

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE



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The Light of the World Is Born



FROM TEMPLE TO TABLE: A HISTORY OF THE HANUKKAH MENORAH |
HANUKKAH AROUND THE WORLD | EVEN SO, "COME LORD JESUS!"

The Light of the World Is Born



**FROM THE
PRESIDENT,
MITCH GLASER**

Shalom in the name of our glorious Messiah!

On behalf of the Chosen People Ministries global family, I wish you a very Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah!

For many of my fellow Jewish people, the very idea of linking these two holidays together is awkward. It still feels a little strange to me, even after being a Jesus follower for the past fifty years. Yet, I realize that having one without the other is impossible.

Let me explain. The story of Hanukkah describes the ways God protected and preserved His chosen people. If Antiochus Epiphanes destroyed the Jewish people, then how would Mary have given birth to the Jewish Messiah, Jesus? In other words, “Without Hanukkah—there would be no Christmas!”

I continue to reflect upon the similarities and differences between Christmas and Hanukkah. The similarities include the theme of lights, giving gifts, families gathering, and viewing the God of Israel as the deliverer of His people. Yet, the differences between the holidays loom large because there is no other time of year when Christians think more about the incarnation—God becoming human—than on Christmas.

HE IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON!

It is still astounding to me, and largely unknown by my Jewish people, how the only mention of Hanukkah in the Bible is found in the Gospel of John chapter 10. But, of course, if you have read our newsletter for a while or spent time on our website, you know Jewish people do not accept the New Testament as God’s Word. I do, as does all our staff, but again, this is not a typical Jewish view.

The traditional Jewish view of the New Testament is one of the most difficult challenges we face in bringing the gospel to the Jewish people.

I still remember the day I realized Jesus was the Messiah. It happened after I read the New Testament and understood Jesus was Jewish and celebrated the Jewish holidays—including Hanukkah! Then, as I continued reading, I realized the New Testament, especially the Gospels, seemed like part two of the Hebrew Scriptures.

In the Old Testament, we read about the promises of God to the Jewish people and the nations of the world. In the New Testament, we see how those promises are fulfilled in Jesus the Messiah. The Bible, both Old and New Testaments, tells one magnificent and seamless story of God’s plan for redemption.

GOD IN THE FLESH

This incredible story, told through both testaments, made perfect sense to me. Even more importantly, I fell in love with the Messiah Jesus and believed He was indeed God wrapped in human flesh!

Yet, accepting His deity is difficult for most Jewish people, as we are raised to believe God has no physical form. Jewish people expect the Messiah to be a religious, political, and military leader, not God in the flesh.

Modern Judaism considers the first two commandments—to have no other gods before us nor to create graven images of God—the reason why the very idea of an incarnation is unacceptable.

The Christmas/Hanukkah season intensifies these differences as it is increasingly difficult for Jewish people to avoid the issue of Jesus’ deity! Every nativity scene reminds us of the New Testament teaching about how God became a man. As believers, we know the Messiah’s deity is true and fulfills God’s promises to the Jewish people found in Isaiah 7:14 and again in chapter 9, verses 6 and 7.

In Micah 5:2, we learn this leader in Israel, the Messiah, was to be born in Bethlehem, whose “goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.”

The Hebrew Scriptures present unshakable evidence for the deity of the Messiah throughout its pages, yet most Jewish people do not recognize or accept it. This conflict over the deity of Jesus is at the heart and core of Christmas and Hanukkah.

It was during the celebration of Hanukkah when Jesus made one of the clearest statements about His deity. We also see how the Jewish people of His day took exception to His declaration of divinity:

*“I and the Father are one.” **The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him.** Jesus answered them, “I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?” The Jews answered Him, **“For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God.”** Jesus answered them, “. . . If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, **so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.**” Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp. (John 10:30–39, emphasis added)*

Have you ever wondered why the Jewish leaders had such a strong reaction to Jesus’ pronouncement? It seems to stretch far beyond theological disagreement as, after all, they wanted to stone Him! It is impossible to understand the reaction of the Jewish leaders without knowing the background of Hanukkah.

