

The Chosen People

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SPECIAL ISSUE



CHOSEN PEOPLE MINISTRIES
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October, 1988

Dear Friend:

Welcome to the second special edition of *The Chosen People* magazine. The first special edition was done in October, 1987. We received such an enthusiastic response from our "Chosen People family" that we felt led to produce another special evangelistic edition this October.

This special edition of the magazine has been carefully and prayerfully prepared so that you can give it to a Jewish friend or family member. It is really an evangelistic tool – better than a tract, easier to read than a book. It presents Yeshua (Jesus) and the Gospel in a Jewish context, easily understood by Jewish people.

All that you need do to make this special issue of *The Chosen People* magazine your witnessing tool for the Messiah is to remove the outside cover and donation envelope. You then simply pass the magazine along to a Jewish person – perhaps your neighbor, your doctor, dentist, business acquaintance, etc. By doing this you will join together with us and thousands of other Christians in making a direct witness for Yeshua (Jesus) in the next few months. God blesses His Word – our witness for Him. I am convinced that many Jewish people will come to faith in Jesus because of this special ministry outreach.

We have printed extra copies of this special edition. I am sure that you will want extra copies to give to your Jewish friends. We have prepared for that. Simply fill out the order form on the back of the outside cover. Return it to us and we will send your copies to you promptly.

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Thank you for your prayers and gifts. Thank you for being a part of our "Chosen People family." Perhaps through your witness a Jewish person will come to faith in Jesus (Yeshua).

In Messiah,

HAROLD A. SEVENS

PRESIDENT, CHOSEN PEOPLE MINISTRIES

The Chosen People

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE is published monthly (except August) as a medium of information concerning the Jewish people, Israel, and the work of the Chosen People Ministries, 1300 Cross Beam Drive, Charlotte, N.C. 28217-2800.

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In Messiah,

HAROLD A. SEVENSEN

The Chosen People

Four Jewish People
Who Struck It Rich

see inside



Isaiah 53: Of Whom Does The Prophet Speak?

¹³Behold, my servant shall prosper, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

¹⁴As many were astonished at thee; his visage was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

¹⁵So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for *that* which had not been told them shall they see; and *that* which they had not heard shall they consider.

53 Who would have believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

²For he grew up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he had no form nor comeliness; and when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

³He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

⁴Surely he hath borne griefs *inflicted by us*, and suffered sorrows we have *caused*: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

⁵But he *was* wounded through our transgressions, bruised through our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him, and with his wounds we were healed.

⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath caused the iniquity of us all to fall upon him.

⁷He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: as a lamb which is brought to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.

⁸He was taken away from rule and from judgment; and his life who shall recount? for he was cut off out of the land of the living; through the transgressions of my people was he stricken.

⁹And one made his grave among the wicked, and his tomb among the rich; although he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth.

¹⁰But it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: if his soul shall consider *it* a recompense for guilt, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

¹¹He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my servant justify the righteous before many, and he shall bear their iniquities.

¹²Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath laid open his soul unto death, and was numbered with transgressors; and he took off the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

The Chosen People

Since 1895 the official
magazine of Chosen
People Ministries,
Charlotte, NC

PRESIDENT
Harold A. Sevensen

EDITOR
Jonathan Singer

WRITER
Amy Rabinovitz

COVER STORY

Four Jewish People Who Struck It Rich ...

You've already got the punchline figured out, right? Something religious. Something predictable. Something that says you really don't have what you think you have.

Wrong.

We know you've got what you've got. And that it may be great. Or maybe not, depending on what you want.

It may be plenty. Or maybe it's only a good start.

What you've got isn't the point.

The point is, we figure that you see beyond the cover come-ons that call you from the newstand. Beyond the "How to be richer, more beautiful, and more successful."

We also figure that even if you have 2.2 children, a nanny, a Volvo and a BMW, the right memberships, and an expense account for unlimited power lunches, you've gotta know there's something else.

And finally, we figure that even if you wouldn't tell this to your best friend (and certainly not to your mother), you sometimes wonder what it's all about. What it's about to be Jewish. Whether you really can get it together all by yourself. We think you're even a little envious of those simple, unsophisticated folks who seem to have true faith.

And that's what this is all about. The simple old unadorned message that at the heart of it all, there is truth. Not a truth. Not one of the truths. But truth.

Come to think of it, you may have had the punchline figured out right from the start.

*In case you're wondering who we are, we're a group of Jews and Gentiles who believe that Yeshua (Jesus) is the Messiah foretold by Moses and the prophets. Chosen People Ministries was founded in Brooklyn, N.Y. in 1894 by Rabbi Leopold Cohn, an orthodox rabbi from Europe.

The Tears of a Clown

Laughter makes people surrender their defenses for just a minute," Burt Rosenberg explains. "In the world, comedians use that minute to expose a slightly different perspective of something so that the audience can escape. What I do is use that minute to show that there is a better way to see the world."

What is especially odd about this very funny man is not that he does comedy, but that he uses comedy to reveal truth instead of to escape it; because much of Burt Rosenberg's life was spent searching for something he began to think could not be found.

"I think the same thing causes a person to come to Christ that causes a person to be a comedian," he explains, "a sense of not quite belonging to this world. And, truthfully, from the time I could remember, I'd felt that way."

