

The Chosen People



Volume VI, Issue 12 December 2000



The Babe of Bethlehem Returns as King!

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A Season of Promises Kept

Shalom and Happy Holidays,

I wish you could spend an hour in Manhattan with me! The December air is crisp and clean. The sidewalks along Park Avenue sparkle with holiday lights. Choirs of young children singing carols brighten bustling street corners filled with holiday shoppers and tourists. You have never seen so many people spending so much money and seeming so happy about it!

And where are your Chosen People evangelists? Right there, in the middle of all the crowds and holiday spirit! We are spending most of the month handing out special holiday Gospel tracts and sharing the real reason for the season with both the Jewish people and Gentiles.

As strange as this might seem, the Christmas season is one of the best times of the year to proclaim the Good News to Jewish people. Even in the midst of the crass commercialization,

reminders of Jesus are everywhere. Although Santa Claus has a higher profile in the stores and malls of New York City, we all know whose birthday we are really celebrating!

Christmas is not the only celebration that is afoot. Jewish people celebrate *Hanukkah* at this time—one of my favorite Jewish holidays.

I only wish my people could see how Messiah's birth and Hanukkah intertwine and point to God's ultimate plan of deliverance. How I long for them to know that His plan includes Jesus and that His role in the salvation of Israel is unavoidable! Each holiday, in its own way, points us toward a single, lasting truth: God keeps His promises.

God's Christmas Promise

Christmas is all about God fulfilling the prophecy made through Isaiah to the Jewish people — "*Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel*" (Isaiah 7:14).

He fulfilled His promises and sent His Son to be the Savior of both the Jewish people

Photo ©Comstock, Inc. 1999. The people pictured are models and these photographs are used for illustrative purposes only.

and the Gentiles. But He is not finished yet! There is more to come—more to be fulfilled. The child of promise would grow up to be the Redeemer of the world. Although I love cute babies as much as the next person, we must never forget that the cute baby Jesus who sleeps in the manger is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

One of the great passages of Scripture that puts this all together is found in Isaiah 9:6-7. The baby who would be born of the virgin is here described by a number of different names. He is called the *Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father* and the *Prince of Peace*.

The infant whose birth we celebrate is coming again. He is coming soon as our all-powerful King. In that day, there will be no doubt about the relationship between Hanukkah and Christmas. When He comes, He will deliver His people and rule over all those who embrace Him as their Sovereign Lord.

The Promise of Hanukkah: God the Deliverer

The truth God shows us through the events of Hanukkah reminds us that God will perform what He has promised. Every leader and nation that have tried to destroy the Jewish people have either been defeated or destroyed. This includes Antiochus Epiphanes, whom the Maccabees and their fellow Israelites conquered in 165 B.C.

The Jewish victory over Antiochus shows us that no matter what the odds might be and no matter how hopeless things may look, God will preserve His ancient people *until every promise is fulfilled*. The Jewish people *still* have a role to play in the drama of world redemption.

The Apostle Paul points to this glorious fulfillment in these verses:

"Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?" (Romans 11:12, 15).

God is not finished with His chosen people. Christmas and Hanukkah serve as twin beacons that point us toward the future fulfillment of His promises to the Jewish people and to all the nations of the world.

The Great Hallelujah

I am sure that George Frideric Handel understood something of the scope of these promises. The reason he included the "Hallelujah Chorus" in his masterpiece, *The Messiah*, is that the birth of the Messiah cannot be separated from His Second Coming. He was born to die and He will come again to rule. Just as the Jewish people were central to His First Coming, their continued existence is central to His Second Coming. And for the sake of this promise, God will not allow the Jewish people to be destroyed.

Christmas gives me the faith to look forward in hope, knowing that He will be as faithful in fulfilling the promises related to His Second Coming as He was to those pointing to His birth.

That day will be the *ultimate Hanukkah*—the final day of deliverance and dedication for the Jewish people. In that day, an end-time remnant of Jewish people will cry out to God and receive Yeshua as their true King, according the words of the prophet.

The babe from Bethlehem will one day stand on the Mount of Olives in all His glory and majesty. At that time, the enemies of God and of Israel will be destroyed and the Messiah will rule.

"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of

Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn" (Zechariah 12:10).

The Promise of a Remnant Today

God's Word also promises that there is a remnant of Jewish people TODAY—those who believe that Jesus is the promised Messiah of Israel: *"Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace"* (Romans 11:5).

