

LAUSANNE CONFERENCE ON JEWISH EVANGELISM – SAN DIEGO

BETWEEN THE HUNTERS AND THE FISHERS:
AN EXPOSE' OF JEWISH MISSIONS

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January 2012

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Between the Hunters and the Fishers: *An Expose` of Jewish Missions*

“Behold, I am sending for many fishers, declares the LORD, and they shall catch them. And afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the clefts of the rocks” (Jeremiah 16: 16).

INTRODUCTION:

Accepting the Lord’s command to fish for men because of the Gospel and the Lord’s Kingdom, Jewish missions are to continue in this vein and fish for Israel among the nations, bringing individuals into the Lord’s blessing and dominion. *And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Mt. 4:19).* Individuals that accept the Lord’s righteous authority, and His messianic sacrifice for them will be willingly caught in the net. The fishers will seek out those that accept the Gospel and the Messiah of Israel. *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns” (Is. 52:7).* Those that are fished from among the nations where they were scattered, accept the good news of salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ, and so find their place in His kingdom.

As a Gentile believer,¹ I have found it difficult for Gentiles to understand the deep and continuing love of the Lord Jesus for the Jewish community. This is seen in questions that arise concerning the imperative for continuing the operations of Jewish missions, even when the success of that work is not visible. Two thousand years later, there seems to be only minor effect on the Jewish Community, yet now we in the Jewish work encourage each other to maintain the testimony, especially now, even after His first-century rejection, and during the intervening generations. Jesus weeping over Jerusalem reveals not just the sadness of His knowledge of the horrors facing Jerusalem, but is a picture of His eternal love for His city and His people:

And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, “If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hidden from thine eyes” (Lk. 19:37-42). “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Mt. 23:37-39).

Jesus is not the only one to weep over Jerusalem, there is also the example of the men of Jerusalem recorded by the prophet Ezekiel: *And the LORD said unto him, “Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof” (Ezk. 9:4).*

WHERE THE JEWS ARE – BETWEEN THE FISHERS AND THE HUNTERS

It is this enduring love of Jesus that underlies the Lord’s commission to always go to the Jewish community, *Klal Ysrael* – this is the driving force of Jewish missions, and it is the reason that those that seek to take the Gospel to the Jews are willing to place themselves in the dangerous place between the hunters and the fishers.² Though at times the danger is more

¹ James T. Anderson

² Sacks urges caution about defining Jews only as victims. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, *Future Tense: Jews, Judaism, and Israel in the Twenty-First*

apparent, those that seek to bless the Jewish people will always find themselves in the same position as the Jewish community, because this is the place where the missionaries can minister to their needs. The Lord's commission is a command to be obeyed, but it also serves as the basis of authority for the missionaries to seek the sheep of Israel; and the extent of this authority is the same given to Jesus. *Then said Jesus to them again, "Peace be to you: as my Father hath sent me, even so I send you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith to them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit" (Jn. 20:21-22).* However, this authority to reach the Jewish people also includes the opportunity to suffer in ministering to them as well.

The fishers then, are those that bless Israel, provide refuge for the Jews, clothe and feed them and fully support the Jews return to their homeland, among these fishers are Jewish missions. These provide the provisions just mentioned, but also find ways to expose the Jewish people to the love of the Gospel as explained by Jesus to Nicodemus in John 3. The fishers of Jeremiah 16 are always beneficial to the Jews, seeking their good and blessing. Prior to verse 16 the fishers are those that bring the Jewish people back to their land. In Ezekiel 34 this return to the land is for the good of the people, and places them in a land of blessing in contrast to the oftentimes hostile Gentile lands of dispersion. Clearly the Lord has Himself returned the people to their land as He speaks in chapter 34. So the efforts of Zionism are revealed not to be solely the work of men, but as the Lord told Pilate "*you can do nothing if it is not given to you from heaven;*" this applies to the Jewish return to the land as well.

