

The Chosen People

Volume III, Issue 2, February 1997

Bridging Two Irreconcilable Cultures

A Christian church learns about their Jewish heritage

Advice for intermarried Jewish and Gentile couples

One couple's creative fund-raising for Chosen People Ministries

New Jewish believers



A Passion for the People; A Love for the Land

by Bob Wood

As I look back over the years, I ask myself why God seems to have singled out our church for such tremendous blessings. While I'm sure there may be many reasons for this, one fact stands out in my mind: when I returned from my first trip to Israel in 1978, I returned with an unexplainable love for Israel and the Jewish people. After

that experience, our new church began—and I was convinced that we needed to be obedient to the Lord in every way, if we expected Him to bless us.

At about that time, we met a young Jewish believer who was studying at Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, preparing to go back to the greater New York City area to evangelize the Jewish people and form congregations there. When I shared my burden with our church, we began supporting Chosen People Ministries' missionary Stewart Weinisch. Thus, we began to support the work of taking the Gospel "to the Jew first," and we have continued to support Stewart and the work of Chosen People Ministries to this day.

In those early days of Stewart's ministry, he often spent time in our home, and became like one of our sons. In the hours we spent together, Stew continued the work of teaching me about the Jewish people. I learned about God's unconditional covenant with Israel, concerning the possession of the land. One of my favorite passages has become Ezekiel, chapters 36 and 37. I was amazed to learn that the proper name of the land is not Palestine, but Israel, and that when David Ben Gurion stood to announce the rebirth of the nation, it was the land of "ISRAEL!" What a thrill to know that the land is theirs, and that they and their children will live there forever (Ezek. 37:25).

Under Stewart's ministry, I enjoyed my first "Messiah in the Passover" experience, and began to understand the beautiful object-lessons of the feasts and celebrations of the Jewish people. And, most importantly of all, I began to share Stewart's passion to

win the Jewish people to faith in Jesus as Messiah, Savior, and Lord.

The cry from the lips of the Apostle Paul began to come to life in my heart: *"I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen"* (Romans 9:1-5). And I discovered that many Gentile pastors and teachers who claim the Apostle as their "hero" have yet to catch this, the greatest of his passions, that Jewish people might be saved!

Paul wrote to the Romans (Rom. 1:16), *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek."* And a part of my education and discipleship in the faith has been to try to get on my heart what God has on His heart. That includes a passion for His chosen earthly people, the Jews. And my counsel to any pastor who begins a new work, or who is seeking to revive a work that is dying, is . . . REMEMBER THE JEWISH PEOPLE! Take a good long look at your missions program. What are you doing to reach out in love and compassion to God's people? Are you supporting His program to reach "the Jew first?"

As I look back over our church's history, I would have to say that God's blessing began to rest upon our congregation in a very special way the very day we began to support Jewish missions. My life has been touched and especially blessed by my contact with Stewart Weinisch, that young missionary with Chosen People Ministries. And as I consider all God has done on my behalf and on behalf of my church, I see the promise of God to Abraham being fulfilled: *"I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

I believe that one reason God has blessed America is because, at least up until the present,

she has been a friend of Israel. And I believe God has blessed Community Bible Church because she has been a friend to Israel. God used a visit to the Land of Israel to give me a love for the land and the people, and to bring me to a commitment to obey and teach all of God's Word. My commitment to the Bible brought me to an even greater love for the Jewish people. And God used a contact with one Jewish missionary to bring me to an understanding of His program, to take the Gospel "to the Jew first"! And, I have found that, as my son sang so long ago, "Obedience really is the very best way to show that you believe."



Bob Wood is Pastor of Community Bible Church in Williamstown, OH

To the Jew First



Helping the Non-Jew Reach Out to Their Jewish Neighbor

by Scott Brown

Missionary, Greater

Washington DC Area

MIXED BLESSINGS

"Please join us."

"Please don't join us."

"Please join us for some things, and not for others."

"Please join us long enough for us to scope you out."

"Please join us. We completely accept you as you are."

Confused? So is a significant percentage of intermarried (Jewish/Gentile) couples as they cross the thresholds of their local synagogues. Often, the messages are ambivalent at best. So, why should we be concerned? According to recent statistics, more than half of American Jews who marry are marrying non-Jews, and many of these folks are showing up in our lives . . . needing answers to life's most important questions.

