

# The Chosen People



Volume VIII, Issue 5 May 2002



# Israel

## Ministry in Troubled Times

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Shalom from New York City. Last month we celebrated Israel's Independence Day. It should have been a joyous event—but our joy was tempered by great sadness and mourning.

Not a day goes by without reports of suicide bombings and gruesome news coverage of this seemingly never-ending war raging in the Holy Land. Every so often, there is a glimmer of hope that reason will prevail and peace will be successfully negotiated. Yet with every sincere attempt, *shalom*—peace—still seems impossible.

This should not be surprising for students of Scripture. This latest series of events that has brought Israel once more front and center on the world scene merely confirms what Scripture has taught all along: Israel is the key to future events.

This latest intensification of conflict is a signal to pray more and to do more regarding Israel and its inhabitants. As the Psalmist wrote, “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper who love you” (Psalm 122:6). We know that true peace in Israel will only come when Jesus, the Prince of Peace, reigns in Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:2-3).

### A Fruitful Time

As I write to you today, Chosen People Ministries has four missionaries in Israel who are reaching Israelis for Jesus, especially the hundreds of thousands of Jews from the former Soviet Union. The missionaries themselves are Russian Jews who came to faith in Messiah after their arrival in Israel and have been most effective in reaching their fellow Israelis with the Gospel.

Our activities include evangelism, Messianic services and Bible studies. We have started two congregations in Israel and are now beginning a third. Hundreds have come to faith in the last few years—and more each week during these troubled times.

The repressive environment in Israel with regard to evangelism has caused our staff to come up with some very creative and innovative evangelistic strategies. One of my favorites has been Leonid B.'s guided tour of the holy sites in and around Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. This was especially effective for Russian-Jewish immigrants to Israel as they learned about their new homeland, although recent troubles have curtailed these efforts. We also sponsor evangelistic

concerts and have recently begun a special ministry to soldiers.

Yet there is so much more to do!

One of our most recent significant decisions was to move Michael Z., the director of the Israel work, into Jerusalem itself. It was not an easy decision, particularly in light of the risk involved, but Michael was sure that the Lord had called him to relocate in Jerusalem, the heart and soul of Israel.

Let me share with you Michael's latest, heart-wrenching email:

***Last month was the bloodiest in Israel's recent history. More than a hundred Jews and Arabs lost their lives, and thousands were wounded.***

*All around me people feel huge pain, bitterness, disappointment at all of those in the world who are against us.*

*In my personal life, the last three explosions in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv happened within one to three minutes' walking distance from where I live (Jerusalem) and minister (Tel Aviv). Forty-five people were killed and the streets are absolutely empty. It is an apocalyptic vision.*

*At almost every meeting I see people coming to the Lord in our congregation. Just today two prayed to become followers of Yeshua.*

*The new congregational home for our ministry in downtown Tel Aviv is fantastic. Our young people go out on the streets to share the Gospel immediately after the meetings. We are drawing many visitors. It is very*



Leonid B. shares the Gospel as he leads guided tours of the holy sites in and around Jerusalem. But this ministry has been curtailed because of the violence in the Land.

*strange to see sometimes on the streets that the number of people doing evangelism is greater than the people walking on the streets. It is a sign of the times.*

*Henry is completely isolated in the West Bank. I have not seen him for two months but his reports are still very optimistic concerning his congregation.*

*Leonid is now preparing an evangelistic concert. But the question is, "How many people will show up at this event?" Are we scared? No!... when we are busy. So our prayer is, "God, keep us busy!" Be assured—His answer is always positive.*

In addition to Michael's account of recent events, we heard from another of our new missionaries in Israel, Neriya A., who wrote,

*So far for the last couple of days there have been almost 50 dead and more*

*than 300 injured. Because of this situation many Israelis feel depressed and have no hope. But we do have hope and we share this message of hope through the Gospel.*

*I am discipling an elderly man who watched the Jesus film and received Him as his Savior. Also my co-workers and I daily hear testimony of the wonderful works that Jesus is doing here. From God's perspective this situation is not so bad because God turns negative things to positive (like He did with our ancestor, Joseph). I strongly believe that God will bring peace to this region—and He will reign from Jerusalem above all the earth.*

### **The Heart of the Problem**

I admire the courage of Michael and our staff. They are preaching the Gospel under circumstances that most of us would find nearly impossible to endure. I hope you will pray for them and remember them in their difficult ministry.

