



***"The Jewish Rabbis have stopped protecting
us...
— and the bad witches from home enter" —***

**Christian African labor Migrants in
Israel Trapped in a World Wide Web of
Transactions**

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“The witches are now in Israel, they are everywhere.... Before, when I just arrived in this country no one died.... Everybody worked and no one disturbed us. No one was stopped by the police, no one was deported ... look what is happening now.... It is all because the bad spirits managed to enter Israel ... the bad witches from home enter... our families in Ghana send them” (Charity, Tel Aviv, 2003).



What are the roles African churches (specifically Pentecostal) have in society during times of change such as trans-national labor migration?



What is the significance of the linkage made between bad witches from home with labor and capital within Pentecostal churches on our understanding of the role Pentecostalism plays in modernity?



What can we learn on the interchanges and interconnections between migrants and their home communities through talks about money, belonging and witchcraft on the one hand and between migrants and the Israeli society through talks about money, work force and magical protection by the Jewish Rabbis.

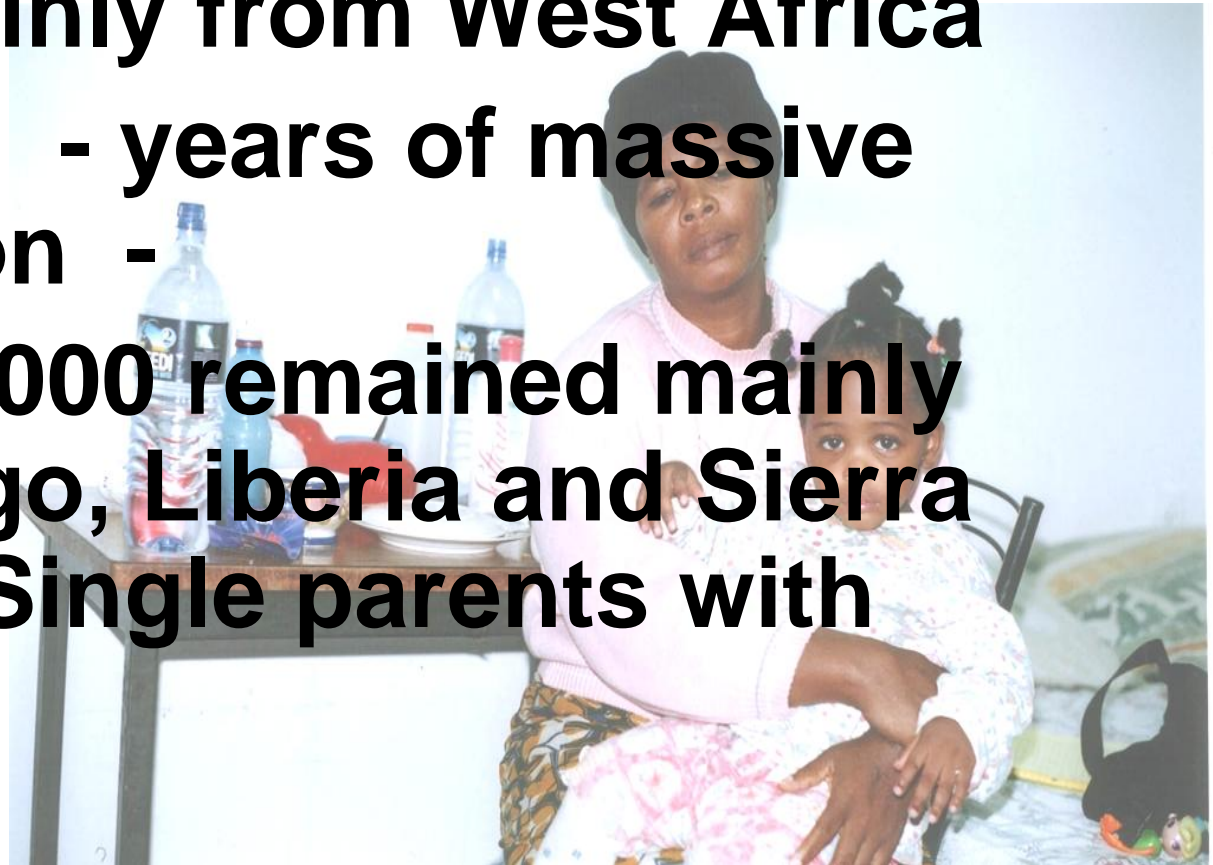
Numbers

Up until 1990 – less than 200

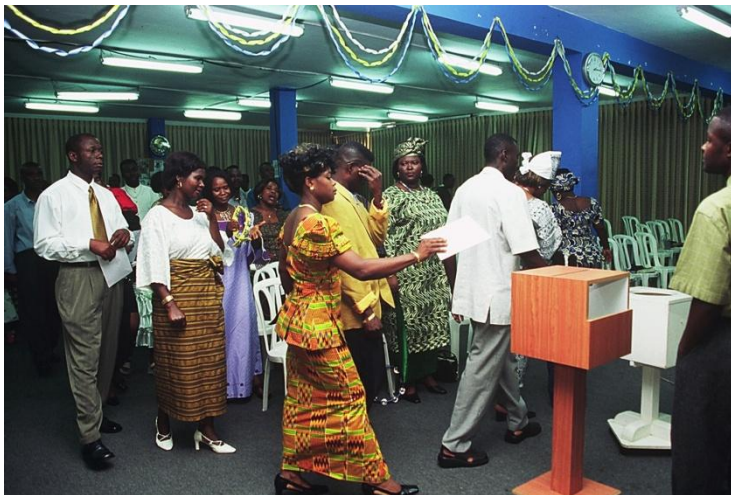
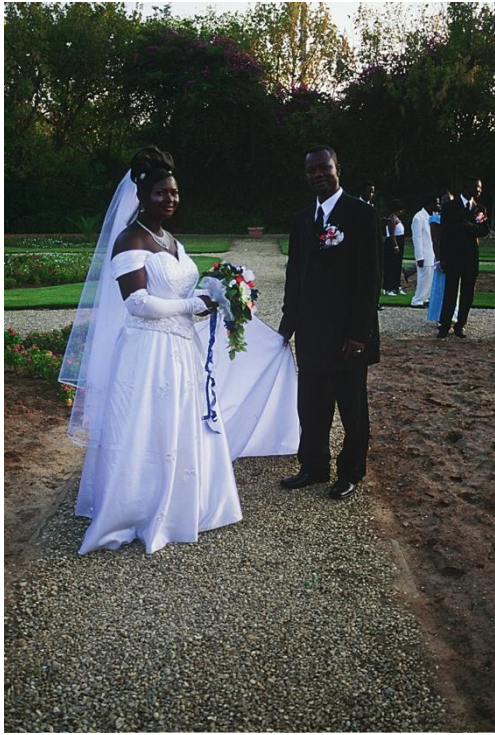
**1996-2000 – between 14,000-
20,000 mainly from West Africa**

**2002 – 2004 - years of massive
deportation -**

**only 2000-4000 remained mainly
from Congo, Liberia and Sierra
Leone or Single parents with
children.**



Inhabitable spaces of welcome



Religious Spaces of Welcome

Sample of Pentecostal Churches established in Israel since 1990.

1. Resurrection Power & Living Bread Ministries International, Tel Aviv Branch
2. Church of Pentecost
3. Deeper Life
4. Grace and Covenant
5. Come and See
6. Assemblies of God
7. Happiness and Glory
8. Miracle Life Ministry
9. Church of the Holy Spirit





“Last month many people died in our church community. This was a spiritual death ... she was lying in her bed, she could hardly move or breathe ... only two days ago people from our church came to pray with her. They made a circle around her and started to pray. One said that suddenly she opened her mouth and a strange voice shouted: “the witch is in me ... it came to take me.”

