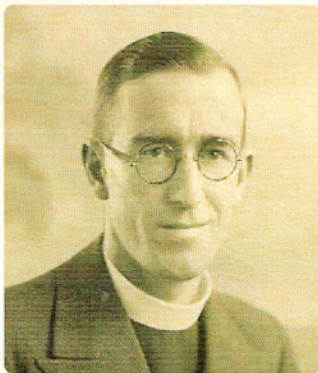


NEWS & VIEWS

The Newsletter of CMJ ISRAEL

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During this Memorial Day/Independence Day season, *News & Views* will remember one of our own CMJ workers who spent his life serving the Jewish people. Roger Allison began his 36 year service with CMJ in 1939 in Poland and Romania. Harassed and arrested by the Nazis, Allison was chased out of Europe and came to Palestine in 1941 where he ministered in Haifa, Tel-Aviv/Jaffa and at Christ Church in Jerusalem until he retired in 1975. There are many exciting and humorous stories in his memoirs and in this issue we will include several excerpts from Allison's *Journey To Jerusalem* that illustrate the motivation for his life's work. Also included in this issue are interviews with Jewish believers from around the country to see what God is doing in Israel today. To read Allison's book visit our website: http://www.cmj-israel.org/Israel_Heritage/Journey-to-Jerusalem.html



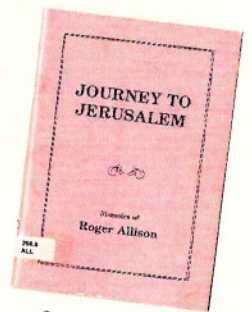
Roger Allison (1910-1998)

Richard Wurmbrand in *Christ on the Jewish Road*, "...the head of the mission was a young pastor called Roger Allison, a man we all remembered for his great humility. The humble man is strong in the Lord: during the time he was our shepherd, our little community increased greatly."

Changing Attitudes

From *Journey To Jerusalem* by Roger Allison:

The 14th of May 1948 was a historical watershed; the day which inaugurated a new era, not only in the Middle East but also, as future historians may well judge, in the destiny of the world. It was the day on which was made the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel.... (p. 36)



The establishment of the new State, I believe, had quite a lot to do in fostering a gradual change of attitude towards the One whose very name had for so long been a name to be shunned, afraid of and suspected. What was happening seemed to be that, together with political independence, there was coming to birth independence of thought, unfettered by the closed mind of a kind of ghetto mentality. God's own patient love needs to be reflected in all who would dedicate themselves to serving this 'first' people of God. (p. 45)

[Once at a British] military funeral I read that wonderful summary in Hebrews 11 of the heroes of the faith of the Bible times. A rabbi who was present was so impressed by the recital of Jewish men and women of faith in their own history, that he sent someone to ask me if I would kindly let him have a copy of my funeral oration – thinking no doubt how beautifully I had phrased it. How pleased I was to send back word that it was a quotation straight from the New Testament and that I would gladly supply him with a copy... In truth, is there any New Testament passage which illustrates more powerfully the intimate connection between the two Testaments and the two Faiths? (p. 42)



In the middle of the road on Memorial Day

Independence Day is celebrated on 5th *Iyar* of the Jewish calendar (in 1948 it was May 14) with picnics, fireworks, parades, music and dancing - the typical fare. But something here is strikingly different. Exactly 24 hours before, for several minutes virtually the whole country comes to a standstill for Memorial Day.

Everyone stops — in offices, schools and supermarkets. Without a word, musicians in rehearsal falter and put down their instruments. People halt in the crosswalks and cars and buses stop in the middle of the road. With all the sirens in the country wailing, everyone stands with bowed head, remembering....

Journey to Jerusalem
"Christians, I believe, must not fail to try to come to terms with this historic [messianic] urge which continues to move in the corporate soul of the Jewish people. It is surely a witness of the continuing place of that people in the 'economy' of God, His providential over-ruling of world history." (p. 77)

A Changing Paradigm an Historical Perspective



Sarah & Gershon Nerel

Dr. Gershon Nerel is a Jewish believer in Yeshua who lives with his wife, Sara (daughter of Sheli Bar-David, p. 5) and their six children on moshav Yad HaShmona. Dr. Nerel received his Ph.D from the Hebrew University; his dissertation was on the shaping of self-identity among Jewish believers in Jesus in Eretz Israel in the 20th century. He has written and taught extensively on this topic.

