

# The Chosen People

OCTOBER 1990 ISSN 0164-5323

SPECIAL ISSUE

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 1990 "special evangelistic issue" of our *Chosen People* magazine.

As in previous years, this month's magazine has two covers; an outer one which when removed leaves a complete magazine with an inner cover—a magazine especially written to witness to your unsaved Jewish families or friends.

If you regularly receive our magazine you know that it's general purpose is to share with you, our prayer partners, the blessings and needs of our ministry. It is our way of keeping you informed about how your prayers and financial support have been effective in reaching Jewish people with the gospel.

If this is your first issue of the "*Chosen People*" magazine, please understand that this is a "special evangelistic issue." It is produced once a year in October for the express purpose of putting into the hands of believers, like yourself, an effective tool to help us reach Jewish people with the gospel.

This special edition of the *Chosen People* magazine was designed and produced so that you could give it away to an unsaved Jewish person. Other monthly issues of the *Chosen*





# From the President

People may be kept for future reference in Bible studies, for helps in witnessing to Jewish people, for prayer concerns, or for just getting better acquainted with the missionaries and projects you support through Chosen People Ministries.

As you read through the "special evangelistic issue," and see some of the illustrations and pictures, some of you may say, "Why are they quoting such people as Goldie Hawn, Voltaire, Sammy Davis Jr., Einstein or Groucho Marx? These are not Jewish believers!" We know that, and in no way are we implying that they are—or that they are interested in Yeshua (Jesus),—or that they are endorsing our efforts to reach Jewish people with the gospel.

The reason we have included pictures and quotes of such Jewish people is that what they do have to say about Jewish life, and about Jewish people, communicates to other Jewish people. It gets their attention!

Jewish people like to read or hear what other Jewish people are saying...and, this is exactly what we are seeking to accomplish with this "special evangelistic issue" of the *Chosen People* magazine. We want to get the attention of Jewish people—we want them to read the magazine—for, in between the clever Jewish quotes, and in between the humorous anecdotes and Jewish comments on life, we have interwoven a clear and concise presentation of the gospel. It is done in a way which clearly communicates the Good News of salvation in a Jewish context to Jewish people.

Please follow these simple guidelines before giving a copy of the October magazine to a Jewish person.

1. Remove the outside cover and the envelope underneath. As you can see, it has been designed so that when the outer cover is removed, you are left with a complete magazine with an exciting new cover.

2. Now, with the outer cover removed, you have in your hands a carefully and prayerfully prepared magazine to give to an unsaved Jewish person. Pray about how God will use you to be His instrument to share the gospel with a Jewish person. Perhaps God will lead you to send it to a Jewish person. Or you may leave it in a reception room, or hand it to a co-worker, friend or family member. Remember it was written to be given away!

3. I am confident that, after you have shared your first copy with someone, you will want more copies to give away. Because we consider this such a crucial ministry, limited numbers of extra copies are available free. We only ask that you pay shipping and handling...and that you promise to give them to a Jewish person. (There is an order form for you to use on the inside of the outer back cover.)

We hope that you will pray for this special evangelistic thrust, and that many Jewish people will find their Messiah through faithful witnesses like yourself.

In Messiah,

Harold A. Sevens

## The Chosen People

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE is 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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**IMPORTANT:**  
PLEASE TEAR FRONT AND BACK COVER  
OFF BEFORE PASSING IT ON TO YOUR  
JEWISH FRIENDS



# The Chosen People

## The Jewish Mystique

*Everyone's got something to say about the Jewish experience. But who can say what makes the Jew so special?*



"It's an historical fact that Jews were never fighters. . . . Let's be honest about it: Did you ever see anybody afraid to walk into a Jewish neighborhood because he might get killed by an accountant?"

—Jackie Mason



"All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?"

—Mark Twain



"Pessimism is a luxury that a Jew never can allow himself."

—Golda Meir



"After all, there's no biological difference between a Jew and a gentile despite what my uncle Max says."

—Woody Allen



# The Chosen People

Since 1894, the official publication of Chosen People Ministries

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WHAT MAKES THE JEW SO SPECIAL? Emerson the poet said it was the suffering (our "badge," he said) that we have endured that has distinguished us as a people. John Adams, the statesman said that we had "done more to civilize man than any other nation."

In a similar vein, the Jewish writer Judah Halevi intimated that in giving the world the Torah we had become exemplary.

Of course what all these men said is true. But if you'd have pressed each one they would eventually confess that our specialness is tied up with God. He chose us.

Anyone who's seen Cecil B. De Mille's "Ten Commandments" knows that, you say. So . . . if everyone knows that then why does the Jewish identity continue to be an enigma? Even the hip, young (and Jewish) ad man of "Thirtysomething", on the brink of his son's birth, stammered on a recent episode, "I want to feel like a Jew. What does a Jew feel like?"

