

The Chosen People



July 2015
Volume XXI, Issue 6



JERUSALEM CENTER: 10th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

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Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Jerusalem Messianic Center

Dear friend of the Jewish people,

Shalom in His grace. I will be heading to Israel next month, where our staff and Board will gather to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the purchase of the wonderful Jerusalem Messianic Center! What a joyous occasion this will be for the almost 60 Chosen People Ministries staff and Board members from at least a dozen countries that will be in attendance.

We are all so grateful to the Lord for allowing us the privilege of having such a beautiful building that has been so powerfully used in our outreach to the Jewish people in Israel.

Reflection: Where Were We Ten Years Ago?

Joyous events like this celebration cause us to reflect upon the past, something King David did so often in the Psalms as he rehearsed all that the Lord had done for him and for Israel...rejoicing in His goodness. As David wrote,

I shall remember the deeds of the Lord; surely I will remember Your wonders of old. I will meditate on all Your work and muse on Your deeds. Your way, O God, is holy; what god is great like our God? You are the God who works wonders; You have made known Your strength among the peoples. You have by

Your power redeemed Your people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah (Psa. 77:11-15).

The Urgent Need for a Messianic Center in Jerusalem

I will remember the overwhelming need we sensed for a facility in Jerusalem to house our Israel ministry efforts! Our staff, just a short decade ago, was scattered throughout Israel and we knew that if we had a place we could call our own that our staff would be more cohesive and share a clearer team identity. This is especially important when you are daily subjected to opposition and often persecution for your faith.

And what better place to have the Chosen People Ministries Israel headquarters than the city of the King—Jerusalem! This is the city in the Holy Land that captures the historic aspirations of and spiritual symbolism for Israelis and for Jewish people everywhere. A Jewish Jerusalem also reminds Christians throughout the world that God keeps His promises!

It was not easy for us to rent facilities because most Israeli landlords would not rent properties to us for fear of reprisals from anti-missionaries and Israeli government officials. I described it this way ten years ago,

As you might imagine, it is not easy for us to rent facilities as so many of the property owners are Jewish people who disagree with what we do! We feel that we can only have the freedom to do our work in the way we would like if we own the property which houses our ministries. Owning property is a dire necessity for us in Israel. It is a critical part of our plan to evangelize and plant churches among Israelis.

What I did not fully realize was the difference that having a beautiful facility in the heart of one of the nicest neighborhoods in Jerusalem would make in our overall witness in Israel. In fact, the Center has changed our image among Israelis. Before, we had been viewed negatively, as a marginalized “fly-by-night” organization. It sent a message to the core of Israeli society that we were a serious group of Jewish people—with a serious message!

I also remember the moment I saw the building that would become the Jerusalem Messianic Center. I wrote a decade ago,

Recently, I traveled to Israel with one of our board members and we reviewed a number of properties. The Lord led us to a 4,000 square foot building that was not even on our list to see with our real estate agent. We turned a corner in a nice neighborhood in Jerusalem—

about 15 minutes from the Old City—and there it was!

We asked our real estate agent to show it to us and she did, later that same day. The moment we walked in, we knew that this was the place for us! It was perfect for what we required. It has all the classroom space we need, some rooms for short-term housing and even a combined living room/dining room area that seats as many as a hundred people for an outreach. It also has a large kitchen where we can prepare meals for larger groups.

The first time I saw the building I knew that it was for us. The Lord had led us to this very place. My board chair who was with me at that time felt the same way!

The Growth of the Chosen People Ministries Staff in Israel

It was interesting for me to re-read the reasons I gave ten years ago for why you and our other faithful prayer partners and supporters should invest in a facility for Chosen People Ministries Israel. In another newsletter at the time I wrote,

Chosen People Ministries now has ten families serving in Israel and there are many others who would like to help.

We need space for these people to work and some short-term housing for teams who come to minister from other countries. We also need housing for those within the country who come to take classes.

The above was true then, but is even more important today. We now have more than 20 families and staff members serving the Lord in Israel and a full office staff. We are one of the largest mission efforts in Israel. We could never have grown if we did not have a facility where we could provide work space and the administrative support needed for a growing ministry. Praise God—I really had not thought

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Chosen People Ministries is one of the largest mission efforts in Israel. The Lord is using us to serve the large Russian-Jewish population as well as Holocaust survivors. I cannot even count the number of outreach meetings, Bible studies, luncheons, dinners, concerts and more we have had at the Jerusalem Messianic Center!





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much about growth in Israel at the time, as I was more concerned with taking care of the staff we already had.

But the Lord had greater plans, and today I am more grateful than ever for *His Center* which has become the “nerve center” for our growing Gospel efforts in the Holy Land!

