

The Chosen People



Volume II, Issue 5, May 1996

*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
they shall prosper that love thee.*

Psalms 122:6



Jerusalem 3000:

A celebration of the faithfulness
of God Almighty

- ◆ Plans for the celebration
- ◆ Israel in Bible prophecy
- ◆ The struggle for the soul of Jerusalem

*"As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
So the Lord surrounds His people
From this time forth and forever."*

PSALM 125:2

"Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad with her, all you who love her ..." Isaiah 66:10



Jerusalem 3000:

An international celebration of a timeless city

There is no room in the inn.

Jerusalem is a city overflowing in this, its 3000th year.

"It is quite hard to find rooms," said Yosi Tal-gan, general director for the 16-month Jerusalem 3000 celebration. "It is very hard to tell you the numbers. I know now that this year is going to be the busiest year of tourism."

Estimates from a variety of sources indicate hundreds of thousands of tourists will visit the city this year — more than at any other time in the capital's three-millennium history. While the celebration specifically marks the anniversary of King David's decision to make Jerusalem his capital, it is the city's unique importance to three major faiths — Judaism, Islam, and Christianity — that has fired imaginations worldwide.

Among the major events still to come in the months ahead:

June 6 — A 1,000-voice choir from the Netherlands in a free open-air concert, accompanied by the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra.

A performance of "Gala Des Etoiles" by the best classical ballet and modern dance companies in Canada, Russia, France, and the U.S.

July 14 — The Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra and some of the world's finest soloists will present Mahler's rarely-performed Eighth Symphony.

July 21 — A 10-day series of concerts by a choir of hundreds of professional cantors (singers), performing the musical liturgy Mizmor Le'ir David.

July 26 — A 10-day celebration of gospel music begins as the world's most popular gospel recording artists perform in historic venues around Jerusalem.

July 31 — The Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra performs a "Gala Concert of Psalms, featuring works by Vivaldi, Mozart and Bernstein.

August 5 — A "Sight and Sound Spectacular," combining music and pyrotechnics in a spectacular history of Jerusalem, played out in the sky above the Old City.

In addition to these events, the ancient city will play

host throughout the year to international arts and crafts fairs, festivals for film, puppet theater, and music (classical, folk, and sacred). Exhibits of art and photography, conferences on the city's history and architecture, and performances of both classical operas and new plays commemorating key moments in Jerusalem's history are all scheduled for the busy months to come.

While none of these events are sponsored by Chosen People Ministries, all this international acclaim is glorious proof of the faithful promise of God, who said, thousands of years ago, "*In Jerusalem shall My name be forever*" (2 Chronicles 33:4).



Happy Anniversary, Jerusalem

by Sam Nadler

It has been, for now these 3,000 years, the City of Kings ... the City of Prophecy ... the "apple of God's eye" (Zechariah 2:8) — the living embodiment of God's love and provision for His chosen people.

I rejoice with all those who celebrate this glorious milestone in the history of the great city ... but make no mistake. There is a Jerusalem only because there is a God Who has loved and sustained it for all these many, many years. This year-long celebration is testimony not to the endurance of an edifice, but to the constant provision and unswerving faithfulness of Almighty God.



Sad to say, this celebration is temporary. We live in a time that will end with the

fulfillment of what the grieving Yeshua (Jesus) foresaw so long ago:

"... For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall

by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (Luke 21:23-24).

The prophecies of Scripture are unanimous: hard times of terrible destruction are coming for Jerusalem. I believe that the celebrations of Jerusalem 3000 are, in part, God's way of drawing our renewed focus to this epicenter of history ... His gentle reminder to pray faithfully and work diligently for the salvation of the Jewish people.

Like our Messiah, we should weep over Jerusalem ... and like Him we should push to the very heart of the city to tell its people the truth of salvation. Jerusalem 3000 must not be a climax, but a beginning.

We must expand our efforts in this city as never before in the years ahead — starting more Bible studies, planting a new congregation — because the days are short. Pray for the people of Jerusalem; and for our missionaries, working among them ... "*that our God's name might be there forever*" (2 Chronicles 33:4).



Israel In Prophecy: THE TRIBUL The stage is set.

"... In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely."

