

The Chosen People

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*The Shamash, the
Servant of God,
illuminates us*

*for it is by His
Menorah that
we see light.*



"LORD, I LOVE THY LAW"
THE STORY OF IRVING SALZMAN

The Chosen People

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From the President

Warships are steaming through the Persian Gulf. Missiles and fighter aircraft are poised, ready to strike at a minute's warning. Iran and Iraq continue their bloody war, angry words, terrorism, violence. In anger and strife, the nations prepare for war.

In South Africa, the people and the government are caught in a bitter racial struggle—Black against Caucasian, oppressed majority against ruling minority, racial tension, violence. In prejudice and hatred, the nations prepare for war.

In Central America, the class struggle continues—Contra versus Sandinista, a cruel war, brother against brother, family against family, political ideology against social change. In hatred and violence, the nations prepare for war.

In Northern Ireland, Catholic against Protestant, car bombs, retaliation, murder, mayhem. In India, the Sikh against the Hindu. In Moslem countries, the Shiite against the Sunnite. The Orthodox against the Liberal, the fanatic against the secular. Angry words. Bitter words. In religious fanaticism, the nations prepare for war.

In the United States, in the nations of the European Common Market and in Japan, the stock market comes crashing down. Economies are thrown into turmoil. To balance these inflated economies, nations are building weapons of war and selling them to the highest bidder. Middle Eastern nations, Third World countries and terrorists are purchasing these weapons. It's an \$800 billion business. Silently, the Western and Eastern Bloc countries are moving from peacetime economies to wartime economies. In greed and economic crises, the nations prepare for war.

How desperately the world needs to hear the message of the angels which burst upon that late night sky so long ago. "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord" (Lk. 2:10, 11).

"Do not be afraid." These are words of great joy. A Savior, a Messiah, the Lord has come. This message of hope, of peace, of love, this message of salvation and redemption seems to be lost in a world where prejudice, greed, religion, violence, economic instability and political ideologies tear apart nations, families, societies, preparing them for war.

This message of hope proclaimed by angels almost 2,000 years ago is far from lost. It is still finding and giving "peace to men on whom his favor rests" (Lk. 2:14). The message is no longer heralded by the angels. Instead, it has been committed to you and me. We are God's ambassadors, proclaiming this message of Good News to a world on a collision course with destruction.

As we share this message, as we live this message, it will cause nations to transform their instruments of war into instruments of peace.

Thank you for helping us bring this glorious message of hope to the Jewish people. Please continue to uphold us in prayer as we seek to share this message with all Jews everywhere.

In Messiah,

Harold A. Sevenser
HAROLD A. SEVENSER



MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS ASSOCIATION





The Temple Light

*The kindling of lights herald
the Feast of Dedication
In remembrance of a flask of oil
following the temple's emancipation.
For a great miracle happened there
in that from the heavenly heights
The Rock of Israel was revealed
in a Festival of Lights.*

*For death's shadow was destroyed in the dawn
of the Bright Morning Star
That entered the world one night pointed out
by an eastern light from afar.
This Sun of Righteousness arises in our hearts
chasing away all the darkness of night,
The Shamash, the Servant of God, illumines us
for it is by His Menorah that we see light.*

*The Shechinah now dwelling among us
in this season of wonder we recall
That Mashiach, the Eternal Living Light of the World,
became the greatest miracle of all.
The glory of Israel to enlighten all nations
— Salvation is found in His Name,
For the Light of Israel would become a fire,
and their Holy One a flame.**

**Isaiah 10:17*

— Anne Roberts

*The shamash, the servant candle of the menorah
"serves" by lighting the rest of the candles*

The Cult Of Santa Claus



One cult has superseded all others. This cult focuses on the celebration of Christmas, and it has replaced the Lord Jesus with a white-bearded gentleman called Santa Claus.

By HAROLD A. SEVENER

Jim Jones, Sun Myung Moon and the Maharishi are just a few of the modern false messiahs who have appeared upon the horizon of history.

The Bible indicates that one of the characteristics of this age will be the rise in false prophets (cf. Mt. 24:11) and false messiahs (cf. Mt. 24:24).

Interestingly, in the history of Judaism since the time of Christ, there have been over fifty messianic contenders. The last of these was the great Shabbetai Zevi, who lived in the seventeenth century. Each of these false messiahs, Jew and Gentile, seek to replace the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ as the central figure of worship.

While these cults and false religions have rallied thousands to their cause, there has been one central cult that has superseded all others. This cult centers around the celebration of Christmas, and it has replaced the central figure of Christmas—the Lord Jesus—with a red-suited, white-bearded gentleman called Santa Claus, the modern-day counterpart to a false messiah.

False Day of Worship

Let us examine this phenomenal cult called Santa Claus. The myth of Santa Claus grew out of the celebra-

tion of Christmas. The word *Christmas* comes from the Latin word meaning "Christ's mass" or the "mass of Christ" (The word "mass" is derived from the Latin word *mittere*, which literally means "to send.") Historically, it came to mean the celebration of the Lord's Supper or Communion.

There is no mention of the celebration of Christmas in the Bible. Its celebration seemingly grew out of a fourth-century desire by the Church to celebrate the birth and the baptism of Christ.

In the early Church, there was no attempt to distinguish between His baptism and His physical birth. There is absolutely no historical evidence to support the fact that Christmas was ever celebrated during the Apostolic Age or even during the post-Apostolic Age.

Hippolytus seems to be the first man to set the date of December 25 for the celebration of Christmas. He was convinced that Jesus' life was precisely thirty-three years in length. Therefore, he reasoned that since Jesus was crucified on March 25, He must have been conceived on March 25. He then calculated nine months ahead from the annunciation and arrived at the date of December 25. Hippolytus had earlier set the birth date of Christ at January 2. Other scholars of his day set the birth date of Christ at January 6, April 18, April 19, May 20 and March 28.

