

# The Chosen People



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# Guilty as Charged!

Shalom from New York City,

Chosen People Ministries and the Messianic movement have received increased attention from the media lately. Some of the articles and reports of our activities have been objective, but others characterize us as foolish. We are accused of being narrow-minded because we believe that everyone, both Jew and Gentile, needs to receive Jesus as the Messiah.

We are guilty as charged! We admit it. We believe with all our hearts that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Nobody, Jew or Gentile, no matter how religious they might be, will be saved without receiving Jesus as Lord and Messiah.

As Jews who believe in Jesus, we are accused of other things as well, and I want to share them with you so you can better pray for us and be better equipped to answer some of the objections your Jewish friends might have about believing in Jesus.

## The Specific Accusations



***“You are no longer Jewish when you believe in Jesus.”***

This is a common misunderstanding and one of the huge hurdles we face in helping our fellow Jewish people understand the Gospel. According to the Jewish community, when a Jewish person believes in Jesus, he or she is no longer Jewish. This view was shaped by centuries of misunderstanding between Judaism and Christianity and fueled by the Crusades, Pogroms and even the Holocaust. But we who know the Lord also know that true Christians love the Jewish people. The behavior of those who persecuted Jewish people is irreconcilable with

the teachings of the Bible—both Old and New Testaments.

The message of Jesus does not make Jews into non-Jews. We believe in a Jewish Messiah who fulfills the prophecies of the Hebrew Scriptures. Gentiles who believe in Jesus are, according to the Apostle Paul, “grafted in” to God’s promises to Abraham (Romans 11:17-24).

A Jew who believes in Jesus remains a Jew. Non-Jews do not lose their heritage, either; in fact, they gain a Jewish heritage through Christ.

The ground, however, is level at the foot of the cross. No believer, no matter the ethnic background, has a spiritual advantage over any other believer. But this does not mean that we lose our ethnic identity or heritage.



**“You have no right to your heritage.”**

We are accused of being deceptive because we continue to use Jewish symbols. If we wear a Jewish star, or marry according to the customs of our people, or celebrate the feasts of Israel, we are accused of being unethical.

Why? Because according to some Jewish community leaders, we are no longer Jewish. Therefore, we have no right to these symbols!

We reject the idea that accepting Jesus negates our Jewish identity. As Jews who believe in Jesus, we have as much right to use the symbols of our heritage as any other Jewish person.

In the State of Israel, this threat has become more ominous. Some religious members of the Knesset are trying to pass laws that will prohibit evangelism. These leaders are convinced that when Jews

believe in Jesus, they are no longer Jewish and no longer have a right to live in Israel.

We vehemently reject these accusations as unfounded and unbiblical (see Genesis 12:1-3, and chapters 15 and 17). Before God, we know that we are still Jews and are not in any way deceptive when we publicly identify as Jews...who love Jesus.



**“You are taking advantage of uninformed and innocent Russian Jews.”**

This is one of the more recent accusations, but could not be further from the truth! We do not apologize for bringing the Gospel to anyone—Russian Jews, American Jews, or to any group of people. Would any of us take seriously the charge against a Wycliffe missionary of “taking advantage of innocent tribespeople?” Is that missionary work unethical for putting the Gospel into the language and cultural forms that the tribesperson can understand? Of course not! The Great Commission compels us to reach all people (Matthew 28:19-20). This includes Russian Jews.

In fact, most Russian Jewish immigrants, though they may not know much about the Jewish religion, do have a strong Jewish identity, forged in the crucible of persecution. This was one of the main reasons they fled the former Soviet Union.

Russian Jews are also generally well educated and well able to think for themselves. Russian Jews around the world are also open to the Gospel because they have recognized the futility of empty atheism and life without a personal relationship with God. This is why so many are coming to faith—not

because they do not know what it means to be Jewish.

What a blessing it has been for me to witness this great movement across the globe—the Russian Jewish people coming to Christ!

