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NOVEMBER 1984



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THE SON OF MAN, AM?"

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The Chosen People

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"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever" (Psalm 107:1).

These wonderful words of the psalmist stab deep into our hearts. How often do we take for granted the goodness and the love of our Lord. How often do we fail to simply say thank you to our gracious God. We are living in a day and age when pausing to say "thank you," whether it be to God or to one another, has almost disappeared.

In the hustle and bustle of everyday life, in the busyness of the market places, in the hectic schedules of home life, where too often family members have simply passed each other as ships in the night, the simple words "thank you" are not heard. Sometimes, the thank you's have been replaced with a grunt, with a "hey," with an "all right," "O.K.," even "have a good day," or several other expressions.

As I thought about it, I realized that saying "thank you" recognizes that we are a recipient of a gift; that someone has done something for us. Something that we may or may not be able to do for ourselves. The "thank you's" of life tell us that we are not totally independent, we are not completely self-sufficient. Instead, we are interdependent, one upon another. Saying "thank you," in effect, recognizes our dependency one upon another. Perhaps that is why it is so difficult for many of us to say "thank you" to God.

There are many today who refuse to recognize their dependency upon God; to recognize His sovereignty — indeed, that He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. We live in a society where secular humanism has sought to elevate man above God.

A society which refuses to recognize the sovereignty of God soon becomes a thankless society. Indifference becomes a way of life. Perhaps it was this thought that led our founding fathers to hold the first Thanksgiving. They recognized and understood their dependence upon God; that, indeed, He was the One that supplied every need — that He is good and that His love does endure forever.

As we once again celebrate Thanksgiving, let us remember that it is more than simply a national holiday. For the believer, Thanksgiving should be a daily experience, a daily recognition of God's unfailing grace and love. As we express that gratitude to God, it cannot help but overflow to our fellow man. Let's put the words "thank you" back into America's vocabulary.

"Thank you" for your faithfulness in praying for and supporting this ministry so faithfully during the year. You have enabled us to share the Gospel with countless hundreds of Jewish people, who otherwise would have never heard of their Messiah, the Lord Jesus. Because of your faithfulness, we can say "thank you" to our wonderful Lord for the 35 new Jewish believers who came to faith in Jesus, just last month!

We serve a wonderful God who is faithful to His Word. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

In Messiah,

Harold A. Sevener
HAROLD A. SEVENER



Who do men say
that I am?

From the day Yeshua asked this question there has been confusion over His role as Messiah. Even today many are unsure about His identity and His purpose.

By HAROLD A. SEVENER

"Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

Yeshua (Jesus) turned to His followers one day and asked this question. The question was puzzling, because it was obvious that He was referring to Himself as the Son of Man. It was equally obvious that He already knew what the people were saying about Him.

Surely He had seen the reactions of the crowds to His miracles. Surely He knew that the people were beginning to talk about Him as the Messiah and that they wanted Him to throw off the heavy yoke of Rome and take the place of Caesar.

Still, He asked the question. Perhaps He, more than any of the people in the crowd, realized that He was more of a servant than a king. Yet even knowing this, He referred to Himself as the Son of Man, a popular Messianic title in the Apocalyptic and prophetic writings of Judaism.

There's no doubt that Yeshua perplexed Israel: On the one hand, they saw in Him the greatness of the Messiah. On the other, He appeared to be the antithesis of a mighty King.

So, "who," He asked, "do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" (Mt. 16:13).

The answer to His question then, as today, shows that there is confusion about the role of Messiah, His identity and His purpose. The con-

fusion comes because Messiah is shown as both the One who would redeem us in a spiritual sense and the One to redeem us in a physical sense.

To reconcile these two purposes, many Jews felt that the Messiah would have to come twice. Others, who studied the Scriptures, said that two Messiahs would come: Messiah Ben Joseph and Messiah Ben David.

Messiah Ben Joseph would come to suffer and die and be raised again to life. Messiah Ben David would come to establish a kingdom and be victorious over all of Israel's enemies. References to these two Messiahs are found throughout the Talmud and rabbinic writings.

Compounding the various theological debates and because of the political climate of a Roman-dominated Israel, people longed for an instant hero, a redeemer who would make Israel great among the nations as it had been in the time of David and Solomon.

It is no wonder, then, that people were confused about Yeshua.

One Question, Many Answers

Some thought that He was John, a Jewish preacher who had been popular among the people but beheaded by Herod. Others believed that He was Elijah the prophet, coming to fulfill the prophecy in Malachi that before the kingdom of God would be established on earth,

the prophet Elijah would return (Mal. 4:5).

Others believed that Yeshua was Jeremiah the prophet. But why Jeremiah? Primarily because Jeremiah was profoundly shocked by the apostasy and sin of Israel.

Still others held that He was one of the prophets, perhaps a reference to "that prophet" written about in Deuteronomy 18:18, 19. A prophet like unto Moses was to come, unto whom the people were to listen; a prophet who would be both a redeemer and a leader of his people.

Answers from the Talmud and Midrash

Some of these answers are also expressed in Talmud and the Midrash. Joseph Klausner comments as follows:

The authors of the Talmud and Midrash, with their fine national feeling, perceived the relation and connexion between the Messianic expectation and the exodus from Egypt, between the Messiah and Moses.

They named Moses "the first redeemer" in contrast to the Messiah, who is "the last redeemer."