Ezekiel 38:8

The events erupting so rapidly in the Middle East — the continuing violence, shifting alliances, military buildups and maneuverings for power — all echo the prophecies of Scripture. What God's faithful prophets foresaw thousands of years ago is now being unveiled for us to behold. His promises are coming true!

The Messiah Who came once as a suffering servant to save the world from sin is coming again to judge those who have rejected that salvation. And just as God moved perfectly through the events and circumstances of long ago to bring His Son into human history, so He is moving now amid the events and circumstances of our own time, to prepare the way for the Messiah's second coming.

The rise of Israel as an independent nation and major world power over the last 50 years is critical to the unfolding of biblical prophecy. In the verse above, for example — in which Ezekiel sets the scene for the invasion of Israel by its enemies, Gog and Magog — the prophet describes a people who have won back their land in battle. Certainly the long warfare that followed the birth of modern Israel in 1948, and the bloodshed that has characterized Israeli life ever since, fit this description.

The prophet also said Israel would be “gathered from many people ... brought out of the nations.” In the wake of the Holocaust, the re-creation of Israel was brought about through the United Nations. In the half-century since, the world has seen a global migration of Jewish people to the land of their ancestors.

The prophet mentions that the mountains of Israel “had long been desolate,” implying that they no longer are. As predicted in Ezekiel 36:8, the return of the Jewish people to their native land was marked by a burst of agricultural growth ... so that today the once-desert wasteland is alive with orchards, vineyards, and gardens.

And, as predicted, the people of Israel now dwell safely — not because they are untouched by fierce foes and the sudden violence of terrorism, but because they are supremely confident in their ability to hold their territory, and their deep determination to do so no

ATION

matter who opposes them.

So the prerequisites Ezekiel established for the apocalyptic invasion of Israel are all in place. And nations eager to invade her are quickly getting into position. Can the days of Tribulation be far away?

All this should make us keenly aware of how short the time is to share the truth of the Messiah. Isaiah 29:10-12 says the Jewish people are blinded to the importance of all these events — the implications are like “a book that is sealed.” To them, the Bible is a closed book, overshadowed by rabbinical teaching and tradition.

They desperately need those who have read the Scriptures — who believe in Messiah — to lead them to a knowledge of the truth. Now ... while the stage is set.

And before the final act begins.

The Tragedy Of Rabbi Johanan Ben Zaki

The destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. brought a severe crisis in Judaism. Without the Temple, there could be no Temple sacrifice. How then to affect the atonement of sins?

The answer was offered by aged, venerable Rabbi Johanan Ben Zaki ... over 100 years old and already regarded as one of the preeminent rabbis of Jewish history. There is another means of atonement, he told his disciples.

“And what is it? It is deeds of love, as it is said in Hosea, *‘For I desire kindness, and not sacrifice ...’* (Hosea 6:6).

Rabbi ben Zaki’s interpretation gained sway, and millions of Jewish people through the century have built their eternal hope on his teaching. They have tried to be “good enough” to atone for their sins and win salvation.

Sadly, Rabbi ben Zaki missed the last portion of that verse in Hosea: “... *and acknowledgement of God, rather than burnt offerings.*” The old rabbi acknowledged God’s existence, but not His plan ... not His truth ... not His Son.

The rabbi would have been a leader in the Temple during the days of Yeshua’s (Jesus’) ministry in Jerusalem. Surely he must have encountered the Messiah, and heard firsthand His teachings and His claims. But he rejected them — and with them the hope of salvation.

Perhaps most tragic of all, Rabbi ben Zaki died knowing what he’d lost. His disciples found him weeping on his deathbed. When they asked why, he sobbed:

“When there are two ways before me, one leading to Paradise and the other to Gehinnom, and I do not know by which I shall be taken, shall I not weep?”

Rabbi ben Zaki died without any assurance of salvation or atonement ... and left a legacy that has led many millions down that same road of uncertainty. “*There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death*” (Proverbs 14:12). That’s why it’s crucial that we share with Jewish people the true Way ... the way of eternal life through the Messiah.



The Struggle For *The Soul of Jerusalem*

*"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: 'May they prosper who love you.
Peace be within your walls, Prosperity within your palaces.'
Psalm 122:6-7*

Perhaps never in Middle East history have so many worked so hard to bring peace to this troubled region. And yet so many fundamental issues remain unchanged ... including, perhaps, the most basic question of all:

Who will control Jerusalem?