The earliest record of the recognition of December 25 as a Church festival is found in the Philocalin Calendar, circa A.D. 354. This date was set for the celebration of the Western Church, whereas the Eastern Church continued the celebration on January 6 as both the physical and what they termed the "spiritual birthday" (baptism) of the Lord until early in the first half of the fourth century.

Chrysostom (A.D. 386) states, "The celebration of the birth of Christ, according to the flesh, was not in-

augured at Antioch until ten years before that date." He indicates that the celebration of this festival was approved by himself, but was opposed by many others.

An Armenian writer living in the eleventh century stated "that the Christmas festival was invented in Rome by the heretic Artemon, and that it was first celebrated in Constantinople in A.D. 373." In Egypt, this Western birthday celebration was opposed during the early years of the fifth century, but was celebrated in Alexandria as early as A.D. 432.

The Jerusalem church celebrated both the birth and baptism of Jesus on the same day, January 6, until about the middle of the fourth century. His physical birth was celebrated at Bethlehem; His so-called "spiritual birth" (baptism) at the Jordan. The two locations posed great difficulty for the celebration of the feast, and it seems that the Jerusalem bishop of the church asked the Roman bishop to ascertain the real date of Christ's birth.

Accordingly, Julius is represented as sending to Cyril a calculation in favor of December 25, based upon the supposition (derived from Josephus) that Zechariah's vision took place at the Feast of Tabernacles. This did not satisfy the Jerusalem church, and they persisted in celebrating Christmas on January 6 until A.D. 549 or later. The Armenians never adapted the Christmas celebration on December 25 and continue to celebrate both the physical and spiritual birthdays of Jesus on January 6.

Paralleling God's true program of redemption through His son, the Messiah, has been a false system of worship—a worldly system, a cultic system. Its roots go back to ancient Babylon and ultimately to Satan himself.

Now, why is this discussion of the date of Christmas so important? Remember that we are discussing a false messiah—a counterfeit Christ. Historically, the date for Christmas and its celebration was set by man and not God. (It has absolutely no foundation in the Word of God.) It was never a part of the sacred calendar given to Israel, which finds prophetic fulfillment in the life of Jesus (cf. Lev. 23).

Paralleling God's true program of redemption through His Son, the Messiah, has been a false system of worship—a worldly system, a cultic system. Its roots go back to ancient Babylon and ultimately to Satan himself.

This false religious system taught that Tamus was the virgin-born son of Semeramis, who the Babylonians taught was the queen of heaven. Tamus was given the name of Bell, or Bacchus. Semeramis was given the name Cybele, or Rhea. Tamus then was worshipped as God incarnate. He was the incarnation of the sun, or Baal. Throughout the centuries this pagan, mystery

religion has counterfeited God's true redemptive program.

In Egypt, the mother and child were Isis and Osiris. In India, they were known as Isi and Iswara. In Asia, she was known as Sybele, and her son was called Deoius. In Greece, they were Seres and Plutus. Even in far-off Tibet and China, the mother was named Shing Moo, and her son was devoutly worshipped.

Fortuna and Jupiter

In Rome, the mother became known as Fortuna and her son as Jupiter. Surrounding the worship of this mother and son were the many feast days of Brumalia and Saturnalia. A. H. Newman states,

How much the calculation of Hippolytus had to do with the fixing of the festival on December 25 and how much the date of the festival depended upon the pagan Brumalia (Dec. 25), following the Saturnalia (Dec. 17-24) and celebrating the shortest day in the year and the "new sun" or the beginning of the lengthening of days, cannot be accurately determined. The pagan Saturnalia and Brumalia were too deeply entrenched in popular custom to be set aside by Christian influence. . . .

The recognition of Sunday (the day of Phoebus and Mithras as well as the Lord's Day) by the emperor Constantine as a legal holiday, along with the influence of Manicheism, which identified the Son of God with the physical sun, may have led Christians of the fourth century to feel the appropriateness of making the birthday of the Son of God coincide with that of the physical sun.

The pagan festival with its riot and merry-making was so popular that Christians were glad of an excuse to continue its celebration with little change in spirit or in manner.

Christian preachers of the West and the Nearer East protested against the unseemly frivolity with which Christ's birthday was celebrated, while Christians of Mesopotamia accused their Western brethren of idolatry and sun-worship for adopting as Christian this pagan festival. Yet the festival rapidly gained acceptance and became, at last, so firmly established that even the Protestant revolution of the sixteenth century was not able to dislodge it.

A. H. Newman, *The New Shaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, p. 48.

False Person to Worship

Having thus established a false day of worship, Satan then instituted a false person to worship—Santa Claus. He substituted a myth of a man giving gifts to the children of men for the Son of Man, who gave His life for all men. The myth of Santa Claus began, coincidentally,

continued on next page

about the same time as the celebration of Christmas. It finds its origin in the fifth century.

The name Santa Claus is a corruption of the name Saint Nicholas. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* tells us, "His cult is as celebrated as his history is obscure. All the accounts that have come down to us are of purely legendary character, and it is impossible to find any single incident confirmed historically."

The oldest known monument of the cult of Saint Nicholas seems to be the Church of S. S. Priscus and Nicholas, built at Constantinople by the emperor Justinian. Churches dedicated to this mythical, cultic leader are found throughout Europe. And in England, nearly 400 churches are dedicated to Saint Nicholas.

He is the patron saint of Russia and the "protector" of children, scholars, merchants and sailors. One legend tells us that Saint Nicholas miraculously restored three rich youths to life.

Another legend states that he surreptitiously bestowed dowries upon three daughters of an impoverished man, thus allowing them to marry. This legend is said to have originated the old custom of giving presents in secret on the eve of Saint Nicholas, which later was translated to Christmas Day.

The American name for Santa Claus is but a corruption of the Dutch San Nicolaas, and the custom of giving gifts was brought over to America by the early Dutch colonists. There are many other myths and legends relating to the name Santa Claus, but behind each of them is the attempt to focus on an individual other than the Lord Jesus Christ as the giver of gifts to men.