They compared Moses to the Messiah in various phraseology: for example, just as Moses brought redemption to his people, so also will the Messiah bring redemption; just as Moses was brought up in the house of Pharaoh among the enemies of his people, so also will the Messiah dwell in the city

of Rome, among the destroyers of his land; just as Moses, after revealing himself to his brethren in Egypt and announcing to them that deliverance was near, was forced to go into hiding for a time, so also will Messiah be forced to hide himself after the first revelations; just as Moses crossed from Midian to Egypt riding on an ass (Exod. 4:20), so also will Messiah come riding on an ass; just as Moses caused manna to rain from the sky, so will Messiah bring forth different kinds of food in miraculous ways; and just as Moses gave the children of Israel wells and springs of water in the wilderness, so also will Messiah make streams of water flow in the desert.

Not only this, but the acceptance of suffering because of the iniquities of others, which late Jewish legend attributes to the Messiah, is in the Talmud and is also attributed to our master, Moses. (This may be called "suffering for atonement"; Christian scholars call it "vicarious suffering," and in Christianity this idea has become an important article of faith.)¹

All of these popular opinions were a mixture of truth and fiction, legend and tradition. Such are the popular notions of the Messiah today.

Most people don't know who He is, nor are they prepared or motivated to find out.

The Second Question

Then, in the midst of the confusion of the many answers to His first question, Yeshua asked His followers yet another, more personal

question: "But who do you say that I am?" (Mt. 16:15).

Peter jumped to respond for all of them, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God" (Mt. 16:16).

Peter's answer reflected what he knew to be true, based upon his experience with Yeshua and his faith in the God who sent Him.

Peter had seen with his own eyes the miracles Yeshua had performed. He had listened with his own ears to His teaching and sermons. So, in contrast to legend and tradition, in contrast to popular opinion, Peter declared for himself and the other apostles a truth that would ultimately change the course of human history: He declared that Yeshua was the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

One Question, One Answer

Peter's answer to Yeshua's question was more than an answer; it was a God-inspired revelation of truth. Peter knew that in order for Yeshua to be the Messiah of Israel, in order for Him to redeem Israel from her sins, in order for Him to provide salvation for all mankind, He would have to be both God and man.

The prophet Isaiah spoke of His deity and His humanity when he wrote, "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder. And his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (9:6).

Isaiah had a twofold emphasis. A

wondrous Child was to be born, but the Child born would also be a Son who is given. The titles that are ascribed to this Child are the titles of deity—the Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Eternal Father, the Prince of Peace.

God's Son In Jewish Scripture

The Jewish Scriptures emphasize the fact that God indeed has a Son (Ps. 2:7). In Proverbs we read of the majesty and sovereignty of God, the One who is the creator of the heaven and earth. "Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name and what is His Son's name, if you know?" (Prov. 30:4).

Peter *did* know. He had made an emphatic response to Yeshua's question. Peter's was a declaration of faith based upon the revelation of God and upon his knowledge of Old Testament prophecy.

Then Yeshua verified the truth of Peter's answer by saying, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 16:17).

Yes, God Himself helped Peter see that the Man he was following, Yeshua, was indeed the Messiah, the Son of the living God. Later Peter came to a deeper realization of the internal evidence in the Old Testament, which showed that only in Yeshua can all Messianic prophecy

The prophet Isaiah spoke of His deity and His humanity when he wrote, "For unto us a Child is born..."



be reconciled.

What Is Our Answer?


Those of us living today have more than the written Word of God to prove the Messiahship of Yeshua. True, we don't have the Messiah physically walking among us, but we do have the Holy Spirit, whom He has sent, and we have the external evidence of hundreds upon thousands of Jewish and Gentile believers in the Messiah. These are people who have, by faith, received

Yeshua and declared Him to be the Messiah, the Son of the living God. Their lives have been wonderfully and dramatically transformed because of this faith, even as Peter's life was deeply changed because of his profession of faith.

Almost 2,000 years of history have passed since Yeshua asked these two questions of His followers. He is asking the same questions today.

"Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" Our answers can be guesses. They can be theological,

studious or downright foolish. But for those who seek with their heart and mind turned to the God of Israel, He will proclaim Himself in Spirit and truth as Messiah, the Son of Man, the King of Israel and the Redeemer of all men.

"Who do *you* say that I am?" 

¹Joseph Klausner, "The Source and Beginnings of the Messianic Idea," in *Messianism in the Talmudic Era*, ed. Leo Landman, pp. 17, 18.

Richard Freeman: Starting All Over With The Lord

With a mortgage and three children it didn't seem smart for Richard to give up a good job and go into the ministry. But then again he knew God was calling.



Our *Chosen People* readers often tell us they regularly pray for those whose testimonies appear in the magazine. Therefore, since so much has happened in Richard Freeman's life since his testimony appeared (October 1984), we wanted to bring you up to date so you can know better how to pray.

To bring you up to date . . .

Richard, Jewish, born and raised in New York, had heard the Gospel for the first time from a co-worker. Not long afterward, one August night, his wife Julia had come to faith at a Bible study.

When Julia had come home that night, she broke into tears and cried, "I'm so unhappy you're not going to heaven with me!"

After an angry confrontation that evening, Richard had tried ignoring Julia's faith. Then, just as he was again feeling in control of the situation, they discovered that their son, Brian, had an ominous, large cyst on his arm. Through months of waiting and agonizing, Richard found himself praying.

As a result of praying, Richard started to become increasingly curious about God. One Sunday he agreed to go with Julia to the Light of Israel Congregation, pastored by Chosen People worker Sam Nadler. There he heard the Gospel in a Jewish context for the first time.