Our proposal is this: Our Jewish identity makes little sense because we are disconnected from God. The God who called us into



"I am a Jew, and it always seemed to me not only shameful but downright senseless to deny it."

—Freud



"The Jew is the emblem of eternity."

—Tolstoy  
(*Stars and Sand*)



"... after I decided to become a Jew only then did I learn the Jews don't really have all the money. When I found out Rockefeller and Ford were goyim I almost resigned."

—Sammy Davis Jr.



"Since my daughter is only half-Jewish, could she go in the water up to her knees."

—Groucho Marx  
(When excluded from a beach club on racial grounds)



being as Jews. To find our fulfillment as Jews we must find our way back to the God who first called us.

On the following pages you will find Jews who have found fulfillment by returning to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But not the way you might expect.

Or maybe you're two steps ahead of us and you've guessed what (or who) this is all about. Fine. But before you close up this magazine thinking this is merely the repackaging of an old tiresome idea . . . stop. If you've read this far you've probably considered lots of other explanations for life's Big Questions. What's one more?

If we're wrong, then you've lost some minutes in some not altogether uninteresting reading material. If you find we're right then you'll never forget today . . . or this silly little magazine

—The Editor

*Who "we" are: Jews and Gentiles who believe that Yeshua (Jesus) is the Messiah foretold by Moses and the prophets. Chosen People Ministries was founded in 1894 in Brooklyn, NY by Leopold Cohn an orthodox rabbi from Europe.*



"If the Jew did not exist, the anti-Semite would invent him."

—Jean-Paul Sartre



"Though we boast of rank, we must admit that we are but of pagan stock while the Jews are of the blood of Christ. . . . The Glory came from them, not from us."

—Luther



"A people who can't sleep themselves and let nobody else sleep."

—I. B. Singer  
(Family Moskat)



"I think I have a Jewish demeanor and a Protestant ethic."

—Carrie Fisher



*In light of 2,000 years of history, is faith in Jesus relevant for a Jewish person?*

# A JEWISH PERSPECTIVE ON HISTORY AND IDENTITY

By SAM NADLER

**Y**ou don't need a Gallup poll to tell you that the concept of Jewish identity has undergone radical change. Intermarriage, once taboo, is an everyday occurrence. German-made cars, once an anathema to the Jewish community are status symbols. And now Jesus, at one time barely accepted as an historical figure, is being embraced by Jews as the Messiah!

Nowadays, it's not unusual for many of our people to respond to Jesus not on the basis of whether His credentials are genuine, but on the basis of His association with Gentiles and what is considered a Gentile religion. "No, thank you. If I'm interested in religion, we Jews have our own."

What may surprise many is the New Testament's *assumption* of Jewish interest in Jesus, and its extensive explanation and justification of Gentile involvement.

Early New Testament discussion regarding Gentile conversion dealt mostly with whether or not they first had to become Jews in order to truly follow Jesus. The issue was resolved. It was determined that since salvation was by grace through faith in Messiah Yeshua, (his Hebrew name) then Gentiles didn't have to become Jews. But since there were and still are so many more Gentiles in the world than Jews, Gentile response has made faith in Jesus appear as Jewish as "sliced ham on white bread with mayo."

In light of 2,000 years of history, is faith in Jesus relevant for a Jewish person? Jesus would say "Yes," because as He once said to a non-Jew:

"Salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22). And as the New Testament clearly states, "the Good News is to the Jew first . . ."

You see, it's not only the message of a Jewish Messiah that came to fulfill the words of Jewish prophets who prophesied of His coming thousands of years earlier. It's also the message of fulfillment of our identity as a people, the Jewish people. He brings meaning and purpose to our lives as our lives become related to the God of Israel.

Sometimes the canard that "faith in Jesus makes you a non-Jew" is believed by our people. On a radio call-

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**Early New Testament discussion regarding Gentile conversion dealt mostly with whether or not they first had to become Jews in order to truly follow Jesus.**

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in show in Miami several years ago, one caller in particular wanted to let me know that now that I'm a "Christian, I could no longer be a Jew." After all, he continued quoting the Scriptures, "in Christ there's neither Jew nor Greek."

Since he had quoted part of a New Testament verse, I asked if he himself was a Christian. "Yes," he responded, "I most certainly am." "Well then," I replied, "let me read the whole verse from which you quoted . . ." There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither

male nor female; for you are all one in Christ.' Sir, let me ask you are you married?"

"Yes," he slowly responded, wondering what I was getting at.

"And is your wife a Christian as well?" I asked.

"Yes," he again replied.

"And are you still a male and yet a Christian?" I continued to ask.

"Yes," he answered, now starting to realize my point.