You see, you understand what is going on?
The witches are now in Israel, they are everywhere.... Before, when I just arrived in this country no one died. For years, no African died in Tel Aviv. Everybody worked and no one disturbed us. No one was stopped by the police, no one was deported.... We just had to work, save money and support our families...

Look what is happening now, in a short time five people died, many, many were arrested and deported. It is all because the bad spirits managed to enter Israel.... There is an area here

[with her hands, she draws imaginary lines in the air]

that is your area, here the bad spirits can't come in without permission of the local spirits.... before, your Rabbi did not let the bad spirits come in and harm people.... Now it has all changed” (Charity, Tel Aviv 2003).

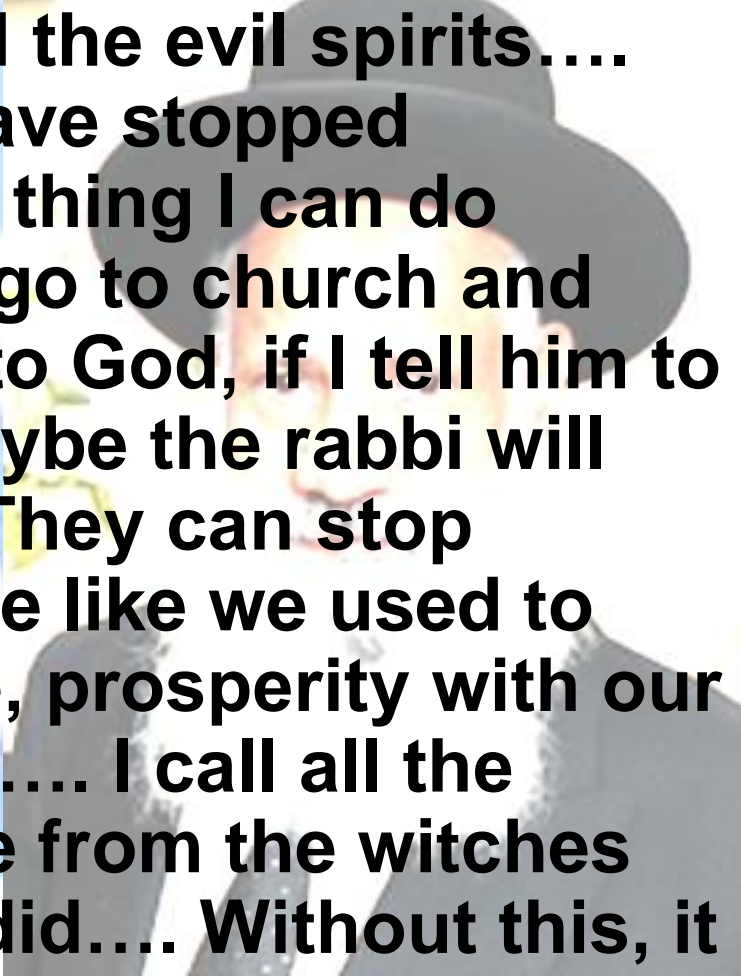
“If I don’t send money...bad things will happen to me... I’m afraid, so I send”