Week by week, I see that remnant grow. Hundreds of Jewish people came to know Jesus this year, everywhere from New York City to Israel, Germany, Canada, Philadelphia and Southern California.

In fact, when I see the Jewish people who have come to faith this year through our Chosen People family of missionaries, I rejoice and look up, knowing that the hour of final redemption draws near.

Happy holidays! May this season of salvation and deliverance give you hope for the future and a reminder of that great day coming when Israel will be redeemed and Jesus will reign as King over all (Romans 11:25-26).

Thank you for your prayers and support as we reach out to Jewish people with the Gospel!

Looking up,



Mitch Glaser
President



P.S. Zhava has included in this issue her "world famous" recipe for potato *latkes* (pancakes)! When you eat them, you will know one of the delicious reasons I love Hanukkah!

The Birth of Our Savior and King

Anyone who thinks that the Holy Scriptures are devoid of comical images need only turn to the first chapter of the Book of Acts. The opening verses, which record the last words of Jesus to the disciples before His ascension into heaven, also record their slack-jawed wonder, *"And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven'"* (Acts 1:10-11). In other words, stop rubbernecking, get to work and remember — He's coming back!

The King is Coming

The Second Coming is the event toward which all history points. The Apostle Paul calls it, *"the earnest expectation of the creation"* (Romans 8:19). Titus simply calls it *"the blessed hope"* (Titus 2:13). God's people have longed for His coming for centuries and with good reason. It is firmly rooted in the prophecies of the Hebrew Scriptures. Can we be confident

today of Messiah's return? We need only to re-read the words of the prophets that describe His birth as Redeemer, and also His role as the true King of Israel.

The Birth of the Messiah

First among equals in the list of prophecies that foretell the birth of the Messiah, the Son of David, is Isaiah 9:6-7, *"For unto us a Child is*

In other words, stop rubbernecking, get to work and remember — He's coming back!

born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the

throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."

These verses, which reverberate with the authority and promise of God, link the birth and the royalty of the Messiah. They give us reason to hope, assuring us that the Kingdom of God is not far off!

Consider also Scriptures such as 2 Samuel 7:12-16 and Micah 5:2, which speak of the promise of an everlasting throne of David and the proclamation of its royal occupant's birth in Bethlehem. Combine them with the marvelous events that unfold in the Gospels and we have indeed the greatest story ever told . . . and the greatest story ever FORETOLD.

Waiting with Confidence

The fulfilled prophecies of Messiah's birth give us confidence that His Second Coming will also unfold according to God's eternal plan.

Until He comes again, we need to proclaim the Gospel to both Jew and Gentile. The babe from Bethlehem will return soon — and reign as King!



Zhava's Quite Unhealthy Potato Latkes

Come on, this recipe is way too easy and too delicious to NOT try it! If you're feeling guilty about the frying, just remember: the miracle of Hanukkah is that Jewish people have been eating *latkes* for 2,000 years and we still survive!

- 4 medium potatoes
- 1 medium onion
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 3 tablespoons flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Tons of oil for frying
- Applesauce or sour cream

Grate potatoes (OK, you have my permission to do it in a food processor—just don't tell anyone). Now here's the important part: MAKE SURE you remove as much liquid as possible from the grated potatoes! Then grate the onions, combine with the potatoes, and mix together with the eggs, salt and flour. That's all! Now drop by heaping tablespoonfuls into hot oil in frying pan, and smooch a bit with your spoon until they measure about 3" across. Fry until the latkes turn nice and brown. Don't turn them over more than once, though, or they'll get soggy, and I'll have to say, "I told you so!"

Latkes are traditionally served with applesauce or sour cream—I like them with both! Enjoy—and have a Happy Hanukkah!

(This recipe makes about 12 small latkes—which is definitely *not* enough!)

Hanukkah

The Light that Lights the Way

Sometimes it comes down to choosing a side: obedience or disobedience; righteousness or wickedness; God or the powers that oppose Him. That's what it came down to for a Jewish priestly family in the town of *Modiin*, a little north of the City of David, Jerusalem. Their bravery and unwillingness to be daunted by odds that would have frozen the blood of men of lesser faith earned their leader the name of Maccabee—the Hammer. And the spark of light they shed has blazed throughout the centuries, even to this day. The story of Hanukkah inspires every generation and the lessons of Hanukkah are as fresh today as they have ever been. It is a Jewish tradition to tell the Hanukkah story every year. Enjoy!