Last August, on the eve of the Jerusalem 3000 celebration, PLO leader Yasser Arafat's senior religious adviser told an interreligious gathering in Jerusalem that the City of David was not Jewish at all.

"Jerusalem has been an Arab city throughout history," said Abdel Salam Abu Shuheide. "Is it right that people of Palestine, who believe in the holiness of Jerusalem, should be expelled from their homes to make room for people who come from Russia?"

Speaking at the same meeting, Rabbi Mordechai Piron, former chief chaplain of the Israeli Defense Forces, portrayed Jerusalem as "the heart of the Jewish people." According to the Jerusalem Post, the rabbi



described the city as the focus of all Jewish thought and action, "the center of everything Jewish."

In December, Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres reiterated for another international gathering in Jerusalem his personal commitment to a united Jerusalem ... under Israeli sovereignty.

Both Arafat and Peres have underscored the fact that the future of Jerusalem will be among the most delicate and volatile issues in ongoing peace discussions.

As Cardinal Roger Etchegaray told the gathering addressed by Shuheide and Rabbi Piron, Jewish people, Moslems and Christians all consider themselves sons of Abraham, and all treasure Jerusalem as a critical component of their historical and spiritual heritage and the epicenter of the end times.

None of these three groups will willingly relinquish their claims to Jerusalem ... and there is no reason to believe the future of the city will be any less tempestuous than its past. But the God Who chose Jerusalem as His own (1 Kings 11:36) still dwells in her midst, "and she shall not be moved" (Psalm 46:5).



People God Has Changed

Katya's mother was determined to break up her daughter's romance.

Katya, an 18-year-old Israeli soldier, had begun dating a man her Russian Jewish parents strongly disapproved of. Anything, her mother reasoned, would be preferable to this suitor — even taking her daughter to the Messianic congregation.

The two visited Chosen People Ministries' Beit Sar Shalom congregation near Tel-Aviv. Katya was intrigued, kept coming, and stayed after services to ask questions. On about her fifth visit, she heard missionary Michael Zinn preach on John 3 — and Nicodemus' question, "How can a man be born again?"

At the end, Katya came forward ... and found the answer for herself.

For three years, Zalmon's wife had prayed for him, as she attended services with Chosen People Ministries' Beth Sar Shalom congregation. But no more.

"If you attend the congregation again — don't come home!" he yelled, as she prepared to leave one day. And yet ... in spite of that warning, something tugged at Zalmon's curiosity. He suddenly decided to attend with her instead.

The old Russian Jew had long been an atheist at heart. But listening to missionary Percy Johnson tell of his own struggles with atheism, and the true faith the Messiah had brought to his heart — something stirred in Zalmon's soul.

When the congregation prayed at the close of the service, he joined them ... and, as the whole congregation cried with joy, he asked Messiah into his heart.

Are you as wise as Joseph?

In Genesis 41, the Bible records how Joseph saved the people of Egypt — and later, his own family — by preparing for the lean years during days of plenty.

