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**1. Update on 2001 Program**

- **Paul the Prophet –**

- A Challenge for Christians and Jews**

Paul has been thought of as Christianity's fiercest critic of Judaism and the Law. But did he have to reject Judaism in order to proclaim Christ?

Dr John Dunnill, Senior Lecturer in New Testament, Murdoch University will be introducing *Re-reading Paul: a fresh look at his attitude to Torah and Judaism - guidelines for clergy and teachers* published by the Council of Christians and Jews (Victoria) Inc. This session is to be held at the Worship Centre, Murdoch University at 7.30 pm Wednesday, 24 October 2001. The charge will be \$2.00 for members and \$5.00 for others wishing to attend.

- **Kristal Nacht Service**

This commemorative service, under the auspices of the CCJWA, is scheduled to be held at Christ Church, Claremont on Thursday, 8 November. It is hoped it will become an annual event. Further details are forthcoming.

- **Annual General Meeting**

Planning is well under way for this our final event of the year to take place on 18 November. Once more it will be at the Redemptorist Monastery Retreat Centre, cnr. Camellia & Vincent Streets in North Perth.

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**2. Examination of Dabru Emet**

Dabru Emet (Speak Truth) is a recently produced statement by 150 Jewish scholars, mainly within the United States. It is an attempt to define what might be a contemporary Jewish attitude to Christianity. It was examined in a programme over two consecutive Tuesday nights, 15 and 22 May.



The audience at the first Dabru Emet session

Copies of the document were distributed on the first night and the audience heard reactions to the document from Rabbi Dovid Freilich of the Perth Hebrew Congregation and Rabbi Joshua Aaronson. Both Rabbis found themselves in disagreement with much of the document and provided positive and constructive criticism.

This set the scene for the following Tuesday night when mixed groups of Jews and Christians criticised the document from their own points of view. Much lively discussion ensued. The general conclusion appeared to be that Dabru Emet contained some useful points but was considerably lacking in credibility and authority. Nevertheless it was felt that it was a healthy exercise for our membership.

We are planning to place the full text of Dabru Emet on our web site for those readers who have not yet read the document.

Here is a summary of the main points expressed in Dabru Emet and the responses made to them by each of the Rabbis:



Rabbi Freilich speaks

***Jews and Christians worship the same God.***

**RF:** We do not worship the same G-d . . . We don't even worship the same attributes of G-d. First and foremost, the Jewish people believe that G-d is Echad - One. Any conceptual image of the deity, imaginary or otherwise in Judaism is a denial altogether of the G-d of Israel. . . We do not believe in the Trinity. . . God has no physical form and cannot be personified.

**RA:** This is not so. Judaism believes in one God and that he created good and evil. Christians do not believe this.

***Jews and Christians seek authority from the same book - the Bible.***

**RF:** The bible to the Jewish people is entirely different to that of the Christian. . To a Jew it is simply The Bible, given in the case of the Torah by G-d. Bible in terms of orthodox Judaism includes the written and oral tradition, all combining to form The Bible . . . To Christianity the Jewish Bible is old, because the Christian concept of G-d is different in that a new G-d or son of G-d came along to deliver a more up to date, newer Bible known as the New Testament.

**RA:** I do not believe this to be so. Jews seek

authority from the Torah and shared rabbinical writings. This is vitally important. E.g. "Eye for an eye" Rabbinic literature would say that this is not just, tampering what might otherwise be the understanding taken from a literal reading of the Torah text.

