

The Chosen People



Volume VIII, Issue 11 November 2002



Brighton Beach Memoirs

INSIDE THIS ISSUE: Brighton Beach Memoirs - Giving Thanks to the Lord of the Harvest • The Russian Community Life Center • Malachi



Giving Thanks to the Lord of the Harvest

Dear friend,

Shalom from New York City and Happy Thanksgiving! As I look around the global outreach of Chosen People Ministries, my heart virtually explodes with gratitude for all God is doing through our workers. I am grateful for each missionary family serving the Lord among His ancient people—and I am grateful for you because of your faithful prayers and generous financial support.

You should be receiving both a newsletter and prayer letter each month, either from me or from one of our missionaries. We want you to feel part of what we are doing! We need your constant prayers. I hope you enjoy these communiqués!

I wish you could read every personal prayer letter of every missionary. It would take you a couple of hours each day, but you would realize why I am so amazed and awestruck by His power and grace operating through our staff.

Just to show you what I mean, I want to share some of what you don't ordinarily read.

This way, you will be able to say with the Apostle Paul, *"We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus*

The Chosen People

and of your love for all the saints”
(Colossians 1:3-4).

Grateful for God's Work through our Missionaries

Take a look at one of these reports
from Boris Goldin in Brooklyn:

We had the Jewish New Year services in our Russian-speaking congregation in Brooklyn. One man, the unbelieving husband of a member, had never before shown any interest in the Gospel. That day, he was deeply moved by the service. As I preached, he started to cry. The next day, as my wife and I prayed for him, he asked Yeshua into his heart. Please pray for this new creature of God.

It is wonderful to read such moving accounts about what God is doing around the world through your Mission to the Jewish people!

There is one additional report I would like to add...my own! The Lord gave me a great opportunity to spend a week with our ministry in Australia, which is called "Celebrate Messiah." I was the Bible teacher for the week at SIMCHA...a retreat designed for Jewish and Gentile believers and their children. It was a fruitful time and the Lord gave me an unexpected joy.

Let me quote from my own prayer letter!

I had a great time teaching a series on the topic, "Growing in the Messiah." After my second message on the role of the Word of God in our spiritual growth, Yanna, a young Russian woman who was not yet a believer, approached me. She asked me, based upon my message on Psalm 1, if she could remain friends with some who were not living good and moral lives. She felt that if she no longer were to be around them, they would think she was arrogant and that she did not care about them.

I asked Yanna if she was a stronger influence on them than they were on her. She shook her head and told me that she knew

that they were influencing her more than she was influencing them.

Over the weekend, I noticed that Yanna had many conversations with Russian and Australian believers. After the last meal of the retreat, Rita, one of the staff in Australia, turned to me and said, "Yanna would like to pray with you to receive the Lord." I smiled and prayed with Yanna. What a joy it was to see this Russian young woman accept Yeshua and receive the gift of everlasting life.

This special time in Australia has made me even more excited about the SIMCHA conference we have planned this spring. It will be held, as usual, at the lovely conference grounds at Schroon Lake, New York. However, it will not be during Memorial Day Weekend, as it has been in the past. Instead, the dates will be Thursday, May 29 through Sunday, June 1. I am pleased to tell you that I will be one of the featured speakers, along with my dear friend and colleague, Dr. Michael Rydelnik, who is Professor of Jewish Studies at Moody Bible Institute.

Mark those dates down and circle them. You can even register online at www.chosenpeople.com/simcha. And please pray for Yanna and for the many other Jews and Gentiles who have come to faith in the Messiah—and those whose hearts He is preparing—through the work of Chosen People Ministries missionaries. Pray especially for the many Russian Jewish people around the world who are receptive to the Gospel.

I know you will enjoy hearing more about this movement of the Lord described in this newsletter.

Joined Together? A New and Creative Way to Reach Families

In the past, I have mentioned another segment of the Jewish community that is very open to the Gospel: those Jewish men and women married to non-Jews. The challenge of raising children, getting along with in-laws and merging traditions and cultures

seems to have created a willingness to explore spiritual things, especially the Gospel. We have decided to meet this challenge and have produced a 47-minute video, which depicts four interfaith married couples sharing their faith in a most beautiful way.

The message of the Gospel is presented clearly and powerfully through the testimonies of these couples. You *must* see it!