Satan's Precursor

The man with the red suit and the white beard, representing commercial joy and happiness, is a unique precursor to the symbolic red dragon seen in Revelation 12. The dragon is none other than Satan himself, who attempts, through commercial and ecclesiastical Babylon (cf. Rev. 17:18), to destroy the nation of Israel and the Person and testimony of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus, by placing in the hearts and minds of men an image of his own making (cf. Rev. 13).

As yielded believers, let us bear witness to the world that there's only one gift of eternal value that has ever been given to mankind. No matter what the world may think, that gift didn't come to us by way of Santa's sleigh. We can only find it in an empty tomb beneath a tree called Calvary. ☺

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CHOSEN PEOPLE MINISTRIES

NATIONAL MINISTRIES REPRESENTATIVES



BARRY BERGER



IRWIN "ROCKY"
FREEMAN



BEN ALPERT

For a special evangelistic service, conference, seminar or regular service schedule one of these Chosen People Ministries Field Representatives. All Jewish believers, these men will open the Jewishness of scripture as it relates to the Jewish people, Jesus and Israel.

To schedule a speaker or for more information please call (914) 359-8535.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1987

“Do Not Be Deceived”

That was the headline of an ad placed by five rabbis when our worker invited the Jewish community to services at his congregation.

The small group of committed believers involved in starting Congregation Beth El Shaddai in the Boston area had no intention of starting a controversy. They simply wanted to form a congregation that would honor the Lord and that would be comfortable, both in worship and in ministry, to Jewish people.

“We had just started in August,” explains Chosen People worker Gary Derechinsky. “There was a core group of about sixteen or seventeen people. To help people know that we were there, we took out some small ads offering the 1988 Chosen People Jewish Art Calendar.

A Rabbi's Phone Call

“Responses to that ad came in two ways: About three dozen people requested calendars, and the pastor of an evangelical church that supported the work received a phone call from one of the community's rabbis.

“The rabbi was very upset with the pastor for standing with our work and told him it was offensive to see groups trying to evangelize the Jewish people.

“The pastor stood firm and tactfully explained his faith.

“A few days later, I called the rabbi and expressed my disappointment that he hadn't called me personally with his objections. I offered to meet

with him privately or publicly to explain the purpose of our congregation and what our plans were,” Gary explains.

“The response has created a very open atmosphere for people to discuss our beliefs. We had fifty or sixty people at both of our Holy Day services, some of whom did not know the Lord.”

“He told me he wouldn't meet with me because we have no common ground. He continued by saying that our presence had disrupted the community. I assured him we didn't mean to disrupt anything and again offered to meet with him or with the local clergy group.

“I'd do anything possible to prevent your meeting with the clergy,” the rabbi said. To which I replied, ‘Are you telling me you oppose me simply because I believe differently from you?’

“Our conversation continued for almost forty-five minutes, but the rabbi remained adamant. He would not meet with me. He only wanted to stop the congregation from mak-

ing its presence known.”

When Beth El Shaddai took out another small ad to announce High Holy Day services, the response was quick. An ad entitled “Do Not Be Deceived,” signed by five rabbis, appeared in the newspaper.

The new congregation prayed about their response and wrote a responding ad entitled, “Please Be Informed.”

The public controversy and debate have created high interest among the residents surrounding the fledgling congregation.

Gary reports, “The response has created a very open atmosphere for people to discuss our beliefs. We had fifty or sixty people at both of our Holy Day services, some of whom did not know the Lord.

“We know many can come to faith in Yeshua as a direct result of this controversy. Also, we're being strengthened by the Lord because of our need to rely on Him.”

Please pray for Congregation Beth El Shaddai and that the controversy surrounding them will bring many people to faith in Messiah. ☸



Originally from New Jersey, Gary and Marjorie Derechinsky have been with Chosen People Ministries for 12 years. Gary attended Dallas Theological Seminary and graduated from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Irving Salzman works part time in Brooklyn for Chosen People Ministries. He also is currently attending Bible college in New Jersey.



By IRVING SALZMAN

My father was born in Poland in an observant home. His father, a devout, pious man who was a Torah reader in the synagogue, died when my father was months old.

Some of my ancestors were rabbis, and perhaps if World War II had not broken out, things would have been different in my father's life and in mine. But my father's religious training was interrupted by the war when he



"Lord, I Love Thy Law!"

Irving Salzman, a Torah reader at his synagogue, fell in love with the traditions of Judaism. Then a chance meeting made him realize that real faith had to be built on more than tradition.

was fourteen years old, and for five years he was on the run throughout Europe, hiding from the Nazis.

Eventually he emigrated from Europe to Israel, where he fought in the War of Independence. He then came to Canada, where he met my mother, an English Jewess.

Both my parents were committed to raising my brother and me in a home where Judaism was evident. But because my father's religious upbringing was interrupted, we didn't have the heavy religious obligations that were tradition-

ally "old world."

So it was that we lit the Sabbath candle and observed the holidays, and my brother and I went to Hebrew school from the time we were small.

Although it makes sense now to say that my father's Holocaust experiences should have greatly colored my childhood, he exhibited great love by sheltering us from the bitterness of the tragedy.

Instead, I was greatly influenced by my parents' love of Jewishness and Judaism. From a very young age, I understood that being Jewish meant something special.

I believed in God and His Messiah when I was very young. My first remembrance of this was when I was about five. I had gone to bed as usual, reciting the *Sh'ma* as my evening prayer. I had hardly fallen asleep when I woke up from a bad dream which I knew had to do with death.

Frightened, wanting to be comforted, I crawled out of my bed and went to find my parents.

My father gently reassured me, "Don't worry. One day Messiah will come and raise people from the dead," he promised.

Great Comfort

As young as I was, there was a great comfort in hearing about this wonderful Messiah. It was a promise I always held dear to me.

During the next few years, my knowledge of God came from the synagogue and the Hebrew classes I took after my regular school. About the time I was beginning to prepare for my Bar Mitzvah, my father decided he wanted me to go into a *yeshiva* for my high school studies.