THE HANUKKAH STORY

So, I hope you do not mind me telling you the Hanukkah story. It is always a blessing for me.

You will not find the story of Hanukkah in the Bible. Instead, it appears in the books of the Maccabees, which are part of the Apocrypha, writings outside the canon of Scripture. Jewish people view these books as historical documents but not divinely inspired Scripture.

Again, please allow me to summarize the story of Hanukkah in my own words.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes was a Seleucid king who reigned from 175–164 BCE over part of the Greek Empire, which Alexander the Great’s four generals divided among themselves upon his death. Antiochus bore the title Epiphanes (God manifest), implying his “incarnation” of the Greek god Zeus. Jewish people called Antiochus the madman (Epimanes) because of his cruel and erratic behavior.

This polytheistic madman wanted the Jewish people to follow Hellenistic ways and periodically outlawed Jewish worship and practices. Finally, he sent his emissaries throughout Israel along with a portable statue of himself and demanded the Jewish people bow down and worship him as a Greek god incarnate. But those faithful among the Jewish community could not stomach idolatry and would not bow to the statue of Antiochus Epiphanes!

The Jewish people who lived in a small town called Modi’in led a grassroots rebellion against the Syrian Greeks from 167–160 BCE under the leadership of Mattathias, a Levitical priest, along with his son Judah.

The Maccabees fought hard for seven years and in 160 BCE defeated the Syrian Greeks, retaking Jerusalem and the Temple. But their joy turned quickly to horror when they discovered that Antiochus sacrificed a pig on the Temple altar.

The Maccabees dismantled the holy altar and removed the stones, which they believed to be beyond cleansing. Jewish tradition tells us they heaped the stones into a pile in the Temple area where they would await the coming of a great prophet to cleanse them. Then, they built a new altar.

JEWISH LOYALTY TO THE ONE TRUE GOD

Hanukkah celebrates the victory of faithfulness over idolatry—more specifically, worshiping the image of a man who believed he was the incarnation of a false god. In this instance, it was Antiochus. Jewish spiritual loyalty resisted idolatry and refused to worship the image of a man claiming to be god.

May I speculate? I believe this spiritual loyalty and resistance to the idea of an incarnation was a strategy the devil used to repel the Jewish people from the actual incarnation of God as predicted by the prophets of Israel. Who can blame the Jewish leaders for resisting what, in their understanding, was an idolatrous statement by Jesus in declaring His oneness with the Father (John 10)? The religious loyalty of the Jewish leaders blinded them. They did not recognize God was fulfilling the promises of Scripture through taking on flesh and dying for the sins of the Jewish people and the world (Isaiah 9:6–7, 53:1–12; Micah 5:2, etc.)!

I cannot blame my people for resisting idolatry. However, the leaders already observed a Messiah who healed, performed miracles, and claimed to fulfill the prophecy of the One who was indeed God in the flesh. He opened the eyes of the blind, fed multitudes miraculously, cast out demons, and fulfilled the messianic qualifications peppered throughout the Hebrew Scriptures.

My prayer is for both Jews and Gentiles who have not yet concluded that Jesus is God in the flesh. Understanding this and coming to know the One who is the reason for the season, the son of David, and the Savior of the world is life changing! I pray the Lord will lead each of us to make the truth of His deity known among both Jews and Gentiles in the days ahead.

Thank you so much for your prayers and sacrificial support of Your Mission to the Jewish People. We have some incredible outreach projects on the horizon, which I will tell you about in the future. Meanwhile, I pray your love for the Messiah will grow more profound as you reflect upon the miracle of the incarnation!

I hope you enjoy the rest of the articles in our holiday newsletter.

In Messiah,


Mitch

P.S. Thank you for your faithful support and prayers. Because of the generosity of one of our supporters, we have a \$100,000 challenge grant available, which would mean that your gift can have double the impact this Christmas . . . this will help us quite a bit as we are about to begin a major initiative in Israel!