"I Knew I Was Loved"

It's not that home wasn't warm and loving. We lived above dad's grocery store in inner-city Washington, D.C. Mom and dad were always there in the store, an unconventional bunch of uncles and aunts were part of the family, and I knew I was loved.

I had a strong sense of being Jewish, not so much having to do with religion, because I thought all religion was bogus, but there was a sense of culture. It was more a matter of knowing that even through this indefinable culture, I was different.

Essentially, though, my life was carefree; things mostly worked themselves out and I always managed to have a good time.

Then, when I was 24, things stopped being funny.

Two guys came into the car wash my dad was managing—he had sold the grocery store several years before—and bludgeoned him to death with a lead pipe.

A Family Tragedy

There's no gentle way to describe what that day was like. About dinner time the phone rang. It was my cousin Phyllis calling to ask why dad hadn't picked her up from work yet.

I had a strong sense of being Jewish, not so much having to do with religion, because I thought all religion was bogus . . .

Mom called the car wash. No answer, so she figured that dad was on his way. When he didn't show up, she called the police, who said they'd check. For what seemed eternity we kept calling and calling. The police kept saying they had no word. Dad still hadn't shown up at my cousin's. Finally, my uncle picked us up and drove us to the car wash.

We pulled up and saw all the police cars with their lights going round and round. It was a crazy scene with people and noise everywhere. Inside, I knew. I asked, "Where's my dad," and a man said, "You don't want to see him."

"Is he alive?"

Endless tears

"No," he said. It was the most penetrating one word I had ever heard. I started crying, tears that were never going to stop.

For a long time it was headline news: the bloody death of three car wash employees.

It couldn't be. Not my father.

I remembered the time when, in Hebrew School, we learned that during Rosh Hashanah you must make amends for all your wrongdoings. I had been sneaking downstairs to the store's cash register, taking out a quarter or a dollar that I'd blow on pinball and the more I thought about it, the more I knew I



By BURT ROSENBERG

Burt Rosenberg always managed to have a good time until a family tragedy brought him grief and hopelessness.

had to make atonement for my stealing.

Finally, one night I took dad aside. "Dad, I need to talk to you."

"Yes? What is it?" His reply wasn't rushed and it wasn't kindly. It was, maybe, best described as grownup.

"I've been going down to the cash register at night and taking money to play pinballs."

"I knew that. You think I'm going to whip you?"

I stood waiting, ready.

Instead, he just put his arms around me and cradled me, saying, "I love you," so happy that I had come clean with him.

And this, I kept thinking, is the man who was brutally murdered? Did he deserve this? I felt his arms around me again and again, saying, "I love you."



The nightmare got worse. When they caught the men, the prime witness for the prosecution was killed by heroin overdose before she could testify. The police mishandled some of the evidence so it couldn't be entered at the trial. A lie detector test

showed guilt, but was not admissible in court.

I sat there in court and listened as they got off scot-free.

Rage and Helplessness

I didn't think the rage and helplessness I felt that day would ever leave me. The anger, the despair. The triumph of evil.

Then, as my world was already plunging into a hole, injustice flaunted itself again.

I was booking and managing bands, and doing pretty well at it. One of my bands got a big break and without a word they walked out on our contract, sticking me with bills, obligations and a sense of betrayed loyalty.

I was in deep, deep despair. I didn't know the Bible said this world was sunk in futility and despair, but that was how I saw it. People died. Things of quality turned ugly. I wanted out of the tailspin; wanted to triumph over this world's unfairness. Over and over, I'd ask myself, "Isn't there any way out of this insecure hell?"

Hiding Out

I was into drugs, music, relationships. Anything that would hide what I felt. I was still booking bands, only I had started doing a stand-up comedy routine between sets, so I was getting pretty well known. In some ways, doing comedy was a sort of live psychodrama but in other ways, it was a way of hiding out.

When a friend gave me a book on yoga, I took a serious look at the reality of spiritual life. I wanted the inner peace this book described, so I

sought out an ashram (yoga monastery) and became a disciple, trying to work out my karma. But I never seemed to be good enough inside to really work it out for long.

No Spiritual Solutions

I walked out of the ashram one day, after five years in yoga, and the next week was back in D.C. doing stand-up comedy. Life was worse than ever now that even spiritual solutions seemed useless.

A couple of months later, I got a gig at a well-known New York club. I took a bus to Manhattan with a fellow comic and some friends. Life was looking great about now, I was getting better and bigger gigs, but inside I was down, down, down.

Off the bus in New York, there we were, a group of irreverent, funny people, parading through Port Authority when I saw a woman standing by a table. Behind her a big sign read JESUS SAVES.

She looked to be the least noticed woman in the world. She was trying to hand out tracts and was being ignored by the thousands. Hey, I thought, these people don't have time for eternal salvation. They had to catch a bus!

Then she walked up to me.

The Will of God

"Are you doing the will of God in your life?" she asked.

There was a certain look in her eyes. Someone was really home inside there.

"Hey, well, I'm trying, sister," I replied, smiling, flip, clever.

"Don't try. Surrender."

Don't try? Surrender? Her words haunted me.

continued on next page

Rosenburg cont'd

When I got home I saw an article in one of the suburban papers about a congregation of Jews who worshipped Yeshua HaMashiach, Jesus the Messiah. I decided to go to one of their services.

