

The Chosen People



Volume XX, Issue 1 February 2014

MINISTRY "DOWN UNDER"

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Report from “Down Under”

God’s Hand at Work in Australia & New Zealand



coined the wonderful phrase, “bringing the message to the original messengers.”

Celebrate Messiah is part of Chosen People Global Ministries, which now encompasses sixteen countries containing 96% of the world’s Jewish population. We have established ministries—or been joined by established ministries—in this partnership everywhere from England to South Africa, Australia, Argentina, Germany, France and many more places.

Shalom. God’s hand is at work—all over the world! This glorious truth was brought home to me yet again as I spent a week visiting our partner ministry in Australia, which goes by the delightful name of Celebrate Messiah. Lawrence and Louise Hirsch, dear friends of mine, began this ministry more than two decades ago to serve the Lord among the Jewish people in Melbourne, Sydney, Perth and many other cities in this fascinating country with almost 100,000 Jewish people!

Lawrence and Louise are both immigrants to Australia from South Africa. Lawrence is from a very strong Jewish home, and Louise is from a non-Christian Gentile family. They fell in love as teenagers and both became believers soon after high school. After they were married, they immigrated to Australia. After receiving further Bible training back in Johannesburg, Lawrence and Louise initiated the work of Celebrate Messiah—which

Transformation— One Life at a Time

While in Australia, I had the privilege of getting together with our leaders to pray and strategize about ways to coordinate our efforts to reach Jewish people around the world for the Messiah. One of the most encouraging conversations I had was with a brand-new Jewish believer who was raised in a traditional Jewish home and is now in his early twenties. May I share his testimony with you?

While attending university, he met a “real” Christian for the first time. This first-time encounter with authentic Christian faith is not unusual for many Jewish people



growing up in strong Jewish communities; we simply do not get to know born-again believers until we enter the workplace or attend university. This believer began sharing the Gospel with this young Jewish man, and eventually they began studying the Bible together—particularly the Sermon on the Mount. (By the way, this is a great place to introduce Jewish people to the New Testament, as the statements of Jesus in these chapters are so attractive and powerful.)

Eventually, the young man became more interested in Jesus and visited a few local churches. He enjoyed them, but did not feel quite at home. So his non-Jewish Christian friend suggested that he visit *Beit Hamashiach* (House of the Messiah), the Messianic congregation in Caulfield, which was planted by Celebrate Messiah in the heart of one of the most Jewish communities in Melbourne.

This young man visited the congregation. Though uncomfortable at first about attending a service, he was met in the hallway by a very friendly Jewish believer who encouraged him to sit down and listen to the sermon. He did, and according to this young man's testimony, tears filled his eyes as he heard the message of the Gospel in a Jewish way. As a result, he felt more compelled than ever before to consider whether Jesus is the Messiah—for both Jews and Gentiles.

It was not long afterwards that this young Jewish man received Yeshua (Jesus) as his Messiah. Since then, he has been

growing steadily in his faith. But he is not the only one! I met dozens of young people at this retreat who were in one way or another involved in the growing Messianic movement in Australia.

There is also a growing movement of Russian Jewish immigrants to Australia who are coming to faith in Jesus—just as we have seen in Brooklyn, Germany, Israel and many other places. Hundreds of Russian Jewish people in Australia have come to faith in Jesus—and many attend the congregation planted by Celebrate Messiah in the heart of Jewish Melbourne. The Lord is doing great things!

The Rise of Ministry to Israeli Backpackers in New Zealand

I know that you will enjoy the remainder of this newsletter as you learn more about the Jewish people of Australia...but I don't want to leave out New Zealand!

Scott Brown, one of our most effective and respected veteran missionaries, moved his family to New Zealand a few years ago. His goal was to establish a ministry on the Southern Island to work with the thousands of Israelis who backpack through the mountains. Many travel there looking for the meaning of life after spending their required years in the Israeli army.