"Well, my friend," I said, "as you and your wife are still male and female, and yet are Christians, so I, too, can still be Jewish and yet a committed follower of Messiah Jesus. You see, the verse (Galatians 3:28) deals with the fact that there is only one way of salvation, not the loss of identity or gender."

There was a long pause at the other end of the line. Then he responded slowly, "You mean I'm still Jewish, too?"

"Yes, of course," I answered.

"Hallelujah!" he exclaimed. "They said I was no longer Jewish and I believed them."

Hallelujah, indeed. Jesus never came to remove anyone's identity—only to remove the barriers between God and man, the barriers of our sin.

Many of our people are coming to understand that. Here's a few of their stories . . .



*Sam Nadler is Executive Director, Chosen People Ministries. He and his wife Miriam have two boys and live in Charlotte, NC.*





*Could a nice Jewish kid who never ventured more than nine yards from central air conditioning find happiness (and salvation) in a rustic cabin?*

# BACK TO THE LAND

By SCOTT BROWN

I am a member of the East Coast Ashkenazim, second generation, American-born and of Polish-Russian descent. The Jewish orthodoxy of my European forebears was largely lost over the years, which may account for my casual outlook on Jews and Judaism during my early, post-Bar Mitzvah years.

"Identity" was something akin to achievement: It had to be accomplished. Your answer to "What are you going to be when you grow up?" was what counted.

When I was young, I thought everyone was Jewish, and being like everyone else, to this teenager, was something to be scorned. So I packed up my heritage and all its accouterments, and put them on a shelf.

## Back To The Land

I was at college when a fellow student mentioned in passing that he would like to buy some land one day. This was in the days when people were flocking "back to the land," when more *Foxfire* books than poinsettias were sold at Christmas.\*

A piece of land. . . . It sounded so good. Land wasn't something that you just owned or studied. It was something to become a part of, something bigger than you. And the accessory images were so idyllic: fireplace, family, cabin, root cellar, garden, tractor, shovels and hoes.

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\**Foxfire* Books were popular in the early 1970s. Edited by Eliot Wiggindon, they focused on teaching youth through a return to their cultural heritage.



### Something To Worship

I bought 40 wilderness acres and an axe. My zeal more than compensated for the fact that I had never before strayed more than nine yards from central air conditioning.

Despite my mother's impassioned pleas reminding me that Jewish boys don't do this sort of thing, I built a tiny cabin. For three years I lived in my cabin in the wooded outskirts of Cornell, a little town in Washington state.

When my mother's friends asked her where I was and what I was doing, she would say, "He's studying hard at Cornell." Then she would quickly change the subject.

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**I thanked him, but I knew what the book was: It was that Gentile Bible, the source of so much pain for the whole of Jewry.**

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### Not Such A Big Shot After All

I spent about one year working with a small crew of carpenters. Two of these fellows were particularly peculiar. Peculiar, I mean, in a positive sense.

Their behavior was definitely different. They were at work on time. They didn't swear. They didn't complain. There was no backstabbing.

But more than this, they were peculiar in the sense that there was a difference in quality. They had a quiet confidence that seemed to lay bare

my own lack.

One of them, Jim, cared about me in a way which was neither contrived nor calculated, and I grew to appreciate him.

### There's Life In It!

One day at quitting time, Jim tossed me a little brown book. As I caught it he said, "Read this; there's life in it."

I thanked him, but I knew what the book was: It was that Gentile Bible, that primer for anti-Semitism, the source of so much pain and suffering for the whole of Jewry.

I took the little book home and stuffed it in the back of a drawer where I intended for it to remain. I would have thrown it away immediately were it not for the fact that Jim had given it to me. Jim cared about me, so I kept his gift.

### Impulse To Read

Months passed, and I changed jobs. One evening I was searching for something in my cabin when I came across the little testament.

Something (Someone?) gripped me with the impulse to read this book. I felt overcome with curiosity. What was it all about? Was it mysticism, mythology?

I convinced myself that I was obligated to justify my distaste for the book. After all, I had never really seen one.

### Most Jewish Book

By the dim light of a kerosene lamp I began reading what appeared to be the most Jewish book I had ever read. I was totally bewildered. I couldn't see what the Gentiles saw in it: It was

full of Jewish genealogies, Jewish history, and Israel.

As I read I soaked it all in. But whenever the words "Jesus Christ" appeared on the page, they tore into me, so thick was the rind of misbeliefs enshrouding my understanding.

But why was the name so deeply offensive? I had never considered the question until then.

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**Something gripped me with the impulse to read this book. I felt overcome with curiosity. Was it mysticism, mythology?**

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### Most Relevant Influence

In the ensuing weeks, my opinion about the book changed dramatically. "Hitler's nursery rhymes," as it was sometimes referred to, was fast becoming the most relevant influence in my life.