After that, it made sense, and what's more, he knew God was calling him. But he was unable to turn his life over to the Lord. Later that week, as he was reading a copy of

the *Chosen People* magazine, he asked Julia, "What do I have to do to get saved?"

The very next night, he made a public statement of faith at Light of Israel and began studying the Scriptures with Sam Nadler.

All during this time, the sensible evidence shouted, "How can you think about abandoning your home and comfort and security to go off and enter the ministry? How can you start over at the bottom when you have come so far in your career? What would you do if all of this happened while you were in seminary?"

Yet the Freemans had more peace than they had ever experienced.

Deeper Than Doubts

"We just knew—something much deeper than our own doubts constantly reminded us—that God was in control and was working through all of these crises," Richard remembers.

"God was so real that even the endless hospital trips, unexpected bills and constant bad news were. . . Well, I can't say that the bad parts were a blessing. But somehow in it all, God blessed us in a unique way. For instance, our daughter Heather was constantly encouraging us to remember all of God's blessings. As a parent, this meant a lot to me."

Julia recovered. Brian's cyst was operated on, and Julia's sister's surgery went well. His father's tumor, after radiation therapy, a second operation and much prayer, was gone and, miraculously, within eight months he was back at work.

Then, after recovering from their bout with all of these dramatic events, the Freemans found themselves under once more—their infant son, Joel, needed surgery.

Pounded and pummeled, the Freemans were amazed at how the Lord used all this to *encourage* them.

Grew Closer

"Stress and hurts and fears and all those things were there. I wouldn't volunteer to go through it again. But through it all, we grew closer to each other and to God. Our whole family grew together, and we saw it as a bad time in our lives but a wonderful time with the Lord, knowing firsthand that He was undergirding us and that He was the only real help we had in all these things," Richard testifies.

"We learned a new kind of peace, a new kind of security."

So, in February, the Freemans put their home on the market. For almost five months nothing happened. In order to have funds and be able to enter seminary on time, the house would have to sell before July 1. Then, June 30, they got a written contract on the house.

And Today . . .

As this issue appears, Richard is enrolled at Dallas Theological Seminary, following God's call to prepare for the ministry. But the path to this point has been strewn with obstacles.

Richard and Julia's lives blossomed in Messiah. Active at Light of Israel Congregation and using the gifts God was developing in him, Richard studied and grew in faith, eventually accepting leadership and teaching responsibilities within the congregation.

He and Julia began to think that God might be calling them into the

ministry. In January 1986, shortly after their third child was born, they discussed it and started to pray about the future.

But it seemed so far-fetched. After all, Richard was an established businessman, the manager of the International Accounting Department of a large firm. His ministry at the congregation was significant and, with a mortgage and three children, ages 11, 9 and newborn, it didn't seem like a smart time to start all over.

Richard and Julia's lives blossomed in Messiah. Active at Light of Israel Congregation and using the gifts God was developing in him, Richard grew in faith.

Could they afford for Richard to take off and go to seminary? The burden laid heavier than ever on them, but it still looked so foolish. What about all the security they had worked for, their well-established lives? To top it all off, they were suddenly bombarded by experiences that made Richard's secure job look very appealing:

- Julia went in for gallbladder surgery.
- Brian's cyst, almost a forgotten part of their life because it had disappeared years before, suddenly grew back and required surgery.
- Julia's sister needed open-heart surgery.
- Richard's father, who does not know the Lord, was diagnosed with a cancerous brain tumor.

The surgeon could not remove the tumor completely—the prognosis was bleak.

New Car Totalled

On July 23, a month before they were to leave, their new car was totaled when they were hit from behind. Even this worked out for them: Everyone walked away from the accident uninjured, and they were able to buy a van. The van was a much more comfortable way to travel to Texas for six people (the five Freemans and friend Sondra Guy from Light of Israel, who went to Texas to help them settle in).

With joy, excitement and leaning on the Scripture verse that had sustained them throughout the past few months—"He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5:24)—the Freemans moved to Dallas. After receiving his Master of Theology in the Old Testament, Richard hopes to go into Jewish missions.

"I got saved through the Light of Israel," he explains, and I want to be a part of reaching more Jewish people the same way. Before I went there [to the congregation], I always thought you had to give up your Jewishness if you were going to believe in Jesus.

"Of course, that's not at all the case. Being a believer is the most Jewish thing I could ever do, but hearing it couldn't convince me of it. I knew it was true when I saw it in the lives of all the people in the congregation." ☺

Your continued prayers for the Freemans, especially for Richard as he looks for part-time work, and your involvement in the lives of the others you meet through the Chosen People magazine are important! Please continue to pray.

On the Road With The Chosen People Singers

Diary selections from members of our music team written during a recent season of ministry in the Pacific Northwest.

June 20

Today, on our way to Jacksonville, Oregon, we stopped at Rice Hill (a famous ice cream place) for a snack, and I met a Jewish woman named Sarah. She was intrigued by our van, which had "Chosen People" written on the side. God opened up an opportunity to share the Good News of Messiah with Sarah. It is amazing how God leads us to people in the most out-of-the-way places. Praise the Lord!

— Lisa

July 7

This afternoon we went to a nursing home to do a concert and to reach out to the residents. Many did not know the Lord, and some were really hurting. One woman expressed her doubts. When she was younger she had accepted the Lord, but now she has a memory impairment and cannot recall when she made her decision. We were able to pray with her and reassure her that God is faithful and He remembers, even when our memories fail!

