may question both the wisdom and the justice of letting that reality serve as the primary point of viewing, especially if all other dimensions of life in the Middle East are simply to be seen and judged in that light. They may be quite anxious to have us take a closer

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look. There may be much more to life in the Middle East than oil for either East or West.

They may legitimately claim that though oil may be a dominant reason for our interest in the region, we will not be able to understand the people of the area or the significance of their contribution to life if our viewing is confined to one such vector. The presence of oil does not make other factors unimportant. On the contrary, the presence of oil may (theologically considered) be the occasion for recognizing the significance of a host of other realities. It may be the invitation to us to see something of the life which Middle Easterners see through a multitude of perspectives.

The pluralistic realities of the Middle East, though in many ways the cause of extreme tension and strife, may also contain within them multi-faceted treasures of which oil may prove to be only one, and perhaps not the most significant. The catalytic functioning of "our interest" in the Middle East can be seen as the invitation to discover unexpected treasures in the lives of people who are made uneasy by our narrow point of viewing. If we are to enter their home at all we will gain only the benefit of thieves if we do not break bread together and begin to see the wonders of the world through their eyes.

Their own customs of offering bread to the stranger and sharing salt as a blessed gift point to their sensitive awareness of the importance of hospitality as the base for real exchange of insight, and the way to understanding. Theological understanding demands no less.

Once we allow our "eyes of faith" or even our human imaginations to take a closer look, we will no longer see one Middle East with an oil cap on it. We will see many Middle Easts full of diverse gifts, frequently locked in combat, hoping for the unity or community which can make the mutual enjoyment of life possible. Not only is the Middle East a large geographic area with many regions. It is also a complex stage on which multitudes of actors enact many dimensions of the human drama with implications for us all.

On the religious stage of life alone there are not only three chief actors—Jew, Christian and Muslim. There are Orthodox Jews, Conservative Jews, Reform Jews, atheistic Jews and Jews without any explicit religious identity. There are Christians of all varieties: Eastern Orthodox, Assyrian Churches of the East, Oriental Orthodox, Eastern-rite Catholics, Protestants, Anglicans and various sects and movements. Even the larger of these groupings are subdivided for a variety of historic and geographic reasons. Even the dominant religious group, the Muslims, is divided into Shi-ites and Suni Muslims, plus such ethnic-religious traditional groups as the Kurds and Druse. Every religious tradition has its factions.

Even if every religious group were categorized to the minutest detail, how much would such a categorization aid us in understanding the life-drama of the Middle East? Such a categorization would tell us little of the impact or significance of any particular religious group. Such categorization could in fact be a temptation to oversimplification and even manipulation. It allows mak-

ing easy assumptions about how a typical Jew, Christian or Muslim ought to behave in our judgment.

But life is not static. Whether at peace or war life is always tumultuous interaction. For political, social, economic, cultural or personal reasons a Jew, in any given situation, may behave like a Christian, or a Christian like a Muslim, or a Muslim like a Jew. Human reality does not easily submit to abstract intellectualization.

The recent Lebanese war illustrates this reality. Contrary to much public misinformation it was not simply a struggle between Christians and Muslims. A closer look reveals that the war represented an intersection of numerous interests which splintered religious groups in many ways. The rich fought the poor, the "right" fought the "left," residents fought refugees, Syrians and Israelis fought both residents and Palestinians, and religious alignments were only one factor in the multi-faceted struggle. Outside interests and categorization only made matters more confusing. The ease with which the western press interpreted the Lebanese struggle as a fight between Christians and Muslims made it possible to hide other basic reasons for conflict, such as poverty and oppression, behind an ill-fitting religious distinction. Christians were not, and are not, neatly aligned against Muslims. The assertion that "the most pressing need in appraising the political problems of the Middle East is to recognize their dependence on U.S.-Soviet relations," represented a widely accepted western perspective, and became a self-fulfilling prophecy. This invasion of foreign interests into the Middle East has so shaken the stage of this drama that few simple alignments can make sense any longer. There is much truth in the assertion that the Lebanese war was a mini-world war fought on Lebanese soil. We are no longer spectators at the Middle East drama. We have all become actors in the play.

Because this is so it is incumbent upon us to *re-view* the drama and become aware of the diverse points of viewing. The quest for peace in our world dictates a far more serious attempt at understanding than yet has been made. Unity beyond pluralistic manipulation must be found. That implies a theological quest for understanding which discovers the possibility of human unity beyond ethnicity, beyond financial interests, beyond power politics, and even beyond self-righteous religious claims. The unity toward which the Christian faith must press is the unity in God, and therefore the essential unity of all human beings in all their diversities. That does not imply dogmatic uniformity, but rather the hope and experience of oneness in spite of our differences or paradoxically *in* our differences. Such a discovery of unity means a quest for understanding.

Is such a theological quest possible when the United States and the Soviet Union are engaged in a struggle for control, when religious groupings are used by both powers for political gain, when diverse religious groups turn their non-religious interests into motives for religious revival and fanaticism, when those who possess the world's greatest energy source are engaged in mortal struggle with economic powers who would claim its benefits with little

only questions for the Middle East. They are questions for all of us. Their difficulty leads us to depths of probing which make theological probing essential. If Christian theology is not merely monologue, but the dialogue of faith in a world context, then our beginning with a biblical perspective (point of viewing) could lead us to a sharing of points of viewing which could yet lead us to new vision. From the ashes of human strife a new vision of the City of God might emerge. To settle for less would be a self-fulfilling prophecy that little can be done. But why should anyone who believes in a gracious God walk that way? The Christian faith lives by the hope that even through death, another road lies open before us.



or no regard for the poor who benefit not at all from the wealth which flows from the earth? In that kind of a world is it possible to regain a *theological* point of viewing? What light would such a vision shed? These are the basic theological questions forced on the world by the tragic drama of the Middle East.

### Theological Issues to Be Probed

What are we as believers in Jesus Christ and members of the church to do? We must begin by asking ourselves some very basic questions. To many of them we may have assumed we already know the answers. But the terror of the present drama should impel us to ask some of them all over again.

We might begin by asking ourselves how to deal with our renewed interest in the Middle East, now that we are aware that much of the energy for our homes, our cars, our offices, flows from the ground in the Middle East. Do we have divine right to its use regardless of what our claim to it does to people of the Middle East or the rest of the world? Is our religious life really only a private affair between God and each of us, or should it inform our consciences so that we may assume public responsibility with a desire to know a point of viewing beyond our selfish ones? Straightforward self-examination of this question could drive us to the Bible once again, to check our own Middle East roots.

But now that we remember that not only oil, but human beings are to be found in the Middle East, how shall we regard them? The second question. We are seeing not only an *oil* conflict, but rather a human conflict. Surely these fellow humans are not simply objects for our exploitation. They too have dignity in the sight of God and the plain questions of human survival and human need must be the first concern. Are they then objects for our religious mission? We need to ask that question with greater seriousness than we have ever asked it before. Our own need to "evangelize" others may have deep theological rootage, but if so, we must ask with all seriousness what that means. If we are to participate in or support mission in the Middle East, are we qualified by our own sense of "calling" or by the invitation to "come over and help us"? Does the divine calling to mission engagement rest in our desires alone, or in the mutuality God desires when we enter another's home as guests and not thieves? Much of the world and particularly the Middle East has sufficient reason to ask, "Why are these missionaries coming?" and "What do they want?"

From our point of view the reasons may seem easy. We want to educate, to convert, to bring health care. But what of their own efforts in precisely these same areas? Are they not first to be understood and appreciated before conversion is urged? Who is to be converted to what must be an open question. This is not to say that all mission is suspect or needs to be abandoned. But it is to suggest that mission, theologically viewed, rests on God's invitation to sensitive mutuality, and not on our easily baptized motives for evangelization. The Middle East may not be in need of "crusades" so much as visits by sisters and brothers who

want to share life in God's home. Do we really know what "mission" is? Or should we find out by probing deeper into the biblical meaning of hospitality and mutuality?

A third question emerges. This is the cradle of three major faiths—Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Yet what do we really know about any of them? If we should be invited to visit a Christian brother or sister in the Middle East, who is going to teach who, what? The very historical roots of the faith are in that region and serious dialogue rather than monologue might be the most appropriate style in a visit to our older brothers and sisters. They have a long and rich history and their tradition contains riches which years of suffering and minority status may have given a spiritual significance which could reveal some of our poverty. Their constant struggle with roots in the Hebrew tradition and present Jewish understanding, as well as centuries of daily engagement with Muslim life, may raise questions about the meaning of the Christian faith which we have never thought to ask, such as how do symbols, such as icons, function in religious and cultural understanding? What are the implications of certain hospitality customs for our understanding of love? What biblical family imagery might we have misunderstood because Middle East traditions are foreign to us? Perhaps another question that will have to be asked all over again is, what is ecumenicity, and what is interfaith dialogue when it is not only a "head trip," but a daily struggle of life together? What are the real theological grounds for understanding our common humanity beyond religious pluralism? Even "who is God both in being and acts" may become a lively question again. What risks for understanding are we willing to take?

Some probing at this level may lead us to an even harder question. We who in our open and prosperous democratic society have easily baptized ethnic and religious pluralism may find such easy baptism challenged where "space for living" (not only in a literal geographic sense) is harder to come by. Where survival presses for unity, pluralism ceases to be academic and becomes existential. What happens then? Is our support of ethno- and religious centrism enough or even helpful? What does a theological point of viewing have to contribute to a better understanding of pluralism and the quest for unity? Is the politics of pluralism enough? Or can it not become a way of saying let the strong unite and let the weak remain divided? Here too we might examine our assumptions and learn when we enter the Middle East.

A final question beyond the question of ethnic and religious pluralism becomes unavoidable. How is human governance possible? Are our assumptions about separation of church and state universally applicable? Would such an approach be possible in the Middle East? Would it contribute to peaceful life together? Recent trends toward religious states in the Middle East raise questions about the viability of secular states. But are such trends anything more than *interim* possibilities? Iran will be an interesting test of the viability of religious states in an industrial secular era.

These and other difficult questions obviously are not

### 3. ISRAEL IN THE MIDDLE EAST MOSAIC: A JEWISH PERSPECTIVE

When Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg gave his eloquent paper on Zionism and the Jewish Religious Tradition in the fall of 1970, only the most optimistic among us would have expected that a little less than a decade later, Egypt, the most important of the Arab nations pledged to Israel's destruction, invading the fledgling state at its creation and fighting it in three more wars, would sign a peace treaty with its former hated enemy. The courage of Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat in breaking away from the pattern of intransigent Arab refusal to acknowledge Israel's existence, and the courage of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and the Israeli Parliament in risking the return of the entire Sinai Peninsula—which provided an important security buffer against surprise attack—for the prospect of peace is now history: a first step, but a crucial one. All who have prayed for peace and security in the Middle East, all who care that there be justice for the peoples of the Book—Jews, Christians and Muslims—ought now to work toward reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians, as well as acceptance of Israel by the remaining Arab "rejection front" states.

The term "security" is often used when discussing the Middle East. It usually refers to national borders, demilitarized zones, terrorist violence, arms shipments, military bases and energy sources. Yet it is important to go beyond this limited and limiting definition of "security" if one is to gain a greater understanding of the Middle East Jewish perspective.

The concept of "security" held widely by the Jewish people is rooted in the biblical image of every person sitting under a vine and fig tree with no one to make them afraid. True "security" implies full liberation, self-determination and the right of peoples to shape their own political, cultural, economic, social and religious destiny. For Jews, that right is intimately linked to the survival and security of the State of Israel, the fruit of the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, Zionism. Hopefully, the day will speedily come when "security" for all people in the Middle East will be rooted to the biblical vision of universal peace.

This goal requires a serious understanding of the history of the area, as well as the history of the Jewish people and their two-thousand-year effort to return to the land from which they were forcibly dispersed. Fairness and justice also require that demands are not made on the Jewish State exclusively, or that Israel is not judged by a different set of standards than its Arab neighbors. Thus, the frequently heard question that some Western Christian leaders pose about why Israel cannot become the

secular democratic state of Palestine seems odd, at the very least, when matched by silence on the lack of democracy and pluralism in many Islamic monarchies and dictatorships that surround Israel. Ironically, the call for Israel to abandon its Jewish character also issues persistently from nations in which Islam is the established state religion.

To most Israeli Jews, as well as to the Jewish community in the Diaspora, the dislocation of part of the Arab population of Palestine, largely caused by the invasion by five Arab states of the newly created State of Israel in 1948, is a deep moral problem, even though such tragic shifts of indigenous populations have been frequent in the wars of the last forty years all over the world. Jews are not pleased to see Palestinian children raised in refugee camps nor are there many Jews who cannot understand that the modern spirit of nationalism which so reinvigorated the Zionist movement has created similar feelings of national identity in the Palestinian population. Furthermore—although, as Rabbi Hertzberg will soon point out, Jews in every century attempted, with some success, to re-establish themselves in their land, and by the nineteenth century were a majority in Jerusalem—contemporary Israeli Jews know what it means to be a refugee, to experience intense insecurity, to be forced to leave their land of birth where their families had lived, in some cases for years. Whether they came, as did some 60 percent of present-day Israelis, from the Arab nations in which they were traditionally second-class citizens, or whether, as were so many of the European Jews who came after World War II, they were survivors of the Holocaust, there is hardly a Jewish family in Israel untouched by the personal experience of persecution and dangerous flight. Is it any wonder then that they are somewhat suspicious of people who address themselves only to one set of refugees in the whole world, in the whole region, and who never suggested the creation of a Palestinian homeland when Gaza and the West Bank were in Arab hands?

Similarly, the reluctance of Israeli leaders and people to lightly cede territory captured in the war of 1967 must be examined against the reality of the period from 1948 to 1967. They ask how they can believe that to give up territories will bring peace and security when there was no peace and security while those territories were not in their possession. Why was that world silent, during this same period, when the Arab Islamic State of Jordan, where Jews have never been allowed to live, and only occasionally to visit, and when they were forbidden access to the holiest shrines of Judaism in Jerusalem, and even Christian

and Muslim Israells were prevented from visiting their holy places in Jordanian-occupied Jerusalem—why does this same world so often appear to suggest dividing Jerusalem again, despite the conditions of free access for all religious groups to their holy places under Israeli administration? Most of all leaders ask how they can be expected to worry about self-determination for a people whose recognized leadership continues to state publicly its aim to deny that same self-determination for the Jewish people in Israel.

It has been said that "the survival of the Jewish state, the small nation of Israel, and the fate of the Holocaust-decimated Jewish people are inexorably bound together, so that to desire the dissolution of the one is to approve the destruction of the other." An understanding of how religious Zionism fed the well which sustained the Jewish people throughout its dispersion, insecurity and suffering, and developed into the political Zionism which led to the creation of the State of Israel is vital for anyone concerned with the Middle East. In view of the vicious and deliberate attempt, in some anti-Jewish and anti-

Israell quarters, to malign Zionism and distort its message, or to imply that it was simply another form of nineteenth-century European nationalism, it is crucial to see the link between the biblically inspired hope of return to Zion and the more secular Jews, who in rebuilding the modern State of Israel, aspired to the models of universal social justice called for by the great prophets, Isaiah, Amos and Micah.

The following article in which Rabbi Hertzberg traces this link was originally delivered at an international Colloquium on Religion, Peoplehood, Nation, and Land, attended by scholars of Jewish, Christian, Islamic, Buddhist and African religious traditions, sponsored by The Harry S. Truman Research Institute of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, The American Jewish Committee, The Israel Interfaith Committee.

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## ZIONISM AND THE JEWISH RELIGIOUS TRADITION

Arthur Hertzberg

Even as a political fact the State of Israel is a unique creation. Its legal existence has been recognized by all the major powers and by most other states; yet many of its neighbors continue to insist that the presence of the State of Israel in the Middle East is a political and moral affront of such magnitude that it entitles them to try to effect its destruction. There have been many revolutions in the twentieth century in the name of national self-determination; Israel is the only example of a new state created by a largely non-resident people returning to the homeland of its ancestors. In our century the tendency of political states, both old and new, has been to conceive of themselves as secular arrangements which represent no particular religious tradition and not even any one cultural and historical heritage. The State of Israel is indeed largely secular. For that matter, one of the avowed purposes of its creators was to make it possible for Jews who wished it to lead completely secular lives as Jews, within their own polity. By law, Arab and Christian citizens of Israel have complete political equality and that ideal, which is largely honored today, would approach being realized if peace would begin to come to the region.

Nonetheless, Israel was created by Jews to be and to remain an essentially Jewish State, that is, to represent something more than a conventional, secular political

arrangement to serve the needs of its individual citizens. This mystique pervades even the secularists in Israel; it is deeply felt among the majority of the Jews of the world, regardless of the nature of their religious convictions or commitments. The often clashing forms of life and value appear, from this perspective, to be the confusion of creativity, the necessary turmoil which attends the growth of a new synthesis between the old and the new. The present is seen as an age of becoming, and the sometimes even bitter internal conflicts of the moment are part of some larger harmony. The national mood in Israel is one of attempting to encounter the twentieth century in terms of its own historic tradition. It is a tragic paradox that the closest parallel to this self-image is to be found, in terms of their own pasts and presents, among the Arabs and, more generally, among many of the societies in the Third World, but most of these states are in varying degrees hostile to Israel.

The unique characteristic of the life of Israel today is its connection with the Jewish community of the world. This theme was stated by one of its earliest constitutional acts, the Law of Return, under which any Jew is a citizen of the State of Israel from the moment of his arrival as an immigrant. Such a law is not entirely unprecedented among modern movements, but the whole complex of connections between the State of Israel and the world Jewish community is indeed unique. Support, both moral and financial, by the majority of the Jews outside of its

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borders is critically necessary to the development of Israel. The leadership in Jerusalem remains dedicated to the task of helping to preserve Jewish loyalty and consciousness among the Jews on all continents. The preservation of the Jewish spirit is the fundamental purpose for which the State was conceived by its founders; this commitment was even more important than the immediate needs which the Jewish settlement in the Holy Land has served during this tragic century, as the major place to which Jewish refugees from persecution could come as a right and not as an act of foreign grace. In turn, the Jews of the world look upon Israel as the major contemporary incarnation of many of their own hopes for continuity. The depth of the emotion which Israel evokes among them is, to be sure, affected by recent memories of Auschwitz. Israel is, in its very strength, a symbol of the end of Jewish passivity and lack of power to resist slaughter; it does represent an open door for Jews who do not easily, in this present age, trust anyone else but themselves with the keys to their safety. At the very root, however, Israel, and the world Jewish concerns which help sustain it, are both based on some of the grand and ancient themes of Jewish religion and of Jewish history.

It should be easier to speak of these great issues with men of good will in terms of their own traditions, man's relationship to that which is beyond himself. Nonetheless, the religious and spiritual premises which are at the root of Zionism, both ancient and modern, are precisely those aspects of the Jewish experience which do not exist in any other major religious tradition, in most of the versions of their own understanding of their faith. The task of a Christian trying to make the most uniquely Christian element of his faith, the Incarnation, comprehensible to Jews, would be of a comparable order of difficulty. All of our religious traditions move in different grooves. We do have a right to ask of one another two things: that we attempt to hear how the great themes of the Bible have resounded among Jews; and that we attempt to hear one another without judgmental presumptions, laying aside the notion, insofar as it is possible for human beings so to do, that the experience of others should not have existed because it differs so radically from our own. We need not come to agreement, but we must hear one another—and understand and turn towards one another.

All of the elements of Jewish religious consciousness were present and defined in the very first encounter, in the biblical narrative, between the One God and Abraham: "And God said to Abraham, go forth from your land and from your place of birth and from the house of your father to the land which I will show you. And I will make of you a great people and I will bless you and make your name great; and be a blessing." In the next verse the last promise is amplified: "and all the families of the earth will be blessed through you." Abraham obeyed the command and entered the land, where the One God appeared to him, reiterating and amplifying the promise: "and to your children I will give this land" (Gen. 12:1-3). In these encounters Abraham was taken away from all of his original relationships. Community, land and even the

family within which he arose all represent ties which were broken in a fresh beginning, a covenant with the Lord, in which a new community is created which Abraham is to found. It is to arise in a particular place, the land of Canaan, which is set aside for authentic encounter between the seed of Abraham and the God who founded their community. The life of this community in this land exists for a purpose, to demonstrate to all other peoples how human life is to be lived at its most moral. The implication already exists in the original sending, that any falling away from such a standard will represent a breach in the covenant and a defilement of holy soil. Exile is already conceivable as punishment and the ultimate return is already in view as laden with messianic meaning, of redemptive quality for Jews and for humankind.

Both as a fact and a promise the relationship of Jews to the land of Israel thus appeared as an indispensable element in the original covenant. Jerusalem appears later, at the time of David. It is clear from both of the biblical accounts of its conquest, in Samuel and in Chronicles, that making the city into the capital is the act which set the seal on the creation of the Jewish Kingdom. The city did not belong to any individual tribe, not even to the tribe of Judah: "And David and all Israel were to Jerusalem" (I Chronicles 14:4), thus acquiring it by action of the entire people and making of it the place to which all Israel would turn. All the biblical writers looked to Jerusalem as the essence of the meaning of their faith, life and hope. In the later years of the existence of the Second Temple, Jerusalem was the center of pilgrimage not only for the Jews in the Land of Israel but also for the increasingly scattered Diaspora. The evidence for this is to be found in the literature of the period, in Josephus (*Wars* i, 4, 13), Philo (*Laws* 1, 68) and the New Testament (*Acts of the Apostles* 2:5). The literature of the Talmud contains many accounts of masses from all of the Jewish world coming to the Temple especially to celebrate the Passover. It is well known that in those days, in the century before the destruction of the Temple by the Romans, the Temple was visited by gentiles as well as Jews and there is Talmudic evidence that in the sacrificial cult there was regular provision for acts of prayer and atonement for all the "seventy nations" of the world.

The connection between Jews and the land was not broken by the Exile. By the third century the Babylonian Jewish community had begun to overshadow the one which remained in the land under the Romans, and yet Babylonian authorities ruled, as firmly as those in the Holy Land, that either party to a marriage could force the other, by appeal to Rabbinic courts, to move from the Diaspora to the Land of Israel. Dwelling in the land remained, in the view of most of the later rabbinic authorities, a biblical commandment of continuing validity. Those of the medieval writers who did not insist on this as a religious good absolved themselves and the people of their generation because of the dangers to life that the journey involved. Life outside of the Holy Land was possible for Jews, but it was less than the full life, in perfect obedience to God, which could happen only with

physical restoration. These religious commitments were more than merely visionary. Some Jews continued to remain in the land even during the most dangerous and disastrous times. In every century there were returns to it, sometimes by small handfuls of leading spiritual figures and, on occasion, by substantial communities.

In the early centuries access to Jerusalem itself was denied to Jews, though there is some evidence that the Roman emperors of the second and third centuries did permit them to visit the city and to worship on the Mount of Olives and sometimes even on the Temple Mount itself. The situation became even more difficult by the fourth century. There is contemporary evidence from Christian sources that Jews had the greatest difficulty in buying the right to come, on the anniversary of the destruction of the Temple, to pray near the Western Wall. The Pilgrim from Bordeaux, the earliest Christian visitor whose written account of his visit to Jerusalem has survived, tells that in the year 333 Jews came every year to that site to "bewail themselves with groans, rend their garments, and so depart" (*The Bordeaux Pilgrim*, pp. 21-22). There are comparable accounts by Gregory of Nazianzus and by Jerome in his commentary to Zephaniah, written in the year 392. With the end of Roman rule in Palestine the prohibition against Jews living in Jerusalem was lifted and after that there is evidence of an often flourishing Jewish community in the Holy City.

Since 1844, a half century before the first stirrings of modern Zionism, Jerusalem has been the one city in the Holy Land which has consistently had a Jewish majority in its population. According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica* the population figures in 1844 were: 7,120 Jews, 5,530 Moslems and 3,390 Christians. By 1896, there were more than 28,000 Jews and some 17,000 Christians and Muslims, combined into roughly equal halves. The first government census by the British, that of October, 1922, found almost 34,000 Jews and about 38,000 Muslims and Christians in the whole of the city. In 1931 Jews were a majority of 51,000 in the city out of a total population of 90,000. By 1939 the Jewish population of all of Jerusalem was an even more pronounced majority, but almost two decades of riots and pogroms by Arabs against Jews in the Old City had made it a dangerous place in which to live, and Jewish population in the Old City itself had declined to something over 2,000.

In the last two millennia of its history Jerusalem has been the most dangerous and difficult place for Jews to dwell of any of the cities of the Holy Land. Yet, physical connection to the city remained so precious to Jews that they were willing, throughout the ages, to risk the dangers and to submit to the suffering. Whenever the barest possibility existed, even under hostile powers, enough Jews were to be found to cleave to Jerusalem so that, across the centuries, theirs was the largest continuing presence in the city. Here memory of the past, messianic hopes for the future and modern Zionism are indeed the heirs of the major continuing physical connection to the city.

This clinging by Jews to Jerusalem even more than to the whole of the rest of the Holy Land is no accident; it has the deepest roots in the continuing religious tradition and folk consciousness of Jews. It is "the city which I have chosen unto me" (I Kings 11:36) and the one "upon which my name is called" (II Kings 21:4). It was, of course, the place where the Temple stood, the seat of God's presence, even though the heaven and the heaven of heavens could not contain Him. In the imagery of prophecy Zion and Jerusalem are often parallel to all of Israel; both these names are often used to represent not only the whole of the people but also all of its land. For example, "Speak unto Zion, you are my people" (Isaiah 51:16) or "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, speak to the heart of Jerusalem" (Isaiah 40:1). The synagogue poets of medieval times made much of these themes. Of the hundreds of examples that could be given, the most famous is also the most characteristic. Writing in Spain in the eleventh century, Judah Halevi cried out: "Zion, wilt thou not ask after the peace of thy captive children?" This poet and philosopher left his native Spain for the Holy Land and, according to legend, was killed soon after his arrival.

In the daily prayers of Jews to this day one of the benedictions is a prayer for the rebuilding of Jerusalem. In the grace which Jews say after every meal, morning, noon and night, the third benediction reads: "And rebuild Jerusalem, the holy city, speedily and in our day; blessed art thou O Lord who builds Jerusalem." All synagogues throughout the Jewish world, from the first in antiquity to those being erected this very day, have been built in such fashion that they face towards Jerusalem. Its very name has always evoked the memory of a time when all was well, when Jews lived on their land and worshipped God in His holy temple, and the hope for the day when some of this glory would return. To be buried on the Mount of Olives, no matter where one dies, has been regarded for two millennia as surest hope of the Resurrection and bodies were being returned from Rome some 2,000 years ago for that purpose. To kiss the stones of Jerusalem, even in its destruction, was to be as close to God as man could be. To participate in its rebuilding was the hope of the ages.

During the nineteen centuries of the Exile there were Jewish communities in the Holy Land. The Talmud of Jerusalem was created by important schools of Jewish learning in the Holy Land, and these declined only in the fourth and fifth centuries under Christian persecution. The fixing of the vocalization of the Hebrew Bible, the Masoretic Text, was done by Jewish scholars in Tiberias between the eighth and tenth centuries. At that time, both the Karaites and the followers of the Talmudic tradition had important communities in the Holy Land, and around the year 1000 academies of rabbinic learning were reconstituted in Jerusalem and Ramleh; these were of such consequence that they shared leadership in the Jewish world with the schools in Babylonia, though the Babylonian academies had, by then, enjoyed an uninter-

rupted tradition of almost a millennium. Even under the Crusaders Jewish communities continued to exist in the cities of Acre and Ashkelon and in a number of villages in the Galilee, in several of which Jews have dwelt without interruption since before the destruction in the year 70.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century came the first organized attempt by Jews in Europe to return to the Holy Land, when three hundred rabbis of France and England came there. Nahmanides left Spain after an unfortunate disputation in Barcelona, which was forced upon him by Pablo Christiani, and spent the last three years of his life, from 1267 to 1270, reconstituting a Jewish community in Jerusalem. Towards the end of the fifteenth century Obadiah of Bertinoro, the author of the standard commentary on the Mishnah, left Italy for the Holy Land and he, too, reinvigorated the Jewish community in Jerusalem.

From the beginning of the sixteenth century, there was an important growth of Jewish population in the Galilee and especially in the town of Safed. Exiles from Spain, after the final expulsion of the Jews in 1492, arrived and within a century there were no less than eighteen academies of Talmudic studies and twenty-one synagogues in Safed alone. Indeed, the most important spiritual stirrings and creativity within Jewry during the sixteenth century took place there. It was in Safed that Josef Karo finished in 1567 the *Shullian Aruk* ("the prepared table"), which was almost immediately accepted by the bulk of world Jewry as the authoritative summation of Jewish law and practice. To the present day all discussion in this area pays major attention to this code.

Until the end of the seventeenth century, the overwhelming majority of the Jews in the Holy Land were either Sephardim, of Spanish extraction, or Orientals. Central and East European influence became prominent in the year 1700, and it has existed in unbroken continuity into the contemporary era. A group of several hundred people arrived from Poland under the leadership of Rabbi Judah the Pious. These immigrants were followed by others. Toward the end of the eighteenth century there came disciples of Elijah of Wilno, the greatest Talmudic scholar of the age, as well as groups of Hasidim, i.e., followers of the Hasidic movement founded by Israel Baal Shem Tov. Both legalists and ecstasies within East European Jewry could not then imagine the continuity of Judaism without a living link to the Holy Land.

Throughout these centuries economic conditions in the country were generally difficult, and the Jews suffered perhaps more than other communities. Those in the Holy Land were constantly sending letters and even personal emissaries to the Diaspora asking for support. It was a well established tradition throughout the Jewish world that these continuing requests took priority even over local charitable needs.

The Jews in the Holy Land were, to be sure, living largely from foreign alms, and were seemingly parallel to Christian pilgrims and monastic orders in the land during that era. There were two important points of difference;

Jews who came to the Holy Land did not cluster around a variety of holy places. From the Jewish perspective dwelling in the land, anywhere, was the fulfillment of religious commandment. In the second place their very presence in the land had radically different resonance among the Jews of the world than the Christian or Muslim presences had among their brethren elsewhere. This often embattled and struggling Jewish community, repeatedly reinforced by new arrivals and always in connection with the whole of the Diaspora, was a constant reminder to the majority that it was living less than the ideal religious life and that return to the land was the ultimate goal. Maimonides in the twelfth century had defined this consummation as not necessarily an eschatological event, attended by miracles and cataclysms. The restoration would happen in a natural way, by change in the political situation which would allow Jews to return to their homeland as part of a universal process ushering in a final age of justice and peace.

Such hopes were aroused once or twice through the ages during messianic movements within Judaism. For a brief moment in the sixteenth century, when the melodramatic David Reubeni appeared in Rome to offer some supposed military support to Pope Clement VII against the Turks, there was even talk of such a restoration in the highest Christian quarters. During Napoleon's campaign in the Middle East, he summoned the Jews by proclamation in 1799 to rally to his banner with the promise that he would help restore them to their land. The first stirrings towards making an end of living essentially on alms began before the middle of the nineteenth century. Sir Moses Montefiore, the leader of English Jewry, and various forces of the French Jewish community, especially the Rothschild family, worked to teach Jews in Palestine to become artisans and even farmers. Central European philanthropists even created a school for these purposes in 1854 in Jerusalem. This was followed in 1870 by the founding of an agricultural school, Mikveh Israel, and within the next two years two Jewish farming colonies were established. The career of modern Zionism began in 1881, as a direct result of large-scale pogroms in Russia, but in that year, before any of the new immigration to the land began, the American Consul in Jerusalem, Warder Cresson, wrote that there were then a thousand Jews in the country who were deriving their livelihood from agriculture.

This ancient and ongoing connection to the land and the messianic hopes which this connection both exemplified and helped to keep alive were the spiritual and emotional climate within which modern Zionism arose. In the last decades of the nineteenth century the bulk of the world Jewish community, which was then to be found in Europe, found itself confronted by three situations. The most searing and immediate was virulent hatred of Jews, and not only in their major place of settlement in Russia. Such phenomena as French and German anti-Semitism towards the end of the century raised the question whether the more liberal part of Europe, in which Jews

had been formally emancipated, would honor the promise of equality for all. In the second place, what seemed then to be the most hopeful of contemporary political ideas was national independence. Liberal nationalism was being proclaimed in the name not of dominance over others but of a creative future for all the historic communities, which would be both autonomous and live in concert with one another. This was the great dream of Mazzini, and the earliest major theoretician of Zionism, Moses Hess, responded to it as early as 1860 with acceptance and profound emotion.

The third situation was the inner spiritual state of Jewry itself. The dissolution of older values and identities, and especially of the religious ones, was engulfing the younger intellectuals of all the traditions of the Western world, but this was felt with particular poignancy among Jews. Viewed from a Jewish perspective, even Western secularism required an act of personal conversion to the mode of life which descended from the majority tradition. What was worse, those Jews who were willing to undergo this conversion, such as Heine and even Disraeli, found themselves less than completely accepted. The nineteenth century was sufficiently open to Jews, intellectually, for them to experience all of its problems; it was sufficiently closed to deny them the possibility, even if they had wished, to disappear as individuals in modern society. They remained sufficiently rooted in their own older heritage to regard their community as an ultimate spiritual good, worthy of both survival and inner refreshing. They were sufficiently men of their day to feel that their own involvement in their particular past and in the land sacred to their spiritual tradition was in keeping with the contemporary belief that historic communities and peoples were worthy of preservation, for their own sake and for the service of humanity.

The tragedies and torments of the twentieth century and the achievements of the Jews of Israel have confirmed the direst of these predictions and some of the greatest of these hopes.

Even the greatest of opportunities that the open society made available to Jews raised for them severe questions of spiritual survival. The rights of equality were given to Jews as individuals, and the continuity of their community perforce had to be defined as a matter of private belief or, at its most organized, as a religious association parallel to that of contemporary Christian churches. From Jewish perspective such redefinition was difficult and devastating. For Jews, the holy congregation of all Israel, which means the reality in this world of all that Jews do in community, is the fundamental premise of their identity and tradition. The individual, of course, exists, but between him and all of humanity there stands a mediating value, the Jewish people as a holy congregation. It was not accidental that comparison was made at the beginning of this essay between the difficulties in explaining the spiritual roots of Zionism to Christians and of explaining the Incarnation to Jews. Classic Jewish interpretation of the Bible has always insisted that Israel according to the

flesh is what is meant by Isaiah's prophecies concerning "the suffering servant." It is the individual Jew's experience of the Jewish people, of its corporate life, way and history, which mediates for him between the individual and God. When the richness and inner integrity of the life of that community is attenuated by either persecution or assimilation, or when belonging to the tradition becomes so privatized as to represent a bewildering variety of personal choices, that which is specifically Jewish in the consciousness of Jews will act, as it had acted in the last century, to recreate a living Jewish community on the land of Israel. For the rest of world Jewry this community represents the indispensable contemporary center which ties Jews to one another and which encourages them to believe that their own lives, though cast in different molds and under minority circumstances, are more viable. Its very creation some two decades ago represented a turning away from despair in the aftermath of the Nazi years and the rekindling among Jews of belief in the future. If I may use one of the clichés of the contemporary "theology of hope," the Jewish people in the 1940s had ceased believing in either the *humanum* or the *futurum*. It regained both in 1948, when the State of Israel was established. In the spiritual, cultural and practical connections between the Jews of the world and those in Israel the inner life and verve of the world Jewry has been refreshed.

There can be no doubt that the Zionist reconstitution of a national Jewish community in Palestine in our time was an act which derived both from the ultimate wellsprings of the historic Jewish faith and from the immediate necessities of a stormy contemporary age. This does not mean that all the trappings of political statehood and all the acts of sovereign power are being presented as commanded, valid or necessary. On the contrary, what saves any nationalism, any sense of historic community and kinship, from becoming exclusivist, from the arrogance of "blood and soil," is conscience. It is an even more wicked assertion that there is no salvation outside one's own nation than to pronounce that there is no salvation outside one's own church. The conscience which protects us from both such assertions has become manifest in the modern age in both secular forms, such as a United Nations Declaration on Human Rights, and in religious pronouncements by all the major Western faiths. This most fundamental of our moral convictions has as its source biblical prophecy. It was Amos who said to the Jewish people of his time that in the eyes of God, chosen though they were by him, they had no more rights than the children of the Ethiopians and that his bringing the Jews from Egypt was paralleled by his bringing the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir. Here we are confronted by the universal element, the command of the living God of all the world, which enters as radical demand into the midst of every human particularity and keeps it under judgment. Indeed, the meaning of community for Jews is that they live in the real world of action and choice, in this world, and the meaning of their chosenness is that they are subject to the most severe and

searching of moral judgments: "Only you have I known from all the nations of the world; therefore, I will visit upon you all your iniquities" (Amos 3:2). For all men of conscience, both elsewhere and in Israel, its acts, like those of any other people, are under judgment.

What then is the connection between the Jewish people and this land? In the Jewish religious vision, there is the belief that the Holy Land is the place fit for divine revelation, that the Jewish Diaspora is in exile, and that the coming of the Messiah would restore Jews to their land. This is, of course, "covenant theology." I would be the last to ask anyone, either outside Jewry or within it, to assent to this as belief, but beyond doubt for many centuries Jews did indeed hold such belief. Because of that belief, Jews alone, of all the ancient peoples who were exiled, retained their living connection with the land of their earliest glory. Jewish theology does not create any claim on the land of Israel to which others must assent. It has created the fact of indissoluble emotional and historic connection.

The State of Israel—not in terms of its culture at this immediate moment, but because of the revivifying possibilities that it alone can afford—is necessary for the continuity of Judaism and the Jews. It is a necessity also for all men who care that the Jewish ethos should flourish and make its own kind of contribution to all of humanity. Once this is accepted as a moral good of the first order, it then becomes possible to say that the immediate next order of moral concern is that every justice be done to Palestinian Arabs short of such action which would result in the end of the Jewish State. At a moment of political and moral resolution of tensions, when the day of peace begins to come into view, justice for Arabs should and will involve us all, and especially Jews, in large and generous action.

Amos like all the Prophets began by announcing his ministry as follows: "And the Lord proclaimed from Zion and raised His voice from Jerusalem." His book concludes with: "Behold, days will come saith the Lord...and I will return the returnees of My people Israel and they will build up waste cities and they will plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they will plant gardens and eat of their fruits. And I will plant them upon their land and they will not again be uprooted from their land which I have given them, saith the Lord, their God."

It is in the Bible that Jerusalem as a city is indivisible: "a city which is joined altogether." Not only in the Bible but throughout its history, Jerusalem has been a unity, the one city of the one God, not only in itself but as the living heart of the Holy Land. In the religious consciousness of the Jewish people, a restoration in the Holy Land is inconceivable without the Holy City in which since the days of Mechizedeck, even before Abraham, God had spoken to man. In the most ecstatic of Messianic visions in the Bible it was imagined that not only Jews but all the nations would look to Zion. In the unrolling panorama of history, something of this has indeed been realized, for Christians and Muslims do indeed turn towards the Holy

City and their interests in it are precious and important to Jews, as they are to all humanity. For the other great biblical religious traditions Jerusalem is the place of memories in which sacred events once took place; for the Jewish tradition, this city is the center of the messianic future. Therefore in ancient times, by the waters of Babylon, weeping as they remembered Zion, Jews said: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand wither; may my tongue cleave to my palate, if I do not remember Thee; if I do not put Jerusalem above the greatest of my joys."

It is the task of men of peace, mindful of the realities, to bring reason and conciliation to bear. Great is the work for peace in Jerusalem. This city in its very name, in Hebrew, the language of angels and seraphim, gave peace and wholeness their name. Great are the peacemakers, for the name of God is Shalom.

# 4. JERUSALEM'S ISLAMIC CALLING

Father Youakim Moubarac

"Jerusalem's Islamic Calling" is the text of a presentation delivered by Father Moubarac at one of the yearly Near East Seminars at the Foyer John Knox. The theme of the seminar at which this presentation was made was The Middle East Crisis—Justice and Peace.

In the dialogue on Palestine as the Holy Land, a third religious participant, Islam, takes its place alongside Judaism and Christianity.

Islam is an important, if not the chief, participant, for the majority of those concerned are in fact Muslim; that is, about 60 percent of the refugees and 90 percent of the Arab World.

Islam has an equal importance and is similarly the chief participant at the purely religious level. It has its own idea of the spiritual significance of this land for humanity and intends to see that it is respected.

To my knowledge no publication has appeared in the Christian West, either European or American, which takes this point of view into account. Either you are pro-Jewish and often also pro-Zionist, or you are pro-Arab and you try to demonstrate by means of a Christian interpretation of the Bible the vanity of Zionist claims to the Holy Land. I know of no interpreter of the Koranic, Muslim position on Palestine since the death of Louis Massignon in 1962.

Although I am not a Muslim, I consider myself as an interpreter of the Koran dealing with the same kind of problem. In homage to the memory of Louis Massignon who visited the Holy Land twenty-eight times (having entered Jerusalem for the first time behind General Allenby in the fourth car of the procession in the company of Colonel Lawrence); in homage also to my Muslim friends and to make amends for our lack of knowledge of their position, I dedicate this talk solely to Islam's view of the Holy Land, entitling it *Jerusalem's Islamic Calling*.

In speaking of Jerusalem's Islamic calling, I in no way intend to reduce the Palestine problem to a religious question. For me it is a problem of justice for a land whose inhabitants have suffered from an iniquitous partition and a scandalous expulsion; it is the problem of a whole area of our planet whose evolution has been deeply traumatized and misdirected. It is a problem of refugees within a more general problem of a colonial nature and it is therefore important to solve it in terms of the decolonization process which is both so necessary and so urgent.

But even when this colonial problem has been solved, the religious aspect, which must not be confused with it, will remain and it must be considered if the problem is to be solved in the best way. Even for non-believers, this is a sociological factor which must be taken into account in

the evolution of peoples if we are not to despise their most legitimate desires and aspirations.