The *yeshiva* was run under the auspices of the Lubavichers (an ultraorthodox, evangelistic community). While there, I fell in love with this ordered, disciplined Judaism I was being taught.

There was something very peaceful and beautiful to me in the rules we observed, and it was a joy to learn about my heritage. Studying God and observing His Law gave me a sense of purpose.

Religious Observances

Before long, I adopted the religious observances I saw around me and took to wearing a *yarmulke* (skull cap) and *tsisits* (ritual fringes) at all times.

Because the dietary laws were important to me, my parents began to observe *kashrut* (kosher laws) in our home. Religious observances had now become part of my life style rather than just part of my studies.

Along with my deep interest in Judaism, I made another discovery during this time: I was gifted with a very good memory and had the other skills necessary to be a Torah reader in the synagogue.

A Torah reader is a skilled individual held in great esteem in the Jewish community. Most synagogues read the five books of Moses in a cycle each year. The books are divided into fifty-two sections, one to be read each week, and the Torah reader is the person who reads them in the synagogue.

Being a Torah reader is a difficult task, requiring as many as six hours of preparation a week, because the section must be read from the scroll,

continued on next page

which does not include the dots and dashes that make up the vowels in Hebrew. The weekly portion must also be chanted in a prescribed method, according to specified musical notes.

From the time I was in high school, and almost every week until only a few months ago, my Saturdays were spent in various synagogues, reading these lengthy Hebrew portions for the congregations.

Unfortunately, I had very little time to become involved in the meaning of the words I was memorizing, since the mechanics were so difficult and the preparation so intense. Even though I deeply enjoyed the readings, being a Torah reader was more of a challenge than an inspiration.

After I graduated from high school, I went to college, a year in Canada and a year in Israel. After Israel, I went to school in New York and then moved back to Montreal.

Through all this, I had lost some of the rigidity of the Jewishness I knew, and although I still had a deep sense of identity, I found myself drifting through life with no great purpose at hand.

Sometimes, to kill time, I would call special phone lines where you called in and met someone over the phone, usually hoping to meet someone of

the opposite sex with whom you might form a relationship.

One day I called the phone lines and was connected to a sixteen-year-old named Peter. At first I thought I would just talk for a moment and then hang up, but Peter turned out to be so opinionated and interesting that we talked for hours.

Born Again

He mentioned to me that he was born again and that he called the phone lines to talk to people about what he believed.

I was fascinated. It was the first time anyone had said that there was anything worth sharing in Christianity. Though I wasn't searching for anything spiritual, I was curious.

Until that time, I had always assumed that Christianity was mostly symbols: vast churches with crosses, nuns, priests, images that made me a little frightened to think about because they all represented a forbidden "unwelcome" sign to the Jews.

Peter and I began to talk frequently, and at one point we made a pact: If he could show me that what he believed was true, I would believe it also. Likewise, if I could convince him that what I believed was true, he would believe that.

In fact, both of us were thoroughly convinced that there was no possible way the other was right.

Nevertheless, over the next two years, I watched my beliefs slowly fade away, which was traumatic. Everything I had built my life on was being shattered.

It wasn't any one thing he said, but rather bits of things that made me realize my faith was not as solid as Peter's. His was based on something of which he was so certain, and mine . . . it was based more on tradition and heritage.

More and more, I found myself thinking that an intelligent, educated Jew could well consider Jesus (Yeshua) to be the Messiah.

"Except," I often told myself, "if it is so right, the rabbis would have believed it long ago."

Confirmations

I found myself listening for other confirmations of what he was telling me. Weekly I was calling a taped Bible message (a ministry of Chosen People worker Winnie Marriner) and started to listen to those around me for other evidences from the Scripture. I wanted to hear more evidence that this was true.

Then one night, something different happened. I was stretched out

It wasn't any one thing he said, but rather bits of things that made me realize my faith was not as solid as Peter's. His was based on something of which he was so certain, and mine ... it was based more on tradition and heritage.



comfortably on my bed half-listening, half-thinking as Peter and I spoke. Peter asked if he could read me something, as he often did during our conversations. This time, the words he read entranced me.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Peter read me the Sermon on the Mount, and at the end of it, I knew the speaker was no mere rabbi, no man like all others. The beauty, wisdom and depth of those words called out to me across the reserve that had been in my heart.

I told Peter how beautiful I found those words, but even more, I began to notice that something was different. I knew I could never look at Yeshua the same way again.

Shortly after that, Peter moved and we lost touch for a while.

No Revelation

Gradually, with no great revelation, I realized that within myself I had accepted that Yeshua was the Jewish Messiah.

I continued to work at the synagogue as a Torah reader, and I appeared very much the same person on the outside. Yet in my heart, I recognized that something momentous had occurred.

Over the next two years, I watched my beliefs slowly fade away, which was traumatic. Everything I had built my life on was being shattered.

Then, almost a year after my last conversation with Peter, he called again. As we spoke, he recognized that the tenor of our discussion was different.

"You believe, don't you?" he asked me.

To this stranger, whom I had known so long but had never met, I admitted the truth.

"Yes, but I'm afraid to say I believe. I don't know if I can be truly sincere, if I truly want Him to have control of my life."

"You can only do what you know best at any given time," Peter wisely counseled. "God will give you the power you need to believe more. Would you like to receive Jesus now?"

Personally? We can pray together on the phone."

"No, I don't think I want to pray on the phone," I answered, feeling somewhat embarrassed and awkward.

"Let me call you back."

The phone went dead, and for just a moment I hesitated. What would this mean in my life? Do I really want this? Can I live up to such a commitment? Could I offer myself to Him and mean it?

Needed Messiah

I knew that to have salvation, atonement and eternal life, I needed to receive the Messiah. Silently I prayed.

Minutes later I called Peter back and told him what I had done. I did not feel any different or see any great flashes of light. But I knew in my heart, and Peter assured me, that God was faithful to my prayers.