***Christians can respect the claim of the Jewish peoples upon the land of Israel.***

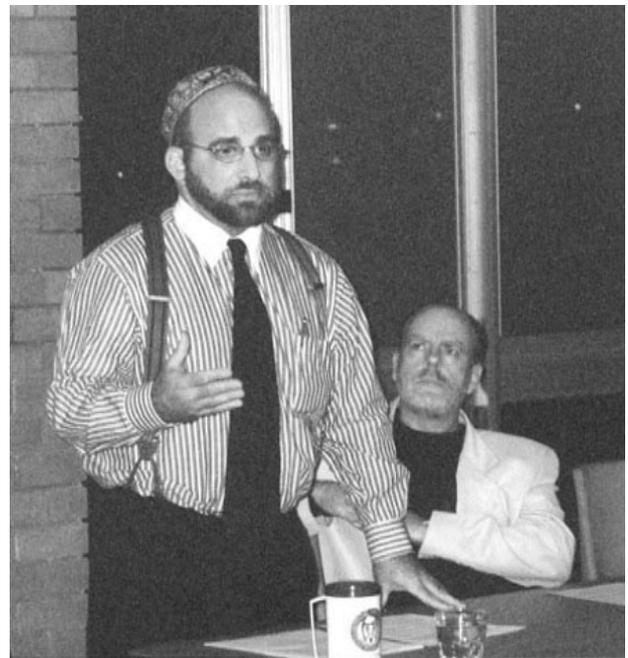
**RF:** It follows, of course, if we did indeed share the same bible . . . then Christianity has no choice but to respect the Jewish people's claim on the Land of Israel and even with far greater borders than it has today, as pointed out in Genesis and Deuteronomy.

**RA:** I do not believe that God "gave" Israel to the Jews. Consequently, this is not a matter of religious belief but one of inheritance.

***Jews and Christians accept the moral principles of Torah.***

**RF:** I have no issue with this at all, except to say, "Oh, that it were true!" The moral code of the Torah, as was given by G-d himself, never changes and is indeed absolute morality.

**RA:** There is a whole range of things on which we disagree. Apart from which, for Christians, the paramount document is the New Testament.



Rabbi Aaronson makes a point while chairperson Dr Rowan Strong listens

***Nazism was not a Christian phenomenon.***

**RF:** There is much evidence that the church and its philosophy of contempt for the Jew, almost since its inception, as a means of vindicating the new faith, has been, and in some

areas still is, the root and influence of violence against all Jews....

**RA:** It is debatable as to whether or not Nazism and the things that it led to were not a product of Christian teachings. For example, take the writings and teachings of Martin Luther and the Catholic Church down through the centuries. This is a matter of concern for the Christians - not the Jews. It requires a different idea or concept of forgiveness. Individuals are the only ones that can forgive. Others that were not involved can not offer forgiveness. People and populations must be judged on their present works, not the history created by their forebears.

***The humanly irreconcilable difference between Jews and Christians will not be settled until God redeems the entire world as promised in Scripture.***

**RF:** As an orthodox Jew, I have no desire for the theological differences to be reconciled or settled between Christians and Jews.

**RA:** When the Messiah comes he/she will be powerful enough to resolve all issues.

***A new relationship between Jews and Christians will not weaken Jewish practice.***

**RF:** A new relationship cannot go beyond a respect and understanding . This requires sincere objective analysis of the past.

**RA:** This depends very much on what that relationship is. It is historical fact that Christians have tried to convert Jews to Christianity down through the ages. It was official Christian church policy and while not now publicised as such, is the endeavour and practice of many Christians today. For the two faiths to proceed in harmony there must be mutual respect of each other's beliefs, and Christians will need to refrain from their proselytising and attempts to convert Jews to Christianity.

***Jews and Christians must work together for justice and peace.***

**RF:** Couldn't agree with this more.

**RA:** Both sides must work together for the betterment of the people of the world. However, there need to be a lot more respect for the ways and beliefs of those not of our respective persuasions. Let us not waste time on documents such as Dabru Emet. Christians and Jews should be happy in their own religions.

### **3. What do you think?**

The CCJWA executive has recently discussed the fact that places of worship are denoted in Australian street atlases by this symbol, regardless of the faith being practised within the building. We have spoken with the WA Dept of Lands Administration (DOLA) and suggested that this was problematical for all faiths other than Christianity. They have undertaken to consider the matter. In the meantime, do our readers have any suggestions?

### **4. National News**

#### **National Representation**

CCJWA is now represented on the executive of the national body, the Australian Council of Christians and Jews by our chairperson, Dr Rowan Strong. This was announced at the last CCJWA executive meeting held on 30 August.

#### **UCA/ Jewish Dialogue**

*From: Uniting Church Assembly Task Group on Other Faiths*

The Uniting Church in Australia and the Executive Council of Australian Jewry convened their fourteenth formal Dialogue at Sydney's Great Synagogue on 2 May. Amongst matters discussed was the situation in Israel and how people of goodwill can work towards bringing about a fair and just settlement of the difficult situation.

