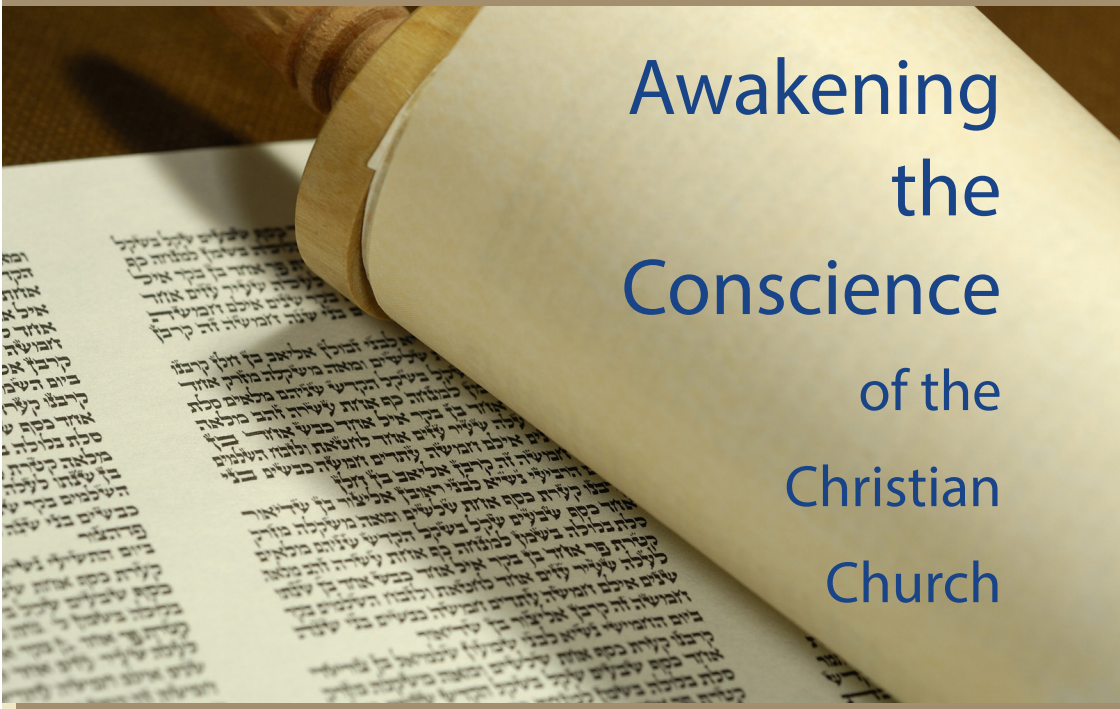


A resource of Christian Witness to Israel (N. America)
to challenge, assist and equip in local Jewish evangelism.

THE AC COURSE



Awakening
the
Conscience
of the
Christian
Church

THE HOPE OF HISTORY

PROTECTIVE PROVIDENCE

1a Jewish History declares God is!

COMPLETE COURSE OUTLINE

The Biblical Burden for Jewish Mission The Hope throughout History for Jewish Redemption Contemporary Connections for Jewish Salvation

THE BIBLICAL BURDEN

<i>The MOTIVE</i>	<i>Psalm 67</i>	<i>The Praying patriarchs</i>
	<i>Romans 9-11</i>	<i>The Praying apostle</i>
<i>The METHODOLOGY</i>	<i>Isaiah 63</i>	<i>The Longing of the prophet</i>
	<i>Luke 4</i>	<i>The Liberation of The Prophet</i>
<i>The MISSIONOLOGY</i>	<i>2Cor 3&4</i>	<i>The Ministry that is glorious</i>
	<i>Acts 20-22</i>	<i>The Ministry that is blessed</i>
<i>The MANDATE</i>	<i>Psalm 150</i>	<i>The Holy hallelujahs</i>
	<i>Rev 4&5</i>	<i>The Cosmic chorus</i>

THE HOPE OF HISTORY

<i>PROTECTIVE PROVIDENCE</i>	- <i>Past, Present, Future</i>
<i>PIRATES OF PROVIDENCE</i>	- <i>Expulsion and Expansion</i>
<i>REPLACEMENT AND DEFACEMENT</i>	- <i>Forgotten and Forsaken</i>
<i>REFORMATION AND RE-EMBRACEMENT</i>	- <i>The Puritan Hope</i>
<i>The LIE OF THE LAND</i>	- <i>Too much love will kill you</i>
<i>REWRITING THE RAPTURE</i>	- <i>Confusion and correction</i>

CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS

<i>The CHALLENGES TO CONNECTING</i>	<i>The separated and the assimilated</i>
	<i>The atheist and the evangelical</i>
<i>The FRAGRANCE OF FRIENDSHIP</i>	<i>The aroma of Christ</i>
<i>The WISDOM OF WORDS</i>	<i>(Un)common language</i>
<i>RABBINIC REINTERPRETATIONS</i>	<i>Jewish objections</i>
	<i>Peter and Pentecost</i>

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

1. As you begin each study, pray for the Lord's grace and wisdom.
2. Discipline yourself to set aside one hour for each paper.
3. Keep a personal 'physical' notebook.
4. Begin with the questions and in your own notebook, answer each question in one sentence, prior to engaging in the study.
5. Read through the paper in one sitting, with note-taking.
6. Answer the questions again; this time, a paragraph each.

Feel free to send your answers to me, ask further questions, or simply make appropriate comments.

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THE HOPE OF HISTORY

PROTECTIVE PROVIDENCE

1a Jewish History declares God is!

QUESTIONS:

1. Consider and reflect on how much of today's social media comment will be read 5 years from now?
2. What aspect of biblical Jewish history is most striking to you?
3. What aspect of Jewish history (AD), is most striking to you?
4. Has God finished the narrative of his covenantal dealings with the Jewish people, or has his protective providence yet a further purpose?

THE HOPE OF HISTORY

The record of history is increasingly becoming blurred by societal ignorance, social media imprecision, sound-bite culture or shallow humorous memes. No longer have we just to contend with the lunatic fringe of Holocaust deniers, instead, a godless pagan narrative is encompassing multiple aspects of 21st century life. Cancel culture started long before it was a hip term.

It is vital therefore to endeavor to maintain and pass on a true and verifiable record. In the context of Jewish mission, we need to both **record, retain, and proclaim** historical realities, facts, and context. Furthermore, particularly as Gentiles attempt to enter into the Jewish world, an appreciation of the following history and providences are a great way to connect with Jewish people even if it soon becomes clear that they are not fully aware of their own narrative!

Despite the oft-repeated adage, we actually can learn from history; its mistakes and its reformations. Contextualization of Jewish mission in the USA therefore demands:

- (i) a reasonable knowledge of the history of Jewish America
- (ii) a recognition of some of the misplaced philo-semitism
- (iii) a clarifying some of the confusion by both reformed and dispensational theologies on the subject of Israel and Jewish mission.

We will therefore present 6 studies to address the above:

PROTECTIVE PROVIDENCE: Jewish History declares God is!

PIRATES OF PROVIDENCE: Expulsion and Expansion

REPLACEMENT / DEFACEMENT: Forgotten and Forsaken

REFORMATIONAL RE-EMBRACEMENT: Puritan Hope

LIE OF THE LAND: Dangers of (too much) philo-semitism.

REWRITING THE RAPTURE: Confusion and correction

PROTECTIVE PROVIDENCE

November 7th, 2017 was insignificant to most people but it had particular significance for those of us involved in Christian Witness to Israel, as it marked the 175th anniversary of the beginning of our Missionary Society. Back in May 1842 the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland approved the setting up of a Committee *'for the purposes of collecting funds... and superintending such missionary operations among the Jews in London... to avail themselves as far as possible, of the concurrence and co-operation of the Christians of other denominations who may be willing to give their aid to this good work of the Lord'*.

Fast-forward a few months and an inter-denominational body was formed, with a specific first meeting planned for November 7th 1842. Rev James Hamilton of the National Scotch Church, Regent Square, London had invited his good friend down from Scotland to preach for him that week-end. So it was that the young Rev Robert Murray M'Cheyne was present at the first meeting and prayed the opening prayer as our new missionary society was formed: *The British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Among the Jews*, later to be called *'Christian Witness to Israel'*. In 2021 our parent body was renamed: *International Mission to Jewish People*.