Shortly after turning my life over to the Messiah, I contacted Winnie Mariner and attended a fellowship meeting at her house, where I met many of the Chosen People workers who serve in the Northeast.

About three years later, they encouraged me to attend Bible college, which is what I'm doing now, as I prepare to enter the ministry. ☺



JIM BATES
Boca Raton, FL

In September, four Jewish people came to the Lord! We're also praising God for our new Bible study in Miami. Please pray for my health as I've been having trouble with my leg again and for one more Bible study to be started in the Northern part of Palm Beach county.

L'SHANAH TOVAH

Next month is New Year's so why shouldn't your Chosen People workers wish you a happy new year in Hebrew? Looking ahead to the new year and over our shoulder at '87, we find much to praise the Lord for.



ELIEZER & SARA URBACH
Denver, CO

We praise God for good health. Sara was sick last fall, and we praise Him that He healed her. We are also thankful for a successful ministry trip to Poland and that our son Chaim started seminary. For 1988, we are praying for new people to come to know the Lord. And we are also praying for the growth of those who came to faith last year. Pray too for our guidance in the work and the outreach going on among believers in Poland.



MICHAEL & SANDRA CAMPO
Chicago, IL

I'm praising God for His faithfulness in blessing the effort I've put forth and also that, in spite of my ignorance at times, He is more than faithful. I'd like people to pray that I would allow the Lord to reach His potential, not mine, in my life.



TOM & SHARON HUCKEL
Philadelphia, PA

Sharon and I are still praising God for a terrific outreach we held at Bethany Baptist Church, where we are members. As part of the Sunday evening meeting, we held a service that would have been typical of a Friday night service in a Messianic congregation. It was wonderful!



GALEN & CAROL BANASHAK
Chicago, IL

We praise God for the miracle of receiving, basically as a gift, five acres of land and a building for the Vineyard Congregation in a Jewish suburb of Chicago. Pray for our continued ministry in Chicago, Montreal and Toronto. In Montreal, prayer is needed for everything to be brought together in His time for our work there.



BARRY & VIOLETTE BERGER
National Ministries Representative

I praise God for the enthusiasm of so many Christians as they hear the message that the Jewish people need to hear the Gospel. Even in places like Manhattan (Montana) and Laurel (Montana)—cities with no Jewish populations—the believers were excited about their responsibilities to share the Messiah with Jewish people and about their response to God's love for the Jews. Please pray with us that in 1988, people will have an even greater sense of urgency in bringing the Gospel to Jew and Gentile alike.



ROCKY & PATRICIA FREEMAN
National Ministries Representative

We're praising the Lord for restoring our health. Patricia and I both had surgery in 1987. We are so thankful that we were able to continue our ministry, even through the health problems. Another thing we are rejoicing about is the opening of our Bible study ministry to prison inmates this year. Please pray for the expansion of this outreach to prisoners and also for more workers in Dallas.



SAM & MIRIAM NADLER
New York, NY

I'm praising God for Rich Freeman from our congregation who is now in seminary, and for a number of new believers who are reaching out to their families. People can pray for more workers and perhaps for two new congregations—one in Brooklyn and one in Philadelphia. Also, I'm praying for 100 Jewish people to get saved in the Northeast this year and that we can be settled in our new regional offices by next summer.



LARRY & FRAN FELDMAN
East Hanover, NJ

We're praising God for the financial growth of Beth Messiah Congregation and that we've met many people who are burdened for Jewish evangelism. Also, something very special happened this summer as the Lord touched me with a pastor's heart and showed me to shepherd people unconditionally. In 1988, we'd like prayer that Beth Messiah can impact the heavily Jewish area of Livingston, New Jersey, with a vital, growing testimony.



JACQUES & REINE GUGGENHEIM
Paris, France

Pray for us as we minister to the more than 700,000 Jewish people in France, for though we serve in a land that is "foreign" to many of you, it is the same Messiah in New York, Paris, Jerusalem and Tokyo!



JERRY GROSS
Bergen County, NJ

First I'm praising God that He brought a wonderful woman into my life (I'm getting married on December 20). I'm also praising Him for the challenge and privilege of developing one congregation and starting another. I'd really like people to pray for my spiritual growth, and for wisdom and direction in the ministry and my life.



GARY & MARILOU DERECHINSKY
Boston, MA

We're praising God that Beth El Shaddai moved from dream to reality in 1987 and also that God brought the Cagans to work with us in Boston. We'd appreciate prayer for the growth (numerically and spiritually) of the congregation, for the Beth Sar Shalom Bible study in Brookline and for the resources to establish an organized campus outreach.



CHRISTOPHER & MARSHA MELISKO
Los Angeles, CA

Pray that we can be consistent in our ministry and persistent in prayer and that we'll see fruit in all our outreaches, especially on the campuses. The year 1987 was a very exciting one for Marsha and me, working with the great group of believers at the Shepherd of Israel Congregation. We are also thankful for the many opportunities to help new believers grow in their faith.



ROB & SHARON STYLER
Plainview, Long Island

We're praising God for His unchanging faithfulness in our ever-changing circumstances as we've gone from Chicago to Toronto to New York in the past few years. We're looking forward to settling in now and building a fruitful ministry. How can you pray for us? Constantly! What can you pray for? Our faithfulness and obedience to God's Word.



ALBERT & GRETA ISRAELI
Toronto, Canada

Praise God for the many Russian Jews who have been hearing about the Lord and for the radio program we are beaming into the Soviet Union and Israel. Pray for the broadcast and its effectiveness and that the Lord's hand would guide the follow-up material, so that it reaches those who want it.



SAM & JENICE MILLER
Houston, TX

We've seen two Israelis come to the Lord recently at our Yom Kippur service. Pray for these young believers and a man in Dallas who also accepted the Lord. We also praise God for part-time worker Rich Freeman, who is a tremendous blessing to the ministry.



