

# The Chosen People



Volume XI, Issue 5 June 2005

## Shavuot and the Promised Holy Spirit

I THOU SHALT  
NO OTHER GO  
BEFORE ME  
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ANY GRAVEN  
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INSIDE  
THIS  
ISSUE:

Hand in Hand, Empowered by the Holy Spirit, for the Messiah •

Feast of Weeks—An Earthly and Spiritual Harvest • Revelation 19

# Hand in Hand, Empowered by the Holy Spirit, for the Messiah

Dear friend in the Messiah,

Shalom from our New York City headquarters. I hope you will enjoy learning more about the great festival called *Shavuot* by the Jewish people and Pentecost by those who follow the Christian calendar.

*Shavuot* is a holy day of great significance, both in Scripture and within the modern day Jewish community. This wonderful festival is especially important to believers in Jesus because it was the day God chose to send the Holy Spirit, the promise of the Father that Jesus spoke about in Luke 24:49.

*Shavuot*—which means “weeks” in Hebrew and is also called the “Feast of Weeks”—is a powerful reminder that God ordained the Biblical festivals, outlined in Leviticus chapter 23 as His redemptive road map! Jesus died on Passover, rose on First Fruits, and on the Festival of *Shavuot*, the Holy Spirit was sent to fill His disciples with power from “on high” to complete the Harvest!

That these great moments take place on these Festivals is not an accident. The Jewish holidays are prophetic portraits pointing to His gracious and sovereign plan to save mankind and establish His kingdom on earth.

## The Messianic Movement Empowered

The coming of the Holy Spirit changed history. Jesus knew that His disciples could not possibly fulfill the Great Commission given in

Matthew 28:19-20 without Him. The Messiah understood that His servants would need His presence and power to do what was commanded. He promised to send the Comforter after ascending to the right hand of the Father.

This Messianic fulfillment of the Festival came upon the disciples as a heavenly storm—unlike any other *Shavuot* in human history. There were signs and wonders displayed in Jerusalem that day that hearkened back to the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai.

This *new* Day of Pentecost created a *new* community of Spirit-filled Jews—and soon thereafter, Gentiles—who together would be able to bring the message of His love to the entire world.

## We Cannot Do It Without You!

Chosen People Ministries is a 111-year-old ministry to the Jewish people. We continue the vision of our founder, Rabbi Leopold Cohn, in seeking to reach our fellow Jewish people with the Good News of the Gospel. Our staff in twelve countries are doing all they can to help Jewish people recognize that Jesus is the promised Messiah of Israel.

But we would not even try to do this by ourselves. We love working with local churches! We need your help to reach the Jewish people in the cities and nations around the world where Chosen People Ministries workers serve. We are in this together! (Psalm 133:1)

We want to help you reach the Jewish people in your community. On the next page, I have listed some ways we can work together, and I hope you will take these suggestions to heart and give us the privilege of co-laboring together in this wonderful ministry of reaching Jewish people.

The Feast of Weeks, *Shavuot*, or Pentecost, is a profound reminder that we need *His* presence to do *His* work and that He has made *His* power available by *His* Spirit.

However, *Shavuot* is also a reminder that we desperately need one another to fulfill the Great Commission!

I cannot tell you how grateful I am to the many who prayed for and gave generously toward the Jerusalem Messianic Center. *We have almost paid for the Center and only need another \$100,000 to enable us to minister there without ongoing debt.*

The matching grant we have received will no longer be available after June 30 and so, if you have been praying about sending a gift for the Center, it would be wonderful to do it today!

We cannot reach our Jewish people without your sacrifice and Spirit-empowered help. May all the blessings spoken of in Genesis 12:3 (“*I will bless those who bless thee*”) be yours.

Your brother in the Messiah,

  
Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser  
President

# Jewish Evangelism, Chosen People Ministries and your local congregation



The nature of the Body of Messiah and the mandate for Jewish evangelism are two parts of the same picture. This is why Chosen People Ministries seeks and welcomes partnerships with local churches that share our burden to bring the Gospel to the Jewish people. We know that no part of the Body can function properly when it is disconnected from the other members (1 Corinthians 12).