— Martha

Last summer, while many of our missionaries were working with the Summer Training and Evangelism Program — training people in Jewish evangelism — five young Jewish and Gentile believers (Steve and Lisa Cagan, Stephanie Rees, Martha Aller and Jonathan Lyons) were in the Pacific Northwest with the Chosen People Music Team.

Their purpose was to share the vision of reaching Jewish people for our Lord. As is often the case, while they were ministering to others, God was also ministering to them

To all those who prayed, who encouraged, and who hosted the team, to all those who gave so that they could go, thank you and God bless you.





July 24

God really encouraged me tonight as we did our concert. We have been so blessed, being able to encourage and share with other believers. But I was longing to know that Jewish people were being ministered to also. Then, tonight, David came up to me after the service. He is Jewish and had just become a believer. He is really afraid to tell his parents about his faith in Messiah. He said hearing my testimony gave him confidence that God would be with him. We prayed and talked. We need to remember to pray for David.

— Steve

July 29

We had the opportunity to visit with a Jewish-believing family in Canada. We all enjoyed the fellowship. But I had a special time talking with their daughter, Rivka, until 2 a.m. It was basically "girl talk" about relationships, marriage, Jewishness and life. When you travel a lot, you encounter so many different people, but never really get a chance to know them well. That's why it was such a joy to be able to make such a good friend along the way. I thank God for bringing this family and so many others along our tour path and for the special time I had just "hanging out" with Rivka.

— Stephanie

The Chosen People Singers: Jonathan Lyon, Martha Aller, Lisa Cagan, Stephanie Rees, and Steve Cagan.

August 11

Tonight a young man named Jeff came to the church to hear our concert. He said he hadn't felt like coming, but something inside drew him. Afterward, at our host's home, we had the opportunity to listen and encourage Jeff, who is going through some hard personal times. He is a believer, just coming back to the Lord, and feels that what he is going through is breaking his heart. Before he left, he said it must have been a divine appointment to come tonight. What a blessing to us, just to be there with God and for God!

— Lisa

August 15

I don't believe it happened! We all got sick. First Jonathan. Then me. Now Stephanie and Martha. Lisa is not doing too well either. It is some type of stomach flu and a real "killer." I am soooo grateful to all of our host families who took us home like their own children and nursed us back to health. Thank You, Lord, for our beautiful hosts!

— Steve





August 18

Overlooking the glimmering sapphire carpet of Puget Sound from my host's balcony, it is a hot, golden day. A day off! After singing in four concerts in twenty-four hours at three different churches, I am drained. But the warm sun draws my attention to God's Son, Jesus.

— Lisa

Are you a mature believer with a heart to share your love for the Jewish Messiah?

Are you musically gifted with singing and/or instrument skills?

Then let us hear from you. We are forming music groups of people who want to serve God through traveling, witnessing and sharing their love for the Messiah.

For more information contact:

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Chosen People Ministries
Box 2000, Orangeburg, N.Y. 10962**

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Mutiny on the Bounty: "You're driving us too hard, Captain Cagan!"

August 21

It was amazing! I was really out of it — spacey, tired, cranky, down. I was in no condition to have joy, to stand there strumming my guitar and knocking the tambourine silly with a smile on my face. But then as the opening chords rang out, it happened! A surge of energy, a current of joy flowed through me. I couldn't understand it. Then I realized: It's Friday night, and my friends at Beth Sar Shalom in Boston would have just been meeting in prayer. As my intercessors, God entrusted me to them. How kind He is to give us such loving brethren.

— Jonathan



August 22

At our meeting last night, a woman told us about two Jewish friends of hers who live an hour away. So today we drove over to visit them and give them one of our Jewish calendars as an early Rosh Hashana gift. We prayed for a special opportunity to share the Good News of Messiah with these two and had a super visit with them. Both were from Eastern Europe and had escaped just before the Holocaust. They were open to hearing about what we believed and graciously accepted our gift and a *L'Chaim* tract. Dear God, please show these two Yourself.

— Lisa

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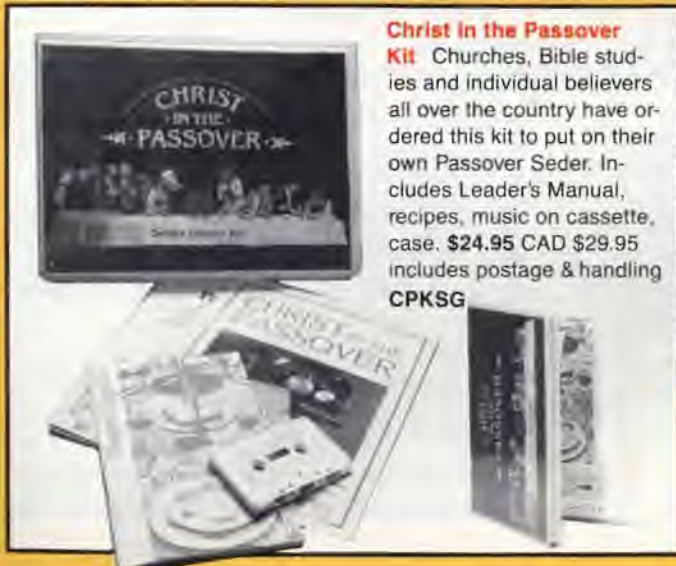
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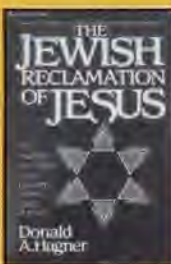
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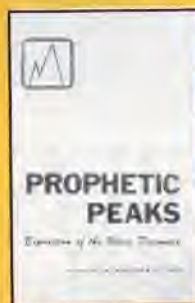
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EXPANSION OF OUR RADIO BROADCAST IN RUSSIA AND ISRAEL

“I Will Say To The North, ‘Give Them Up!’”