But there was more. It seemed to command respect without having to qualify its authority. The words of this Jesus wrenched secrets from my heart and mind of which even I was unaware. The book challenged me, and I became its disciple.

In 1977 I proposed to Margie, my high school sweetheart. She answered my proposal with two proclamations: (1) "Yes." (2) "I'm not into the Bible like you are, so don't presume upon me."

Four years later, she too was studying the Bible, and together we had become quite knowledgeable in the Scriptures. Nevertheless, we re-



mained quite dead in our sins.

### In The Valley Of Decisions

In the summer of 1981, a local church advertised that they were going to show a series of films depicting events which the Bible says will occur at the end of this age. It was Jim the carpenter's church.

The films were free, and we love movies, so we went.

How does one describe the internal ministry of the Holy Spirit on the unregenerate soul? We knew enough Bible to trust the film's depiction of Revelation. The people on the screen were identifiable types; we were much like them.

The films depicted how people were being forced to make decisions that would shape their destinies, decisions based solely on their relationship to Jesus Christ.

They were either Christ's or they weren't. If they weren't, they were condemned. And their death was obviously imminent, given the times.

Was our death, though less obvious, any less imminent? Where did *we* stand with Him?

I was too distracted by my own suffocating conviction to notice that Margie was experiencing the same thing.

With white-knuckled determination we resisted the altar call, after which we silently left the church, silently drove home, silently sat on the couch in the living room.

### "We Have To Pray."

At least one eternity passed before I choked out the obvious: "We have to pray." In our four years of marriage, we had never prayed.

My wife sat beside me on the

couch, we held hands, and I stumbled through a prayer of brokenness that took 27 years to compose. We were

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born again that night.

Words do not begin to describe the subsequent transformation in our lives. God actually resurrected my spirit. But not only this. He has quickened what I thought was to be forever dead: My sense of relevancy as a Jew.

That "useless" heritage I had packed away I now realize had been like a puzzle with a missing piece: It was full of potential, it was beautiful in places, it was almost fulfilling. But in the end, without the missing piece, it was totally useless.

Now that I found the missing piece in my Jewish heritage, Jesus, the Messiah, it all makes perfect sense. And it is oh, so beautiful.

However, coming to a deep appreciation of my Jewish heritage wasn't an easy process. In fact, it is evidence of one of the more dramatic changes in my life.

*Scott is pastor of Son of David Fellowship, Rockville, MD. He and his wife Margie have four children.*







*Growing up, Artis Clotfelter never felt quite good enough, pretty enough or popular enough. No wonder she felt she could never be good enough for God.*

## COULD AN UGLY DUCKLING

EVER BE GOOD  
ENOUGH FOR GOD?

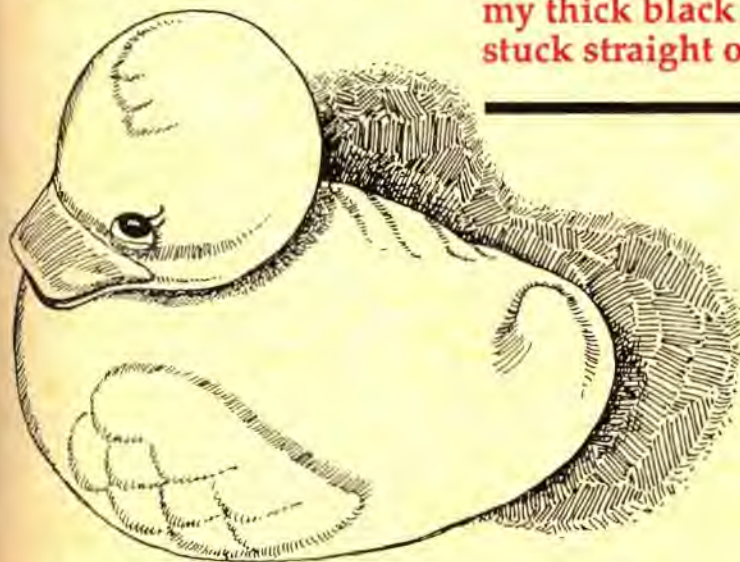


**I** always felt different from the other kids. An ugly duckling, I was too tall, always awkward and no matter what mother did with my thick black hair it stuck straight out. Even during those Depression years most kids had mothers who stayed at home and cooked. My mom was divorced and worked to support her invalid parents and me.

I felt different in other ways too. We lived in a predominantly Catholic neighborhood so my two best friends were Catholics. One time, stepping into their European style cathedral, I was reminded how different it was to be Jewish.

### A Terrifying Voice

Just inside the door stood a mammoth statue of Jesus on the cross. It must have been 10 or 15 feet high. Worshipers would climb a ladder-like stairway in front of the statue and kiss the nail-scarred hands and feet.