In my opinion the heart of the problem and the most pressing obstacle to peace in Israel is the problem of sin. Both Israelis and Palestinians were born in sin (Romans 3:23, Jeremiah 17:9), just as you and I were.

How can there be peace between nations when the people themselves do not have peace with God? Jews and Palestinians can only have peace with God by accepting Jesus as their Messiah (John 14:6). He alone is the answer to their personal and political problems.

War is always the result of sin (James 4:1). The solution can only come through the prayers of faithful saints like you, through our continued witness in Israel and, ultimately, through the Second Coming of our Messiah Jesus. He is the only solution to sin and the only hope for peace.

This is why it is so important—TODAY—to encourage our workers in Israel who are bringing the Gospel

in the midst of this gruesome war. Pray for our staff, support them financially,

Michael Z., the director of the Israel work, has moved into Jerusalem itself. It was not an easy decision, particularly in light of the risk involved, but Michael was sure the Lord wanted him to relocate. You see, Michael has a sense of destiny!



and do what you can to encourage them by your notes and emails (israel@chosenpeople.com).

I will do all I can to encourage Americans and our elected officials to recognize that the land of Israel belongs to the Jewish people. This is the teaching of the Scriptures (Genesis 12:7, 15:8). I will also encourage Israeli officials to treat all people fairly. This is also taught in the Word of God.

For more than 108 years the priorities of your Mission to the Jews remain unchanged—in Israel, in New York City and across the globe—to proclaim the Gospel and help Jews and Gentiles find true peace and forgiveness of sin through receiving Jesus as their Messiah.

We can only do this with your continued help and prayers. Thanks for standing with us!

For Zion's sake,

*Mitch*  
Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser  
President

P.S. I hope you will sign our Internet petition and that you will send it to your friends to sign as well. We are asking our elected officials to act upon what is taught in Scripture and to uphold the right of the Jewish people to the Land.

In doing so, there is a blessing promised to our nation. As God said to Abraham, "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you" (Genesis 12:3).

Visit [www.chosenpeople.com/petition](http://www.chosenpeople.com/petition) to sign the petition online.

# ANTON\*

## From fear to faith

Translated from Russian by Kirsten Shore

I am fourteen years old now. I was born in Ukraine and at the age of nine, I came to Israel with my parents and brother and sister. I was around eleven years old when I became a believer in Jesus.

One evening, I went to bed as usual. Suddenly the thought came to me, "What would happen if I didn't wake up in the morning?" I found that I was

afraid of death. Because of this fear, I began to wonder if I was worthy of living. Because of all my sins, I felt that really only worthy of death.

I had heard about Jesus the Messiah from childhood, since my mother and sister had come to faith some time earlier. They would go to the meetings at a church in Ukraine and a Messianic congregation in Jaffa in Israel. Yet I didn't once say to myself that I must confess my sins and repent.

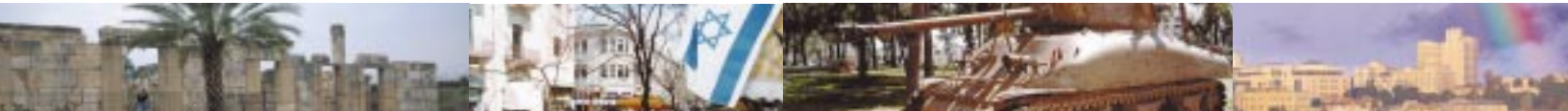
That night I resolved not to put off this decision any longer. I received Jesus. I confessed my sins and put my life in the hands of the Lord.

Since that time I no longer fear death, but have begun confidently to step out in life, because I know that

Jesus is always with me and I have eternal life. Everyone in my family is now saved, except my father. We pray for him and I hope the time will soon come when I will not only be able to call him "Father," but also my brother in the Lord.