Couldn't Buy the Punchline

The service was interesting but the punchline of the whole thing was that Jesus was the only way and I just couldn't buy that. After, I talked with a man named Stan Telchin who told me about another fellow he knew who had also been in yoga. "You might want to talk with him," he suggested.

I took some literature and said, "Yeah, I might."

A month later I looked up this fellow, Art Herman. He worked the sound at a church and after the service we started talking. We talked so long they turned the lights out, then

we went to his house and talked some more.

He understood karma, and how I had come to believe I could never work it out or "realize" enough to achieve "liberation." "You know," he said, "I went through some similar things, trying to work it out for my-

The service was interesting but the punchline of the whole thing was that Jesus was the only way and I just couldn't buy that.

self. The key is atonement, though, and Jesus died so He could atone for us, so He could be our salvation."

Needed Saving

A key turned. If Jesus wasn't the only way, He should be. I was helpless and hopeless. I needed salvation. I needed saving from the outer life of sound and fury that meant nothing. I needed saving from the spiral that kept going down and down. I needed the only way God had made available to atone for my sins.

Nothing had ever appeared to me as beautiful as what God did that night. When Art asked if I wanted to receive the Lord, I said, "Yes, it's about time."

It had taken so long. So much hurt and hopelessness, so many false beginnings and disappointing endings before I found that there is One who brings hope and love to all things.

The Healing Power of Comedy

Eventually, God started to stir my gift in me, and I did some comedy here and there. In the next several years, doing it more and more, I came to see the healing power of comedy and the access it can give into men's hearts.

It's paradoxical that I go into prisons and God has given me such a heart and love for these prisoners; the very men I once considered capable of my father's death. What I am doing when I go in, though, is expressing a Spirit reality: a gift of Life.

What I do is comedy, but it really isn't just a joke. I call it my particular "snowflake ministry"—a way of showing that we're all unique—no two alike. Even so, in one way we are all alike: we've all sinned, all of us have fallen short of God. And we all have to choose between evil and love.

Having chosen, I'm constantly amazed how He now expresses His life through my life, as He provides the daring to share love and laughter with divine abandon. That is what life in all its abundance (John 10:10) really is.

If any article in this issue of the Chosen People has piqued your interest, perhaps you would welcome the free material that we have available. Please contact one of our representatives near you, listed on the back cover.



In Search of Perfection

Debbie Bedell figured if she could just work out her karma she'd become perfect.

I was about 14 when I started to feel a lack of direction, spiritual direction, in my life. Every week after synagogue I'd come home and ask, "Why can't I have more of a relationship with God than this?"

It was a friend of my mom's, who knew what I was going through, that told us about this great course that would help me "get in touch" with myself. "This is *exactly* what Debbie needs," he told my mom.

New Age

So that's how I first got involved in a New Age spirituality, and by the end of my first month, I had met my two spiritual guides...spirits who I was told would always be with me, always help me stay in touch with God and give me knowledge of how to help other people.

This was exciting and fulfilling, an answer to my questions and prayers. Not only was I finding my higher self, but I was also able to help other people. And my guides really did seem to bring me closer to God. My prayers were answered, I saw very amazing spiritual events occur and I felt that at last I could speak to God whenever I wanted.

For the next six years I was deeply involved in developing this spiritual relationship within myself.

Highs and Lows

The problem was that there was a constant cycle of peaking high and low as I needed to work out my karma. I believed that everything had a reason and it was up to me to find out why things happen, to work hard to correct them, to become perfect.

This created a never-ending chase for knowledge and understanding.

Pretty soon this high and low drama was draining me. I started to notice a difference between what I was being taught and what was happening.

God Within You

This "mind-enhancing" group taught that you could do great things for mankind if you loved yourself and learned to: let go, accept that God is within you, and find strength from God within you to do the ultimate good.

Every week after synagogue I'd come home and ask, "Why can't I have more of a relationship with God than this?"

The actual result of all this was a constant sense of guilt that came because I knew I would never be good enough. I was frustrated that the betterment of the world would always be thwarted by people like me, unable to attain perfection.

Still, I believed I was doing God's work and there was nowhere else to turn.

When I actually read the Bible (at the suggestion of a friend) I was astounded. I had never actually learned about God, but instead had relied on conversations with friends, sermons in synagogue and what I imagined to be true because it seemed right to me. I believed there was evil in the world, but that noth-



DEBBIE BEDELL

ing spiritual could be evil; clearly a lesson not taught in Scripture.

Much to my surprise, the Bible was amazingly clear in teaching that God did not expect us to better the world through our own efforts.

Freed from Self-Efforts

He sent the Messiah, Jesus, to free us from our self-efforts and to give us a personal relationship with Him.

What a wonderful feeling it was to see that Jesus did the work, that He died for me, that I could assume His perfection. I cried out to God one night, renounced the other spirits within me, and accepted my Messiah.

I still care, more now than ever, for the world around me to be a better place to live. Yet I know it comes from new hearts and changed lives that are a result of what God does for us when we find the mine of true life in Messiah.

Debbie Bedell grew up in Florida, received her Master of Science Degree from City University of New York, and is a member of the Olive Tree Congregation.

By AKIVA COHEN

Yearning For A God I Had Never Known

Akiva Cohen was convinced that he could never find God.

Overlooking Jerusalem at sundown was a deeply spiritual sight. Something about the golden glow permeating the atmosphere, the hills shimmering, the sense of belonging to a nation of Jewish people made me yearn for a God I had never known.