Scott and his wife, Margie, base their ministry out of a campground, offering Sabbath dinners and free barbecues, engaging in literature distribution, and often going hiking with the Israelis

through the gorgeous scenery. With the help of teams we send from the United States to help reach these wandering Israelis for the Messiah, Scott and Margie spend their time sharing the Good News. They distribute Hebrew New Testaments and find other ways to touch the lives of these young Israelis who are eager to talk about the deeper things of life.

We have already recruited a young Israeli couple to be part of the team to serve along with the Browns' many volunteers. In fact, Scott has been providing training in Jewish evangelism to a network of Christians in New Zealand who open their homes to wandering Israeli travelers. The strategy works beautifully, as young Israelis get to see how Jesus-loving believers and authentic Christian families live. This network has doubled over the last few years! We hope to bring this wonderful tool of evangelistic hosting to other countries, and have already trained volunteers in both Scandinavia and Germany.

My heart is filled with the incredible experiences of my recent trip down under. I wish I had more time to share with you what the Lord is doing. I pray that His powerful presence will continue to fill your life and home. May 2014 be a wonderful year of faithfulness and fruitfulness for you as you serve our risen Jewish Savior.

Your brother in the Messiah,



Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser
President

P.S. While in Australia, I gave two sermons at *Simcha* (the Hebrew word for "Joy"), our Messianic retreat there. This year, we had about 450 people and it was incredibly exciting. If you want to hear these sermons—please go to www.chosenpeople.com/audio, where you can listen to my messages and those of other Chosen People Ministries staff.



EVANGELISM “DOWN UNDER”



Australia and New Zealand

When we think of Jewish populations, we usually think of places like Israel, North America, and the remnant of Jewish life in Europe that has lately been invigorated by the immigration of Jewish people from the former Soviet Union. We also would remember the significant Jewish numbers in South America. Few of us, however, look to places like Australia and New Zealand for important Jewish communities and mission fields that are indeed ripe for a rich harvest for Messiah in terms of Jewish souls.

Are we missing something? Just ask Lawrence Hirsch, founder and director of Celebrate Messiah, Chosen People Ministries' partner in Jewish evangelism, who oversees a thriving ministry in each of these countries. A native of South Africa, Lawrence is keenly aware of the history and development of the Jewish communities in each of these places. By the Lord's grace, he and his wife, Louise, and a cohort of committed staff are making a difference for Messiah in these far-off lands.

House of the Messiah— a Nourishing Foundation

Beit HaMashiach (House of the Messiah) Messianic Congregation in Melbourne was planted by Celebrate Messiah in 1998 and continues to bear witness for Messiah as our “flagship” ministry in Australia.

The congregation is led by Lawrence and Louise Hirsch with other staff members: Jay* (Youth and Young Adults), Phil Plotnek (Worship Director), and Rita Ivenskis (*Dom Misi'ee* —“House of Messiah” Russian Jewish ministry).

Beit HaMashiach's average attendance over the past twelve months has been 137, including children. About 40% of the congregation is either Jewish, married to a Jewish spouse, or comes from a Jewish believing family. The congregation's outreach ministries include Sabbath services for English and Russian speakers, Youth Ministry, Young Adults Ministry, a Messianic Dance Group, Hebrew language class, and men's and women's discipleship groups.

Staff member Barry Buirski and his wife, Melinda, are particularly committed to *Tikkun Olam* (Repair of the World), a benevolence ministry that

has distributed 1,015 food baskets to the Jewish communities in Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth and Sydney since the beginning of 2011 with the help of 259 volunteers. Lawrence and the rest of the staff are also particularly excited about the Melbourne Messianic Center Project, which will be a new two-story facility and a welcoming place of worship, community and outreach with which to engage the Jewish community.

Elsewhere in Australia, another Celebrate Messiah staff member* has a wide-ranging ministry that is based in Sydney. A warm, gifted and experienced missionary, this individual has the ability to connect with a large number of Jewish people. They prayerfully and diligently organize many events and activities that attract interest among members of the Jewish community in Sydney.

Regular follow up with Jewish contacts and Jewish believers is made, as well as meeting with them one-on-one, in small groups, or via Skype or telephone. Visits to Jewish people in several elderly-care homes in Sydney and other parts of New South Wales and Canberra also take place. In addition to all of this, Bible studies are held regularly, including one consisting entirely of not-yet-believing Israelis.