Now I am preparing to be baptized, with four other people who are studying. I am the youngest, but I ask more questions than any of them!

I hope that it will come to pass that in several years I will be able to be a preacher. The elders of the congregation have promised that after my baptism, I will be able to be a leader in the children's service. I really love children and want to teach them to memorize Bible verses.



My name is Serge and I am a Jewish believer from the former Soviet Union. I was the fourth son in our family and my father came to the Lord when he was thirty. I tried to be polite and I attended a congregation from time to time, but I was not a believer.

When I was seventeen, I had a most disturbing dream. There was fire everywhere and a voice that filled me with fear. I somehow realized that it must be God. Deeply shaken, I woke my father and with tears on my face, I shared this vision with him. He comforted me, agreeing that God was trying to reach me. After that, I started to read the Gospel on occasion, but time passed and I forgot all about it.

By the time I was 24, I was married. One day I actually shared the Gospel with my wife, although I did not even believe in it myself, and she received it without any doubts!

I became a professional sportsman and eventually found myself among gangsters. I began to drift away from my wife, who kept on patiently praying to God and trusting in Him. I continued to live a dissipated life and three years ago, I decided to leave my family and run to Israel.

Once a week I called home, and my wife was always happy to hear my voice. I still did not

understand that God would soon reveal His purpose for me in the Land of Jesus.

Things got worse for me. I continued to lie and cheat and did not see any light for my lost life. In

October 2000 I found myself in a terrible situation. After yet another fight, I went through a police investigation. To my surprise, it went very well for me and I finally understood that God had given

me one last chance. I called my wife and asked her to come to Israel with our daughter, which she did.

In October 2001 we started to attend a Messianic congregation and the day came when I came forward to receive Jesus as my personal Savior. Now we live in Israel and give praise to the Lord for the wonderful salvation we have in Him. I want to serve Him with all my strength and with all my soul. Israel is my home and the Holy Spirit lives in me and leads me. I give all glory and praise to Him!

# SERGE\*

## Finding Messiah's Promise in the Promised Land

\*names have been changed

# Albert Runge

## A Brooklyn Jew Meets Jesus

Albert Runge was born into a Jewish family from Russia. As a small boy, when he asked his mother who Jesus was, she replied, "He is the God of the Gentiles, who taught his followers to hate the Jews."

When Albert was fourteen years old, his family moved to an apartment on Pulaski Street in Brooklyn, New York. He remembers, "Chosen People Ministries had a profound influence in my life. It was while my parents allowed me to attend a boys' club there under Dr. Daniel Fuchs that I learned the identity of the Messiah. This prepared me to receive Him a few years later."

In the years that followed, Albert has served as a missionary, a radio Bible teacher and a senior pastor of four large congregations in over 50 years of ministry in the United States and Canada.

At the age of 73, Pastor Runge is still active in radio ministry and serves on the Board of Directors of Chosen People Ministries in Canada.

This book tells the story

## A Brooklyn Jew Meets Jesus

by Albert Runge

When Albert Runge met Jesus, it was the beginning of a distinguished life of ministry. The Jewish boy from Brooklyn grew into a man of God whose service to Messiah has taken him throughout the world. *A*

*Brooklyn Jew Meets Jesus* is the story of a remarkable man, told with the special brand of humor that comes when an unusual background meets a living faith.

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May 2002

# Is It Legal to Preach the Gospel in Israel?



The question of whether or not it is legal to preach the Gospel in Israel seems straightforward enough. But, like so many

things in Israel these days, the reality is not so simple. In fact, the answer at the present moment seems to be, "Yes...and no!"

We know it is legal to preach the Gospel because there seems always to be some anti-missionary measure or other floating around the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament). So far, such proposals have failed to gain the support necessary to become law. This is mostly because of the Israeli reluctance to erode free speech and give too much power to the religious parties from which these proposals are generated. Also, there is international pressure against such measures.