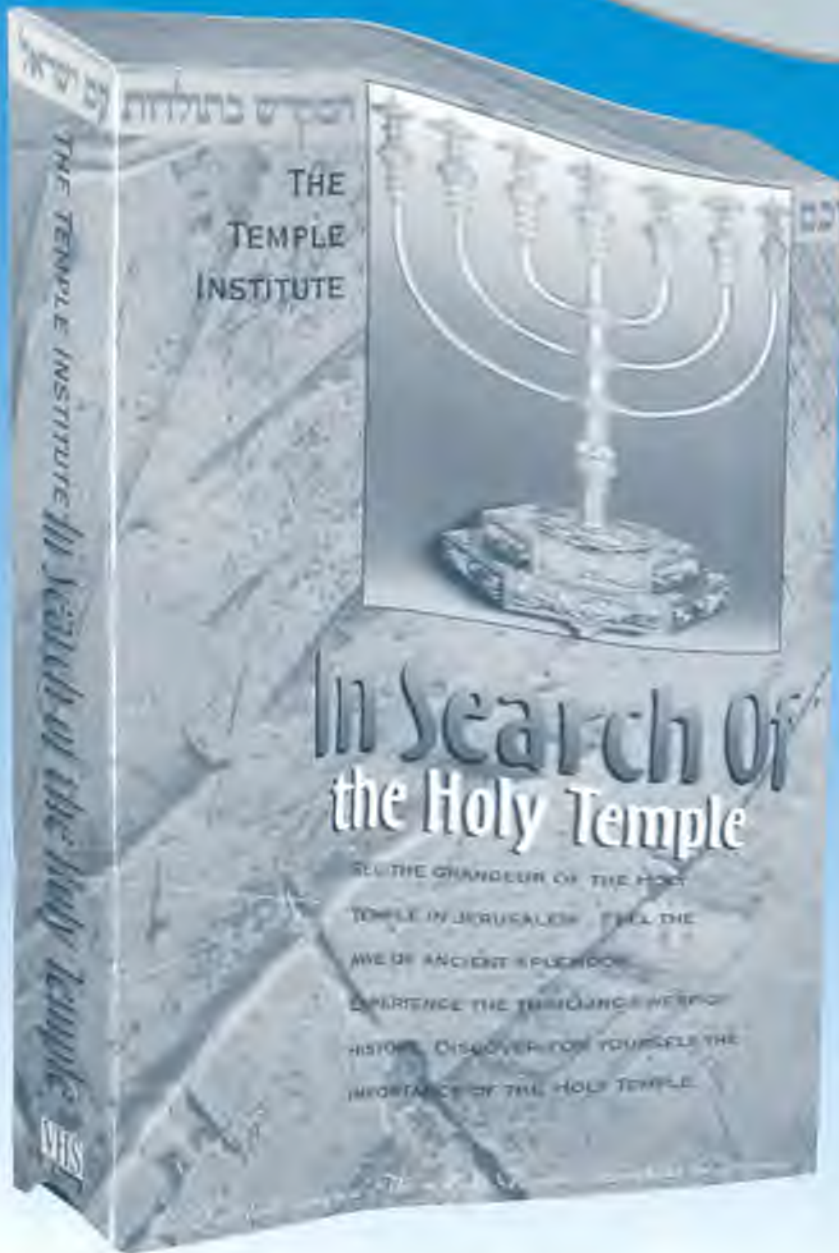
Are you as wise? Through a deferred payment gift annuity, you can provide for your family in the years ahead ... and help Chosen People Ministries as well.

Mr. Jones, 45, invests \$2,000 a year into that kind of annuity. His benefits:

- A total tax reduction of \$19,245 may save income taxes of \$5,966.
- After retirement, the annuity will pay him and his wife \$4,118 a year for life.
- A portion of each annuity payment is exempt from income tax.
- After they're gone, the rest of their investment will go directly to Chosen People Ministries — saving their estate money and bypassing probate.

For more information or a free quotation on what an annuity can do for you, call our Stewardship Department at **(800)776-3927** today.





VISIT WHAT WAS ONCE THE HOLIEST PLACE ON EARTH.

***In Search Of The Holy Temple* takes you v no man has been for nearly two millennia — the great temple of Jerusalem.**

Through the wonders of computer animation, you enter the gates of this historic structure ... walk the courtyards and porticoes ... peer into the Holy of Holies.

This dramatic video takes you on a remarkable tour of the place that played such a critical role in Bible history and answers crucial questions about the temple and its continuing significance today.

What role has Jerusalem played in world history? How do current events in the Middle East are shaping the future of this ancient, holy city?

Chosen People Ministries is pleased to offer with a this colorful video that presents such intriguing answers to your questions about the Holy Temple of the Jewish people.

***In Search Of The Holy Temple* is yours, this month, for any gift to Chosen People Ministries.**

Yours for any gift this month to Chosen People Ministries

The Chosen People Newsletter

Chosen People Ministries has been taking the love of the Messiah to Jewish people worldwide since 1894.

For more information or to receive The Chosen People newsletter, include your gift of \$25 or more, write to Chosen People Ministries, 1300 Cross Beam, Charlotte, NC 28217. In Canada: Box 897 Station B North York, Ontario M2K 2R8. Printed in the USA.