When it comes to housing for short-term missionaries, I can now tell you that I had some idea at the time that if we had the housing, we would better be able to field teams from the U.S. and other countries in short-term ministries within Israel. However, I really had no idea as to what the Lord would actually accomplish with the housing provided by the Center—for only a dozen people.

I actually tried to count the number of people we have had stay at the Jerusalem Center who came to share the Gospel in Israel, but stopped counting after the first 3,000 guests! They have come from more than a dozen countries and have helped incredibly with all of our outreach projects and ministries.

The Openness of Israelis to the Gospel

Ten years ago I also wrote to our supporters,

The Intifada and troubles in Israel have caused the average Israeli to be more open to God. The Russian Jews who have immigrated are specially open to the Gospel and our work among this group is significant. We need ministry space to conduct Bible studies, training classes and outreach services.

In hindsight this might be one of my most profound “understatements.” Sometimes, I try so hard to be measured and conservative but in this instance I simply had no idea what the Lord was actually doing in His Land! We were in the midst of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit among Russian Jewish immigrants. There were already hundreds of thousands of Jewish people from the Former Soviet Union who had immigrated to Israel. We had already planted a congregation in the bustling city of Tel Aviv, but did not know how the Lord would continue to use us among these “new Israelis.”

During the last ten years, we have witnessed the rapid growth of the national church in Israel...some say the numbers have grown from 4-5,000 to

more than 15,000! Whereas we do not know this for sure, I can tell you that I have never seen this level of openness to the Gospel within Israel for the 40-plus years I have been sharing the Good News in the Holy Land. In fact, it is a common understanding among Messianic leaders that probably 60% of the believers in Israel speak Russian as their first language.

We are in awe of the Lord’s faithfulness and Your Mission to the Jewish People in Israel has been at the heart of what God has done—especially among Russian Jewish immigrants. Our national director for these last ten years is a Russian Israeli—Michael Z. Michael is a Russian Jewish immigrant to Israel who became a believer while studying Hebrew as a new immigrant!



From left to right:
 We are having many opportunities to share the Gospel. Israel has the largest Jewish population in the world*—about 6,103,200 or 43% of all Jewish people.
 Inset: The Jerusalem Messianic Center when we first bought it in 2005 and after renovations.

*www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/jewpop.html

I would be remiss if I did not mention the marvelous ministry we have had among the hundreds of thousands of Holocaust survivors living in Israel. At least half of these precious people, many of them elderly, came from the Former Soviet Union and did not immigrate to Israel until after *Perestroika*. I praise God that we had a young staff of more than a half dozen Russian Jewish believers in Israel during these years who have been able to share the Gospel with these unique immigrants.

We now have food distribution centers and regular ministries helping with the physical needs of these elderly immigrants to Israel, as well as helping to provide for their spiritual needs. We could not possibly have done all of this without an adequate headquarters facility in Israel.

I cannot even count the number of outreach meetings, Bible studies, luncheons,

dinners, concerts and more we have had at the Jerusalem Messianic Center!

We simply could not have been used of God to do all of this without the Jerusalem Messianic Center! My heart bursts with joy as I reflect upon the way the Lord has used our Israel staff and volunteers to touch the lives of needy Israelis!

The Jerusalem Center Today

The Lord continues to powerfully use the Jerusalem Center. You can be part of the ongoing ministry of the Jerusalem Messianic Center through your prayers and support. **We budgeted about \$200,000 for this coming year to run the Center,** which includes outreach events and costs for our staff administrators, facility managers, etc., who keep the Center running effectively.

July 1st is the beginning of our fiscal year. It is my prayer that we will be able to raise the full budget for the Center

this month, so that we can assure the staff that they will have everything they need for the next twelve months. We want them to focus on sharing the Gospel, rather than being concerned with raising the funds to advance the ministry and keep the facility in top shape.

You can give a gift or even pledge an amount of funds to help us with this incredible facility and gift from God dedicated to serving the Jewish people of Israel.

I suppose it goes without saying that there is a wonderful *biblical and prophetic element* to investing our prayers and finances in our Jerusalem ministries. The Lord promised that one day,

... And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us concerning

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JERUSALEM, THE ETERNAL CITY, AND WHY IT SHOULD NOT BE DIVIDED

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither, let my tongue cleave to my palate if I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy (Psa. 137:5–6).

The Eternal City of God Given to the Jewish People

Martin Gilbert, the famed Churchill biographer and Jewish historian, once wrote that Jerusalem is not a “mere” city. He stated, “It holds the central spiritual and physical place in the history of the Jews as a people.” Jerusalem and the Jewish people are eternally intertwined. Even in the Diaspora, Jews have always called Jerusalem their home and have yearned for the return to their ancestral city in their ancestral homeland.

King David pronounced it as the capital of Israel in 1004 BCE. And as Eli E. Hertz observes, “For over 3,000 years Jews looked to Jerusalem as their spiritual, political, and historical capital, even when they did not physically rule over the city.”