The Biblical picture is of the fishers, that bring the Jews back to their own land in Israel, and are benevolent to the Jewish people; the hunters described in the latter part of verse 16 and following verses, are those that seek the final end of the Jews in persecution and destruction. The final solution in the plan of Haman was a hunter program of genocide for the entire Jewish population throughout the Persian Empire that was thwarted by the God of Israel through Queen Esther (Hadassah). The first and second century Roman shoahs (70 and 135 of this era) were also major hunter-related events. The Nazi holocaust of our own generation planned for the destruction of 11 million Jews according to Third Reich documents from the Wannsee Conference, and is our own experience of the hunters' work. There is a distinction between a shoah and a pogrom. There were many pogroms against Jewish people recorded throughout the centuries. The catastrophic shoah events, that envisioned the destruction of the greater Jewish community, have been few, but have a horror and a lasting cursing effect (upon those Gentiles that take up the curse against the Jews) that brings to the succeeding generations cursing and death in some degree. In the last few centuries Jewish missions have had to minister to the Jewish community that is between the hunters and fishers. Any that would labor in this ministry, need to recognize that wherever the Jewish community is, the threat of the hunters is not far away. Being between the hunters and the fishers fits the God-given profile of the Jewish missionary

Willem ten Boom wrote a letter home to his family in Holland describing pre-Shoah conditions in Germany, around 1925 when *Mein Kampf* was written. He wrote, "I expect that in a few years time, there will be worse pogroms than ever before. Countless Jews from the east will come across the border seeking refuge in our country. We must prepare for that situation."³

³ *Century*, (New York: Schocken Books, 2009), 29.

³ David Brog, *Standing with Israel: Why Christians support the Jewish State* (Lake Mary, FL: FrontLine, 2006), 232-33.

Willem didn't stop with this letter, but returned and began to put into place a rescue operation.⁴ Willem's view of the coming holocaust was a view of the Nazi hunters who would seek out the Jews for destruction and genocide. His efforts gave the ten Booms a legacy of prayer and outreach to the Jewish people in 1844, during a time of peace, that would last into the time of trouble a century later.

In 1944, one hundred years later during the Shoah, the ten Booms were arrested while studying the Bible and praying for Jews. Their crimes were possession of ration cards to feed the Jews and the suspicion of harboring Jews. The ten Boom's experience as fishers during peace and in later as the Nazis invaded Holland and hunted down the Jews, as the Shoah intensified, shows the need for Jewish missions both in peace and war. Jewish missions must always operate where the Jewish Community is between the fishers and the hunters. The fishers must live and identify with the Jews who are hanging on the precipice between life and death, always hoping to avoid the next Shoah. Ministering near the Jewish Community (*Klal Ysrael*) is the place where mercy and blessing can be done for Jews by seeking to save or redeem those that are in peril, even at the cost of death to those serving in Jewish missions.

WHERE WAS GOD DURING THE SHOAH?

Many have asked, "Where was God during the Holocaust?" From the prophet Obadiah an ancient answer is given when Israel was plundered by Edom. In those days the Lord saw what was done against Israel and promised Edom would be shamed and destroyed for their violence against Israel.

"For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever. In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them. But thou shouldst not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldst thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldst thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress. Thou shouldst not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldst not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity; Neither shouldst thou have stood in the cross-way, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldst thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress. For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee:" (Ob 10-15).

So if in the day of Obadiah, the Lord saw the violence done to Israel, according to Scripture, the same all-powerful, all-seeing God witnessed the Shoah as well as the deprecations in the time of Obadiah. Obadiah is "witness number one" to God's presence when evil is done to the Jews. The ten Booms, mentioned earlier, were also witnesses to God's presence during the Shoah since their ministry to the Jews was at that time. Rose Warmer is an additional witness to God's work among the Jews in the death camps according to her own personal testimony.⁵

Another witness to the power of God in the Shoah is the mysterious Raoul Wallenberg,

⁴ From the staff at the museum: "...the ten Boom family and their many friends saved the lives of an estimated 800 Jews, and protected many Dutch underground workers." "The Corrie ten Boom Museum – "the Hiding Place"," <http://www.corrietenboom.com/>.