Starting November 5, a new voice will be added to the international airwaves—Chosen People missionary Albert Davis Israeli. Twice a week he will beam a Russian language broadcast into the USSR and Israel, expanding our already existing broadcast schedule.

Transmitting through the Voice of Hope in Lebanon, the broadcast is entitled *Svet Izrailia* (“Light of Israel” in Russian). The fifteen-minute format includes traditional Hebrew music, Russian Gospel music, poems with a Gospel orientation, a Gospel message and an invitation for response.

For USSR-born Albert, this broadcast is part of a God-given dream. “In Russia, first the people are taught that there is no God. Even so, the atheist knows he is a Jew and will say, ‘Jesus is not for me, I am Jewish.’ So our task is doubly hard.

“But there are many millions of Jews in the Soviet Union, and according to prophecies in the Old Testament, they will leave there one

day and go into the Promised Land. Radio is the only way we can reach them now.

Albert will introduce them to the idea of a living God and also that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah. They will also hear about Jewish people worldwide who have accepted Jesus as the Messiah. After hearing these broadcasts, they will hopefully be more receptive to the Gospel when they come out of the Soviet Union.

“We are offering to send a complete Bible—Old and New Testaments—to those who write, and we must pray that these Bibles reach them, for this is something we cannot control.

“Also we obviously cannot charge these people any money—what would we do with Russian rubles? And we don’t know what kind of responses we’ll receive. It could be 100; it could be 5,000. So we need much prayer for the administration and funds of the broadcast.

“We’ll transmit into Russia on shortwaves, since most people have

shortwave radios in their homes. Our broadcasts will be on Saturdays, at approximately 7 p.m. Moscow time. They will reach from the Ural Mountains to the western and southern borders and to the North Sea. We will also reach into many of the East Bloc ally states where Soviet military personnel are stationed.

“For Israel we are broadcasting on Thursdays at 7 p.m. to reach the Russian and Eastern European Jews who are not receiving the Gospel now. The broadcasts will be on AM and FM, so people can hear them wherever they have a radio.”

Albert Davis Israeli’s testimony has been in our Chosen People magazine, but you might not recognize his name. When his



family came to Canada (from Russia and Israel), they changed their name to Davis. As a witness to his people, Albert has gone back to the original family name, Israeli.

"I Want To Believe, But What About My Family?"

An Orthodox Jewish woman counts the cost of believing.

By MARTHA ALLER

I heard about Deborah from Israel Cohen (Chosen People worker, Brooklyn) even before I met her, so I knew that she was going through a difficult time with her life.

As an Orthodox Jew, Deborah felt that she had a faith to cling to, but somehow it was never enough. Yes, she believed in God. Yes, she prayed regularly. She had even enrolled her oldest child in religious school and scrupulously observed *kashrut* (kosher laws) in her comfortable Manhattan home. She hoped, by every way possible, to please God and be closer to Him.

But still, it was never enough. She had been separated from her husband for over a year and lived daily with hurt and a sense of failure. All of her best attempts to draw closer to God left her with an even deeper need for love and security.

Then one day Deborah ran across an old friend. There was something new and different about him, and she immediately sensed that something wonderful had taken place in his life: He was so excited about life and so confident about God.

Overwhelmed

When he explained that he had become a believer in Jesus and enthusiastically attempted to share his faith with her, she was overwhelmed.

This friend, a Gentile, didn't seem to understand that she was Jewish and that Jews simply didn't believe in Jesus.

The next day Deborah's friend saw a poster announcing that

Chosen People worker Israel Cohen was speaking at a nearby church. Deborah agreed to go, to "check it out."

Deborah found herself drawn by Israel's love and enthusiasm. But she was disturbed that he did not wear a *talit* or *yarmulke*. Jews who truly loved God were supposed to keep the 613 laws, weren't they? How could he claim to serve God and yet not wear the traditional religious garments? Most of all, how could he claim to love God and believe in Jesus?

After the service Israel and Deborah set up a time to meet again, and I was invited to this meeting.

Deborah approached the meeting confused and frightened. How could someone say they were Jewish and yet believe in Jesus?

How could she turn her back to the one comfort left in her life—the God of

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Wouldn't God be hurt if she accepted the Messiah? Or would He?

continued





Martha Aller became a part-time worker on our staff in October 1986. Then in January 1987, she became a full-time staff member. She works in Westchester County with Sam Nadler, where she is involved in sharing her faith, discipling and teaching.

I could see the doubt and indecision cloud Deborah's face. Clearly part of her wanted to respond to Jesus.

I could see the doubt and indecision cloud Deborah's face. Clearly part of her wanted to respond to Yeshua (Jesus). During the course of the discussion, she realized, to her astonishment, that Jesus had fulfilled the Messianic prophecies.

Then, like a spark that was growing brighter, she understood how willingly and lovingly God had given His only Son to die as the *kippora* (atonement) for her sin.