I climbed the ladder and kissing that cold, imposing body a terrifying voice suddenly stabbed my heart: "Thou shall have no graven images before thee." Shaking, I climbed down.

As if it wasn't enough being different from my friends, mother never quite let me forget I was also very different from her.

She was a people-person. Strong and charismatic, she never seemed to feel inadequate. She loved pretty dresses and parties.

I wanted to be a Northwest Mounted Policeman. More often than not you could find me alone somewhere, in my room, eyes drooping as I stayed awake to read the latest Jack London book.

**An ugly duckling, I was too tall, always awkward and no matter what mother did with my thick black hair it stuck straight out.**

Like most children who are loners, however, I had a natural curiosity and a great sense of adventure. By the time I was 11, I had fallen in love with flying through the Civil Air Patrol Cadets. On occasion I had even gone up with the famed aviatrix Jacqueline Cochran.

In school, I was well ahead of my class but frequently bored. Always asking questions, I was considered too outspoken, another trait my mother didn't approve of.

One time during confirmation studies I remember questioning the rabbi about Isaiah 1:18.

"Look," I showed him. "It says my sins are like scarlet but they can be white as snow. Why are they scarlet? How can they be white?"

"Don't ask such questions," he said, "and don't argue. If you would live a good life, do *mitzvot* (good deeds) and be a good person, instead of being a troublemaker, you would understand these things."

Naturally mother was exasperated. "Why can't you just sit there and keep quiet?" she pleaded.

"I just can't, that's all," I replied.

### Ugly Duckling Into A Swan

Mother remarried when I was about ten. When I was 14, my stepfather, an engineer, moved us to Monterrey, Mexico where he had a very good job offer. Though I was 5'10" and loomed over everyone, at last it seemed that the ugly duckling was going to turn into a swan.

I was accepted by an older, faster crowd and went to gala balls. We were very involved in the Jewish community and there were constant parties and activities.



The fun ended when mom got worried about the company I kept. It was, she feared, too loose and fast for a young teen. Before I knew what had happened, I was whisked off to live with a complete stranger: my father.

#### Antebellum Atmosphere

Dad and his wife Lillie led a quiet, refined life in Washington, D.C. Lillie's father was a Civil War veteran and she had always lived in a some-

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**"Look," I showed the rabbi. "It says my sins are like scarlet but they can be white as snow. Why are they scarlet?"**

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what genteel, antebellum atmosphere. Neither Lillie nor I was prepared for the culture shock of a rebellious, Jewish American Princess moving into her home.

Doubt and insecurity hit me harder than ever. I was attending a high school where most of the kids were from families of ambassadors and high level government officials. For once I wasn't the brightest in my class. Washington turned the swan from Mexico back into an ugly duckling.

Gloria Steinem, one of the early founders of Women's Lib., was in my high school class and just recently I heard her confess she felt like an awkward outsider in school. If so, it didn't seem that way to me. She and her friends seemed like the 1952 version of the "beautiful people."

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**Gloria Steinem was in my class. Recently I heard her confess she felt like an outsider in school. It didn't seem that way to me.**

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After high school, I snared a job at the Pentagon and began to date Len Clotfelter, a handsome airman. Len had come to believe in Christ when he was 12, but was never grounded in the Word of God.

Our relationship bloomed and we married. When Len got out of the Air Force we moved to southern California, and began attending First Baptist Church of Lakewood with his sister.

For several months, Len grew as a Christian and I was willing enough to go to services with him. Everyone was praying for me, but I was completely oblivious to the idea that there was some decision I had to make.

#### The Prayer Room

One night, after seeing *Oil Town U.S.A.*, a Billy Graham film, I found myself more than curious. I found myself talking to someone about Jesus. "Do you believe the New Testament is the Word of God?" he asked.

"No!" I said, incredulous at the question.

He called for Bob Ellif, Chairman of the Deacon Board. Bob had a special sensitivity to me, and after talking, said, "What you're saying is you'd like to find out more, right?"

"Yes," I agreed, relieved.

Pastor Harold Carlson came over and went through much of the same

information Bob Ellif had. He explained that all of us were sinners, separated from God, and in need of a Savior. He showed me that Jesus said He was that Savior.

#### Didn't Feel Any Different

It's all a little hazy to me, but before I knew what had happened, Pastor Carlson and a bunch of others were congratulating me. I didn't feel any different, except I knew I had invited Jesus to come into my life and accepted that He died in my place on the cross. What good would that do, I thought. I could work all my life and still not be good enough to please God.

It wasn't until a few weeks later that I realized what had happened. The Scripture—"It is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9)—suddenly came alive.

God had given me eternal life!