### **Answering the Accusations**

Chosen People Ministries will continue to respond to our accusers the same way Nehemiah did when he was falsely accused of plotting rebellion (Nehemiah 6:1-7).

Nehemiah responded in a wise and godly manner. He denied their allegations, but he also commented, “For they all were trying to make us afraid, saying, ‘Their hands will be weakened in the work, and it will not be done.’ Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands” (Nehemiah 6:9).

Certainly, it is wise to explain ourselves and to deny allegations that are false. But once we do this, we must leave the results with God and continue doing His work.

We love our people. We are not angry. But we cannot spend precious time defending ourselves over and over again. We have been called to proclaim His love and grace to both Jews and Gentiles.

We will not stop our work to “come down off the wall” and answer our critics. We will continue to make the Messiah known among Jewish people everywhere and encourage others to do the same!

Pray for us, especially for our faithful staff members who face this opposition daily. God’s blessings abound, and we have included a special report on the harvest among Jewish people in the Washington, D.C. area. I hope you enjoy reading about the wonderful way the Lord is blessing.

Thanks for listening, understanding, and praying for us!

Yours in Yeshua,

  
Mitch



## From Seed to Branch:



who now serves as leader of the growing Son of David Messianic Congregation. Scott received the Lord as a result of the Bible study, and joined the Chosen People Ministries staff in 1988.

The Bible study, which met at that time in Wheaton, Maryland, was a haven for Jewish seekers and saints and for others wanting to know more of the Jewish roots of New Testament faith. It could have gone on this way indefinitely, but the Lord had other ideas.

As the fellowship matured, the meeting began to take on some of the features of a worship service and developed a more evangelistic focus. It became evident that a new work was beginning. By this time, the location had shifted to Rockville, Maryland, and with a core group of only five others, Scott Brown began his service as a Chosen People Ministries missionary/church planter. The work progressed.

# A Tree Grows in Washington, D.C.

The Bible is full of illustrations of growth, and none is better suited to Chosen People Ministries' work in the Washington, D.C. area than Jesus' parable of the mustard seed. Just as the humble mustard seed produces strong branches to give shelter, the Chosen People Ministries Washington, D.C. branch has grown from a modest beginning to become a thriving center of Jewish evangelism.

### Humble Beginnings

The recent growth of Chosen People Ministries' presence in the Washington, D.C. area has been a fine illustration of how a seed planted can bear much fruit. In the mid-1980s, a Bible study led by former Chosen People Ministries Regional Director Larry Jaffrey received a visitor. It was Scott Brown,



From left to right:  
Jay & Lauren Bockisch,  
Dennis Karp Family, and  
Bruce Elman Family

### Branching Out

According to Scott Brown, the appointment of Mitch Glaser as Chosen People Ministries' new president in 1997 gave the work another boost. Scott recalls, "Mitch's vision was for the ministry branches to grow." Soon after, a branch office was opened in Rockville, and two additional missionaries were recruited: Jay Bockisch and Bruce Elman. They joined Dennis Karp, who was already on staff. They also added an office manager, Kim Fox. Scott says, "The local office forced us to be more accountable in terms of our work and our relationships and created a much-needed cohesiveness."

Meanwhile, the growth of the Son of David Congregation continued. The group of five grew to 185. In November of 1998, Scott officially left the Chosen People Ministries staff to become the full-

time congregational leader at Son of David. The congregation and Chosen People Ministries maintain close ties, sharing the office space in Rockville. Scott reflects, "All of this could not have taken place were it not for the vision and faithfulness of Chosen People Ministries."

## More Fruit For the Kingdom

Dennis Karp came to faith in May of 1992, after attending a "Messiah in the Passover" presentation led by Scott Brown. In the summer of 1994, he participated in Chosen People Ministries' Summer Training and Evangelism Program (STEP). His calling as an evangelist to the Jewish people intensified through this experience, and he officially joined the Chosen People Ministries staff in 1996.