Usually, the marriage begins with a laissez-faire attitude toward spiritual matters. "Neither of us is religious, so what's the big deal?"

Then the couple faces its first Spring, and tensions rise over the

invitations from the extended family. "OK . . . I'll come to your parents' seder, even though I'll feel like a total outsider; but I expect you to come with me to the Easter sunrise service! My folks would die if we didn't attend!" And then, before they know it, December arrives. . . .

Add children to the mix, and the intermarried dilemma becomes even more complicated. Little minds are inquisitive, especially about spiritual matters. "Who is God?" "What do we believe?" "What are we, anyway?" Questions like these tend to trigger a need in Mom and Dad to reconnect broken ties with their religious affiliations. The gap widens.

As a Jew married to a Gentile for nearly twenty years, and as a leader of a Messianic congregation (whose membership and contacts consist primarily of intermarried couples), I'm in a place of privilege when it comes to ministering to intermarrieds! Below are some guidelines for the Christian who longs to touch such a couple with the Good News of Messiah.

DEVELOP TRUST

Be a willing listener.
Demonstrate genuine care and

sympathy. Ask questions without giving unsolicited advice. In other words, just be a friend. Try to discover the answers to these questions:

Where is each spouse in his/her spiritual journey? Is either spouse observant in his/her faith? How do they regard the Bible?

AVOID DRIVING WEDGES

The following are common presumptions which can actually assist Satan in destroying intermarriages. Avoid them! Don't presume that:

- both partners are seeking a personal relationship with God.
- both partners are willing to compromise in order to bring about a resolution.
- by winning one to the Lord, the other will follow.

If you are married to a Christian, ask God to give you and your mate opportunities to minister couple to couple. Make every effort to help this couple make decisions together, especially regarding spiritual matters. Remember: God has made them one. Deal with them accordingly.

ADDRESS FELT NEEDS

I've heard it said of pre-believers, "They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." The adage is nowhere more true than in the context of intermarried couples. Yes, they need Jesus, but they feel

other needs more strongly: The holiday dilemma; how to raise the kids; where to worship; tensions in the extended family; etc. These dear people need real answers NOW. By helping them meet these needs, you create opportunities for sharing God's truths.

INSPIRE HOPE

When I meet intermarrieds who have tried and failed at the "Let's-compromise-and-do-it-50/50" routine, I tell them this: "I've got great news for you! There is a solution, and it's not a Hanukkah tree or ham on matzo. It's substantial and enduring, and it will unify you in faith without forcing you to relinquish your cultural uniqueness. May I meet with you once to show you what I'm talking about?"

My follow up is simple: I merely share the principles of salvation from a "Jewish" source; the book of Genesis. The Jewish spouse is encouraged by the focus on Genesis (the first book of the Torah) and the Gentile spouse, who usually has some church background, is intrigued by the revelation of Jesus in the earliest chapters of the Old Testament. Often for the first time, the couple sees a bridge between two cultures which they previously considered irreconcilable.

LIVE A FULLY DEVOTED LIFE

1 Peter 3:15 contains an essential evangelistic principle: We are enjoined to be ready to give a reason for the hope that is within us to those who ask. But why are they asking? The answer is found in the beginning of the verse: *"Sanctify the Lord in your heart. . ."* That is the key! When the Lord Jesus is properly positioned on the throne of our hearts; when our lives betray our sincere devotion to Him, others ask.

Love God recklessly. Building redemptive relationships comes naturally to those who are head-over-heels in love with the Savior.

Changed Lives

FRIEND VISITS CONGREGATION ... SAYS YES TO YESHUA!

Andrew* came to Beth Messiah Messianic Congregation in

Livingston, New Jersey, during Rosh Hashannah as a guest of one of the congregation members. Having been raised in a synagogue, he was very familiar with the synagogue procedures and liturgy. Andrew is also married to a Gentile believer. Since his marriage, he did not practice his Jewish worship, but on occasion he went to synagogue. Then he started coming to Beth Messiah's Saturday Shabbat services for a few weeks.