Here are a few creative ways that you and your church can partner with Chosen People Ministries—your mission to the Jewish people.

## Start a Prayer Group

The Great Commission certainly includes the Jewish people (Romans 1:16) and there may be a number of your fellow believers who share that burden. Find out who these believers are, and begin with a weekly group prayer time. Our newsletter has plenty of ideas about what to pray for and, as your fellowship increases, other ideas may come to you.

## Coordinate a Special “Jewish Missions” Event

Why not organize an event designed to highlight the Jewish roots of the Christian faith? One great way is to invite a missionary or special speaker from



Chosen People Ministries. For

example, a “Messiah in the Passover”

banquet is a wonderful way to draw the connection between the Jewish Passover and the Lord’s Supper. Or choose another Jewish holiday, such as the Feast of Weeks (see accompanying article), to emphasize the relationship of the Hebrew

Scriptures, the life of the Church and the Great Commission.

## Volunteer Involvement Program

Chosen People Ministries has a Volunteer Involvement Program that will help you with training and material to plan Jewish outreach events and other evangelistic activities. One growing area is campus ministry. We can help you get a literature table started with excellent materials designed for spiritually hungry Jewish students if there is a college or university that is near your church.



## Short-Term Missions

We also offer a variety of opportunities to put “words into action,” starting with our challenging short-term summer missions.

STEP-in-a-Week is a one-week summer program in New York City

that emphasizes training, evangelistic outreach and provides opportunities

to explore the history and culture of “Jewish New York.” Another is “eXperience Israel,” a two-week mission/tour to Israel designed for

18- to 35-year-olds. We are eager to work with your church group to “customize” a short-term program that meets your needs. And who knows—perhaps this “taste” of Jewish missions will lead someone to pursue a life-long calling to bring the Gospel to the Jewish people.

## Encourage Your Missions Committee to Partner With Us

Perhaps you are in a position to encourage a place for Jewish evangelism in your church missions budget. Chosen People Ministries would be happy to maintain a relationship with your Missions committee and help you to designate resources to projects about which you can become truly inspired.

## A Final Word

If you would like to find out more about these opportunities, contact us at 1-888-2-YESHUA, or [opportunities@chosenpeople.com](mailto:opportunities@chosenpeople.com) by e-mail. How often we find the Lord accomplishing things through the vision and efforts that begin with a single person—and that person could be you!



# Shavuot

## The Feast of Weeks — An Earthly and Spiritual Harvest

Shavuot, or the Feast of Weeks, is one of the three “convocations of the Lord” that, along with Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles, constitute the “appointed times” (Leviticus 23:4) for Israel to gather in Jerusalem. It may be thought of as a unit with Passover, as we will soon see, for a number of reasons—including the close connection between the life and ministry of Jesus the Messiah and the gift of the Holy Spirit that empowers the Lord’s people to do His work.

### Shavuot’s Biblical Basis

As the Book of Leviticus describes, the first connection between Passover and Shavuot is that they move together on the Jewish calendar—*“On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the LORD’s Passover. . . seven days you must eat unleavened bread. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD”* (Leviticus 23: 5, 6, 8, 15–17).

Therefore, regardless of where Passover falls on our “modern” calendar, Shavuot is sure to follow fifty days after the second day of Passover. This fifty-day period is where another name for the feast comes from: Pentecost.

### Shavuot Traditions in Judaism

In Judaism, the period of “counting the days” from Passover until Shavuot according to the Lord’s command (Leviticus 23:15) is called “Counting the Omer.” It comes from the ancient practice of offering an omer (about two dry quarts) of barley to the Lord on the second day of Passover. To this day, blessings are recited as observant Jewish people keep track of the days between Passover and Shavuot by “counting the omer.”

During this period, observant Jews mourn the deaths that occurred in a plague among the Jewish people during the final armed revolt against the Romans that took place in A.D. 132. A number of signs of mourning are typically observed at this time. For example, there are no haircuts taken during this period, and no weddings or festive occasions are celebrated—except on *Lag B’Omer* (Hebrew for the 33rd day of the counting of the Omer).