I know you will love this videotape! And I hope you will not only view this tape yourself, but also give one or more to many interfaith couples with whom you are friends. We have also produced a training booklet to help you engage your friends in a discussion about Jesus after showing them the video. Why don't you pray about getting a copy of the *Joined Together?* video and inviting your friends over to view it?

We are asking for a suggested donation of \$20 plus shipping for the video. But we are willing to give away a copy of *Joined Together?* to your unbelieving friend, just for the cost of shipping and handling! All you need to do is speak to them and make sure they are interested in receiving the video, and then fill out the enclosed card. Give us their name and address and we will send them a *Joined Together?* videotape. The DVD is coming...in a few months! I also hope you will consider donating some copies to your church library and encouraging others within your congregation to show the video to their Jewish friends.

I have a feeling that next year at this time, we will be filled to overflowing with gratitude to the Lord for all He has done through the *Joined Together?* outreach.

On behalf of the entire Chosen People Ministries staff, thank you for being part of our family and helping us reach our Jewish people for the Messiah.

With Thanksgiving,

Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser
President



The Russian Community Life

From Godlessness to Grace

Leslie McMillan, Executive Director of the Russian Community Life Center, was radically saved out of vain philosophy and godless politics. With a Philosophy degree and Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Washington in Seattle, Leslie, the prideful agnostic, pursued an aggressive career as a legislative employee and political consultant.

But as friends began to pray, the Lord intervened—most notably by miraculously healing her marriage to her husband, Del. Finally, in 1989, they both heard the Gospel clearly and trusted Jesus. Their lives changed dramatically.

Reading the Bible, Leslie noticed that it seemed to be all about Jewish people. Her heart broke for them and she developed a love for God's Chosen People. She began to study the Bible deeply and systematically. The Lord called her into various ministries as she simultaneously developed her understanding of Jewish issues.

Finally, after a two-year position as the campaign director for a gubernatorial candidate, Leslie had a clean desk. It was then that the Lord allowed her to concentrate on Jewish/Israel ministry in her church. In 1998, she met Klaudia Zhelezny, a missionary with Chosen People Ministries and the founder of the RCLC in Brooklyn. This divine appointment resulted in Del and Leslie moving to Brooklyn within seven months.

Since then, God has worked to expand the outreach, save souls and provide a facility on Brighton Beach Avenue in the epicenter of Russian Jewish Brooklyn.



Klaudia

Finding God Amid the Darkness

The shadow of Babi Yar, the concentration camp where my grandparents and other family members were killed by the Nazis in 1941, hung over my birthplace of Kiev. Although I grew up an atheist, I found myself wondering, "Why am I a Jew?" But God had no relevance to me.

In 1988, my teen-aged son was ordered to join the Soviet army. He tried to avoid this, but the KGB arrested him. We were trapped. I was called to meet with the KGB Major, a woman who was

handling his case. Walking home the night before this appointment, the snow beat upon me so hard that I could not see. I started to cry, "God, if You are real, I need your help now!" Immediately, I sensed that Someone was around me. Incredibly, I felt peace.

The next day, the KGB Major began rudely. I said nothing, but prayed. Suddenly she said, "I don't know why, but I feel sorry for you." She delayed my son's case for two months. I knew then that we needed to leave the Soviet Union as soon as we possibly could, but this was not easy for Jewish people at the time.

We applied for a visa and were sent to a refugee camp in Italy. While we were there, my son introduced me to the "American Club." I didn't know it at the time, but this was the mission of a pastor and his wife who believed that the Gospel



Yelena

God's Presence in Hard Trials

The first time I heard about Jesus was in 1979, when I was twelve. We were in Italy, in a refugee camp with many other Jewish people, awaiting relocation after leaving the former Soviet Union. I read about Him in a children's book. I was amazed at His love—not only for the Jews, but for all people.

Once in America, my mother continued to search for truth. One beautiful day, she saw a sign on a pole offering classes in English and the Bible at the Russian Community Life Center. She started to attend, first the classes, then a home group, and then services at a Messianic congregation. She loved it so

much that she took my sister and me along! It was there that I sensed the presence of the Lord. Finally, I felt I was home.

This was in 1997. By that time, I was married and had a child. My husband was not a believer, but I prayed every day for his salvation.

Conflicting Loyalties

I wanted to be baptized, but my husband was strongly against it. He argued with me when I attended services. As a Jew, he had suffered through much anti-Semitism. He thought that if I were baptized, I would no longer be Jewish. I would become a part of the group that had hated him. For a time, I stopped going to the congregation for the sake of peace at home. I missed the fellowship terribly and my relationship with the Lord suffered. I became depressed.