By referring to Jerusalem's Islamic calling, I hope no one will accuse me either of being biased or of giving an incomplete picture. I repudiate the latter on the grounds that the Jewish and Christian positions are already well-known. I will not be biased because the purpose behind my concentration on the Islamic position is to bring about justice for a third party by turning our attention outward from ourselves. My aim therefore is to make the Judeo-Christian conscience, which is still encased in what we call the "Western" conscience, see another point of view; I want to draw it out of itself, to free it from its complexes and open it to a true universality.

Three principal events mark Islam's presence in Jerusalem and represent moments when its consciousness has been awakened. When put back in context, these three instances reveal the first Islamic significance of Jerusalem, the main one having already been expressed in the Koran, to which we shall return later.

The three great moments to which I refer are:

- the entry of the Caliph Omar into the Holy City in 636,
- the reconquest of the city, which had been captured by the Crusaders, by Saladin in 1187,
- the recognition by the League of Nations of the Temple of Jerusalem, including the Wailing Wall, as Islamic property.

The entry of the Caliph Omar into Jerusalem in 636 was the result not of conquest but of capitulation, as the Muslim troops had camped on the Mount of Olives for a year before being led into the abandoned city by the Patriarch Sophrone. This Muslim victory is intimately related to the general history of this era: it was achieved only with the complicity of the people against the hated Byzantine occupation. According to the unanimous witness of the Christian historians of the time, the Christians of Palestine and Syria, like those of Egypt a little later, welcomed the Arabs as liberators. Thus the Islamic conquest can be considered as the last migration which has spread from the Midi to the Fertile Crescent since the dawn of history. In contrast to all the other invasions which have engulfed it and then disappeared, this one unified what we call the Semitic world up to the present day.

The Crusaders occupied the city in 1099 by perpetrating a general massacre, as we well know. The Latin chroniclers speak of Muslim and Jewish blood flowing freely up to the level of their horses' breasts. Less than 100 years later, Salâh Al Din the Ayyubite, commonly known as Saladin, who was recognized even in the West as the noblest of generals and by Islam as its greatest figure since Mohammed, triumphed over the Crusaders at the battle

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of Hattin and entered Jerusalem on the night of the Muslim feast of Isra'-Mirāj, whose significance we shall discuss later. From that moment on, Jerusalem continued to be under Muslim domination, except during the period of the British mandate.

Yet, it was under this mandate and in the international context of our age that His Majesty's government had recourse to an act of law which in my opinion is of considerable importance, for different reasons than the all-too-famous Balfour Declaration. It has been shown often enough how the declaration was the action of a foreign country, as yet with no mandate, on behalf of a foreign and nonexistent nation, at the expense of a people foreign to both parties but well-established in its homeland. The act of law to which I refer is the recognition by the League of Nations—through the intervention of the power to whom it had granted the mandate, and the mediation of an international court of justice—of the whole complex of the temple of Jerusalem, including the Wailing Wall, as being inalienable Islamic property. The court made its decision on the advice of three experts, of whom none were either English, Jewish or Muslim, but all recognized specialists in international law and acquainted with the history of the Holy Places.

The act of law is dated May 19, 1931, the commission set up by the League of Nations having been formed on January 14, 1930. The judgment pronounced opens with the following paragraph:

The West wall is recognized as the property of the Moslems alone: it is to them alone that the estate, which together with the precincts of the holy place forms an indivisible whole, belongs: this is wakf property [that is, an inalienable religious foundation].

There follow clauses which, while allowing the Jews to come at specified times to pray freely at the wall, reaffirm the inalienable character of the estate which forms an indivisible whole with the public temple courtyard, the Cupola of the Rock and the El-Aqsa mosque.

I can easily see how outrageous it must seem to a Western ear to hear that the Wailing Wall, traditionally connected with the picture of the wandering, weeping and now triumphant Jew, is Islamic property. But the Western ear and conscience have recognized many other "enormities." Even Montesquieu reveals, not without humor, the degree of information and metaphysical broadness of mind of his contemporaries by asking the question: "But how can one be Persian?" In more recent times, another "enormity," of a different kind, was pointed out by François Mauriac of the Académie Française in his memorandum which was published in the *Figaro Littéraire* of last July 9, having received the following telegram: "The Zionist occupation of Jerusalem is as painful for the Eastern Christians as was the Nazi occupation of Paris in June 1940 for these same Christians." He adds: "A Catholic priest wrote this 'enormity' to me." Without stirring up any more bad memories, old or new, I am now going to devote the rest of these comments to the Islamic significance of Jerusalem, which for the Muslim has not changed since the times of the Prophet.

Before going on to the next stage of the analysis, I should like to recall that the Hebrew term Ma'aravi or Magreban indicates not only the city gate but also the popular area which surrounded the Wailing Wall and which the so-called Israeli town-planning quickly demolished after the occupation, treating with contempt its humble inhabitants who were left to their sorrow and indignant protests. This area is in fact Tlemcenian, or Algerian, Islamic property which was founded for the pilgrims of North Africa by the descendant of a famous fourteenth-century mystic who happens to have the same name as the present President of Algeria, Boumédiène. This is only a dialectical form of the venerable medieval figure, Abû-Madvan. Since the Council of Ulemas of Algeria defended this area at the Quai d'Orsay at the time of the annexation of its lands in Israel in 1948, I thought it good to remind the Algerian President on the night of last June 7 to 8 that this Algerian property at the Magreban gate of the sacred Haram of Jerusalem was at the heart of the Islamic claims to the Holy City.

Islam's attachment to Jerusalem is usually demonstrated by referring to the Koranic tradition of the Isra' and Mi'rāj, which are fundamental Islamic concepts. Isra' means *nocturnal journey* and Mi'rāj, *celestial ascension*. The first of these terms forms the title of the seventeenth chapter of the Koran and tells of the ecstatic journey of the Prophet Mohammed. Transported by night from Mecca to Abraham's sacrificial rock in the temple courtyard, his winged horse, Burāq, having first set him down at the foot of the West wall, the Prophet is then lifted to the sky in order to receive the revelation of the Koranic law. It was during this feast of Mi'rāj that Saladin entered the city, and the same feast was chosen as early as the time of the British mandate as the Palestinian national day. Personally I do not attach any particular importance to this tradition as such, in spite of the obvious impact which it has had on the Muslim, both in the distant and recent past. I would be more inclined to say that it is just a Muslim belief in a primitive archetype whose symbolic significance reaches beyond the historical substratum. When understood in this way, the archetypal representation of the Isra'-Mi'rāj reveals the basis of Jerusalem's Islamic calling.

Contemporary chronicles report that when the Caliph Omar entered Jerusalem, he asked to be led immediately to Abraham's sacrificial rock in the temple courtyard. On reaching the place and finding that the Christians had allowed it to become a rubbish dump, he asked that the place be cleaned and that its original sacred character be restored. He did not build a mosque there: the name "Omar's Mosque" is doubly wrong. In the first place, the building there is not a mosque and secondly, it does not date from the time of Omar. It is a sanctuary built under the Omeyyade Caliph Abd-el-Malik. It is not the conquering character, nor the upstart character of Islam that Omar is displaying by being taken directly there and having the place cleaned and by restoring its holiness, but rather the original Abrahamic claim of every believer. Abandoned by the Jews and despised by the Christians,

this place was restored by Islam for the veneration of all believers.

Thus the Abrahamic character of Islam is at the root and heart of Jerusalem's Islamic calling. It is to this character and to its implications that I dedicated a study some years ago. Without going into the textual developments of the Koran to which this study is devoted, I shall discuss not so much their importance for Islam as their impact on the Jewish and Christian consciences which were deeply troubled by the Prophet's longing for Jerusalem, as he never went beyond the limits of his native land.

To speak of the Abrahamic character of Islam does not mean that it is a descendant of Ishmael, as it is customary to affirm at the moment in an attempt to find some way of giving it a share in the inheritance—that of the outsider. Even less does it mean that the Ishmael of the desert triumphs over carnal Israel robbed of her ancestral prerogatives. Islam has no desire to claim rights to the Promise by means of ethnocultural ties: on the contrary, it is precisely this idea that it rejects. Like Paul in Galatians and Romans, the Koran protests against the monopolization of the Promise by a so-called chosen people. The only difference in the Koran is that it condemns the monopolization of the Promise by Christians as much as by Jews. In Islam's eyes, Christians only snatch the Promise from the Jews in order to guard it jealously in their turn as a privileged people. Who can express this better?

In opposition to the Jews and Christians alike, under the name of the "People of the Book," Koranic Islam protests against all undue appropriation of the gift of God. The Promise is made through Abraham to all believers in the one God, and it is this that Islam wishes to express by sacralising not the place of Ishmael's sacrifice, but of Isaac's: the sacrifice took place in any case in the heart of Abraham, the first believer who submitted himself to God's will, and who was therefore the first Muslim in Jerusalem. Thus, when linked with the universalist claims of Islam, the Cupola of the Sacrificial Rock becomes the unimpeachable witness to its vocation as a protester, not to say to its protestant vocation.

In more specific opposition to the Jews, Islam adds to the Abrahamic claim the sign given in Jesus—and it is also in Jerusalem that it places him on its spiritual map of the world, in the courtyard of the temple but at the other end, at the Aqsa, or Distant, mosque. We know that Islam does not recognize the divine sonship of Christ, for reasons which I shall not develop here, but the Koran which denies this divine sonship nevertheless defends Mary's honor. Why?

Because in this way Christ becomes the one in the whole Semitic world who is not called by his father's name, but only by that of his mother, and he thus escapes from the tribal and racial system of belonging to a specified race. The Messiah, born of David's line, does not belong to the house of David, although Matthew takes such pains to convince Christians descended from Judaism that this is the case. As Adam on the first day of creation, and as the Temple on the Day of Judgment, Christ is not begotten of man and therefore belongs to all.

It is therefore at Jerusalem that Islam lodges its protest and makes the claim which that implies. The El-Aqsa Mosque has the same primitive name as the old part of the city which is still shown to the pilgrim: *mihrab Zakariyya*, or Zacharia's Oratory. For, according to the Muslim tradition which carries on the Byzantine-Christian tradition, it is here that Zacharia, father of the Baptist and levitical priest, heard the vow which Mary of Nazareth made at the Temple. It is for this reason that the verses of the Koran relating to this event have been devoutly painted on the walls of the mosque, as on the vaults of other Islamic high places.

Jerusalem's Islamic calling was recognized, then, first in Abraham at the Cupola of the Rock and secondly in Jesus, son of Mary, at the El-Aqsa Mosque. The third and final recognition of Jerusalem's Islamic calling is found close to these places under the eschatological sign of the judgment. Universal in an Abraham, father of all believers, and in a Messiah who does not belong to a single people, but is the gift of God to all, the Islamic faith also locates the Last Judgment in Jerusalem and it defers until the end of time the final challenge which it will nevertheless continue to present to the conscience of both Jews and Christians in the meantime.

By forbidding both Jews and Christians to call themselves the children of God to the exclusion of all others and by imposing its own law at the heart of the Islamic city yet without in any way excluding them, Islam challenges Jews and Christians to a greater witness, more worthy of their respective vocations.

By shutting itself up in its stern, uncompromising faith, Islam challenges Judaism to witness unflinchingly to its *messianic hope*. In this respect, Israeli Zionism offers an answer which is surely no more praiseworthy than the medieval crusades. For Pope Urbane's decision to undertake the crusades and his command to the Christian soldiers to drive the sons of Ishmael back to the desert are in fact inspired by the same spirit as the sons of Israel claiming to be the owners of the land, by virtue of the same promise. The prestige of the Jewish people is greatly diminished by this parody of the Christian crusades, as it is by their being in the pay of a colonialist world which is nevertheless on the decline. Contrary to the Koranic affirmation and to the Islamic protest in Jerusalem, the Jewish people have no worthier and no more effective weapon than to "hope against all hope." Since they did not believe in the first coming of Christ, it is up to them, with regard to Islam which presents them with the challenge of the sign of Christ, to dissolve the heavens and bring righteousness raining down for the end of the world and the Last Judgment. Meanwhile the military entry into Jerusalem is even more of a sinister parody than the murderous Sinai march—an exodus in reverse—not to say the utmost blasphemy, and gives this empty show of force undue importance.

While calling Judaism to witness unflinchingly to its messianic hope, Islam challenges Christianity to its most essential vocation of *love*. Jerusalem's Islamic calling adds a special aspect of an ecumenical nature to this challenge.

Indeed, what a sad spectacle Christendom offers to Islam, in the very place where it is invited to a dialogue; for Islam demands that Christians first agree amongst themselves. Therefore, more forcefully than any controversy with Islam, Jerusalem's Islamic calling challenges Christians to live in love and as a first step to achieve ecumenical unity. It thus presents Christendom with an ecumenical emergency, not for the purpose of fighting, but for that of bearing a better witness to the power of love and brotherly harmony.

In order to give a broader meaning to the phrase ecumenical unity, where beyond all challenging, Judaism, Christianity and Islam discover their complementary vocations, during this period which I have placed under the title of Jerusalem's Islamic calling, I should like to borrow a simile from the flora of the Holy Land. I would readily see Judaism in the biblical image of the fig-tree, but, so as not to give the impression of wanting to be malevolent by evoking the gospel picture of the cursed, barren fig-tree, I prefer to take the well-beloved vine of Isaiah—and even more of the Lord of Hosts—to describe the house of Israel, hoping nevertheless that this vine will produce something different from the Zionist verjuice, that it will produce this delectable fruit whose temporal fermentation is the promise of the new Kingdom which is not of this world. This is the essential vocation of Israel, scattered amongst the nations. It is Israel who ferments the new wine of the kingdom whose coming for all eternity depends to a certain extent on its hope.

As for Christendom, it is definitely represented by the olive tree. More than a symbol of peace, the olive tree becomes in the Koran the sign of unity, and this is perhaps the fundamental significance of the *graft* of which Paul speaks in Romans. Indeed it says in the verse on light, which has given chapter 25 of the Koran its title, that the olive tree whose oil lights the house and even the face of God, is a "blessed tree which is neither of the East nor of the West." May God hasten the day when, according to the demands of Islam's calling in Jerusalem, Christianity will see it in this light which is "neither of the East nor of the West" but a witness to a truly universal love.

Finally, Islam is represented in our plant imagery by the palm-tree. Yet, I do not wish this palm-tree to be isolated in a desert scene. It should be placed in the playground of humanity, which the Holy Land is to be, covered with trees, flowers and fruits. Indeed, the Koranic version of the birth of Christ tells us that the Lord causes a spring of living water to gush forth for his son and for Mary, who have taken refuge under a palm-tree whose fresh, ripe dates are about to fall. It is therefore at the foot of this palm-tree and beside this spring that Islam calls us together, to Jerusalem. Next year we shall be in Jerusalem.

The significance of Jerusalem for all believers addresses it to the conscience of all men of good will as the symbol of understanding among peoples. Delivered from every form of *fait accompli*, it should become again, in this ecumenical era, a sign of blessing in the heart of the world. Peace upon Jerusalem.



AMERICAN JEWISH  
**Part Two**  
ARCHIVES  
**Leader's Guidance**



## 5. AN INTRODUCTION TO TEACHING THE MIDDLE EAST MOSAIC

As developed in Richard Butler's introduction, a mosaic is a piece of artwork made by inlaying a series of brightly colored stones or glass to form a pattern or picture. Some of the patterns of the Middle East Mosaic are a search for identity, the heritage of colonialism, the quest for political and economic models which are appropriate to the region's history and culture and the tension caused by the injection of modern secularism into a highly religious environment. The pieces of the patterns are the various peoples, cultural histories and religions of the area. Other pieces have a distinctively foreign hue like superpower competition, oil diplomacy and Camp David Accords. Obviously, the piece of the mosaic made the most visible is the Arab/Israeli struggle but it is not the only source of conflict in the region. The Cyprus conflict, the Kurdish contest, the Iranian struggle and the Lebanese Civil War are also components.

The question, which the title of this leader's guide raises, is whether the patterns and pieces can come together to form community or whether they will fall apart in conflict. Either option is a potential in the Middle East. Modern economics, our dependency upon Middle Eastern oil and competition between the superpowers have brought new urgency to this question for North Americans. The choice between conflict or community is no longer only the problem of the inhabitants of the Middle East. It is our problem as well.

Yet Christians come to the study of the Middle East not to protect their own interests but rather in obedience to the Lord of the Church, the Prince of Peace. Peace should be that state of living in harmony with neighbors and environment. It is much more than the absence of conflict. Rather, it is social reconciliation. Today the churches of the Middle East are engaged in a variety of ministries, which are aimed at binding up the wounds of the human community and bringing about social reconciliation. This guide is intended to assist persons in sharing in that mission. It is written on the assumption that the followers of Jesus belong where evil needs a contender and conflict threatens to destroy the human community.

Hopefully, participants in the study process will increase their understanding of the dynamic movements in the Middle East, develop a fresh appreciation for the two other monotheistic faiths, and discover a set of values or commitments which will motivate them to share in a long term ministry which contributes toward the attainment of peace and justice in the troubled region. The temptation will be to study the problem, write a couple of letters, send a few dollars, and walk away. However, the Middle East will still be there. It still will be evolving toward community or conflict. The only difference will be your lack of involvement. This guide assumes that your involvement or lack of concern will make a vital difference in determining the shape of the Mosaic.

## 6. A SESSION APPROACH

The Middle East is indeed a mosaic. It is a composite of a number of countries, peoples, cultural heritages, political histories, viewpoints, aspirations and fears. It is filled with oil-rich empires, dusty hilltop villages, booming cities, crowded refugee camps, and expanding suburbs. Muslim mosques, Jewish synagogues, and Christian churches cover the landscape. However, it is more than geography and architecture. It is people like you and your class. Like your friends, the people of the Middle East Mosaic are husbands, wives, children, singles. Like your friends, these persons seek to cope with the countless challenges inherent in existence. However, there is a difference. The peoples of the Middle East live amidst an international and often intra-national crisis. The symptoms of this crisis are as fresh as the morning's newspaper and as vivid as the evening's newscast.

### The Leader's Task

As the group leader, your task is to assist an intergenerational class to become acquainted with the peoples of the Middle East, with the nature of the conflict which encompasses their lives and with potential pathways that might lead to a just and durable peace in the region. It is a challenging yet manageable responsibility. You already have several important resources that are designed to help you carry out this assignment.

The leader's guide is intended to help you: 1) to present the importance of the Middle East for international peace and economic stability; 2) to clarify the diverse historical, cultural, and religious backgrounds of the peoples of the Middle East; 3) to develop an awareness of and appreciation for the various Christian churches in the region; 4) and to enable class members to construct ministries which are supportive of the churches in that region and which contribute towards a just and peaceful resolution of that tragic conflict. It is written to help you lead the class in an investigation of the mosaic of the Middle East. In addition to various lesson plans, the leader's guide contains four contributed chapters giving: an introduction to the Middle East as a mosaic, an understanding of the pluralism that marks the mosaic, and two different perspectives that could be illustrative of the different pieces that make up the mosaic. Because of the supplemental nature of the leader's guide you might want to order several extra copies. The lesson plans will contain exercises that will utilize this guide.

### The Use of Many Resources

Here is a list of the resources designed for a coordinated study of The Middle East Mosaic and developed interdenominationally by Friendship Press. Suggestions for their use are provided in this chapter.

*Sojourn in Mosaic* by Robert Elfers. This is a unique fiction piece intended to provide members of the study group an enjoyable reading experience, while at the same

time provide as much background on the area as is possible and stimulate them to further study and reading. Because this book is a novel and an introductory piece, it is important in your planning that study group members read it in advance of your first or second meeting.

*Peace, Justice and Reconciliation in the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Christian Perspective* by Cranford Pratt, et al. This is an essential piece in understanding the basic issues inherent in one of the most often heard aspects of the Middle East story. The reflective nature of the six short chapters as well as the appearance of discussion questions in the text make this piece a natural for group reporting and discussion. Be sure to incorporate the discussion questions not only as part of a reading in the book, but also as part of your session times.

*Many Yet One: The Church and Churches in the Middle East*. A filmstrip kit with filmstrip, cassette and script/guidance booklet, *Many Yet One* will give your group entree into a little known or understood world of the Christian churches in the Middle East. It can be shown and discussed as an opener to the study or in advance of the session focusing on this topic.

*Signpost/Middle East* and *New Friends/New Places* by Anne Stephens and Constance Taras are two sets of story papers for children, the first for older elementaries and the second for early elementaries. Guidance for using these two pieces is found in chapter 7: Children View the Middle East Mosaic—Special Children's Guidance.

*The World of Islam* by John B. Taylor is designed to be an introduction to the basic elements essential to the Islamic faith.

*When Jew and Christian Meet* by LaVonne Althouse, though not prepared especially for this study, is a must in conjunction with *The World of Islam* and *Many Yet One*. In addition to setting forth some of the basics to the Jewish faith, it also provides the setting for dialogue and discussion between members of the Jewish and Christian faiths. This dialogue approach is also useful in approaching discussion with Muslims and members of the Orthodox Christian churches.

Additional recommended books for study are *When Faith Meets Faith*, *David*, *My Jewish Friend* and *Hungry for Peace*.

Decide which of the above materials your group will need approximately one month in advance to give adequate time for purchasing or ordering the materials and to give you, as the leader, time to become familiar with the materials.

### Preparation for the Study Course

The first step in preparation is reading the study resources. Become familiar with all of the resources. Review the various lesson plans in this guide. Each of these contain some additional resources. Decide on which

of these resources you want to use in your study and place your order. Once you are familiar with the materials you will have to decide on how you will utilize them. You have the option of a Sunday school class or an evening seminar. These can run either 6 or 7 sessions. An alternative option is a one day workshop. A lesson plan for the workshop is also contained in this chapter.

The second step in preparation is the challenge of recruitment. Several weeks before the class begins, you might want to place a brief story in the church newsletter and regular notices in the church bulletin. Be sure that you convey the fact that the class is open to all ages and not only adults. Posters would also be an effective way of bringing the message to your congregation. In addition to these you might want to place a brief story in your local newspaper. Many television and radio stations have special periods during the day when they announce meetings of community interest. If your station follows a similar practice, contact them with an announcement outlining the purpose of the course and the dates of its meeting. However, don't leave publicity to the official channels. Personalize your invitation by writing letters to nearby churches. Invite these congregations to also participate in the course. Identify your neighbors and acquaintances who might be interested in your course and call them. Don't expect persons simply to come. Instead, invite them to become participants. Perhaps you might also ask other members of your congregation to pass on invitations to their close friends, and offer them a ride to the meetings.

Finally, prepare your meeting place for the class. Ideally, it should be a large space that will accommodate the expected number of participants and leave sufficient room for several displays and work areas. A fellowship hall would be a good place. You should have a chalkboard, a bulletin board, as well as several tables on the side. Review the books on the Middle East in the public library and check out several of the better ones. You can use these books to make a display table. Begin collecting newspaper articles about the Middle East and put these on your bulletin board. Posting several maps of the region would also be helpful. Think of other ways you can visually bring the importance of the Middle East to the attention of your class and set up your room accordingly.

### Session One: Introduction

**Goal:** The purpose of the first class meeting is 1) to introduce the participants to the Middle East study and 2) to enable them to become a group.

**A Word of Welcome:** Greet the participants as they arrive and assemble. In some circumstances it may be helpful to furnish class members with name tags. Coffee and doughnuts also add a nice touch and can contribute towards building an informal atmosphere. If class size permits, you might break the class into groups of two, allow time for the individuals to become acquainted, and when reassembled have each member introduce their neighbor to the class. Using either your own ideas or the opening

paragraphs in the leader's guide state the purpose of the course. It will be helpful to write these goals on newsprint and post them in the room. This will provide the class with an easy reference point for evaluating where they are as a class during the learning process.

One way of introducing the class to the present study could be to ask, "Where and what is the Middle East?" Have participants list as many Middle Eastern countries as they can. You may want to use a map to help them locate the area and identify the names. Once the locale is determined ask them to give their impressions of what is happening there. Richard Butler, a contributor to this guide, has identified four dimensions to the dynamics of the Middle East Mosaic; they are:

- A. A search for identity for *Middle Easterners* who are neither of the orient nor of the west; who sit between Asia, Europe and Africa.
- B. Continued impact of colonialism and the creation by European powers of nations with boundaries that suited the interests of the Europeans but not necessarily the people of the area.
- C. The continued question of whether or not the European nation state model will work in the Middle East where older concepts of peoplehood and politico-religious communities still have a stronghold.
- D. In the search for modernization what political model(s) and what economic model(s) can best be suited to the needs of the people and countries of the area?

List these and arrange your class's impressions within the fourfold outline. Are there any blank spots? If so, why? Ask particular class members to assume the responsibility for filling in the blank areas with specific examples at the close of each of the subsequent meetings. For example, at the end of each class session you could ask, "Did we learn anything today which would be illustrative of 'a,' 'b,' 'c,' or 'd'?"

1. One way to introduce your class to the Middle East would be by showing the film, *Hope for Life*, which was prepared for the One Great Hour of Sharing. The film is in color and runs about 30m. You may want to distribute paper and pencils to class members and ask them to make a list of some of the persons they see in the film and the predicaments that confront them as the film is shown. After the film is viewed you divide the class into groups of threes. Ask each group to spend 5 minutes describing the persons and predicaments in the film and to select the one person and ministry that is most exciting for them. Have the groups reassemble and hear reports. Be sure each group tells the class why they selected the person and ministry they did.
2. An alternative to showing *Hope for Life* is to help your class to clarify their attitudes towards international peace and the Middle East. Either on newsprint or the chalkboard draw the following diagrams:

A. What are the chances of another war in the Middle East?

Small

Great

B. What is the likelihood of your country being involved?

Sally is  
building a  
bomb shelter

Bob is  
watching  
T.V.

Have each member of the class place themselves on these scales and briefly explain why. After everyone has explained their attitudes, you might want to remind your class that our country already has a presence in the Middle East, in terms of economic interests, foreign and military aid, and our dependency upon their oil.

3. Resource Inventory:

Spend 15 to 30 minutes identifying possible sources of information about or contact with the Middle East. List these on newsprint. For example: library, State Department, embassy, persons who have worked in Middle East, students or business persons from Middle East, Chamber of Commerce, tourists and your denominational headquarters, etc. Ask the class to put a name by each category or a contact person who could suggest a name. Ask individual members to contact the various resource persons and invite them to share in the class process at appropriate points (i.e. panel discussions, etc.) Review the resources and report to the class (library).

4. Have someone read Matt. 5: 1-16. This could be done collectively, responsively, or one person could read while the class follows. After the passage is read, have individuals in the class spend several minutes listing examples of "peacemakers," "light," or "salt." List these. Point out to them that in order to answer this type of question, the class must understand the concrete context in which they are called to be peacemakers, light or salt. This is one of the goals of our course.

5. Conclude your class with a reading of Matt. 25: 31-46. Usually the church has read this passage as a list of "oughts." We ought to visit, clothe, and feed. However, there is a surprise in this passage we often miss. The sheep did not realize they were sheep until Christ called them by name. They were sheep all the time but didn't know it.

Assignment: Before adjourning ask your class to cut stories from their newspapers and magazines during the coming week that apply to the Middle East and to bring them to the next class meeting. Secondly, hand out *Sojourn in Mosaic* and ask the class to begin reading. Thirdly, ask several persons to take one of the following special assignments:

1) read and briefly report on *The World of Islam* book by John Taylor.

2) read and give a brief report on *When Jew and Christian Meet* by LaVonne Altouse, and

3) read and report on chapters 3 and 4 of the guide on "Israel in the Middle East Mosaic" and "Jerusalem's Islamic Calling."

4) Prepare to show the filmstrip *Many Yet One*.

## Session 2

**Goal:** The purpose of this class meeting is to introduce class members to the major religions that are found in the Middle East: Islam, Judaism, and Christianity.

**A Word of Welcome:**

Greet the class and make a special point of welcoming and introducing any new members. Begin the class by asking the participants to share with the class any news stories they have read concerning the Middle East. Their increased awareness about the amount of daily news coming from that troubled region should develop an increased sensitivity to the importance of the conflict.

1) Show the filmstrip *Many Yet One*, which is intended to acquaint the class with the diversity of Christian churches in the Middle East. You could distribute paper and pencil before the showing, and request the class to 1) list the various churches mentioned in the film; 2) explain the purpose and work of the Middle East Council of Churches. Check the guidance booklet that accompanies the filmstrip for discussion suggestions.

### Churches of Middle Eastern Background in the United States and Canada

Experiencing the life and worship of Middle Eastern Christians will help make the Middle East Mosaic study come to life for a church study group. Many of these Christians are to be found in the United States. Listed below is information on how to contact churches of Middle Eastern background in order to learn if there is such a congregation or church in your locality. The addresses listed are of church headquarters which can supply names and addresses of local churches. Before writing you might check a local church directory or local council of churches office to see if one of these churches is to be found in your locality. Contact with the priest or pastor and a visit to a liturgy or worship service will help make the study more of a reality to your group.

### Church Families

#### *Eastern Orthodox*

Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America  
358 Mountain Road  
Englewood, New Jersey 07631

Churches of the archdiocese are under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Antioch located in Damascus, Syria. In addition, Eastern Orthodox persons of Middle Eastern background might be found in Greek Orthodox parishes as well as in Orthodox Church in America parishes.

Armenian Apostolic Church of America  
138 East 39th Street  
New York, New York 10016

Armenian churches are under the jurisdiction of the Holy See of Cilicia now located in Antelias, Lebanon.

Armenian Church of America  
[Eastern Diocese]  
630 Second Avenue  
New York, New York 10016

[Western Diocese]  
1201 North Vine Street  
Hollywood, California 90038

Armenian churches under the jurisdiction of Holy Etchmiad-Zin, also include the Armenian Patriarchates of Jerusalem and Constantinople:

Coptic Orthodox Church  
Diocese of North America  
427 West Side Avenue  
Jersey City, New Jersey 07304

Churches of the diocese are under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Alexandria.

Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch  
Archdiocese of the United States and Canada  
293 Hamilton Place  
Hackensack, New Jersey 07601

Churches of the Syrian Orthodox Church are under the jurisdiction of the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and All the East located in Damascus, Syria.

#### *Protestant and Evangelical Churches of Middle Eastern Background*

While there are a few Arabic-language or Armenian-language Protestant churches in the United States and Canada, there is no organizational structure tying these churches together. Most Protestants, Evangelicals and Anglicans of Middle Eastern background have been assimilated into existing English-language congregations.

#### *Eastern-Rite Catholics*

For information on Eastern-Rite Catholic Churches in the United States and Canada, interested persons should consult the *Official Catholic Directory*, P.J. Kennedy and Sons, publisher. Copies of the *Directory* can be found in many public libraries and at the rectories of most Roman Catholic and Eastern-Rite Catholic churches.

An alternative would be to divide the group into several sub-groups and assign reading *Sojourn in Mosaic* to each group. Ask them to look for examples of ministry. To whom is the ministry directed? What is the purpose of the ministry?

2) Hear the report on *The World of Islam* and chapter 4. As the class member is reporting use the blackboard or

newsprint to write down important terms such as Islam, Muslim, Muhammad, Allah, Qu'ran, "The Five Pillars of the Faith," Mecca, Sunni, Shiis, and Crusades. Following the report review these terms with the class and make sure that each is understood. Give special attention to "The Five Pillars of the Faith." Have the class compare and contrast Islam with Christianity. You might initiate this discussion with the following or similar questions: "Someone observed that Islam is a way of living while Christianity is a set of beliefs. Do you agree or not?"

3) Hear the report on *When Jew and Christian Meet*. Once again list such important terms as Torah, Synagogue, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Succoth, Passover, and Holocaust. In order to pick up on the theme of Israel and the land hear the report on chapter 3.

4) Briefly discuss the following question: "Is there anything inherent in any of the great religions that would command a believer to kill another person?"

The basic concepts in the Qu'ran will be surprisingly familiar to most Jewish or Christian readers. Monotheism, repentance, the Day of Judgment, resurrection, heaven and hell all appear in its pages. There is much common ground. For example, compare and contrast the following affirmations concerning the nature of God and faith.

"There is no god but Allah"

"Hear O Israel, the Lord our God Is One Lord" (Deut. 6:4)

"Allah! There is no God save Him, the living, the eternal!

Neither slumber nor sleep overtaketh Him. Unto Him belongeth whatsoever is in the earth." (11:255)

"My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved, He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep." (Ps. 121: 2-4.)

"Righteousness is not that ye turn your faces to the East or to the West, but righteousness is this: whosoever believeth in God, and the Last Day, and the angels, and the Book, and the Prophets, and whosoever, for the love of God, giveth of his wealth and to his kindred, unto orphans, and the poor, and the way forever, and to the beggar, and for the release of captives...." (ii, 177)

Amos 5:21-24

Matt. 25: 31-46; James 2: 14-26 or Luke 6: 46-49.

Allow the class to discuss this problem for a few minutes and then challenge them to explain why persons are killing each other in the Middle East.

5) Two ways of concluding your meeting might be 1) to offer a brief prayer which petitions God for a spirit of love and understanding among church, synagogue, and mosque, or 2) have the group compose a prayer by making suggestions which utilize the list of religious terms that are on the newsprint or blackboard.

Before adjourning ask several of the younger members to 1) read and report on *New Friends/New Places*, or *Stgnpost/Middle East*. Assign various chapters in *Peace, Justice and Reconciliation in the Arab-Israeli Conflict* and chapter 2.

### Session 3

**Goal:** to introduce class members to the political, economic, and cultural forces which are affecting the Arab communities in the Middle East.

#### *A Word of Welcome*

Greet class members as they arrive and distribute to each participant a pencil and some paper. Share with the class the purpose of this meeting: to acquaint persons with the political, economic, and cultural forces which are affecting the Arab communities in the Middle East. Ask if anyone has any newspaper or magazine articles they wish to share with the class.

1) Begin the class with a brief quiz to assess their "headline" understanding or portrayal of Arab communities in the Middle East. Suggested test questions are:

1. The Lebanese conflict is a civil war. True or False.
2. The population of Lebanon is roughly divided between Christians and Muslims. True or False.
3. The Arabs have a disproportionate share of Lebanon's wealth. True or False.
4. The presence of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon is not an important factor in the present conflict. True or False.
5. Some of the options for Lebanon's future are \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Egypt's problems cluster around one fundamental reality: too many persons and too little land. True or False.
7. Because of colonial influence Egypt has not been one of the leading Arab countries. True or False.
8. Egypt has focused upon agriculture instead of industrialization in its effort to raise the population's standard of living. True or False.
9. Like Lebanon, Egypt has a pluralistic population in which the wealth is equally distributed. True or False.
10. Egypt's domestic trouble makes another war a political necessity. True or False.
11. M.K. Atatürk was the last Emperor of Turkey. True or False.
12. Turkey and Greece have enjoyed a long history of cordial relations. True or False.
13. Recent relations between Turkey and the U.S. have been less than cordial because of the island of \_\_\_\_\_ and the production of \_\_\_\_\_.
14. Turkey's foreign policy is partially determined by her proximity to \_\_\_\_\_.

Spend about 15 minutes discussing the answers to these questions. The persons who read either chapter 2 or chapters in the *Peace, Justice...* book can be resource persons for the groups. After the class has discussed each

segment of questions ask the resource leader if the class is right and if he or she has anything else to add.

#### *Interview:*

Invite a university student from the Middle East who is studying in your city to serve as a guest in a question and answer format. Work up a series of questions with several members of your class during the preceding week and share these with the guest. For example: What is involved in growing up in the Middle East? Describe your schooling, religious holidays, and dating habits. If someone were going to visit your country what would you like them to see and why?

2) Spend the remainder of your time discussing *Sojourn in Mosaic*. In each case begin the discussion: What is the point or points that the author is trying to convey? How is this theme or point of view conveyed? In light of your reading what constitutes "justice" for the Arabs or Jews?

Another approach would be to have a panel discussion. Invite several persons to serve on a panel to discuss the nature of life in the Middle East as well as the present conflict. Appropriate persons for such a panel may be those in your community who are from or who have worked or lived in the region. Ask them to describe life in the Middle East: religious traditions, customs, any social changes, or problems. Note areas of agreement or disagreement. (Open the floor to questions from your class.) Conclude your class discussion with the following questions: "Did any of the characters in *Sojourn in Mosaic* have similar experiences" or "What seem to be the major impressions that you received from these panelists or the novel by Robert Elfers?"

Conclude your class with a brief study of Luke 10: 25-37. Note the subtle way in which the lawyer tried to define "neighbor" narrowly and the way Jesus responded. The focus is not so much upon "who is my neighbor" as what does it mean to act neighborly, i.e. to show mercy and compassion.

Before adjourning ask four persons to read chapter 1 in the leader's guide and chapters 3-5 in the *Peace, Justice...* book.

### Session Four

**Goal:** to introduce class members to Israel, to the Palestinians, and 2) to identify areas of conflict between the two.

#### *A Word of Welcome*

Greet class members as they arrive. Share with them the purpose of this meeting: to identify points of conflict between Israel and the Palestinians.

1) Begin your class with a brief Bible study of Genesis 11: 1-9 and Acts 2: 1-13. One way of doing this would be to ask the participants to assume the roles mentioned in the two narratives and to act out the passage. In the Genesis story a group is engaged in a common endeavor and is dispersed or scattered. In the other case a diverse and separate audience is brought together. Note the divergent themes of estrangement and reconciliation.

Ask class members if they have read or heard of any news from the Middle East during the past week which illustrates either of these themes. Briefly discuss the recent news.

2) Divide the class into two groups. One group is to study the Israeli position while the other seeks to understand the Palestinian's position. Using the Leader's Guide and any other available resources each group is to determine their respective group's identity, what their history is, and what they want in the present conflict. One way of opening this process could be to request each group to review maps in the back of *Peace, Justice and Reconciliation in the Arab-Israeli Conflict* and read chapters 1 and 2 in that book.

Ask each group to elect a spokesperson and a scribe. The scribe is to write on newsprint the groups' answers. Allow about 20 minutes for the groups to complete their work.

3) Assemble the class and hear reports. Underscore important points for the class. Compare and contrast hopes of Israel and the Palestinians.

4) Conclude your class with either a showing of the brief film "Arabs and Jews," Part I or a discussion of anti-Semitism using the following lines:

What is anti-Semitism? Give examples. If your parents had died in the Holocaust how would this influence your perception of events over the last thirty years in the Middle East? How does Western civilization's history of anti-Semitism affect our evaluation of the Middle East conflict? While both Jews and Arabs are Semites, are we overly sympathetic to the plight of Israel because of our history? In light of the Holocaust is it possible to be "overly" sympathetic to the aspirations of Israel?

Useful resources for this discussion are *The Anguish of the Jews: Twenty Three Centuries of anti-Semitism* by Edward H. Plannery or chapters 55 through 57 of *The Story of Judaism* by Bernard J. Bamberger.

Before adjourning ask several members of your class to read *When Jew and Christian Meet* by LaVonne Althouse, *David, My Jewish Friend* by Alice L. Goddard, and *The World of Islam* by John Taylor. Ask the remainder of your class to begin formulating a list of methods that persons can use to influence other persons or groups.

### Session Five

The teacher has two options with this session of the class. Depending on the needs of your group, the leader may either have a panel involving Muslims, Jews, and Christians or a simulation exercise which is intended to help participants come to grips with the political dynamics in the Middle East. In some circumstances an interfaith discussion may be impractical. If this is the case, then go on to the simulation game which follows.

#### Option 1: Interfaith Discussion

**Goal:** to increase mutual understanding among persons of various faiths and to examine points of agreement and disagreement among persons in the various religious communities in regard to the Middle East.

**Preparation:** In some circumstances an interfaith discussion may be impractical. If this is the case then go on to the simulation exercise, "Conflict or Community," which follows the directions for the interfaith dialogue or to Session 6.

If the leader decides to have an interfaith panel discussion, then it will be necessary to recruit representatives from the various religious communities. There is a large population in North America of persons representative of churches of Middle East background and Islam and Judaism. Contact with such groups could be made either through checking the phone book for the organization, contacting a local university pastor, or writing one of the following organizations:

Muslim World League  
300 East 44 Street  
New York, N.Y. 10017

Muslim Students Association of the U.S. and Canada  
P.O. Box 264  
Plainfield, Indiana 46168

Federation of Islamic Associations in the U.S. and Canada  
820 Second Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10017

Office on Christian-Jewish Relations  
National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.  
475 Riverside Drive  
New York, N.Y. 10027

National Conference of Christians and Jews  
43 West 57 St.  
New York, N.Y. 10019

American Jewish Committee  
165 East 56 St.  
New York, N.Y. 10022

Anti-Defamation League of B'nai-Brith  
315 Lexington Ave.  
New York, N.Y. 10016

See session 2 for a listing of organizations for churches of Middle Eastern Background.

You will need to contact these groups well in advance and request them to furnish the name of the nearest representative who might be willing to serve on an interfaith panel.

The third member of your panel could be the local pastor or the executive of your church's judicatory, i.e. district, Presbytery, etc.

#### A Word of Welcome

After you have greeted the class, request one of the participants to read Amos 5: 21-24 and Leviticus 19: 16-18; 33-34, or have the class read in unison, responsively. After the passages are read, ask the class, "What do these passages say about our relationship to our neighbor? Is

there a connection between love and justice? Can a person claim to love a neighbor and not seek justice for that person?"

1) Share with the class the purpose of the session: to increase mutual understanding among persons of various faiths and to examine points of agreement and disagreement among religious communities on the Middle East conflict. Briefly review the rules for interfaith dialogue in *When Jew and Christian Meet*. Introduce the various panelists to the class. The class leader should serve as moderator.