One day Chosen People Ministries' missionary Stewart Weinsich invited Andrew, his wife and children to his home, where they spent the entire day with Stewart spending one-on-one time, three to four hours in Bible study. Since Andrew accepted Yeshua (Jesus), Stewart and Andrew meet regularly for discipleship, and Andrew openly shares his newfound faith with friends and coworkers. He's really excited about it! He even found a zealous believer at work through his witnessing.

PRAYERS ANSWERED . . . YOUNG MAN ACCEPTS MESSIAH!

Prayers were answered for members of Beth

Messiah's men's Bible study—for the last two months, they had been praying regularly for David* the fifteen-year-old nephew of a Jewish member of Beth Messiah. Not only does David come from a non-believing, broken home—he has cancer. He accepted the Lord in the hospital. Join us in praying for physical healing for David, and for the emotional healing, reconciliation and salvation of his parents.

**Not their real names.*

RECYCLING FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

Next time you gulp down the last swallow of your favorite canned soft drink or beverage . . . and casually go over to toss it into the garbage, or into the closest recycle bin . . . think again. You might be missing out on an "aluminum" opportunity to do something "for the glory of God." Just ask Dale Grover!

Recently, Linda Human of Chosen People Ministries found out that Dale and his wife, Dorothy have been supporting CPM for the last six years—solely through the revenue generated from recycling aluminum cans!

It began in 1990, when the Grovers attended a special church meeting at Calvary Memorial in Rockford, Illinois—the church they've attended for thirty years. The meeting's special guest was a missionary from Chosen People Ministries, whose message focused much on the scriptures in Leviticus, and on the Old Testament. Dale had been studying the book of Isaiah for years, and for the past two years, had been teaching about it in Sunday school—so the message was particularly interesting to him.

Although the Grovers had tried to support various ministries over the years, with six children to raise, funds were not exactly plentiful. "What might have been cast aside as impractical for some families," according to Dale, "as far as supporting missionaries . . . it's something we take quite seriously." This was the first time he would consider supporting Jewish evangelism, and something special moved him to find a way to help. God provided, faithfully.

Dale had collected aluminum cans for quite a number of years, off and on for various purposes, so the idea was not new to him. He felt that Chosen People Ministries was a good place to put the revenue, and since his decision, he dedicates the proceeds solely to CPM.

He thought, "Your seed is only effective if you sow . . . so, let's see

what the Lord can do with empty cans!"

"And," his wife Dorothy adds, "anyone else Dale can recruit to help out!"

Dale and Dorothy take a bag with them each time they go for walks, picking up cans along the path—and Dale, who is semi-retired from the janitorial profession—collects the cans at work.

"They add up a little faster that way," he says.

How many does he collect? About every two to three months, Dale bags up from two to three hundred pounds of cans and carries them to the closest recycle center. His garage and storage areas serve as his own private collection receptacle. He crushes them himself, with the aid of a mechanical can crusher.

"I crush them all up . . . I get more of them in the car that way."

Depending upon aluminum values at the time, the pay-off varies . . . but all of the monies are designated for reaching Jewish people with the Gospel. It's Dale's simple way of helping fulfill God's plan.

Regarding Jewish evangelism, Dale worked with Jewish people for 40 years, and has a heart for reaching them with the Good News of the Messiah. That's one of the reasons he became interested in the book of Isaiah. There, he learned something about how he could relate to Jewish people. Dale says, "as near as I can figure out you've got the whole story of salvation and everything right there in that book!" "Isaiah 53 is a fantastic chapter!"

Many of us would tire of the special effort it takes to gather extra resources, but Dale and Dorothy feel blessed by their labors of love. Regarding his motivation to keep on collecting, Dale commented that "the Lord Himself, the Messiah for the Jew" is his strength. "Scripture is very definite that the Jewish people have a place in God's heart as a nation."

We think it's important too—and Dale and Dorothy Grover have become special friends. May God bless them richly for their faithfulness to His chosen people.



If you have a special story to share with us, we'd love to speak with you. Contact us at CHOSEN PEOPLE MINISTRIES • 1300 Cross Beam Drive • Charlotte, NC 28217 • 704-357-9000 ext. 148.

Ministry Updates from Around the World

UNITED STATES

In December, Chosen People Ministries' new program, *Messiah in the Feast of Dedication*, was broadcast via satellite to over 10 million homes via 850 cable television stations and over thirty independent Christian television stations across the United States. The documentary on Hanukkah brought to its viewers the significance of this special time in the lives of Jewish people, including historical, cultural and prophetic meanings of the holiday. It also revealed the importance of Yeshua (Jesus) during this special celebration. A VHS version is available for home video on request by calling 1-800-455-7723.