I was visiting Jerusalem to see my grandmother, but in the process, it stirred up a deep sense of being a Jew and of finding an extended family and identity.



What Does It Mean to be Jewish?

I began to ask, perhaps for the first time in my life, "Just what does it mean to be Jewish?" and within me, I knew that being Jewish had much to do with a relationship with God.

I first became aware of this wonder and spiritual curiosity while I was camping in the Sinai. Perhaps it was the vastness or perhaps the awesome antiquity all around that made me feel what I perceived to be a deep spirituality.

Whatever it was, I saw that Judaism was more than my reform upbringing had taught me to expect.

I had gone to Israel for a visit – as part of a trip to see the world. I left there with a hole in my heart which nothing, not even the meditations and consciousness-altering techniques I began to practice, could fill.

A Longing to Know God

My longing to know God continued to grow. Daily I asked God to show me the way and He answered by placing a belief in my heart, like the dim light at the end of a tunnel, that He greatly desired to show Himself to me. Somehow I knew that His desire for me far exceeded my desire for Him.

My wanderlust eventually led me to South Africa where, watching deep red sunsets, my loneliness for God turned to a feeling of futility. The loveliness of the area haunted me like a silent accusation, saying that I would never, could never,

know the One Who created it.

One day I fell on my knees and cried out, "Help me." I could not even articulate what I wanted help for. I only knew I was lost. Perhaps it was that realization for which God had waited, because within the next week, everywhere I went people would tell me about Jesus. But Jesus could not possibly be the answer for me – I was Jewish.

Getting the Message

Some fellow even walked up to me out of the blue and told me that God had directed him to tell me about

Jesus. I began to get the message – loud and clear.

When a friend invited me to church, I was eager to go. There I sensed a presence of God and I became a regular attendee.

Despite the desire to hear the message, I found that more than once I was literally compelled to run out of the services. The feelings of struggle and oppression seemed to overcome me. Yet the longing to personally know God was stronger than my fears that Jesus might be the Messiah.

One evening the pastor spoke about the victory Jesus had won over death. This intrigued me.

Death had always seemed a dark and evil subject. Final. Unknown. Yet as I heard that the death of Messiah served as a reconciliation between me and God, I responded. Messiah was sent to conquer our separation from God. He rose from the dead and gave us new life.

New-Found Joy

I reached out in my heart and said yes to God. About a month later, as a testimony to the new-found joy He had given me, I prayed a simple prayer with a friend, asking Messiah into my heart and life.

When I look back, I am reminded of a promise the Lord gives to our people in Ezekiel 36:24-25: "For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back to your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean...."

It is this new freshness, a fulfillment of the longing that first stirred in Israel, a relationship with the God of my fathers, and most of all a personal intimacy with the living God, that I have found through the Messiah.

Six Things Most Jewish People Don't Know...

Clear away the clutter of a couple thousand years and you'd find that Christianity was not started at the First Baptist Church. Instead, it was... a Jewish movement, in Israel, debated among Jews, started by one Jew, whose name was Yeshua (later translated into Jesus) whose followers were Jewish.

Surprised? Here are some other facts straight from the Bible:



Jesus observed the Jewish holidays: Passover, Chanukah; and was circumcised on the eighth day as prescribed by Jewish law.

St. Paul didn't start out as a Catholic saint. He was a Jewish rabbi named Saul who studied under Rabbi Gamaliel. Of his credentials, he said this: "If anyone else thinks he has reasons

to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the Church...."



Christ was not a last name that went with Jesus. It is the translation of *Christos*, which was the Greek word for Messiah, from the Hebrew *mashiach*, meaning anointed one.

The first debate in Christianity? Whether to welcome Gentiles into their groups without first making them *convert* to Judaism!


Jesus' message was directed at the Jews of Israel. When a gentile woman entreated him for help he even went so far as to rebuke her, saying he was sent "only to the lost sheep of Israel."



His preaching was from the Jewish Scriptures. He quoted from Old Testament prophets like Isaiah and emphasized that he didn't come to destroy the Law but to fulfill it.



The Bible is full of information that many people, Jewish and Gentile, don't know. For your free copy of "21 Reasons to Believe," write Chosen People, 1300 Cross Beam Drive, Charlotte, NC 28217-2800.



By HAROLD

The Man Who

If you could have it all, would you?

The richest man in the world reclined on his silk embroidered couch and began to contemplate the meaning of wealth. By today's standards, his riches would far exceed the combined wealth of the Duponts, the Gettys, and the Hunts.

This man was Solomon, the richest and most powerful man in Israel's history.

Unlike many young people today, Solomon did not initially seek after wealth. In fact, when God told him that he could have whatever he asked for, Solomon chose wisdom over riches.

Wisdom Rather Than Riches

But interestingly, because Solomon requested wisdom rather than riches, God gave him both. In fact, God made him the richest man in the world. Solomon became the first "yuppie" king of Israel. He had it all. The world was his oyster. Nothing was out of his reach. Nothing inhibited him from enjoying his new-found wealth and prosperity.

He accumulated gold, horses, chariots, women and servants. If he were living in today's world, he would be collecting Rolls Royces, Lamborghinis and Ferraris, etc. He would be buying private jets and super deluxe yachts. He would be king of the "jet setters" — a playboy of playboys.