From Temple to Table:

A History of the Hanukkah Menorah

One of the most familiar images of Hanukkah is a nine-branched menorah. One candle called the “servant,” *shamash* in Hebrew, is usually placed in the center of the menorah. It is used to light each candle representing each of the eight nights of the holiday. This style of menorah is the one you will see this time of year¹ in homes, stores, and public displays—but it is not the only kind of menorah and should be distinguished from the seven-branched menorah, which stood in the Tabernacle. This biblical lampstand had seven cups for the priests to fill with oil and light (Exodus 25:31–40). When the menorah appears as a symbol, like the Chosen People Ministries logo, it usually contains only seven lights.

The Jewish community sometimes refers to the nine-candle menorah as a *hanukkiah* to distinguish it from the seven-light variety. Still, it is fair and accurate to call a hanukkiah a menorah. After all, menorah is simply the Hebrew word for “lampstand.”² So, all hanukkiah are menorahs, but not all menorahs are hanukkiah!

Why Eight Days?

The origin of the hanukkiah and the practice of lighting it for eight days during Hanukkah is unclear. As a holiday, Hanukkah dates to the second century BCE, when the Seleucid ruler over Israel began to persecute the Jewish people. The Maccabees led a successful rebellion against this tyrant. In the process, the Seleucid army defiled the Temple, so the priests needed to rededicate it upon their return. Josephus, a Jewish historian and former Jewish general who lived during the first century, was the first to connect Hanukkah with light. He noted the holiday was called “Lights” but did not explain why.³ A “Hanukkah lamp” is mentioned in the *Mishnah*, an authoritative Jewish commentary on the five books of Moses compiled in the third century,⁴ but not until the sixth century did Jewish sources discuss the practice of lighting flames on Hanukkah in detail.

¹ Hanukkah falls on the 25th of Kislev on the Hebrew calendar, which falls in November or December.

² William Lee Holladay and Ludwig Köhler, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament: Based upon the Lexical Work of Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner*, (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 202.

³ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 12.325.

⁴ M. Bava Kamma 6:6.

To explain the origin of this tradition, the Sages said one day’s worth of oil lasted for eight days when the Maccabees rededicated the Temple and relit the menorah. Jewish lore offers other explanations for the eight-day celebration. First, Jewish people could not observe the biblical fall festivals during the Maccabean Revolt. Partly to make up for this loss, the people celebrated the last of these holidays, the Feast of Tabernacles (*Sukkot*), which lasted eight days.⁵ Less common—but equally fascinating—is a ninth-century legend that depicts the Maccabees discovering eight spears in the Temple. According to the story, they stuck these spears in the ground and lit them.⁶

Development of the Hanukkiah

Archaeologists have discovered lampstands with eight spouts from the sixth century. The earliest Hanukkah lights were clay or stone lamps with small cups for oil and wicks. During each day of the festival, a celebrant would add a lamp to the display.

The fuel used to light the lamps was olive oil, just as the priests used oil in the menorah in the Tabernacle and, later, the Temple. Olive oil was a valuable commodity in the ancient Mediterranean world and figured prominently in many practices recorded in the Bible. For example, oil was part of the grain offerings (Leviticus 9:4). Additionally, priests and other leaders—like kings—were anointed with oil (Exodus 29:21). As a food product, oil symbolized prosperity, much like wine (Deuteronomy 8:8). Oil could soothe wounds (Isaiah 1:6) and serve as a cosmetic (Esther 2:12). The priests also needed a constant supply of oil to fuel the menorah in the Temple (Leviticus 24:2).

The medieval European Jewish community began using candles for Hanukkah lights because wax was less expensive and easier to obtain than oil. Before electricity, lighting was a significant expense for most societies. Oil was quite expensive, making lighting a lamp for religious purposes sacrificial.⁷

Hanukkiah Today

Though we use candles in most hanukkiah today, oil’s connection with Hanukkah remains. Traditional Hanukkah foods like potato pancakes, called latkes, and jelly-filled donuts called *sufganiyot* are cooked in oil. The standard hanukkiah today comes in an endless array of creative designs. Many have a star of David; some are colorful or have flowers. Especially imaginative Hanukkah menorahs are also available—even an octopus-shaped hanukkiah where the cephalopod’s body serves as the base, and each tentacle can hold a candle! Small disposable hanukkiah are used by many who choose a less elaborate way to celebrate the holidays, and electric hanukkah menorahs are growing more and more popular. Along with the potato pancakes, beautiful prayers announcing this season of God’s victory on behalf of His chosen people are recited and moving songs are sung along with presents given on each of the eight nights. The great theme of the holiday focuses on joy, light, deliverance, and the warmth of family gathered in observance of the holiday.