2) Each member of the panel will give a five-minute presentation on what they believe to be points of commonality between the tenets of their faith and the other major religions represented on the panel. In short, they are to deal with the question, "What does my faith hold in common with yours?" After points of agreement are examined and acknowledged, the panelists should deal with the following questions:

- a. As an individual Jew, Christian, Muslim, do you have any particular interest in the shape of a Middle East settlement?
- b. Does your religious community have a special interest in the shape of a Middle East settlement?

These questions are intended to bring out a variety of issues that should be brought to the attention of your class. For example, each of the faiths represented on the panel possesses emotional, if not theological, ties to the city of Jerusalem. Should the representatives of one faith control the entire city with its many shrines? Should the city be under international control with guaranteed access to pilgrims of all faiths? Some members of the present state of Israel want Israel's boundaries to conform to the boundaries that were in existence at the time of King David. Is this reasonable? What would this mean for the Palestinians, Egyptians, or Jordanians? Is it proper to use Scripture to justify such an expansion of political control? Do Jews, Muslims and Christians worship the same God and, if so, what implications does this have for Christian mission? What meaning does our belief that "in Christ there is no Jew, no Greek," etc. have for our search for peace in the Middle East?

After these questions are answered, open the floor for questions from the class. At the end of the class session, try to summarize the various issues and views that emerged during the discussion. Acknowledge areas of disagreement as well as agreement. Conclude the class meeting by thanking the guest panelists for their willingness to participate in the class.

Before adjourning encourage the class to complete the reading of their *Peace, Justice...* books and to bring their "How to influence" lists to the next session.

#### *Option Two—Simulation Game Conflict or Community in the Middle East*

The purposes of this simulation game are to have participants encounter the obstacles to peace and the opportunities for community in the Middle East. More-

over, it is intended to assist the player to think through his or her understanding of "foreign policy" within the context of the Middle East Mosaic.

Directions: Divide the class into eight groups. Each group is given a prescribed number of chips or power slips. These chips can be pieces of paper with the name of one of the countries in the Middle East conflict. Each individual will have a name tag which identifies their country. The distribution of power chips for the purpose of this game is as follows: Egypt (10), Israel (10), Palestinians (6), Jordan (10), U.S. (50), U.S.S.R. (50), and oil producers (25).

The game will consist of three rounds. In the first round each group is to separate itself from the other countries, determine how many chips will be wagered, put these in an envelope, and reassemble with the other countries at the end of ten minutes. The teacher or game leader will open the various envelopes and count the number of power slips in each. The team which wagers the most slips is declared the winner and collects all the slips wagered by the other countries. In case of a tie, the winnings are divided.

In the first and subsequent rounds teams may enter into alliances with one another. For example, Israel and U.S. may wager their slips as a block. If an alliance is arranged, then the slips should contain a mention of the joint effort. Distribution of "winnings" gained through an alliance are at the discretion of the involved parties. Please note, only those alliances which are clearly noted on the wagered slips will be counted as a block vote.

At the end of the first round, the distribution of power should have been altered. Remind the participants of the possibility of entering into an alliance. After the allocation of power chips is determined ask the Palestinians and Israel if they are satisfied with the results. If either group is dissatisfied, they may veto the distribution. If a veto is used then the distribution of power returns to the distribution that existed at the beginning of the round. Moreover, every group is penalized 5 chips which are subtracted from their total number of chips. While Israel and the Palestinians are to be told of their veto option at the end of the round, they are not to be told of the penalties until the veto is utilized.

Send the countries into separate rooms for 20 minutes. They are to use this time to determine their wagering in the second round, discuss their strategy, and enter any alliances.

After the teacher has determined the winner in round 2, recorded the new distribution of power chips, and inquired whether Israel or the Palestinians wished to use their veto, the leader will declare a "force majeure." The "force majeure" will consist of the following elements: a. Israel invades southern Lebanon in order to neutralize P.L.O. groups. Israel gets 5 chips from Lebanon. b. Oil producing nations declare a doubling of oil prices in response to invasion. America loses 15 chips. c. Russia reaffirms its support of the Palestinians and gives them 10 chips.

## Session Six

The leader will list the new distribution of power. Each group is to leave the room and prepare a brief statement concerning 1) its feelings about what has transpired during the course of the first two rounds, and 2) what it would like to see happen at the end of the third round, i.e., How many chips would you like to have? Give the groups about 15 minutes to compose their statements. Assemble the groups and have a person from each group present its position. After each group presents its statement allow 5 to 10 minutes for further discussion among group leaders in public. After the spokespersons have presented their positions, remind the class that international arrangements often involve trade-offs. A nation will give up something in order to gain something. For example, Egypt may give up its desire to create a Palestinian state in order to regain its territory. Conversely, Israel might return some of its occupied territory in order to gain peace with Egypt. In our game we also have opportunities for trade-offs through alliances and block voting. Two important things you will have to decide in your wagering period are 1) whether you are willing to trade, and 2) what constitutes an acceptable trade?

Send the groups out to determine their wagering in the third round. After 20 minutes, assemble the groups and open the bids. Determine the distribution of power and ask Israel and Palestinians whether they wish to use the veto. After making any necessary changes in the distribution of power, declare the game at an end and ask each country to remove its name tags.

Debriefing: Using the following or similar questions, lead the class through a discussion of the game.

How did you feel at the end of rounds 1 and 2? What was happening in your group and how did you feel about the other groups? The "force majeure" was a hypothetical situation yet how did it affect you and your feeling concerning the other groups? What constituted "winning" in this game—the acquisition of the most number of chips or a more equal distribution of chips? What were your feelings when the veto was employed? Why was it employed by Israel or the Palestinians? If you were a member of a small country did you feel able to risk all your chips? Was it easier for the big countries to risk chips? If you were a large country could you afford to risk your chips without knowing what the other big country would do? Was it possible for all the parties to get together and arrange a fair distribution of chips through trade-offs? What were the incentives for such trade-offs? What were the obstacles? Were there any ways to prevent one or both of the large countries from arbitrarily taking advantage of the smaller countries? If you had to write a 25-word or less telegram listing what you learned from playing the game, what would it say?

Some persons claim that there is no such thing as a Christian foreign policy or a Christian solution to the Middle East conflict. Rather, there are only choices among policy options. What criteria would you use in making such choices? Does our faith provide us with any guidance or criteria? If so, what are these criteria?

**Goal:** to develop strategies of ministry which will enhance a peaceful and just resolution of the Middle East conflict and which will be supportive of the churches in that region.

**A Word of Welcome:** Greet the class as they assemble and lead them in prayer requesting God's guidance in developing an effective ministry of reconciliation. Share with the class the purpose of this meeting: to develop and implement a strategy or plan for increasing the possibility of a peaceful and just resolution of the conflict in the Middle East.

**Game: Hot Potato**

The purpose of this game is either to help the class quickly review the previous class session or to present material gained from reading assignments. The teacher is to organize the class into a circle. The teacher begins the game by saying a word, phrase, or term which is part of the Middle East Mosaic (for example: "Islam"). Moving clockwise, the next person in the circle defines the term or phrase. He or she concludes the definition with another term or phrase (for example: "oil embargo"). If an individual is unable to define a term, then it is passed on to the next person in the cycle. If several persons do not recognize a word or term from the Mosaic, you should either give several persons an opportunity to do some research on the subject for homework or adjust your lesson plan to give an appropriate amount of class time to the topic.

1. Using the first 4 chapters of this guide and the *Peace, Justice...* book, review with the class the various issues surrounding the Middle East crisis. List these issues on newsprint. For example, the list will include Jerusalem, Israeli occupation of territories, settlements, terrorist attacks, refusal of some Arab states to recognize diplomatically Israel's right to exist, Lebanese civil war, oil embargo, etc.

2. Take a few minutes to brainstorm with your class possible ways of influencing other persons or groups. Here are a few examples:

- write your Congressman, Senators, or member of Parliament
- ask your church to overture its district, conference, or Presbytery to take a public stand
- report the stand to the newspapers; forward copies of the articles to your political representatives
- discover what other Christians are doing in your city, state, denomination and Council of Churches and join with them
- visit your political representatives with a petition signed by a number of persons in your community
- adopt a position and distribute it to the newspapers, local television stations and political representatives
- join Impact. Impact is a coalition of persons from over twenty denominations which seeks to influence the political process on foreign aid issues. For more information, write Impact, 110 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002

- h) ask your civic groups to present programs on the Middle East crisis
- i) hold a seminar on the Middle East conflict to which you invite business persons who have economic ties to that region

Your class can certainly improve upon this partial listing. Give them an opportunity.

3. Divide your class into three groups and give them the following assignments: Group 1 is to identify one or two *obstacles* to peace and justice in the Middle East that pertain to the religious dimensions of the controversy. For example, they may choose the lack of understanding among Jews, Christians, and Muslims. After they identify the obstacles, they are to decide on one or two steps that could be taken by an individual or the class to overcome this obstacle. Group 2 is to identify one or two *obstacles* to peace and justice in the Middle East that pertain to the goals of the various participants in the controversy. For example, they might choose the Palestinian desire to keep a homeland of their own or Israel's desire for secure and recognized borders. After they identify the *obstacles* they are to decide on one or two steps that could be taken by an individual or the class to overcome this obstacle. Group 3 is to identify one or two elements in their country's foreign policy that is either increasing or decreasing the likelihood of peace and justice in the Middle East. For example, they may identify America's arm-sales as a source of instability or stability in the Middle East. Once they have identified the element, they are to decide on one or two steps that an individual or a class could take to increase North America's contribution to a just peace in that troubled region. They may wish to begin their work by discussing the questions in the back of the *Peace, Justice...* book or by discussing the following or similar questions:

1. There is no such thing as a Christian foreign policy or a Christian solution to the Middle East conflict. Rather, there are only choices among policy options. What criteria would you use in making such choices? Does our faith provide us with any guidelines or criteria? If so, what are they?
2. Reinhold Niebuhr suggested that "justice" in the international arena translates into an equilibrium of power in which each nation is able to pursue its own interests and no single nation is arbitrarily able to impose its will upon another. Would you agree or disagree with this definition? Why?
3. Reinhold Niebuhr has suggested that a central problem in international relations is how immense concentrations of power can be made socially responsible. Do you have any ideas as to how this could be accomplished?
4. Re-assemble the class and hear reports. Note areas of agreement and assign responsibility for initiating actions. For example, everyone might covenant together to write their political representatives advocating a particular policy. At the same time, an individual could contact his or her local church

governing board on behalf of the class requesting a public statement. These assignments should flow from the various reports of the three work groups. The important factors in this process are: 1) everyone should have at least one assignment, and 2) there should be a definite time frame in which this responsibility will be fulfilled.

5. You may want to offer your class the opportunity of re-assembling within a week or two in order to evaluate the success of the strategy for ministry and to develop additional plans. See next section for suggestions as to how to utilize an additional meeting.
6. Another follow-up approach could be to visit a mosque and/or synagogue: Contact a local synagogue or mosque and see if arrangements could be worked out to have the class receive a guided tour. It would be very helpful if you could meet with a corresponding group of Jews or Muslims for discussion and refreshments. Possibly, your group could serve as hosts for their tour of your church. In summary try to personalize your study and provide opportunities for inter-religious friendships which will extend beyond the short term study of the Middle East.

### Session Seven—Optional

In preparation:

The leader may find pages 5-6 of *Doing the Word* by Robert E. Koenig (United Church Press, \$1.95) very helpful resources in preparing for this meeting of the class.

The purpose of this session, which follows by two or three weeks the previous class meeting, is to assess the results of the group's ministry. Hence, the objectives of this gathering are:

- a. to evaluate the results of the strategies in light of the hoped for results
- b. to reflect theologically upon their experiences, and
- c. to develop a new plan for ministry.

#### *A Word of Welcome*

As participants assemble, ask each person briefly to write down the ministry for which he or she assumed responsibility and the results of their efforts. After a few moments allow each member of the class to share his or her experiences with the other members.

As the various participants report, the leader is to record their activities on two pieces of newsprint. On the first piece of newsprint, list the various activities that seem to accomplish their purpose or objective. On the second piece of newsprint, list those activities which were either counter-productive or ineffectual. Ask each member of the class if they would modify their approach if they had it to do all over again. Record any suggestions. After they report the facts of their adventure in ministry, ask them to share their feeling. For example, "Was your experience frustrating or satisfying, challenging or boring?"

1. Have someone read Luke 9: 1-6; 10: 1-12. Ask the class to consider and discuss the following question: Does

the fact that we are sent into the world in ministry by Jesus guarantee success?" If some members of your class engaged in forms of ministry which bore good fruit while others participated in actions which were essentially unproductive, what do these types of experiences tell your class about the world and their witness in it? Have their experiences modified their understanding of their field of ministry? Has their optimism been tempered by realism, or has it fallen into cynicism? If particular actions were ineffectual, it may be wise to either discard or modify them. Build on successful approaches.

2. The remainder of the class period could be profitably spent in re-designing the class's strategy for increasing the likelihood of a peaceful and just solution to the Middle East conflict. Use the experience gained through the previous effort to formulate more realistic and productive plans. Make sure every participant has had an opportunity to assume responsibility for implementing some facet of the class's strategy. Establish a time period in which the strategy will be implemented.

### Planning For An All Day Workshop on The Middle East

The purpose or goal of an all day workshop on the Middle East conflict is:

- a. to provide a concentrated learning experience
- b. to provide opportunities to discuss the controversy in the light of our common commitment to peace and justice
- c. to develop and implement ministries which are intended to increase the likelihood of a peaceful resolution of that conflict.

Preparation:

After obtaining the use of building space, arrange for refreshments and necessary meals. See the Middle East celebration in chapter 7 of the guide. Begin collecting articles on the Middle East and put these on a bulletin board. Recruit your leadership team. You will need five or six persons. Obtain a resource packet for each member of the leadership team. Call a meeting of the leadership team at least one month before the workshop and make the following assignments: a) ask each member to familiarize himself or herself with the material within the resource packet; b) assign each member of the leadership team one of the following areas of responsibility:

1. introducing participants to the peoples of the Middle East as they are found in Lebanon, Egypt, and Turkey
2. introducing participants to the Israelis and Palestinians
3. introducing participants to the religious dimension of the Middle East
4. introducing participants to the issues involved in the Middle East conflict
5. introducing participants to ways and means of influencing other persons and groups

The first four assignments will require the person to prepare a 45-minute class on the assigned topic. Resources for preparing a class are in the preceding section of the leader's guide. The fifth assignment will require the

individual to moderate a discussion on the "how to" of making an impact. Moreover, this person should also be prepared to make specific recommendations concerning tactics.

### *Suggestions for Conducting the Workshop*

The workshop will be divided into four phases: a) information gathering, b) discussion and reflection, c) developing strategies, and d) assuming responsibility for the implementation of the strategy. Due to the complexity of the issue, it would be helpful to have morning, afternoon, and evening sessions.

1. As persons register, give them a name tag to fill out and assign them to one of the four groups (groups 1, 2, 3, and 4). While these groups should be of equal size, it would be beneficial to assign persons from the same church or community to the same group.

2. The opening should consist of a brief word of welcome, introduction of the leadership team, and a statement of the purpose of the workshop. The workshop is intended to increase our understanding of the present controversy in the Middle East and to develop strategies that are in conformity with our faith and that will increase the possibility of a peaceful and just resolution of that conflict.

### Phase 1 - Information Gathering

3. Each group will be directed to meet in a particular learning center or classroom. In that room one member of the leadership team will conduct a 45-minute class on their assigned area of responsibility. Paper and pencil should be provided each participant. During the last few minutes of the class, the participants are to list several obstacles to peace and justice in the Middle East that pertain to the particular class they are attending. After the 45-minute class, the group is to move on to the next classroom or learning center in order to meet another teacher and learn about another area of controversy within the Middle East conflict. For example, group 1 will go from room 101 to room 102 and group 2 will go from room 102 to room 103, etc. The process should repeat itself so that each participant in the workshop will have had a chance to touch base with each of the areas of concern.

4. Re-assemble the group after the meal. You might want to consider a hymn or a prayer as a means of bridging the gap between rest time and work. Provide a few minutes for persons to offer any reactions or observations on the experiences derived from phase one. At the conclusion of this reaction period, the fifth member of your leadership team should make a brief presentation on the various ways and means of making an impact upon the creation of policy or on public opinion. Have the leader list various options with a brief description. Allow for the participants to suggest additional tactics which the group could use to influence policy.

### Phase 2 - Moral Reflection

5. Ask each of the four groups to meet in one of the adjoining classrooms and discuss the following questions:

What are some of the important obstacles to peace and justice in the Middle East? What are some of the tactics or means that the group could employ in order to either lessen or overcome these obstacles? Are there any passages or themes in the Bible which seem to pertain either to the obstacle or the tactic? Have someone in each group record the answers on newsprint. Give the groups an hour and a half to complete the assignment.

Assign one or two members of the leadership team to work with each group as a process facilitator and resource person.

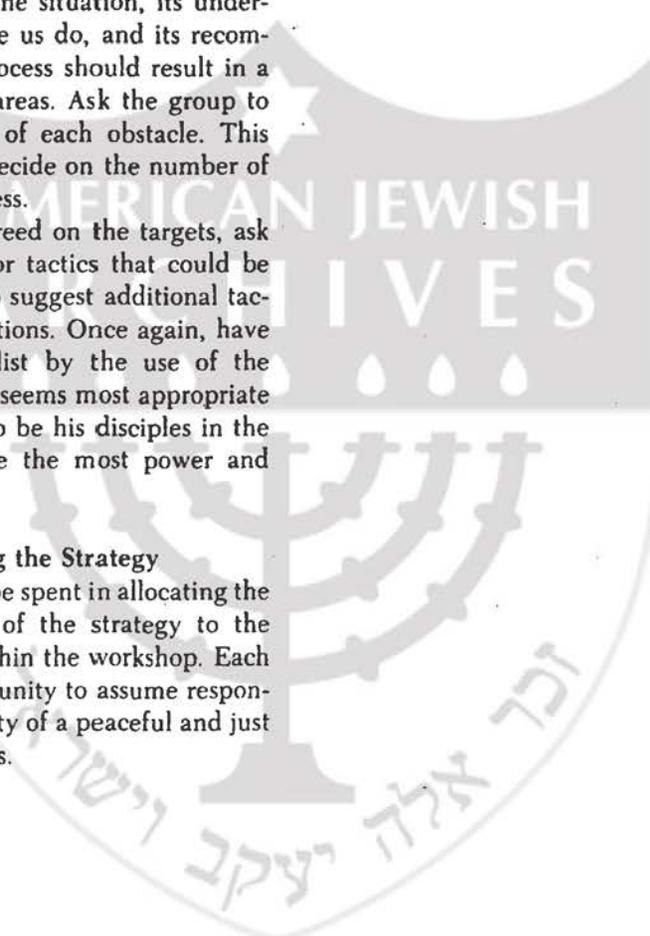
### **Phase 3 - Strategy Building**

6. Re-assemble the group and hear brief reports. Each group is to share its analysis of the situation, its understanding of what God would have us do, and its recommendations as to tactics. This process should result in a list of major obstacles or target areas. Ask the group to vote on the relative importance of each obstacle. This process is called "prioritizing." Decide on the number of targets your group wishes to address.

Once the participants have agreed on the targets, ask the group to list several means or tactics that could be employed. Ask the participants to suggest additional tactics. Develop a list of possible actions. Once again, have the workshop "prioritize" this list by the use of the following questions: What action seems most appropriate for us who are called by Christ to be his disciples in the world? What action do we have the most power and resources to undertake?

### **Phase 4 - Implementing the Strategy**

7. The remaining time should be spent in allocating the responsibility for the execution of the strategy to the various participants or groups within the workshop. Each person should be given an opportunity to assume responsibility for increasing the possibility of a peaceful and just resolution of the Middle East crisis.



# 7. CHILDREN VIEW THE MIDDLE EAST MOSAIC: Special Children's Guidance

Anne C. Stephens and Constance J. Tarasar

If you have read the preceding chapters of this guide—and we hope you have, for you will need the valuable background information they contain—you are probably wondering how to approach the complex issues of life in the Middle East at a level that will have meaning for early and late elementaries.

First, let's think specifically about another question: Why do we wish our children to learn about the Middle East Mosaic? The main part of this guide says that learning more, and more accurately, about the Middle East is the basis for ministry in this area of the world. Children as well as adults need to be presented with the opportunity to contribute in their own way to ministry. They, too, need to have available information that will inform their attitudes toward others in an interdependent, multiethnic, multireligious world.

When children first begin to learn about the Middle East, teachers will have difficulty introducing historical and contemporary concepts in a simplified, yet meaningful form. Past and present are closely interrelated. The line between right and wrong is never clear; in fact, often it is not even possible to discover such a division. At best, after a teacher has first grounded him/herself in knowledge that provides some degree of insight into the history of the area, political and religious as well as sociocultural, and has become supersensitive to the complexities of labeling as right or wrong, just or unjust one or another issue, boundary, demand, and so forth, he/she will need to decide into what areas to lead children.

Both sets of story papers, *Signpost/Middle East* and *New Friends/New Places*, are designed to introduce children to other children like themselves, providing at least a minimal common ground. The context of each story then reveals aspects of a particular family-ethnic-national-religious-cultural identity that makes these children different, at least in a small way, from one another. The teacher's responsibility is to pick up these similarities and differences, and try to weave them into a picture of the larger society, in which different ethno-cultural and religious backgrounds mark minority and majority groups that must act and react with one another as a part of the nation-state of which they are citizens (or in some cases noncitizens).

In such a situation, you cannot expect to find either the extreme of perfect harmony or the extreme of total conflict, where there is no sharing, within or among groups, of any common view. Instead you will find the tension that is probably the most obvious and all-pervasive quality of the lives of people in the Middle East nations. Everyone shares with others some common ground of interest, and yet so often there are also quite important and pronounced dissimilarities of interest.

Into this situation the church and individual Christians bring the reconciling Word, and children can be shown the very great need for the Word and the example of Christ. Learning about the Middle East, about the confusion of justice with injustice, secular government with religious government, ethnic pride with prejudice and all the rest, on a level where it affects even the lives of children, can reveal all the opportunities for the ministry of reconciliation that children, there as well as here, have in their own lives. Ultimately, you are guiding your children in understanding not simply the story of the Middle East, but that of the human condition.

## Teaching Elementary-age Children

Teachers will need to keep in mind certain characteristics of children in early and late elementary classes. In early elementary classes, teachers should focus on sensory elements and social concepts that are within the comprehension levels of six- to eight-year-old children. Time and space concepts are not yet well developed, so geographical details should be limited to things the children can experience through their senses; for example, map study is not appropriate, but study of deserts and the forms of life found there can be introduced. In like manner, "centuries" is a concept of little meaning to a child who has lived only six years, so terms such as "long ago" should be substituted. "Nations" and "cultures" are abstract terms, but you can introduce the topic of how families live in different places. Emphasis should be placed on stories that illustrate life situations; history and political events should be minimized unless children ask questions about contemporary news events related to the Middle East. In the latter case, keep answers simple and avoid long, historical explanations.

Children in the late elementary grades, on the other hand, are beginning to study geography, use maps, learn about different countries and peoples, and have a better understanding of time values. Increased academic skills and dexterity enable the students to conduct investigations for simple research reports, construct sometimes elaborate models and topographical maps, and discuss current events. The use of time lines can help them to place historical events on a continuum in a concrete way, and assist them in relating biblical events to events preceding and following them. Concepts should still be presented in concrete forms, however; abstract historical or political concepts should be avoided in class discussions.

# A Middle Eastern Celebration

Plan a meal around the theme of a Middle East celebration. Here are some recipes you might try with the children for your celebration.

## Homus 'B Tahini (Chick-pea Dip)

2 cans chick peas	4 cloves garlic
6 Tbsp. sesame tahini	1 Tbsp. oil
2 tsp. salt	Parsley

Empty contents of chick peas in saucepan and boil 15 minutes. Drain and reserve water. Mash and set aside.

Place tahini, salt and lemon juice in mixing bowl and mix. Add reserved water until dressing reaches consistency of heavy cake batter. Add mashed garlic and oil. Mix. Pour the tahini sauce over the mashed chick peas. Mix and place in blender. Blend, adding reserved water until entire mixture reaches consistency of heavy cake batter.

To serve, pour mixture into salad bowls.

Pour olive oil on top and garnish with parsley. Serve with pita (pocket) bread, using bread to scoop up the dip.

## Tabooley (Salad)

2 C. crushed wheat	1 tsp. black pepper
2 bunches parsley	½ C. olive oil
1 bunch green onions	Salt to taste
2 green peppers	Lemon juice to taste
4-5 tomatoes	mint leaves
2 cucumbers	

Wash crushed wheat. Drain and squeeze excess water. Add to finely diced vegetables. Add olive oil, lemon juice, pepper and salt. Mix well.

Serve with fresh lettuce leaves (romaine lettuce can be used to scoop up the salad for eating it directly from the bowl), grape leaves or cabbage leaves.

## Kafta Kabob

2 lbs. ground lamb	1 tsp. salt
1 med. onion	1 tsp. allspice
½ bunch parsley	1 tsp. pepper

Mix lamb, onion and parsley to an even consistency. Add seasonings and mix again (season to taste). Form into small footballs and broil or charcoal grill.

Serve as sandwich in pita bread, with additional chopped onions, diced tomato, diced parsley and/or lettuce.

*Note:* Pita bread or Syrian bread is now available under the name "Sandwich Pockets" from Pepperidge Farm bakeries.

Fresh fruits, such as oranges, dates, melon slices can be served for dessert.

# New Friends, New Places—Middle East

## Preparing to Teach

A trip to the library is an essential part of the teacher's preparation for the Middle East unit for elementary-age children. What should you look for? Begin in the children's section and check the card catalog for books on any of the following topics: Middle East, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon and other Middle Eastern countries; deserts (desert lands, plants, animals, and so forth); ancient civilizations, especially Egypt; feasts or festivals of different lands; foods of the world; costumes of different peoples. On the basis of these cards, look for stories in the fiction section that illustrate life in the Middle East; picture books dealing with geography, dress, daily life, customs, and so on; audiovisual aids such as maps, slides or filmstrips. Even the smallest local library has some materials available and may be able to get others through an interlibrary loan system. If you have difficulty, another source is the library at your local elementary school. Teachers of the upper elementary grades may be willing to help you find resources. And check children's encyclopedias for the same topics as those suggested for the card catalog.

A second area of investigation is the churches and synagogues in your community. Your nearest Jewish synagogue should be able to assist you with materials on Israel as well as information on Jewish festivals and family observances. Priests of churches of the Eastern traditions, such as Syrian Orthodox, Melkite, Maronite, Coptic and Armenian, can provide information on foods and customs of Middle Eastern peoples and special ways of celebrating Christian feasts, as well as story materials on early Christian saints such as St. Anthony or St. Pachomius, who were among the first monastic desert dwellers. Some larger cities also have Muslim communities where additional information can be obtained.

Finally, if you live in or near a large city, there may be embassies, consulates or other foreign offices from Middle Eastern countries that can be of some assistance to you. The offices of large corporations with business connections and offices in the Middle East may also have introductory materials that have been prepared to acquaint their own staff members with Middle Eastern life and customs.

## Early Elementaries

### Classroom Preparation

The picture books and other materials you have collected should give you plenty of ideas for bulletin board displays and special projects. Your class preparation can include some or all of the following, depending upon your resources, space and time available for the unit of study.

1. A *bulletin board* on the theme: *New Friends/New Places—Middle East*. A map of the major countries of

focus in the unit can be placed in the center. Stretch colored yarn from each country or area to pictures of people, places and things found in each. You may find excellent pictures in magazines that cover international news and travel. With current interest in the Middle East, it should not be difficult to find good photos in back issues.

2. *Interest centers* can be set up on various themes. The purpose of the center should be to attract interest in the theme as well as to suggest specific activities or projects to be worked on by individuals or small groups of students. Possible themes include:

- a. *New Friends in New Places*. Focus on the countries and people of the Middle East. Include such items as copies of children's encyclopedias marked or opened to the pages of the countries being studied; photos, artifacts or small models of things to be found there (some of these can be obtained from neighbors or friends who have visited the Middle East); costumes or items of clothing or embroidery; pictures of foods and recipes; instructions and materials for games that originated in the Middle East. Make "Where am I?" cards for a review game—paste a picture of a familiar Middle Eastern person or object on one side of an index card, with the question "Where am I?" printed underneath. Print the answer on the reverse side of the card. Or develop a matching game using simple words and pictures to identify places and objects.
- b. *Ways of Worship*. Focus on the major religions of the Middle East. Include copies of books such as the *Time-Life Religions of the World* series (Golden Book edition; see "Resources for Use with Children" in this guide) opened to the relevant pages. Collect photos of major religious centers in the Middle East, and pictures or slides of religious festivals or celebrations and family religious customs. Develop a review game on index cards, using a format similar to that of the "Where am I?" cards to identify religious practices and objects used in worship. On activity cards, suggest projects that can be done to illustrate feasts or religious customs. On the cards, list materials that will be needed and detailed instructions, including simple diagrams, if appropriate. Possible activities include the following: make a sukkoth from a shoe box; make a menorah; mount a paper icon on wood for use at home (select a feast-day icon such as the entry of the Lord into Jerusalem); plan the menu for a Passover or Easter meal; make a model of a mosque. The story papers contain some activity suggestions, and you will find additional help in activity books such as the *Clues to Creativity* series (see "Resources for Use with Children" in this guide).
- c. *The Middle East—Land of Ancient Civilizations*.

Focus on the ruins and cultures of ancient and biblical times. Collect photos and items to illustrate ruins and artifacts of ancient times, such as the pyramids of Egypt, the Roman ruins found throughout the area, the famous pagan temple at Baalbeck in Lebanon, Mount Sinai and the Monastery of St. Catherine, the religious centers in Jerusalem. Have the students build clay models to represent these. Label each one and put on display for other classes and parents to see. Make story pictures such as those found in ancient Egyptian artifacts.

- d. *Life in the Desert.* Focus on the forms of life found in desert regions and the lifestyles of the people who live there. Collect books and photos of desert regions, forms of animal and plant life found in the desert, people of the desert (Bedouins). Suggest projects or areas of investigation for later sharing in the class.

### Lesson Presentation

1. Use the bulletin board and the interest centers as starting points for each class period. Allow the students to examine the articles and look at the photos and books. Note comments and questions and use these to lead into suggested projects. Insert, when appropriate or when additional information is needed, material from the story papers. Try to utilize one story paper each session for a special presentation; one paper may be used to introduce a lesson, another might better be used to support a project idea or to summarize the day's activities. Vary the approach used in class each period.

2. The projects and activities should be used to develop the main themes. Small groups of students can be working simultaneously on different projects extended over several class periods. Whenever a project is finished, it should be presented and explained to the entire class and put on display. Review games can be designed to utilize each project in conveying additional information to the class.

3. On the final day of the unit, projects can be presented in a special program to which you may want to invite parents and members of other classes. The students can help in advance preparation of Middle Eastern foods for refreshments and can serve them as part of the program. Detailed suggestions and recipes are included in this chapter in the section "A Middle Eastern Celebration."

### Late Elementaries

As we have said, late elementary children have more highly developed academic skills and are more aware of current events than their younger brothers and sisters. With the older age group, you may be faced more directly with the possibility that the material you are teaching may become controversial, causing divided, perhaps emotional, responses in or outside the classroom.

This study of the Middle East is bound to be viewed by

some as a distortion of the "truth" of one or another situation, a defense of the "indefensible," an insult to this or that group. Try to be restrained in areas of highly conflicting opinion or emotion. The materials for this unit of study do not claim to present the "truth" of how people and nations were, are or should be in the Middle East. Our goal, rather, is to provide some insights on the level of an elementary school child into life in the Middle East for other children. Keep this goal in mind as you plan your sessions with the children.

### Organizing Your Sessions

Since *Signpost/Middle East* includes five story papers, at least five sessions would seem to be required. Probably two or more sessions for each story paper topic would be well worth the time spent. However, if very little time is available, choose one or two story papers to emphasize with classroom attention, and suggest the children read the others at home, perhaps sharing them with parents or siblings for discussion.

Each story paper includes suggestions for crafts and other kinds of activities. Many of these a child could undertake at home, probably profiting from a little help from parents or older siblings. However, the most appropriate learning setting is still a small group, with a teacher available to stimulate thought and discussion, to help provide the needed art and craft supplies and to interpret and vary or expand upon the craft suggestions, all of this according to the individual abilities and preferences of his/her children. Try to organize your sessions so as to allow for small group activity as well as times for the entire class to engage in discussion, sharing and worship. Set up activity centers for the small groups, with project suggestions and necessary supplies available.

### Using Resources for Teaching

Little in the way of definitions of unfamiliar words or ideas, places or events is included in the story papers themselves. Space limitations are one reason for this, plus the conviction that a teacher can fill in here, guiding students to reference works. Review the story papers with this in mind and gather appropriate reference materials, trying to include pictured references (worth a thousand words, remember), and guide the children in their use. See the Bibliography, "Resources for Use with Children" in this guide for specific materials to look for. Using reference materials themselves will give children a solid background of information on which to base their enjoyment and discussion of the story papers. They are also more likely to retain information if they have taken an active part in digging it out.

Another responsibility for the teacher is to make use of a Bible concordance to frame brief worship periods for each class session, choosing Scripture references appropriate to the story paper. Some possible combinations follow. *Signpost/Egypt*: the story of the Exodus, of Joseph and his family, of the Passover; the Gospel of Mark (said to be the founder of the Coptic Christian Church) and the flight of

the Holy Family after Joseph's dream. *Signpost/Lebanon*: the building of Solomon's temple and the lumber of cedars of Lebanon; references to the Phoenicians and the commerce of Tyre and Sidon; the expansion of King David's rule to encompass Lebanon. *Signpost/Turkey*: St. Paul, his origins in Tarsus, his travels and the establishment of the churches of Asia Minor. *Signpost/Israel*: Book of Psalms, in praise and thanksgiving for the bounty of the land; Book of Joshua, the conquest of the Twelve Tribes; the writing/prophesies of Amos, Hosea, Micah and Isaiah; the stories of the Babylonian captivity and the return. *Signpost/Holy Land*: I Samuel, II Samuel, the establishment of Jerusalem as capital city for the kingdom; the rebuilding of the city and the temple in the Book of Nehemiah; the Book of Lamentations; the Book of Esther; the Gospels of Matthew and Luke (nativity).

Of course, all of these can be used throughout the class sessions devoted to study of the Middle East.

A copy of the Qu'ran, and some appropriate reading to correspond to themes in the various story papers, such as the important precepts of Islam, the pilgrimage to Mecca, the life of the Prophet Muhammad, and so forth should be gathered as references for the class. Especially important would be readings that describe how the teachings of Islam influence everyday life for Muslims, and their regard for Christ, Judaism and Jerusalem. *The Arab World* (see "Resources for Use with Children") is a good guide to matching topics to readings in the Qu'ran and about Islam.

Finally, your class may wish to plan an opportunity to share what they have learned with others. If other groups in your church are studying the Middle East Mosaic, check with them. A joint celebration might be enjoyed by all. Or your class can plan its own celebration and sharing time, perhaps inviting family and friends. See the section "A Middle Eastern Celebration" in this chapter for detailed suggestions and recipes.

## 8. Bibliography

### RESOURCES FOR MISSION

- Foreign Policy in Christian Perspective.* John C. Bennett. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966. Bennett believes that "there are no Christian foreign policies, but Christians should be moved and guided by their faith and commitment to seek the best policies in the circumstances." The book sets forth criteria for selecting the best policy and a possible role for the church in this process.
- Foreign Policy Is Your Business.* Theodore R. Weber. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1972. This short volume clearly outlines the ethical problems associated with foreign policy and reminds the reader of the resources that faith provides for wrestling with these obstacles. Discussion questions following each chapter open the subject to critical reflection.
- The Just War.* Paul Ramsey. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968. Originally published as a justification for U.S. involvement in Vietnam, this is valuable today for its explanation of the "just war" theory as well as its exposition of the role of intervention and deterrence.
- Moral Man and Immoral Society.* Reinhold Niebuhr. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932. Niebuhr's chapter on "The Morality of Nations" is a classic analysis of foreign relations within a Christian context; must reading.
- U.S. Foreign Policy and Christian Ethics.* John C. Bennett and Harvey Seifert. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1977. An updated expansion of Bennett's earlier book, this takes a fresh look at foreign policy in light of Vietnam, world hunger, and the limits of growth.

### Books on Dialogue

- Guidelines for a Dialogue Between Muslims and Christians.* Joseph Coug and Louis Gardet. Rome: Secretariat for Non-Christians, n.d. One of the best introductions to dialogue with Muslims, written from a practical point of view.
- Jewish Christian Dialogue.* Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1975. A series of articles by Jewish and Christian scholars focusing on the theme "The Quest for World Community—Jewish and Christian Perspectives." This theme was explored at a consultation in 1972, sponsored by the International Jewish Committee on Inter-religious Consultations and the World Council of Churches. Valuable introduction to the issues encountered in Jewish-Christian relationships.
- Journal of Ecumenical Studies.* Quarterly which includes material on Jewish-Christian dialogue. Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa. 19122. \$10 per year.
- A New Threshold: Guidelines for the Churches in Their Relations with Muslim Communities.* David Brown. London: British Council of Churches, 1976. Practical study guide for those interested in dialogue. The basic methodology presented here applies equally well to Christians as they seek to engage in dialogue with Jewish friends.
- When Jew and Christian Meet.* LaVonne Althouse. New York: Friendship Press, 1966. Must reading for anyone planning an interfaith discussion. Useful for developing a sensitivity to issues involved in such interchanges.

### THE MIDDLE EAST

- The Arab Awakening.* George Antonius. New York: Capricorn, 1965. First published in 1939, this classic is subtitled "The Story of the Arab National Movement." It is the definitive treatment of Arab nationalism and its efforts to throw off foreign colonialism, first Turkish and later British and French. The book highlights the role of Christian Arabs in the development of nationalism in the Arab world.
- Armageddon in the Middle East.* Dana A. Schmidt. New York: The John Day Company, 1974. Part of the New York Times Survey Series, this is a readable introduction to the conflict. The concluding chapter on "Solutions" touches all the right bases and will help the reader to understand the obstacles to peace. A useful tool for introducing the lay person to the enigma of the Middle East.

*Baal, Christ and Mohammed.* John Cooley. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965. Deals with the confrontation of religions and revolutions in North Africa. Traces the rise and fall of Baal worship, Christianity, Islam and, most recently, secularism in the countries of North Africa. Includes accounts of nineteenth- and twentieth-century mission activities there. The author is Middle East correspondent for *The Christian Science Monitor*.

*Biblical Background of the Middle East Conflict.* Georgia Harkness and Charles F. Kraft. Nashville: Abingdon, 1967. In her last book before her death, Georgia Harkness has surveyed the four-thousand-year struggle between Arab and Jew. Useful for putting the present conflict within a historical and biblical perspective.

*Israel and the Arabs.* Maxine Robinson. New York: Pantheon Books, 1968. Historical survey of the last sixty years in the Middle East from an Arab point of view. While it is useful for the student of the Middle East, the uninitiated will find it difficult reading; its value lies in its exposition of the Arab cause.

*The Middle East: Its Religion and Culture.* Edward J. Jurji. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956. This excellent summary portrays the interplay of religion and life in the Middle East. The author is a noted Middle East Christian on the faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary.

*The Middle East: Oil, Conflict and Hope.* A.L. Udovitch, editor. Lexington, Mass. and Toronto: Lexington Books, 1976. Volume 10 of the Commission on Critical Choices for Americans (the Rockefeller Commission). Contains in-depth studies of the various parties to the Middle East conflict and is must reading for the person who wants to get behind the headlines.

*The Middle East and South Asia, 1978.* Ray Cleveland. Washington, D.C.: Stryker-Post Press, 1978. This brief booklet is a handy resource guide including history, geography, vital statistics and recent developments in the countries of the region. Egypt and the countries of North Africa are dealt with in a similar publication entitled *Africa, 1978*.

*A Middle East Reader.* Irene L. Gendzier, editor. New York: Pegasus, 1969. A collection of essays written before the 1973 war which provide the reader with a historical introduction to the present conflict. Helpful in understanding the Arab point of view.

*Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East: Missionary Influence on American Policy 1810-1927.* J.L. Grabill. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971. The author traces the mingling of American Protestant mission activity with the creation and implementation of U.S. foreign policy during the period of U.S. mission expansion into the Middle East.

*Toward Peace in the Middle East.* Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1975. This short pamphlet is the report of a study group which included Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's national security advisor. Its conclusions provide a possible outline for a peaceful resolution of the present conflict.

*Whose Land Is Palestine?* Frank H. Epp. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970. The author examines the long history of claims to Palestine. Beginning with the indigenous populations and ancient empires, he traces the claims of Palestine, of Judaism, Islam, Christianity, Zionism, the British, Palestinian Arabs, the Arab states, the United Nations, the State of Israel, and the Palestinian refugees.

### The Israel-Palestine Conflict

- The Arab-Israeli Dilemma.* Fred J. Khouri. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1968. This scholarly yet readable work provides a complete background of the conflict from its origins to the date of printing. Events of more recent years have not outdated the factual material presented. Includes a useful appendix with relevant documents.
- The Disinherited.* Fawaz Turki. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972. Subtitled "The Journal of a Palestinian Exile," this thin volume gives an excellent autobiographical account of the life experienced by Palestinian Arab refugees since 1948. The concluding chapter, which suggests solutions to the conflict, is not up to the standards of earlier portions of the book.
- The Israelis: Founders and Sons.* Amos Elon. New York: Holt, Rinehart

and Winston, 1971. Looks at Israel through the eyes of the early settlers, the founders, and the second generation Israelis, the sons. Gives a sense of both change and continuity in the Israelis who came from Europe and those now a part of the Middle East.