A. SEVENER

Who Had It All

What would you ask for first?

Magnificent Obsession

Amazingly, the thing that Solomon didn't ask for (riches and wealth) became the thing which he pursued. This pursuit became his avocation. It became his magnificent obsession. Perhaps he expressed it best himself when he wrote: "I denied myself nothing my eyes desired: I refused my heart no pleasure" (cf. Eccl. 1:10).

His excesses are listed. He writes, "I bought male and female slaves. . . I also acquired more herds and flocks than anyone in Jerusalem. . . I amassed silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and provinces. I acquired men and women singers, and a harem as well — the delights of the heart of man" (cf. Eccl. 2:4-8).

The seeking after riches and the seeking after the material pleasures which the world offers blinded Solomon to the true riches and wealth that God had also given to him — wisdom.

It was a young Solomon who built the great Temple in Jerusalem — the place where God could dwell on earth. During those early years Solomon's energy and time were spent in seeking to serve the Lord.

He sought to be the best king over Israel. He sought to be a wise and benevolent ruler. However, it soon appears that Solomon became a victim of his own success. His priorities got mixed up. Instead of recognizing that God was the one who gave him his wealth

continued on next page



Solomon began to think that it was his own ability that gave him all of these things. He began to feel that not only did he have to acquire wealth, he also had to maintain it.

Forgot God

In so doing, Solomon forgot God. Solomon increased and maintained his wealth by making alliances with foreign powers. He did so by marrying foreign wives. He began to worship false gods and established idol worship to Ashtoreth and Molech (cf. I Ki. 11:5-8). His personal ambition and his pursuit of riches and pleasure took his eyes off God. Too late he found that the riches of the world bring no satisfaction. They do not bring lasting peace or happiness. Solomon would write, "Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath" (cf. Prov. 11:4) and, "whoever trusts in his riches will fall" (Prov. 11:28). And, indeed, Solomon fell. Because of Solomon's sin, God took the kingdom, wealth, and power from Solomon and gave it to his subordinates (cf. I Ki. 11:11-13).

Solomon continued to rule Israel until his death, but he had no peace. Enemies began to attack his kingdom—both from within and from without (cf. I Ki. 11:14-33). His riches and his wealth brought him no lasting peace. Solomon wrote, "For riches do not endure forever, and a crown is not secure for all generations" (cf. Eccl. 12:6,7).

Solomon recognized that true riches—true happiness—are not found in material wealth or pleasure. True riches can only be found when one recognizes God's claim upon his life. Solomon wrote, "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it be good or evil" (cf. Eccl. 12:13, 14).

The richest man in the world became "poor in spirit" in his pursuit of wealth. So it is with each one of us when we place riches above faith, pleasure above personal peace with God, and personal gain above obedience to God. Worldly riches never satisfy. Perhaps the Psalmist expresses it best when he writes, "I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word" (Ps. 119:14-16).



Harold A. Sevens is President of Chosen People Ministries. An expert on Middle Eastern affairs, Mr. Sevens did graduate work in Jerusalem at the American Institute of Holy Land Studies and the Hebrew University. Mr. Sevens has participated in several archaeological expeditions in Israel and writes regularly on Bible themes for *The Chosen People* magazine, the official monthly publication of Chosen People Ministries.

In a review of a book about the Jews a critic pointedly asked: "What of Jews who do not choose to be Chosen?"

That is a question of the foremost importance. Since it is God Who has chosen the Jews, the Jew who does not choose to be chosen has an argument with God.

Such a man denies or opposes the wisdom of God. In so doing he incurs consequences upon himself, and he injures the entire human society to a degree that he does not suspect.

It is possible to every man to reject the claim of God upon his life and person, to Jews and also to Gentiles. But there is a substantial difference between the two.

There is a substantial difference between a Gentile and a Jew rejecting God's claim on his life.

It is natural for Gentiles to live in ignorance of God, unless they have been enlightened about Him through the Jewish Scriptures and have decided that He—the God of Israel—will be their God.

For a Jew to ignore or reject the God of Israel is not the same thing.

A Jew who "chooses not to be Chosen" does not do so by a mere continuity in sin. He does so by turning his back on what it means to be a Jew, as God sees it. He willfully rejects the role for which he was made as

On Choosin

a Jew. He, in fact, does not choose to be a Jew. He knows that he is a Jew by birth, but he rejects the element in that distinctive birth that is of God—the glorious fact that, because he is a Jew, he is chosen to belong to God; to serve Him with all his mind and soul; and to show Him forth to mankind.

The blessings that God has promised to send upon Jews who obey His voice are spiritual and material, individual as well as national.

Moses said that. Moses told the people in plain terms, warning them with the utmost solemnity and urgency: "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse: A blessing if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day, and a curse if you will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you



g To Be Chosen

By McCANDLISH PHILLIPS

this day, to go after other gods, which you have not known" (Deuteronomy 11:26-28). "Other gods" does not refer only to the false deities of the non-Biblical religions; it refers to anything that claims an allegiance that comes before God in a man's life. Silver and gold, achievement and renown can be "other gods," too.

It is the greatness of a man to rise to the highest calling that comes to him in life and fill it. God, Creator of the universe, has made no mistake in ordaining and calling a people called the Jews to belong to Him, to be His messengers and light-givers to the world. You will make no mistake in answering that call as it is, out to the full scope of God's intention.