My point is this. In our swiftly changing social media world of quick celebrity status and even quicker forgotten oblivion, is it still significant to remember history and historic events? Is it important to know where we have come from and where we are going? Is it necessary to note, consider, analyze and learn from the past? When Google and Wikipedia can give us immediate answers why do I need to have any 'knowledge' in the 'Random Access Memory' of my personal brain?

I find it strange even having to pose that question but as I get older I realize that this is going to be a much more important

issue for generations to come. When the narrative of our past is being eroded or more dangerously, re-written, we have little grasp of lessons learned in history and therefore can make little analysis of life's aim and purpose. Our secular world has rewritten the Divine narrative with evolutionary thought, making us all appear by chance from nothing. The fruit of that philosophy is that life's transient dream is simply to pursue personal 'animal' desires until we become the object of another animal's desires, namely, worm-fodder. We have a better narrative to tell: the Redemption Story from Scripture and the Purpose of History.

1. JEWISH HISTORY DECLARES GOD IS!

One of the greatest fears of the Jewish community today is a loss of its own history. Jewish identity is wrapped up in Jewish history, both biblical and post biblical. It was always a Hebrew imperative, yea even a Divine imperative, to 'remember'. The Jewish festivals are visual and verbal reminders of the Divine Hand that brought them out of Egypt and other places. It is a humorous summary to say that the Jewish festivals can be understood in three sentences: *'They tried to kill us. God saved us. Let's eat!'* It is simple, but also true. God saved them. They're still here.

It is correct to say that the American holiday of 'Thanksgiving' has its roots in the Jewish celebration of Sukkot / Tabernacles. Wilderness days would be remembered even when there were better days. So too in the New World of the Americas, a thankful heart was woven into the core of life. It has sometimes been said that the greatest problem and pain for the atheist is to look around at the beauty of the earth and have no-one to thank. Today, 'Thanksgiving' is becoming increasingly hard for those who see no Divine Hand of purposeful Providence. We may sadly include very many Jewish people in this category of philosophical emptiness.

Most Jewish people are either agnostic or atheist. Many will argue that God died in the fires of Auschwitz and their mantra might well be: 'They tried to kill us. We escaped. Let's survive.'

In our attempt at providing a resource for Christians (mostly Gentile) to have an understanding and an intentionality to reach our American Jewish neighbors with the message of the Messiah, we need to know their history and we need them to know their history. Why? - because it is divinely ordered; and if divinely ordered then it has a divine purpose.

As part of this '**AC Course**' we wish to stress both a '**Biblical Burden**' and follow up with the '**Hope of History**'. In order to convince our Jewish friends to begin to study the biblical narrative of God for them (namely their salvation), we may need to discuss with them the miraculous nature of their history. And if seen as miraculous, then God is! Furthermore, God has purpose 'for them'. Yes, Jewish people are still here, not because of their ability to survive, but because they are '*loved for the sake of the fathers*' (Romans 11:28).

In this historical article (and the next) I plan to set before you a portrait of a people; a sovereignly guided people, a divinely cared for people, and yet nonetheless, a lost people. We will look at where they have come from, what are their aims and goals and where they perceive themselves going. But as if in a corn maze they are turning many corners but are no nearer finding the way out. Or in the words of Bono and U2, 'I still haven't found what I'm looking for'.

As we paint this portrait, I hope you will be as intrigued as this author at the wonder of divine providence, the measure of divine patience, and then I hope you'll become as passionate as I, to tell them truly what 'they're looking for'.

History is stunningly significant and since the Jewish people are just like everyone else, only moreso(!), I hope the

stunning significance of learning where Jewish America has come from and where they're currently going, will inflame your prayers and your witness for the biblical revelation of divine purposes (as considered in our Biblical Burden section) to be fulfilled.

2. JEWISH HISTORY DECLARES GOD IS... WITH THEM.

The history of the Jewish people is often set forth as a history of disobedience and divine correction; wrath coupled with mercy. But what I want to draw attention to in this paper is the continuance of God with a disobedient people; a continuance that is rooted in His irrevocable covenants which makes with and for this peculiar people; this 'protected' people. His continuance with 'them' is a lesson to the largely Gentile church that he will persevere with us sinning saints, as he has done so with 'the apple of his eye', the sinning Jewish people.