*A Palestinian Entity?* Don Peretz, et al. Washington, D.C.: The Middle East Institute, 1970. This brief collection of essays by three skilled and knowledgeable Middle East specialists is excellent for the nonspecialist. Peretz deals with "The Historical Background of Arab Nationalism in Palestine" and "Forms and Projections of a Palestine Entity," including excellent background material on Palestinian organizations. An essay by Evan Wilson on the "Role of Jerusalem in a Possible Arab Entity" deals briefly with the material in his volume *Jerusalem: Key to Peace*, also published by the Middle East Institute. Richard Ward treats the question of "The Economics of a Palestine Entity."

### U.S. Policy and the Middle East.

*Annual Review of U.S. Middle East Policy.* U.S. Department of State. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, July 1978. Published annually. The 1978 review is based on a statement by Harold Saunders, assistant secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the House International Relations Committee, June 12, 1978. The statement covers perceptions of U.S. interests and the premises for U.S. policy.

*Decade of Decisions: American Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967-1976.* William B. Quandt. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978. The author is presently Middle East Affairs consultant in the White House. The book analyzes U.S. policy from different perspectives and cites the lost opportunities that have resulted from an obsession with U.S.-Soviet relations to the exclusion of regional realities unrelated to the cold war.

*United States Interests in the Middle East.* George Lenczowski, editor. Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1968. An analysis of U.S. interests, both political and economic, in the Middle East. This study is published by a Washington-based "think-tank" sympathetic to U.S. business interests in the region.

## RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES

### Books on Churches in the Middle East

*Christians in the Arab East.* Robert B. Betts. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1978. This handy volume fills a vacuum concerning the churches and Christians of the Arab East. It provides a picture of the life of the churches of the Middle East from the time of their establishment to the present day. Highly recommended to American readers who have assumed that Christian churches ceased to exist in the Middle East with the arrival of Islam or the defeat of the Crusaders.

"The Churches and the Crisis in Lebanon." Norman A. Horner. *Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research*, vol. 1, no. 1 (January, 1977), pp. 8-12. Incisive account of the churches' involvement in the political crisis in Lebanon; helpful in making the contemporary situation intelligible.

"Ecumenical Roadblocks in the Middle East." Norman A. Horner. *Worldview*, vol. 29, no. 2 (Summer, 1978), pp. 10-17. "Shows how churches in the Middle East relate to one another" and indicates six "factors which hinder creative relationships."

### Books on Judaism

*The Anguish of the Jews.* Edward H. Flannery. New York: Macmillan, 1965. The conflict between church and synagogue, from the ancient world until today. Discusses the roots and forms of modern anti-Semitism.

*Basic Judaism.* Milton Steinberg. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1947. Adults and high school students will gain from this short book a deeper appreciation of the faith of our neighbors. The chapter on "Israel and the Nations" is particularly useful within the present study.

*Face to Face, An Interreligious Bulletin.* Quarterly of Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 315 Lexington Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016. Contribution of \$2.50 requested.

*Faith and Fratricide.* Rosemary Radford Ruether. New York: Seabury

Press, 1974. Explores the theological roots of anti-Semitism; asserts that the Christian affirmation of Jesus as the Christ is accompanied by a repudiation of Judaism as a living faith, and that this "left hand of Christology" is the origin of Christian anti-Semitism.

*The Jews, Their Religion and Culture.* Louis Finklestein, editor. New York: Schocken Books, 1971. Valuable collection of essays on themes relating to the Bible, Hebrew literature and poetry, and Jewish religious life and institutions, by Robert Gordes, Ralph Marcus, Abraham Heschel, Louis Finklestein and others.

*The Judaic Tradition.* Nahum N. Glatzer, editor. Boston: Beacon Press, 1969. A collection of documents and essays from various periods in Jewish history. Helpful in developing an appreciation for the religious wisdom of the rabbis and the role of the Holocaust in modern Judaism.

*Religion in the Middle East*, 2 vols. A.J. Arberry. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976. An indispensable reference work for Islam, Judaism and Christianity.

*The Story of Judaism.* Bernard J. Bamberger. New York: Schocken Books, 1970. (Third, augmented edition.) A chronicle of the Jewish people from the earliest times until the mid-twentieth century, portraying not only their history but also the inner contents of Jewish life and practice.

*We Christians and Jews.* Paul J. Kirsch. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975. Deals concisely with the concepts of messiah, covenant, and Israel, exploring both the similarities between Judaism and Christianity, and the distinctive aspects of each tradition.

*We Jews and Jesus.* Samuel Sandmel. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973. Jesus and Christianity as viewed by a modern Jewish scholar.

*The Zionist Idea.* Arthur Hertzberg, editor. New York: Doubleday, 1959. A collection of essays from the past century and a half, treating the basic concepts of Zionism, by writers ranging from Moses Hess to David Ben-Gurion.

## Books on Islam

*The Arabs in History.* Bernard Lewis. New York: Harper and Row, 1966. A concise and authoritative history of the Arab people in the Middle East.

*The House of Islam.* 2nd ed. Kenneth Cragg. Belmont, Calif.: Dickenson Publishing Company, 1975. One of the best introductions to Islam for westerners, this seeks to penetrate the religious life of the "House of Islam" and make it understandable, particularly to Christians.

*Ideals and Realities of Islam.* Seyyed Hosein Nasr. Boston: Beacon Press, 1975. Presents the essential beliefs of Islam, demonstrating their relevance to the modern world and their relationship to other religious traditions.

*Islam.* Fazlur Rahman. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966. An excellent presentation by an outstanding Muslim scholar; most useful to those already somewhat familiar with Islam.

*Islam in the Modern National State.* Erwin I.J. Rosenthal. Cambridge: The University Press, 1965. Important and readable discussion of ways modern Muslims are seeking to cope with the challenges of the modern secular state. Though dealing with more than the Middle East, the information is excellent background for understanding the Islamic dimension of the Middle East mosaic.

*Mohammadanism: An Historical Survey.* 2nd ed. H.A.R. Gibb. New York: Oxford University Press, 1953. Old but still excellent introduction to Islam.

## AUDIOVISUALS

*Arabs and Jews: The Crisis.* Series of six filmstrips and cassettes dealing with the historical background; issues, and role of the major powers in the Middle East. Excellent introduction to the region. Available through your denomination's audiovisual library or from Scholast Products, 150 White Plains Road, Tarrytown, N.Y. 10591.

*Early Civilizations in the Middle East and Middle East.* Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1978. These maps, charts and text which appeared in the September 1978 issues of *National Geographic* are available, printed on one side only on heavy chart paper, from the National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C., 20036. They can be important additions to any group study of the Middle East.

*Hope for Life.* A 35-minute film put together by the Committee for the One Great Hour of Sharing. Focuses upon individuals and their predicaments to open up the crucible of the conflict in the Middle East. Recommended for this study. It is available through your denomination's audiovisual library or from United Methodist Communications, 1525 McGuovck Street, Nashville, Tenn.

## ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

*American Jewish Committee*  
Institute of Human Relations  
165 E. 56 St.  
New York, N.Y. 10022  
Phone: (212) PL1-4000

*Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith*  
315 Lexington Ave.  
New York, N.Y. 10016  
Phone: (212) 689-7400

*Department of State*  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Two useful resources available from this source are *The Middle East: Tricontinental Hub* and *A Select Chronology and Background Documents Relating to the Middle East.*

*Egyptian Interests Section*  
2310 Decatur Place, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20008

*Embassy of Israel*  
1621 22nd Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20008

*Embassy of Lebanon*  
2560 28th Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20008

*Federation of Islamic Associations in U.S. and Canada*  
820 Second Ave.  
New York, N.Y. 10017

*League of Arab States*  
1608 New Hampshire Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20009

225 Metcalf St., Suite 310  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

*The Middle East Council of Churches*  
P.O. Box 5376  
Beirut, LEBANON

*The Muslim Students' Association of the United States and Canada*  
P.O. Box 264  
Plainfield, Indiana 46168

*Muslim World League*  
300 E. 44th St.  
New York, N.Y. 10017

*National Conference of Christians and Jews*  
43 W. 57th St.  
New York, N.Y.  
Phone: (212) MU8-7530

*Office on Christian-Jewish Relations*  
National Council of Churches  
475 Riverside Drive  
New York, N.Y. 10027

*The Arabs Knew.* Tillie S. Pine and Joseph Levine. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976. Tells of the contributions of the Arabs.

*David, My Jewish Friend.* Alice L. Goddard. New York: Friendship Press, 1968. Useful for introducing children to continuity and discontinuity between Judaism and Christianity.

*The Desert.* A. Starker Leopold and the Editors of Life. New York: Time-Life, 1962. Includes photos and explanations of desert life, including the deserts of the Middle East.

*The Egyptians.* Shane Miller and Edward Ochsenchlagel. New York: Coward-McCann, 1963. Part of the Life Long Ago series.

*The Egyptians Knew.* Tillie S. Pine and Joseph Levine. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964. An excellent book with simple text and drawings; activities for younger children showing what and how the Egyptians knew about mathematics, astronomy, and so forth.

*Everyday Life in Ancient Egypt.* John Manchip White. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1967. Sketches and descriptions of the pictorial system of writing, tools, musical instruments, dress, furniture, occupations of ancient Egypt.

*The Land and People of ...* series (Portraits of the Nations). Philadelphia: Lippincott. Includes individual book about each Middle Eastern country; outstanding.

*Let's Travel in the Holy Land.* Darlene Geis, editor. Chicago: Children's Press, 1965. Excellent book on the land and peoples of the Middle East. Includes color pictures of a street seller in Damascus, Bedouins and shepherds, religious sites in Jerusalem, a muezzin in a minaret, the Wailing Wall, and more.

*Once the Hodja.* Alice Geer Kelsey. New York: David McKay, 1943. Folk tales about a character represented in most Middle East cultures.

*The Pyramids.* John Weeks. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1977. A step-by-step book explaining, in simple language and pictures, the building of a pyramid.

*Religions of the World: From Primitive Beliefs to Modern Faith.* Geoffrey Parrinder, editor. New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1971. Includes introductions and photos of ancient Egyptian religious practices, Judaism, Christianity.

*Why Ziva Cried on the Feast of First Fruits.* Moshe Shamir. New York: Abelard Schumann, 1960.

*The World of the Pharaohs.* Hans Baumann. New York: Pantheon Books, 1960. Story of a 13-year-old boy who tries his luck at archaeology. Illustrated.

*The World's Great Religions.* The Editors of Life. New York: Golden Press, 1958.

*Yael and the Queen of Goats.* Norgalit Banai. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1968

*National Geographic* magazines, for excellent photographs, drawings and articles on all the Arab and Middle East countries.

*ARAMCO* magazines, for photographs, pictures and drawings of the Muslim/Arab/Middle East world, past, present and future; published by ARAMCO.

## RESOURCES FOR USE WITH CHILDREN

*The Arab World, a Handbook for Teachers.* Ayad Al-Qazzaz, Ruth Afifi, and Audrey Shabbas. Albany, California: NADJA (Women Concerned About the Middle East), 1978. Available from Americans for Middle East Understanding, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10027, or from NADJA, P.O. Box 6051, Albany, CA 94796. Comprehensive reference, directed primarily to elementary and junior high school teachers. Includes essays on most frequently misunderstood or misrepresented areas of the Middle East, past and present, materials that may be reproduced for classroom use, and more.

# An Invitation to Respond

In May, 1969 the National Council of Churches General Board adopted a policy statement entitled "On the Crisis in the Middle East." This statement, as with other such documents of the Council, is addressed primarily to the Christian community and is intended as an educational tool. These policy statements provide guidelines for Christian understanding and action in relation to specific situations. They also furnish a basis for more detailed resolutions and statements issued from time to time by the Council.

Since mid-1978 a Task Force representing various divisions and commissions of the Council has been reviewing this statement in light of recent developments in the Middle East. A plan for rewriting the policy statement has been adopted which will bring a new statement before the Council and its member churches in May, 1980.

Coinciding with the mission study theme, this plan for rewriting the statement offers an opportunity for persons and groups at the local church level to make suggestions for consideration by the Task Force.

In reviewing the existing statement on the Middle East,

the Task Force feels that the scope of the existing statement is too narrowly focused on the Arab-Israeli conflict. While not denying the importance of this conflict to the entire region, the Task Force believes that broader issues should be addressed in the new statement. Some of the issues identified for consideration in the new statement include:

The meaning of an Islamic state; a Jewish state

The impact of the western missionary movement on the churches of the Middle East

Human rights; minority-majority relations

U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East

Oil and the development process.

Local church groups wishing further information as to how they might participate in the review and revision of the policy statement on the Middle East should write to:

Task Force on Review of Middle East

Policy Statement, NCCCUSA

Room 626

475 Riverside Drive

New York, N.Y. 10027

## A POLICY STATEMENT

*of the National Council of the Churches of Christ  
in the United States of America*

### ON THE CRISIS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Adopted by the General Board

May 2, 1969

#### I. THE FOCUS OF CHRISTIAN CONCERN

This statement, addressed to the constituency of the National Council of Churches, suggests that Christian concern for the conflict in the Middle East is properly focused upon fundamental human needs and rights. Political, military and national rivalries in the area are of critical importance, but Christian attention to them arises out of the deeper concern, which the Gospel enjoins upon all who follow Christ, for the human person, his society, and for peace in the world. The most urgent needs of the peoples of the region may be discerned as follows:

##### 1. Two Specific Needs

In the situation of the past twenty years and more, two specific human needs have arisen, continued and remained unsolved.

a) One is the need of the Palestinian Arabs affected by

the establishment of Israel, of whom now approximately 1,500,000 are refugees, for a home that is acceptable to them, and for a future in which they may discern justice, security and hope. What will constitute "a home acceptable to them" must now be a matter of negotiation in which generosity will be required of many, and compromise by all who are directly involved.

b) The other specific need is security for the Jews in the area. The Jews in the Arab countries of the Middle East and the Jews of Israel must be assured of safety and of their rights. Without this assurance, there will be no justice or peace in the Middle East.

##### 2. Justice Among Peoples

Christian ideas of justice and righteousness derive from God's nature as revealed in the Scriptures and fulfilled in Jesus Christ. It is within the context of God's love for

man that justice is of prime importance to Christians. In fact, in Christian moral theology justice must be kept in the perspective of the love of God and man, if it is to remain true.

Consequently, in seeking justice Christians must try to apply the principle that each individual person has inalienable rights and that, in love, he must be treated as an end in himself and not merely as a means to something else. Attempts must be made constantly to secure more just relations among men and peoples than those which presently exist. In the Middle East, it is fundamental that a solid concern be demonstrated for the achievement of a greater justice among all the peoples there. Righteousness among men is prior to their security and peace, for these latter depend ultimately upon relationships which men recognize to be at least tolerably just.

Therefore, a Christian view holds that the measure of justice in the Middle East is not the vindication and triumph of any single, limited claim or interest, but the degree to which human need in the area is met. Essential to the achievement of a minimum of justice among Arabs and Israelis is the meeting of the specific needs of Palestinian refugees and of Jews in Israel and elsewhere, as indicated above, but also progress in the economic, political and social development of the whole of the Middle East.

### 3. *Peace Among Nations*

Human needs in the Middle East cannot be met without peace in the minimal sense of an end to violence and the establishment of security. Each nation must live in security. No nation has a right to commit aggression. Furthermore, acts of violence, whether sporadic or sustained, whether committed by individuals or by organized groups tolerated if not sponsored by governments, must be both condemned and stopped. Continued violence by Arab guerilla groups and by Israel carries the threat of expansion into disastrous war. A Christian view requires an end to this violence in the interests of peace. Yet the cessation of these hostilities should not mean that the status quo is frozen: it should mean that, with shooting and raids stopped, an atmosphere is created for a settlement that makes it possible to reverse the arms race and to advance toward permanent security based upon justice in the relationships among nations.

A Christian concern focused upon broad areas of human need cannot be imprisoned by any particular political doctrine that may be institutionalized in the states of the Middle East. Neither justice nor peace is set forward by being simply "pro-Arab" or "pro-Israel." Indeed, it is important to go even further than the achievement of a humanitarian non-alignment in respect of political ideologies.

The Middle East conflict is the scene today of deepening and dangerous intransigence. Any claim that contains or

suggests genocide must be denied and opposed. The idea is abroad that Arabs desire to "push Israel into the sea." Many Arabs deny that this is policy. Even if it represents only the assertion of irresponsible extremists, Christians must oppose it. Nationalisms exist, in Israel and elsewhere, which stem in part from religious roots and which contain, in the present situation, powerful political implications. One form of such nationalism connects the promise of God to the Jewish people with the land of Palestine, holding that the will of God and the future of the Jewish people require that the Jews possess Palestine as a homeland. The result is to make an ultimate value of Palestinian land, particularly Jerusalem, and the relation of that land to the Jewish people. An Arab religious nationalism also exists, among both Muslims and Christians, which regards Palestine and Jerusalem as part of its sacred ancestral lands. We affirm our respect for and fellowship with those who hold these religious faiths, and ask them to understand that our concern is because of the tragic political consequences of all religious nationalisms.

Extreme and ultimate claims on both sides are unacceptable to us as Christians. Judaism, Christianity and Islam owe obedience to the God of all, whose relation to the particulars of history is viewed differently by men of differing faiths. In that obedience we register our Christian convictions and ask for continued, prayerful dialogue with our brethren on these matters of great moment.

To too great an extent, the Christian community in the United States—and perhaps elsewhere as well—is itself a part of the problem, offering sympathy and advocacy too exclusively "pro-Arab" or "pro-Israel." The "victory" of one side over the other, or the satisfaction of one side to the neglect or at the expense of the other, is not a worthy objective for Christian or humanitarian support. Christian theology holds that no particular place (including "holy places"), nation, people, ideology, philosophy, theology, or institution (including ecclesiastical organizations) is absolute, but all are relative to God's universal mercy and judgment. They are all subject to God and, as such, find their meaning not in their own supposed absolute value, but only as they are judged and redeemed by God and serve the broad interest of humanity. For this reason, Christian theology has its deepest conflict with any attempts, whether Israeli, Arab or American, to elevate particular factors of history or culture into absolute values.

## II. DANGERS IN THE PRESENT SITUATION

The following appear to be the principal dangers in the present situation:

1. Failure to achieve a security for Israel that is acceptable to her and her neighbors will, almost certainly, lead to increased warfare. If hatred and open hostility

continue, the vastly larger Arab population increasingly will threaten Israel, in spite of her social and technological advances. Guarantees of the security of Israel are essential, but the present situation holds little likelihood of achieving such guarantees save as Israel and her neighbors—after 25 years of struggle—reach agreement as to final determination of Israel's borders and as to the settlement of the refugee problem.

2. The continued dislocation of Palestinian Arabs seriously exacerbates present tensions and difficulties in the Middle East. The refugee problem is a major acute human need in the region; it is heightened by the growing sense of identity among Palestinian Arabs. Both a just peace and the upholding of human rights depend upon safeguarding the lives of these refugees and finding means for constructively channeling their energies.
3. One of the tragedies of the situation is that in spite of some notable achievements, warfare and tension have prevented Arab nations from achieving an adequate rate of development. Many domestic and international factors have contributed to this situation, which breeds new dangers for the future.
4. There is little or no communication between Israel and the Arab states or their peoples. If all hope of communication were to disappear, and the emotional, ideological and political positions of the opposing sides hardened still more, the menace to world peace would be extremely grave.
5. A fifth danger is that, in spite of present efforts to the contrary, conflicting interests of the great powers in the Middle East exacerbate and enlarge the internal conflicts in the area. If the great powers, United Kingdom, France, the United States and the USSR, conceive and pursue their interests in a narrow and exclusive fashion, the danger is extreme. This becomes more true if the great powers seek domination of the Mediterranean, solicit clients in the region, or if they yield to the desires of nations there to secure exclusive military, economic and political allies. On the other hand, the present trend toward broadly conceived interests by the United States and the USSR, resulting in further detente and cooperation to secure peace, is needed in order to lessen materially the danger of the present explosive situation.

### III. TASKS OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

1. It is essential that the Christian community transcend partial sympathies with the Israeli or Arab sides and concentrate its attention upon the great elements of human needs in the area. (Section I) Christians should themselves seek out and support all those who search for solutions that are practical rather than partisan and doctrinaire. The prime objective must be to meet the needs of the conflicting populations—those of the

refugee camps, of Israel, of Arab states—for a reasonable security and a relative justice.

2. The Christian community should use every available means to help develop meaningful communication among the parties involved. United States Christians have a unique responsibility to promote understanding, because of their longstanding associations through missions, relief and interchurch relationships in the Middle East, and because of their close fellowship with the United States Jewish community. The primary task is to create situations in which persons of the different groups can listen to and communicate with one another.
3. The Christian community urgently should encourage strong United Nations action in the area, as the best promise of restraining the pursuit of narrow interest by the great powers, of helping the great powers to broaden their interests toward the objective of securing peace, and of providing impartiality and equity for the Middle Eastern nations. United Nations action should strive not to impose a solution, but to secure direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab states concerned. It is of particular importance that the supply of armaments to the Middle Eastern states and the deployment of great-power military forces in the region should be restrained and reviewed to the end of achieving security in the region rather than an explosive arms race. The possibility of effective UN action depends to a large extent upon the will of the great powers to merge their interests in order to secure peace.
4. The Christian community in the United States should encourage urgently the United States Government:
  - a) To use United States influence to keep the great-power conflict in the Middle East to a minimum.
  - b) To use United States influence to discourage violence by any party to the conflict.
  - c) To use United States influence to strengthen and set forward efforts, whether by the United Nations, or within the context of the United Nations, to secure compromise, and thus to accomplish the purposes of the Security Council resolution of November 22, 1967.
  - d) To use United States resources to increase the rate of development throughout the area, particularly through United Nations or other multilateral agencies.

It is recognized that the first three of the above suggestions (namely, a, b, and c above) are generally within the policy of the United States Government. The fourth, concerning development aid, should be pressed upon the Government with particular vigor.

72 FOR; 18 AGAINST; 0 ABSTENTION.

## DAVID H. BOWMAN

David H. Bowman is the Minister of Church in the Pines, Laurel Hill, N.C. and prior to that of Biscoe Presbyterian Church. He therefore leads the busy life of his calling combined with his being a husband and the father of two young children. In addition to this he has been chairperson of the General Assembly's Task Force on the Middle East for the Presbyterian Church U.S. and a member of the General Assembly's Task Force on Faith and Economics. Further he served as chairperson for the Ministry Group on Church and Society for the Presbyterian Synod of N.C. During his tenure, the Ministry Group produced the first educational material on the J.P. Stevens/Union controversy. They are the first church-related group to produce such material. Mr. Bowman holds two Master's Degrees, one in Divinity as well as one in Theology. He has written and had published numerous articles and compiled the *Middle East Study Packet* in 1976 for the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.



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**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** July 13, 1979  
**to** Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
**from** Rabbi A. James Rudin  
**subject** Friendship Press: Middle East Mosaic  
Analysis of SOJOURN IN MOSAIC  
By Robert A. Elfers

I have carefully studied Robert Elfers' 88 page novel entitled Sojourn in Mosaic. The novel is the centerpiece of the entire Friendship Press series on the Middle East. In December 1978 and again in January 1979 I prepared two detailed analyses of the original manuscript and the revised version of this novel, and I am attaching those studies to this memo.

In January and in February of this year our department met with representatives of Friendship Press, the Division of Christian Education of the NCC, the Executive Director of the Office on Christian-Jewish Relations, the Chairman of that office's Advisory Committee and the Chairperson of the Friendship Press Lay Advisory Committee. You will remember that we spent an enormous amount of time articulating our specific criticisms of Elfers' novel, and although there are a few substantive changes from the original manuscript, it is my judgment that the basic and serious problems of the book still remain.

The major criticism is that the author has presented a highly one-sided view of the Middle East conflict and his fictional hero and heroine openly "sympathize" with not only the Arab cause, but specifically with an extreme Palestinian position. In fact, on page 68, one of Elfers' Arab characters presents a defense for Palestinian acts of terrorism committed against "innocent men and women." This apology for terrorism not only goes unchallenged, but in fact, Elfers' American hero understands and sympathizes with the position.

In carefully going through the novel it appears that Elfers has made only two cosmetic changes in the final text. Mr. Rosen, the Israeli spokesman, is now described as "convincing" instead of "voluble" and the Israeli resort city of Netanya no longer has a

July 13, 1979

"skirmish line of palm trees." Instead the city has a "wall of palm trees." Aside from these two insignificant changes, all of the negative images of the Israelis remain, including the particularly offensive reference to the "smell of Arabs."

This novel is the worst publication of the Friendship Press series because it will convey to youthful readers a distorted and false impression of Israelis and the Israeli cause and position. It is also most troublesome because it is likely that the novel will be much more widely read and used than either the children's story papers, the Canadian Christian position paper on the Middle East and the teachers' guide. It is clear that the Friendship Press officials after receiving two written analyses as well as the input from two face to face meetings with us either were unable or unwilling to make substantive changes in the novel. In all the other printed materials when we made either a written or oral intervention or suggestion, most of our ideas were adopted and incorporated into the texts. The situation is entirely different regarding Elfers' novel. The enclosed analysis of last January lists in some detail the problems that still remain in "Sojourn in Mosaic." The novel is a disappointment and is a highly prejudicial document.

AJR:FM  
Encls.

cc: Judith Banki  
Inge Gibel



An Analysis of Robert Elfers' A Flight Through Mosaic,  
Revised Version

Prepared by: Rabbi A. James Rudin  
Assistant National Director  
Interreligious Affairs  
American Jewish Committee  
New York City, New York

January 1979



I have read the revised Elfers' manuscript with great care and I must conclude that there are very few substantive changes from the original manuscript and it is my feeling that the basic problems with the book still remain. Elfers has not developed a balanced and cogent presentation of the Israeli case in his work. His hero and heroine openly "sympathize" with the Arab cause and the Israelis that one encounters in the book do not favorably compare with the various Arabs found throughout the novel. The changes that have been made do not correct the "tilt" that is present.

✓ Page 10 - Dr. Elfers has removed the word "Jewish" in describing Mary's boyfriend with whom she "might be shackled up."

✓ Page 10 - No change in the description of the "well dressed" Middle Easterners who speak Arabic.

✓ Page 24 - No change about "pride in being an Arab."

✓ Page 46 - No change in reference to the PLO attack on Israeli civilians and the Israeli response.

✓ Page 57 - No change vis-a-vis "the Syrians are a stabilizing force."

✓ Page 57 - No change in reference to the negative image of Israeli support for Lebanese Christians.

✓ Page 58 - Slight change added about Israeli attitudes toward state and religion but still a problematic paragraph.

✓ Page 60 - No change in references about dangerous and ominous quality of Jerusalem.

✓ Page 62 - No change in re Arab status in Israel.

✓ Page 63 - Dr. Elfers did eliminate the troublesome paragraph dealing with Christians, Israel and the Holocaust. No acknowledgment however that Arabs also receive aid from the United States, not merely Israel.

✓ Page 64 - No change in re Palestinian refugees. No development of various causes of the problem.

✓ Page 64-65 - No change in readers' first contact with Israelis.

Israelis still "check the passengers...are vigilant, boastful, efficient and wear the universal uniform." The Israeli soldier still cannot stand the smell of Arabs; a highly pejorative page.

Page 67 - No change.

Page 68 - No change. One of the most unbalanced and problematic pages in the entire novel.

Page 70 - One phrase eliminated regarding the "Jerusalem Post." One clause added linking Beirut and Jerusalem as Western cities. Other than that no change in the description of Jerusalem.

Page 73 - The change from Wailing Wall to Western Wall.

Page 73 - No change in description of Arab University training.

Page 74 - No change. Elfers' hero still feels the Israeli businessman (sic) is "giving me a line" after the Israeli speaks exactly one sentence! This is in the face of a long and eloquent statement of the Palestine position that appeared elsewhere in the book.

Page 75 - The author has added reference to the nearly 800,000 refugees from Arab countries, but the Israeli spokesman, Mr. Rosen, is still given a choppy and incomplete presentation. He is "voluble" and the hero has trouble remembering what Mr. Rosen says. This is hardly a fair presentation of the Israeli position.

Page 77 - No change in re story of how refugee situation was created.

Page 80 - Dr. Elfers' description of Netanya is somewhat improved over the original manuscript, but it still has a "skirmish line of palm trees...with blazing white cement."

Page 80 - The author has removed the bribe that was accepted by the Jewish hotel clerk.

Page 82 - No change. This is a critical page because the hero and heroine openly acknowledge their "sympathy" to the Arab position and it is a sharp critique of the Israeli position. No such critique of the Palestine and/or Arab cause appears in the book.

Page 83 - No change.

An Analysis of Robert Elfers' A Flight Through Mosaic



Prepared by: Rabbi A. James Rudin  
Assistant National Director  
Interreligious Affairs  
American Jewish Committee  
New York City, New York

December 1978

modified ✓ Page 13-14: The language is, in my opinion, inappropriate for Friendship Press' audience. Moreover, the image of the novel's heroine "shacked up with her Jewish boyfriend" is highly pejorative. This is the first reference to Jews or Judaism in the novel and is an ugly and negative one. "Keyhole Peeper" also is totally out of place in this novel.

Page 14: "Middle Easterners, well dressed, speaking Arabic, family groups..." The contrast with the "shacked up Jewish boyfriend" in Israel could not be more graphic. Arabs are well dressed and members of family groups; a positive image as opposed to a negative one vis-a-vis "the Jewish boyfriend" in Israel.

Page 33: "Islam is a unifying force of great power in the Middle East and so is pride in being an Arab." I have no problem with the statement but somewhere in the text the author should note that Jews in the Middle East are proud of their religion as are Christians and there is pride also in being an Israeli as well as being an Arab.

Page 63-64: "Some PLO raided Israel from the sea and killed civilians near Tel Aviv. This is what happened in retaliation...their jets came over in a strike." The words "retaliation and strike" seem harsher than "raided" and even "killed." What is needed here is the use of the word "terrorists" in describing the PLO attack of March '78.

Page 78: Even though one of the author's characters admits that the Syrian attacks on civilians are "very bad", nevertheless the "Syrians are a stabilizing force among us" - a more accurate description is that the Syrians have "stabilized" Lebanon by simply occupying much of its territory. An acknowledgment of this fact should appear in the text.

The following paragraph gives an all-too-facile explanation of why Israel is aiding the Christians in Lebanon. No mention is made of the fact that many PLO terrorist raids have come from the southern part of Lebanon and that that area has consistently been a base for attacks on Israeli civilians. A more full and balanced explanation is needed.

modified ✓ Page 79: "Not so in Islamic thought, where everything, government, politics, everything is part of religion." The other statement flies in the fact of a later statement which calls for the establishment of a secular Palestinian state. (page 115) If the sentence about Islamic thought is true then any talk of a secular state with a large

number of Muslims is not realistic. Is this the author's true intention?

"This same point of view in Israel." Once again there is not a balanced explanation which recognizes that the issue of separation of religion from state is one of the primary factors of Israeli life. The all too easy statement that "That is the way it is in Israel" neglects the very real struggle that is taking place. Nor is any attention given to the articles in the Israeli Declaration of Independence which specifically speak of religious freedom and religious liberty. Nor is there a fair and full explanation of the Israeli "law of return."

Where is the evidence that Israelis want a "theocratic government?" For 31 years Israeli voters have overwhelmingly rejected the Jewish religious parties. These parties have never gained a majority in Israeli political life. Fairness would dictate that some of these facts be added to the novel to provide adequate background for the reader.

✓ Page 82: "I am leaving for Jerusalem...be careful." Why the need for such ominous warning? Why not a positive response to the statement that a person is going to a city holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims. As the text stands now the reader received a subliminal message that somehow Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, is a dangerous place in which to live. Is this the true intent of the author?

modified  
also will  
be changed

✓ Page 84: "The Israelis merely tolerate our presence as a kind of second class citizens." Where is the documentation for such a statement? The status of minorities in any country is worthy of discussion, but using the code words "second class citizens" conveys a totally inadequate picture.

will be  
changed

✓ Page 85: The paragraph at the top of the page is filled with prejudicial and pejorative statements. The uncritiqued statement that Israel is the 51st state of the U.S. is an example. What is meant by this statement? Is Israel the only country to receive economic aid from the United States?

✓ More mischievous is the impression that Israelis "fear Christian influence in the Middle East." What does this mean? What kind of Christian? What kind of influence? Where in the Middle East? How does this square up with the previously stated Israeli aid to Christians in Lebanon? Worst of all the seemingly simple statement that "a secular society took a horrible toll of Jews" needs a much fuller explanation. The author admits that Christianity helped to

create the Europe of World War II but then backs off and explains the Holocaust, (a term that should be specifically used in this paragraph) in terms of a secular society. The author cannot have it both ways. If Christianity helped to create the Europe of the Holocaust, then it must bear some of the responsibility as well. (see the works of Franklin H. Littell). The entire paragraph needs to be recast.

Page 87: "Over half of the population... as a result of the creation of Israel." Once again we have an over simplified explanation of a very complex event. The author again places some very detrimental statements in the mouth of an Arab and the statement goes unchallenged without nuance or explanation. Since the refugee issue (both Arab and Jewish) is central to any understanding of the Middle East, a sense of fairness demands a fuller and more balanced explanation of this event.

Page 88: The reader meets the first Israeli on this page and the image is highly negative. Israelis "check the passengers...wear the universal uniform...seem vigilant but cordial." The first Israeli is, in fact, a taxi driver from Chicago. This taxi driver "boasts" and "jauntily" makes prejudicial remarks about the body odor, 'the smell' of Arabs. It is my belief that an erroneous and highly negative image of Israelis is found on this page. This is especially critical because it is the reader's introduction to over three million Israeli Jews.

Page 91: Mahmoud tells his version of recent Middle East history on this page. It is presented in passionate and strong human interest language. Where is the balance? Does Mr. Smith, however, ask any provocative questions? Does he accept everything Arabs say at face value?

Page 92: The second paragraph on this page is really Palestinian chauvinism run wild. Again extreme statements go unchallenged and unquestioned.

Page 93: This page is an apology for the PLO, a terrorist organization committed to the destruction of Israel. Israelis according to "Mohammed" (another one of the many Arab speakers in the novel) commit injustices, are cruel, take land, deprive Palestinians of their homes and, worst of all, bring death and disease to our people. What kind of disease? Even the most biased observers of Israeli life admit that she has an extremely high standard of public health. Even WHO, despite extreme anti-Israel prodding from Arab states and others, recently reported that health standards on the West Bank are quite superior. What does the author mean by "disease?" Israelis also "bomb and strafe." This is an extremely heavy indict-

ment of Israel all in one paragraph, yet the author's Arab spokesmen have a field day in freely expressing themselves in the most outrageous terms vis-a-vis Israel, and there is no response, no question, no critique, no balance.

In the following paragraph Israelis throw people in jail and beat up people. They are like "foreigners" in the Middle East (this in the face of nearly 4,000 years of Jewish existence in the Land of Israel), but of course the reason that the Israelis are doing all this is that "they were put here." By whom? By the UN? By the British? By the Americans? By God? By themselves? And then the author reveals the secret of Israeli success, "they are smart and they are strong."

Finally, and only finally after 93 pages does Mr. Smith even venture the opinion (but only to himself!) that perhaps there is another side to the story; that perhaps there is also an Israeli point of view worth considering. The author gives his hand away when he writes that "I understand and even sympathize with the two guys" (sic!)

Even the very real achievements in agriculture are not conceded by the author's Arab spokesman. The truth is that the Land of Israel was not "always" as fertile as it is now. Read Western Christian descriptions of the land in the 19th century, especially Mark Twain.

✓ Page 96: When Mr. Smith, the would-be openminded American visitor to the Middle East wants to read the Jerusalem Post, even this request is given an anti-Israel twist. To wit, the Post is "what the Israelis want you to read." This is patently an unfair statement, it does a serious disservice to the cause of truth. The author makes it sound as if the Israelis have a controlled press when, in fact, the opposite is true. There are papers representing every political expression in Israel including the militant Arab one as well. With the exception of pre civil war Lebanon, no Arab country can compete with the vitality of the Israeli press. Why does the author not comment on the closed nature of the Egyptian press, or the Syrian or the Iraqi, or the Jordanian or the Saudi Arabian? Only the Israelis have a controlled press.

✓ What does the author mean by Jerusalem is in "many ways a western city?" Does he mean this in a positive or a negative way? Does he mean that no other city in the Middle East is western? I personally visited Beirut in 1974 and found it to be highly "western." The whole paragraph is gratuitous. What does it matter if anybody anywhere eats in Chinese restaurants or likes French pastry? What does any of this have to do with anything about the Middle East?

Page 97: Again a harsh image of Israel as their jets "break the sound barrier with a thunderous clap." Again in 1974 I personally

heard enormous sonic booms by the jets of the Jordanian Airforce over Amman. What's the purpose of this paragraph?

Page 100: Accuracy demands that the wall in Jerusalem be given its real name, the Western Wall, not the Wailing Wall. The last paragraph on this page is also filled with inaccuracies and over-simplified statements. What forces "my son and my daughter" to go to Europe and the United States for university training? It simply is not true that Christians cannot find higher education in Israel. If they do not want to attend Israeli colleges and universities, they can attend institutions of higher learning in Arab countries as well. The sweeping personal statement needs modification and correction.

Page 102: Finally after 102 pages the Israeli Jew is going to get an opportunity to speak for himself, but what kind of Jew does the reader encounter? He is a "business associate" of an Arab in the "import and export business." Again the image of the Jewish businessman. Mr. Smith feels the Israeli is "giving me a line." This feeling comes to Mr. Smith after the Israeli has spoken exactly one sentence. A rather quick judgment one would think.

In the earlier pages the Arab speakers go on and on and we never know whether Mr. Smith has a question of the Arabs or has an opinion about what he is hearing. Now after 103 pages we discover that Mr. Smith does have some question about the Arabs but poor Mr. Rosen cannot speak in such an unquestioning way. Like some of the Arabs, Rosen is "inflexible, voluble and complex." All this in one paragraph.

*modified* ✓  
Page 103: Mr. Rosen's conversation is 27 lines long, a great deal shorter than the many Arab statements that the author has employed earlier in the work. In addition, Rosen's speech is rambling and somewhat disconnected and many of the statements are given without any reasons, either historical, religious, cultural or social. It's all passed off as opinion and it is an inadequate treatment of the Israeli view.

Page 105: "A refugee from Haifa." Haifa's Jewish community in 1948 actively encouraged the Arab residents to remain, and not to flee. There is a great deal of documentation to substantiate this statement. What really happened in Haifa during those critical months 31 years ago should be noted in the novel. Today Haifa has a significant Arab community and the University of Haifa has a high number of Arab students enrolled there. The University has an important and distinguished Arab-Jewish Institute on its campus. Thus, the seemingly bland remark that one of Mr. Smith's Arab friends was a refugee from Haifa is simply not enough.

Page 106: "They have received no money for the homes they were forced to leave." As indicated earlier, the Middle East refugee problem is a complex and important issue. Some mention must be made indicating

that nearly 800,000 Jews from Arab countries left the lands of their birth after the 1948 War. Their property was taken over by the host governments and many of them came to Israel literally with the clothes on their back. Today that community represents nearly 60% of the Jewish population of Israel. In any comprehensive Middle East settlement, the claims of Jewish refugees will also have to be addressed. Again some balance is needed.

✓ Page 110: The author's description of the Israeli town of Netanya is quite negative. He describes it as "clamorous...a skirmish line of palm trees...blazing white cement." Having visited Natanya several times myself, I think this description is unfair. Why the use of the bellicose phrase "skirmish line?" At the bottom of page 110 Amon gives a bribe to a hotel clerk. Once again the image of the wily and corruptible Jew is projected to the reader. It is ironic since one of the stereotypes coming out of the Middle East is that the Arabs have been historically susceptible to bribery. Why the need for any reference to bribes in the work?

Page 112: "The Jewish friend" is portrayed as a manager of a hotel. Throughout the work the Arabs are all portrayed as working for a lofty and noble purpose while Jews are either taxi drivers, export-import business people, managers of a hotel or bribe takers.

Page 113: The author's two chief characters, Miriam and Amon, engage in an argument with their Israeli friends. We do not find any such response to the stated positions of the Arabs in the novel and indeed on this page it is clearly stated that Miriam and Amon have "sympathy" for the Arab position. I would hope that a future revision of the novel would allow Amon to ask the tough and hard questions of Arabs as well as Jews.

✓ Will be changed There is a basic historic error in paragraph 3. The impression is given that the Holocaust created the State of Israel. Zionism as an active political movement began in the 19th century and it has always been a part of the Jewish consciousness stemming from Biblical days. It is simply not true that the Holocaust created Israel and indeed the raison d'etre of Israel is not based on a reaction to the Holocaust. The roots of the Jewish State are found in the Bible and in the Jewish religious and historic experience.

"The benefits of Western technology that Israel has introduced." Again the image of western type state somehow being imposed upon the Middle East. Any observer of the Middle East today can clearly see that the Arab countries are engaged in a furious campaign to bring western technology to their nations. One may only look at the situations in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Syria and Egypt for confirmation of this fact. Is Israel the only country in the Middle East that seeks the benefits of western technology?

Page 114: "Israel is a state created by the West." A mischievous statement since in fact Israel is a state that was created by Jewish suffering, Jewish courage and Jewish commitment.

"Jews have been given Arab land because Western Christians feel guilty." Again a highly perjorative, inaccurate and simplistic explanation of a complex issue. No mention is made of Jewish continuity in the land for thousands of years, Jewish purchases of the land in the 19th and 20th centuries. It is all too pat that Western Christians gave Jews an Arab land.

✓ As for Palestinians staying in Israel, they could not because of the war. It is simply not true. Thousands of Palestinian Arabs remained after the 1948 War and today over 10% of Israeli population is Arab. As in so many historical events, there is much complexity. Some Arabs left, some Arabs remained. Both facts should be acknowledged.