Messianic Jews have the right to share the Gospel—in theory. But there is a catch. According to Israeli law, there is no such thing as a Messianic Jew!

This perception that Messianic believers are not Jewish has opened the door for Israel's Interior Ministry to crack down on Jewish evangelism. A report issued by the Messianic Action Committee last year stated that the Interior Ministry has "...taken advantage of their

broad discretionary powers in the area of residency and citizenship to harass, intimidate and legally disenfranchise Messianic Jews.

"These efforts have included the confiscation of Israeli ID cards, which every Israeli is legally required to carry at all times, and without which basic activities (banking, use of a credit card, registering children for

school, and access to all government services, for example) are impossible. The harassment and intimidation have been carried out using KGB-like tactics."

This situation bears continual watching, especially in light of Chosen People Ministries' Messianic outreach efforts in Tel Aviv, Samaria and Jerusalem.



# See the through Jewish Eyes Bible

by Dr. Daniel Goldberg

## THE LORD MEASURES JERUSALEM

### Zechariah Chapter Two

Like a tailor taking measurements for a suit modification, the LORD measures Jerusalem for alteration. A “young man” with a measuring line is ordered to calculate its dimensions (Zechariah 2: 2,4).

Here is evidence that the city of the great King (Psalm 48:2) and the Holy Land (Zechariah 2:12) belong to the LORD, the God of Israel. He alone has the right to measure and alter them.

Could it be that the “young man” is the same man who measured the temple area in Ezekiel’s day (Ezekiel 40:3-5), Messiah Himself, whose name is called “the Branch” (Zechariah 6:12)?

In Zechariah chapter two, the LORD measures the city of Jerusalem to make three alterations:

#### **Alteration #1: Expansion of Her Borders (2:1-4)**

“...Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men...” (2:4).

This alteration declares that Jerusalem shall enjoy future expansion and glory such as it never before experienced. The population will spill

over its former boundaries. The Hebrew word *perazoth*, used here in verse 4, means to exceed limits, overflow bounds, and to spread and expand. The vision of the surveyor portrays the phenomenal growth of Jerusalem so that the city overflows its walls and expands into the open country.

While the vision had a distinct local application to encourage the generation to whom Zechariah preached, in its fullness the prophecy looks far beyond to the final and full alteration of Jerusalem during the Kingdom rule of Messiah Jesus.

#### **Alteration #2: Reoccupation of Her People (2:6,7)**

Many of the Israelites had settled in Babylon and Persia in Zechariah’s time. They failed to avail themselves of the opportunity to return to their own land.

Now they are warned to return (2:6), not only because of the blessings God will grant to Jerusalem, but because judgment will fall on Babylon and Persia. The return to Jerusalem in Zechariah’s day was but a foreshadowing of the final regathering of Israel, preparatory to the earthly reign of their Messiah. Isaiah declares: “...the LORD shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people ... from the four corners of the earth” (Isaiah 11:11,12).

#### **Alteration #3: Return of Her Messiah (2:12)**

“And the LORD will take possession of Judah...and will again choose Jerusalem” (2:12).

The prophet foresaw the privileges God’s people would enjoy and called for a song in light of Messiah’s glorious return: “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,” says the LORD” (2:10).

What an alteration we have in comparison to the First Coming of Messiah to Jerusalem when “He came unto His own, and His own did not receive Him” (John 1:11). Now everyone on earth who previously oppressed the Jewish people, despised the Holy City and refused to acknowledge the LORD and His Anointed (Psalm 2:1-3), are commanded to keep silent: “Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD, for He is aroused from His holy habitation” (2:13).

In its new and altered status the city of Jerusalem will have no need for walls of protection, “For I,” says the LORD, “will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst” (2:5).

On a personal level, our lives have been measured by God: “...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 6:23; Psalm 14:2,3). Only Jesus the Messiah can alter (change) us so that “...if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17). ✨

## **South American Conferences Reap Harvest**

Roberto Passo, the director of Chosen People Ministries in Argentina, was recently invited by two of the largest local churches in Lima, Peru, to conduct Bible conferences for leaders and to help with an evangelistic campaign. As a result of the two week-long conferences, there were more than 200 faith decisions!