#### Accepted By God?

God had already done it all! He wasn't disappointed that I was different; He had made me that way!

When the joy of God first impressed me, I took out my childhood Bible, the one I had used growing up in synagogue and turned to the section marked "Birth." The words I wrote there still make me want to sing:

"The most important in all of eternity for me, April 1954, born again to be a child of God through the precious blood of the Lamb of God of Isaiah 53."

*Artis and her husband Len live in Sacramento. They have two grown children.*





*Ben Volman thought he could find the meaning of life by studying philosophy. But all he found was a dead end.*

## FROM DEAD PHILOSOPHERS TO THE LIVING GOD

By BEN VOLMAN

The sunlight of early spring poured into the professor's office. As we sat around her desk discussing the meaning of philosophy, I grew more dissatisfied with her every answer.

"How did I make this mistake?" I thought. "What made me think that philosophy would lead to understanding or give my life meaning?"

The face of my teacher was lined with her own troubles. I tried to explain my dilemma.

"I always thought that studying philosophy would lead to truth, to wisdom for life."

"No, Ben," she began. "Those things are not the purpose of our study. We are examining the history of ideas . . ."

As she spoke I knew I was at a dead end. In my mind's eye I could see all my teachers and the students turning a great wheel in a clockwork machinery; producing ideas without a reason. They circled the truth, whatever that meant, and never reached it. No one could tell me if life had a real purpose or if there was a larger-than-life reason for living.

The professor had stopped speaking. I agreed politely with her and promised to work harder on my essays.

### Nagging Questions

Outside in the reviving March air, I felt the freedom that comes from giving up false illusions. It was mixed with disappointment. What would I do now?

From my route I viewed the emerging skyline of the city center.

My parents had come to Toronto from Israel in the early 1950s, and I





mother's stories of growing up in Israel in the 1930s and 1940s. My mother's family had fled to Israel from Germany in 1933. My father was a Holocaust survivor and had been in the War of Independence. Hebrew was the second language in my home. Then, as now, I called myself a Zionist.

Despite personal success in school, I was always aware of a deep-rooted difference. I could trace that, too, back to my Jewish heritage. It seemed as though we were almost reliving a part of the Holocaust in the daily talk around the kitchen table or at family gatherings. Whenever the stories were told of aunts, uncles, grandparents, or young cousins, they all ended in tragedy. They died in the camps, in the streets, or in a way too horrible for my parents to talk about.

#### Unresolved Anger

The thought of those who died was like a weight, and the memory of those crimes against the innocent burned inside me like unresolved anger.

If there was a God, the Holocaust proved that He didn't matter.

In the fall of 1974 I entered the University of Toronto. My college, Innis, was the smallest and most "radical" of the undergraduate colleges in Canada. I was planning a career as a writer by taking courses in English and philosophy.

My first philosophy class was particularly disarming, when the distinguished lecturer closed his class this way: "Ladies and gentlemen, I hope you will study many philosophers in the years ahead, but I hope that you will also discover that the greatest philosopher who ever lived is Jesus Christ."

#### Almost Convincing

Despite that unexpected beginning, philosophy did attract me. (The Philosophy Department at the university was one of the largest in North

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**Despite personal success in school, I was always aware of a deep-rooted difference. I could trace that, too, back to my Jewish heritage.**

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America.) Strangely enough, the philosophers were always talking about God. In fact, their reasons for believing that there was a God seemed, well, almost convincing. Descartes, Spinoza, Kant, even the modern philosophers continued the discussion. Some of them even believed.

I became fascinated by the book *Pensées*, a collection of thoughts by Blaise Pascal, the seventeenth-century French mathematical and scientific genius. Pascal actually recounted a moment of meeting Jesus personally.

He was the author of a brilliant little essay called "The Wager." He offered two alternatives: "Either God is or God is not... and you must wager." I had never seen it put that way before.

Let us weigh up the gain and the loss involved in calling heads that God exists:... if you win you win everything; if you lose you lose nothing.

Slowly I was being drawn into a God consciousness of some kind. It weaved through readings in the occult and mysticism. How was I going to put it all together?

One weekend my elder brother brought home a Bible he was reading. My interest was aroused. I went to one of the campus bookstores and rummaged through every Bible in stock.

The Bible was the most powerful literature I had ever encountered.

The writing was wonderful. I even asked myself if I might ever live by Jesus' teaching. I decided I might

was born while they still lived in the teeming Kensington Market when it was full of postwar Jewish immigrants.

I was always very conscious of my Jewishness. Not that my parents were very religious. We celebrated all the holidays, but our identity did not revolve around Passover or Yom Kippur.

We were stirred instead by my



want to, but I never would. I'm not saint material.