"From the first, I wanted to be involved in planting a congregation," he explained. Together with two other families, Dennis began a Monday night fellowship meeting in 1998 in Herndon, Virginia. It soon became



congregation "Sar Shalom" – Prince of Peace. In barely over a year, its weekly service has grown to an attendance of 55. Dennis and his wife, Tina, have been encouraged to see a number of professions of faith.

Dennis mixes his duties as church planter with 70-80 speaking dates a year in churches, training other Christians to reach Jewish people. Dennis views working with Jewish/Gentile couples as a great opportunity for evangelism. He reports, "It's really wonderful to see them grow and mature in a Messianic setting."

## A Day in the Life

"What kind of calls does the D.C. branch get? All kinds!" So says Chosen People Ministries missionary Bruce Elman. "We get calls from Jewish believers, Jewish seekers—all kinds of folks. Many times they are in some kind of crisis. Recently, I visited a prison

where a Jewish teenager, less than eighteen years old, is serving a life sentence for murder. His mother called the office and asked us to see him, because he had become a believer while in jail. So many times, evangelism carries over into other forms of ministry."

Fortunately, Bruce doesn't have to go it alone. Jay and Lauren Bockisch, recently married, are now an integral part of the D.C. Chosen People Ministries ministry team. They have been concentrating much of their time on the local university campus, where they've been patiently establishing a presence. Partnering with other campus ministry organizations, they have been busy striking up conversations with students and following up contacts.

While searching for a full-time branch leader, Chosen People Ministries has been fortunate to have Dan Rigney on loan from Ariel Ministries as a temporary replacement. An experienced hand in Messianic ministries, Dan has kept things going after Scott Brown's departure to Son of David. His



outlook is hopeful. He says, "I see much potential as we keep up our evangelistic outreach on the campuses and in one-on-one ministry. Right now, we're organizing a Bible study geared for seniors in an apartment complex. What we need are volunteers, and those who will pray for the work of Jewish evangelism in the D.C. area."

## From Branch to Tree

The branch offices Chosen People Ministries has established in urban areas such as Washington, D.C. are like a glimpse back into the first days of the spread of the Gospel. In both eras, we find faith, evangelistic zeal, and a desire to plant congregations that are grounded in the teachings of the Messiah. The field is white for harvest, and the Chosen People Ministries staff is praying for God's guidance and strength, as we continue to work until He comes.

# See the Through Jewish Eyes Bible

by Dr. Daniel Goldberg



## HEBREWS 10 — “LET US” LET GOD

Of the thirteen admonitions beginning with the words, “Let us,” found in the book of Hebrews, three appear in chapter 10. They are directed God-ward (10:22), inward (personal; 10:23), and man-ward (10:24).

Hebrews being addressed were in constant danger of reversing their direction due to all the pressure placed upon them. The world says “while there’s life, there’s hope.” But realistically when there is no hope there is no life worth living. Only the Messiah can take people that are hopeless and lost and give them a living hope that anchors their soul (Heb. 6:19). The basis for our hope is that our God “...who promised is faithful” and cannot lie (Heb. 10:23, Titus 1:2).

### III. Living for Others:

**“Let us” Consider One Another**  
“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together...” (Heb. 10:24,25).

When we first enter the presence of God in prayer we think mostly of ourselves. But it is not long before we become concerned for others who need our help. Believers play an essential part in enabling fellow believers to love and to perform good works.

Provoking (stirring up; Gk. *paroxysm*) is employed here in a good sense. There may have been far too much inciting of the congregation to anger and evil action (Acts. 15:39). What was needed was to “stir up” or to “excite” the brethren to a greater love. This is only possible when believers do not isolate themselves from the assembly of God’s family in the Messiah (Heb. 10:25).

These three admonitions are in their proper order: first God-ward, then self-ward, and finally, outward.

The remaining admonitions in Hebrews may also be grouped under the same three categories:

**GOD-WARD:** 1) Let us therefore come boldly, 4:16; 2) Let us have grace, 12:28; 3) Let us go forth to Him, 13:13; 4) Let us offer the sacrifice of praise, 13:15.