The Lord also sees the intrinsic spiritual value of Jerusalem (i.e., a city holy and special to Him, see Psalm 87:1–3); He commands the Jewish people to go to the city three times a year—for specific feasts—to worship the Lord (Ex. 23:14–17; 34:18–23). He says He will put His name on the city (1 Kings 11:36). Psalm 132:13–14 states, “For the LORD has chosen Zion;

He has desired it for His dwelling place: ‘This is My resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it.’”

Jesus speaks of the city as representing the whole of Israel and the Jewish people (Matt. 23:37–39). God foretells a restoration of Jerusalem (Jer. 3:17). Likewise, the prophets speak of a time when all nations in the world go up to Jerusalem to worship God (Micah 4:2, Zech. 14:16, Isa. 2:3).

Islam’s Mythical Connection to Jerusalem

In today’s politically charged atmosphere in the Middle East, Israel is not the only one laying claim to the physical and spiritual heritage of Jerusalem. Islam also claims to hold the deed, although during the 1,300-year occupation of Jerusalem by Muslims, Jerusalem was never a capital of any Arab entity. The PLO’s National Covenant did not even mention Jerusalem until after the Jewish people regained sovereignty over the city in 1967.

The other questionable connection of Jerusalem to Islam lies in the Dome of the Rock and, subsequently, the al-Aqsa mosque. The claim is that the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa mosque (translated “the furthest mosque”) is where Mohammed ascended into heaven. The issue with this claim is that the founder of Islam never set foot in Jerusalem, dying six years before the occupation of Jerusalem. Furthermore, the construction of the Dome of the Rock and

subsequently the al-Aqsa mosque (688 AD, 691 AD) was stimulated by the desire to proclaim Islam’s supremacy over Christianity.

The Myth of “Two Jerusalems”

Between 1948 and 1967 Jordan illegally occupied Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem. During this period of time, Jordan attempted to eradicate any evidence of Jewish life; renaming Judea and Samaria the “West Bank,” destroying synagogues, kicking out Jewish people and preventing access to holy sites. Only when non-Muslims gained control over the city did its so-called connection to Islam become a talking point for Muslims.

This gave birth to the Palestinian Arab claim that there were always two Jerusalems, one Arab (east) and one Jewish (west). The problem here is that “east-west” is a geographical designation, not a political one. In the same way, Palestine is a geographical designation. Given to the region by the Romans in 132 CE, it never had a Palestinian government, currency, culture or flag—the latter being a recent invention.

Holding Sacred What God Calls Holy

As believers, we must see the great value of Jerusalem to God Himself and to the Jewish people. Even in the Diaspora, Jewish people utter daily prayers worldwide, beseeching God to bring them back to His holy city. The Lord has placed His holy hand upon Jerusalem—for His prophetic purposes. Therefore, Jerusalem today—home to more than 500,000 Jewish people and the focal point of so many kingdom promises—should be important to you and me, and to all who love the Word of God and the God of the Word.

We must pray for the peace of God’s city as directed by the Psalms:

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May they prosper who love you. May peace be within your walls, and prosperity within your palaces.” For the sake of my brethren and companions, I will now say, “Peace be within you.” Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek your good (Psa. 122:6–9).

NEWS BRIEFS

JEWISH MAN: FROM SEEKER TO DISCIPLE

Leading Bible studies has been a cornerstone of Roy Schwarcz's ministry for many years. But each new soul who comes to faith is as great a blessing as ever. For some time, he has been leading a Jewish man in a study of Genesis. Now, after a season of questioning and soul-searching, this man has come to faith. Roy reports, "He and his wife have been attending a church in the suburbs. At a service, an invitation to accept the Gospel was given and he went forward to publicly receive Jesus as his Lord and Savior. We are now beginning discipleship."

CONCERT IN MOSCOW STIRS MEMORIES AND FAITH

Kirill Polonskiy, our man in Moscow, helped coordinate a concert for Holocaust survivors and veterans of World War II. He reports, "We sang well-loved traditional Jewish songs and songs of the War era. Everyone who came to the concert received great joy and had much fun. I had the opportunity to share my testimony of how I came to faith in Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah. I saw how my words touched the hearts of the Jewish people there. I offered to pray, and some people accepted Yeshua as their Lord. One of them told me that he had never in his life experienced so many emotions. Our Lord loves His people!"

JEWISH BUSINESSMAN FINDS RIGHT NUMBER TO CALL

Jeff Kipp received a phone call from a Jewish businessman who explained he found Jeff's name and number on the internet. Jacob* said, "Rabbi, I think I need to talk with you." They met the following week for breakfast and Jacob confided that several people in his life through his business

had shared the Gospel with him, but that he had questions that he felt he needed answered from someone with a Jewish perspective. After Jeff answered his questions, he seemed satisfied and said he thought he might be ready to accept that Yeshua was his Messiah.