"Why doesn't Israel do what the UN says...Israel wants to grow in size at the expense of Palestinians." Two very loaded statements that are prejudicial. The entire role of the UN in the Middle East needs to be more fully explained. One could ask why didn't the Arab States permit the creation of an Arab Palestinian nation in 1948 following the partition plan? Why did Transjordan annex the West Bank and why did Egypt take over the Gaza Strip? Why didn't they follow the UN and allow the creation of an independent Palestinian state at that time? The alleged charge of Israel expanding, if allowed to stand gives a false impression of the facts.

Page 115: "Israel planes bomb refugee camps...and kill innocent people yet the guerillas are fighting for a just cause, an independent Palestinian state that is open to everyone." These are two extremely damaging and negative sentences. The Palestinians did not, of course, kill innocent people, the Israelis, of course, are not fighting for a just cause, only guerillas, and a future Palestinian state will be open to everyone. Does that include Soviet Jews, Iranian Jews, etc.? Nor is there any acknowledgment that Israeli planes may, in fact, be attacking military positions. The author's true sentiments are succinctly expressed in these two harsh and biased sentences.

**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** July 11, 1979  
**to** Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
**from** Rabbi A. James Rudin  
**subject** Friendship Press Middle East Mosaic  
 NEW FRIENDS/NEW PLACES  
 by Constance J. Tarasar

Ms. Tarasar, a Greek Eastern Orthodox Christian has written four story papers for children dealing with the Middle East. They are:

1. A Lamb For the Feast. This deals with an Egyptian Muslim boy and the Feast of Bairam. There is nothing problematic in this story paper.
2. A Very Special Place. This deals with Egyptian Coptic Christians who visit a desert monastery. There is nothing problematic in this story paper.
3. A Beautiful Booth. This deals with the Jewish Festival of Sukkoth in Israel. My detailed analysis follows.
4. Samira's Big Day. This deals with a Greek Orthodox child in Beirut in celebration of Palm Sunday. There is nothing problematic in this story paper.

Ms. Tarasar has incorporated almost every one of the suggestions from both my December 1978 and January 1979 analyses of her material. The following points should be especially noted:

1. The section on Sukkoth now includes two illustrations. There were no illustrations in the first manuscript.
2. There is an illustration of Israeli Halutzim (pioneers) laying a water pipe in the desert.
3. Ms. Tarasar specifically mentions "that Jews in many parts of the Middle East and Europe were not allowed to own land or to be farmers at all... One of the most exciting things

## NEW FRIENDS/NEW PLACES (continued)

about living in Israel today is that Jews are once again farmers as they were in Biblical times."

4. In the original manuscript the word "Israel" was nowhere mentioned. It now appears several times in the story paper and there is even a special section entitled "Israel and Jerusalem." In this section the author writes, "The land of Israel is sometimes called the Holy Land because it is the place where Jesus lived and where many religions have important shrines. In Bible times, this land was known as the Land of Caanan and later as Palestine."
5. There is a much improved section on the Torah including an illustration of a scroll, albeit a blank one. Ms. Tarasar has incorporated all of my suggestions about the importance of the Torah, the honor accorded to it and the fact that the Torah is "the name given to all of Jewish teaching."
6. The European word "Papa" has been removed and replaced with "Father."
7. There is a much fuller description of the historical origins of Sukkoth along with a description of the Lulav and Esrog.
8. The Wall in Jerusalem is now accurately called the Western Wall, instead of the Wailing Wall, and Moses is now "our teacher" instead of "our Father."
9. In the original manuscript the Israeli story paper constituted only 18% of the material. It is now 25%.
10. One problematic sentence remains. Ms. Tarasar states, "The city of Jerusalem is in the center of Palestine" and in her description of the city she nowhere mentions that it is in fact the capital of Israel.

All in all, Ms. Tarasar's series is a great improvement over the original manuscript in both text and illustrations. In the original manuscript there were many errors of omission regarding Israel, Jews and Judaism. By and large, these errors have been corrected. As indicated above, the corrections can be directly attributed to the two analyses that the American Jewish Committee supplied.

AJR:FM

Encl.

cc: Judith Banki  
Inge Gibel



An Analysis of "New Friends/New Places" by Constance J. Tarasar  
Revised Version

Prepared by: . Rabbi A. James Rudin  
Assistant National Director  
Interreligious Affairs  
American Jewish Committee  
New York, New York

January 1979



The author has made some important revisions in the text which have been quite constructive. I am pleased that there will be illustrations in the Jewish section dealing with the Festival of Succoth. The author also followed our suggestion of substituting the word "father" for "Papa." She also specifically mentioned on page 2 of the Succoth story the fact that Jews were prevented from owning land in many parts of the Middle East and Europe and "one of the most exciting things about living in Israel today is that the Jews are once again farmers as they were in Biblical times."

Page 21 - The author has given a definition of a synagogue and changed the phrase to "our teacher, Moses."

Page 23 - In the description of Jerusalem it should be noted that the city is not only in the center of Israel but that it is also Israel's capital. The author has changed the word "Wailing Wall" to the "Western Wall."

In her description of the Torah, one sentence should be rewritten to read "these are the first five books in our Bible." The words "also" and "Christian" should be omitted.

The author has added a good paragraph about the importance of the Torah to Jews and its central position in every synagogue building.

Overall the manuscript reflects considerable reworking. Will there be any bibliographies or guides for either the student or the teacher?

# AN ANALYSIS OF "NEW FRIENDS/NEW PLACES"

By CONSTANCE J. TARASAR

Prepared by:

Rabbi A. James Rudin  
Assistant National Director  
Interreligious Affairs  
American Jewish Committee  
New York, New York

December 1978

Page 19: Why does the Israeli child call his father "Papa"? In the earlier chapter on Egypt the child calls his parents "Mother and Father." Why suddenly "Papa" when an Israeli child speaks? "Papa" is a European term, and does not reflect the fact that nearly 60 percent of the Israeli Jewish population comes from Africa and Asia. A better word would be simply "Father" or the Hebrew word "Abba."

The short description of the Jewish festival of Succoth is presented without any pictures or illustrations such as we find in the Egyptian section, nor is there any specific acknowledgment that the festival is taking place in Israel. The word "Israel" does not appear in the chapter. The author does mention the Negev and the Galilee (lesser known names than Israel), but the previous section does cite Egypt by name (page 6).

Page 21: Jews never refer to Moses as "our father," rather as "our teacher." In the brief three page description of Succoth no mention is made to the historic origin of the holiday. According to tradition, the ancient Israelites lived in the small booths during their wanderings in the Sinai desert after the Exodus from Egypt. Also it should be noted that the small hut or Sukka is symbolic of the frailty of human life and of our dependence upon God and nature. Nor is there any specific description of the Lulav which is one of the major symbols of the festival. The Lulav is a combination of various branches and leaves, and is used in all Sukkoth services. Once again, illustrations are needed in this section along with an explanation of the term "synagogue."

It would be helpful if David's father mentioned the fact that for many, many centuries Jews were forbidden to own land and to be farmers in many parts of the Middle East and Europe. One of the most exciting and important developments in the rebirth of Israel

is that Jews have returned to their soil and have again, as in Biblical times, become farmers and vineyard keepers.

Page 22: The word "Torah" has come to mean many important things in Jewish tradition. Its root definition is "teaching," and it also means the parchment scroll that contains Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, the first five books of the Bible. Torah in its broadest sense means the entire tradition of Jewish religious instruction and teaching, including ethics, law, history, and commentary. Thus the sentence, "The Torah is the Hebrew Bible, the most important part of which is the five books of Moses--the first five books of our Christian Bible" is inaccurate and unclear. The author should state that the Torah is read in the synagogue on every Sabbath and on Jewish holidays as well. It might also be noted there can be no synagogue without a Torah scroll, and that when a Torah scroll wears out or becomes damaged, it is never discarded, but is appropriately buried.

To sum up, the brief descriptive paragraph on the Torah is simply inadequate to convey what Torah truly means to Jews and Judaism. Certainly a picture of a Torah scroll would be helpful on this page.

Page 23: The second paragraph: "The city of Jerusalem is in the center of Palestine-Israel." This sentence is neither helpful or accurate. The young reader will be confused by the term "Palestine-Israel," since no such political entity exists. Is the author unwilling or unable to accept the legitimate existence of Israel after 31 years? Israel is a sovereign state and nation, is a member of the United Nations, has diplomatic relations with many other states, and is currently negotiating a peace treaty with Egypt, an Arab country. The author gives away her hand by her inability to recognize these facts and she confuses the issue greatly with this unnecessary misleading sentence.

Page 23, section 3: The correct name is the Western Wall. Jews do not call it the Wailing Wall. That is a term given to it by others.

In sum, there are several problem areas in this text. First there is a total lack of illustrations regarding Jews, Judaism, and/or Israel when compared to Egypt and Islam. Second, out of 28 pages, 18 are given over to Egypt and/or Islam, nearly 65%. Five pages are devoted to Judaism, Jerusalem and Israel, about 18%, and the remainder is about life in Lebanon. This is an imbalance that should be corrected. Third, the chapters that deal with Israel and Judaism must be enlarged to provide added information and background and some sense of balance, especially for an American audience that comes

in contact with a large and active American Jewish community. As indicated above, the descriptions of the Jewish holiday, the Torah, and Israel and Jerusalem are minimal and inadequate. Much more needs to be added, and I would welcome the opportunity to provide educational material, illustrations, bibliographies, and any other assistance to the author.



# NEW FRIENDS/NEW PLACES

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Constance J. Tarasar



## Story Paper

# 1

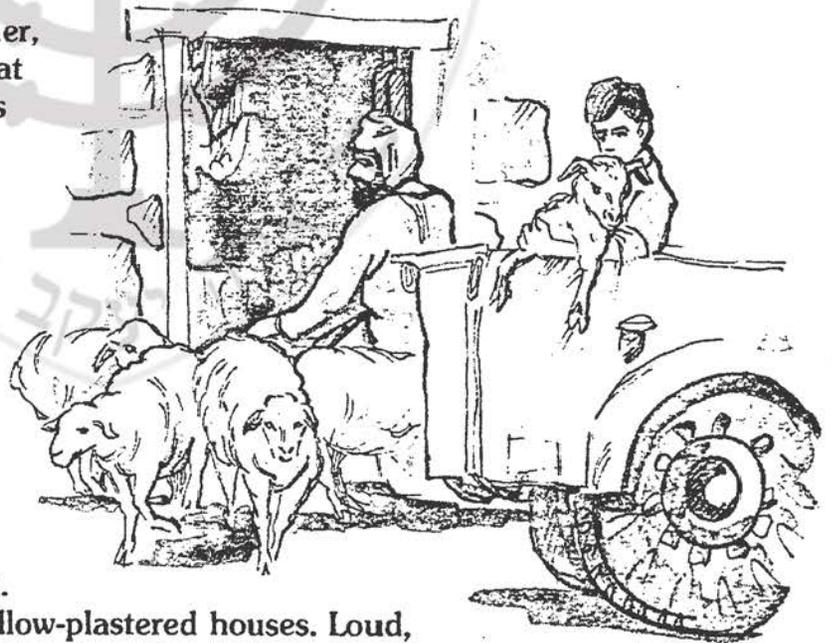
# A LAMB FOR THE FEAST

Jamil opened his eyes and squinted. The bright sun was shining in his face. "Mother!" he cried. "Is Father still here?"

"Yes, he's waiting for you to get up. It's going to be a busy day so you'd better hurry!"

Jamil jumped out of bed and dressed quickly. Today was a very special day. Jamil was going to the market with his father to pick out a lamb for tomorrow's feast day. The feast of *Bairam* was one of the biggest holidays of the year for Muslim families. On this day they sacrificed a lamb to remind themselves of Abraham's obedience to God.

"Well, it's about time," said Jamil's father, as the boy hurried into the kitchen. Jamil sat at the table to eat his breakfast of olives and cheese, which he stuffed into a pocket of flat bread. He listened quietly while his mother and father checked their shopping lists. Jamil and his father were going to the section of town called Old Cairo, where they would find many lambs from which to choose their own for the feast. Mother was going to the local market a few blocks away to buy the rest of the food for their big meal.



Old Cairo was a crowded part of town. The narrow streets were lined with old yellow-plastered houses. Loud, honking cars shared the streets with crowds of people and small flocks of animals that huddled in front of the meat markets. Jamil and his father checked several markets to find the best price and then selected their lamb. They pushed the lamb onto the small truck they had borrowed for their shopping trip and drove home. Jamil rode in the back of the truck, proudly holding onto the lamb they had bought.

“Jamil! What have you got?” It was George, Jamil’s best friend, who lived in the apartment next door.

“A lamb for the feast!” said Jamil. “Help me get him off the truck and up the stairs.”

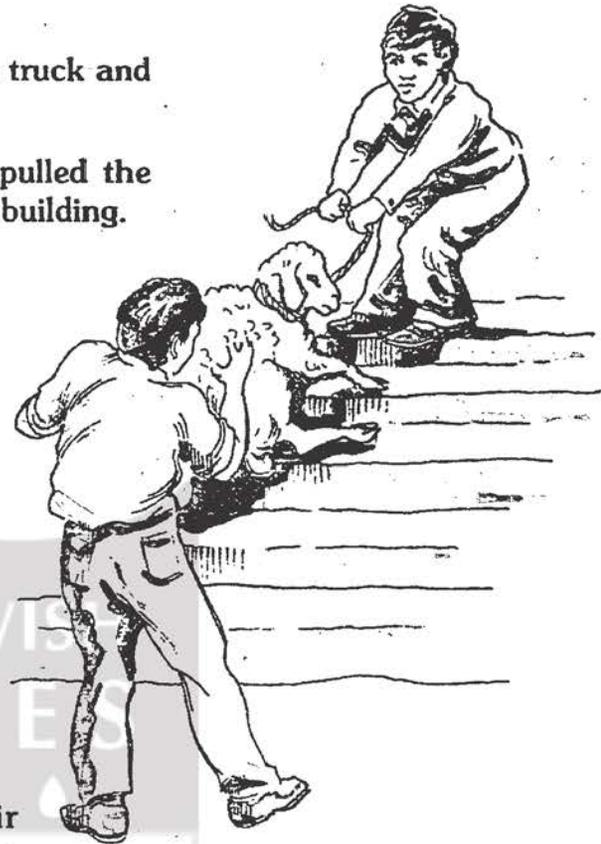
George ran to help Jamil and together they pushed and pulled the lamb into the street and led him to the door of the apartment building.

“Where are we taking him?” said George.

“To the roof,” answered Jamil. “He’ll stay there until it’s time for the sacrifice.”

The boys tugged and pulled, and pushed and shoved. Finally, after much struggling, they reached the top of the stairs of the six-story building. Jamil led the lamb onto the roof and tied him to one of the pipes sticking up.

“Look!” said George. “There are lambs on other rooftops!” The boys looked over the wall of the roof. They counted six more lambs on the roofs of other buildings in the neighborhood. All the lambs were munching handfuls of grass that their owners had left for them in their strange homes.



“It’s too bad they will all be killed tomorrow,” said George. “Why do you sacrifice an animal for this feast?”

“Don’t you know?” said Jamil. “You have the story of Abraham in your Bible. Our Scriptures, the *Qu’ran*, tell us we must be obedient and faithful to God, just as our father Abraham was. *Allah* (God) wanted to

see if Abraham would obey him, no matter what God asked him to do. So he asked Abraham to kill his son. Abraham loved his son, but he also loved God. He built an altar out of stones. Then he laid his son on the altar. Just as he was about to kill him, *Allah* called out and stopped him. ‘Now I know you truly obey me in everything,’ he said. Just then, Abraham saw a ram caught in some bushes. He ran to catch it and put it on the altar in place of his son. Then he offered it as a gift of thanks to God.”

“I remember that story,” said George, “but I still don’t understand why you sacrifice a lamb on the feast.”



"Well," said Jamil, "by remembering Abraham's sacrifice, we show our thanks and obedience to Allah. It's our way of promising to obey God every year. People who are lucky enough to go to Mecca, our holiest place, offer a sacrifice there. Every Muslim hopes to make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once. But even when we can't go, we can still offer a sacrifice to Allah."

"What do you do with the lamb after you kill it?" asked George.

"We cook it and eat it," answered Jamil. "We say special prayers and then we visit the cemetery. The poor people gather at the cemetery. We go there to say prayers for the dead and to share some of our meat and food with the poor, who can't afford to buy their own. One way we obey Allah is by helping the poor."

"Jamil! Hurry down! There's much more work to do!" It was Jamil's mother calling.

"I guess if I want to enjoy the feast, I'd better be obedient, too!" Jamil laughed as he waved goodbye to George and hurried down the stairs.

## AMERICAN JEWISH ARCIVES

### MEET A MUSLIM FRIEND

Many of the people who live in the countries of the Middle East belong to the Muslim faith. Jamil is a Muslim boy who lives in Cairo, Egypt. Most of the people in Cairo are Muslims. They follow the teachings of a prophet named Muhammad. Their name for God is *Allah*.

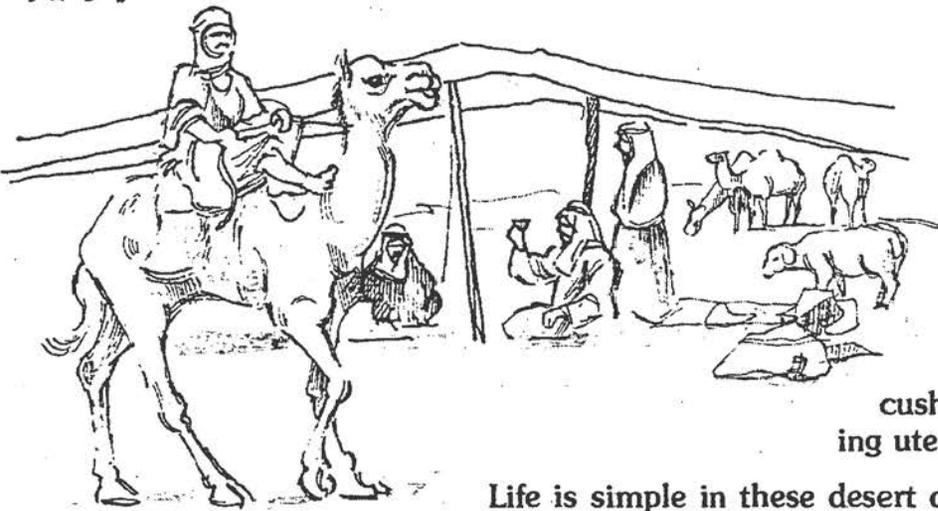
#### Muslims at Prayer

Muslims pray to Allah five times every day, no matter where they are. A man called the *muezzin* or crier goes up into a tall tower called a *minaret*. From there, he calls all the people to prayer. The people come to the nearby *mosque*—house of worship—to pray. They wash themselves with water before entering. They take off their shoes at the door and enter the mosque barefoot. Then they kneel on a mat or carpet, facing in the direction of Mecca. A leader helps them to chant the daily prayers.

Muslims who cannot come to the mosque kneel on their prayer carpets wherever they are. They face in the direction of Mecca and chant the prayers. On Fridays, everyone tries to come together for the prayers in the mosque. A sermon may also be given at that time. There are no statues or holy pictures in the mosque. The only decorations are writings from the Qu'ran, the Muslim holy Scriptures, on the walls and ceilings.

### NOMADS OF THE DESERT

A special group of Muslims in the Middle East are the *Bedouins* or nomads (which means travelers or wanderers). These people live a very different life from Jamil and his family. They do not live in one particular place. They do not have a regular home. Instead, the Bedouins travel from place to place with their families, their sheep and camels, and even their homes.

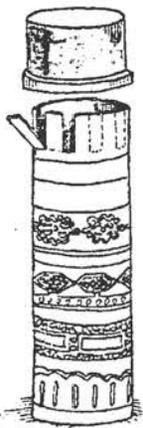


During the rainy winter season, the Bedouins live in the desert regions. In the dry summer months, they move to the mountains or plains. Wherever they go, each family sets up its home in a large tent. In the tent are rugs or mats for sleeping, a very low folding stand or table with one large plate for food, perhaps some cushions for sitting on, and whatever cooking utensils are needed.

Life is simple in these desert camps. The people spend most of their time caring for their flocks of sheep, camels or horses. Sometimes, if they stay long enough in one place, they may grow a few crops for food, but usually the Bedouins do not farm. They may hire other people in the desert oases to grow crops for them. Usually the Bedouin tribes keep moving in order to find enough water and grazing land for their animals.

Even though they lead a different kind of life, the Bedouins and Jamil's family share a very important thing—their Muslim faith. The Bedouins pray to Allah, like Jamil, and they, too, sacrifice a lamb for the feast of Bairam.

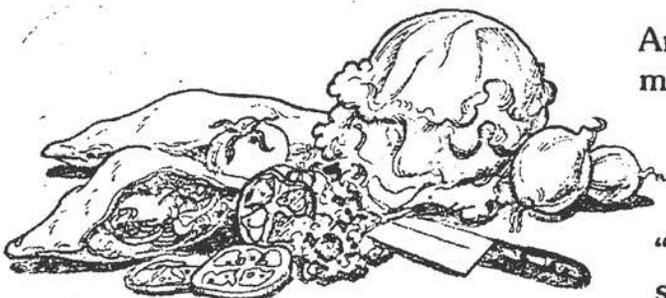
## MAKE A MINARET...



One of the interesting things about visiting Cairo is hearing and seeing the crier call the people to prayer. You can make a minaret and crier of your own.

You will need the cardboard tube from a roll of paper towels. On one end, make cuts 2 inches long every 1/4 inch around the tube. Fold down every other strip and cut off, so that the top of the tube looks like a tower on a castle. Place a rounded plastic aerosol cap on top of the cut end, and attach with glue. Place a pipe-cleaner figure in the tower to represent the crier. Decorate the tower with geometric designs, such as those found in pictures of Islamic mosques.

## ...AND SHARE A FEAST



In your own supermarket, wherever you live in North America, you can find foods like those Jamil and his family might share with you in Cairo!

Ask your parents to look for pita bread, which can be found in many stores. Chop some fresh vegetables—tomatoes, lettuce, onions, parsley—and stuff the “pocket” of the bread. For dessert, try orange or melon slices, dates or figs.

# NEW FRIENDS/NEW PLACES

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Constance J. Tarasar

## Story Paper

# 2

# A VERY SPECIAL PLACE



"Is the desert all flat? Are there any trees? Do any animals live there?" Mark had many questions about today's special trip.

"You'll soon see for yourself," answered Mother. "I've packed a lunch for you to eat in the car, and here's a light scarf to cover your face when the wind starts blowing sand all over."

Mark threw the scarf around his neck and ran downstairs to the car. Father had just finished packing the car with some gifts and supplies for the monks.

"What do monks do? How can they live in the desert? Do they really live in caves?"

Mark's father laughed. "Is there no end to your questions today? Get into the car and you'll soon see for yourself. Abba Pimen is expecting us before sundown. It would be good if we could arrive at the monastery in time for Vespers."

Mark got into the car. He was really looking forward to the trip. Today he would finally see the real desert, not just the edge of the sand that came near the city. And he would also see a very old *monastery*, a place where monks lived. He often saw monks praying in his own church here in Cairo, but he didn't know much about them. Today he would actually visit them and see how they lived!

"How long does it take to get to the desert?" Mark asked.

"As soon as you see the *pyramids*, you'll know that the desert is beginning." Father pointed ahead to the edge of the city. The peaked tops of the famous pyramids of Egypt could be seen just over the roofs of the houses.

"There they are!" Mark pointed as they approached the huge stone structures. No matter what side you stand on, the pyramids always look like triangles. "They look like little mountains," Mark said as the car moved past them.

Soon the pyramids were behind them, and in front was the desert—



miles and miles of sand, as far as the eye could see. But there were many things to look at—hills and valleys, ridges and gullies. The sun played on the sand, turning it many different colors. Mark didn't see any trees, but he did see some dry scrub grass and a few desert flowers.

"Are you sure there's a monastery out here? It doesn't look like you could build much in this place," said Mark.

"There are many monasteries in the desert," said Father. "Some have been here for more than a thousand years, ever since St. Anthony first came to the desert to live as a monk. At first the monks lived in places where the desert is rockier and more mountainous, in caves. Then, as more people came, they joined together to build churches and other buildings for shelter. Sometimes it's hard to tell the buildings from the hills around them, because the monks used the sand and rock to make concrete and blocks for the foundation and walls."

Mark looked and looked, but he could see only hills of sand and an occasional rock formation. The hot air made him sleepy. He ate the sandwich and olives his mother had packed for lunch and then fell asleep.

"Wake up, Mark! We're almost there!"

Mark opened his eyes and looked out the window. The desert had changed; now the hills looked like small mountains. Jagged ledges and openings in the large rocks created all kinds of shapes in the landscape. They rounded a curve and Mark shouted, "Look, isn't that a cross? Yes! It's a church! And there's the monastery."

Mark sat up to get a better look. Soon they were at the gate of the monastery. A bearded young man in flowing dark robes came to meet them. "Welcome! My name is Brother Athanasios. Abba Pimen is expecting you."

Mark was so excited, he felt like shouting, but something about the monastery stopped him. Everything was so quiet and peaceful here. You could even hear yourself breathing. There were no cars or machines or crowds of people to make a lot of noise. Mark saw a few men walking silently to the church from their *cells* (rooms). Another man was sitting outside the door of his room, making baskets out of reeds. Mark wanted to see more, but Brother Athanasios led them into a large room where another man in dark robes met them. He had bright eyes and long white hair and beard.

"Welcome, my children. You must be tired after your long drive." Abba Pimen blessed them and asked them to be seated. Another monk brought them some water to drink. After the long, hot ride, Mark thought he had never tasted anything better.

Mark sat quietly while his father spoke with Abba Pimen. After a few minutes, Abba Pimen rose and said to Mark, "Come, you must be anxious to see our monastery. I'll show you how we live here."





In and out of small buildings they wandered. Some of the buildings seemed to be built right into the side of the mountain. In some rooms, Mark saw monks weaving mats and baskets. Others were making rope. A few were weaving crosses out of thin strips of leather.

"I have a cross like that!" said Mark.

Just then, Mark heard bells ringing. "It's time for Vespers," said Abba Pimen. Mark and his father followed the monks to the church for evening prayers. The sun was going down as they crossed the narrow courtyard. Inside the church, candles were being lit to provide light for reading and singing the psalms and hymns. The church smelled sweetly of burning incense. Soon Mark and his father were surrounded by men in black robes, chanting the evening prayers. Except for the different surroundings, it reminded Mark of the services in his church in Cairo.

After the service, Brother Athanasios led them to the guest house for a light supper.

"People often come here for a few days of peace and quiet," Mark's father told Mark. "They spend their days reading, praying, or just walking around the monastery grounds."

"That's right," said Brother Athanasios. "Some talk with the older monks about how to live a better Christian life, and during the main meal of the day, they listen to the monks read stories of the lives of the saints. Sometimes, they even hear the story of a saint who lived right here in this very monastery many hundreds of years ago."

"Time for bed, young man," Father said. A monk was waiting with a candle to show them to their room for the night. It was dark now. The sky was filled with stars and the air was very still. Mark said his prayers and climbed into bed.

The church bells were calling the monks to midnight prayers. But Mark was sound asleep.

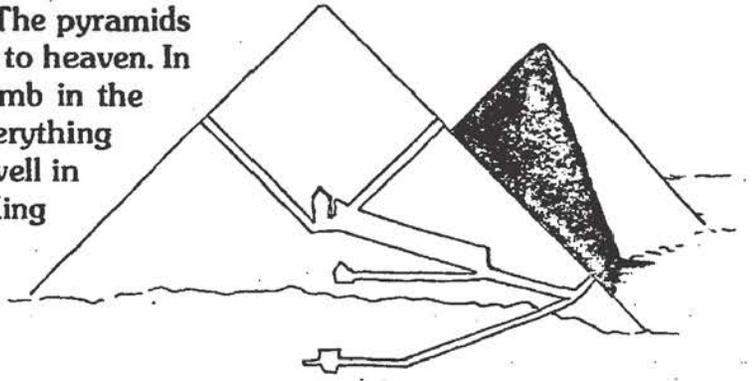


## ANCIENT EGYPT

Mark lives in Egypt. His family is Christian and they are members of the Coptic Church. Most Egyptian Christians are Coptic; Coptic is another word for Egypt or Egyptian. Mark's family traces its beginnings back to the time before the people in Egypt heard about Jesus Christ. Mark's ancestors were the ancient Egyptians.

We know something about the ancient Egyptians from the monuments and tombs they built. The most famous of these are the pyramids. These

are the tombs of the kings or pharaohs of Egypt. The pyramids are very large and point to the sky, like a staircase to heaven. In ancient times, the king's body was buried in a tomb in the pyramid along with many of his possessions—everything the people thought he would need in order to live well in a new life. One such king was the very young King Tutankhamen—King Tut. Many of the objects that were found in his tomb have been on display recently in North American museums. Perhaps you have seen pictures of these.



From the monuments and drawings or picture stories left by the ancient Egyptians, we can tell what life was like long ago in Egypt. The early Egyptians were great builders. They studied many things that people still study today. They knew math and science. They were excellent engineers and knew how to make the most of the land for farming. They studied the stars to learn more about the world. They also studied medicine. We are still learning today how much the ancient Egyptians really knew about life in our world.

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES

## PICTURE THIS

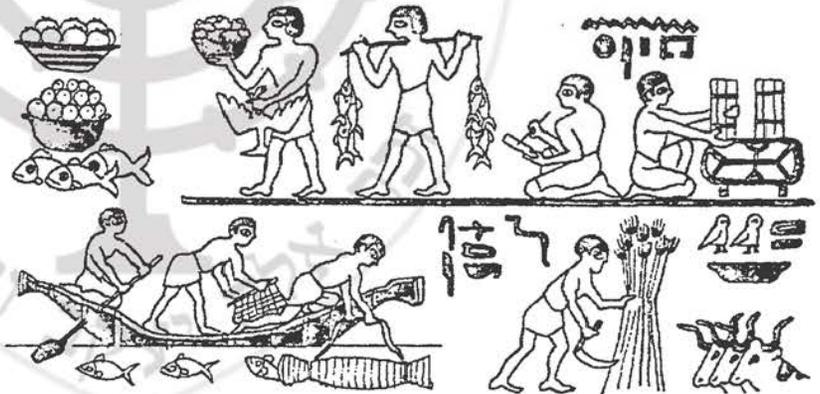
Read this picture story. Tell what you think it means or what the people are doing. What kinds of foods do they have? What kinds of tools do they use? What kinds of animals can you see?

Draw your own picture story. Tell something about your life that you would like Mark to know. Here are some things you could include:

- the people in your family
- where you live
- a game you like to play
- where you go to church.

Ask an adult to help you find old magazines with pictures of Egypt. Cut out the ones you like best and paste them onto sheets of construction paper. Gather the sheets together and staple them along the left-hand side. Now you have made your own book about Egypt! Some kinds of pictures you might look for are:

- the pyramids
- mosques
- children of Egypt
- the desert.

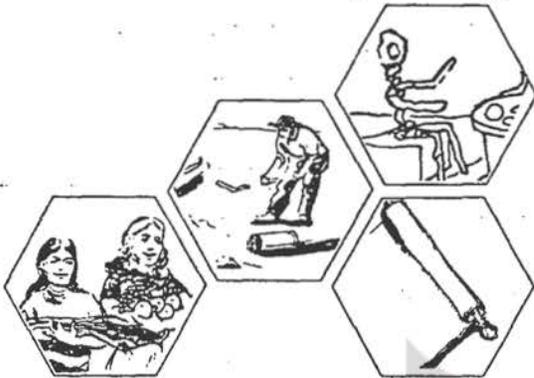


# NEW FRIENDS/NEW PLACES

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Constance J. Tarasar

## Story Paper



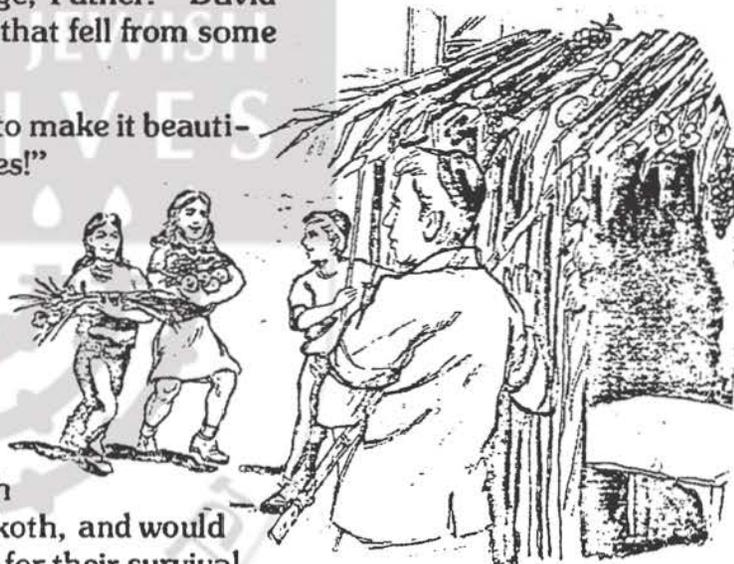
# 3

## A BEAUTIFUL BOOTH

"Will our booth be the most beautiful in the village, Father?" David asked, as he ran after his father, picking up the fruits that fell from some of the branches.

David's father laughed and said, "We'll certainly try to make it beautiful. Come and help me decorate it with these branches!"

David couldn't wait for the feast to begin. *Sukkoth*—the Feast of Tabernacles, or booths—was his favorite feast of the whole year. It took place in the fall, at harvest time. Each year, David's family would build a small shelter against the side of their house. According to tradition, in ancient times the Israelites lived in small booths like this during the years when they wandered in the desert. David's family and other Jewish families would remember their ancestors during *Sukkoth*, and would remember that all people depend upon God and nature for their survival.



The shelter was built out of branches and palm leaves. Especially important were the branches of citron, the large lemon-like fruit that had just ripened on the trees in the orchard. The citron and other fruits hanging from the booth gave it a colorful, festive atmosphere. The *lulav*, a bundle of branches, and an important part of all *Sukkoth* services, would also be made from branches and leaves.

"Be sure to leave an opening in the roof so that we can still see the sky!" Father called as he handed the branches up to David, who was perched on top of a stool so that he could reach the roof.

"How does it look, Father?" he called down.

"Wonderful," said David's father, "but now we need to hang more fruit from the branches."

"Father, Father!" called Ruth, David's sister. She came running in from the fields, her apron filled with oranges, lemons, citrons and other fruits from the harvest. "I think I have at least one of every kind of fruit in the orchard for our booth!"

"Wait for me, Ruth!" Little Rachel, their youngest sister, was trailing behind, her arms filled with flowers.

David jumped off the stool to help his sisters. He smiled at Rachel and said, "Now we're sure to have the nicest booth in the village!"

Rachel handed the fruits and flowers up to David. Carefully he hung them among the other branches.

"I'm ready to make the cakes now!" Mama called from the house. The two girls ran into the house to help Mama. The booth was nearly finished. David and his father carried the table and chairs out of the house and placed them in the booth. There was just enough room. Now the family would be able to eat their meals outdoors all week in the sukkoth. David even hoped Father would let him sleep in the sukkoth during the week of feasting.

Father stood back and looked at their sukkoth. "Well, David, I think we've done a good job!" he said. "I'm glad we had a good harvest this year. All the trees in the orchard were filled with fruits, and we had more flowers and vegetables than ever to sell at the market."

David was especially proud of the good harvest because this year he was old enough to work in the fields. He had helped to plant the seeds for the flowers and vegetables. Now he was helping pack the crates of fruit that were being taken to the market.

"David, do you remember when we moved here to the Negev desert? There were no fields of crops and very few trees. Almost nothing would grow in this ground," Father said. "It was very different from the beautiful green hills and valleys of Galilee where you were born. The people in our village have worked hard to make things grow on this land, but we couldn't have done it without God's help."

David was too young to remember his early days in Galilee, a different part of Israel, but he did remember the hard times they had had trying to make things grow on the dry desert land. The people of the village dug ditches and laid miles of pipe to carry water to the fields. Slowly, the earth began to feed the seeds that had been planted. Today everything was green and beautiful.

"Did you know that for many, many years, in many parts of the Middle East and Europe, Jews were not allowed to own land or to be farmers at all?" Father went on. "One of the most exciting things about living in Israel today is that Jews are once again farmers, as they were in biblical times."

"You know, Father," David said, "what happened here reminds me of what I heard in the *synagogue* (house of worship). Our teacher read to us the words of the prophet Isaiah. He said something in the Scriptures about the desert blooming with flowers!"



"You're right, David. I know those words very well. Isaiah said:

*'The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,  
and rejoice with joy and singing.'*"

David's father looked out at the fields of vegetables and flowers. "You can see how good the Lord has been to us. We have had gentle rains and good weather to help our crops grow. Now we must give thanks for this good harvest."

"Is that why we bring palm branches and citrons to the synagogue tomorrow?" asked David.

"That's right," answered Father. "In the Torah the Lord said to our teacher Moses:

*'You shall take on the first day the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days. You shall keep it as a feast to the Lord seven days in the year ... you shall dwell in booths for seven days; all that are native in Israel...'*"

"Well, we have a good booth, don't we, Father?" David looked with pleasure at the booth he had helped make.

"We certainly do," said Father. "Now, let's get busy and make our bundles of branches for the big procession. We still have much to do for the feast!"

## ISRAEL and JERUSALEM

David is a Jewish boy who was born in a village in the northern part of Israel. When he was young, his family moved to a new village in the southern desert region called the Negev. The land of Israel is sometimes called the Holy Land, because it is the place where Jesus lived and where many religions have important shrines. In Bible times, this land was known as the land of Canaan, and later, as Palestine.

The city of Jerusalem is in the center of Palestine. The old part of the city contains many holy places—the Christian Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the remains of the Jewish Temple, and the Muslim Dome of the Rock. Around the Old City are the places where Jesus taught and healed people, the Garden of Gethsemane where he prayed, and the place where he was crucified. Jerusalem is often called the Holy City; it is a very special place for Christians, Jews and Muslims.

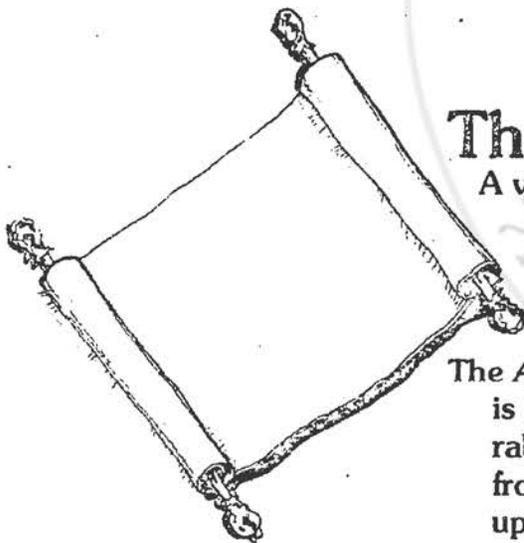
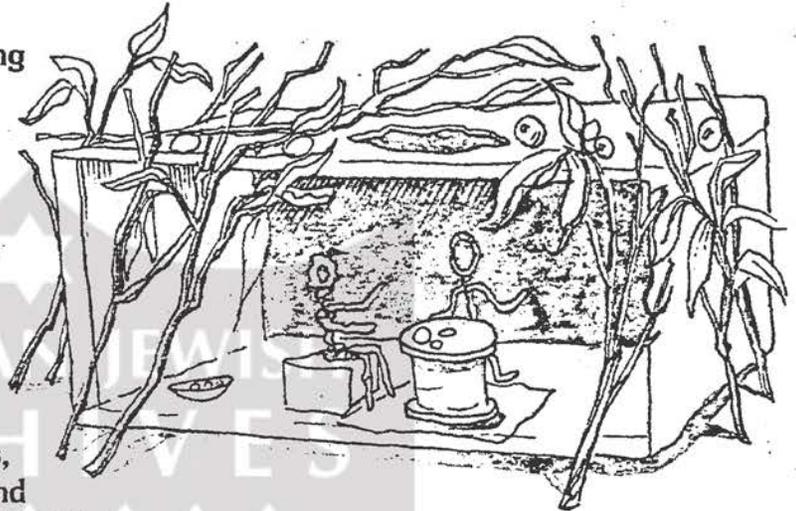
1. Here, in Jerusalem, is the Muslim shrine, the Dome of the Rock. Muslims believe that the prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven from this spot.

2. The Christian Church of the Holy Sepulchre is built on the place where Jesus was buried.
3. The Western Wall, all that is left of the ancient Temple of Jerusalem, is a holy place of the Jewish people.

## CELEBRATE WITH DAVID

Imagine that you are visiting David's family during Sukkoth. With David, his father, and Rachel and Ruth, you help to decorate the beautiful booth as a way of saying thank you to God.

Make your booth by taking an empty shoe box and laying it on its side. Cut a hole in the top. Decorate the box with leaves and twigs or small branches. Use small berries or tiny wads of colored tissue paper for fruit. Add some flowers if you have them. Using pipe cleaners and construction paper or fabric scraps, make small chairs and a table to put inside, and make small figures of family members. Make David, Ruth, Rachel, their mother and father—and don't forget yourself!



### The Torah

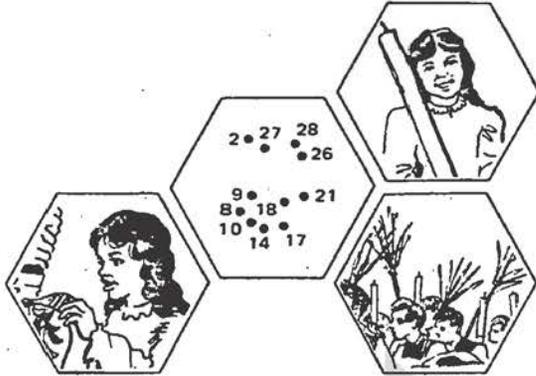
A very important part of the Jewish faith is the Torah. This is the name given to all of Jewish religious teaching, and it is also the name for a parchment scroll that contains the five books of Moses. These are also the first five books in our Christian Bible. Each copy of the Torah is written by hand on the large scrolls.