### Jesus Is God

Then one summer day I stumbled onto a reference to John 14:6. Jesus says there, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." I studied the passage for long minutes. Yes, I concluded, Jesus is actually saying here that He is God.

"I'm Jewish," I thought. "I can't believe this."

I closed the Bible and put it away. And that, I assumed, closed the book on Jesus.

I entered my second year at the university. As months went by I found that I could not shake the conviction that God exists. This time, though, I was not looking at Him, but at myself. Beside the wonderful promise of hope spoken of by Pascal, my life seemed like an empty routine without joy or reason.

One night I lay in bed, painfully aware of the void inside.

"Dear God," I began. I really did want to pray, but then stopped. My

**Slowly I was being drawn into a God consciousness of some kind. It weaved through readings in the occult and mysticism. How was I going to put it all together?**

heart was not in it. Tears came. My heart had lapsed into a long and bitter winter. For the first time I knew how deep the gulf was between God and man.

It was for this very reason—one last attempt at finding truth and

meaning—that I had gone to my professor's office, only to have her say, "No, Ben, those things are not the purpose of our study."

As I walked through the wintry streets from the professor's office, I looked forward to lunch with my friends. I was only steps away from the college when a yellow poster caught my eye. In bold red letters it announced: Arthur Katz. For some reason I stopped to look. Underneath was a biography. I began to read about his spiritual journey from Marxism to that which led him to "expound on the Person of Jesus Christ."

I looked again at the name. With a name like that, he must be Jewish.

### Skipped Lunch

The meeting started at 1 o'clock. It was now 1:15. The auditorium was on the other side of the campus. I would have to skip lunch.

I arrived quietly and slipped into a back seat of the hall. As I sat there, I heard the speaker's dramatic and intelligent voice repeat things that had been going through my mind for over a year.

Katz spoke of living moment by moment with the Lord, and I knew that this was how I wanted to live.

After the stirring address, I went forward to talk to him in person.

I asked the one question that held me back. "What about the Holocaust?" To be honest, I don't remember his answer. All I remember thinking was that here was another Jew ready to speak about his faith in Jesus.

I realize now that the only answer to the Holocaust, to evil in any and every form, is to end the will to do evil that lives in our own hearts. To receive inner healing we must receive the Prince of Peace. We can't change history, but *we can change*, with God's help.

Art looked at me closely. "You're

**As months went by I found that I could not shake the conviction that God exists. This time, though, I was not looking at Him, but at myself.**

ready to come, aren't you?"

"Yes," I said.

He took me aside, and there in front of my Jewish friends I let God have His way in my life. I felt like a brick had fallen off my chest. A few minutes later I felt flooded with the joy of peace beyond understanding.

I had received the God of Israel as my God, and Jesus as my personal Messiah. And I felt inside that They had received me.

For the next six months I woke up every day amazed at that decision, and I needed to let God prove it again and again. Finally it was no longer a matter of proof, but daily faith.


My life has long since become absorbed with other pursuits than philosophy, but I am still aware that believers are called in faith to love God with all their minds.

In my well-thumbed copy of Pascal's *Pensées*, I discovered these words underlined: "It is good to be tired and weary from fruitlessly seeking true good, so that one can stretch out one's arms to the Redeemer."

Jesus had promised that peace: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Mt. 11:28, 29). ☞

*Ben Volman is pastor of the Olive Tree Congregation in Toronto. He and his wife Sue have one child.*





## Isaiah 53: Of Whom Does The Prophet Speak?

<sup>13</sup> Behold, my servant shall prosper, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high

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

<sup>15</sup> So 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?

<sup>2</sup> For 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.

<sup>3</sup> He 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.

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

<sup>5</sup> But 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.

<sup>6</sup> 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 upon him.

<sup>7</sup> He 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.

<sup>8</sup> He 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.

<sup>9</sup> And 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.

<sup>10</sup> But 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.

<sup>11</sup> He 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.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore 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 Mystery of Isaiah 53

*An Old Testament passage thousands of years old still sparks debate between Jews and Christians today. To whom does this mysterious passage refer?*

By MICHAEL RYDELNIK

One of the key Old Testament passages debated by scholars is Isaiah 53. Jewish expositors after Rashi\* generally say the suffering servant depicted here refers to the nation of Israel. Early Jewish sources and most believers in the Messiah Jesus contend it refers to the Messiah.

Can the suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 be Israel? The text of the passage itself plainly says no. Here are the reasons:

**The Pronouns.** In Isaiah 53:1-9, there is a clear distinction in pronouns. The speakers uniformly identify themselves in the first person plural (we, us and our), while the Servant is consistently described in the third person singular (he, him and his). Isaiah the prophet, a Jew, in speaking of himself and his own nation Israel, uses the pronouns we, us and our. He describes the Servant as Someone other than himself and his people in using the pronouns he, him and his. Since the speakers are plainly Isaiah's people Israel (we), the Servant whom they describe (he) must be Someone other than Israel. They both cannot be Israel.