New Zealand—Land of the Israeli Backpacker

Jewish communities come in many different shapes and sizes. One of the most unusual is also one of the most changeable. It is the flow of young Israeli backpackers—many of them recently discharged from military service—who are stretching their legs as young adventurers with a walkabout in New Zealand’s beautiful landscape. Scott Brown and his wife, Marjorie, are waiting to welcome them.

A seasoned congregational leader, Scott’s vision of providing hospitality and sharing the Gospel with these young travellers through a Messiah-centered hostel setting is bearing fruit. He writes,

Having completed our fifth year managing the camp, we are seeing a steady increase of Israeli guests. We were pleased to host about a dozen young Israelis our first season, and now more than 200 stayed with us this past year. As the numbers have increased, so has our effectiveness. Nearly every Israeli who stays with us receives personal interaction of a spiritual nature, along with a Hebrew New Testament and/or other Gospel-related Hebrew literature.

I’m thrilled to report that while my enthusiasm for the ministry has not waned

one iota, my strategies have improved significantly. We have worked hard to expand the network of Christians in New Zealand who host Israeli travellers. Since arriving in New Zealand five years ago, the number of hosts has effectively doubled, with approximately 530 homes now open to Israeli guests.

The ministry of hospitality is a sleeping giant in the world of Jewish evangelism. We are rising to meet the challenge in innovative ways, such as scheduling and presenting new material designed for training those wanting to host the young travellers we want to attract. Our gifted team member, Zohar Gonen, has also been visiting Israelis in hosts’ homes on the South Island.

Pray for these “Down Under” Ministers of Messiah

Celebrate Messiah, in partnership with Chosen People Ministries, is faithfully carrying out the Apostle Paul’s Romans 1:16 commission to preach the Gospel “to the Jew first and also to the Gentile” in far-off lands that even Paul himself might not have imagined. Pray for these faithful ministers of Messiah as they serve Him. May He make them bountiful in His service!

*name withheld for security reasons

PRAYER REQUESTS

- ✓ FOR THE WORK OF CHOSEN PEOPLE MINISTRIES IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND
- ✓ FOR OUR LEADERS: LAWRENCE & LOUISE HIRSCH AND SCOTT & MARJORIE BROWN
- ✓ FOR THE DEDICATED MISSIONARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS
- ✓ FOR GOD TO SOFTEN THE HEARTS OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA
- ✓ FOR THE LORD TO BRING OPEN-HEARTED ISRAELIS TO THE HOMES OF CHRISTIANS AND OUR STAFF IN NEW ZEALAND
- ✓ FOR THE NEW MESSIANIC CENTER BEING BUILT IN THE HEART OF JEWISH MELBOURNE



SEE THE BIBLE THROUGH JEWISH EYES

BY DANIEL GOLDBERG, TH.D., D.D.



Dr. Goldberg serves as International Ministries Representative for Chosen People Ministries and lives in Pineville, North Carolina with his wife, Madeline.

THE FALL OF SATAN FROM HEAVEN ISAIAH 14

Who is the “day star, son of the morning” or, as it is also translated, “Lucifer” (light-bearer), in Isaiah 14:12? Does this figure, who appears in the song or taunt in this extended passage, refer to history’s King of Babylon, from whom Israel has been freed and no longer fears? Or is there another, spiritual reality involved?

Many Bible scholars hold the view that Lucifer is Satan himself, the power behind the King of Babylon. This view is acceptable, because the Devil represents the ultimate personification of pride (Isa. 14:13,14).

SATAN IS REAL

The Scriptures present the Devil as possessing intelligence (2 Cor. 11:3), a perverted will (2 Tim. 2:26), emotions (1 Tim. 3:6) and great organizational ability (Rev. 2:9).