"I'd like to accept Jesus as my Messiah," she confessed, "but I'm so afraid." On the one hand, Deborah had strong ties to tradition; on the other, she had a deep longing to know God.

We had been talking for almost three hours, and it was obvious that Deborah needed to spend some time alone. She agreed to come to our Bible study that night.

At the Bible study, she looked like a person who had found a home.

"I know I need what these people have," she confided in me. "I can see their love. I can see God's love. I want to believe, but I'm so afraid."

The implications of faith in Jesus were weighing heavily on her. "What about my family? What about my children? My husband would sue for custody. My parents would hate me."

I couldn't deny how serious her fears were, but I urged her to look at the greater picture.

"Deborah, God has given His Son Yeshua to die for you. Can't you trust your children into His care? Can't you see that only He can truly protect them in any case?"

Finally Yielded

Her expression revealed the struggle in her heart. Finally, she yielded up her fears.

"I want Yeshua as my Messiah now. If God can give His Son for me, I think I should be able to trust Him with my children."

We bowed our heads and prayed together. As Deborah accepted the Messiah into her life, I knew the angels above were joyfully singing and shouting praises to God.

Please pray for this daughter of Zion who has returned to her God and found the love of the Messiah of Israel. 🙏

Editor's update: Word has just reached us that Deborah is struggling in her faith and wavering in her newfound belief. Please pray for her during this difficult time.

"Boy, You Make It Sound So Jewish!"

By IRVING SALZMAN

"What are ya doing in New York?" he asked me.

I had barely gotten into the cab, given my destination and smiled at the friendly, expansive-looking driver who greeted me cheerfully, when he asked me where I was from and why I was here.

When I told him I was going to Bible school, he raised his eyebrows with interest. "Oh? What's that? What do ya learn there?"

"We learn about Jesus, about the Bible and about what God wants from us," I answered, beginning to be glad that I had chosen to take a cab.

Originally I had planned to make the trip from one end of Brooklyn to the other end of Queens by bus, but when I discovered it would take two or three hours that way, I opted for the taxi instead.

"Oh, well, I'm Jewish," he said matter-of-factly without being hostile or on guard.

"Well, so am I," I replied,

That's what a New York cab driver exclaimed to Irving Salzman our part time worker in Brooklyn after Irving told him about Messiah. You're right if you think the story gets better!

equally nonchalant.

I was sitting in the front seat with him, and he turned and looked at me closely. I went on to explain that I had gone to an Orthodox school, had been a Torah reader in the synagogue and eventually studied the Scripture and came to believe Jesus was Messiah.

Pretty soon we were talking about why I had made my decision, and I was sharing different prophecies with him. I told him about how Jesus fulfilled the promises such as His birth in Bethlehem and His death according to the prophecies, like Isaiah 53 and Zechariah 12:10.

With a look of open interest, he turned and faced me, saying, "Boy! You make it sound so Jewish!"

"That's because it is so Jewish!" I answered.

He had all sorts of questions about what I had told him. Why didn't the rabbis believe? Why did people think that Jews shouldn't believe in Jesus? He sounded curious but not especially searching for the truth.

A lot of what he said sounded like he was going off on a tangent, mostly just talking to be friendly. Still, he kept the topic alive, and I answered his questions as best as I could.

When we pulled up at my destination, I had my hand on the door to get out. "How do you feel about these things?" I asked. "Would you like this for yourself, to know that you have eternal life with God?"

His brows pulled together a little bit. "Well, yes, I would."

"Would you like to receive Jesus... right now?" I offered.

"Yeah, I would."

There in the cab, we prayed together as he received the Lord. We spent a few more minutes talking and exchanging phone numbers.

I've called him since. At first he was eager to attend a Bible study, but now he seems hesitant.

Please pray for Dave to get a good grasp on his new beliefs and to grow in his faith. ☺

Irving Salzman is a student at Northeastern Bible College and a part-time worker in our Brooklyn ministry. Before he came to the Lord, Irving attended an Orthodox yeshiva (religious training school) and was a Torah reader in a synagogue.



From the Exile to the Christ

The Hasmonean Dynasty

By DR. DANIEL FUCHS

One of the problems that Judah Maccabeus and his soldiers faced in their war with Antiochus Epiphanes was the fact that Judea's neighboring nations, whenever they could, gladly helped the Syrians fight against the Jews. In fact, they used the same tactics back then that the Arab nations of the twentieth century are using with modern Israel. They not only helped Syria fight against the Jews by sending soldiers and money, they also persecuted the Jews who lived in their midst. The pagans of Jaffa, for instance, drowned two hundred Jewish men, women and children who lived among them.

The Syrian Yoke

When Judah and his men rededicated the Temple in 165 B.C. some thought they had attained their goal. In fact, the *Chasidim*, who were the nucleus of what later became the Pharisees, withdrew from the conflict at this point. Judah sent punitive expeditions against the surrounding nations.

Meanwhile things were going badly for Antiochus in the East. In the summer of 164 B.C., he was stricken with a loathsome malady that affected his mind. When he learned that Jerusalem and the Temple were in Jewish hands, he went mad. Before his death, he wrote a letter appointing his nine-year-old son, Antiochus V, as his successor.

When Judah learned of this, he immediately laid siege to the Acra fortress in the Temple area in Jerusalem. Judah's old enemy, Lysias, believed that now at last he would avenge his defeat at Mizpeh. He appointed himself viceroy for the new king and was able to raise a huge army of mercenaries from

all of the enemies that surrounded Judea. It was the most formidable army that the Maccabees ever faced. It included a group of thirty-two trained elephants.