IRV & CORDELIA RIFKIN
San Diego, CA

We're praising God that I was able to visit some Jewish prisoners in British Columbia and that I got into the prisons very easily. We need to pray that one of these men who is still in prison will grow in faith and have the strength to study God's Word. The other man, who is out now, wants to serve God. Hopefully we can help him do that. We're also praising God for beautiful Rosh Hashana and Sukot services and that unsaved Jewish people came to both.



SID & JOAN STERN
Los Angeles, CA

For one thing, we're praising God that we got through the earthquake! I sat here at my desk and watched the whole house shake and rattle. Praise the Lord, only a few small things broke. We're also praising God we were able to visit so many Jewish people this year. We would appreciate prayer that in 1988, we can get more names of Jewish people to share Messiah with, especially from Christians who are willing to let us say they sent us.



BEN & BONNIE ALPERT
National Ministries Representative

We're praising God for the many people who have made decisions for Messiah and for ministry support. Also, with all we've been through on the road, such as the time we were hauling forty-five feet of van and trailer and there was a rock slide right in front of us, we praise God that our guardian angels have been working overtime. We continue to pray for quality meetings, that is, meetings in which believers are deeply touched about reaching Jewish people for Messiah.



JOHN & LINDA BELL
Ministries Director

"Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" The challenge to go is being answered by the men and women of Chosen People Ministries. We had a greater harvest and more discipleship in 1987 than ever before. The challenge for 1988—more names in the Book of Life, more people maturing in the Messiah, more laborers to "go and tell this people."



HOWARD & JANET SILVERMAN
Los Angeles, CA

I'm praising the Lord that the new congregation, Shepherd of Israel, got underway in 1987. I am looking forward to great things next year, especially seeing God bless people's lives spiritually. I'd like people to pray for the growth of this congregation and also for more workers in the Los Angeles area.



BEN & SUSAN VOLMAN
Toronto, Canada

I thank the Lord for the lives I've seen restored and the believers to whom the Olive Tree Congregation has ministered by giving comfort and hope. I'm looking forward to and praying for the continued growth in these people and that they will multiply their faith by bringing others to know Him.



LARRY & GAIL JAFFREY
Reston, VA

I'm praising God for the staff He's given me, and I'm looking forward to the new doors of ministry that seem to be opening for 1988. For instance, in Florida a group of believers came to our worker Jim Bates and said they wanted to do something to reach Jewish people. They held Jewish High Holy Day services, and three Jewish people accepted the Lord!



ISRAEL & JUDY COHEN
Brooklyn, NY

Praise God that in 1987 God brought Irving Salzman to work with me in Brooklyn. In the first three months he was here, we saw eight people come to faith, six of them Jewish. It would be wonderful if people would pray for the spiritual growth of these new believers, for more volunteers and especially for a Russian-speaking worker to help us share Messiah with all the Russian Jews we've been meeting recently.

WINNIE MARRINER
Montreal, Canada

The Lord has been teaching me more about direct, personal, even seemingly minuscule prayer requests, so I'm looking forward to spending more time with Him. One thing I'm praising Him for is that I've watched with my own two eyes, sitting at the kitchen table where we have a discipleship class, two sisters grow beautifully in the Lord. It is wonderful to see this kind of fruit in people's lives.



MITCH & JACKIE TRIESTMAN
Philadelphia, PA

There's so much to say, but I know one thing we're praising God for—the people who've been saved this year. A number of them have been on our prayer lists for two or three years, and now they are growing so fast in the Lord it is wonderful. We're praying for more help in 1988, especially with the many people to be disciplined. We're also praying for a place to hold meetings in Bucks County.





STEWART & SHOSHANNAH WEINISCH
New York, NY

I thank the Lord for bringing about our youth camp in 1988, because I've been praying for this for some time. Also God answered my prayers in allowing me to be involved in starting the Joy of Israel Congregation in Bridgeport, Connecticut. We're also praising God for the birth of our child last May.



MICHAEL & EVA RYDELNIK
Plainview, Long Island
We're thankful that the Olive Tree Congregation has made such an impact. Last year twelve Jewish people came to the Lord through the Long Island ministry! For 1988 my primary goals are to start an evangelistic Bible study in Queens and to see God raise up and establish leadership in the Olive Tree. Pray that God helps me maintain the balancing act of family life and ministry.

DEMETRIUS & SOFIA PAPANIKOLAOU
Athens, Greece

Opportunities to witness and share the Scriptures with Jewish people have not ceased! And as the Word goes forth, it will never return empty!



LEAH GOREN
Jerusalem, Israel

Heartiest greetings from Jerusalem! Recently thousands came to Israel to identify themselves with the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles. A good number of Jewish Christians were there wearing banners that said in Hebrew, "I am a Hebrew Christian. Jesus is the Messiah." Pray for the work and our testimony in His land.



STEVE & LISA CAGAN
Sharon, MA

By God's grace we're praying for fifty people from the Sharon, Massachusetts area to come to know the Lord in 1988. In 1987, we had so many changes—moving to Boston and going on tour with the music group, for instance. We want to praise God for the victories and strength He gave us. We'd really appreciate prayer for Lisa's health as her arm muscles are still bothering her from our summer tour.



ROBERTO & AZUCENA PASSO
Buenos Aires, Argentina

We rejoice every day as we work with all our strength. We see open doors in Argentina and Latin America for reaching the 800,000 Jewish people in this part of the world. Sadly, we do see anti-Semitism rising in Argentina, so remember us in prayer.



DAN & MADELINE GOLDBERG
Los Angeles, CA

I'm praising God for the return of the Lord—which is soon—and for the many Jewish people coming to the Lord at the end of the age, filling up the body of Messiah. We are praying that God will raise up new workers and seal their hearts with a call to minister to the people. We are praying that all of the new Jewish believers who have fear of family and friends will be delivered and take a bold stand for the Messiah.



ROY & JO ANNE SCHWARCZ
Chicago, IL

In 1987 we look back and praise God for all the exciting things that have been happening at the Vineyard Congregation and that it has grown enough now to become an independent congregation. For 1988 we're praying for discernment about new projects in the Midwest and asking for guidance about what to do and where and when to do it.