⁵ 2 Maccabees 10:9.

⁶ Peskita Rabati 2:1.

⁷ David Zvi Kalman, “The Insanely Fascinating History of Hanukkah Light,” *Forward*, December 5, 2017, <https://forward.com/culture/388936/the-insanely-fascinating-history-of-hanukkah-light/>.





Hanukkah *around* the World

Besides the story of the Maccabees and the miracle of the oil lasting for eight days, Hanukkah is mostly known for its traditions of candle-lighting, spinning dreidels, chocolate coins wrapped in gold foil, yummy jelly doughnuts called *sufganiyot* in Israel, potato latkes, and gift-giving. But did you know many of these fun traditions stem from only one stream of Jewish culture from the diaspora? That's right! The European Ashkenazi Jewish tradition largely popularized the celebrations of Hanukkah as observed in the United States and even in Israel today. Have you ever wondered how Jewish cultures from other parts of the world celebrate(d) this holiday—or didn't celebrate it? Here are a few fascinating different traditions (and delicious must-try recipes) for celebrating Hanukkah according to very diverse Jewish communities around the globe!

Yemenite and North African Jews

Chag HaBanot (Hebrew for Festival of the Daughters) is a celebration of women that was observed in Yemenite and North African Jewish communities on the seventh night of Hanukkah. Although *Chag HaBanot* or *Eid Al Banat* in Judeo-Arabic has largely ceased to be an active holiday, it is best kept and still preserved by the Tunisian Jewish communities today, while others are reviving these customs.¹ This night is filled with singing, dancing, and lighting of the hanukkiah (special menorah for Hanukkah) in commemoration of Jewish heroines like Hannah and Judith, whose fights against assimilation appear in the books of Maccabees. In countries like Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, and Morocco, many Jewish communities held a dairy feast in honor of Judith. According to the story, Judith offered the Syrian Greek general, Holofernes, cheese and wine, leading him to believe that she would help him and his army take the city of Bethulia. Once Holofernes became drunk, Judith beheaded him, causing the rest of his soldiers to flee in terror, which then revived the morale of the Maccabean fighters. During this feast, women would go to synagogue to touch the Torah and pray for their daughters' health (and all women in their families); young and old women would dance with each other; and reconciliation between women would take place.

Bukharan Jews

Considered one of the world's oldest diaspora groups, the Bukharan Jews are said to have first arrived in the modern-day

countries of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan during the Babylonian exile in 586 BCE.² The Bukharan Jewish community celebrates Hanukkah with a flat menorah requiring oil and cotton wicks instead of candles. The musical tunes for prayers also greatly differ from other Jewish communities. Called *shashmaqam*, or "six notes," they shared their music not only with the many Jewish communities in both Uzbekistan and Tajikistan but also with Muslims. Bukharan Jewish people honor the Hanukkah tradition of eating fried foods (to commemorate the miracle of the oil, which lasted eight days in the Temple) by enjoying fried "twig" cookies, called *hushquiliq*, whose key ingredients are oil and vodka!³

Ethiopian Jews

Even though the events of Hanukkah predate Jesus' birth by more than 150 years, it is considered a "modern" Jewish holiday in the mind of Ethiopian Jewry because they only recently learned the story of Hanukkah.⁴ Beta Israel existed for fifteen centuries in Ethiopia.⁵ For more than 2,000 years, these Torah-observant Jewish people lived isolated and disconnected from other Jewish communities. Most of the world was not aware of the Jewish people who existed in Ethiopia for all those centuries.⁶ When the Ethiopian Jewish community reunited with the greater Jewish population, they adopted similar Hanukkah traditions. A traditional Ethiopian spicy chicken dish called *doro wat* also became a popular Hanukkah dish served with a holiday bread called *dabo*.⁷