We have already made the point according to Romans 11:28 they the Jewish people are *'loved on account of the patriarchs'*. Within that love is a divinely protective providence. It has been present since the Lord began his grace-filled promises towards them. Picture the scene in the days of Jeremiah. Though surrounded by devastation, destruction and (soon to be) dispersion, the prophet could nonetheless declare, *'it is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed'* (Lamentations 3:21) With that in mind, I want to consider the truth of that statement historically, and providentially.

But first a few more verses from that Holocaust scene of 587BC and Jeremiah's reflections in Lamentations:

1:6 – *they fled without strength before their pursuer.*

1:11 – *all her people groan for food as they search for bread; they trade their treasures for food.*

2:10,11 – *the elders of the daughter of Zion sit on the ground in silence... infants and babies die in the streets of the city.*

This could have been written in 1940's Germany. But no, it is 587BC and Jeremiah even in the midst of such suffering, remembers protective providence and covenantal mercy.

3. JEWISH HISTORY REMEMBERS... God is... and God is with them... in the Bible.

In Lamentations, Jeremiah writes Jerusalem's funeral sermon. He remembers what she was and what she is. He remembers her sin, and since Lamentations chapters 1-4 are composed in Hebrew alphabetically and poetically, it is meant to be continually remembered by rote. This is not the power of positive thinking; rather it is the power of a pious memory. Jeremiah remembers God; his character, his 'loves', his mercies, and the unfailing faithfulness of God to Himself, and to His covenants.

We note that Jesus also did this – *'O Jerusalem... how often I have longed to gather you...'* This was the power of a pious memory. *'But your house is left to you desolate.'* Paul also did this in those very relevant verses on Jewish mission (Romans 9:2). In effect he is saying, 'Look at what you are my Jewish brethren! Yours is the adoption; yours, the divine glory displayed, the covenants, the law, the temple worship and from you, the Christ. But, you need to be saved!'

One of the things we seek to do in our evangelism of Jewish people is to remind them why they are here. They should be mindful of God's protective providence. 'Why are you still here? There is no reason for your continued existence, except by miracle!' As Jeremiah stated, *'it is of the Lord's mercies, we are not consumed.'*

SH Kellogg, in 'Studies in Leviticus' writes: *'The continued existence of this nation up to the present day, the preservation of its national peculiarities throughout thousands of years, in spite of all dispersion and oppression, remains so unparalleled a phenomenon, that without the special providential preparation*

of God and his constant intervention and protection, it would be impossible to explain it.' Yes indeed – Protective Providence.

4. JEWISH HISTORY REMEMBERS... God is... and God is with them... in America!

We will develop this much further in the next paper, but just a little taste here will suffice to illustrate the point. In 1607 the first European settlement in America was in Jamestown, VA. In 1620 the Pilgrim Fathers then settled Plymouth, MA. What is perhaps not so well known, but certainly pertaining to our subject, is a much more important settlement in 1624. It was called New Amsterdam, and later would be called New York. 23 Jewish souls arrived there in 1654, and now the New York Jewish population today is around 2 million.

(i) The Land of the free

In our politically correct age, with entitlements, and rights constantly being heralded and lauded, it is hard to imagine the limited nature of Jewish 'rights and entitlements' in the 18th century. Yet everything is relative and the Jewish community were enjoying 'the Land of the Free' and general freedoms greater than they had had in Europe. However, they could not live in MA, CT, or NH! Increasingly though American independence from Britain brought many new laws into being and many new religious freedoms were enacted and enabled.

Within the freedoms though there were challenges even within the unified, yet diverse Jewish community. Ashkenazi Jews (from Eastern Europe) were now living side by side with Sephardic Jews (from Southern Europe). Tensions of traditions and even religious observance strained the freedoms they were now enjoying. There were also challenges of living within a basically Christian Gentile society. And further, there were challenges of assimilation and inter-marriage.

In 1791 the 1st Amendment granted religious freedom. It took Thomas Jefferson to challenge the current church/state relationship which at that time prevented Jews from owning land or having a vote. It is a strangely different world from the one we find ourselves in today, so we need to try to appreciate both the Jewish enjoyment of 'freedoms' and the remaining restrictions. Generally speaking, where Catholicism was locally more powerful, the Jewish people faced greater persecution. (More on that in a subsequent study.) It wasn't until 1826 that a 'Jew Bill' was passed in (Catholic) Maryland granting the Jewish people equality.