Israel's Sad Decline

The year was 164 B.C. For centuries, the fortunes of the Jewish people had fallen lower and lower. What had become of the glory of David and Solomon? Internal strife and faithlessness had brought God's just judgment, just as the prophets had promised. Israel, which had once been the glory of its time, was now little more than a pawn to be pushed across the chessboard of world politics by other, more powerful players.

The fiery zeal of God's followers had been in many quarters almost extinguished. The Greek language, philosophy and culture had had a profound effect upon the Biblical faith of our fathers. Many Jewish people were far more eager to be good Greeks than they were to be

good Jews. It took the overplayed hand of a madman to bring the nation to its senses.

Following God—Despite the Cost

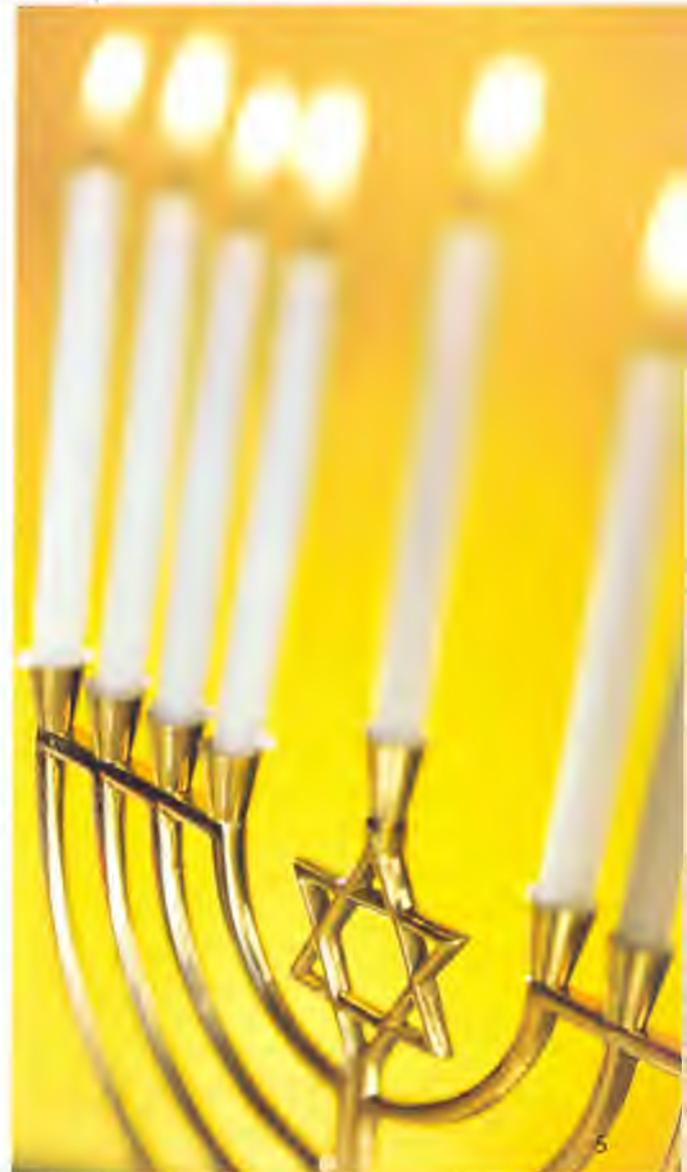
When the dangerous and oppressive Antiochus Epiphanes, descendant of one of Alexander the Great's generals, took power over Israel, he simply went too far. He forbade circumcision, made obedience to the Law a crime and tried in every way possible to stamp out the Jewish faith. When he ordered the Jewish people to offer a sacrifice of incense to him as though he were a god, it was the final straw. Finally, the Jewish people woke up. Through deed and sacrifice, they prevailed over the much larger, better-trained army of the foe. Like Gideon of old, the Maccabees rallied their small strength and consecrated it to God. And, as of old, God magnified His strength among them to the amazement of the watching world.

The Meaning of Hanukkah

The candles of the Hanukkah menorah remind us of the legend that God caused a small amount of consecrated oil to burn in the Temple for eight days until more could be procured. But they are much more than that. The Hanukkah lights teach us that when we

obediently offer our small light to God for the sake of His truth, He can make it shine more brightly in the darkness than we could possibly have imagined (John 8:12).

For the One who said, "*I am the Light of the world*" illumines even the darkest place through those of us who are willing to carry His presence there. May the brightness of His light shine on and through you!