Our text begins with a comparison that likens the then-king of Babylon to a satanically inspired ruler. Isaiah’s prophetic method was to blend a description of Satan in his original revolt with that of an earthly monarch whom he inspires to acts of violence and aggression against the people of God. Because of his perverted acts, the King of Babylon is thus

portrayed as the very evil intent of the Devil.

SATAN’S PERNICIOUS PLAN (ISA. 14:13,14)

The devilish designs are summarized in five “I will” statements that illustrate the intent of his depraved mind and heart. Under inspiration of God, Isaiah exposes the evil purposes that drive all satanic activities. (Isa. 14: 13,14).

Satan organized the first rebellion against God, persuading one third of heaven’s angels to follow him (Rev. 12:4). In addition, Satan will organize and lead the last great revolt against the Divine person (Rev. 20:7-9).

The Bible contains at least 22 names and titles of this perverted personality. His most common names are “Satan” (Adversary), which appears 52 times, and “the Devil,” (Slanderer), used 35 times.

Isaiah viewed the defeat of Babylon historically in concert with the defeat of Satan prophetically. Satan, the “prince of this world,” seeks to energize and control kings and rulers of nations, even assigning fallen angels as messengers to motivate and influence leaders of various nations (Dan. 10:20).

The Devil delights in circulating pernicious lies regarding

Israel and the Jewish people. As the last survivors of the Holocaust slowly leave the stage, Holocaust denial and distortion of the truth are alive and well. In Europe and even in North America, a huge percentage of young people are skeptical about the reality of Holocaust history.

SATAN’S PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE LOCATIONS

Only God is omnipresent, but the Devil has been to, is in, or will occupy the following six locations:

1. PAST: In the heavenlies as God’s choir director (Eze. 28: 12-19).
2. PRESENT: In heaven as God’s enemy (Job 1:6,7).
3. FUTURE: Cast out of heaven to earth (Lk. 10:18; Rev. 12:7-12).
4. FUTURE: In the bottomless pit (Rev. 20:2,3).
5. FUTURE: On earth for the last time (Rev. 20:3).
6. FUTURE FOREVER: In the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10).

CONCLUSION

We all have an earthly father. According to Jesus, the Devil is the father of all unbelievers (Jn. 8:42-44). All who know the Savior now have a heavenly Father (Jn. 4:23,24). To which of the last two do you belong?

CONGREGATIONS WEST... AND EAST!

Scott and Dana Nassau, who minister in Southern California, have recently partnered with a church in West Los Angeles to plant a Messianic congregation to reach the community's significant Jewish population. After preparing for some time with monthly services and other gatherings, the Nassaus are excited to announce that they have begun weekly services right in the heart of West Los Angeles, along the famous Venice Boulevard. If you want to read more about it, go to www.kehilacovenant.com.

Randall and Luda Ford, who minister to the well-established and populous Bukharan Jewish community in Queens, New York, have started a new, English-speaking fellowship. It takes place on Saturday nights for Messianic teenagers and adults who cannot attend their Wednesday morning service. Luda met with two teen-aged girls from the group who talked and prayed about how hard it is to be a witness for Messiah as high school students because of the many unhealthy peer pressures they encounter in school. In addition, the teenagers struggle with how to identify themselves as Messianic believers in the Jewish community. Nonetheless, the Fords rejoice to see several of them growing in their faith—and regular fellowship is an important factor, especially among young people.

JEWISH AND A CHRISTIAN – WHO KNEW?

For the past nine years, Cathy Wilson has organized a special holiday celebration in the Scottsdale, Arizona area where she



ministers. This year, she was thrilled when Irma,* an 80-year-old-plus Jewish woman to whom she has witnessed before, responded to the testimony of Rachel,* a Jewish believer. Irma exclaimed, "I didn't know you could be Jewish and a Christian!" Later on that evening, Irma told her friend Susan, a local pastor's mother, who has been a loving witness to Irma for decades, "I believe!" It was truly a Hanukkah/Christmas miracle over which to rejoice.