Hannukah Celebrations, December 1987

NORTHEASTERN USA

New York City
Beth Sar Shalom
Stewart Weinisch
(212) 757-6716
December 21

Brooklyn, NY
Beth Sar Shalom
(718) 332-4269
December 15

Yonkers, NY
Light of Israel Congregation
Sam Nadler (914) 237-5002
December 18

Plainview, NY
Olive Tree Congregation
Michael Rydelnik
(516) 939-2277
December 18

West Hanover, NJ
Beth Messiah Congregation
Larry Feldman
(201) 535-3954
December 18

Philadelphia, PA
Beth Sar Shalom
Tom Huckel (215) 379-2352
December 12

Sharon, MA
Beth El Shaddai
Congregation
Gary Derechinsky
(617) 784-3111
December 18

Stratford, CT
Joy of Israel Congregation
Stewart Weinisch
(212) 828-7405
December 18

SOUTHERN USA

Rockville, MD
Son of David Fellowship
Larry Jaffrey
(703) 471-0163
December 18

Dallas, TX
Beth Sar Shalom
Patricia Freeman
(214) 241-3699
December 19

Houston, TX
Beth Sar Shalom
Sam Miller
(713) 550-2265
December 5

Miami, FL
Jim Bates
(305) 395-7417
December 19

MIDWESTERN USA

Long Grove, IL
Vineyard Congregation
(312) 520-0616
December 13

Columbus, OH
(614) 885-8546
December 14

Akron, OH
Lou and Hy's Deli
(216) 836-0540
December 15

WESTERN USA

Phoenix, AZ
Beth Sar Shalom
June Schmid
(602) 842-9438
December 10

Los Angeles, CA
Shepherd of Israel
Howard Silverman
(818) 884-8245
December 19

South Bay, CA
Beth Sar Shalom
Sid Stern
(213) 635-8531
December 17

Albuquerque, NM
Beth Sar Shalom
Eliezer Urbach
(303) 320-0899
December 20

Long Beach, CA
Beth Sar Shalom
Sid Stern
(213) 635-8531
December 21

Sacramento, CA
Chosen People Fellowship
Artis Clotfelter
(916) 722-6615
December 11

San Diego, CA
Chosen People Fellowship
Cordelia & Irv Rifkin
(619) 583-3336
December 26

Denver, CO
Beth Sar Shalom
Eliezer Urbach
(303) 320-0899

CANADA

Toronto
Beth Sar Shalom
Ben and Susan Volman
(416) 665-4695

Montreal
Beth Sar Shalom
Winnie Marriner
(514) 277-1859
December 11

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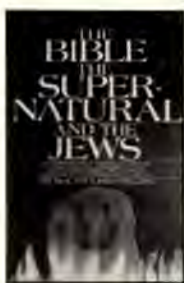
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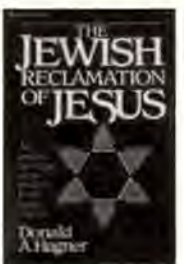
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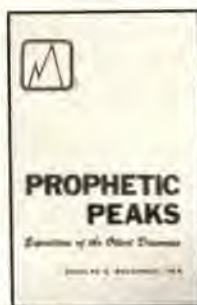
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From the Exile to the Christ

The Slide to Ruin

By DR. DANIEL FUCHS

In 142 B.C. after 450 years of Gentile rule, Jerusalem was once more the capital of the Jewish people. For a few short years Jerusalem actually became the "city of peace," as its name implies. Commercial relations were established, and Jewish slaves were redeemed. It seems that the author of 1 Maccabees actually believed that prophecies in Isaiah and Micah had been fulfilled as he describes the "new" Jerusalem.

The Jews "tilled the land in peace, and the land gave her increase, and the trees of the plains their fruit. The old men sat in the streets, they talked together of the common good, and the young men put on glorious and fine apparel. Every man sat under his own vine and his fig tree, and there was none to frighten them" (1 Maccabees 14:41). (See also Isa. 2:2-4; Mic. 4:1-4.)

From Scripture to Diplomacy

However, their newly won utopia was not paradise regained. Subtle changes had taken place in Israel after Mattathias's death, especially in the attitudes of the new Jewish leadership.

For instance, Mattathias had begun the revolution against Antiochus Epiphanes by rallying the Jewish people with the challenge, "Whosoever is zealous of the Law, and maintaineth the covenant, let him follow me" (1 Maccabees 2:27). His appeal was to the Law and the Prophets.

However, the emphasis under the new leadership of Mattathias's oldest son, Judah Maccabee, changed from Scripture to diplomacy. Thus, because it seemed to be the best decision at the time, Judah Maccabee signed away Israel's new-found freedom in a treaty of friendship with Rome.

It seems incredible that such a thing could happen after Israel had just been released from its Gentile rule of 450 years! How could this be?

Judah Maccabee, himself a brilliant general, had become enamored of the military prowess of Rome. Josephus says of Judah Maccabee,

Who hearing of the power of the Romans, and that they had conquered in war Galatia, and Iberia, and Carthage, and Libya; and that, besides these, they had subdued Greece, and their kings, Perseus, and Philip, and Antiochus the Great also; he resolved to enter into a league of friendship with them. He therefore sent to Rome some of his friends. . . . They also made a decree . . . engraven in brass. The decree itself was this:

"The decree of the senate concerning a league of assistance and friendship with the nation of the Jews. It shall not be lawful for any that are subject to the Romans to make war with the nation of the Jews, nor to assist those that do so, either by sending them corn, or ships, or money; and if any attack be made upon the Jews, the Romans shall assist them, as far as they are able; and again, if any attack be made upon the Romans, the Jews shall assist them."

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*,
Book XII, Chap. X, para. 6.

The treaty signed with Rome was engraved in brass. The brass itself had value but the treaty was worthless, because Rome never had any intention of sending help to the Jews. Rather, Rome was only waiting to destroy the Syrian Empire before sending its hordes to march through the streets of Jerusalem.