Columbian Jews

In Columbia, one Jewish community popularized a new Hanukkah tradition. *Chavurah Shirat Hayyam*, a group in Santa Marta, substitutes Hanukkah's traditional potato latkes with fried plantains, called *patacones*.⁸

Italian Jews

Similar to the traditional *sufganiyot* (doughnuts) served on Hanukkah, Italian Jews have a special Hanukkah dessert called *precipizi*, which are fried honey balls made with flour, eggs, and rum. The dough is lightly sweetened, infused with olive oil, fried, and dipped in honey.⁹

Hungarian Jews

Besides the Hanukkah celebrations that take place in Israel and the United States, Budapest is perhaps next in line to offer massive celebrations for the Festival of Lights. Every year, the city hosts the "Quarter 6 Quarter 7 Festival," named after Budapest's historic Jewish district in District VI and VII. For eight whole days, people celebrate with flash mobs, concerts, theatrical performances, and, as always, oil-saturated Hanukkah delights at local restaurants.¹⁰

Perhaps this year you can add some new traditions and flavors to your Hanukkah celebrations. Happy Hanukkah!

1 Tabby Refael, "Beyond Gelt: How Mizrahi Jews Celebrate Hanukkah," *Jewish Journal*, December 16, 2020, <https://jewishjournal.com/commentary/columnist/326126/beyond-gelt-how-mizrahi-jews-celebrate-hanukkah/>; and Rabbi Jill Hammer, "Chag HaBanot: The Festival of the Daughters," *Ritualwell*, accessed October 10, 2022, <https://ritualwell.org/ritual/chag-habanot-festival-daughters/>.

2 Alanna Cooper, "Who Are the Bukharan Jews?" *My Jewish Learning*, accessed October 10, 2022, <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/who-are-the-bukharan-jews/>.

3 Manashe Khaimov, "How My Bukharan Jewish Community Celebrates Hanukkah," *My Jewish Learning*, December 9, 2019, <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/2019/12/09/how-my-bukharan-jewish-community-celebrates-hanukkah/>.

4 Joan Nathan, "A New African Tradition for Hanukkah," *New York Times*, December 4, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/04/dining/doro-wat-hanukkah-ethiopia.html>.

5 Atira Winchester, "The History of Ethiopian Jewry," *My Jewish Learning*, accessed October 10, 2022, <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-history-of-ethiopian-jewry/>.

[jewry.org/](http://www.jewry.org/).

6 Mitchell Bard, "Who Are the Ethiopian Jews?" *Jewish Virtual Library*, accessed October 10, 2022, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/who-are-the-ethiopian-jews>.

7 Nathan, "A New African Tradition for Hanukkah."

8 "How 21 Countries around the World Celebrate Hanukkah Slideshow," *Daily Meal*, December 8, 2017, <https://www.thedailymeal.com/holidays/countries-around-world-celebrate-hanukkah-slideshow/slide-1>.

9 Shachar Banin, "Precipizi (Fried Honey Balls)," *Kosher.com*, accessed October 10, 2022, <https://www.kosher.com/recipe/precipizi-fried-honey-balls-12166>; "Hanukkah around the World," *Kosher River Cruises*, accessed October 10, 2022, <https://koshercruise.com/hanukkah-around-the-world/>.

10 "Quarter 6 Quarter 7 Festival: Budapest Pesach," *Festival Budapest*, accessed October 10, 2022, <http://www.festivalbudapest.com/quarter-6-quarter-7-festival-budapest-pesach>; "Hanukkah around the World."

EVEN SO, “COME LORD JESUS!”