Finally, I told my husband I had to choose God. I told him that it was He who gave me joy, peace and love. When my husband saw how serious I was, he relented. I was able to return to the

Center—

was also for the Jewish people. I was shocked! I decided to read the Old Testament, and if I could find Jesus there, nothing would stop me. Soon, I discovered that only Jesus could be the Messiah! Everyone in our family prayed to receive the Lord during showings of the *Jesus* film at the American Club.

When we immigrated to Brooklyn, we began to pray about how to share Jesus with other Russian Jewish immigrants. We started a Bible study and soon realized that if we offered English classes and services for the new immigrants as well, we would be able to reach more people. This eventually grew to become the Russian Community Life Center, where I have been blessed to see many Russian Jewish souls place their faith in the Lord.

congregation. After that, my life started to change every day for the better. Little by little, I began to be myself again.

God's Humbling Mercy

Then came that horrible morning—September 11th. My husband and my brother were both working just across from the Twin Towers. When I realized that the Towers were destroyed, I was desperate. The telephones were not working. I couldn't stop crying and praying. People from our church called each other and some of them called me. In those very difficult hours, we stayed in prayer together.

But the Lord was merciful, and I was reunited with my loved ones. Once more, I saw the hand of God in my life. One month later, on October 6, 2001, I was baptized. I've never been closer to my Lord than I am now. He answers my prayers, and I know that He loves me. My husband and I are much closer now than we ever were. God has truly restored my life!

November 2002

The Russian Community Life Center (RCLC) is a ministry established and mostly operated by Russian Jewish immigrants to Brooklyn. Its work began in 1993 with English/Bible classes that also introduced people to Jesus.

Immigrants need stable community relationships, as well as individual spiritual rebirth. The RCLC wants to empower them to integrate successfully into American life while maintaining their special identity. However, it is more important for them to realize their identity in the Messiah. Therefore, every program offers service that is saturated with the Gospel. Currently, the RCLC has 26 classes in English/Bible, citizenship or Hebrew. Altogether, classes meet 40 times a week and nearly all of them include Bible study. The RCLC enjoys a close relationship with Chosen People Ministries.



The Russian Jewish People in New York City – Who Are They?

By Leslie McMillan, Executive Director,
Russian Community Life Center

The Russian Community Life Center serves the 300,000 Russian Jewish immigrants who have come to Brooklyn since 1989. The ministry also serves other Russian-speaking people. A 1999 study found that in the previous five years, people from the former Soviet Union were New York City's largest immigrant group. In fact, New York City attracted more Russian Jewish immigrants than did any other part of the world except for Israel.

Furthermore, the study identified them as the most highly educated immigrant population in history. A large percentage of older immigrants—perhaps even the majority—were skilled professionals in medicine, engineering, music, teaching, science or accounting. In America, however, their most common occupations are: babysitter, home attendant, housecleaner, driver and construction worker.

Younger immigrants often work eagerly for American college degrees, but many are on a fast track to materialism. Immigrant children are susceptible to the influences of American culture. Spiritually, most Russian Jews have historically been atheists and few have read the Bible. Jewishness under Communism was more an experience of anti-Semitic persecution (influenced, alas, by the mainline Russian Orthodox Church) than of Jewish traditions.

For most immigrants, the high expectations they cherished for life in America are depressingly unmet. This disillusionment, however, has produced an amazing openness to the hope found only in Messiah Jesus.

See the through Jewish Eyes Bible

by Daniel Goldberg, Th.D., D.D.



MALACHI – LAST OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETIC VOICE

The unique, prophetic voice of the Hebrew Scriptures falls silent after Malachi, the last of the so-called “Minor Prophets.” Malachi prophesied during or shortly after the days of Nehemiah, in or around 396 B.C. His name means, “My Messenger,” and he is aptly named, for his message bears an eightfold controversy of the Lord with His people. In each instance, when charged with sin, the people of Israel contradict the Lord and ask for proof. Their attitude is expressed by the key Hebrew expression of Malachi, *במה* (*ba-mah* or *ba-meh*)—translated “In what way?”