I did not have a 'Damascus Road experience' after reading the New Testament, but the Lord convinced me – first in my mind and then several years later in my heart. I was a teenager living in Beersheva during the Six Day War and a missionary couple, Warren and Linda

Graham, made a great impression on me because of the very fact that they remained while most others left. They were like other 'old-time' missionaries, Roger and Gwen Allison, and Ronald Adeney of CMJ. These people did not come for adventure or to be able to put Israel on their resumé. Their lifetime commitment to the work here made a huge difference. It's not that they became Israeli, or tried to become Jewish. For instance, Roger Allison did learn some Hebrew, but it was more than that. Allison had a 'Jewish mind' and he understood the nuances and intricacies of life here. He fully understood the issues and the desire of the Messianic Jews to keep their identity. This is very clear to me as spelled out by Paul in the New Testament. Should we Judaize the Gentiles? No! Should we Gentilize the Jews? No!

Before 1948 the Jewish believers were very connected to and dependant upon the existing churches and missions. But during the Mandate period it was

becoming very clear that there would be a Jewish state and Allison could see that there would have to be a Jewish church.

The Messianic movement is difficult for some in the churches who claim that we are anachronistic and trying to recapture something that passed 2,000 years ago. But it's a changing paradigm and it takes sensitivity and special insight which some, especially in Evangelical churches, are able to recognize. We're not converts, but rather, Jewish believers are inheritors of that early church that first welcomed the non-Jews to faith. I see the issue as one of Jewish believers returning home as hosts and not just as guests.

Today the Lord is opening up the Jewish world to the Gospel. The younger generation is quite open to everything – and because they feel less threatened by the church - they are also open to the Gospel. Here at the moshav we have an 'in-reach.' Israelis come to us because of our guesthouse, restaurant and

biblical village and we have many natural opportunities to talk to people about our faith.

There is definitely a great openness to the New Testament in the Jewish academic world. Every four years there is a prestigious event at the Hebrew University - the World Congress of Jewish Studies and two years ago I lectured on *Operation Mercy: the Evacuation of Messianic Jews from Israel in 1948*. Of the 1,200 lectures, this one was included among the few that are to be published this year in a special 3 volume set of the event. And I just received an invitation to lecture at Tel Hai College in the Galilee about *Armageddon and Eschatological Interpretations in the 21st Century*. Of course I will be speaking from the New Testament, the Revelation and about the return of Yeshua the Messiah.

- Gershon Nerel

The Trauma Had Positive Consequences

In 1948 with the preparations for the pullout by the British authorities, mission organisations arranged 'Operation Mercy' to evacuate Jewish believers from Israel, mainly to England. It was feared that they would be caught between the hostility of the Arabs and the persecution of the Jews, unable to find work after the missions left, and their families left destitute. Of around 200 Jewish believers in the Land, only about a dozen remained

after 1948. This, in effect, wiped out the emerging Jewish church. However, as Dr. Gershon Nerel points out, "The trauma of Operation Mercy in fact also had positive consequences. It enabled, step-by-step, formulation of new ways of thinking, new frameworks of traditions and self-determination... The remaining leadership used the fresh linguistic tools of Hebrew to freely define their own theology, liturgy and identity."

Already Borne Fruit

Fifteen years ago Y. was an Orthodox rabbi in Jerusalem. He had much knowledge and spent so much time studying the Tanach that a very well known rabbi warned him, "Be careful. If you read the Bible too much you may end up a Christian!" In fact, Y. did come to see Yeshua as Messiah, but he floundered and his faith faded. He married, and years later, he moved with his wife and children to Arad. But seeing the harassment of the Orthodox against the believers strengthened his faith. His wife has another story. When she saw the demonstrations

and heard the things that were being shouted, she approached the demonstrators and tried to talk with them. The only response she received was "Whose side are you on... theirs or ours?" Right there she took off her head scarf, and walked over to join the believers... and she had never even read the New Testament! This whole family is now part of the Arad congregation. And the story continues. Her sister came to visit. After a huge struggle she also came to faith in Yeshua, saying, "I really see something here... love."