**names have been changed*

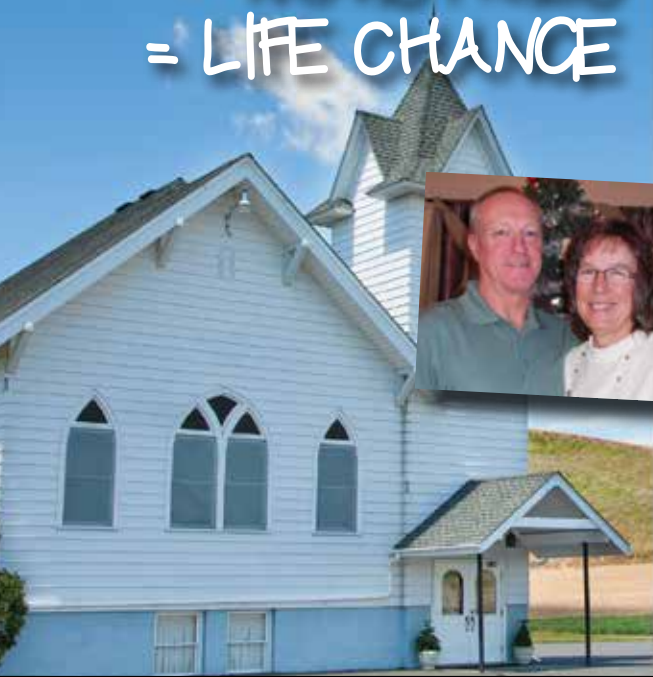


MINISTRY MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN NEW ZEALAND

The Gospel-oriented social events hosted by Chosen People Ministries staff in New Zealand are a real draw for Israeli backpackers. Our worker Robin B., who leads short-term evangelistic teams to assist in the New Zealand ministry, reports great conversations with a young Israeli traveler named Effie,* and her father who was also there in New Zealand to be with her. As Robin spoke with Effie's father, she shared about her own observant Jewish upbringing and other parallels between their lives. As Robin and Effie's father spoke further, they realized that Robin had also met his son in New Zealand and had shared the Gospel with him as well. Effie's father, who questioned Robin thoughtfully about her belief in Messiah, realized that this was no mere coincidence. Robin writes, "I also got to share with Effie about God's love. It is clear God is doing something in their lives."

Robin also reports that about twenty-five Israelis attended a Christmas Party where the host clearly shared the Gospel. Amidst the food, the spirited live music and games, discussions about Yeshua (Jesus) sprang up in small groups. One young Israeli lit up when Robin told her in Hebrew that she was a Jewish believer. She said she'd heard of such people, but had never met one. They went on to have a great discussion about prophecy and the Lord's ability to transform our lives. The Lord is touching hearts in New Zealand!

YOU + CHOSEN PEOPLE MINISTRIES = LIFE CHANGE



We were raised in the church in rural America, and we thought we knew about reaching Jewish people with the Gospel—that is, until we met David Sedaca, Vice President of Chosen People Ministries. Since developing a wonderful relationship with David and his wife, Julia, as well as the great people at the Mission, we have realized that we have a great need to educate ourselves and other Christians about Jewish evangelism. The truth is that we Christians are definitely NOT reaching enough Jewish people with the Gospel. We church members have the God-given charge to dedicate our time and resources to be sure every Jewish person hears the clear message of Yeshua (Jesus) as Messiah.

As we have traveled to New York City to see first-hand the tremendous need to share the Gospel with our Jewish friends, we have become committed to doing all we can to help fellow believers catch the vision of reaching Jewish people by supporting Jewish missions, especially through Chosen People Ministries. We have always had a heart for missions, for after all, it is God's heart. But now, through our warm friendship with the Sedacas and Chosen People Ministries, we understand more fully the value of making Jewish missions our evangelistic priority. Since we began supporting Jewish missions through Chosen People Ministries, we have been abundantly blessed in all facets of our lives. Truly, our lives will never be the same.

-Tim and Jeri Erdman

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MESSIANIC RESOURCES



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The Chosen People Newsletter

Chosen People Ministries has been taking the love of the Messiah to Jewish people worldwide since 1894.

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Please remember Chosen People Ministries in your will. "I will bless those who bless you." (Genesis 12:3)



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