**INWARD:** 1) Let us therefore fear, 4:1; 2) Let us hold fast, 4:11; 3) Let us lay aside every weight, 12:1.

**MAN-WARD:** 1) Let us therefore be diligent, 4:11; 2) Let us run with patience the race, 12:1. ✪

The great Reformers, Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin drew heavily upon Hebrews 4:16 “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Three Reformation principles were issued:

- 1) No sacrifice but Calvary
- 2) No priest but Christ
- 3) No confessional but the throne of grace.

We now proceed to explore three of the admonitions beginning with “Let us” in Hebrews 10.

### I. Living in God’s Presence: “Let Us” Draw Near

“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water” (Heb. 10:22).

One is reminded of the great spiritual classic, *The Practice of the Presence of God*, by Brother Lawrence. His real name was Nicholas Herman, born of peasant parents in Lorraine, France, in 1611. He lived in the century of John Bunyan and Francis Bacon. Brother Lawrence wrote: “I renounced, for the love of Him, everything that was not His, and I began to live as if there were none but He and I in the world.” His view of prayer was nothing else but a sense of the presence of God, and when the appointed times of prayer were past, he found no difference because He still continued with God as a present reality.

### II. Edified With Hope: “Let Us” Hold Fast

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful” (Heb. 10:23).

Hope is the forward look. The

# NEWS BRIEFS

## Chosen People Ministries Goes to Prison

Chosen People Ministries Washington, D.C. branch workers Lauren Bockisch and Bruce Elman have been working with a Jewish family in Maryland, whose 16-year-old son, Alan\*, is serving a life sentence for murder. However, Alan's life has changed dramatically since he came to faith in Jesus through the powerful witness of a fellow prisoner. Bruce has been visiting Alan in prison and discipling him.

Meanwhile, Lauren has been ministering to Alan's 15-year-old sister, Anne, who is interested in Jesus. Bruce and Lauren see a door opening for Chosen People Ministries to play a more active role in the lives of broken families and troubled young people, especially in Jewish urban communities.

## Salvation Comes to Synagogue

Chosen People Ministries staff member Noel Rabinowitz was placed in contact with a Gentile woman who, having become disillusioned with Christianity some years earlier, converted to Judaism. She had actually become a leader in a large Reform synagogue!



During the course of some lengthy conversations, Noel discussed Messianic prophecy and the reliability of the New Testament with her. She was open, and the Lord worked in her heart. Before long, she accepted Jesus as her Messiah!

In a recent telephone conversation, Noel learned that not only is she still walking with the Lord, she has led three other people from the synagogue to Jesus!

## To the Jew First in the New Millennium Comes to Los Angeles

Los Angeles, California will be the setting for the next "To the Jew First in the New Millennium" conference to be held on February 24-27. Shepherd of the Hills Church, First Fundamental Bible Church, and Community Christian Church of the Foothills will join Chosen People Ministries as co-sponsors of this event.

The subjects covered in the seminars will be "The Future of Israel" and "The Biblical Basis of Jewish Evangelism." The speakers will be Rich Freeman, Chosen People Ministries Director of Church Ministries and Conferences, and Chosen People Ministries staff members Dr. Dan Goldberg, Larry Feldman, and Don Meecha. Saturday evening's featured speaker is Dr. Darrell Bock, Professor of New Testament at Dallas Theological Seminary. Messianic composer and musician Joel Chernoff will minister in concert. Call 888-405-5874 for more info.

## Ministry Reaches Young and Old

Stewart Weinisch recently presented a dramatic piece during chapel at a Christian school in Florida. The subject was birth of the Messiah, seen through the eyes of Simeon (Luke 2:25-35). More than thirty children raised their hands to receive Jesus at the end of the presentation. Stewart spoke with their teachers, and they will be following up with the children to be sure they understand the decision they made.