The Eight Complaints

Malachi addresses eight complaints of the Lord against His people. First, they have denied God’s love—“*I have loved you,*” says the LORD. “*Yet you say, ‘In what way [ba-mah] have You loved*

*us?’ Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?” says the LORD. “Yet Jacob I have loved” (1:2). Second, they have dishonored God’s Name—*A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am the Father, where is My honor? And if I am a Master, where is My reverence? says the LORD of hosts to you priests who despise My name. Yet you say, ‘In what way [ba-meh] have we despised Your name?’ (1:6). Third, they have defiled God’s altar—*You offer defiled food on My altar. But you say, ‘In what way [ba-meh] have we defiled You?’ (1:7). Fourth, they have deserted their wives—*Yet you say, ‘For what reason [al-mah]?’ Because the LORD has been witness between you and the wife of your youth (2:14). Fifth, they have perverted God’s standards—*You have wearied the LORD with your words; yet you say, ‘In what way [ba-mah] have we wearied Him?’ In that you say, ‘Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the*****

LORD” (2:17). Six, they have departed from God’s laws—“You have gone away from My ordinances and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD of hosts. “But you said, ‘In what way [ba-meh] shall we return?’” (3:7). Seventh, they have deferred God’s tithe—*Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way [ba-meh] have we robbed You?’ (3:8) And finally, they have gone so far as to even renounce the Lord their God—*“Your words have been harsh against Me,” says the LORD, “Yet you say, ‘What [mah] have we spoken against You?’” (3:13).****

Malachi’s Ministry

Malachi was an evangelistic messenger. Through the prophet’s ministry, God preserved a Remnant within Israel, whom He calls “My jewels” (3:17). A divine “book of remembrance” contains their names, because they feared the Lord and spoke often of Him (3:16, 17).

God’s elect remnant today are those who fear Him and think upon His Name. Jesus promised: *If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him (Jn. 14:23).* Malachi (God’s messenger) prophesied of two future messengers of God. God would anoint a messenger to announce Yeshua’s first coming, namely John the Baptist (Mal. 3:1; Matt. 11:10). He also declared that Elijah himself would come to proclaim the return of Messiah to the earth (Mal. 4:4-6; Rev. 11:6).

Thus Malachi, the last prophet of the Hebrew Scriptures, sets the stage for the New Covenant consummation of the story of God’s great salvation through the Gospel of Jesus the Messiah—to the Jew first, and also to the Greek (Rom. 1:16). ✨

Soul Winner Wins Again

Malka is a ministry volunteer in Philadelphia who had known Rose,* an elderly Jewish woman, for a number of years and had met with her on many occasions to share the Gospel. Rose always gave a polite but uncommitted response. However, not long ago, it was a different story. Rose wasn't feeling well and was having family problems. Malka comforted Rose and continued to share God's love and concern for her and her family. After once again hearing the Messianic prophecies, Rose was finally convinced that Jesus is truly the Messiah. Malka led Rose in the prayer of salvation!

From Brooklyn to Texas to Faith

Chosen People Ministries' Dr. Al Reichman gets around. Recently, Al gave his testimony at a church in Austin, Texas. As soon as Al extended the invitation for salvation, he noticed a woman nudging her husband into the aisle and watched them come forward together. As Al watched, the couple prayed to accept the Messiah. Al spoke with them and learned they were a Jewish couple from Brooklyn, New York, who "just happened" to be visiting the church. What brought them there on that particular Sunday? Al still doesn't know. But God does!

Anti-Missionaries Harass Chosen People Ministries in Israel

Leonid B., a staff member in Israel, tells of increased activity from the anti-missionary organization *Yad l'Achim* (Hand to Brothers). He reports, "They continue to persecute us. Every Tuesday, when I teach Bible classes, they meet us at the door with their tracts and yell at our people. They also send 'spies' to Messianic congregations to take pictures. Please pray for their salvation." But there is also good news. Several months ago, a 31-year-old Jewish man named Dov* attended the Tuesday meeting. He came to Jesus through the witness of his mother, who lives in Ukraine and had recently visited Israel. Dov is now asking about baptism and plans to study at a Bible college.

Wedding Couple Now Truly Joined Together

Prospective bride Jeanne* is Jewish and her groom, Matthew,* is Gentile. When Matthew's father, a Christian minister in Florida, went looking for a Messianic leader to help plan the wedding, he called Chosen People Ministries' Dr. Ben Alpert. During a pre-wedding planning meeting, Jeanne showed great interest in the Jewishness of Jesus. Ben and his wife, Bonnie, were able to share the concepts taught in Chosen People Ministries' new *Joined Together?* video for interfaith marriages. During a rich time of sharing, Ben and Bonnie led the young Jewish lady to the Lord! At the wedding reception, Ben shared the Gospel with a number of interested Jewish and non-Jewish seekers.