Also, our volunteer group from Tandil (about 370 miles from Buenos Aires) reports that Rachel,\* a non-believing Jewish woman, accepted Jesus as her Messiah. Believers had witnessed to her for a long time, but she would not say yes until that day. Please pray for Rachel's spiritual growth and an effective testimony to her family.

## **Young Jewish Woman Comes to Faith**

Estie,\* a young woman with whom Chosen People Ministries worker Lauren B. has had contact, recently came to faith in Jesus. Her decision came largely through the witness of the congregation Lauren attends. Estie is fluent in Hebrew and has spent time in Israel. Lauren is presently helping to disciple her and Estie has already boldly shared with her mother about Jesus. Please pray for Estie and her entire family, that they too might come to faith in Messiah.



## **Salvation – One Spouse at a Time**

Laura Fels, who serves with Chosen People Ministries in New York City on loan from Executive Ministries of Campus Crusade for Christ, recently taught an investigative Bible study entitled, "What's All This Fuss About the Messiah?" During the discussion, Susan,\* the Gentile wife in an interfaith couple, began to cry. She said, "I've done all those things before—I believe in Jesus, and have prayed to Him all my life. But something is missing. It doesn't seem to connect like it does for you." After further discussion, it was evident that she was ready to pray and ask Jesus the Messiah to become her Lord and Savior. As she prayed, the peace of the Lord seemed to descend from heaven. Susan's Jewish husband watched in amazement. He is seriously considering the Gospel. Please pray that he will join his wife in receiving the Lord.

## **Passover in Berlin – Let My People Come**

It wasn't only Pharaoh who changed his mind at Passover. With only two days' notice, the hall for Chosen People Ministries' Passover *seder* in Germany suddenly became "unavailable." After much prayer and a quick round of last-minute negotiations, the doors to the hall "reopened!" There was not an empty chair in the room, and in addition to a full house, the event was also covered by a local television station. But best of all, many Jewish seekers attended and several accepted Jesus the Messiah!

## **Salvation at Passover**

Frank Potter, who pastors the congregation Chosen People Ministries helped to plant in Philadelphia eight years ago, recently ministered at a Passover *seder* (held in a Russian restaurant) that was attended by 120 people.

As the Passover celebration unfolded, the fulfillment that Jesus brings to the elements of the *seder* was vividly demonstrated. At the end of the evening when the invitation was offered, a Russian man and two Russian women prayed to receive the Lord.

\*names have been changed

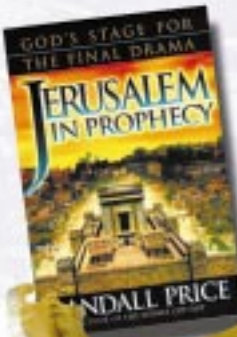
## **Was Jesus the Messiah? The Debate Continues**

In mid-April, Chosen People Ministries helped sponsor a debate in New York City between Shmuley Boteach, internationally known orthodox rabbi and author, and Michael Brown, Messianic

Jewish believer with a Ph.D. in Semitics from New York University. The event, advertised by a half-page ad in the New York Times and thousands of leaflets and posters, attracted hundreds of people to consider the topic: Was Jesus the Messiah? Hundreds more had to be turned away. Many honest questions were raised and answered in a neutral, non-confrontational setting.



# From the Resource Room



## Jerusalem in Prophecy

by *Randall Price*

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## Shofar from Israel

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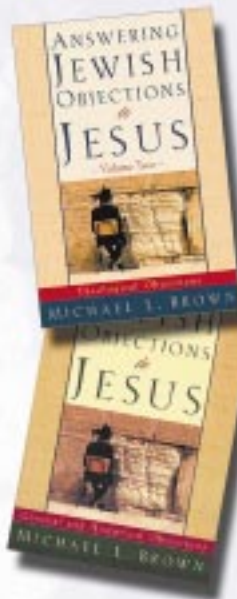
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## The Chosen People Newsletter

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)