Lag B’Omer commemorates the death of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, supposed author of the Kabbalistic work, the *Zohar*. His death is a day of celebration, for he himself is said to have given such instructions. Therefore, the mourning observances are suspended for a day. Thousands of the Rabbi’s followers congregate at Mt. Meron, near the town of Safed in the Galilee, to observe the anniversary of his death. Bonfires are lit to symbolize the shining light of the Lord (*Zohar* means “Light”), and weddings are made. Lag B’Omer has become the traditional occasion for a Jewish child’s first haircut.

When Shavuot finally arrives, it is celebrated as a day of rest in Israel (two days outside of Israel). Shavuot traditions today include the reading of the Book of Ruth, which perhaps reminds us of the harvest, the eating of dairy foods (without meat, as befits a kosher diet) and the decoration of the home and synagogue with harvest produce.

But Shavuot has another spiritual side, for it is also called "*Hag Matan Torateinu*" (the Festival of the Giving of Our Torah). According to Jewish tradition, it is also the time when the Lord revealed to Israel the gift of the Law at Mt. Sinai. And here we find that, just as Moses the Deliverer connects the first Passover and the first Shavuot, Jesus the Messiah brings them together again—in a new and startling way.

### Shavuot and the New Testament

The Gospels demonstrate how Jesus the Messiah fulfills the prophetic promises of the Hebrew Scriptures. The drama of the Last Supper is a most vivid example, as Jesus reveals Himself to be the true and all-sufficient Passover sacrifice.

Now, as the story continues in the Book of Acts, we see how the close connection between Passover and Shavuot is preserved through the ministry of the Messiah.

The very last recorded words that Jesus spoke in the final chapter of Luke's Gospel were, "*Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high*" (Luke 24:49).

And so, it is fitting that Luke should take up the story again at roughly this point in the Book of Acts. Luke records Jesus' words restating the Lord's promise and the Great Commission for which His people will be empowered: "*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be*

*witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth*" (Acts 1:8).

Now, as Luke continues, we are in the midst of another "appointed time" several weeks after Passover. It is the Feast of Weeks, Shavuot, and once again Jewish people from throughout the known world (Acts 2:5-11) are gathered in Jerusalem, according to the Lord's commandment.

### The Holy Spirit and Shavuot

We have seen how Shavuot commemorates the harvest and the revelation of the Torah. Now, in the Book of Acts, we find it is the occasion upon which the Holy Spirit was first given.

Peter, who such a short time before had been paralyzed with fear, now preached the Gospel with boldness and authority. And what was

the result of his Spirit-filled words? "*Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them*" (Acts 2:41). Another kind of harvest had begun—a harvest of souls for the Kingdom.

That harvest is continuing today as Jewish people and others join together in the New Covenant and the Great Commission. That covenant was proclaimed by Messiah at the Passover. Now, it is sealed through the power of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost—yet another example of how our sovereign Lord has taken the former things and made them more meaningful than ever before.

Sources consulted:

Judaism 101 – <http://www.jewfaq.org>

The National Jewish Outreach Program – <http://www.njop.org>

David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Clarksville, Maryland: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), pp.219-221

# Shavuot

Read about it in Leviticus 23



This is the Feast of Weeks established by God in the Book of Leviticus. This year Jewish people around the world will celebrate it on June 13. This festival commemorates the giving of the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai. In Acts 2:1-41 we see the disciples celebrating Shavuot when the Holy Spirit was revealed. This holiday then came to be called *Pentecost* by Christians and is a celebration of the birthday of the Church.

*Jesus died on Passover,  
rose on First Fruits,  
and on the Festival of  
Shavuot, the Holy Spirit  
was sent to fill His disciples  
with power from "on high" to  
complete the Harvest!*

# See the THROUGH JEWISH EYES Bible

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

## THE FOUR HEAVENLY ALLELUIAS OF REVELATION 19

*“Alleluia” is the Greek form of the  
Hebrew word for “hallelujah”  
(praise the Holy Name).*

In Revelation 19, we hear four  
joyous notes of “alleluia”—each



of which signifies praise for a specific aspect of the Lord’s attributes and actions.