See the Through Jewish Eyes Bible

by Dr. Daniel Goldberg



THE BOOK OF JOEL: THE DAY OF THE LORD... THEN AND NOW

Joel is the first prophet to use the phrase, *"The day of the LORD."* He refers to it five times in three chapters (1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14).

Most likely, Joel was the earliest of the Minor Prophets, who ministered during the reign of Joash, king of Judah (835-796 B.C.). During this time, a terrible plague of locusts had fallen upon Judah as judgment for their iniquity (Joel 1:4). It was never to be forgotten: *"Tell your children about it, let your children tell their children..."* (Joel 1:3).

But the greater "locust plague" will be a future time termed the DAY OF THE LORD, a time beginning with the Tribulation period (Revelation 9:3-5).

A Day of War

Joel describes the coming DAY OF THE LORD (Tribulation Time)

as a day of global war: *"Proclaim this among the nations: 'Prepare for war!...Beat your plowshares into swords..."* (Joel 3:9-10).

The second seal judgment recorded in Revelation 6:4 states: *"Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword."* This will be a great World War, in fulfillment of Joel's prophecy.

A Day of Darkness

The terrible Day of the Lord would also be a day of darkness and dread. *"The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD"* (Joel 2:31).

The Book of Revelation likewise conveys this description of God's

wrath. In the sixth seal calamity described in Revelation 6, *"...the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth..."* (Revelation 6:12, 13).

A Day of Judgment

These foreboding signs culminate in this explicit oracle of judgment: *"I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel..."* (Joel 3:2).

Jehoshaphat means "the LORD judges." The valley associated with the great, end-time judgment day is the Valley of Armageddon (Zechariah 14:2, 3; Revelation 16:14-16).

Blessing Follows Tribulation

Great blessings are promised to Israel and the nations after this terrible time of trouble. Joel prophesies a great ingathering of the harvest: *"...in that day...the mountains shall drip with new wine, the hills shall flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water..."* (Joel 3:18).

There will also be a great outpouring of the Spirit: *"And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh..."* (Joel 2:28).

Peter used Joel's prophecy to illustrate what happened at Pentecost (Acts 2:16-17). The Spirit of whom Joel prophesied was poured out on the disciples in the Upper Room...and the world has not been the same since.

So we see that the prophetic ministry of Joel finds its fulfillment in the Scriptures of the New Covenant—the covenant God has made with all who place their trust in Yeshua the Messiah. ✨

NEWS BRIEFS

Doors Opening in Seattle

Chosen People Ministries missionary Daniel Nessim reports progress in the work he is developing in the Seattle area. He is starting a Bible study group of Jewish believers and seekers at the University of Washington. One of his contacts lives in a large building where many Russian Jewish people reside. Another close friend just found out that many of his neighbors are Israelis. Daniel says, "Doors are really starting to open. What will the Lord do next?"



The Nessim Family

Chosen People Ministries Expands Web Site

Who visits www.chosenpeople.com, the Chosen People Ministries web site? Thousands of people from around the world! We have recently added a web site in Spanish, and there is even a testimony in the Yiddish language. Do you have Chinese friends who are interested in faith in the Messiah? You will find founder Leopold Cohn's testimony in Chinese. If you wish to translate a testimony into a foreign language, send us a letter using the enclosed envelope or write to webmaster@chosenpeople.com.

The web site is an excellent evangelistic tool, and has also proven to be a valuable resource for pastors and others who want to learn more about the Jewish roots of the Christian faith.

Take Us Out to the Ballgame

How better to proclaim the Gospel to the world than to bring it to the World Series? That's exactly what Chosen People Ministries President Mitch Glaser and a team of six New York City staff did when the games came to New York City. One staff member described the crowds of people at the Subway Series as a "tidal wave of New Yorkers." The team of workers handed out tracts and attracted a great deal of attention with their "Ask Me about the Messiah" sweatshirts.



New Chosen People Ministries Messianic Congregation in Israel

Despite the violence in Israel, our outreach there continues. In the midst of the difficulties, Chosen People Ministries' Israel leadership has announced the birth of a new congregation, "The Hope of Samaria." Staff worker Henry N. recently said, "I view it as a testimony to the wonderful care and encouragement of God. Under the present circumstances, it is indeed a sign of hope."