Josephus describes the battle as follows:

So the king took this army, and marched hastily out of Antioch, with Lysias, who had the command of the whole, and came to Idumea, and thence went up to the city Bethsura, a city that was strong, and not to be taken without great difficulty. He set about this city, and besieged it. And while the inhabitants of Bethsura courageously opposed him, and sallied out upon him, and burnt his engines of war, a great deal of time was spent in the siege. But when Judas heard of the king's coming, he raised the siege of the citadel, and met the king, and pitched his camp in certain straits, at a place called Bethzachariah, at the distance of seventy furlongs from the enemy; but the king soon drew his forces from Bethsura, and brought them to those straits. And as soon as it was day, he put his men in battle-array, and made his elephants follow one another through the narrow passes, because they could not be set sideways by one another. Now round about every elephant there were a thousand footmen, and five hundred horsemen. The elephants also had high towers [upon their backs], and archers [in them]. And he also made the rest of his army to go up the mountains, and put his friends before the rest; and gave orders for the army to shout aloud, and so he attacked the enemy. He also exposed to sight their golden and brazen shields, so that a glorious splendour was sent from them; and when they shouted the mountains echoed again. When Judas saw this, he was not terrified, but received the enemy with great courage, and slew about six hundred of the first ranks.

Antiquities of the Jews, Book XII pp. 370, 371.

It was during this battle that Judah's younger brother, Eleazar, saw an elephant that was larger than the others and was arrayed with gorgeous gaudy adornments. Eleazar guessed that this elephant must have been carrying the boy-king, Antiochus V, in its wooden tower. He attacked the troops that were defending the elephant, ran beneath it, and stabbed its belly. The huge animal fell dead on him and crushed him to death. It was a futile gesture; the king was not riding that elephant. The death of one elephant didn't slow the relentless advance of the Syrians. Judah and his army fled to Jerusalem.

One of the problems that Judah Maccabeus and his soldiers faced in their war with Antiochus Epiphanes was the fact that Judea's neighboring nations, whenever they could, gladly helped the Syrians fight against the Jews.

Lysias laid siege to Jerusalem. The siege lasted for months. It was a sabbatical year during which the Jews could not, according to the Law, cultivate a new crop. And so it seemed as if at last the Syrians would starve the Jews into surrendering.

A Temporary Truce

Lysias, however, received some bad news from home. His rival, Philip, was the legal regent to the boy-king, Antiochus V, and he had advanced from the East and occupied Antioch. Lysias realized that he must return to Syria. He proposed a negotiated truce with the Jews. There were two issues to be

decided — religious liberty and political independence. The Syrians offered to yield the first if the Jews would give up their struggle for political freedom.

Judah proved himself to be a capable general. Foolishly, however, he entered into a mutual defense pact with Rome. Little did he know that Rome never defended any nation.

Actually, neither side had any real intention of keeping the peace. Judah wanted political as well as religious freedom, and Lysias would return after he took care of his rival, Philip.

Judah had proved himself to be a capable general. The war with the Seleucid kings had lasted 25 years, but Judah was not satisfied. It is easy, at this point in time, to criticize Judas's next act. He entered into what he thought was a mutual defense pact with Rome. Little did he know that Rome never defended any nation. Within 80 years the bitterly won independence of the Jews would be trodden under the feet of Pompey's armies. Judea would learn of a crueler despot than Antiochus Epiphanes.

A Native Yoke Under Jonathan Maccabeus

Judah Maccabeus was succeeded by his brother, Jonathan, who led the people for 17 years. He was not the military leader that Judah was, nor was he a statesman. Actually, he was a successful politician. His successes were due mainly to the skill with which he played one man against another. He was thoroughly unscrupulous.

In 152 B.C., a civil war erupted in Syria. Both sides

continued on next page

were eager for Jonathan's support. By manipulating both sides, Jonathan obtained appointments as high priest, governor of Judea, and general. He entered Jerusalem in triumph, rebuilt the city and fortified the Temple area. Then on the Feast of Tabernacles he donned the royal robes and presented himself as high priest. The Jews had spent 25 years freeing themselves from a foreign yoke. In the years to come they would learn that a native yoke could be just as heavy.

The Yoke of the Gentiles Broken

At last in 143 B.C., Jonathan was lured into a trap by Trypho and was slain. When Jonathan died, there was only one son of Mattathias Hasmon left, the aging Simon, who was noted for his wisdom. Simon gathered an "Assembly of the Great." Later

the Sanhedrin claimed to have developed from this assembly. During this assembly, Simon was appointed hereditary "Ruler and High Priest" adding the proviso "until a true prophet shall rise."

Simon was now an old man. Although he actually was never anointed king, he is generally regarded as the founder of the Hasmonian Dynasty. He, too, like his brothers, would suffer a violent death, but before he died he was able to negotiate political independence for the Jews. In 142 B.C., "the yoke of the Gentiles" was removed from Israel, and people began to write in their documents and contracts, "In the first year of Simon the great high priest and commander and leader of the Jews" (Maccabees 15:6). After 450 years, Jerusalem was once more the capital of a sovereign state. 🕊

A Special Way To Remember

When Congress enacted sweeping changes in the estate tax laws a few years ago, it generously increased the gift tax exemption for personal gifts from \$3,000 to \$10,000. The unlimited exemption on gifts to ABMJ/Chosen People Ministries remains unchanged.