The Ark is the name of a special place in the synagogue where the Torah is kept. It is covered by a curtain. Whenever the Torah is read, the rabbi carefully removes it from the Ark and places it on a stand at the front of the synagogue. As soon as the reading is finished, it is rolled up again, covered and placed back in the Ark. The Torah is read on every Sabbath and on Jewish holidays. At special times, the Torah may be carried in religious processions.

A building cannot be a synagogue until it has its own Torah scroll. When a Torah scroll becomes too old to use any more, or is damaged, it is never thrown away. Instead, it is buried, in a special ceremony.

Here is a way you can make a miniature version of the Torah. Make small scrolls by cutting large sheets of manila paper in half, lengthwise. Print in large letters the opening words of the Bible: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ..." Then attach the sides to short dowels. Roll the paper carefully from both sides toward the center. Decorate the ends of the dowels with aluminum foil, making a small extension or knob on each end.

## Story Paper



# 4

# SAMIRA'S BIG DAY

Samira came running into the house, a large shopping bag clutched tightly in her arms. "Daddy, Daddy, wait till you see my new dress!" she called. Daddy came into the living room and Samira rushed into his arms. "It's just the kind of dress I wanted. It's all white, with white satin ribbons and a big white bow on the back."

"Well," said Daddy, "I should hope it's the right one. You and your mother have been shopping for over three hours. What else did you get?"

"Everything we need, I hope," said Mother as she walked in the door. She put down the other shopping bags and called for Nadim, Samira's older brother. "Please carry in the groceries, Nadim, and then help your father set up the extra tables for tomorrow's dinner."

Samira had disappeared into her bedroom and now she came out dressed in her new white dress. "My, what a pretty dress," said Father. "I'll have the most beautiful girl in all of Beirut on my shoulders in tomorrow's procession!"

Samira laughed and ran to her father. "Put me up on your shoulders now! I want everyone to see how I'm going to look."

"Not now," said Father. "We have too much to do. Nadim, help me carry the kitchen table into the large room."

It was the eve of Palm Sunday, one of the happiest days of the year in Beirut. Tomorrow, all the children in church would take part in a big procession, carrying candles and branches and shouting, "Hosanna in the highest!" as the children did many years ago on the day Jesus entered Jerusalem. Samira was just old enough to remember last year's procession, and this year she looked forward to the celebration with great excitement. Nadim was also excited, for this year he would be old enough to serve as an altar boy to the bishop, who always came to their church on this feast.

Palm Sunday was a day when whole families would come



together—aunts, uncles, cousins, grandmothers and grandfathers. After the church service and procession, each family would have a big dinner in their home. Everyone looked forward to this day, for it was a very happy occasion.

On Saturday evening, after most of the work was done, Father sat down to help Samira with her candle. Every child who took part in the procession would carry a large candle, and every little boy and girl wanted a candle that was as tall as they were. Samira brought some extra white ribbon and olive branches to her father, who helped her tie them to the candle.

“There, your candle is finished and ready for the procession,” said Father.

Samira stood by the candle. “Is it as tall as I am?” she asked.

“Oh, I’d say it might even be a little bit taller,” laughed Father.

Samira hugged her father. “I’m so glad you’re going to be home this year. I’m going to ride on the shoulders of the tallest father in our church. I’ll be able to see everything—even the bishop and Nadim!”

Father was glad to be home, too. Most years, he had been in another country during this feast. Because he was an airline pilot, he couldn’t plan his schedule as easily as the other fathers, most of whom had their own shops in Beirut.

Mother finished making a few repairs on Nadim’s vestment and then called to both children, “Well, time for bed! If you really want to be ready for the procession tomorrow, you’d better get to sleep early tonight.”

The children were sound asleep when the phone rang, well past midnight. It was the airline calling to tell Father that one of the pilots was sick and couldn’t fly the early morning plane to Cyprus. Father would have to take over. He wouldn’t be able to carry Samira in the big procession after all, but at least he would be back for the big dinner afterwards. Father went back to bed for a few hours of sleep and then drove to the airport before the children were even awake.

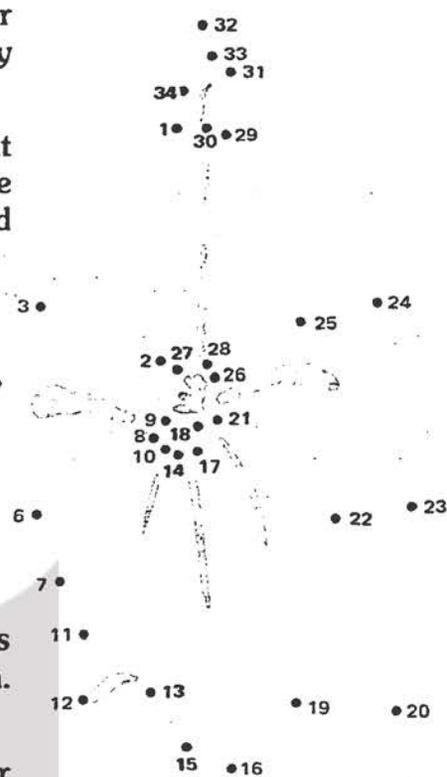
Samira jumped out of bed. The sun was shining and she could tell it was going to be a wonderful day. Just then, Mother came into the room.

“I’m afraid I have some disappointing news,” she said. “Daddy was called last night to make the short flight to Cyprus. He’ll be back this afternoon, but he won’t be able to be here for the procession.”

“Why did Daddy have to go? Couldn’t some other pilot fly the airplane? It’s not fair!” Samira shouted. She was angry and wanted to cry. Nadim came into the room and heard the news.

“Maybe Uncle Boulos can carry you today,” said Nadim, as he tried to comfort his sister.

“I don’t think he could get here in time,” said Mother. “It depends on how heavy the traffic is. The highway between Tripoli and



Make Your Own Candle.  
Connect the dots by starting with number 1. When you get to 34 you will see a candle with a bow around it.



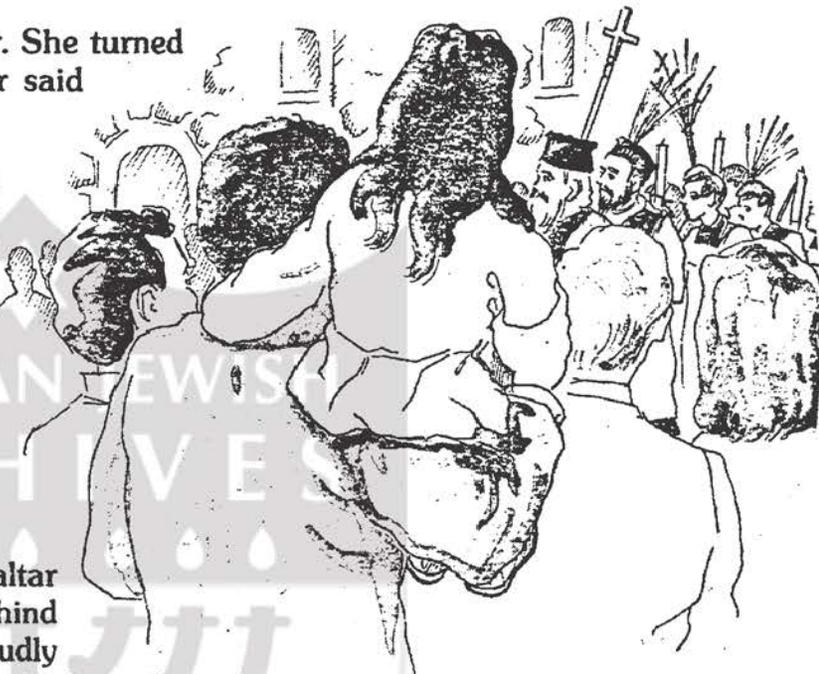
Beirut is usually crowded on Sundays." Mother helped Samira get dressed. She checked to see if Nadim had his church vestment and Samira had her candle. Soon they were on their way to church.

The services were joyful, but Samira was sad. With no one to carry her in the procession, she wouldn't be able to see anything. She couldn't see the bishop in his gold vestments. She couldn't see Nadim carrying one of the fans. She felt miserable and wanted to go home.

Just then, Samira felt a tap on her shoulder. She turned around and exclaimed, "Uncle Boulos! Mother said you couldn't come in time for the procession."

Big Uncle Boulos smiled down at Samira and said, "Your father called me early this morning from the airport. He said you'd be very disappointed that he couldn't be here, so he asked if I could come early and take his place. Now, come—up on my shoulders! The procession is beginning."

With his long, strong arms, Uncle Boulos quickly lifted Samira up onto his shoulders. Samira could see everything now. There was the bishop with four priests, a deacon, many altar boys, and, carrying a processional fan right behind the bishop, Nadim. The people were singing loudly the Palm Sunday hymn "... like the children with the palms of victory, we cry to Thee. ..." Samira knew the words and she joined in the singing: "Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord!" As they went around the church, Samira smiled and waved to her mother. She held her candle and branches high and sang again and again, "Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord!"



## LIFE IN BEIRUT

Samira is a Greek Orthodox girl who lives in Beirut, Lebanon. There are many different Christian churches in Beirut—Maronite, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Armenian, Greek Orthodox and others. The Orthodox churches, however, are the oldest group of Christian churches in Lebanon.

Beirut is a city where you can see a little bit of everything. There are large high-rise apartment buildings and very small poor homes. On the streets you will see many cars side-by-side with donkeys carrying packs on their backs. Some people wear suits and dresses just like people in North America, while other men and women wear dark-colored robes on the street. Some women cover their faces with dark veils.

All day long, the streets are filled with people and noise. Street sellers pushing carts yell up to the people in the apartments to tell them what is

for sale today—oranges, bananas, melons, onions, eggplant, mangos and other kinds of fruits and vegetables. Five times a day, the Muslim crier chants the call to prayer from loudspeakers atop the tall minarets. Buses and taxis blast their horns at people and animals in the road. Old men sit in the coffee shops drinking black Turkish coffee and smoking water-pipes. Street vendors sell fresh-squeezed orange juice and thin slices of lamb that they cook on sticks over fire.

The sights and sounds of Beirut are like a continual street fair or county fair. There is always something to see, to do and to eat. In fact, almost all large cities in the Middle East are the same. Sometimes it seems that a little bit of everything from all over the world can be found there.



## AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

CONSTANCE J. TARASAR

Ms. Tarasar, the holder of a Master of Divinity degree cum laude, has been lecturer in religious education at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary for the past eight years. Concurrently she has been executive secretary of the religious education department of the Orthodox Church in America and executive secretary for the Orthodox Christian Education Commission.

Among her numerous memberships, she has been a member of the National Board—Religious Education Association of North America and Canada, and a delegate to the World Council of Churches Assembly in Nairobi. She has served on the Advisory Council of Search Institute in Minneapolis and as curriculum consultant to the Oriental Orthodox Churches Curriculum Consultations in Lebanon in 1967 and 1972. She has also done field work in Lebanon.

Ms. Tarasar's literary contributions have been similarly extensive. She served as general editor of *Orthodox America 1794-1976—The Orthodox Church in America*, published in 1975 as a Bicentennial commemorative. She recently completed *Jesus The Word* and *Jesus The Teacher*, two adult studies on the Gospels for the Orthodox Christian Education Commission. Among her many curriculum materials are a kindergarten text, *Together With God; Our Life In The Church*, a fifth grade text; *The Young Church*, a study for junior highs. She also served as co-editor of *Orthodox Women*, published by the World Council of Churches. She has had ten years of experience in conducting teacher training seminars and workshops.

Born in Minneapolis, she did her undergraduate work at the University of Minnesota and is presently working toward a doctorate with SUNY at Albany, New York.



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date July 10, 1979  
to Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
from Rabbi A. James Rudin  
subject

I am enclosing four draft letters in re our proposed Protestant-AJC national conferences. I have spoken to Paul Sherry of the UCC, Matthew Giuffrida of the ABC, Lonnie Turnipseed of the United Methodists and Bill Weiler of the Episcopal Church. Each of them felt that the letter would receive a favorable response and urged me to send them.

I would appreciate your looking them over as soon as possible so that we may get these "oars in the water" during July. Hopefully, these four Protestant conferences can be held within the next 18 to 24 months along with our Evangelical-Jewish conference in Chicago in October 1980, the Jewish-Lutheran-Islam conference and the joint conference with Claude Broach's Ecumenical Institute in North Carolina.

As soon as the dust settles at the United Presbyterian Church (when Dean Lewis returns from his sabbatical on September 1st and when we respond to Oscar McCloud) I will begin negotiations again with that Church. Right now the static level is quite high.

AJR:FM  
Encls.

D R A F T

July 9, 1979

Dr. Robert Campbell, General Secretary  
American Baptist Churches  
Valley Forge, Pennsylvania 19481

Dear Bob:

I hope this letter finds you and your family enjoying a pleasant summer. Over the past years many positive relationships have developed between the American Baptist Churches and the American Jewish Committee. Together, our two groups have participated in a series of important interreligious programs and projects both here and overseas.

Because of this significant record of cooperation, we believe the time is now ripe for our two groups to meet together to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest. We propose a national consultation to be co-sponsored by the American Baptist Churches and the American Jewish Committee that would involve key leaders from both the Baptist and Jewish communities.

At this critical moment in history, such a conference could be a valuable contribution towards building true reconciliation and interreligious understanding. The compelling issues of human rights, world peace, religious pluralism, energy, refugee aid, as well as the profound theological questions need to be addressed by both Baptists and Jews in a serious and systematic way. The proceedings of such a meeting might be published thus broadening the impact of our conference.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this proposal with you and your colleagues in the near future. Perhaps a small joint working group could meet to begin some preliminary talks. With warm regards, I am,

Cordially yours,

P.S. I am enclosing some programs from some of our previous conferences.  
cc: Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum

D R A F T

July 9, 1979

Dr. Peter Day  
The Episcopal Church Center  
815 Second Avenue  
New York, New York 10017

Dear Peter:

I hope this letter finds you and your dear ones enjoying a pleasant summer. In the past years many positive relationships have developed between the Episcopal Church and the American Jewish Committee. The establishment of the Presiding Bishop's Committee on Christian-Jewish Relations is an important contribution to building understanding between our two groups.

Because of this significant period of cooperation we believe the time is now ripe for us to meet together to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest. We propose a national consultation to be co-sponsored by the Episcopal Church and the American Jewish Committee that would involve key leaders from both the Episcopal and Jewish communities.

At this critical moment in history, such a conference could be a valuable contribution towards building true reconciliation and interreligious understanding. The compelling issues of human rights, world peace, religious pluralism, energy, refugee aid, as well as the profound theological questions need to be addressed by both Episcopalians and Jews in a serious and systematic way. The proceedings of such a meeting might be published thus broadening the impact of our conference.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this proposal with you and your colleagues in the near future. Perhaps a small joint working group could meet to begin some preliminary talks. With warm regards, I am,

Cordially yours,

P.S. I am enclosing some programs from some of our previous conferences.  
cc: Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum

D R A F T

July 9, 1979

Dr. Avery Post  
President, United Church of Christ  
297 Park Avenue South  
New York, New York 10010

Dear Dr. Post:

I hope this letter finds you and your dear ones enjoying a pleasant summer. Over the past years many positive relationships have developed between the United Church of Christ and the American Jewish Committee, especially in the area of Shalom Curriculum, world hunger, and human rights. Because of this significant record of cooperation we believe the time is now ripe for us to meet together to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest. We propose a national consultation to be co-sponsored by the United Church of Christ and the American Jewish Committee that would involve key leaders from both the United Church of Christ and Jewish communities.

At this critical moment in history, such a conference could be a valuable contribution towards building true reconciliation and interreligious understanding. The compelling issues of human rights, world peace, religious pluralism, energy, refugee aid, as well as the profound theological questions need to be addressed by both the United Church of Christ and Jews in a serious and systematic way. The proceedings of such a meeting might be published thus broadening the impact of our conference.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this proposal with you and your colleagues in the near future. Perhaps a small joint working group could meet to begin some preliminary talks. With warm regards, I am,

Cordially yours,

P.S. I am enclosing some programs from some of our previous conferences.  
cc: Dr. Howard Spragg - Dr. David Stowe - Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

D R A F T

July 9, 1979

Dr. Robert L. Turnipseed  
United Methodist Board of Global Ministries  
475 Riverside Drive  
New York, New York 10027

Dear Lonnie:

I hope this letter finds you and your family enjoying a pleasant summer. Over the past years many positive relationships and programs have developed between the United Methodist Church and the American Jewish Committee. Together our two groups have worked closely on a series of important interreligious programs.

Because of this significant period of cooperation we believe the time is now ripe for us to meet together to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest. We propose a national consultation to be co-sponsored by the United Methodist Church and the American Jewish Committee that would involve key leaders from both the Methodist and Jewish communities.

At this critical moment in history, such a conference could be a valuable contribution towards building true reconciliation and interreligious understanding. The compelling issues of human rights, world peace, religious pluralism, energy, refugee aid, as well as the profound theological questions need to be addressed by both Methodists and Jews in a serious and systematic way. The proceedings of such a meeting might be published thus broadening the impact of our conference.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this proposal with you and your colleagues in the near future. Perhaps a small joint working group could meet to begin some preliminary talks. With warm regards, I am,  
Cordially yours,

P.S. I am enclosing some programs from some of our previous conferences.  
cc: Dr. Robert Huston  
Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** July 11, 1979  
**to** Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
**from** Rabbi A. James Rudin  
**subject** Friendship Press: Middle East Mosaic  
 SIGNPOST MIDDLE EAST  
 by Anne C. Stephens

These story papers are five in number:

1. Egypt
2. Holy Land
3. Israel
4. Lebanon
5. Turkey

1. The Egyptian story paper deals with a visit to a Coptic Christian young boy named Moussa. There is nothing problematic about this story paper although there is a side bar illustrating both ancient and modern language of the Middle East. The Hebrew is very poorly printed with one vowel inaccuracy, but this is a minor point. I wish that Friendship Press had checked the Hebrew with us before it was printed.
2. The Holy Land - Despite our questioning the need for a separate story paper on the "Holy Land", this section still remains. My analysis of it is below.
3. The section on Israel was originally entitled "Israel/Palestine." We were able to remove Palestine from the title and my analysis is below.
4. The section on Lebanon deals with an Armenian Christian, a Maronite Christian and a Muslim. There is some description of the Civil War in Lebanon but there is no clear explanation of the roles of the Palestinians, Syrians and Maronites. There is one specific reference to a village in South Lebanon where an Arab Muslim family had

lived "before the Israelis bombed their village."  
There is also the statement by an Arab Muslim, "My home is in Israel, in Haifa. My father and mother lived there before I, Samir Joussef, was born."  
There is no explanation as to why they felt they had to leave Haifa, despite our analyses in reference to the 1948-49 history of Haifa and the constructive role that the Jewish leadership played in urging the Arabs to remain in the city.

Ms. Stephens has changed a great deal of the manuscript dealing with Lebanon. Originally she had such phrases as "PFLP troops" and the "Phalange dogs." These have been removed along with reference to "Palestine." Despite these problems the section on Lebanon is a great improvement over the original manuscript.

5. The section on Turkey deals with Christian life in that country with special emphasis again to the fact that Christians are very much the minority in Turkey. There are no problems in this section.

The story paper on the Holy Land is a much improved description of the Purim holiday. In the original manuscript Ms. Stephens presented a superficial and inadequate description of this Jewish festival, calling it in one place a "carnival similar to those found in Christian cultures," and she had the story of Purim somewhat confused. A young Israeli girl, Sarah, calls her father "Abba" and there is a sympathetic paragraph about Soviet Jews who have come to Israel and the trouble they had in learning Hebrew. In the original manuscript the Soviet Jews had trouble speaking both Hebrew and English, but now the latter language has been dropped. All of this is based on our analyses.

This story paper also describes a Muslim boy's first fast and Christmas in Bethlehem. Although I still fail to see the necessity for a separate story paper on the "Holy Land," nonetheless Ms. Stephens has made many constructive improvements in the final text.

The final story paper is entitled simply "Israel." As mentioned above, the word "Palestine" has been eliminated from the text. Ironically, the section on Israel primarily deals with a Christian Arab's visit to a Greek Orthodox monastery in the desert (somewhat similar to the Tarasar Egyptian piece). Ms. Stephens made some changes regarding her description of the 1967 War but she still writes about "planes dropping bombs in the open squares and along the roads, and explosions made the hospital rock as if there were an earthquake."

July 11, 1979

The young reader is left to his or her imagination as to whose planes drop bombs. One of Ms. Stephen's families fled across the Jordan River in 1967 but no explanation is given nor is there any explanation of why the Israel Government "Said that no one would be allowed to return home." In our analysis we asked for a fuller explanation of this seemingly harsh policy along with the fact that many Arab families were reunited after the 1967 War.

Ms. Stephens, however, has dramatically improved the paragraph describing the Jewish commitment to the Land of Israel. In the original manuscript she stated that the Jews "Think of the land as their ancestral homeland." The final text reads, "The Jews, both the Israelis and those who live all over the world, share a deep belief that the Land of Israel is their ancestral homeland. For nearly 4,000 years they have dreamed of reestablishing a Jewish nation in Israel, and today they are determined to maintain their freedom here, and keep the covenant of their faith alive." This positive paragraph is in response to our sharp critique of her original wording.

Finally, and most dramatically of all, there are four excellent pictures of Israeli life and one of the four pages of the story paper is devoted to a "picture story" that is a sympathetic description of the origin and meaning of Israel. Indeed, the words "beautiful Israel" appear in the text along with these critical and important sentences: "Many more came after 1948, when Israel became a separate nation. From Europe came survivors of the Nazi death camps. From North Africa and other Middle East countries came Jews escaping increased oppression by Arab governments. Today's Israeli citizens have come from 102 different nations to live freely in a land they had loved from far away..."

"Now that Israel and Egypt have agreed to be peaceful neighbors, everyone hopes better days are ahead."

This picture story and the text really constitute a tremendous breakthrough with Friendship Press. It is perhaps the most positive material published about Israel by the NCC. Our Department supplied pictures and also suggested the idea for this special section. This positive addition to the story paper can be directly attributed to our Department's intervention.

AJR:FM

Encl.

cc: Judith Banki  
Inge Gibel



An Analysis of Anne Strohbeck's "Signposts / Middle East"

Revised Version

Prepared by:

Rabbi A. James Rudin  
Assistant National Director  
Interreligious Affairs  
American Jewish Committee  
New York, New Yoek

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES

January 1979



The five sections of this children's book show enormous revisions and by and large, the changes have been positive ones. At the outset it should be acknowledged that the inaccurate, misleading title "Sign Posts / Middle East: Israel-Palestine" has been completely eliminated. This is a helpful step. It is not clear to me, however, why five and not four sections are required. The first four deal with Egypt, Israel, Lebanon and Turkey. The fifth is entitled, "The Holy Land."

In the section on Israel we meet a Christian Arab family and it is not until the "Holy Land" section that the Friendship Press reader encounters a Jewish child. Also in the "Holy Land" section there are stories about a Christian and Muslim child as well. This construction is somewhat puzzling since it would make better sense to include the Jewish, Christian and Muslim children in the Israel section. The addition of the fifth part entitled, "The Holy Land" I think confuses the reader and even implies that there is some sort of entity that is in fact "The Holy Land." Perhaps the book could be shortened to four sections.

I. Sign Posts/Middle East: Israel (all page numbers apply to the revised version). The author has done a massive rewriting job with some noticeable improvements.

Page 5 - There is some question about the accuracy of the statement "the government said that no one would be allowed to return home." Palestinian Arab family reunifications have, in fact, taken place in some number since the end of the 1967 War.

Page 6 - Again some clarification should be added as to why Leila's uncle and aunt left for the United States. The Friendship Press reader does not get a totally accurate picture of Israeli policy regarding travel and family visits. Some balanced rewriting would be helpful.

Page 10 - The author has made a helpful revision regarding the Jewish commitment to the Land of Israel. I would suggest, however, that one sentence be slightly amended to read "For nearly 4,000 years Jews have lived in the Land of Israel, and during the past 2,000 years they have dreamed, prayed and worked to re-establish a Jewish state in the Land of Israel and today they are determined to maintain their freedom and independence here and keep their covenant of faith alive."

Page 12 - The author's conclusion should be somewhat modified. "It is true for each of us, Christian, Jew and Muslim alike, as the Muslims say: Our God is one." This is not quite accurate since Islam is not the only monotheistic religion in the Middle East

and indeed, one of the central Jewish prayers is "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One."

Page 14-15 - It might be helpful for the reader to learn that the eight branch Menorah is used during the Jewish Festival of Hanukkah, and that the seven branch Menorah which appears on page 14 is the official symbol of the State of Israel.

II. Signposts/Middle East: Lebanon. In the overall description of Lebanon, it might be helpful if the author would give a paragraph or two of the background of the Civil War that is taking place so that the reader may better understand why Arabs are killing Arabs. Without such an explanation the reader is thrown immediately into a tense situation in Beirut.

Page 5 - The same suggestions apply. The reader is unclear about the actual causes of the fighting in Jezzín. Various Lebanese factions, the Palestinians, the Syrians as well as the Israelis have all been involved in Lebanon.

Page 10 - The story of the Arab population of Haifa in 1947-48 is well documented. Haifa's Jews at that time actively encouraged the Arab residents to remain and not to flee. Today Haifa has a significant Arab community and the university has a large number of Arab students enrolled there. The university also has an important Arab-Jewish institute on its campus. Thus, the author might want to acknowledge that many Arabs did remain in Haifa and continue to live there today, 31 years later.

III. Signposts/Middle East: The Holy Land. The author has greatly improved her description of the Purim festival in Israel. Some factual additions and/or changes would be helpful, however.

Page 3 - The description of the Soviet Jews who have just arrived in Israel. The question is not whether they speak English, but rather Hebrew. I would suggest that the words "or English" (line 9, page 3) be removed.

Page 4. - Purim usually takes place in the month of March rather than February.

In the second paragraph the phrase "Old Testament" should be replaced with either "The Bible" or "The Hebrew Bible." Following the word "Megillah" the word "Scroll" should be added. Mordecai was not Esther's father but a kinsman, probably her cousin. The sentence "all Jews were resident foreigners with no civic standing

in the community" is questionable. The term "civic standing" is a very modern one which does not accurately describe the situation in ancient Persia. It was Haman's intention to not only deprive the Jews of their position in ancient Persia, but to destroy them as well.

The Jewish community of Persia (Iran) has lived in that land for 2700 years and given the tragic events that are unfolding in Iran today, the author's assertion that Jews were resident foreigners is not a positive contribution for the reader.

Page 5 - The author might add that one other Purim custom is "Shalach Manot", that is the sending of food and money to the poor during Purim. The young reader might be encouraged to bake the traditional confection, the Hamantaschen, a three cornered small cake stuffed with prunes, jelly, etc.



ANALYSIS OF "SIGNPOSTS MIDDLE EAST" BY ANNE STROHBECK

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December 1978

Page 15: "Signposts Middle East Israel/Palestine." This is a misleading and inaccurate title, since no such political entity exists. There should be a separate chapter on Israel, and if the author wishes, she can devote a separate section to the Palestinians. It is as if the author is either unable or unwilling to accept the reality of a sovereign and independent State of Israel after 31 years. Is this really the case? If so, she should clearly state it, so the reader may know precisely where the author stands. There are Palestinian people but there is no Palestine today, and the heading of this chapter is a disservice to the reader.

Page 20: "The planes dropping bombs...the improvised basement bomb shelter." The 1967 War should be placed in some context, especially noting the fact that the Jordanians began the fighting on the Jerusalem front. UN and US officials have acknowledged that the Israelis sent messages to the Jordanian King, asking him to refrain from fighting. The clear understanding was that Israel would not engage in any acts of warfare as well. However, the King did not heed those messages of peace but began instead to shell Israeli Jerusalem, thus forcing an Israeli response. The impression that comes through in the Friendship Press text is that the Israelis were the aggressors in Jerusalem in 1967. The opposite is true.

Page 25: The use of the word "Palestine" twice on this page comes under the same criticism that I made earlier regarding page 15. It is simply inaccurate in 1978 to speak of Palestine. The paragraph beginning with the words "of course the Jews" and ending with "commanded in the Torah" is a totally inadequate description of the Jewish religious commitment to the land of Israel. Jews do more than "think" of the land as their ancestral homeland; they believe it with all their hearts, minds and souls.

The author also makes it sound as if Jewish religious life in the land was all in the past. She neglects the fact there is a strong spiritual and religious life in today's Israel as well. "They are determined to maintain their freedom here and keep their faith

alive in places of its early development" reflects an incomplete understanding of the Zionist Movement and the Jewish passion for the land of Israel. Much more than "maintaining their freedom" has drawn millions of Jews to Israel. It is rather the ancient and overriding dream of a people regaining its national independence in its ancestral homeland.

The phrase "its early development" does an injustice to the nearly 4,000 year record of Jewish existence in the land. It is not "early development" or "late development", but it is the unbroken link of the Jews with the land of Israel that should be described and celebrated for the reader.

Page 27: Once again the word "Palestine" is incorrectly used.

Page 28: "Palestine (or Israel)". This is a shift from the title page of the chapter. There "Israel" is listed first, but by page 28 it is now relegated and enclosed in a parenthesis.

Page 44: "Palestine" is again used.

Page 45: The author should inform the youthful reader that the "PFLP troops" are, in fact, terrorists who killed innocent civilians. The word "troops" gives them more dignity than they deserve.

Page 46: Why the phrase "the Phalange dogs." Why are they dogs? Who are the Phalange? None of this is made clear to the reader.

Page 52: The word "Palestine" should be changed to "Palestinian" such as we find on pages 53 and 54. Once again there is no quarrel with the use or the description of the Palestinian people, but it is with the term "Palestine."

Page 69: Finally, at the end of the book the reader is going to encounter his or her first Jewish child (after meeting Muslim and Christian youngsters), but, alas, this does not happen. Instead, we are faced with only two pages dealing with current Israeli life. It is a superficial and inadequate description of the Jewish festival of Purim. I found the description disturbing because the holiday is never allowed to stand by itself. In one place Purim is linked with the "Carnival" in Christian cultures, and then, in the last paragraph at the bottom of page 71 the author indicates that Purim is influenced by the Persian New Year. The young Friendship Press reader after scanning these two pages has no real idea of the richness of the Jewish religious tradition. There is no adequate understanding of Purim, nor any contact with an Israeli Jewish child. The reader comes away with an image that Purim is somehow a Jewish Lenten carnival influenced by ancient Persian traditions. What is

most shocking is that exactly two pages out of 75 are given to a description of current Israeli life and even those two pages are highly problematic and inadequate.

Even the title of the chapter on page 69 omits the word "Israel." By now it is called "the Holy Land." The author's inability to come to terms with the living reality of the Jewish state is the single greatest drawback to the entire manuscript. It is not just the pathetically small section devoted to modern Israel, nor the highly superficial treatment, but it is the inability to accept the legitimacy of Israel that casts grave doubt on the credibility of the book.

It is incredible that an Israeli Jewish youngster never has the opportunity to speak for her or his self. There is absolutely nothing about the varied backgrounds of the Jewish community of Israel (stemming from over 100 countries), nothing about the Israeli schools, religious life (except the skimpy Purim account), dances, family life, cooking, handicrafts, youth groups, subjects well treated for other Middle Eastern peoples. The Israeli Jews are less than cardboard figures in this text, they are invisible except as soldiers.

As mentioned in other analyses, the American Jewish Committee would welcome the opportunity to assist the author in her task. We can supply her with pictures, maps, charts, bibliographies, audio visual lists, reference books, and what is needed most of all, real live Israeli Jews!

# SIGNPOST MIDDLE EAST

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# Egypt

Anne C. Stephens

## A VISIT WITH MOUSSA

You are a North American, right? You don't know me, because I live in Deir al Akhdar, in Egypt. I don't think you have ever been here, because I know that I have never seen an American child. For a time, when I was younger, a Canadian worked here in our village. He was taller than my father, and taller than Rev. Habib, our pastor. He had big hands and blue eyes. I don't remember his name, which was strange and hard to say. (I was only six years old, then.) I wonder if he thought my name, Moussa (pronounced Moo-sa) strange? He told me it would be Mos-es in English.

Sometimes we talk about America—Canada and the United States—in school. But mostly what I know about such places is from hearing my father talk to the other men of the village at the Village Center. He goes there after the evening meal, and I go along.

My father says that North Americans probably don't know any more about Egypt than we know about them. I wonder if you are as curious about me as I am about you? Let me tell you about my life.

I live in a village in the middle of Egypt. For a very long time, much longer than many other nations have existed, the Egyptian people have been kept alive, fed and sheltered, and made happy and sad by the great Nile River. The Nile flows out of the center of Africa into the Mediterranean Ocean. Long ago, before the Romans, before the birth of Jesus Christ, and long before the birth of Muhammad the Prophet, the people of Egypt believed that the Nile itself was a god. The villages and cities of Egypt are either built along the river, before the fields and palm groves are closed in by the rocky cliffs and sandy desert slopes, or at the edge of the sea.

When my father was a child, and forever before that, each summer the waters of the Nile would begin to rise, crawling up the mud-banked slopes where reeds and grasses grow, and overflowing the nearest fields. In a month or two the river would reach out nearly to the edges of the desert. For a short time, the villages would be surrounded by water. Then, slowly, the water would begin to retreat to the banks of the river. The roads dried; the fields were wet with good rich mud. Then the crops were planted: wheat, berseem, which



is like clover, and cotton. For a time, everything would be green and beautiful. In every village, brickmakers made stack after stack of bricks, the mud mixed with straw and left to cure in the hot sun and dry desert air.

This was the way of the Nile and the people of Egypt from the times of the most ancient Pharaohs. My father says that the Canadian with the blue eyes seemed amazed by the ancient ways of Egypt, and the way so many of our customs and ideas go back thousands and thousands of years.

Today our ways are beginning to change, though. My older sister was born in the year of the last floods, and so, in one way, she is part of the old Egypt, while I am part of the new. The new Egypt has the largest dam in the world, the High Dam at Aswan. Because the dam holds back the water in a huge reservoir, floods do not swell the Nile from July to October as they once did. Instead, the water produces electricity, lighting lamps like the ones at the Village Center, or in the medical clinic that the church doctor runs. Even on days when there are dust storms and the air is gritty with desert sand, at the clinic it is bright as the sun. Electricity also runs radios, and my father has promised us that soon we may have a radio in our home.



I think that in the new Egypt we do many everyday things in better ways than our grandparents and great-grandparents. My mother is proud of the new things she has learned from the village workers sent by the church to help us. Several years ago two men and two women came to our village to live. At first they talked to the women about how they could make the children strong and keep them from becoming sick. One thing they told us about was our drinking water. We had always used water from the canal edging the fields beyond our village. The water was poured into a huge clay pot—larger than I was at the age of five years. The dirt slowly drifted to the bottom and water to drink was taken from the top. We didn't know that there were dangerous things to make you sick in the canal water. The village workers told us this, and said no one should drink the canal water. The government had just dug a well in our village, and the village workers taught my mother to cover the water she brings home from the well, so that it stays clean.

My mother also asked my father to build a low platform on the floor, on which to put bedding. Father bought nails from the market and some pieces of wood. Wood is very expensive in Egypt, because we do not cut trees unless they no longer bear fruit and are dying. My brother, my sister and I had to learn not to fall off the bed platform at night.

Now my father is going to build what the village worker calls a door sill—one for the doorway opening on the street, and another for the doorway to our courtyard within the house. Then you will no longer be able to just walk into the house; you will have to step over the door sill. This seems funny, but my mother says that it will keep the dust of the street from blowing into the house under the door, and also will keep our new little chicks that we will soon get from running about the house where they might be hurt.

It will be a most important day when my father and I get our chickens. Father says that I am to be responsible for the chickens, and that I will go to the

village meeting when the chicken man comes to train us. Soon I will know everything that one needs to know about raising chickens. Then our chickens will lay the biggest eggs in the whole village, because I will take very good care of them.

I will sell some of the eggs, for my mother says the hens will lay more than we can eat ourselves. Perhaps the mayor's wife will buy them—she has a large family—or perhaps the *imam* (leader) of the mosque, which is at the opposite end of the street from our church. My sister and the imam's daughter, Azzizi, are best friends. I am sure that she would like to taste my chickens' eggs. I will teach my sister to care for the chicks, also. I read very well now, and will use the book that the village workers use to teach about the new kinds of chickens.

My friend Ibrahim wants me to tell you about him, too. He is a good friend. We sometimes swim together in the canal. When he is older, he intends to go to the training program at Itsa. This program is for nineteen-year-olds, and teaches all about raising bees. Next he will have seventy-five beehives and sell the honey. Then he will have a house with three rooms for his family.

I would rather have chickens, but Ibrahim thinks bees are better. He says you have to read very well, and spend a whole year in the program at the center learning about bees. Then you can have your very own queen bee. One must have a queen before other bees will live in your hives and make honey.

Several years ago Ibrahim's father, Omar, and my father began to learn to read at the Village Center. Both our pastor and the imam from the mosque had met with the village workers to plan the reading classes, and they are held in the Center because this is a place where the men of the village often gather. Besides having reading lessons, the men talk about many things—about the weather, how the cotton is doing and what the price will be. They talk about why Hamdi's chicks died last week. Then they talk about why Abdul agreed to let his daughter marry the man from Cairo. She met him at the University but none of



the family knows him, because he is not from our village. (I know why! Because it is old-fashioned to marry one whom your family has picked but whom you hardly know at all. I, too, will pick my own wife, though my mother has already decided that I will marry her cousin's daughter, Selwah.)

When Ibrahim's father had learned to read the Qu'ran, he began to plan for a *hadj* (pilgrimage) to Mecca. It is very important for a Muslim man to go to Mecca, and Omar is a very religious man. Only a few men from our village have ever done this, because one must be lucky enough to have a good cotton crop and save money. One must pay for the bus and the train and the ship which will take you to Mecca after several days' travel to the East. Ibrahim's father told us he wore a white robe and sacrificed a lamb. He walked seven times around the Kabah in the Great Mosque of Mecca. The Kabah is the most holy Muslim shrine, placed there, Muslims believe, by Abraham the Patriarch at God's command.

Now the whole wall of Ibrahim's house is covered with pictures he drew of the ship that took the pilgrims, and the banners they carried. We call Omar *Hajj Omar*, to show he was a pilgrim in Mecca. When he tells stories of his pilgrimage, all the listeners shout "*Allahu Akbar*," which means "God is the Greatest".

Our pastor has been to Jerusalem, but my father says that we do not need to go to Jerusalem. We Copts (descendants of the ancient Egyptian people) are proud that the Holy Family with the Christ Child visited us in Egypt so that he would be safe from Herod the King.

Now it is time for me to say goodbye. We are going torch fishing tonight on the river, so I must make the torches. I am glad that Ibrahim and I now have friends in North America. *Salaam*.

**WHERE DID IT  
COME FROM?  
WOULD YOU  
BELIEVE ARABIC?**

These English words come from Arabic:

admiral	coffee	racquet
chemical	cotton	sash
algebra	gauze	satin
almanac	jar	sherbet

These foods come from the Middle East:

apricots	eggplant	oranges
asparagus	figs	rice
bananas	ginger	spinach

The mud bricks of Egypt are called *tub akhdar*; *Tb* is a Pharaohnic word which became *al-tub* in modern Arabic. Spanish has many words that come from the Arabic, as Spain was ruled by Arabic-speaking Muslims for several centuries. Where do you think the word *adobe* (brick) probably came from?

𐎶𐎵𐎺𐎠𐎧𐎫𐎡𐎴𐎠𐎫𐎠𐎧𐎶𐎵  
Mesopotamian Cuneiform

Ⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ  
Egyptian Hieroglyphic

𐎶𐎵𐎺𐎠𐎧𐎫𐎡𐎴𐎠𐎫𐎠𐎧𐎶𐎵  
Hittite Hieroglyphic

Ⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ  
Phoenician- 11th Century, B.C.

Ⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ  
Aramaic- 9th Century, B.C.

Ⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ  
South Arabic- ca. 500 B.C.

Μετὰ φόβου Θεοῦ  
Modern Greek

תְּהִי אֵלֶיךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ  
Modern Hebrew

سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ يَا لَيْلَةَ الرَّحْمَةِ  
Modern Arabic

Every culture in the world has some achievement in which its people take special pride. Scholars think that the ancient Egyptians were one of the first cultural groups to invent a form of writing to record spoken language. This was a kind of picture-language, and was called hieroglyphics. Naturally, the Egyptians are very proud of this special achievement. The chart shows you what the very early writing looked like, and the way later Middle Eastern cultures developed it.

You might like to try inventing a picture-language, such as the Egyptian hieroglyphics were, to write messages which only you can read. Look for books in the library to help you do this.

## TAFADDUL (Come and Eat, in Arabic.)

Enjoy an old-fashioned Egyptian dessert of *batikh* (you would call it watermelon). If you lived in Egypt, your watermelon would be growing in a nearby field, so you would cut it from the vine a couple of hours before eating. Since refrigeration is not common in Egyptian villages, you would let it cool by evaporation in a shady place, just as the water in Moussa's mother's clay water jar cools.

If you can't find a watermelon in your market, prepare and serve an apricot fruit

drink called *qamar ad-din*. Egyptians make this with finely chopped dried apricots, dissolved in water.

Swirl dried apricots and water in a blender at the "liquefy" setting. Start with a small amount of water, taste, and add more until your drink still tastes nice and fruity, but is liquid enough to drink.