During this time of year, we tend to focus on the first coming of Messiah. Various prophecies tell us how He would come (Isaiah 9:6), to where He would come (Micah 5:2), when He would come (Daniel 9:24–27), and even why He would come (Isaiah 53). That is not going to be the focus of this study. Instead, I am going to be looking at a prophecy of Jesus’ second coming in Zechariah 12–14 and its fulfillment in Paul’s amazing statement in Romans 11:26, “*And so all Israel will be saved.*”

For many, the timing of this prophecy is understood to be at the end of the seven-year tribulation period, when the antichrist, satanically inspired, is trying once and for all to destroy Israel and the Jewish people. All the nations of the world, under his leadership, will come together as one and gather as a vast army surrounding Israel. This final battle is what is commonly called Armageddon and will be focused primarily in the Jezreel Valley near Megiddo in northern Israel. Israel, hopelessly outnumbered, is given supernatural empowerment by the Lord to withstand the onslaught. Zechariah 12:8 describes it in this way: “*In that day the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the Lord before them.*” That is the context of Jesus’ return to earth. Israel is under attack from all the nations of the world, holding them at bay but ultimately needing the Lord’s intervention to save them.

Zechariah 14:3–4a describes what happens next. “*Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. In*

that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east.” One of the blessings of my ministry with Chosen People Ministries is I get to lead tours to Israel every year. One of my favorite places to go on those tours is the Mount of Olives so I can take the opportunity to teach about this particular prophecy of Jesus’ second coming. Israel is in a hopeless situation and in need of the intervention of the Lord to save her. Jesus returns to fight on Israel’s behalf, and the place He comes to first is the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

At this point, we need to ask an important question. Why does Zechariah write, “*In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives?*” He could have said, “*In that day He will come back to earth on the Mount of Olives.*” The meaning would have been virtually the same. However, Zechariah, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is painting a picture for us of our Messiah with the visible nail scars on His feet and hands. The parallel to Zechariah 14:4 is 12:10, “*I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced.*” When Yeshua (Jesus) returns to save Israel from that final onslaught, He will be visible for all to see.

When the Jewish people see Him and recognize Jesus truly is the promised Messiah of the Hebrew Scriptures, it will be the fulfillment of Romans 11:26, “*And so all Israel will be saved.*” This does not mean that every Jewish person who has ever lived gets a free ticket to heaven because they are Jewish. Rather, all the Jewish people alive when Yeshua returns will recognize who He is and come to faith in Him as their Lord, Savior, and Messiah. Even so, “Come Lord Jesus.”

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The Old City wall and view of the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

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MINISTRY NEWS BRIEFS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

WALK IN PARK LEADS TO MAJOR DIVINE APPOINTMENT

While evangelizing in a park one day, one of our missionaries approached a group of people in their twenties. Interestingly, most were Jewish, and they started talking and laughing together. When the missionary brought up spiritual matters, only a few people wanted to talk about God, sin, and forgiveness. One man, Stephen,* learned our staff was Jewish and believed Jesus is both the Messiah and divine. He eagerly invited our missionary to sit with him and talk in detail! Stephen is half-Lebanese. His ancestors lived in Israel before 1948, but they moved to Kuwait and kept their Jewish heritage hidden. Stephen attended Columbia University and became friends with a Messianic Jewish woman. Stephen mentioned how much he admired this woman's strong faith, even though her whole family abandoned her. For hours, Stephen and our staff member talked about the gospel and its Jewish and prophetic foundation! Our staff member described for him the gospel's ability to reconcile us to God. After their conversation, they exchanged contact information, and Stephen received a pocket-sized New Testament, along with other materials about messianic prophecies. The rest of Stephen's friends sat there stunned, listening to the whole conversation! What a witness!

HISTORIC MOODY MISSIONS CONFERENCE IMPACTS STUDENTS

During a historic conference at Moody Bible Institute, which celebrated one hundred years of its Jewish Studies program, one of our young missionaries got to teach a workshop with fifty students about the history of antisemitism in the church. This missionary also had many great conversations during the week about how believers can speak to Jewish people about Jesus. Many students did not know about the persecution Jewish people endured at the hands of those who claim to believe in Jesus; but now these students' hearts are breaking for the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Moreover, all week they got to hear from speakers who minister to Jewish people around the world. They listened to stories of salvation, God's heart for His people to return to Him, and our mandate as followers of Jesus to help reach His people with this especially Jewish message of Jesus the Messiah! Please pray the Lord would continue to raise up workers in this field.