In the combination of those rules lies a unique way to achieve two desirable objectives: to say "I love you" or "thank you" year after year to a relative, a cherished friend or perhaps a retired pastor or missionary—and at the same time to provide an ultimate gift to this ministry in lieu of a bequest by will.

How to fulfill both objectives? By investing in an ABMJ Gift Annuity now and directing that the guaranteed payments for life be made to that other person. Thereafter, any unused portion of your investment will be available for the expense of Jewish evangelism.

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Interested? Just send us the name and birthdate of your prospective annuitant. Advise if the gift is to be anonymous. Include your phone number so that we might contact you if necessary for further understanding of your intention. Please write or call THE PRESIDENT, ABMJ/CP Ministries, P.O. Box 2000, Orangeburg, NY 10962, phone 914/359-8535.

Please Pray

Here are some more inspiring stories of people who came to the Lord through this year's Summer Training and Evangelism Program. We hope you will pray for these new brothers and sisters in the faith.

From Ohio:

"I'm very open, I want to learn."

This was what Fanya told Wilma the very first time she heard the Gospel at a Messianic seder.

Long before Wilma Koch met Fanya, a Jewish teacher from Communist Romania, she had been praying for her. Wilma recalls, "I was friends with Fanya's husband—he had come ahead of the rest of the family—and by the time his wife arrived here, I felt like we were friends."

A learned woman, Fanya had lost her teaching post when her husband came to America. It had been three years since they had been together, and now—reunited and free at last—Fanya had many reasons to think about the goodness of God.

Time Together

For several months after they met, the two women spent a great deal of time together: talking about Scripture, going to lunch or just chatting while Wilma rode along so Fanya could perfect her newly learned driving skills.

Fanya regularly attended the fellowship meetings and Bible studies, regularly took tracts home to read and seemed to consider the Gospel carefully. With her methodical, intellectual manner, Fanya seemed more a student than a seeker. . . .

Until the night the STEP team came to Columbus. Albert Israeli taught the Bible study that night,

discussing the parallels between Joseph and Christ. Something in the message brought it all together for Fanya. The impersonal became real. Afterward, there was a new light in her eyes when she remarked, "It's true! It's really true!" But she left that evening without saying more.

The next morning, Fanya called Wilma and asked her, "Did you pray for me last night?"

Even in those brief words, Wilma could tell there was a difference in Fanya.

Personal Decision

"Yes, I prayed for you," Wilma assured her, and then continued, "Fanya, you know it's true now, don't you? That Jesus is the Jewish Messiah and that He died for your sins? Now you need to make a personal decision. You need to accept that He died for you. You need to accept His salvation."

That day, on the phone, Fanya received the Lord.

During the next week, the two women spent precious hours together searching the Scriptures. An added bonus during that visit was that Fanya's teenage daughter joined in and asked several questions.

Then, because of an out-of-state job opportunity, the family had to move. Please keep them in your prayers and pray for their family members in Romania, who do not know the Gospel.

Wilma Koch is a volunteer worker with Chosen People Ministries in Worthington, Ohio, outside Columbus. It was while she was in the hospital twenty years ago, following an auto accident, that she first witnessed to a Jewish person. From that encounter grew a deep love and burden for reaching Jewish people for the Lord.

From Nebraska:

"We'd like to talk to you about the Lord."

"Announcing your intentions through a security intercom is not exactly the way you'd think of making a first call on someone, but in this case, it was the only choice we had."

Staff worker Michael Campo and David Defoe from STEP were in Omaha and had received Bertha's name from her sister, Elsie. The two STEP workers had met Elsie, a Jewish believer, in a nursing home, and she had given them the name and address of her unbelieving sister.


"When we got to Bertha's, it was a security building. We had to announce ourselves through the intercom and tell her what we wanted—to talk to her about the Lord. She sent down a neighbor to 'look us over,' and then, finally, after a series of intercom communications, Bertha invited us up," Michael remembers.

When they walked into her apartment, they met a sweet woman, small and very fragile, who gladly welcomed their company. As they talked and became friends, Michael told her, "I'm here to talk to you about some serious matters. As a matter of fact, it is the most important issue any of us will ever decide."

For several hours, Bertha, Michael and David talked about spiritual matters—Scripture, God, doubt and belief. When Michael asked, "Would you like to pray with me to receive the Messiah yourself?" she answered without wavering, "Yes."

Please pray for the church members who will be visiting her, and pray for both of these Jewish sisters—Elsie and Bertha—who are now sisters in the Lord.

Michael Campo, a Gentile believer, grew up with no love for, or interest in, Jewish people. After coming to faith, Michael met John Bell, a Chosen People worker, and through this friendship, the Lord completely changed Michael's heart. He was very involved in helping establish the Vineyard Congregation. Earlier this year, he joined the Chosen People Ministries staff.



ALASKA

MIDWESTERN USA
Mr. Roy Schwarcz
6057 N. Kedzie Ave.
Chicago, IL 60659
312/338-5959

NORTHEASTERN USA
Mr. Sam Nadler
250 West 57th St.
#230 New York NY 10107
212/757-6716

HAWAII

WESTERN USA
Dr. Daniel Goldberg
20442 Sherman Way
Canoga Pk., CA 91306
818/884-8245

SOUTHERN USA
Mr. Larry Jaffrey
P.O. Box 2303
Reston VA 22090
703/471-0163

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