(ii) The Home of the Brave

And they were brave! Charleston SC City Hall has a plaque outside its door to Francis Salvador (1747-1776), the first Jewish person to hold public office and also die for American Independence. It reads: *'Born an Aristocrat, he became a democrat; an Englishman, he cast in his lot with America. True to his ancient faith, he gave his life for new hopes of human liberty and understanding.'*

There was bravery also during the years of Civil War. 7,000 Jewish people fought for the Union, and 3,000 for the Confederacy. Yes, they fought on both sides. Many southern Jewish people were in the mercantile trade which was considered more respectable than manual labor, so they were more accepted in Southern society than the Irish. (This Northern Irish author will deliberately make no comment!)

'Loyalty to the confederacy often was a matter of intense personal gratitude' writes Howard M Sacher ('History of the Jews in America'). Jewish tradition also played a part in their being on both sides. *'Seek the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you.'* Jeremiah 29:7.

On Feb 25th 1861 Judah P Benjamin was confirmed as attorney general of the Confederate States of America. He

was to the civilian government of the south what General Lee was to the military. Indeed some historians would consider him the brains of the Confederacy. He would later advance the radical proposal that slaves who fought for the Confederacy be freed, but by this time the southern nation was dissolving.

In gaining an understanding of the 19th century attitudes towards Jewish people, both in the north and the south, here is an instructive anecdote. Ulysses S Grant issued an order December 17, 1862 stating, *'The Jews, as a class, violating every regulation of trade established by the Treasury Department and also department orders, are hereby expelled from the department of Tennessee within 24 hours from the receipt of this order.'* The Jewish people of Paducah appealed to Lincoln. Lincoln is said to have jibed, *'And so the children of Israel were driven from the happy land of Canaan?'* Cesar Kaskel of Paducah then replied to Lincoln, *'Yes, and that is why we have come under Father Abraham's bosom, asking protection.'* Lincoln promptly replied, *'And this protection you shall have.'*

(iii) The Huddled Masses

Emma Lazarus, a Sephardic Jewess, entered a poetry competition in 1883. The winning poem was to be auctioned in order to raise money for a pedestal that would hold a statue recently donated to the United States by France. The statue was of a woman bearing a torch and would be placed in New York Harbor. Emma Lazarus won the competition, but died, aged 33, before the statue's unveiling. Her poem (representing the American dream to many immigrant Jewish souls) reads:

'Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore, send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.'

America was, and still is, the beautiful land of the free and home of the brave, for many Jewish people. What is not so greatly known, is that the Divine Hand has written those former chapters and has some yet still to write! It is vital that those of us who have a biblical burden to bring the gospel to the Jewish people, also have a grasp of Jewish history in order to remind our Jewish neighbors that they are here by Divine decree, and for as yet unfulfilled purposes.

5. JEWISH HISTORY... FORGOTTEN

We will develop this next time, but in brief we need to say that these providences have not been remembered, or at best they are conveniently forgotten. Instead, in the 21st century the Jewish communities (and they are diverse) have become more self-made and determined to make the world better, without God. Both in terms of their own survival and in terms of how to develop the brotherhood of man, they have largely ignored their own Scriptures, their own God, and even the distinctive providential narrative of their own people.

Reform Judaism is the majority Judaism in the USA. It is a Judaism that has adapted to the 20th & 21st centuries. Modern day Jewishness is largely an ethnic thing if anything at all. While Christianity concerns itself with belief; modern Judaism is concerned with belonging. But even if you choose to be more conservative, or even Ultra Orthodox – there still needs to be some adaptation to modern life. You can buy your high-end oven with ‘sabbath mode’. You can buy a refrigerator that disables the light and icemaker on the Sabbath. You can even buy a Shabbat pen which has temporary ink – according to Jewish law, an action is only prohibited if it is permanent!

Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Jewishness: well, it’s the American dream isn’t it? Having faced persecution from

Middle Ages Europe, through the challenges from Roman Catholicism or Russian and Eastern Orthodox Christianity and having had their god 'die' in the fires of Auschwitz, they have little left, but life, liberty, and the pursuit of Jewish happiness. L'Chaim – to life!