ISRAEL

In November, Beit Sar Shalom Congregation, near Tel Aviv, sponsored a concert with Messianic and classical music, which was attended by approximately 200 people, two-thirds of them unbelievers. Beit Sar Shalom is very blessed to have in their fellowship very talented, professional musicians who are willing to perform and share their love for Messiah through their music. Pastor Michael Zinn gave the evening message, where a Jewish mother came forward to make a profession of faith! Please pray for her, as well as for the other numerous inquiries which were made. One hundred Bibles (Russian and Hebrew), as well as an estimated 200 pieces of literature were given away.

BRAZIL

Shema Yisrael Messianic Fellowship in Sao Paulo has enjoyed such rapid growth over its first six months, that missionary Eduardo Loewenthal had to find a new meeting place to accommodate their needs for services and Bible studies. Loewenthal happily reports that he welcomed 35 people to the first service in the new location (which will hold approximately 50), which serves as both office and meeting space for mission worship services and activities.

ARGENTINA

During the fall, José Abadi, and several volunteers, represented Chosen People Ministries (JAMI), and Beth Sar Shalom Messianic Congregation in Buenos Aires at "Harvest Evangelism," an international evangelistic event held in Mar Del Plata. Over 4,500 people gathered to learn more about sharing the Gospel, including over 2,000 pastors and leaders from Argentina and abroad. The only Messianic group there, Abadi and "Friends of JAMI" had an opportunity to exhibit, distribute and sell literature about their ministry. As a result of the event, numerous church leaders invited them to participate in future programs at their churches next year.

GERMANY

History was made in November when Beit Shomer Israel Messianic Congregation in Berlin performed the first Messianic mikvah (baptism service) in Germany since World War II.

Nine people (six Jewish) participated in the service, taking the bold step to confirm their belief in Yeshua and further proving the fulfillment of His will for their lives.

Coincidentally, the mikvah was held on the same day that marked the 58th anniversary of "Crystal Night," where, in 1938, a devastating massacre took place in fascist Germany—12,000 Jewish people were deported, and 15 of 40

synagogues were destroyed. What a blessing the same day became 58 years later! In addition to the mikvah, Beit

Shomer Israel also celebrated their first Messianic Bar Mitzvah as congregation leader Vladimir Pikman presided.



Shalom Jerusalem... Music from the Heart of Israel!

Nothing calls the heart to a place of worship as does music that is lifted to the Lord in praise! And Paul Wilbur—formerly of the Messianic music group “Israel’s Hope”—is known the world over for much of the wonderful praise and worship music we have all come to love.

Recorded live in Jerusalem, *Shalom Jerusalem* blends the purity of worship into Messianic praise music. Nearly 3,000 believers from over 14

countries joined their voices with Paul’s to create one of the most spiritually uplifting music programs you’ll hear.

We wanted to share this wonderful experience with you. This month, Chosen People Ministries will send you a cassette album of *Shalom Jerusalem* by Paul Wilbur for your gift of \$15 or more to help us continue sharing the Good News of Messiah around the world.



FOR YOUR GIFT OF **\$15** OR MORE

OUR 1997 MESSIANIC JEWISH CALENDAR HAS BEEN REDUCED!

While supplies last, the 1997 special edition calendar is available for an additional gift of \$5 to Chosen People Ministries. Each month highlights a specific prophecy concerning the nation of Israel and its modern day fulfillment . . . as well as exclusive Holy Land photographs. Just note on the enclosed response piece how many you would like to receive.

The suggested donation includes the fair market value. Please note that the Internal Revenue Code permits you to deduct the amount you give to Chosen People Ministries that goes beyond the value of the materials we send you. To help you determine the tax-deductible portion of your gift, we'll show on your receipt the fair market value, along with your total gift amount. All proceeds will be allocated to our Jewish Evangelism Outreach Fund to expand our evangelistic and discipleship efforts among Jewish people around the world.



The Chosen People Newsletter

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

Visit us at www.chosen-people.com

For more information or to receive
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including your gift of \$25 or more, write to:

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