You can order copies of *Joined Together?* for a suggested donation of \$20* plus shipping (item #8025). Just call 1-800-333-4936.

Gospel Outreach in Hawaii

Some weeks ago, Chosen People Ministries' Henry Matarrita helped coordinate an evangelistic outreach to the Jewish people on the island of Maui in Hawaii. Around 120 people attended and among them were about 30 Jewish people, a number of whom were seekers. The speakers included Nora Finberg, an Iranian Jewish believer, who gave her testimony and spoke of the problems in Iran. After the service, a Jewish woman gave her heart to Messiah. Keep praying for future Chosen People Ministries evangelistic outreach events coming up in Honolulu and Maui in the summer of 2003.

New Evangelistic Outreach in Germany

Vladimir Pikman, Chosen People Ministries' Director in Germany, is rejoicing. He declares, "God makes our dreams a reality!" Our Berlin congregation finally received permission to set up their evangelistic book table in the Jewish heart of Berlin. Vladimir says, "It's a great opportunity for Messianic believers to witness to Jewish people. Some of them have already come to our services."

*names have been changed

NEW Just in Time for Holiday Gift Giving

Say "Our Home Belongs to God" With a Mezzuzah

The *mezzuzah* ("doorpost" in Hebrew) is a small, rectangular case containing a scroll with Hebrew verses from Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 11:13-21. It is affixed to the doorposts of many Jewish homes. Each time we walk by, it reminds us that our house belongs to the true and living God. Now you too can have this silent but powerful witness of God's presence to place on your doorpost to proclaim Messiah's Lordship.

Mezzuzah/Item #5140 Price \$24.95⁰⁰

Festivals of Light by Marty Goetz

Though messianic musician Marty Goetz grew up with the music of Hanukkah, he always enjoyed hearing the songs of Christmas. Now, as a Jewish believer in Yeshua, he loves singing them both. We invite you to celebrate with us these Festivals of Light!

Festivals of Light CD/Item #4050 Price \$15.95⁰⁰



Mommy, what are we?

Are we Jewish or Christian? Should we celebrate Hanukkah or Christmas?

Explore answers to these and other pressing questions for those in an interfaith relationship. *Joined Together?* is a new documentary featuring four interfaith married couples who share their discovery that faith in the Jewish Messiah can bring a dynamic and joy-

filled basis to their marriage. Hearing them relate their struggles and successes is sure to touch and move you.

You can order copies of *Joined Together?* for a suggested donation of \$20⁰⁰ plus shipping (ask for item



#8025). Just call 1-800-333-4936, visit www.chosenpeople.com/joinedtogether, or write to Chosen People Ministries at 241 East 51st Street, New York, NY 10022, or in Canada write to Box 897, Station B, North York, ON M2K 2R1

Give Thanks to God Through a Special Gift

"O Give thanks to the Lord for He is Good" (Psalm 106:1). Thanksgiving is a time to reflect upon the blessings of God with humble gratitude. Are you thankful for someone special in your life? What better way to give thanks to Him than through a special memorial gift to help bring the Gospel to His Chosen People? Chosen People Ministries has many ways through which you can bless the Jewish people with the message of Messiah. Call us at 888-2-YESHUA to learn more.

Simcha 2003

Thursday, May 29th
to Sunday, June 1st

Schroon Lake, New York

Featured speakers will be:

Dr. Mitch Glaser

President, Chosen People Ministries

Dr. Michael Rydelnik

Professor of Jewish Studies,
Moody Bible Institute



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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The Chosen People newsletter is published monthly by Chosen People Ministries. For more information, or to receive *The Chosen People* newsletter, write to: Chosen People Ministries, 241 East 51st Street, New York, NY 10022. In Canada, write to: Box 897 Station B, North York, ON M2K 2R1. In Australia, write to: Celebrate Messiah, PO Box 5006, Glenferrie South VIC 3122 (www.celebratemessiah.com.au) • Editor: Zhava Glaser • Staff Writer: Alan Shore • Art Director: Olivier Melnick • Design: Lois Gable

• Cover photo background by George Uber

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Please
remember
Chosen People
Ministries in
your will. "I
will bless those
who bless you."

(Genesis 12:5)