Not only was the treaty worthless, but it put Israel in a terrible position: From that day forward, the Jewish nation had to look to Rome to solve their problems. The Romans, of course, solved all their problems with Roman "justice," which meant that what was good for Rome was good for all.

Thus through diplomacy and desire for "friendship" with Rome, the new leadership yielded up the nation's freedom to follow the Scriptures and serve the Lord as a politically free people.

From Leaders to Rulers

There was another difference that took place after Mattathias's death. As great as the Maccabees were in leading the Jewish state to freedom, they soon exhibited their own lust of power by actively seeking and accepting political access to the office of high priest for themselves and their posterity.

The pious Jews (called Chasidim) had begun the revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes because he had deposed the rightful high priest, Onias, with his brother Jason. This act, more than any other, infuriated the Chasidim and led to the revolution.

The treaty signed with Rome was engraved in brass. The brass itself had value but the treaty was worthless, because Rome never had any intention of sending help to the Jews. Rather, Rome was only waiting to destroy the Syrian Empire before sending its hordes to march through the streets of Jerusalem.

When the author of the Letter to the Hebrews said of the high priest, "No one takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God" (Heb. 5:4), he wrote as a Jew who understood a central truth of Judaism: The high priest does not represent the king; he represents God.

In 152 B. C., a young man conquered Ptolemais, which was a seaport of Syria. He claimed to be Alexander Epiphanes, the younger son of Antiochus Epiphanes:

"Alexander Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus, went up and took possession of Ptolemais; and they received him and he reigned there" (1 Maccabees 10:1, 2).

Today, however, most historians concede that this Alexander Epiphanes was actually an impostor whose real name was Alexander Balas.

All of the neighboring powers as well as Rome wanted Syria to have a puppet ruler who was generally held in contempt. Attalus II, king of Pergamum, "discovered" Alexander, evidently because he looked like Antiochus Epiphanes.

Weakling Puppet

In any event, Attalus declared that Balas was in fact the son of the late king of Syria, Antiochus Epiphanes. In Rome, the Senate, as eager as Attalus to have a weakling puppet on the Syrian throne, also recognized Balas as the heir to the throne.

Meanwhile, in Israel, Jonathan had succeeded Judah Maccabee, his older brother, as ruler. Now Jonathan and Alexander Balas had something in common—they both wanted to be "friends of Rome," a fact that formed the basis of their friendship. Josephus records a letter written by Alexander to Jonathan:

King Alexander to his brother Jonathan, sendeth greeting. We have long ago heard of thy courage and thy fidelity, and for that reason have sent to thee, to make with thee a league of friendship and mutual assistance. We therefore do ordain thee this day the high priest of the Jews, and that thou beest called my friend. I have also sent thee, as presents, a purple robe and a golden crown, and desire that, now thou art by us honoured, thou wilt in like manner respect us also.

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*,
Book XIII, Chap. II, para. 2.

Appointing Jonathan as high priest was a brilliant stroke on the part of Balas, as it played into Jonathan's secret ambition for power.

Josephus writes, "When Jonathan had received this

continued on next page

letter, he put on the pontifical robe at the time of the feast of tabernacles, four years after the death of his brother Judah, for at that time no high priest had been made."

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*,
Book XIII, Chap. II, para. 3.

Antiochus Epiphanes had begun his plan to destroy the Jewish religion by deposing the rightful high priest and appointing his own choice. This led to the Maccabean revolt in which the Jews were victorious. Now, in less than one generation, Jonathan, one of the Maccabean brothers, eagerly accepted the high priesthood from an impostor whose very ability to bestow this honor was based on his claim to be the son of Antiochus Epiphanes!

From this time on until the Romans destroyed the Temple (and the high priesthood) in A.D. 70, whoever ruled Jerusalem also controlled the office of the high priest. This proved to be a far greater disaster for the Jews than even the Babylonian Captivity.

Many students of history claim that Jonathan was a clever diplomat, that he accomplished by diplomacy what he couldn't accomplish by arms. Actually, his acceptance of the high priesthood from a contemptible usurper was an act of great folly, legitimizing the regal control of the priesthood.

From this time on until the Romans destroyed the Temple (and the high priesthood) in A.D. 70, whoever ruled Jerusalem also controlled the office of the high priest. This proved to be a far greater disaster for the Jews than even the Babylonian Captivity.

Max I. Dimont, in his excellent history of the Jewish people called *Jews, God, and History*, reminds us of the famous limerick:

There was a young lady of Niger
Who smiled as she rode on a tiger;
They came back from the ride
With the lady inside
And the smile on the face of the tiger.

For eighty years the nation enjoyed political freedom, although its leaders were "smiling" at the Roman tiger. Then its leaders "took a ride on the tiger's back" by signing the treaty of "friendship." The Roman tiger simply swallowed up its Jewish "friend," but it was the lust for power of Israel's leaders that really caused its downfall.

A Responsible Ministry

This ministry was incorporated under the laws of the State of New York as a not-for-profit corporation on May 1, 1924, under the name of The American Board of Missions to the Jews, Inc.

All contributions are receipted in the name of ABMJ/Chosen People Ministries, Inc., and are deposited in a corporate account registered in that name in a federally insured national bank. These funds are exclusively used to support this evangelical ministry via literature, radio, and the expenses of full-time and auxiliary workers.

The ministry is a charter member of the Evangelical Council on Financial Accountability and abides

scrupulously to its tenets. Checks and money orders may be made payable to ABMJ/Chosen People Ministries, to ABMJ, or to The American Board of Missions to the Jews, Inc. The latter is the official name registered with and recognized for charitable deductions by the U.S. Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service.

Our Canadian friends should make their gifts payable to Beth Sar Shalom Mission, Inc., the name of this ministry in that country. Receipts are issued under this officially registered name, and all gifts are recognized as tax-deductible by the Canadian Department of National Revenue.

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