**The People.** In Isaiah 53:8, Isaiah declares that the Servant was put to

death "through the transgressions of *my people* [italics added]. "Obviously, Isaiah's people are the Jewish people. If the Servant died *for* the children of Israel, the Servant cannot also *be* the children of Israel.

**The Sufferer's Innocence.** The passage repeatedly claims the innocence of the Servant. Isaiah 53:4-6 says that His suffering was not for His own sin but for the sins of others. Verse 9 specifically states, "He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." However, the prophets, especially Isaiah, never characterize Israel (or any nation) as perfectly innocent. Isaiah says of Israel, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as a filthy garment" (Isaiah 64:5). Since Isaiah affirms the Servant's innocence while at the same time affirming Israel's guilt, Israel cannot be the Servant.

**The Servant's Willingness.** Isaiah 53:7-12 describes the Servant as a voluntary and unresisting Sufferer. He is characterized as willingly accepting His suffering (verse 7), rendering Himself as a guilt offering (verse 10), and laying open His soul unto death (53:12). Certainly the Jewish people have suffered immensely at the hands of anti-Semites, who must still an-

swer to God for their awful deeds. But despite the enormity of Jewish suffering they never received it willingly.

**The Servant's Death.** The passage says that the Servant was "cut off out of the land of the living" (53:8) and that "he hath laid open his soul unto death" (53:12). Were the Jewish people ever, as a whole, put to death? No, we joyfully sing, "Am Yisrael Chai!" ("The People of Israel Live!"). In fact, in Jeremiah 31:34-36, God promises that the children of Israel will exist forever. Thus, since the Servant was "cut off," it is impossible to say that Israel is the Servant.

**The Servant's Substitution.** One of the main points of the passage is that the Servant died as a substitute for the sins of others. Nowhere do the Scriptures teach that Israel would suffer *for* the sins of others, only *at* the hands of others. For this reason, Israel is not the Servant in Isaiah 53.

The evidence is clear. The characteristics of the Servant cannot and do not apply to the Jewish people. The only One who fits the description is the Jewish Messiah, Messiah Yeshua.



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\*medieval Jewish Bible interpreter.



# L'ch

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

**G**od 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?

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





# aim

**M**an 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).

**T**he 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?

**G**od 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 zeros 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.

**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.

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*Mazel tov! If you have prayed the above prayer then you are a new creation in Messiah. Begin reading your Bible for spiritual nourishment and meet with other believers regularly. You may want to get in touch with one of the following messianic congregations in your area. OLIVE TREE CONGREGATION 88 Southern Parkway, Plainview, NY 11803, Michael Rydelnik (516) 938-6066. BETH MESSIAH CONGREGATION 46 Melrose Terrace, Livingston, NJ 07039, Larry Feldman (201) 535-3954. JOY OF ISRAEL CONGREGATION PO Box 322, Ansonia, CT 06401, Stewart Weinisch (203) 732-8296. BETH EL SHADDAI PO Box 50, Sharon, MA 02067, Gary Derechinsky (617) 255-9931. LIGHT OF ISRAEL 6057 N. Kedzie Ave., Chicago, IL 60659, Roy Schwarcz (312) 338-5959. SON OF DAVID FELLOWSHIP 19100 Muncaster Road, Rockville, MD 20855, Scott Brown or Larry Jaffrey (301) 989-2582. SHEPHERD OF ISRAEL 20442 Sherman Way, Canoga Park, CA 91306, Dan Goldberg or Howard Silverman (818) 710-8473. OLIVE TREE OF TORONTO Box 1215, Sta. B, Downsview, ON M3H 2T0, Ben Volman (416) 736-1698. KEREN YESHUA c/o A. Boskey Box 637 Kfar Saba, Israel.*





VOLTAIRE.

"...we all ought to become Jews, because Jesus was born a Jew, lived a Jew, died a Jew, and he said expressly that he was fulfilling the Jewish religion."

—Voltaire



"I am a Jew: Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions . . . warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is?"

—Shakespeare  
(*Merchant of Venice*)



"I am Jewish down to my toes, my soul. I have always felt that having a Jewish soul has colored my life in the very best sense. I sing better . . ."

—Roberta Peters



"We belong to a race which can do everything but fail."

—Disraeli



## Twelve Different Original Watercolors Interpret Messianic Prophecies In The New 1990-91 Jewish Art Calendar.

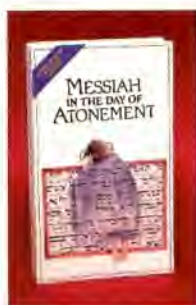
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