⁵ Rose Warmer, and Myrna Grant, *The Journey: The Story of Rose Warmer*; (Wheaton, IL: Living Books, 1978).

who saved thousands of Hungarian Jews with Swedish “protective passports” (German: *Schutz-Pass*), which identified the bearers as Swedish subjects and thus prevented their deportation. These were given to Jews already loaded onto cattle cars, who were able to escape to trucks waiting to take them to Swedish safe-houses. As the war began to wind-down, Eichmann wanted to kill off the last 100,000 Jews in Budapest through death-marches. Major-General Gerhard Schmidhuber, the supreme commander of German forces in Hungary, was persuaded by Wallenberg to cancel a final effort to organize the marches by threatening to have the Germans prosecuted for war crimes and hung once the war was over. Shortly after this last stop-gap measure to successfully save the last Jews of Budapest, Wallenberg disappeared into Russian custody, never to be seen by credible witnesses again.⁶

Though Wallenberg did not use the Gospel, he met the Lord’s requirement to visit and deliver those bound unto death in the German-controlled prison camps, according to the New Testament: *And the King shall answer and say unto them, “Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Mt. 25:40)*. Wallenberg is an additional witness to the presence of God during the Shoah and a special sign to the Jews because he was responsible for the deliverance of nearly 100,000 Jews from death, but he could not save himself. This shows the power of God’s hand to deliver, but the power was not in Wallenberg since he could not save himself.

IN THE PRESENCE OF MINE ENEMIES – FISHING WHEN THE HUNTERS RISE

This is another example of how Jewish missionaries may sometimes be required to put themselves in danger, like the ten Boom family, in order reach the Jewish community. The outreach must be between the hunters and fishers as the missionaries move toward the hunters who prey upon the Jewish community. As their shepherd, renown for giving His life for His sheep, so Jewish missionaries may be called to risk their lives in the quest for the welfare of the Lord’s sheep. Jeremiah’s text above, is a precedent for Yeshua’s call to his disciples when he told them: *“Follow me and I will make you fishers of men” (Mt. 4:19)*. The proclamation of the gospel to all of Israel and the rest of the world, parallels Jeremiah’s prophecy about the end-time restoration of Israel and the end of the Diaspora.

Thus there are two effects that fishing accomplishes: the netting of the remnant and the preservation of Israel, though the existence and presence of the remnant. The fishers’ function is paralleled by the role of the shepherd who gathers the sheep in John 10 in that both the fishers and the shepherd must seek and save that which is lost. In the beginning of the early church in Acts 2 the commission of the Apostles (*Sheliachim*) was to bring forth the remnant of world Jewry to the new birth and hence netted as the fish of God. Shimon’s (Peter’s) call to the representatives of World-Diaspora Jews (Acts 2:5-11) meant an obligation for them to repent so as to become fishers to those disparate communities. Their failure (and the majority in unbelief) to heed the call set in motion the Roman Shoah of 70 CE and 135 CE: *“For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls (Acts 2:39-41)*. When the time of the Jewish War started in 66 CE, the Jewish believers heeded Jesus’ warning to flee and not fight

⁶ There is only anecdotal information of Wallenberg’s religious background and whereabouts. Harvey Rosenfeld, *Raoul Wallenberg: The Mystery Lives on*, (New York: backinprint.com, 2005), ixliiii.

(Luke 21:20-24). This separation of the believers from their countrymen because of war made Jewish missions difficult.

After nearly 2000 years the call for faithful missionary work among the Jews is as important as ever. Providing for the Jews in need of food, clothing and freedom, or in sympathy, consolation and encouragement is another key aspect of Jewish Missions and is the continuation of work first mentioned in the 25th chapter of Matthew. Yeshua's identification with the Jewish community in terms of meeting their material needs and supporting them in their sorrows and afflictions, is so paramount that it forms the basis for the final judgment of nations and individuals as they stand before God. Every effort must be made at the same time as fishing for the Jews, to treat them as one would treat the Messiah Himself. So the evangelical outreach of Jewish Missions includes restoration that is both spiritual and humanitarian.

As well as fishing from danger and bringing Jews to an understanding of Yeshua's work on their behalf, Jewish missions is full orbbed including meeting the needs of this dispensation, but also bestowing the blessing upon Jews mentioned by Father Abraham which seeks overall welfare from enemies, peace and safety. After the ravages of the holocaust of WWII, seeking the establishment of rescuers and ways of escape as well as providing blessing for believing Christians that they might abstain, or thwart the effects of antisemitism from harming Jews. Jewish missions is more than just saving souls. Lives matter. Future generations of believers are cut off if there is no rescue from a Shoah. The ten Booms were able to rescue Jews because their philosemitic activities were in place to help when trouble came. Holding prayer meetings for Israel since 1844, their prayers brought God's intervention on behalf of the Jews in WWII. Wilem ten Boom's call for preparation in 1925 worked out in a network of rescuers throughout Holland.