Notice that you don't need to add sugar for this drink to be good. This is one way that it is different from apricot drinks you buy already mixed in a can.

## EGYPTIAN-STYLE JEWELRY

In ancient times, before metal coins were used, people saved gold and silver most often in the form of jewelry, which both men and women wore. The Egyptians often made jewelry from gold and silver wire, coiled, braided and sometimes set with carved semiprecious stones called *scarabs* (they are carved to look like beetles). Here are instructions for making such jewelry from copper wire. You might need a parent, teacher or older brother or sister to help you.

Have ready to use:

No. 18 or No. 20 copper wire (from hardware store)

Tools: wirecutters or snippers  
hammer

long-nosed or jewelry pliers

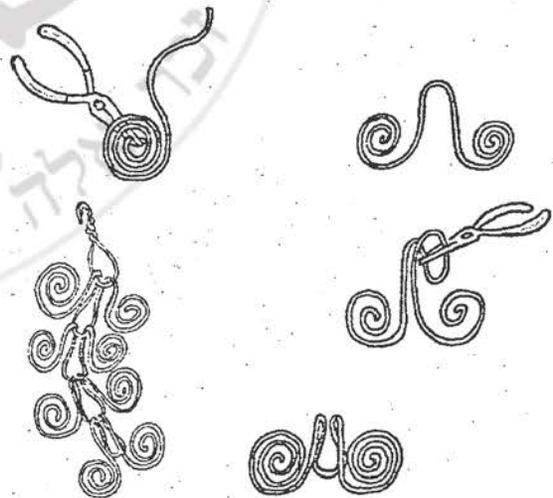
Working base: Drive a 1- or 2-inch finishing nail into the center of a piece of wood, 1 or 2 inches thick, perhaps six to eight inches square. Use this to anchor your wire when braiding and shaping it.

Can of lacquer spray (or another kind of clear protective coating to prevent tarnish)

1. Make many coils from pieces of wire about 12 inches long. Bend both ends, coil toward center, rotating coils while you work. Make coils about 3/4 inch in diameter, with loop between the coils extending about 1/2 inch above coils.  
16 coils=bracelet; 32 coils=necklace; 2 or 3 coils=earrings.
2. Lay coils on flat, wooden surface, cover with

cloth—old towel or piece of sheet, folded—and pound to flatten.

3. Bend the loop of each coil back and down, using long-nosed pliers.
4. Chain the coils together until they are the right length.
5. Twist last loop into a hook of the right length, fasten through loop of first coil. For earrings, buy surgical steel wire loops for pierced ears; attach to coils.



## SCARAB JEWELRY

Gather small, round, smooth stones. Paint with acrylic paint. When dry, paint on black beetle marks. Take a length of fine copper or silver wire and knot scarab into the center. Fashion loop in one end, hook in other end for necklace or bracelet.

# SIGNPOST MIDDLE EAST

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## Holy Land

Anne C. Stephens

### A COSTUME FOR DAVID

In one corner of the schoolyard a small huddle of girls and boys were gathered. Sarah had just finished describing her *Purim* costume, which her grandmother had made for her. Sarah knew that only a few families were able to provide such beautiful costumes for their children. Many, if not all, of the children who were her fascinated audience would have only a mother's shawl and skirt, or perhaps a cowboy hat or soldier's cap and wooden rifle. They were still young to be a part of the parade through the city. Mostly they would be watching older brothers and sisters in the most glorious celebration of the year, Tel Aviv's Purim Festival.

The signal that playtime was over sounded, and the children turned toward the school door. Sarah was in no hurry, and David had no trouble catching up with her.

"You will look so wonderful," he said, smiling at her, his white teeth bright in his dark face. "I wish I had a costume. Then I could go to the parade also and we could shake our *gregers* (noisemakers) together and laugh and shout at the Haman dummy on the bonfire."

"Don't you have any costume?" Sarah asked, stopping to stare at him. Immediately, she was sorry she had asked the question. No, of course he didn't. David and his family, new immigrants to Israel, were poorer than she could imagine. Once, several months before, she had been describing David to her mother and father at home.

"He wears the awfulest looking clothes, Abba," she had told her father. "And he hardly speaks Hebrew at all. He says funny things as if we should understand, and then his face gets red, and he looks like he's going to cry."

Her father had frowned. Then he patted his knee in the gesture that had always meant she should come and sit with him for awhile.

"I know you are quite a big girl now, Sarah," he had said. "But not too big to come and talk to me about how we can help David to feel more at home. We all have a duty to help those newly arrived here in Israel. David and his family have come from Russia, and the Russian government makes it very hard for a family to come to Israel to live. They must leave nearly

everything they own behind. And often, they do not speak Hebrew, so you know it is hard for a child to learn in school or to make new friends."

Since then, Sarah had been a friend and helper to David. Now, she had a sudden idea. Her brother had been about David's size two years before, when he had first taken part in the street parade. She knew his costume was still on the closet shelf.

She smiled at David, and invited him to meet her and Ben for the parade. Yes, they would both go in costume tonight, David looking as fine and festive as she. David would long remember his first Israeli Purim.



Purim is the most exciting and festive of Jewish holidays, and children who live in or near the large city of Tel Aviv, in Israel, can participate in the most extravagant Purim celebration anywhere. For three days in March, there are large and colorful parades with floats and bands and celebrities, costume parties, feasting and general merrymaking.

Another name for Purim is the Festival of Lots. It celebrates the story told in the Book of Esther in the Bible. This book is called the *Megillah* Scroll in Hebrew. Esther, a beautiful Jewish woman, lived in the Persian Empire, which was ruled by King Ahasuerus (also called Xerxes). The king chose Esther to become queen without knowing that she was Jewish. All Jews were resident foreigners, with no civil standing in the community.

Esther's cousin, Mordecai, was an important Jewish leader. Haman, a favorite advisor of the king, hated all Jews, but especially Mordecai, who was a very pious man and refused to honor Haman with a bow of reverence. The Jews believed that reverence belonged only to God. Haman was so angry that he suggested that the king order all who refused to bow to be killed.

Read the end of the story in the Old Testament Book of Esther, and you will see why it led to such a happy celebration.

Since this holiday reminds us of events that are said to have happened in the Persian Empire, many Persian customs are part of the traditional celebration: feasting, masquerades and puppet plays.

## MA IN OUD'S FIRST FAST

Surely this had to be the very longest day of the whole year. Mahmoud had been out into the street at least ten times during the afternoon to see how long the shadows were. Would evening never come?

Finally, able to stand it no longer, he went looking for his brother, who owned a beautiful wristwatch. He found Said at his workbench, busy polishing some jewelry for the shop he and his cousin owned in the Jerusalem *suk*, or market bazaar.

He stood at Said's elbow for several minutes, knowing that probably at least two or three other young members of the family had come to ask the same question as he, and Said might already be out of patience with them all. Finally he burst out:

"Surely it must be close to sundown! Said, tell me how much longer until we may begin our *Id al-Fitr* feast."

"Mahmoud, do you know how many times this afternoon I have been asked that question?" his brother said in an exasperated voice. "If I were rich, the very first thing I would do would be to buy a clock for every room in the house. Then, perhaps, I could get some work done!"

He paused, noticing the downcast expression on Mahmoud's face. Suddenly he remembered how he had felt during his first attempt to keep the Ramadan fast. Poor Mahmoud! No school today, Mother and aunts busy preparing for the family feast in the evening, hunger pangs in the stomach and a mouth dry from thirst. Nothing to distract him from counting the hours and minutes until the long day would come to an end.

He put his arm around his youngest brother's shoulders. "Never mind," he said, glancing at his watch. "It's five o'clock, and I think you only have until eight o'clock to wait." He turned to look directly at the boy.

"I hope you know how proud Father and Mother and I are of you," he said, smiling. "You have certainly been cheerful and patient for someone struggling with their first Ramadan fasting. I don't know many boys your age who have done as well—I know I didn't. I have never told anyone this, but at least two or three times during my first fasting I took a glass of water, hoping no one would find out.

"Come, let's take a walk to see what the carnival and fireworks are like this year. Having something to do will make the time pass more quickly."

Mahmoud grinned happily at Said. It had been a pretty tough month, this first Ramadan fast. But it would be worth the effort when the celebration started. He was going to sample every one of his favorite sweets that the *suk* had to offer, until his holiday-gift money ran out. And perhaps even better would be next Friday's visit to the mosque with Father. He could already feel the pride with which his father would introduce him to friends and acquaintances as "my son Mahmoud, who has just celebrated his first Ramadan Fast!" Yes, three more hours. Who cared? It was worth it.

The Muslim calendar follows the cycles of the moon, so Ramadan, the ninth month of the year, and the feast of *Id al-Fitr*, which follows it, are not always observed at the same season of the year. During the month of Ramadan, all faithful men and women over the age of thirteen or fourteen are required to fast from sunrise until sunset. It is thought to be a sign of growing up for a child to join the adults for perhaps two or three days as they fast, in obedience to the law of the Qu'ran.

Even a few days of neither eating nor drinking anything at all until the sun has set is more than enough time to prepare you for three days of feasting and general rejoicing. Especially in the summer, when the weather in Middle East Muslim countries ranges from quite warm to very hot, refraining from drinking even a cup of water during the daytime hours is very difficult.

On the last day of Ramadan the new moon is scarcely a sliver of silver above the horizon. The children dress in their best and brightest clothing. The food has been prepared for the first holiday meal that evening. Just as families everywhere like to celebrate major holidays and festivals together, so now aunts and uncles, cousins and second cousins, grandparents and nephews and nieces all gather if they can to celebrate together. Then, after everyone has eaten their fill, it's off to the street fair and carnival. Shops are full of delicious snacks, and street-corner performers entertain crowds of merry-makers.

By the third day of the celebration, the younger members of the family will be nearly worn out. Then it is time for the busy mothers to relax and enjoy the holiday also. Everyone is happy that the month of fasting is over.

## CHRISTMAS IN BETHLEHEM

Could anything be more exciting than Christmas Eve? No, never, not for us children.

"Hurry up, Mary, Mother is ready to braid your hair. She still has to pack up the cookies and cakes we are taking to Aunt Martha's."

I had already brushed my hair and polished the shoes—one of the jobs distributed among us children in preparation for Christmas. For weeks everyone had either been trying hard to do their share or else trying to get others to do it for them. Oh, the baking and the sewing: dates and nuts baked and stirred into all kinds of mouth-watering, delicious sweets; new dresses and shirts for everyone, from Grandma Faraj down to my littlest cousin, baby Elizabeth.

Soon we would be on our way to Manger Square in Bethlehem for the Christmas Eve services there and in the huge stone Church of the Nativity. The stars would be shining, and each of us would look to see if



we could spot one brighter than all the rest. We were all bundled up against the biting cold, damp wind, thankful that this year there was no snow to freeze our feet. Already we were colder than one would have thought possible from standing on the stone cobbles of Manger Square or the enormous flagstones on the floor of the Grotto. Here, lamps filled with oil and incense clustered over the place where the baby Jesus once lay in the manger while the shepherds, climbing up from the fields on the slopes of Bethlehem's hillside, came to kneel and worship him.

Each year the crowd seemed to get bigger—too big, in fact, for the square or the church. And yet, everyone was in such good spirits, so eager for the peace of Christmas, that we always went back for this one celebration.

Grandma and Grandpa Faraj welcomed us at their door, with the cousins clustered around behind. Soon everyone was opening gifts, exclaiming over the beautiful Christmas tree and the artfully arranged carved olive-wood crèche sitting beneath its branches. Candles inside paper lanterns hung from the ceiling. The charcoal brazier glowed as chestnuts roasted and sizzled on the coals.

Despite getting to bed so late—hardly ever before two or three A.M. on Christmas Eve—we never forgot to fasten our stockings to the foot of the bed. Sure enough, they would bulge in fascinating ways when we opened our eyes on Christmas morning. Santa Claus had arrived and departed, unseen, for still another Christmas.

Lack of sleep never seemed to interfere with the events of Christmas Day. The best time was always the arrival at the door of the costumed singers, neighborhood children who would sing all our favorite carols in return for candies, coins and cheers. Sometimes we would slip from the house to join them as they went from door to door, singing and laughing joyfully.



Bethlehem is quite near Jerusalem—a brief twenty-minute automobile ride away, winding among hills that block the view from one to another. All the places mentioned in the New Testament as being associated with Jesus' life have for many centuries been marked by shrines and churches. A large basilica, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, is built over the place where Jesus was crucified and the tomb where he was buried. Another very old church is built over the shrine that is said to be the place where Jesus was born, in Bethlehem. In some places there are buildings where members of all three religions, Judaism, Islam and Christianity, come to worship. One of these places is in a city called Hebron. Here Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and others of the ancient Hebrew tribes are said to be buried. So many arguments over the right to worship here have grown into fights that walls were built to keep followers of the different religions apart when they come to honor their spiritual ancestors.

## A Play from the Book of Esther

Make a set of puppets to represent the characters you read about in the Book of Esther.

You will need toilet-paper cores or other small, lightweight cardboard cylinders for bodies. Heads can be made by stuffing fabric pieces with shredded newspaper, tying at the neck and fastening to the cardboard bodies. Dress them with fabric scraps or paper, with

yarn or feathers or felt hair and beards. Write a play about the terrible situation in which the Jews found themselves in this story, how they (the characters) felt about it, and how in the end Esther saved the Jews from the king's decree. Write another play about boys and girls in Israel and how they might celebrate Purim today.



### ANNE C. STEPHENS STROHBECK

The author combines her experience as the mother of three daughters with her writing ability and her strong relationship to her church in creating these story papers. Her closeness to children is demonstrated by her ten-year involvement with the Girl Scouts as a leader and group committee member, from Brownie through Cadette and Senior Scouts.

Add to this a five-year stint in the Office for the Middle East, Division of Overseas Ministries, National Council of Churches of Christ USA. Working closely

with the director of the office, Ms. Stephens Strohbeck has had extensive exposure to pastors, Middle East workers in Church World Service, and others involved in Middle East affairs. She also has traveled extensively in the area.

Several articles by Ms. Stephens Strohbeck have appeared in *Lutheran Women*, including "LCW Convention: A Delegate's Reflections," "Faith Sharing: Hong Kong '74," and "Rallying To Share The Good News."

# SIGNPOST MIDDLE EAST

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# Israel

Anne C. Stephens

## DOWN INTO THE DESERT

The Easter recess from school was nearly over. Luckily, there was still enough time for one trip, which might make this the most interesting vacation Rondi had enjoyed yet.

Ever since Rondi, her parents and older sister had come to Jerusalem to live, Rondi had wanted to take a trip into the desert. The beach on the Mediterranean, where the family had spent one weekend camping, was delightful. Trips taken in all directions from Jerusalem to visit places whose names spoke to everyone with echoes from Bible times were special, too (even though once there had been a traffic jam, with cars, trucks and buses hood to fender for an hour). But there had not yet been the chance for a trip into the desert.

Yesterday, her friend Leila's mother had telephoned, inviting Rondi to go with Leila and her mother on a trip down to Jericho, through the Judean desert, with a stop at St. George's Monastery. So now, Rondi was waiting on the garden wall.

As she waited, she took a quick peek at the wrapped lunch her mother had made.

Rondi's attention shifted to the approaching car, and she hopped down from the wall to meet it.

"Wait a minute, Rondi," Mrs. Salah said. "Did you bring a hat to keep off the sun? It will be blazing like a giant furnace by the time we are ready to walk down the trail that leads to St. George's Monastery."

Rondi ran to the house and in a few moments was back with the floppy-brimmed hat that she had last worn at the beach. Then they were on their way, Mrs. Salah threading her way carefully through heavy traffic as they crossed the edge of the Old City.

The road wound up the hillside in graceful curves. Rondi craned her neck to spot the telltale shimmer of the Dead Sea. It lay beyond the hilltops, which at first were green with olive and almond orchards, vineyards and pasture lands, and then, quite suddenly it seemed, turned brown and rocky. No trees were to be seen for many miles in all directions. The sun was glaring out of the sky, as if it were trying to pierce through the hat brim and even her shut eyelids.

Leila pointed at something off to the left of the highway. Rondi saw what she had spotted. A truck, like one she had seen passing the school this past

week filled with soldiers in their brown uniforms, lay turned on its side, its windshield gone, and one door lying some yards away on the sand. A short distance away was a tank, its long gun pointing at the now empty sky.

As Rondi stared, Leila talked excitedly of the day she had been born. Not that she could remember any of the events of that June in 1967, when the armies of Israel and Jordan fought in the third Israeli-Arab war, but she had heard her father and mother talk of it many times. How frightened everyone had been by the shooting! The building walls crowding the narrow streets of ancient Jerusalem were scarred with bullet holes. Planes dropped bombs in the open squares and along the roads, and explosions made the hospital rock as if there were an earthquake. The new little baby lay with her mother on a cot in the basement, the safest place that could be found.

Still, Leila's father thought that they had been lucky to have a baby daughter at just that time. It had kept them from doing as Leila's uncle and his wife had done. Their home was so badly shaken by exploding bombs that part of the roof and wall had caved in. Since it was dangerous to try to travel toward the family home in Jerusalem, they had quickly packed a few clothes, taken what money they had and crossed to the other side of the Jordan River to find safety. When the fighting stopped, they found that the area where their home had been was guarded by Israeli soldiers. The government said that no one would be allowed to return home.

So Leila had never seen her uncle and aunt, or her cousins, because they had finally gone to live in the United States, until the time when they could return to their own country. Leila's father often talked of going to visit his youngest brother, but always ended by worrying that if he left, he, too, might not be allowed to return to his wife and children. There was always the hope that some day soon all those who left might be allowed to return to their homes and families.

Mrs. Salah broke into Leila's well-rehearsed story to point ahead to a place where another road, much narrower and only partly paved, led off the highway. The car slowed, then turned to follow a narrow wadi (dry creek bed). The wadi looked as if it ought to be a

*Continued on page 3*



## A Picture Story

*Snowy mountains and dusty, rocky deserts, the blue sea and golden beaches, oranges peeping through shiny green leaves, wheat fields waving with the passing breeze, purple grapes heaped on the market counter. Beautiful Israel.*

*Though it is a small country, and you could travel up and down, back and forth from border to border in three days, there are many beautiful and interesting sights to see.*

*In ancient times the twelve tribes of Jewish people lived in only a few cities, among them walled Jerusalem, on the hilltop. They farmed and tended their sheep and goats along the hillsides, among the olive groves, at the rocky edges of the desert and on the fertile coastal plain. They fought fierce battles with others who wished to claim the land for themselves. Sometimes they won, sometimes they lost. Many wandered away, or were taken as slaves and captives by conquering armies. In song and story, religious ceremony and carefully taught history, the Jews always called this country their own.*

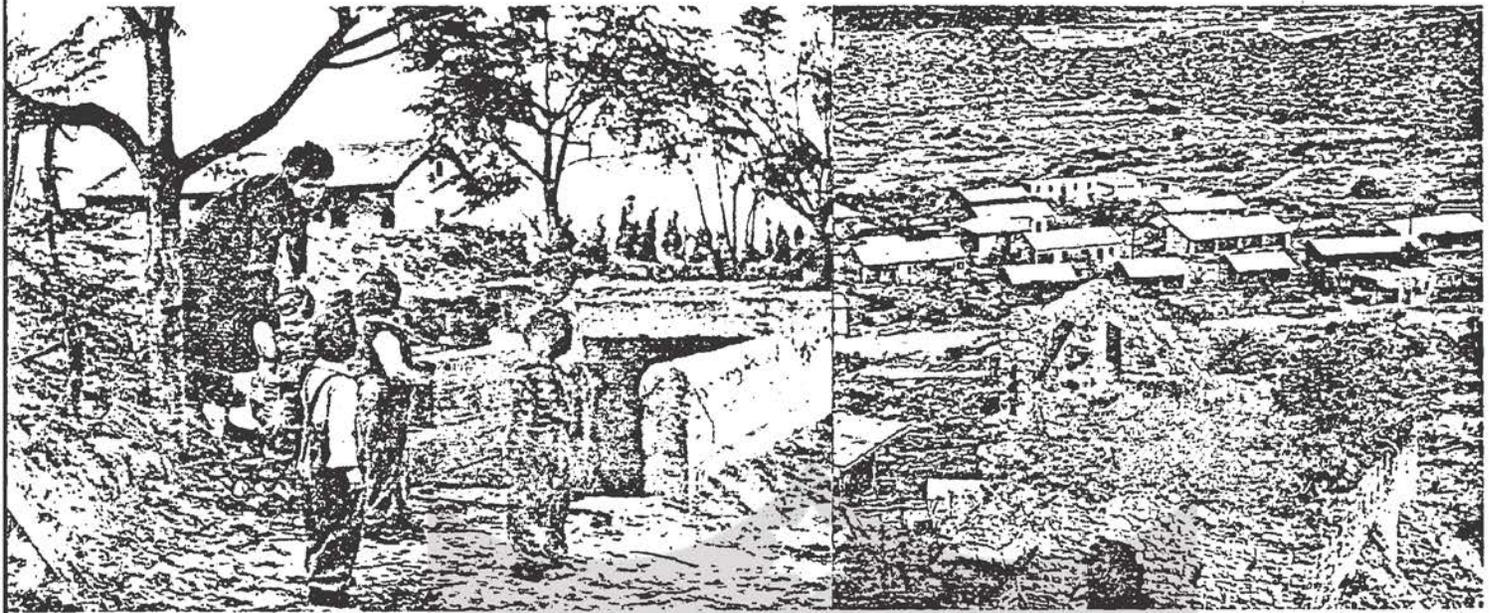
*After many centuries, Jewish leaders in Europe, Russia and a few from America began to organize groups to go to live in Palestine (Israel). Late in the 1800s and in the very early 1900s they began to farm small pieces of land alongside the Palestinian Arab people. Many more came after*

*1948, when Israel became a separate nation. From Europe came survivors of the Nazi death camps. From North Africa and other Middle East countries came Jews escaping increased oppression by Arab governments. Today's Israeli citizens have come from 102 different nations to live freely in a land they had loved from far away.*

*Most of the people lived in small farming villages called Kibbutzim. Houses were built where families lived and worked together as if they were all related — many fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, aunts, uncles. Later they built tall apartment buildings, hospitals and universities, ports for large ships and paved highways for trucks and buses. They built a home for their parliament, the Knesset.*

*Unhappily they also needed soldiers. They needed planes and tanks because they and their Arab neighbors mistrusted and resented each other. Three wars in 1947-48, in 1967 and in 1973 have threatened Israel, killing many and making everyone fearful of more fighting. Most young people, girls as well as boys, become soldiers for a year or two when they are eighteen.*

*Now that Israel and Egypt have agreed to be peaceful neighbors, everyone hopes better days are ahead.*



*Continued from page 1*

stream, with sparkling water flowing over large rocks and boulders. Instead, it had been dried up by the desert winds and was a river of sand.

Leila's mother slowed the car as a motorcycle came bumping and racing toward them. They were startled to see that its rider, a young man with brown skin, a prominent nose and a fine mustache, was wearing the flowing robes of the desert Bedouin. They billowed behind him as he approached, then passed them with a wave of his hand.

"There is probably a Bedouin camp, with several families, their tents and animals, somewhere nearby, near a spring," said Mrs. Salah.

*Park vehicles here*, the sign said. As the two girls tumbled from the car, gathering together lunches and water bottles, Mrs. Salah picked up her camera. With Mrs. Salah leading the way, they started down the rocky trail of the Wadi el Kelt. Before long the path narrowed, the rocky walls shoving large, protruding elbows at them. The deep valley seemed almost like a miniature Grand Canyon.

"I feel like I must be sizzling around my edges," said Rondi. Leila giggled, and pointed to the hat Rondi was wearing.

"If your hat were flat and hard on top, like the one my father wears with his professor's robes, I bet you could cook an egg on it while you walked to the bottom of the wadi!" she said.

As she sipped cool water from the bottle, Rondi's eyes examined the wadi stretching out below them. The first thing she spotted was a concrete trough, stretching as far as she could see in both directions. Mrs. Salah explained that this was the aqueduct that carried water all the way from Jerusalem, high on its hilltop, down to the city of Jericho on the bank of the Jordan River.

Further along, and deeper in the wadi, the trail took another turn. Suddenly, high on the opposite cliff

wall, Rondi could see the whitewashed square rooms of the famous monastery, perched almost like an American Indian pueblo on the face of the vertical cliff.

Another climb up from the bridge, and they approached the whitewashed wall enclosing the gate of the monastery. A few more little garden patches, looking somewhat dustier than the ones above the stream, were growing here.

"A truck delivers provisions for the monks at the parking lot where we left the car, about once a week," said Mrs. Salah. "Then the monks bring them down and across to the monastery on donkeys. It would be very hard if they had to live on what they could grow in these little garden patches, as I suppose they once did.

"St. George's is a Greek Orthodox monastery, many centuries old. I suppose the first Greek Christians were those to whom St. Paul preached in Athens, only a short time after Christ's death and resurrection. Then Greek pilgrims began to come to Jerusalem, to the places where Christ had taught. Priests and monks built places like this monastery where they could devote themselves to worship, prayer and study, in what they thought of as a Holy Land. Nearly every kind of Christian church has claimed some shrine, or built some monument or church here in Palestine, as if they all needed to claim a little bit of the land for their own.

"Of course, the Jews, both the Israelis and those who live all over the world, share a deep belief that the land of Israel is their ancestral homeland. For nearly four thousand years they have dreamed of reestablishing a Jewish nation in Israel, and today they are determined to maintain their freedom here, and keep the covenant of their faith alive.

"As for the Muslims, they came to the Holy Land to bring the Prophet Muhammad's teachings to the other People of the Book, the Jews and the Christians. Jerusalem became one of their holy cities, as you can see when you visit the beautiful mosque called the

Dome of the Rock. Islam teaches that Muhammad ascended to heaven from the Temple Mount, exactly where the beautiful mosque now stands."

By now the visitors had passed through the gate, over the narrow bridge and into the courtyard of the monastery. Afterward, Rondi found it hard to decide which of the strange and fascinating things they saw at St. George's to tell about first. They were guided through shadowy chapels, lit mostly by hundreds of little hanging brass lamps clustered around the altars. The white-robed monks spoke Arabic or Greek, sometimes French, and rarely English. The chapels were filled with ancient painted and gilded icons of Christ, Mary and the saints, especially St. George.

Steep steps led from one level of the monastery to another, as if nearly every room had been hollowed out of the cliff face, one at a time. Behind one of the altars sat a row of polished skulls, the relics of martyred monks killed twelve hundred years ago when Palestine was invaded by Persian armies.

The visitors left the monastery gate in silence. The

sun had moved across the sky so that they were shadowed by the rim of the cliff looming above. Climbing toward the opposite rim they moved into brilliant sunshine, almost as if they were moving out of the dimness of centuries past, into the sunlit present.

Rondi spoke, mostly to herself.

"I've never been in any other place where it seemed so much as if a thousand years ago were just yesterday."

She thought of all the Christian pilgrims who had walked into the desert and been sheltered and cared for in this ancient place. No wonder the Christian Arabs seemed to love this land as much as the Jews. The history of their people was written on the face of the land. It was their home, too.

"Yes," said Mrs. Salah, almost as if reading Rondi's thoughts, "we all live very close to our distant ancestors here in this land. Surely we should share it as brothers and sisters, and not quarrel over ancient rights and privileges. It is true for each of us, Christian, Jew and Muslim, as the Muslims say: Our God is One."

## MAKE A LAMP

The lamps that lit the homes of the ordinary people of the Middle East were made of common clay—pottery, they would be called. The wick would be a twisted or woven length of cotton or linen threads inserted into the olive oil that every household made or bought for scores of uses—cooking, healing, and especially light. You can find many places in the Bible where the idea of the lamp, lighted and shining in the dark, is used to explain the importance of God's message.

To make one or several lamps you can actually light, you will need real clay, the kind that will dry hard or can be baked in a kiln. The simplest kind of lamp is shaped like a shallow bowl or deep saucer that will hold about 1/2 inch of liquid. Shape the bowl so that its sides and bottom are at least 1/8 inch thick, and set it on a flat surface. If it does not have a level bottom, but teeters like a chair with one short leg, take a wire cheese cutter and shave a very thin layer from the bottom where it seems to be uneven. Repeat this until the lamp will sit securely on a table top. Then, using both hands, take the edge of the bowl between your first three fingers and gently squeeze and pull the edge out until it forms a sort of spout or lip, sticking out from the edge of the bowl. The sides of the spout should nearly touch, so that the wick can be pressed between them and held while it burns.

Smooth the outside of the bowl and then the inside, using your fingers or a small damp sponge.

Set the lamp aside to dry for at least twenty-four hours. Now you can decorate it, using a sharp-pointed or wedge-shaped tool, such as a wooden skewer from the kitchen, or a special tool sold in hobby stores for potters. You might choose one or more of the symbols pictured here, or make up a design of your own. Outline the design in the soft clay, being careful not to squeeze the lamp out of shape. If the clay is still too soft to stay in shape, set it aside to dry for a day.

Now cut your design deeply into the clay, let dry an hour or two and smooth the design very gently with a damp sponge, or with your fingers, dipped in water.

To finish the lamp you must let it dry completely, at least three or four days. Then you can paint it, if you like, and if you have the use of a kiln, bake it to make it harder and more durable.

When it is completely finished, pour about 1/2 inch of salad oil into the lamp. Pull a piece of wick, about 1 1/2 inches long, into the lip, so that one end is on the neck of the lamp, the other in the oil. Light the wick carefully with a match, and watch how brightly it burns. (Wicks may be purchased at craft stores where candle-making supplies are sold.)



# SIGNPOST MIDDLE EAST

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## Lebanon

Anne C. Stephens

### ARMEN

Five o'clock in the morning. I woke with a jerk, as the door to the apartment slammed, and urgent voices carried down the hall to the room where I sleep.

I scrambled out of bed and reached for my clothes as I recognized the voices of my Aunt Mary and Uncle Elias. Then I heard my father say, "Now calm down, Elias, calm down!"

By the time I reach the kitchen my uncle and aunt are drinking cups full of hot coffee. My father has got a piece of paper from one of my school books and is sketching a rough map of Beirut.

"Now here is the office," he says, marking an X on the map. "And here is where Hanna would be crossing the line." He points to the heavy line that he has drawn on the map, showing half of Beirut divided from the other half, mountains separated from sea-shore, families and friends kept apart.

"Wouldn't he have been coming back with Gamal?" My uncle nods, yes. "Then we must telephone and find out if Gamal knows where Hanna is, or whether they crossed the line together last night."

"I already tried, but the telephone lines must be down because of the fighting," says Uncle Elias.

By now I am pretty sure I know what has happened to bring Uncle and Aunt Akullian to our house at such an early hour, and in such an upset and terrified state of mind. Hanna, my older cousin, who works in a bank on Hamra Street, did not come home last night. My aunt and uncle, and my parents also, are surely afraid that he has been hurt. Snipers are often on the roof of the building where the Palestinians are hidden; there are mines planted by the Syrians; and the Maronite troops, their bullet crosses on chains around their necks, have been firing.

"Elias, perhaps we should go to Gamal's house. It isn't far." Aunt Mary had separated herself from my mother and gone to peer at the map.

"All right, we will," Uncle Elias said. "You stay here, and keep trying the telephone. You never know when it might be reconnected. Fuad and I will walk to Gamal's."

Uncle Elias heads for the door, but my mother holds on to Father's arm, talking softly to him. She doesn't want Aunt Mary to hear, I think. It is all very

hurried, and in a moment my father follows Uncle Elias out the door. I understand why Mother doesn't want Aunt Mary to hear. I know my mother and father love Hanna, too, but what she has said to my father is that he should be careful. He should not let Uncle Elias do anything foolish. She hopes he won't let Elias take any of his Lebanese friends with him to look for Hanna. It is safer, just Armenians alone. Everybody knows we try to stay neutral.

I was going to go with Father and Uncle Elias. After all, I know how to fire an automatic rifle—all the boys at school took turns practicing with one we found after a gun battle near the school. But my mother grabbed me from behind, just as I was following them out the door. I can tell by the way she grabs that it won't do me any good to fight her—she won't let go! I know what she thinks about boys my age shooting guns.

Six o'clock. The sun is fully risen. We are back in the kitchen for more coffee. My mother says I should have some bread and cheese; it will be a worrisome day and she will feel better if she knows I have eaten a good breakfast.

Suddenly Mother jumps from her chair and looks out the window toward the road leading to Beit Meri, a village in the mountains east of Beirut. You can see puffs of smoke where the shells are landing on the road, and hear—even feel—the explosions. Aunt Mary and I crowd against Mother's elbows to see better. This early, with the western slopes still in shadow, you can see flashes from the muzzles of the guns set up on the edge of the city. Aunt Mary moans as we watch the smoke and see that it is creeping toward us, right across the blocks of buildings that Uncle Elias and Father have headed for. We know that pretty soon there will be answering rocket fire from the south.

I remember the last time I saw Samir Youssef, my friend from school. We had played hockey to pick up souvenir shell casings. I let Samir keep mine, because I knew that Mother would never let me bring them into the house. That next week there was lots of fighting in Tal el Zaatar, and I never saw him again. Somebody told me that his family had gone back to Jezzin, in South Lebanon, where they had lived before the Israelis bombed their village.

Mother is shooing us away from the window. "All

right," she says. "We had better get ready to move down to the storeroom. We're not going to risk a shell through the ceiling if they keep coming closer."

Aunt Mary is gathering cans of food from the cupboard, and bread to take with us. She fills a jug with water.

"Hurry, you two," she says. "It's seven o'clock. I hope the men have reached Gamal's. I'm going to have one more try with the telephone."

Tomorrow, when everything is back to normal, Father and Mother will write to Uncle Boulos in the United States. They will tell him that everything is fine, and that he shouldn't worry about us.

"No," they will write, "although we would like to visit the U.S. and see all the nieces and nephews and our Armenian friends, we cannot leave our family here in Lebanon. Armen misses his schoolmates, and we hope that before too long the fighting will stop so that they will all be back in school together."

I wonder how they know that I say this in my prayers? Perhaps that is why I dreamed about Samir Youssef and Amal last night.

## AMAL

Seven o'clock; springtime sunshine slants through the cedar trees in Beit Meri. The bells ring out from the tower of the church further up the mountainside. Amal and her cousin, Adele, have not been too long awake. The first sounds of the birds chirping and the cocks crowing did not waken them, curled in their bed in the stone house. The fresh smell of the pines did not wake them. Probably it was the smell of breakfast, or perhaps a bee buzzing in the open window on a detour from flower to flower, that awakened the girls. The two had become best friends since Amal's family came to live in the Maronite community six months ago.

Now, Amal and Adele have dressed. They are nearly the same age—Amal, nine and a half, Adele, ten years old. It was not difficult to find a few things for Amal from Adele's good supply of dresses and coats. Amal had arrived with only the clothing she was wearing the day they fled from their village, Damour.

Downstairs in the kitchen, the whole family is gathered for breakfast: Adele's brothers and sisters, the little cousins, Amal's mother and grandmother, Adele's grandfather and his two sons, even the cat and dog are there. Only Amal's father is missing. It is his turn to stand guard duty on the church bell tower, in the room under the swinging bell that calls the people of the little Maronite community to Mass each day. Since the family came to Beit Meri to live, Father had carried out all the militia duties that anyone could ask of him, and more.

Amal remembers the day they left Damour—her father's grim face, her mother's hair in such disorder, looking not at all like the neat woman she usually was. The baby screamed with fear and hunger as the car in



which all eleven people were packed raced up the road out of the village. No one had a chance to look back—and it was just as well, she had heard the grown-ups say in later weeks. But no one told her exactly what that meant.

She knew that they had been among the lucky ones, that others of her neighbors had been killed in the explosions and gunfire that had seemed to be coming from all directions at once that day. When it was finished, the town had been left all but deserted.

Of course, she still had frightening nightmares. When she woke crying, her father would take her in his arms and sit in the warm kitchen, calming her.

"We are safe in the mountains now, Amal," he would say, "and no one will come to hurt you."

Spring crept up the slopes of the mountains, bringing green grass for the grazing sheep and goats and new green leaves on the vines. Each night, Mother would tell Amal stories of the centuries before, when her great-great-grandparents had lived on Mount Lebanon, safe from the wars and violence on the plains and desert below.

"The Church of St. Maroun and the family home in our mountain village have stood for years and years to shelter us," she said. "You should not be afraid, Amal."

After Adele and Amal have helped clear away the breakfast things, everyone washes, and they begin to climb up the street to the church. Wild flowers are scattered in the grass along the way. The two girls stick them in each other's hair. Amal clammers up the rocky side path to give one to the guard staring down at the road below, winding up from Beirut to the west.

The family enters the church, cool and dim after the warm, bright sun outside. The smell of incense mingled with candle wax always makes Amal feel serious and reverent. She kneels, waiting for the priest

to enter, watching the candlelight and glancing sunlight.

What prayers would be said today, Amal wonders? Her mother, she knows, prays always that her father and the other men will be safe at their militia duties. Her father, she thinks, prays that the government will be able to keep Lebanon a united country. All must honor the white flag, with its beautiful green cedar tree, that brings them together as Lebanese, even if sometimes there are bitter quarrels among different groups.

Amal prays that someday she will meet her old friends from school: Samir Youssef, who gave her a piece of bone carved in the shape of a bird from his home in Jezzín; and Armen, who sometimes shared the Armenian pastry he brought for lunch. Had they not all studied together in the same schoolroom?

Out in the sunshine again, Amal sniffs the scent of pines on the breeze, light and fragrant after the heavy incense. She glances down the mountainside, west toward the ocean, south over the valley. Yes, she feels safe here, but not happy. She will be happy when she knows that not only her family, but her friends and their families, are safe and happy, too. When will that be, she wonders?

## SAMIR YOUSSEF

Twelve o'clock, noon. Mother probably expected me home by now.

I wonder why I said "home"? It really isn't home, though Mother is waiting there. It is where I bring the week's food rations from this truck, parked at the end of this street in Damour.

I have lived in three different places since we left Jezzín. None have been home, because my home is in Israel, in Haifa. My father and mother lived there before I, Samir Youssef, was born. We had a beautiful stone house with a red tile roof. There were an orchard and olive groves, and a spring with good water near the house. In Haifa Mother never had to carry water up from the well below the footpath.

Sometimes in Jezzín when the olives had been harvested or the oranges sent to market, we would go for a day to the beach. Watching the ships sailing south, we wondered if they were going to Haifa.

For a time we lived in Tal el Zaatar. Our home was part of a warehouse where they stored tobacco before loading it on the ships in the harbor. There was no plumbing and there were holes in the wall where the rats sometimes ran in.

When Tal el Zaatar was attacked we went back to Jezzín. We could not live in our house. The roof was fallen; two of the walls had been knocked down. Most of the furniture was broken or had disappeared altogether. My mother and father both wept. I did not cry. I wanted to kick down the wall that was still standing.

Almost every house was as bad or worse than ours. Some people had used planks from the floors to roof over the walls that were still standing. The mosque was burned. One wall of the school was caved in. The church had been bombed. Not even one wall was standing.

We tried to live in Jezzín, but the trees had been splintered and uprooted. There were bombs and mines lying unexploded in the fields.

My mother pleaded with Father to leave Jezzín. Father thought we should stay. The fighting grew worse and one day my little sister was killed. We took the few tools that we had, the mattresses from the floor, our clothes, and came north again.

Now we live in Damour. In the summer it is hot and dusty. In the winter it is so cold that ice forms on the puddles left by the cold rains. The wind is fierce. Once it tore off a piece of the tin roof, and the rain ran down the wall and across the floor. We children had to dodge the trickles of water or else have wet clothes all day long.

I feel better now, though, because I can begin to learn a trade. My father would be proud of me, if he were still alive. I am going to join the shoemakers' cooperative as an apprentice, and soon I will be earning money to support my mother and family.

Father called it a miracle when the shoemakers' cooperative began. All his tools had been lost in Tal el Zaatar when it surrendered to the Maronites, and he did not have money to buy leather.

Then, one day, a man came to tell my father that if the men who were shoemakers by trade would get together, he would tell them how they might begin a shoemaking cooperative. He explained that he came from the Social Movement for Lebanon. The organization would buy a building in Damour to be a shoemaking cooperative. Money would be loaned for leather and new tools, and a truck would deliver the finished shoes to Beirut. Father was so excited. Then he caught pneumonia and died.

I wish that I could see my school friends to tell them of my good fortune. Often I think of Armen and Amal, and I wonder where they are and if they are well.

"It is your turn for the food, now," a voice says. The man in the truck has bags of lentils, milk powder and tins of sardines. Today there is kerosene for our stove and some soap. Everybody in the line gets some of everything, though I can tell that the people on the truck are Christians because of the marking on the bags of lentils.

I will be home in time to wash and pray at the mosque with my brother this afternoon. I remember when Muhammad and I used to go with Father each Friday to the mosque. We would pray the *Fatiha*, and Father would give each of us a few coins for the poor, as the Qu'ran commands. Then I would look for Amal or Armen to play with, while Father went to the coffee house. I wonder what friends they have now?

## THE FATIHA

The Fatiha (opening chapter of the Qu'ran) used by Muslims whenever they pray:

*Praise be to God,  
Lord of the Universe,  
The Merciful, the Compassionate,  
Sovereign of the Day of Judgement.  
You are the One we worship.  
You are the One we ask for help.  
Guide us along the straight highway,  
the highway of those who receive your grace,  
not that of those who incur anger or go astray.*

## TAFADDUL

Suppose you were able to go to Lebanon to ride on the truck to Damour. When the food gifts from Church World Service had been shared with everyone, the church workers might introduce you to Samir, since he is just your age. In the Middle East it is the custom to invite new friends to share a meal in your home. You would know, of course, how little food Samir's family has to share, but you would not want to be unfriendly.