NEXT GENERATION OF MESSIANIC JEWISH LEADERS GATHERS IN LISBON, PORTUGAL!

At the end of this month, Chosen People Ministries will host a leadership conference for our young missionaries and Messianic young adults who are thoroughly invested in heart and deed in reaching the Jewish people with the gospel of Messiah Jesus. It will be an amazing time of connecting, sharing, praying, and equipping the next generation of Messianic leaders. Historically, Portugal was a hub for Jewish life until they expelled the Jewish people. Spain forced the Jewish people out in 1492. Eventually, Portugal followed suit. So, the conference will also include a time of learning about the Jewish history of Lisbon. Our prayer is for these young leaders to be more built up and encouraged in their faith and even more clear and determined to step into their God-given callings! Please pray with us for this conference as we are excited about the kingdom value of this sort of gathering, especially in impacting future ministry!



JESUS DID NOT DO AWAY WITH THE LAW —HE FULFILLED IT!

One of our missionaries got a chance to chat with a young Orthodox Jewish man about Jesus as well as early church history. Our staff member initially brought up a few striking parallels between Jesus and the Baal Shem Tov, a prominent Jewish leader who began a movement within Orthodox Judaism called Hasidism. The Orthodox man seemed intrigued and listened carefully, but then claimed the movement Jesus began was different and faulty because it did away with the Torah (the Law). He listened very openly when our staff member quoted Jesus' own words, "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill." Hearing these words for perhaps the first time captivated him, and he asked follow-up questions. Please pray Jesus' words would stick and cause this young man to do more research on what He meant by "fulfill" the Torah.

WISE GIVING



2 WAYS TO LIMIT TAXES ... and Maximize Your Year-End Gift

Because you pray and give, Jewish people around the world are receiving the good news of God's love and the promise of salvation. Thank you!

Now, you may be able to do even more to bless the chosen people, through strategic planning of your year-end giving. You may want to consider one of these giving options:

1) IRA Distribution

If you are age 70½ or older, you can transfer up to \$100,000 from your traditional individual retirement account (IRA) to a qualified charity, like Chosen People Ministries, without adding a penny to your taxable income—while receiving tax benefits not requiring you to itemize on your tax return!

2) Appreciated Assets

If you donate an appreciated asset, like real estate or stocks, you can gain a variety of benefits, including:

1. Receiving a charitable giving tax deduction for the fair market value of the asset (up to 30 percent of your adjusted gross income) if you owned the asset more than 12 months
2. Likely avoiding capital gains tax you would pay on the appreciation if you sold the asset
3. Giving the life-changing message of Messiah to even more Jewish people through your maximized gift!

Be sure to act quickly to meet the December 31 deadline for contributions to apply to this year's taxes! *Remember: an outright gift of cash must also be dated and postmarked by December 31 to qualify.*

For answers to your questions regarding strategic giving options, contact Cindy Forbes at 212-223-2252, ext. 1208 or cforbes@chosenpeople.com today!

Messianic Resources to Gift this Christmas

CHRISTMAS THROUGH JEWISH EYES



This easy-read booklet reveals how the birth and celebration of Messiah Jesus is viewed through Jewish eyes . . . it's not what you thought. • **\$7.95^{us}**

TO THE JEW FIRST

Based upon the biblical mandate to take the gospel "to the Jew first," this comprehensive resource looks at the historical, theological, and biblical context for Jewish evangelism, and provides encouragement for Christians and Messianic Jews engaged in this task. *To the Jew First* includes contributions by Richard Averbeck, Craig Blaising, Walter Kaiser, Richard Pratt, Jr. and ten other evangelical scholars. • **\$15.95^{us}**

THE HEART OF THE APOSTLE

Why do we need a commentary on only three chapters of the book of Romans, and what is so important about this part of the Scripture? *The Heart of the Apostle* shows that Romans 9 through 11 may be the most important chapters in all Scripture for understanding the heart of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, as it pertained to Israel, his "brethren according to the flesh." By Rich Freeman (softcover) • **\$11.95^{us}**



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