If you are a young Jew who has not yet committed his life to some other purpose, you are especially free to do

It is the greatness of a man to rise to the highest calling that comes to him in life and fill it. God, Creator of the universe, has made no mistake in ordaining and calling a people called the Jews to belong to Him.

that. You can begin now to answer the call of God just by telling Him that you want to do so. You will feel that you are not able, and that is right. But are you willing? If you are willing, *God will make you able.*

Moses could never have got the people of Israel out of Egypt without the supernatural power of God. He could never have got the people of Israel across the Red Sea without the supernatural intervention of God.

Just by being willing to obey God, Moses brought the power of God visibly into action in human affairs. That is what the Jews are meant to do. **Just by being willing to answer God's call, you as a Jew will bring the power of God into action in human conditions that are now in wretched disorder.**

There is no want of religion in the world today, but there is a tremendous lack of spiritual reality. As a young Jew you are not called to rote, but to reality.

It is not to be urged that young Jews become exceedingly religious and return to all the venerable traditions from which so many Jews have wandered, by choice or by chance. Fidelity to a tradition, even a tradition of very long standing, and loving God with all one's heart are not the same thing.

If a man determines that he is going to keep the law and the customs and the traditions to show God that he loves Him—that is one thing. It is an elaborate and conscious self-effort.

But if a man loves God with all his heart, he *will* keep His commandments, not as a matter of rule or rote or even conscientious subscription, but as the virtually ef-

Just by being willing to answer God's call, you as a Jew will bring the power of God into action in human conditions that are now in wretched disorder.

fortless outcome of that love!

For he is not a real Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not physical. His praise is not from men but from God" (Romans 2:28, 29).

"Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn" (Deuteronomy 10:16).

Circumcision removes a covering of skin from a part of the human anatomy that is reproductive, that has the capacity to transmit life to another generation.

Adapted from "The Bible, the Supernatural, and the Jews," by McCandlish Phillips; Bethany House Publishers.



Circumcision, in its inward reality, is a kind of cutting out and removing of a covering over the heart – spiritually, not physically – that impedes the free and ardent exchange of love between the heart of man and the heart of God. That which impedes it is cut away and cast off permanently. When that great love is fully in action, the Jews are able to carry out their mission to the world and to reproduce in others their own devotion to Jehovah.

What a day it will be for mankind, staggering in thickening moral darkness, when the Jews are circumcised in their hearts! For individual Jews, those who care, that can occur now if they desire.

Maybe you have tried resolutions. Starting tomorrow, "I will . . ." or "I will not . . ." The resolutions express your idealism, but you don't keep them because you can't keep them. You don't have the power.

Sin is a problem, because no one caught in it is free. "Everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin," the Bible says in John 8:34. That is plain enough, and if you are honest, you know it's true. You sin because you don't have the strength or the power not to, even though you know it's wrong.

Every once in a while you hear people say they live by the Ten Commandments or the Sermon on the Mount, or both. That is nonsense. No man can live by either if he tries to live by them as rules.

It takes new life to live them! It takes power to live above the power of sin.

My own experience of this new life, and the power over sin and freedom from it, began shortly after I read these wonderful words:

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he *power to become the sons of God*, even to them that believe on his name, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:10-13).

When I first saw those words they hit me with considerable force. I knew that I was not a son of God, but the Bible said God was able to give me "power to become a son of God." About three days later I received that power.

Jesus Christ came into my life, and sin went out of my life. That is not to say that I did not ever sin again, but the power that sin held over me, despite my best efforts

Every once in a while you hear people say they live by the Ten Commandments or the Sermon on the Mount, or both. That is nonsense. No man can live by either if he tries to live by them as rules.

to overcome it, was broken. Sin could no longer compel me to do its bidding. As long as you lack power over sin, you are not free.

Read what Isaiah says: "Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18).

No matter how much of a hold sin has on your life, that situation can be suddenly and utterly reversed. There is entire forgiveness with God.

Every man needs a direct, personal relationship to God. That begins in an encounter with the living God. In this first encounter, God extends pardon for sin, imparts new life, and sets a person in a new relationship to temptation—above it, not under it. That cleansing, and the realization that God has done a miracle inside you, brings joy with it.

If you discover the joy that only God can give, your own life will be wonderfully changed and you will be able to help remake the soul of our time in ways of which you cannot now even guess because they are beyond you.

A man may be born of the royal line, born to be a king, but if he refuses to take the crown and the scepter he will not become a king, though he was born to it. He will be

A man may be born of the royal line, born to be a king, but if he refuses to take the crown and the scepter he will not become a king, though he was born to it. He will be only a man who should have been a king but who has devoted himself to some diminished purpose.

only a man who should have been a king but who has devoted himself to some diminished purpose.

Hear these words: "Ho, every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Hearken diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in fatness.

"Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my steadfast, sure love for David.

"Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.

"For you shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace. The mountains and hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands" (Isaiah 55:1-3, 6-9, 12).

If you have never heard the mountains singing, or seen the trees of the field clapping their hands, do not think because of that that they don't. Ask God to open your ears so you may hear it, and your eyes so you may see it, because, though few men ever know it, they do, my friend, they do.



