

# Charles Feinberg Testimony: Conference in Japan Pt. 1

By Charles Feinberg

*[Transcriber's note: in the recording, every sentence is repeated in Japanese by a translator.]*

Charles Feinberg:

It is a great joy for me to be in Japan again. I want you to know that I feel perfectly at home in an assembly like this. When I became a believer and was in church services it was so quite I didn't know whether the people were asleep or dead. You see in the synagogue where I was reared, we all prayed out loud. So if you want to give praise to God during the time of the service, that's what our service is for. Another thing I should like to say before I give my testimony is this a wonderful day after I came to know the Lord that I realized I was part of Paul's answer to his prayers in Romans 10:1. Tonight I have learned also that my salvation is in part because of an answer to your prayers some thirty years ago. Dr. [inaudible] and I are both in the Lord some thirty one years so that would be about the time the Bishop [inaudible Japanese name] and his dear ones you folk came to pray earnestly for salvation of Jews. There are many portions that we could use as Scripture. For five years I was the preacher to the Jews in the Church of the Open Door. This was while I was teaching in the seminary and some friends asked me aren't you afraid that you will run out of material preaching on Israel from the Bible? My answer was just as afraid as the herring is that it will swallow the whole ocean. Now beloved if you would turn to Galatians 2:20. The passage reads I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I

live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me in the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. This is not only Paul's testimony but mine and yours too when you know the Lord Jesus.

I was born and brought up in the city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Our home was a very Orthodox Jewish home which I shall soon explain. This means that all the 39 books of the Old Testament were considered as from God, his word especially did this mean that the Rabbis place great emphasis on the first five books. The Rabbis actually went through these books and found commandments and prohibitions up to 613. How does this work out practically day by day in the Orthodox home? These regulations of the Rabbis are in a large set called the Talmud. For common people like us we had to have something smaller, condensed, simpler. It was condensed by one of the Rabbis into a book somewhat smaller than this. These regulations take a person from the moment he awakes til the moment he goes to bed from the time he's born until his death. For example, in the morning the Orthodox Jew when he awakes goes immediately to wash his mouth so that it can be clean to praise God. And at night on the bed the Orthodox Jew has a special prayer to say that's in fulfillment of the Psalm that says I commune with the Lord upon my bed. Everything that is eaten during the day has a special prayer. When an Orthodox Jew has some food or fruit he asks whether it is of a tree or the ground or a vine. For the Jewish housewife, the housekeeping is very difficult because a part of a verse in the Law of Moses says you are not to boil a goat in its mother's milk. From that the Rabbis said that an Orthodox Jew must never eat together dairy products and milk products. Therefore in the Orthodox Jewish home, for 51 weeks of the year, that's apart from Passover, there are two sets of dishes for milk or dairy and for meat. For the week of the Passover there are two other sets of dishes dairy and meat but that have never come in contact with leaven. This dear housewife, when she comes

from the market cannot prepare food until an hour and a half after she comes from the market. This is with reference to fish and fowl and meats because Leviticus 17:11 says the life of the flesh is in the blood they will not eat blood. So the meat that has blood in it or the fish or the fowl must be scolded a half hour and soaked in clear water for an hour. For instance on the Day of Atonement one must fast 24 hours. Leviticus 23 actually says [Hebrew] ye shall afflict your souls.

So the Rabbis explain the affliction of the soul as fasting. You can imagine how 24 hrs. of fasting without even water passing the lips works a hardship on the people who are fasting. And yet after all the fasting and praying the Orthodox Jew is not certain he is forgiven his sins. Some of the old men and women who have fasted so long toward the evening become faint in the Synagogue. If you talk to an Orthodox Jew coming home from the Day of Atonement and say do you have forgiveness of sins? He'll say in German Ich hoffe es. "I hope so". It is heartbreaking to read the prayers for the Day of Atonement. The prayers are almost as big as this book. In one place they cry out [Hebrew] "we have no righteous mediator". In another place, because the Talmud does use Greek words they say [Greek] hush you accuser. [Greek] and let the advocate take his place. And all the while they do not know that Jesus Christ is our mediator. And they do not know what the apostle John says that Jesus Christ is our advocate with the father. Yet in spite of all these laws that Paul calls bondage, [inaudible] elements of the Law. In spite of that I cannot remember my father ever reading the Old Testament but what before he finished he kissed the Bible this way and this way and placed in the top place on the table.

When I was six years of age I was sent to the English school and the Hebrew school at the same time. I had three brothers and three sisters. Unlike the Americans the Jews believed Children are a blessing. And all of us boys expected to be Rabbis. I went through grammar

school and high school and also to college. In the University we were taught unbelief and my faith was undermined. But in the Hebrew school also there were those who tore apart the Word of God. I found then at the end of my college career that I was practically an Atheist, and unbeliever in God. I had even gone to New York, to the Jewish Theological Seminary of America to make arrangements for my final training as a Rabbi. When I came back I was under great depression because I was without faith and yet supposed to be studying to be a Rabbi. Now I must go back in my life, and you will see why I have a great love for Gentile believers. In an Orthodox Jewish home, when a boy reaches 13 years of age he becomes a full member of the spiritual community.