Michael Z., Director of Ministries in Israel, reports that our other worship services, Bible studies and outreach ministries continue despite the unrest. Michael wishes to extend a special thank you to the almost 1,000 people who have posted messages of encouragement on our web site to our Chosen People Ministries family in Israel. If you wish to e-mail our Israel staff, visit www.chosenpeople.com/prayer.

Seed Planted Brings Salvation in Southern California

Last spring, Brenda* and her grandmother, Rose,* obtained tickets to attend the well-advertised Messianic Passover Seder led by Chosen People Ministries' Don Meecha.

When the invitation to receive Jesus as Messiah was given, six people responded. Neither Rose nor Brenda received the Lord that night, but both of them began to visit the congregation. They attended every week through the spring and summer.

At the end of summer, Brenda told Don that she believed Jesus was the Messiah. She said it had been a slow process, but at some point over the summer she became convinced that Jesus is God and Messiah! This fall, she was baptized and both she and Rose remain regular, faithful attenders.



The Meecha Family

*Not their real names

Wrap Up the Year

Give These Jewish Resources to Your Friends & Family

Footsteps of the Messiah

by Arnold Fruchtenbaum

This scholarly work examines prophecy chronologically, seeking to understand the full meaning of the Book of Revelation. The author's consideration of the biblical material is thorough and thought-provoking. Those who read this book will be stimulated by his work.

book 3019

price \$19.95^{US}

Daniel: God's Man in Babylon

by Harold Sevens

In a clear, readable format, Chosen People Ministries past president, Harold Sevens, explains how the Book of Daniel applies to our lives today—and tomorrow. It is impossible to understand the Book of Revelation without knowing the background found in the Book of Daniel. These two books together will open the Bible in new and exciting ways!

book 3028

price \$12.95^{US}

Hey God, Are You Talking to Me?

by Sally Klein O'Connor

With a style completely her own, Sally Klein O'Connor burst upon the Messianic music scene and captured its heart. This recording will have you laughing and crying, with songs such as *Let Me Be Your Eyes* and *Improbable People*.

cassette 4025

price \$10.95^{US}

CD 4026

price \$15.95^{US}

Come Meet the Author of Life

by Sally Klein O'Connor

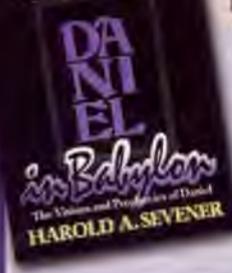
Another masterful recording by soulful Messianic recording artist, Sally Klein O'Connor. Includes *I Just Want to See You There*, and *Waitin' for the King of Jews Blues*. Not to be missed!

cassette 4023

price \$10.95^{US}

CD 4024

price \$15.95^{US}



*while supplies last

Most Christians' Stewardship Ends at the Grave!

Many sincere Christians unknowingly leave much of their money to government when they pass into the presence of the Lord. Often forgotten are churches and ministries they have supported for years. Why? Possibly they expect to use all they have in their twilight years. Possibly they focus on leaving as much as possible to their heirs. Probably they are unaware of legal ways to:

- ◆ make gifts that provide tax deductions now and income for life;
- ◆ convert appreciated assets into higher yielding investments with minimal tax consequences; and
- ◆ leave significant legacies to the Lord's work while maximizing their heirs' inheritance and minimizing taxes.

Use the legal instruments available to you. Regardless of your estate's size, you can probably benefit from at least one. Call Amy or John at 212-223-2252. If your estate is simple, we will advise you. If your estate is complex, we will refer you to professionals who will evaluate your needs free of charge.

A Monthly Giving Program for Partners of Chosen People Ministries



WATCHMEN FOR JERUSALEM

Now you can help us put your financial gifts to work immediately when you sign up for the *Watchmen for Jerusalem* automatic giving program. Your gift will go farther because automatic giving reduces mail costs and frees more resources for evangelism. All you do is fill out a simple form. Check the box on the response card to send for a complete brochure.



The Chosen People Newsletter

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

The Chosen People Newsletter is published monthly by Chosen People Ministries
 Editor: Zhava Glaser
 Staff Writer: Alan Shore
 Design: Lois Gable

For more information, or to receive *The Chosen People Newsletter*, write to: Chosen People Ministries, 1300 Cross Beam Drive, Charlotte, NC 28217. In Canada write to: Box 897 Station B, North York, ON M2K 2R1.

Please remember Chosen People Ministries in your will. 'I will bless those who bless you.' (Genesis 12:3)
 Visit us on the Web at www.chosenpeople.com