Let me return to Jeremiah as we draw this paper to a close. He faced a Holocaust and wept till he had no tears left. Yet he confessed, 'I will wait for him'. This attitude of faith in the Divine Hand, is almost scorned by the Jewish community today. Jeremiah knew that even as he looked upon Jerusalem's horror, yet, he was hopeful. 'Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is full redemption.' (Ps 103:7,8)

6. JEWISH HISTORY... KNOW and LET GO.

We all know that little phrase – Let go and let God. And we know how dangerous it is - right! Well, let me be dangerous... With the right foundational theology, you can 'let go and let God', and sometimes you must. In the desperation of a desolate Jerusalem, Jeremiah had to let go... and he hoped in God, the God who was his Portion.

An old saint was once asked - *'What if, after a life of following and serving Christ, God were to decide to place you in hell?'* The believer answered - *'He can do with me as he pleases; but if he did that, he would lose more than me.'*

In other words, God cannot act contrary to his covenanted and sworn faithfulness. He cannot be untrue to himself. Jeremiah said – I will wait. He knew the future.

Paul said in Romans 11:1 & 11 – has God completely cast off his people? (His ancient ethnic people). Absolutely not. And he goes on to recount the covenanted promises of God... those irrevocable promises (Rom 11:29). They are not consumed. They shall not be consumed.

Let me paraphrase Jeremiah 31:31-37. Is the sun still shining? Moon, stars, are they still there? Are the waves still to-ing and fro-ing? Can you measure the heavens, in this expanding universe? Have we completely searched the depths of the earth? If the natural order of things is turned on its head, only then will the nation / the ethnic, ethnos people, cease... And if that is the case – why are they still here??

Why are they not consumed? Why did 23 Jewish souls limping into New Amsterdam harbor become 2 million? Why do we now have 6 million Jewish people in USA, 7 million in Israel, and another 1.5 million around the world. Despite Haman, Herod and Hitler, they're still here!

Art Katz, is a Jewish believer, who wrote a controversial book on the Holocaust, 'Where was God'.

'If Nazi soldiers threw Jewish infants up in the air and caught them on their bayonets... I was left with one of two options. Either agree with many commentators that God is dead, or accept the testimony of the Scriptures, that God's silences are in distinct proportion to our sin.' (He then continues more optimistically...)

'We will yet be that blessing to all the families of the earth. Not in the arrogance and self-sufficiency that has characterized us till now, but in a brokenness and humility that is yet to come in our final latter day dealings with God.'

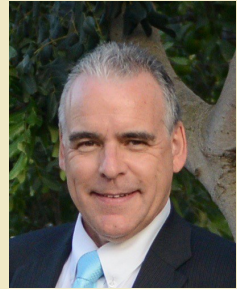
We cannot fully understand the reason for the divine permission of the horrors of the Crusades, the Inquisition, or the Pogroms or Holocaust. We must bow our heads. But we can be reassured, it is of the Lord's mercies... they are not consumed. I believe Art Katz is right. There are yet final latter day dealings between God and the Jewish people.

Thus with a **Biblical Burden** we can appreciate the **Hope of History**.

WHO ARE WE? WHAT DO WE DO?

DIRECTOR: STEPHEN ATKINSON

As **Director of Ministry** and 35 years of preaching experience, Stephen has been engaging with churches on behalf of CWI since 2004. With a Biblical mandate, historical reasoning, and present day missionary urgency, Stephen makes the case that every Church must have Jewish mission on its agenda!



MISSIONARY: MITCH TEPPER

As a **Jewish believer** Mitch has the apostle's burden for his own 'kindred after the flesh'. A graduate of Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary, his Scriptural knowledge and personal passion drive him in his street evangelism, one on one relationships, and household bible studies, with the singular purpose of 'Telling Jewish people about Jesus'.



CWI International

Christian Witness to Israel has been sharing Jesus with Jewish people for almost 180 years. Today we have missionaries in the USA, UK, Israel, France, Holland, Hungary, Australia, all faithfully witnessing to Jewish communities across the world.



CHRISTIAN WITNESS TO ISRAEL (N America)

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