

Editorial

It has been two months since the *Time* article on Christian witness to Muslims appeared. I was in the Albany, NY area when a friend mentioned he had received it. Immediately, I looked for the nearest mall and bought my copy, rather fearing the worst. Would the freewheeling liberals in *Time* blow us out of the water? Would their ignorance of the basic issues regarding missions and the reasons the message of Christ is being proclaimed at great risk render the article as so much dribble?

However, what I encountered was a fairly even-handed approach. Of course, *Time* isn't known for writing commentaries for evangelicalism. Yet, they resisted painting those carrying the Gospel into Muslim lands as kooks or misguided zealots. It was, rather, one of their better efforts, albeit very limited in scope and depth. Nevertheless, I felt they merited a positive vote and wrote the editors to that effect. Their reply stated their appreciation for my comments, promising to let me know if my letter was going to be published. As far as I know, it never was. My strong request to *Time* was that, having done an investigatory piece on 'Should Christians Convert Muslims?', a similar focus on Muslims 'Islamizing' worldwide was now to be awaited. Whether they heard me or not, I do not know. Should anyone see that such a study is carried out, please notify *Seedbed* and send me the article.

This second issue of 2003 focuses on some of the serious concerns facing our world today. I refer to Iraq, the Middle East and what could be called the Middle East cauldron. I think you will find both 'Iraq and the Bible' and the study on 'Islam and Democracy' very interesting. Do let us know if you agree or not. 'Life at the Hub of the World' takes a new look at church planting which will make you reflect about strategy, especially if you are involved at the front lines. 'Encountering the Lost' takes us into the realm of spiritual warfare. Hopefully, there will be space to include it in this issue. If not, it will appear in the winter issue.

We envisage going to three issues for 2004. Therefore, I would welcome articles on your personal experiences, so please sit down and put finger to keyboard. As we begin to hit our stride, please let us have your comments and observations. We would like *Seedbed* to be a lively forum of serious intellectual exchange and not merely a bulletin of dry verbiage.

Abe Wiebe (Editor)

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Letters to the Editor

Where can I buy the books reviewed in Seedbed?

I finally got around to reading the First Semester issue of Seedbed. I think it is a very good and helpful issue. I note the book 'Daughters of Islam' by Miriam Adeney was reviewed by Joyce. However, it did not tell us where to obtain copies of the book. I would especially like to have one. So could you tell me where that could be purchased?

Bev McCullough (US)

Ans: Most of the books reviewed will be available via Amazon.com. Another good source is Fellowship of Faith, Box 65214, Toronto, ON M4K 3Z2. Of course, many missions that have a ministry to Muslims would also likely carry such books.

Did G.D. get it right on God's purposes for Jews and Arabs?

It was with gladness and gratitude that I received my copy of SEEDBED this morning. I am glad AWM found a new editor to continue this important ministry. Let us know how to pay for it. Is there a possibility of getting back numbers?

I believe G.D. overlooks the weight of Rom. 11:1-2 in connection with 11:29 in his article, and, in my view, mistakenly identifies 'some of the broken off branches' (Rom. 11:17) with the whole of Israel and draws the conclusion that 'Israel ceased to be the people of God'. In spite of the 'spirit of stupor' (Rom. 11:8), of being 'hardened' and of a 'hardening in part' (11:25), of having stumbled and fallen, though not beyond recovery (11:11) and of having become 'enemies' (11:28), Israel has not been

rejected, and God's covenant with them has not been cancelled out. The whole metaphor of the olive tree makes that clear. Yes, some branches have been broken off, but the tree itself (i.e. Israel) has not been cut down (cp. Jer. 11:16). Judgment, yes, rejection and replacement, no. We, the wild branches, have been grafted in among the others (i.e. branches) and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root (Rom 11:17f). In my view, G.D.'s assumptions would make God's promises in Gen. 17:7-8 meaningless.

And that would be bad for all of us.

Dieter Kuhl (Germany)

More on the Jewish-Arab Question....

In the last issue of Seedbed, G.D. initiates discussion of our view of current Jewish-Arab issues. Since our desire is to major on the majors, a main focus on such a question should be the delineation of Jewish-Arab issue findings that can be held in common among Christians of varying eschatological orientations. Paradoxically, one of the best ways of achieving this goal may be through a thoroughly premillennial examination of the whole matter.

Non-premillennials generally don't have eschatological 'hang-ups' about seeking socially just activity for both Jews and Arabs or about encouraging the exploration of land-for-peace negotiations between Israel and its neighbours. In contrast, many premillennials feel impelled [sic] by common interpretation of their eschatology by such activity.

I believe there is a strong basis, even from within the premillennialist orientation:

a) for desiring socially just activity for/ from both Jews and Arabs, and

b) for encouraging the exploration of land-for-peace negotiations.

The crystallization of this perceived basis developed through my responses to clarification requests from a number of premillennial church leaders and Christians who are deeply troubled by the current Arab plight. I encouraged these Christians to find

common cause with non-premillennial Christians regarding the two conclusions, even though the eschatological routes to these joint conclusions vary widely.'

Richard L. (Canada)

Any Seedbed reader wishing a detailed paper in this line of argument by Richard, please request the same from the Seedbed Editor.



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for 2005**

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