Jeff said, "Jacob, why wait any longer. Would you like me to help you pray to receive the Lord?"

Jacob answered, "Yes, let's pray." Jacob was so happy afterwards that he gave Jeff a huge hug right there in the middle of the restaurant and again in the parking lot!

ISAIAH 53 DRAWS ANOTHER JEWISH SOUL TO MESSIAH

Field worker Mike Cohen in Southern California had the opportunity to share Isaiah 53 with a young Jewish man he met at University of Southern California through one of the Christian ministries on campus. He writes, "When I did share this amazing prophecy, he was very impressed, but not ready to make a decision. Recently, he came to faith and is now a believer in Jesus. Please pray for him that he gets baptized and continues to grow in his new faith."

"SENIOR DAY OUT" BRINGS JEWISH FAITH DECISION

Ron and Paula Michelson, who minister in Southern California, host a Gospel-oriented, weekly event they call "Senior Day Out." One Jewish man who heard about it rode his motorized wheelchair several blocks to attend. After his second week, he stayed behind with many questions. Another Jewish man, who had recently come to faith and was well along in his walk with Messiah, stayed also and answered many of the questions this man in the wheelchair had. Two hours later, the man gave his life to his Messiah, Jesus.

* name has been changed

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His ways and that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:3).

You see, dear friend, I believe that future day has begun and that Yeshua is coming soon. If this does not cause us to act now, I don't know what will!

Thank you for your generosity and faithfulness.

Blessings in our Messiah,


Mitch



P.S. I hope you can join us on one of our Israel tours and see this beautiful Jerusalem Messianic Center! We are scheduled to go in just a few months and still have some openings on the trip. The dates are October 26 - November 5. If you would like more information, please call us at 561-737-1431. We will tell you how you can "hop on the bus!" It will be the trip of a lifetime and transform the way you read Scripture. I will be travelling with the tour and would love to spend the time with you.



Watch the testimonies of Jewish believers!

We are pleased to announce a new, exciting evangelistic website called "I Found Shalom." This site contains many video testimonies of Jewish believers in Yeshua. These "storytellers" will invite you into their lives, and you will see for yourself, through their eyes and experiences, why they decided to become followers of Yeshua and the profound impact this had on each of them as individuals. You will smile, laugh and at times be moved to tears by these compelling stories.

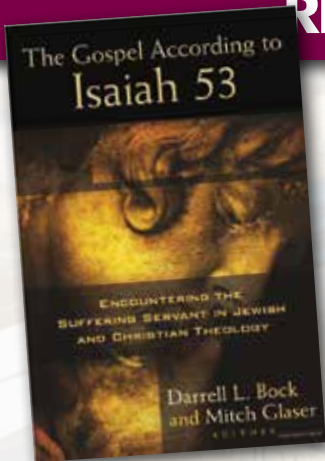
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MESSIANIC RESOURCES



Equip yourself to present the redemptive work of the Messiah to the Jewish community. Exploring issues of atonement and redemption, respected scholars show how Christ is the fulfillment of Isaiah's "suffering servant"—and offer suggestions on how to share the good news with our Jewish brothers and sisters. Written by Darrell Bock and Mitch Glaser.

Contributors include Walter Kaiser, Robert Chisholm Jr., Craig A. Evans,

David L. Allen, Michael J. Wilkins.

The Gospel According to Isaiah 53 3138 \$19.95US

To order this and other resources, visit www.chosenpeople.com/store or call 800-333-4936.



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Tour the land of Israel and visit the Jerusalem Messianic Center with Chosen People Ministries President, Dr. Mitch Glaser, and Dr. Rich Freeman, Vice President of Church Ministries and Conferences. Enjoy a spiritual journey through the Holy Land designed to draw you closer to Yeshua and to the Jewish people!

For more information contact Dr. Rich Freeman at rfreeman@chosenpeople.com or call 561-737-1431.



The Chosen People Newsletter

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

The Chosen People newsletter is published monthly by Chosen People Ministries. For more information or to receive The Chosen People newsletter, write to: Chosen People Ministries, International Headquarters, 241 East 51st Street, New York, NY 10022. In Canada, write to: Dufferin-Lawrence PO, Box 58103, Toronto, ON M6A 3C8 (www.chosenpeople.ca). In Great Britain, write to: P.O. Box 47871, Golders Green, London, NW11 1AL (www.chosenpeople.org.uk). In Australia, write to: Celebrate Messiah Australia, P.O. Box 304, Caulfield, South Vic 3162, Australia (www.celebratemesiah.com.au). Contributing Editors: M. Goldstein, R. Goldstein, S. Ilchishin, S. Nassau, N. Parramore, A. Shore; Designer: Lois Gable Ruedinger. Cover credit: kirill4mula | Thinkstock.

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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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Printed in the USA