Phillips, 1974

McCandlish Phillips is the author of "The Bible, The Supernatural and The Jews" (Bethany). Phillips was also a reporter for The New York Times for over 20 years. In his book about The Times, "The Kingdom, The Power and The Glory," Gay Talese described Phillips as "one of the best reporters" on The Times.



To Life!

L'chaim ... to life! More than an exclamation, more than a song from Fiddler on the Roof here are the words of eternal life.

If you would like to know how to have a relationship with God through Messiah, here is all you need to know.

God is the source of a satisfying, worthwhile life: *Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore* (Psalm 16:11). This kind of life is the result of a close relationship with God. *In thy presence ... at thy right hand* speaks of a personal relationship which can be as intimate as the one between Abraham and God: *Abraham my friend* (Isaiah 41:8).

Deep down, just about everyone wants a life and relationship like this. As a Jewish scientist put it: "The Jewish nature and soul need to know God. This is its purpose on earth. Our souls are looking for God and we are trying to know God."

Why, then, aren't most people experiencing this life and relationship?

Man has separated himself from God. God's character is the standard by which man is to live: *Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy* (Leviticus 19:2). Anytime man deviates from God's holiness, he violates God's standard, and this is called *sin*. Obviously, then, all of us have sinned. *For there is not a just man upon earth,*

that doeth good, and sinneth not (Ecclesiastes 7:20; see also Psalm 53:3, 4).

Since God is holy and just, He will not establish a personal relationship with anyone until his or her sin is dealt with because He cannot allow sin in His presence. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity* (Habakkuk 1:13).

Because sin is a violation of His standard and character, God must judge man's sin and reject it. Thus sin causes spiritual death and results in separation from God: *But everyone shall die for his own iniquity [sin]* (Jeremiah 31:29; see also Ezekiel 18:20).

As long as sin separates us from God, we can't enjoy the life and relationship God wants us to have: *Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear* (Isaiah 59:2).

But can't we solve the problem by living properly, by prayer, repentance and good deeds? No, we cannot remove the sin barrier by our own efforts: *And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified* (Psalm 143:2; see also Ezekiel 33:13).

Human effort is not adequate because, in God's sight, *We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses [good deeds] are as a filthy garment* (Isaiah 64:5).

Human effort is not adequate because man cannot do enough to solve the problem. *No one can in any wise redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: For the*

redemption of their soul is precious (Psalm 49:8, 9).

But, then, how can this problem of spiritual death and separation from God be solved? God must take the initiative; He must provide the solution. *But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave* (Psalm 49:16).

The sin barrier can be removed by believing God's Word (faith) and by having the blood of the atonement. Abraham was an example of how the sin barrier can be removed. *And he believed in the Lord; and he [God] counted it to him for righteousness* (Genesis 15:6). We must follow the same pattern. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever* (Isaiah 26:3, 4; see also Habakkuk 2:4).

But Moses said that one more thing is essential – the blood of the atonement. *For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul* (Leviticus 17:11; see also Leviticus 4:35).

But why would God want man to go through the awful procedure of killing an animal? When the offerer saw the sacrifice suffering and bleeding for the sins which he had committed, he was impressed with the awfulness of sin and the penalty of death the sinner deserved.

The sacrifice showed him God's holiness (because of His hatred of all evil), justice (because He does not leave sin unpunished), and mercy (because of His readiness to pardon the truly repentant and believing by providing a substitute for him). The animal sacrifice thus provided the blood of atonement and was an act of faith acceptable to God.

But without a priesthood and without a temple, there can be no sacrifices. How can we have the blood of atonement today?

God has provided the blood of atonement for today. *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath caused the iniquity of us all to fall on him . . . For he was cut off out of the land of the living; through the transgressions of my people was he stricken . . . And he took off the sin of many* (Isaiah 53:6, 8, 12).

In the prologue to Isaiah 53 (Isaiah 52:13-15), the author identifies the "he" of these passages. He is described as God's Servant who will be exalted. In

other parts of his work, Isaiah equates this Servant of God with Messiah (e.g., Isaiah 42:1).

God's provision of the blood of atonement through the Messiah follows the same principles God set up in the sacrifice system:

- Sin-offering, atonement for a man by means of a sacrifice
- Pesach, atonement for a family by means of a sacrifice
- Yom Kippur, atonement for a nation by means of a sacrifice
- Messiah, atonement for all by means of a sacrifice

As we have seen, under the sacrifice system personal faith was necessary along with the blood of atonement. So also faith is necessary with the sacrifice of Messiah. He should be the object of our faith today.

But how can we know who Messiah is? God made sure we could recognize Messiah by certain specific identifying marks. These are described by the prophets of Israel:

- His ancestry was from the family of David (Jeremiah 23:5, 6).
- The city of His birth was Bethlehem (Micah 5:1).
- He had a supernatural nature (Isaiah 9:5, 6).
- The manner of His execution was crucifixion (Psalm 22:14-17).
- He rose from the dead (Psalm 16:10; Isaiah 53:10, 11).
- The time of His coming was before the destruction of Herod's Temple in 70 C.E. (Daniel 9:26).

Do you have any idea if anyone has fulfilled these prophecies or has even come close? History tells us that Yeshua ("Jesus" is the Greek translation) of Nazareth fulfilled these and many other prophecies. There are at least 48 specific prophecies concerning Messiah which Yeshua fulfilled. The probability that one person could fulfill all 48 prophecies is 1 out of 10 with 157 zeroes after it!