ENCOURAGING NATIONAL REPENTANCE OVER THE NAZI HOLOCAUST

While USA helped to win the war and end the Nazi menace, Americans failed to act in the critical time of the 1930s to rescue Jews in a peace-time situation when it is easier to move people freely.⁷ Was America's failure because there were Hunters within a Fisher Nation enough to paralyze the nation into inaction or was there a breakdown of Biblical influence in the Land or was it a combination of both? This failure to act was a form of cursing the Jews. Obadiah was clear about blocking the way of escape during a Shoah. America could have absorbed the stateless Jews at the time when the Nuremberg Laws denied the Jews citizenship in Germany. A symbolic gesture of sending ships to transport Jews to the US at that time would have open the doors of many other nations. When the nations refused to receive these Jews they were in effect approving of the Nazi actions. Taking up the curse in this way has an effect on revival. As long as the curse remains unconfessed the nation is bound. God cannot bless that which is cursed. Failing to act then ensured that America will remain powerless to resist the next Shoah. The goal of the Hunters is to destroy the Remnant. Revelation 12:15-17 indicates the Devil's plan to destroy the holy seed and the woman (rest of Israel in unbelief). When the Hunters take positions of authority, then a Shoah is near. What will soul-winning churches do when they remove the Jewish believers from them? If revival brings civil righteousness, then the effect is the restraining of the next generation of Hunters from taking power. Is it possible for believers to confess the

⁷ Deborah E. Lipstadt, "Beyond Belief: The American Press & the Coming of the Holocaust 1933-1945," Document online. Available from www.amazon.com/Beyond-Belief-American-Holocaust-1933-1945/dp/0029191602/ref=cm_cr_pr_product_top#reader_0029191602. Accessed 2 February, 2012.

national sin of closing the door of escape when the Jews needed to flee the Nazis? By taking up the curse in this way, America's will is weakened, but to cry out to God for forgiveness breaks the power of this sin and ends the curse. Daniel's confession in Chapter Nine forms the example. Daniel didn't confess his own sin (Ezekiel 14:20), but the sins of his people - note that he didn't say "they have sinned" but "we have sinned." In his case the generational sins of occultism (having "other gods before me" – Dt. 5:7-9) that took place for several generations prior to the Babylonian Captivity brought on the curse and the exile. But the curse was broken or removed by confession through the Atonement and the Jews were released from the ban to return to the Land. Towards the end of Franco's regime in Spain, Evangelical believers from all over Spain gathered in Madrid. Unplanned was a spontaneous crying out to God by those gathered, asking God to forgive the sins of the Inquisition. A new openness to the gospel in Spain resulted.⁸

CONCLUSION:

Facing another possible Shoah is part of Jewish missions. The Jewish Community sits on the precipice of another Shoah standing between the Fishers and the Hunters. Bringing forth the godly remnant means the ultimate preservation of Israel as well as the saving of a soul from Hell. But there is also Shoah mitigating work that needs to be done before it arrives as well as rescuing future generations of Jews during one. The following three ways help to prepare for a Shoah: 1. Tears – Messianic weeping as found in Luke 19:41, which shows Jesus, as the Son of God, weeping over Jerusalem, which included Auschwitz, because he could see the Nazi Holocaust in the future and thus wept. 2. Defense – Standing up and saying "Never again," which finds expression in the Israeli army. Israeli believers are committed to serving Israel in the army with distinction. Without a strong Israel the danger of Jews everywhere is greatly increased. 3. Sacrifice – as a last resort, it means dying with the Jewish people as martyrs.

"Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth therein. For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession. The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein" (Psalm 69:34-36).

This expose of Jewish Missions is dedicated to Art Goldberg, lover and citizen of Israel; and also to Jim Mader, lover and laborer among the Jewish people for 60 years.

⁸ From an account told by missionaries George and Alice Huggins in Spain at the time. It is not certain what effect this had on antisemitism at the national level.

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