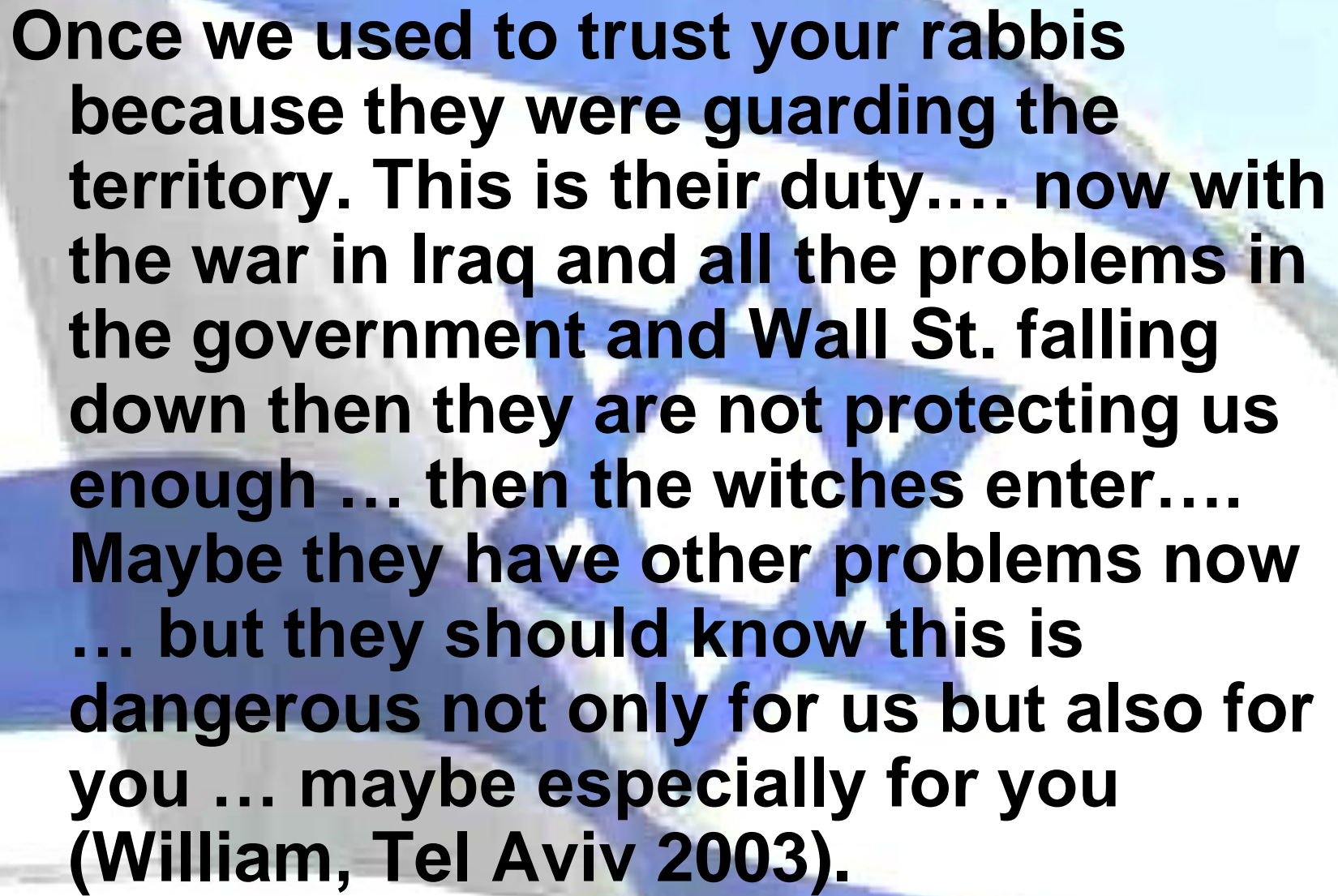


**“If I refuse to
send money it
will kill them
and me...so I
have no
choice... we
don’t save
money in the
bank, our
savings are in
our families
back home**





**Our families in Ghana send the evil spirits....
And the Jewish rabbis have stopped
protecting us... The only thing I can do
against them is to work, go to church and
pray.... If I pray and talk to God, if I tell him to
talk to the rabbi, then maybe the rabbi will
not let the witches in.... They can stop
deportation and let us live like we used to
live until now ... in peace, prosperity with our
friends and families here.... I call all the
Jewish rabbis to save me from the witches
and protect us like they did.... Without this, it
will all fall to pieces (Charity, Tel Aviv 2003).**



Once we used to trust your rabbis because they were guarding the territory. This is their duty.... now with the war in Iraq and all the problems in the government and Wall St. falling down then they are not protecting us enough ... then the witches enter.... Maybe they have other problems now ... but they should know this is dangerous not only for us but also for you ... maybe especially for you (William, Tel Aviv 2003).