Dr John Bodycomb of Melbourne, who co-chairs the Dialogue on behalf of the Uniting Church, said that the Dialogue was "without doubt one of the most successful meetings since the process began".

The Jewish community's co-chair, Jeremy Jones of Sydney, noted that "the atmosphere of mutual respect and complete honesty makes each Dialogue meeting a uniquely meaningful experience." "Together with our Uniting Church partners in dialogue, we look forward to continuing our mutual exploration of matters of concern to all people of goodwill, when we next meet in November," Mr Jones concluded.

Presentations at the Dialogue were made by Dr John Bodycomb and Ms Wendie Wilkie on behalf of the Uniting Church, and by Rabbi Raymond Apple and Mr Jeremy Jones from the Jewish community. Other participants in the meeting were the Rev Dr Lorraine Parkinson, the Rev Michael Barnes and the Rev Dr John Squires (from the Uniting Church), and Rabbi Dr John Levi, Rabbi Jacqueline Ninio, Ms Josie Lacey and Ms Peta Pellach (Executive Council of Australian Jewry).

**In Sydney** on Friday, November 9 there will be a Night of Broken Glass Commemoration at the Cenotaph, Martin Place, at 12.00 p.m. On the following Sunday, 11 November, a Service of Repentance (for what Christians have done to Jews) will be held at Clancy Auditorium, University of New South Wales, at 2.30 p.m.



### **5. The Centre for Jewish-Christian Relations, Cambridge, England.**

The Centre is a dynamic forum for research, discussion and consideration of all aspects of the encounter between Jews and Christians. It provides a number of educational programmes which can be studied in Cambridge or via distance learning.

Jewish-Christian dialogue has grown significantly in recent years, but relevant courses are still taught in relatively few places. The Centre for Jewish-Christian Relations responds to an increasing demand for study in this field, and is the only independent institution of its kind in the UK.

The Centre is based in the heart of Cambridge, one of the most beautiful cities in England. The scholarly study of Judaism and Christianity has a rich and significant tradition here. In the nineteenth century Cambridge University led the way in Europe by establishing a post in Talmudic and Rabbinic literature with Solomon Schechter as one of its most famous incumbents.

One of the Centre's main aims is to focus attention of the importance of the Jewish-Christian encounter throughout the ages and to develop it as an academic discipline in its own right. The Centre invites at least one Visiting Fellow every academic year to stay at the Centre and contribute to its research, seminar and publication series.

The Centre offers educational programmes to students of all ages and backgrounds, on both a full and part-time basis.

The MA degree in Jewish-Christian Relations is offered both on-site and by distance learning.

The core course to all degrees is Jewish-Christian Relations: Their Foundations and Relevance to Contemporary Society. Jewish-Christian Relations in 20th Century Europe, The Significance of Israel in Jewish-Christian Relations and Jewish-Christian Relations Portrayed in Literature and Film are just a few examples of the other courses available.

The Centre offers a summer school which can be

attended as an officially accredited module or just for interest. It also runs intensive weekend courses and has an active seminar series. These activities provide an excellent opportunity for people with hectic lives but with a thirst for knowledge in this area to gain an insight into the Jewish-Christian encounter.

The Centre for Jewish-Christian Relations may be found on the World Wide Web at <http://www.cjcr.org>



### **6. New Holocaust Web Site**

Those planning to visit the USA should not miss the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. The Museum is located near the National Mall, just south of Independence Ave., SW, between 14th Street and Raoul Wallenberg Place in Washington, D.C. If you are looking at a cheaper option, why not make a virtual visit to the museum via the World Wide Web? Here's the web address:

<http://www.ushmm.org>

Also, don't forget the Sydney Jewish Museum which also has a Web presence at:

<http://www.join.org.au/sydjmus>



### **7. Newsletter Submissions, Feedback, and Subscriptions**

The CCJWA Newsletter is produced by the executive committee and is distributed quarterly by 'snail mail', e-mail and fax. It is principally distributed to CCJWA members but copies are also made available to congregations of the five faith communities directly supporting our work.

The editor welcomes submissions, feedback and subscription requests. Please contact:

The Editor  
CCJWA Newsletter  
5 Ryland Road  
KELMSCOTT WA 6111  
E-mail: [nielseng@iinet.net.au](mailto:nielseng@iinet.net.au)