Prepare this menu for your meal with Samir in Damour:

pita bread (Arab-style bread, round and flat)  
sardines from a tin  
lentil soup (no meat)  
Arabic coffee, served in small glasses or little cups  
sugar to sweeten the coffee.

The meal might be served on a brass or hammered metal tray. Be sure you sit on the floor, since most of the family's furniture has been destroyed.

If you should find yourself in Beit Meri at breakfast with Amal, you would have pita bread, feta cheese, Greek-style olives and thin wedges of ripe tomatoes. Or you might spread your bread with cheese and apricot jam.

Armen's family might use this Armenian prayer from Lebanon, eating in the dark shelter under the stairs:

(Before meal) "Let us in peace eat the food that God has provided for us. Praise be to God for all his gifts. Amen."

(After meal) "May the abundance of this table never fail and never be less, thanks to the blessing of God, who has fed and satisfied our needs. To him be glory for ever. Amen."

From *Children's Prayers From Other Lands*, Dorothy Gladys Spicer, Ed. By permission Association Press.

## Games

Here is a very old game, played with date pits or pebbles. Does it remind you of any game you know?

Scoop a series of holes from the dirt or sand, one hole per player. Make them 1½ inches deep, 2½ inches to 3 inches around, all in a row about 3 inches apart. Each player has three or four pebbles to toss into the holes from an already decided distance. Naturally, the person with the best aim wins. If one player's toss adds to another player's score, well, *Inshallah*—it is the will of Allah.

**AFREETAH:** Arabic Hopscotch

This is similar to American hopscotch. A stone is tossed into the first square. The player hops on one foot only, kicking the stone ahead from one square to the next, and tries to get all the way to the last square.

**FOLK DANCING**

Visit the library or a record store and see if you can find a recording of Hebrew or Arabic folk music. Listen to the music, clap and stamp your feet to the rhythm. Now you are ready to try the *Dabkah*, a Palestinian folk dance.

Form a wide circle or line and join hands. Keep line tight by linking arms.

1. Step to the right on right foot.
2. Cross left foot in front of right foot and shift weight to left foot.
3. Step to right on right foot.
4. Stamp with left foot.
5. Take a small step back on left foot and kick with right foot at the same time hopping on left foot.
6. Start again with right foot.

The leader (first in line) may improvise during the *Dabkah* as long as he or she maintains the rhythm of the dance. The leader should make sure not to confuse the other dancers when improvising, but should give the other dancers the incentive and the spirit of the *Dabkah*. The leader can use a handkerchief in the right hand and twirl it while leading. This can help to keep the rhythm. The entire *Dabkah* line can lean to the right or left while dancing, or rock forward and backwards with the rhythm.



# SIGNPOST MIDDLE EAST

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# Turkey

Anne C. Stephens

## JIMMY'S NEW HOME

"*The Star and Crescent*," Mrs. Stewart read aloud from the masthead of the newspaper spread before her. "May, 1979, Istanbul, Turkey."

"Looks pretty cool, doesn't it, Mom?" Jimmy ventured. "See the design at the top corners, and the middle of the page? That was my idea." His dimples showed, as he laughed with pleasure.

"It certainly does have a lot of nice drawings, and some very interesting stories," Mrs. Stewart replied. "Did you teach Jim all about Turkey, Karim?" she said, smiling at her son's Turkish friend.

"No, mostly we did the work at school these last few months. We've looked up information, interviewed people, even gone on some field trips—places that weren't too far from school," Karim said.

"We went to see movies at the museum about Turkish history, and then visited the Topkapi Museum," Jim added.

"Good," said his mother. "So you should be able to tell me all about Turkey."

"Maybe so," Jim said. "What would you like to hear about first? Modern Turkey or Alexander the Great? Wait!" he held up his hand. "I could tell you about both together. Did you know that Alexander the Great was born in Greece? Yet his army had its headquarters in Turkey most of the time he was becoming Great. That was because Turkey was a sort of land bridge between Greece and Central Europe to the west of the Bosphorus and the rich eastern countries, Asia, India and Pakistan. That was as far as Alex conquered."

Karim, not to be outdone, went on. "And Turkey still joins Europe to Asia. One of the movies at the museum showed a modern truck convoy traveling through Turkey. It had come from Germany, and was carrying cars to Iran and India."

"Our teacher calls Turkey a bridge to political understanding," Jim declared. "Turkey is a democratic state, with an elected legislature and a president and premier, and several political parties. And almost everyone is Muslim. I don't think I know even one Christian at school except Westerners like us. Many Middle East countries use Islamic religious law as their

national law: what the Qu'ran rules, the judge says is law."

"That's pretty different from European and American states, where civil law tries to be separate from religious beliefs, isn't it?" Mrs. Stewart asked.

"That's right," Karim said. "Turkey wants to be like the West in this way."

"The most famous person here is Kemal Ataturk, who was the first president of Turkey, and who died in the 1950s," Jimmy went on. "He did the most to change the Arabic writing of Turkish to an alphabet a lot more like the English one."

"You ought to come with me when I go to talk with Professor Ran at the University," Mrs. Stewart said. "He's going to help me plan a study group for European and American workers in your father's company. We've decided that we ought to know more about Turkey ourselves. I'm ashamed when I talk to Mrs. Becker. Of course, she has lived in Turkey for quite some time, ever since the church sent her to teach in the Girls' School at Üsküdar. She speaks Turkish, and knows a great deal about Turkish culture and history."

"Oh, boy, Mom, are you in for it!" Jimmy grinned.

"What makes you say that?" Mrs. Stewart asked.

"You just can't imagine how complicated Turkey and its history are," Jimmy replied. "I can't even remember all the different people and tribes and armies and religions that they start telling you about."

Jimmy thought back to how his teacher, Ahmet Bey, had tried to help him get it straight in school last week. Standing at the front of the crowded classroom, the teacher pointed to a large map from time to time as he spoke.

"Let's go over it one more time," Ahmet Bey said patiently. "First there were some people called Hittites, in Old Testament times. They had an important empire because they were good soldiers and good farmers. Then the Greeks and the Romans each came and lived in Turkey—only they called it Anatolia. During that time important cities grew up. Jimmy, you have probably learned in your church that the Apostle Paul visited Tarsus, Ephesus, Galatia and Philippi."

Jimmy raised his hand. "Why did all these people pick Turkey as a place to live?" he wanted to know. "Were there wars when each new group moved in?"

Ahmet Bey smiled. "That's a good question. Anatolia was a very good place for growing grain," he said. "Everyone wanted to live there and become rich and well fed. The Romans sent the grain away in their ships to feed other parts of their empire."

The teacher continued with his story. "After the Roman Emperor, Constantine, became a Christian, his empire was called the Byzantine Empire. Back then Istanbul was called Constantinople.

"This was a time when all the people of Turkey were Christians. The very first Christian kingdom, even before the emperor became a Christian, was Armenia. There aren't too many Armenians still living in Turkey, but they were a separate nation with their own king back then.

"The several bishops of the church had different ideas about what was most important for Christians to believe, and about who should be the leader. After quite a while, there were several churches. Now the emperor was considered just a little less than divine himself.

"By the time the Byzantine Empire was several hundred years old, around five hundred years after Christ lived on earth, it was very rich and powerful. It was the most important place between Ireland and Persia. The Empire included Egypt and Palestine."

A bell rang, signaling that it was time for lunch. Ahmet Bey turned to his desk as the children began to gather up their books.

"Tomorrow," he said, "we will see a filmstrip that will show you something of Turkey's cultural heritage, both Byzantine and Islamic. The Byzantine Empire is famous for its mosaics, its domed churches, and its icons, among other things. The Islamic culture has beautiful mosques and tiled mosaics and designs. Both are important parts of Turkey's heritage."

A sound from the kitchen doorway brought Jimmy back to the present.

"Dad!" he said. "When did you come in?"

"Oh, just a few minutes ago," Mr. Stewart said. "Hello, Karim, how are you?" Mr. Stewart and Karim shook hands.

"We've been looking at the school newspaper Jim and Karim have put together, and then we started talking about what an interesting place Turkey is," said Mrs. Stewart, making room for her husband at the table.

"Well, this is very good work, boys," Mr. Stewart said, studying the paper. "A nice title, too, chosen from the symbols of the Turkish flag. Would you be interested in a suggestion for some of your future issues?"

"Sure, Dad. What are you thinking about?" Jim asked.

"Well, you'll find plenty of material about both the history and present development of Turkey at school and at the museum. And you could go to the government information office. But as it happens, I had a conversation with your teacher today. Ahmet Bey heard that some important people will be in Istanbul

next month for a conference at my office and he asked me to see if we could arrange a different kind of field trip for your class—one that will help us all to learn more about modern Turkey."

Jimmy and Karim could hardly contain their excitement.

"Really, Mr. Stewart?" asked Karim. "Oh, tell us all about it!"

"Yes, Dad," added Jimmy. "What are you and Ahmet Bey planning?"

"Slow down," Mr. Stewart laughed. "Here's what we have in mind. First, I'd like you to come to my office next month to meet the people Ahmet Bey was talking about. I think they could find time to talk with students, even though they are pretty busy. I'll ask them to bring slides, and to tell you about some of the most important things that are going on in Turkey. Many people are trying to build a society in which everyone, especially the poor people in rural areas, can live a better and more productive life. In many parts of Turkey, farming and herding are very primitive. The health and education of a great many people are not very well cared for. And Jim, you will also see how you and your non-Turkish friends are helping Karim and his people to do this."

"Ah, I think I know what your father has in mind, Jim." Mrs. Stewart had been busy during the discussion bringing Jim and Karim glasses of milk, and Mr. Stewart a cup of coffee.

"Hmm," said Mr. Stewart, breathing the coffee fragrance. "That smell makes me very grateful the Arabs invented a good way to use coffee beans." He smiled at his wife. "I don't suppose it's early enough to have just a taste of that baklava you were going to practice-bake this morning? Karim, Jim and I would give a very objective report about your baking, wouldn't we, boys?"

"Gee, that's right, Mom. I saw the pan right there on top of the stove when I came in from school. Where did it disappear to?"

Mrs. Stewart raised her left eyebrow and smiled. "Oh, you want to be taste-testers, do you?" She consulted her watch. "I suppose just a shred wouldn't ruin anyone's appetite for dinner. Then, if it didn't turn out very well, you won't be so disappointed when it's time for dessert. Do go ahead and tell us more about this field trip, Don."

"I'm very excited about this meeting, myself," continued Mr. Stewart. "I hope the class will see slides from several parts of Turkey. We'll try to get slides of the poultry raising on the southern coast. Some very fine work is being done to help farmers earn a better living by raising chicks to sell to restaurants and meat packers. And far to the east, in the most underdeveloped parts of Turkey, farmers are learning to breed and raise dairy cattle in a modern way. Purebred Holstein cattle have been sent from the United States, and some from Israel. These cattle give much more milk than the native cattle. When bred with the best of

the native cattle, and fed and cared for by the farmers in the best way, the herds will produce much more milk for sale.

"Remember those newspaper photos we clipped to send back home, of the imported cattle arriving on airplanes, and charging in all directions at the airport? The men who helped unload them still laugh about their chance to play real live cowboy, far-west style, when they had to round them up. Poor cows, it was their first (and last) air trip and they were frightened as could be. These two projects and others like them use money sent by American churches to help their Turkish friends."

"I have an idea, Mom," said Jimmy. "Why don't we invite Ahmet Bey and his wife for dinner one night? Then we can talk about the plans and Karim and I can get started on our research for the last issue of our newspaper before school closes."

"Of course," Mrs. Stewart said. "I'd love to meet your teacher and his wife, Jim. And now, you ought to

be able to tell me, should I count on serving homemade baklava, or does it not quite meet the company-dinner test?"

"Whatever kind of test that is, Mom, it sure would pass," Jim said. Mr. and Mrs. Stewart laughed as he did his favorite trick—rolling his eyes, patting his head with one hand, and rubbing his stomach with the other. "Yum-m-m-m. The only sticky-sweet-syrupy thing I like better than baklava is maple-syrup-on-snow back in good old Vermont, U.S.A."

"Oh, hey, Karim, a super idea! Our next edition of the *Star and Crescent* is supposed to have candy recipes for *Sheker Bayram*, the Candy Festival. That's what I'll contribute: maple-syrup-on-snow. We'll have to make the syrup with sugar and add maple flavor—I know it's too expensive to ask Gramps to send us syrup from Vermont. And grind up ice cubes in the blender for snow. Wow! The other kids will never be able to top that!"

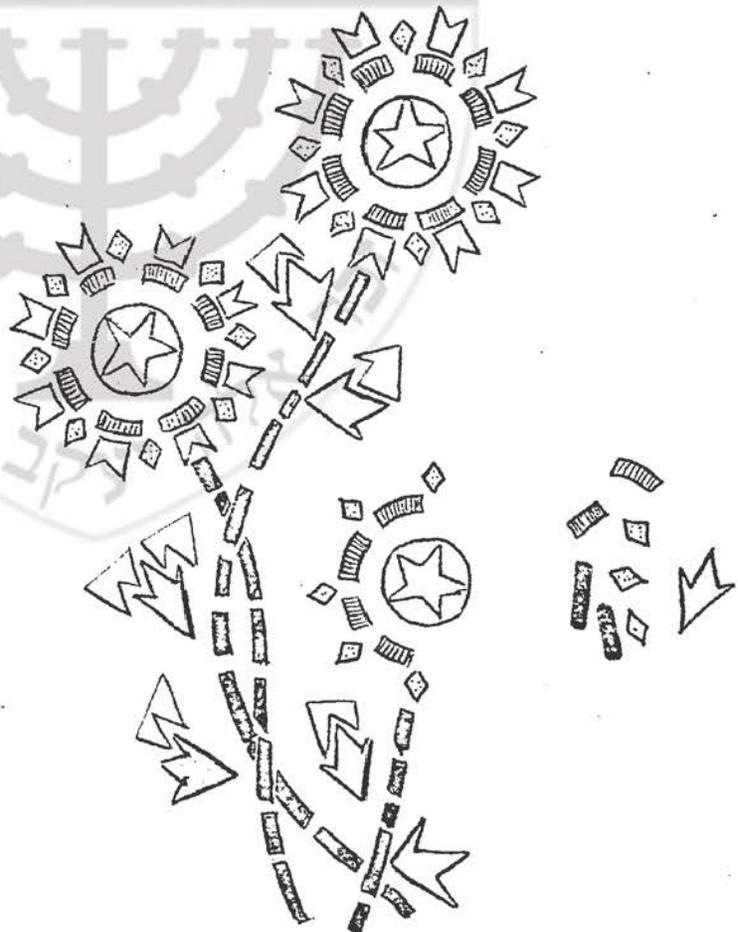
## MAKE A MOSAIC PICTURE

Mosaics are pictures, or designs, created with odd bits of different colored and different shaped materials. You can use almost any materials, as long as they can be fastened together to a background or base with glue or another adhesive.

As a way to experience for yourself just what a mosaic is, and how it is created, start with small, odd-shaped, different colored scraps of construction paper. Take a number of scraps and experiment with your design by laying them on another sheet of paper to be used as a base. Try intertwining flower or fruit designs, arrange abstract geometric designs, or create a simple picture. When you have a design that pleases you, and that fills the entire outline of the picture you wished to make, then glue the pieces permanently in place.

Some traditional colors used in Islamic art and architecture are blue (peace), green (justice), red (victory) and black. Of course, they also use other colors.

Your teacher or your parents might have other suggestions for materials that will make splendid mosaic designs.



## CELEBRATING SHEKER BAYRAM IN TURKEY

You would expect that a celebration or festival where candy is plentiful would be a favorite of children. This is true of the festival called *Sheker Bayram*, or the Candy Festival, which ends the fast of Ramadan. In addition to family visits and parties, new clothes and vacations from school and business, the holiday is celebrated by eating candy!

Part of the fun of this activity is making your own candy, although of course, this is not necessary. Try a recipe for nougat, or Turkish delight, or even taffy. Dates stuffed with nuts and fondant or any other kind of candy is appropriate. Arrange the candy attractively on large metal trays: a copper or brass tray would be most like those used in Turkey, but silver or aluminum or just plastic trays covered with foil would be fine. Have small glasses or paper cups of water and, if you would like to try it, Turkish coffee for your guests.

Another old custom is for the host to buy inexpensive handkerchiefs, tie coins in the corner as favors, and give them to guests. Games or storytelling (a *Hodja* story, perhaps) could be your entertainment.



After hearing one or two *Hodja* stories, you might like to try inventing your own along the same lines: one person adding one original story line, the next person adding a second, the third, another, and so on, until you have a funny story that no one else in the world has ever heard before.

## YOUR OWN SHEKER BAYRAM RECIPES

### Chocolate Turkish Delight

- 3 tablespoons unflavored gelatin
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup cocoa
- 1 teaspoon vanilla flavoring

You will also need a 1-quart saucepan; measuring cups and spoons; a stirring spoon, wooden, if you have one; small bowl; a candy thermometer (careful, don't break it); an 8-inch-square pan; and waxed paper.

1. Put 3 tablespoons unflavored gelatin in small bowl, add 1/2 cup cold water and soak for 10 minutes.
2. Put 2 cups granulated sugar, 1/3 cup cocoa and 3/4 cup water into saucepan. Attach candy thermometer to pan. Put on medium heat, stirring constantly for about 5 minutes to dissolve the sugar.
3. Add the gelatin from the small bowl and stir until the mixture comes to a boil.
4. As soon as it boils, turn the heat down. Cook without stirring until candy thermometer says 220°F., about 15 minutes.
5. Turn off the heat, add 1 teaspoon vanilla flavoring and stir.
6. Set pan where it can cool for 30 minutes.
7. Cut a piece of waxed paper to fit the bottom of your square pan. When the candy has cooled,

pour it in. Let it stand overnight.

8. On a large piece of waxed paper sprinkle a little sugar.
9. Run a knife around the sides of the candy pan. Turn it over quickly on top of the sprinkled sugar. Peel off the paper and cut into squares. Now it's ready to eat.

Adapted from *Hershey's 1934 Cookbook*, Hershey Foods Corp., 1971

### Sugar-on-Snow, Vermont Style

1. Boil two cups or more of maple syrup or maple-flavored syrup in one-quart saucepan and stir over medium heat. Using a candy thermometer, cook to 232° F.
2. Have a bowl of hard-packed snow ready, shaped with a slight cup in the center. (Ice cubes chopped in a blender will do if there is no clean snow.)
3. Drop a small spoonful of the syrup on the snow.
4. With a spoon, roll up the syrup. Eat it. Yum, yum! (In Vermont there are always sour pickles to eat with your sugar-on-snow.)

**SAFETY TIP:** *Nothing burns faster than boiling hot sugar. So don't start cooking without Mother or Dad, Grandma or Grandpa, or an older brother or sister on hand to help with the pouring and stirring.*

**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** July 20, 1979  
**to** Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
**from** Rabbi A. James Rudin  
**subject** Middle East Mosaic: Peace, Justice and Reconciliation  
in the Arab-Israel Conflict: a Christian Perspective

This slim volume (64) pages is perhaps the most thoughtful and certainly the most balanced piece in the entire Friendship Press Series on the Middle East. You will remember that it was written by a group of seven Canadian Christian leaders including Gregory Baum and Cranford Pratt. Even in its original manuscript it presented few problems for us, and in my first analysis of the document in December 1978, all of our criticisms were listed.

The revised version took almost all of our suggestions and incorporated them into the text. Two text problems still remain with the booklet:

1. The comparison between Israel and South Africa still remain even though the authors admit "the analogy is a bad one."
2. The Canadian authors still call for some "international guarantees regarding Jerusalem, involving an elaborate and unique sharing of power on the part of both Arab and Israeli authorities...." This is however a great improvement over the original manuscript which called for an "international presence in Jerusalem."

What is new is a series of nearly 35 discussion questions written by Alan Geyer. I am enclosing a copy of his questions with this memo. Although Geyer's questions are not bad, he still, in my opinion, slightly tilts to a pro-Arab, anti-Israel position, but I believe there is little we can do about it at this time.

To sum up, this is a very thoughtful, highly skilled, quite detailed position paper on the Middle East. The authors end up with seven main points (see attachments) that by and large are balanced and useful. It calls for international guarantees for the security

July 20, 1979

of Israel's borders and "a new Palestinian homeland" though it does not come out for a PLO state. The Canadian authors took almost every one of our suggestions seriously and the final text reflects this fact.



AJR:FM  
Encl.

cc: Judith Banki  
Inge Gibel



## PEACE, JUSTICE & RECONCILIATION

Friendship Press

To argue as we have done that Israel had very real grounds for its security preoccupations but that it cannot hope to meet these by the permanent occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, is to accept that international action must find ways to assure Israel of a security that would justify its returning to an eventual Arab sovereignty much of the territories occupied in 1967. The main components of this international role have been easily identified as they appear frequently in the literature on this conflict. They include:

- 1) International guarantees of the security of Israel's borders and of the right to use the Suez Canal and the Straits of Tiran, and means for ensuring their enforcement.
- 2) The use of early warning systems, demilitarized zones and whatever other techniques are available to lessen the risk of surprise attacks.
- 3) An international military presence on the crucial borders of Israel for as long as is necessary, and an international military and civilian presence in the areas now in dispute during whatever transition period may be agreed upon.
- 4) International guarantees regarding Jerusalem, involving an elaborate and unique sharing of power on the part of both Arab and Israeli authorities, for it is hard to imagine how peace will be possible if the holy places remain entirely within the sovereignty of either Arabs or of Israel alone.
- 5) International agreement to limit the buildup of arms by the major protagonists in the Arab-Israeli conflict.
- 6) International assistance to compensate and resettle the Palestinian refugees in a new Palestinian homeland, or in the countries where they presently live, or (in the case of an important symbolic few) in Israel, and to do justice also to the compensation claims of Jews who have come to Israel from the Arab countries as refugees. Nations such as the United States and Canada must also themselves be ready to receive significant numbers of Palestinian refugees.
- 7) International participation in the negotiations that will certainly be long and arduous if there is to be a settled peace in the Middle East along lines that Jews and Arabs finally accept.

It is possible to identify some of the difficult issues that are bound to arise in these negotiations and to suggest how concerned countries

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

by Alan Geyer

The introduction to this book suggested that the following discussion questions are more than invitations to express personal opinions: they are promptings to return to the text and to dig more deeply into the meaning of each chapter. There is perhaps no international conflict in which uninformed top-of-the-head opinion is more fatuous or more dangerous than the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Yet we must be open to asking the necessary questions. Opinions must be formed. Present opinions must be open to change. Study groups are invited to make substantial use of these questions in concert with serious reading of the text. Questions are grouped according to chapter.

## 1. OVERVIEW

- (1) To what extent do Christians bear historic responsibility for hostilities between Jews and Muslims in the Middle East since the 1940s? How should this historic record affect the attitudes of this generation of Christians?
- (2) What positive resources of Christian faith and institutions are most appropriate to the tasks of reconciliation in the Middle East?
- (3) What elements of common faith in Islam, Judaism and Christianity are most appropriate to these same tasks of reconciliation? What differences, if any, among these three faiths are so serious as to make reconciliation especially difficult?

## 2. WHAT THE CHURCHES HAVE SAID

- (1) How should we assess the Vatican's refusal to recognize Israel's existence as a state? Does that refusal constitute a serious injustice to Israel and to Judaism? Does it enable the Vatican to play a unique mediating role with regard to religious and civil rights in "the Holy Land"?
- (2) How should North American Christians weigh the moral claims of stateless Palestinians and impoverished Arabs against the moral claims of survivors of the Holocaust who have been building the modern state of Israel? Should biblical promises of land to Jews be recognized as giving priority rights to Jews in the Twentieth Century?

- (3) Should Christians rejoice in Israel's impressive military victories in wars with Arab states? Why, or why not?
- (4) While the U.S. has provided arms to both Israel and Arab states as inducements to successful peace negotiations, the World Council of Churches at its 1975 Nairobi Assembly denounced arms exports to the Middle East. Can an increased supply of arms actually contribute to a peaceful settlement? Why, or why not?
- (5) Recent U.S. peace efforts in the Middle East have focused on a separate Israeli-Egyptian settlement to the exclusion of other Arab states and direct representation of Palestinian Arabs. In contrast, the World Council of Churches has called for a wider settlement through a resumed Geneva Peace Conference which would include all Arab states and the Soviet Union, as well as the Palestine Liberation Organization. Which of these approaches is preferable and why?

### 3. THE DEVELOPING CONFLICT

- (1) What importance should be attached to the fact that Arab Muslims and Jews share a common ancestor in Abraham and that both are Semitic peoples?
- (2) The writers of this book observed that non-Arab Muslims "generally do not place the Arab-Israeli conflict high among their political priorities." More particularly, it was noted that Iran "has been the principal supplier of oil to Israel." However, since those words were written, a revolution in Iran led by militant Muslims has resulted in Iran's cutting off oil supplies to Israel, breaking diplomatic relations, and even turning over the Israeli embassy in Teheran to the Palestine Liberation Organization. Do these developments indicate a trend toward the increasing identification of Muslims everywhere with Arab policies and Palestinian nationalism? If so, what are the implications for a peace settlement in the Middle East?
- (3) How should Christians evaluate Zionism as: (a) the fulfillment of the biblical covenant in Palestine; (b) a socialist utopia; (c) a form of cultural self-expression; and (d) a homeland for persecuted Jews? With which of these aspects of Zionism should the churches identify, and why?
- (4) Should the U.S. and Canada have welcomed much larger numbers of Jewish refugees from Europe in the 1930s and 1940s? Why didn't they? What were the consequences for Zionism? For Palestine?

- (5) What were the most legitimate Arab grievances against Western governments in the 30-year period from 1917 to 1947? How adequately did the British government respond to those grievances?
- (6) How should the role of the United Nations in Palestine in 1947-48 be evaluated? In the years since?

#### 4. THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR: 1948-78

- (1) What are the most compelling moral justifications of Israel's policies concerning the resettlement of Palestinian Arabs? What justifications for the policies of Egypt, Syria and Lebanon on the same issue?
- (2) Has U.S. public opinion been more favorable to Israel in recent years than to Arab states? Why, or why not? How much opportunity do Americans have to become familiar with Arab sentiments and policies?
- (3) How should Christians evaluate P.L.O. proposals for a secular democratic state in which Arabs and Jews would share equal citizenship rights but Jews would not be accorded special legal status?
- (4) What moral issues are involved in Palestinian terrorist tactics against Israel and in Israel's retaliatory attacks?
- (5) How should Christians evaluate the record of Israel concerning the civil rights and liberties of its Arab citizens? How does this record compare with treatment of Jews in Arab states?
- (6) Is the Israeli policy of fair access to Muslim, Christian, and Jewish holy places in a Jerusalem under Israeli control preferable to a return to sovereign division of the city? Is that policy preferable to international control of Jerusalem or to some authoritative international presence in the city?
- (7) Why did the Soviet Union, an original supporter of Israel, shift to a pro-Arab, anti-Israel policy? What responsibility, if any, did the U.S. bear for such a shift?
- (8) What are the most important sources of U.S. influence on Israel? On Arab states? What are the most important sources of Israeli influence on U.S. policy? Of Arab influence?

#### 5. OUR SEARCH FOR A MORAL PERSPECTIVE

- (1) In what respects, if any, is it plausible to view Israel as an essentially Western colony imperialistically imposed upon the Middle East? In what historical respects should Israel be viewed as a legitimate Middle East state?

- (2) How should the substantial relationships and alleged parallels between Israel and South Africa be evaluated, especially in view of the harshness of apartheid and repression of human rights in South Africa?
- (3) To what extent is it morally justifiable to seek a reversal of such historic decisions as the British 1917 promise of a Palestinian homeland for Jews or the UN's 1947 partition of Palestine which permitted a Jewish state? Do the moral rights of Palestinian Arabs, who constituted a large majority of the Holy Land's population before 1917, override these decisions? Why, or why not?
- (4) How should Christians assess Jewish claims to preeminence in Palestine based on three millennia of Jewish identification with Zion?
- (5) Does Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank, Jerusalem, Gaza, and Sinai contribute to Israel's long-term security? Why, or why not?
- (6) What are the consequences of Israel's establishment of Jewish settlements in occupied Arab territories? Does such a policy enhance Israel's security and the prospects for peace? Why, or why not?
- (7) The writers claim that "the first step toward peace" must be Arab acceptance of the existence and legitimacy of Israel. How should Christians respond to the continuing refusal of Arab states to recognize the state of Israel? How should Christians respond to P.L.O. determination to eliminate Israel as a Jewish state? What leverage, if any, should the U.S. be prepared to use to induce Arabs to recognize Israel?
- (8) The writers claim that some form of "political self-determination" for the Palestinians is the "central requirement" of any effective Middle East peace settlement. Assuming that is true, what policies should the United States and Canada encourage Israel to adopt in order to enhance prospects for Palestinian self-determination?

## 6. POSTSCRIPT

- (1) What are the most vital interests of outside countries in the Middle East? How might those interests be affected by a new war between Israelis and Arabs?
- (2) How is the Arab-Israeli conflict related to the problems of world poverty and hunger? To the energy crisis?

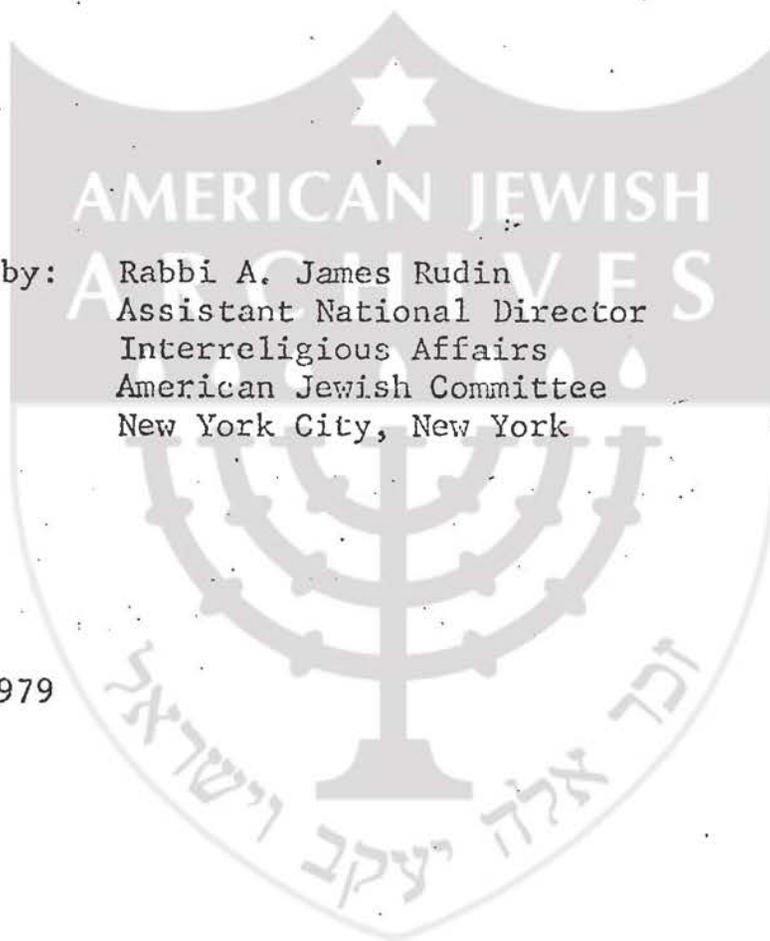
- (3) Sometimes it is argued that only the passing of more time will allow Middle East hatreds to subside so that a peace settlement becomes possible that cannot be achieved today. But others argue that repeated postponements of a peace settlement tend only to deepen hatred and bitterness and to make future violence more likely and more devastating than ever. Which of these judgments seems more realistic and why?
- (4) What should local churches do to enhance prospects for peace, justice and reconciliation in the Arab-Israeli conflict?



An Analysis of Peace, Justice and Reconciliation in the Arab-Israel Conflict: a Christian Perspective  
Revised Version

Prepared by: Rabbi A. James Rudin  
Assistant National Director  
Interreligious Affairs  
American Jewish Committee  
New York City, New York

January 1979



There have been many positive changes in this manuscript from the first draft. However, a few points still are problematic for me.

Page 17 - Somewhere on this page it should be noted that Jews have constituted the majority population in Jerusalem for over one hundred years. As the second paragraph now stands it gives the reader an incomplete picture of the Jewish population in the Palestine of 1918.

Page 18 - It should be noted that the Jabotinsky group in the World Zionist Movement was always a distinct minority. The last paragraph on this page conveys the impression that the Weizmann group and the Jabotinsky followers were roughly equal in size. This is not so.

Page 21 - "Previously, anti-Semitic persecutions were borne in relative patience because the people as a whole would continue to fulfill its destiny." This addition is an improvement over the earlier version but I really question whether Jews bore anti-Semitic persecutions in "relative patience." The concept of quiet suffering and passive acceptance of anti-Semitism is, I think, not quite accurate.

Page 40 - The most troublesome problem is the apparent linking of South Africa with Israel. Although the authors say that the analogy is a "bad one", nevertheless this comparison could lead to distortion and a misunderstanding of the facts.

Page 51 - and 53 - The authors continue to call for an "international presence" in Jerusalem. As indicated in my earlier analysis, both the Jews and Arabs of Jerusalem are absolutely opposed to any such international presence as are the governments of Israel and her Arab neighbors. International guarantees for the Holy places are perfectly appropriate along with guarantees that all peoples may visit the Holy places but an international presence in the city is a mischeivous phrase and should be removed.

It would be helpful if we could have a copy of Alan Geyer's discussion questions.

As indicated above, of the five manuscripts I've read, this one is by far the most balanced, thoughtful and constructive of the group.

AN ANALYSIS OF "PEACE, JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION IN THE  
ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT: A CANADIAN CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE"

Prepared by:

Rabbi A. James Rudin  
Assistant National Director  
Interreligious Affairs  
American Jewish Committee  
New York, New York

December 1978

Overall this is a constructive statement. The authors have attempted to present many points of view fairly, and by and large they have succeeded. The authors have shown great sensitivity to all the peoples of the Middle East, and the document is a useful contribution to the subject. The statement on page 53 that "the first step towards peace must be Arab acceptance of the permanence and legitimacy of Israel" is most welcome and really gets to the heart of the problem.

✓ Page 6: The first sentence of the third paragraph, "the Arab Christians of the Middle East, both Roman Catholic and Orthodox, share in the Palestinian resentment against Jewish immigration and the explicitly Jewish character of Israel." The sentence should be modified to say "some Arab Christians" or "many Arab Christians."

✓ Page 8, line 7: "1947" should be changed to "1948", the founding of the State of Israel.

Page 14: The last two paragraphs of the page that recount the early Biblical history of the Hebrews are weak and lukewarm in tone. ✓ The verb "displaced" is pejorative and inaccurate when describing the comings and goings of the peoples of Biblical times. Some mention should be made of Abraham purchasing burial space for his family, the migrations of the various peoples, the close relationships between ancient Hebrews and their neighbors, etc. One of the most remarkable achievements of this period is not mentioned, that is the rise of the Hebrew prophetic tradition and its insistence on pure monotheism.

Page 17: The second paragraph should note that Jews have constituted the majority population in Jerusalem for well over 100 years. The Encyclopaedia Britannica is a source of this fact.

Page 18: In reading the last paragraph it sounds as if the fol-

lowers of Chaim Weizmann were roughly equal in size to the followers of Vladimir Jabotinsky. In fact, the Jabotinsky group was always a distinct minority within the World Zionist Movement. A closer reading of Jabotinsky's works would also show that he did not call for "a tough Jewish policy" towards the Arabs, only against the British occupying forces. As a matter of fact, Jabotinsky envisioned very positive Jewish-Arab coexistence and cooperation. Jabotinsky's real foe was the British Mandate, not the Arab presence in Palestine.

✓ Page 20: "Serious Arab riots and uprisings broke out against the British administration..." The Arab riots and uprisings were overwhelmingly directed not against the British, but against the Jewish residents of Palestine, i.e. the 1929 massacre of Jewish scholars and students in Hebron, the riots against Jews in Jerusalem, Safed and other cities.

✓ Page 21: In the paragraph describing the "inter-war years" (1918-1939) mention should be made that there was a growing sense of urgency and, indeed impending doom among the Jewish leaders throughout the world. Many felt a new war would bring great disasters on the Jewish people. Such an explanation helps explain why the Jewish community was "preoccupied with its own aspirations...for a national homeland...and the need to expand their numbers." One can better understand this "preoccupation" against the backdrop of Nazism and Fascism that arose in Europe during those years.

✓ Page 22: "In the 1940s however, there was a realization that if the Jews were to continue as a people, faithful to the Covenant, it would be only insofar as they defended themselves." This is inaccurate, and I would urge that this sentence be deleted from the text. "Their own war aim was the creation of a Jewish State." The real war aim of the Jewish community in Palestine was the defeat of Nazism and Fascism, and the creation of a Jewish state, albeit an important aim, was secondary. One of the other war aims not mentioned in this paragraph was the urgent attempt to save as many European Jews as possible during the Holocaust. *Reformulate*

✓ Page 23: "After the Second World War, Jewish immigration increased as survivors of the concentration camps and those persecuted elsewhere...", the "elsewhere" should be spelled out. There was severe anti Jewish feeling in many Arab countries as well as in Europe, and indeed, following the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, nearly 800,000 Jews from Arab countries came to the Jewish State. Nearly 60 percent of today's Jewish population of Israel stems from these Sephardic (Afro-Asian) communities.

✓ Page 32: In the last line "1973" should be changed to "1972".

✓ Page 36: Under section 5 on the fourth line, I would change the words "October attacks in 1973" to the "October War of 1973."

✓ Page 40: American military aid to Israel averaged 1.5 billion dollars and not 15 billion dollars.

✓ Page 42: The third paragraph, second line, reads "The Jews are the people whose historical origins are in the Middle East." It should be specifically noted that Jewish historical origins are in the Land of Canaan, that is today the Land of Israel. The Middle East is a bit too vague.

Black African Countries  
Page 43: The last paragraph discusses the alleged Israel-South African connection. There is some evidence to indicate that the Arab educational level in Israel is even higher than the level achieved by Sephardic Jews in Israel. Although later on the authors state that the Israel-South African analogy is a "bad one," nonetheless, this paragraph provides ammunition to those who believe the analogy is an accurate one. Some more nuances and modifications are needed.

✓ Page 51: "Sadat's readiness to accept Israel as a Jewish state... received no parallel Israeli response..." I am troubled by the word "parallel." Surely there have been positive Israeli responses to Sadat's initiative, i.e. the Israeli proposal of December, 1977, regarding the West Bank, the Camp David agreements of September, 1978, and the proposed Israel-Egypt peace treaty. I am not sure what the authors mean by "parallel."

✓ Page 54: "the obduracy of Begin's responses." I believe this is too harsh a judgment of the Israeli Prime Minister's actions following Sadat's visit to Israel in 1977. A high State Department official recently said that Begin's Camp David position was "light years away" from his earlier stance. The word "obduracy" gives a highly pejorative view of official Israeli behavior, and I do not think the facts warrant such a judgment.

Page 56, section 4: "The international presence in Jerusalem." Such a presence would be entirely unnecessary when a comprehensive peace comes to the Middle East. Not only are the Jews and Arabs in Jerusalem absolutely opposed to any international presence, but so are the governments of Israel and her Arab neighbors. Jerusalem, like the other issues in the Israel-Arab conflict, must be settled by the parties themselves, and there is simply no need for any "big brother" to interfere. An "international presence" is a somewhat mischievous phrase since it is open to many interpretations. Is this the real intent of the authors?

Specific mention should be made of the many Jewish refugees from

Arab lands. In any comprehensive settlement their claims must also be met as well as those of the Arab refugees. UN Security Resolution 242 speaks of the "refugee question" with the clear understanding that Jews as well as Arabs have been refugees in the Middle East.

Page 59, section 5: "An international presence may be a critical condition for agreement." I feel this sentence should be omitted.



**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** July 20, 1979  
**to** Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
**from** Rabbi A. James Rudin  
**subject**

I have carefully analyzed the five major Friendship Press publications in their series entitled, "Middle East Mosaic." These include two sets of children's story papers, the novel, the discussion guide and the Canadian Christian position paper. With the exception of the novel, all of them represent enormous improvement over the original manuscript. These improvements are directly attributable to our analyses and intervention, as well as our departmental introduction of the Hertzberg piece. As I indicated in a separate memo, the novel by Robert Elfers is still highly problematic.

I am awaiting copies of the revised study guide for the film, "Hope For Life" and the revised script for the film strip, "Many, Yet One." I am confident these revisions will also represent enormous improvement in balancing what was at the outset a decided anti-Israel tilt.

As soon as I receive the two revisions, I believe we will then be ready to issue a news release, taking a great deal of credit for the very substantial improvements in the Middle East Mosaic. Such a release should be a carefully written statement but nevertheless it should be upbeat and positive in tone, still pointing out the disappointment we have about the novel.



AJR:FM

CC: Judith Banki  
 Inge Gibel

**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** October 11, 1979  
**to** Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
**from** Rabbi A. James Rudin  
**subject**

I have spoken to Linda Ferm of Friendship Press. She told me that the Middle East Mosaic series has just been announced within the Protestant community and it is hard to gauge what kind of reception it is getting. She said that there have been some early book reviews but that most reviewers single out only one book for discussion. The Canadian piece entitled, "Peace, Justice and Reconciliation" (the best in the whole series) has been receiving the most attention.

As I mentioned to you, it is my feeling that we should issue a press release about our work with Friendship Press as well as including some reference to it in our Interreligious Newsletter. I believe we can claim a substantial victory in this area but I would hold up the release until after the NCC Governing Board Meeting takes place on November 8, 9 and 10 in New York. If the Board passes a hostile resolution about Israel and the PLO, we may want to reconsider the timing of the Friendship Press release.

AJR:FM

cc: Judith Banki  
Joel Gallob  
Inge Gibel