During his lifetime many people called Yeshua the Messiah ("Christ" is the Greek translation) and believed in Him (Matthew 16:16; John 1:45-51; Acts 6:7).

Many people since that time, both Jews and Gentiles, have had their sins forgiven and have gained a personal relationship with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob through Messiah Yeshua. Through Him one becomes a completed person; e.g., a Jewish person becomes a completed Jew.

Since the blood of atonement has been provided through Messiah Yeshua, there is only one thing left for you to do.

continued on next page

You must by faith receive Messiah Yeshua into your life in order to have a personal relationship with God and a satisfying, worthwhile life. To all who received him [the Messiah], to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12). Receiving Messiah Yeshua involves a moral decision to turn to God's way and from your own, to trust Messiah Yeshua to forgive your sins and bring you into a right relationship with God.

When you receive Messiah Yeshua by faith (trusting what He has done for you), He comes into your life and gives you the power to live a satisfying, worthwhile life. Yeshua says, *Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will go in and eat with him, and he with me* (Revelation 3:20).

Some people think that receiving Messiah Yeshua by faith means they're no longer Jewish. That's not true. As Yeshua put it, *Do not think that I have come to abolish them but to fulfill them* (Matthew 5:17).

The apostle Paul felt the same way. He said when he was in jail, *It is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain* (Acts 28:20).

Are you still lost in your sin? Don't let anything hold you back from God — why not invite Messiah Yeshua to give you a right relationship with God right now? Remember,

1. God is the source of a worthwhile life.
2. Your sin has separated you from God.
3. God's provision through Messiah Yeshua is the solution to the sin barrier.
4. The only thing God asks you to do is trust in Messiah Yeshua to forgive your sins and give you a right relationship with God.

You can receive Messiah Yeshua by faith right now through prayer: "Messiah Yeshua, I admit that I have sinned. I believe that You have provided the blood of atonement for me. I receive You as my Messiah. Thank You for forgiving my sins and coming into my life as You promised."

If you've prayed that prayer or want more information, call or write: The Chosen People Ministries, 1300 Cross Beam Drive, Charlotte, NC 28217-2800 (704) 357-9000, or clip the card inside this issue.

I Was Lost Myself B

David Chagall, cousin to

By DAVID CHAGALL

Cousin to artist Marc Chagall, David Chagall is the author of three novels, a political book and frequent contributor to prominent publications such as TV Guide and Los Angeles Magazine. His wife Juneau is an artist, sculptor and photographer.



Though raised in an Orthodox Jewish home, as an adult Chagall's world was one of images, ideas and philosophies, a world not outside of God's grasp, but one not exactly open to God either.

Looking For but I Found God

Artist Marc Chagall, considered himself too "super-charged" to need God.

"One time, a fellow writer told me that Jesus died for our sins," David recalls, "but I was much too tolerant, too open-minded, too super-charged to need God. I told him, 'That's great for you but I can't believe in anything I don't have to work for.'"

For David, as it is for most people, the time he became aware of his desire for God is hard to place, but the most obvious impetus came when his publisher sent him to San Francisco in 1967.

Beatnik Era

"My book 'The Century God Slept' dealt with the beatnik era so the publisher thought I might be able to turn out something quick about the hippies," he explains.

"It was the beginning of flower power, anti-establishment, and tuning into yourself. In most ways, I was different from these hippies: I was older than most of them, and considered myself a person ruled by reason. I had my BS and Masters degrees, both in social sciences, and was proud of my aggressiveness and my accomplishments.

"Yet, despite their flagrant disregard for the world I knew, these flower children had something that was missing from my life: an awareness of their need for inner peace.

"I began to meditate and to read the Bible, not because I was looking for God but because I was looking for myself."

Pulitzer Nomination

David's "quick" novel became intertwined with his spiritual search. Written in four years instead of the projected six months, the book was released as "The Spieler for the Holy Spirit," and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

Though raised in an Orthodox Jewish home, as an adult Chagall's world was one of images, ideas and philosophies, a world not outside of God's grasp, but one not exactly open to God either.

The years passed and so did his realization that God was a real, personal and living Being. "I began to put Him to little tests. I'd ask for help and direction in everyday things. I saw that I was happier and more peaceful and that I was beginning to turn from the 'real world' to the spiritual. I saw which one held the greatest reality.

"Through my Bible reading I was growing to love the person of Jesus,

despite the ever-present conflict that He was the God of the enemy. It was more a sense of disloyalty than hostility, a little like being a Penn State alumnus and rooting for Syracuse."

Taking God Seriously

"Occasionally I'd watch Christian preachers and was astounded by their personal faith. I ignored the evangelistic invitations partly because the clichés bothered me and partly because they so openly appealed to people much needier than me. But I wanted to share one thing with these men: I wanted to take God seriously.

Then one day, spending his accustomed time with God, "I realized something personal was missing in my relationship with God. As I prayed about it, a voice within me said, 'Ask Jesus.'"

"I began to talk to Jesus. I already knew about Him, of course, but everything I had read about Him began to make sense. I realized I didn't know Him but that He was the only way to peace with God. In a flash I realized Jesus was not a secondary God. He was the Messiah, my Messiah. It was like meeting someone I had always wanted to know.

"I set out to know myself, to find the truth. In Jesus there was the answer, the one who tells me, He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8).

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