Stewart's ministry in nursing homes is also bearing fruit. During a recent Gospel presentation, twenty of the elderly folks who were present prayed to receive the Lord. Twelve of the twenty are Jewish. Ruth, one of the Jewish women, said, "This is the most wonderful moment of my life! I know that God has forgiven all of my sin and that He has adopted me as His child."

## Messianic Songfest at Jewish Hospital in Argentina

Outreach workers at the Chosen People Ministries branch in Argentina recently ministered in the nursing school of a Jewish hospital in Buenos Aires. Some of the members of our congregation there were invited to give a program of Jewish songs. They were very well received and invited to return. Most of the professors and administrators of the hospital are Jewish non-believers.

Praise the Lord for such a good opportunity to give a testimony of our wonderful Messiah. May God use this new inroad into the Jewish community to bring many people into the Kingdom.

## See Israel in the Year 2000

See Israel through Jewish Eyes this November. Call 1-800-459-9402.

## New Birth in Chicago

Eva Rydelnik shares about the new birth of her friend, Debbie\*, whom she met over a year ago at a Messianic Hanukkah party. Sometime later, Debbie called Eva and said, "I am becoming convinced that Jesus really is the Messiah. I really want to know God and I thought you could help me. Can we get together and talk?"

They met in the Moody Bible Institute Student Center. When they opened the Bible together and studied the way of redemption from the Hebrew Scriptures, Debbie began to weep. After three hours of talking, Debbie put her trust in Jesus as her Messiah. Eva continues to meet with Debbie each week for discipleship and Bible study.

\*names have been changed.

# Enjoy an Experience in Messianic Camping!



**July 30 - August 5, 2000**

Sometimes kids need to take a break from the hustle and bustle of everyday life to reflect, relax and renew their spiritual fervor.

**Simchat Yeladim** offers the perfect setting. Come spend a week with other Messianic kids. Meet new people and renew old friendships. Bring your tennis shoes, bring your Bible and be ready to discover God in a whole new way!

- ✧ Are you 8 to 15 years old?
- ✧ Are you ready for a great week of camp in the Pennsylvania hills?
- ✧ Are you ready for great activities, fun, fellowship and worship?

**Call Bruce or Suzi Elman at 1-800-342-3870**

## LEARN MORE ABOUT THE FEAST OF PASSOVER

with these resources from Chosen People Ministries

### Messiah in the Passover Kit

This Kit will help churches, classes, or families have a Passover celebration of their own. Guaranteed to make your Passover celebration an unforgettable experience. Includes the *Messiah in the Passover* video, *How to Prepare for a Passover Dinner*, *Messianic Passover Haggadah*, a poster, and bulletin inserts.

kit 5001 price **\$\$\$19.95**

### Messiah in the Passover Video

Set around a realistic Passover family dinner, the Seder ceremony is reenacted in this video, focusing in detail on the meaning of each of the ancient traditions practiced by Jewish people for over 3,000 years. *Messiah in the Passover* vividly portrays the unique spiritual and symbolic relationship between Passover and Easter.

video 8006 price **\$\$\$14.95**

### Messianic Passover Haggadah

This is a must for those who desire to conduct their own Messianic Passover Seder or to gain a deeper understanding of this important event. This Haggadah has been prepared to show God's redemptive grace in the Passover through the death, burial, and resurrection of His Messiah, Jesus, and symbolizes God's spiritual redemption of His people.

book 3008 price **\$\$\$4.95**

### God's Appointed Times

by *Barney Kasdan*

The Biblical holy days are not just for Jewish people. All believers can receive the blessing of these glorious days, the greatest object lessons in the Bible. Author Barney Kasdan offers historical background, traditional Jewish observance, relevance to the New Testament, prophetic significance, and a practical guide for believers, including recipes, songs and crafts.

book 3047 price **\$\$\$9.95**



## The Chosen People Newsletter

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

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Please remember Chosen People Ministries in your will.

*"I will bless those who bless you."*  
(Genesis 12:3)

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