### ALLELUIA FOR SALVATION, GLORY, HONOR AND POWER

The first alleluia (Revelation 19:1) stresses God’s incomparable majesty and His mercy toward us. The heavens have already praised Him for His creation (Revelation 4:11). Now the redeemed of the Lord can sing praise for His complete deliverance and salvation through the Messiah, the Lamb of God.

### ALLELUIA FOR MESSIAH’S JUDGMENT UPON HIS ENEMIES

Revelation 19 paints a terrible portrait of Messiah’s wrath against the wickedness of “the great harlot.”

Although the world is reluctant to dwell on this frightening aspect of Scripture, no one should be surprised at the force of Messiah’s judgment. Psalm 2 indicates that the Messiah would dash His enemies to pieces like a potter’s vessel (Psalm 2:9). In Revelation 6:10, the martyred for the sake of the Lord cry out *“How long, O Lord...until You...avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”* Now they are able to sing alleluia.

The conqueror comes on a white horse (19:11), followed by the armies of heaven (19:14). The main objects of His wrath are the beast (Antichrist) and the false prophet who deceives the world by miraculous signs (19:20). All the nations are assembled to fight against the Lord and His Anointed. Messiah Jesus is the Victor, leveling His enemies by the sword of His

mouth as *“He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God”* (19:15).

### ALLELUIA FOR THE MESSIANIC RULE OF GOD UPON THE EARTH

The Prophet Isaiah saw the Lord seated upon the throne in heaven (Isaiah 6:1). John in Revelation sees the rule of Messiah come down to earth (19:4,15). Jesus the Messiah is the fulfillment of the disciples’ prayer: *“... Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven”* (Luke 11:2).

The Old Testament is replete with Messianic prophecies. The Prophet Daniel described the coming “stone kingdom” of Messiah to this earth after crushing all rebellious kingdoms: *“...the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed...”* (Daniel 2:44). Revelation chapter 20 expands on this theme. Alleluia for the coming King and His kingdom!

### ALLELUIA FOR THE GREATEST WEDDING OF ALL AGES

The God Who instituted marriage in the beginning in the garden (Genesis 2:21-24) is planning the greatest of all weddings at the consummation of the age. All believers from Pentecost (Acts 2) to the Second Coming (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) are known as the Bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:22-33; 2 Corinthians 11:2)—and Messiah Jesus is the Bridegroom (John 3:29).

Soon, the Messiah will return to take His bride to heaven (John 14:1-6). She will be clothed in righteousness and invited to the “marriage supper of the Lamb” (Revelation 19:8,9). Because of the Father’s wealth, this celebration may last a thousand years (Revelation 20:6). Won’t that be something to behold? Alleluia! ✨

### **CELEBRATE MESSIAH CONGREGATION BUILDING VANDALIZED**

Celebrate Messiah, Chosen People Ministries' partner in Australia, is under attack. The building that houses its congregation, House of the Messiah, has been vandalized in a series of incidents for several weeks. The damage includes smashed windows and doors, painted graffiti and damage to the building's locks. The graffiti messages and the threats that have been pasted on the doors indicate that the perpetrators are a radical group of Orthodox Jewish people. Lawrence Hirsch, Executive Director of Celebrate Messiah Australia, writes, "Please pray for our outreach in Melbourne during this time of persecution. Pray that God would give us great opportunities to testify of our love for God and the Gospel of Messiah Jesus."

### **FROM MOCKERY TO MESSIAH**

Neriyah A., our faithful staff worker in Israel, is full of praise to our Lord for his friend V. About six years ago, Neriyah's wife, Anna, witnessed to V. but he was not open to the Gospel. Some time after that, Neriyah and Anna connected with him through their evangelistic ministry on the beach. V. continued to rebuff their message many times and also made fun of them. However, in recent weeks, V. began to visit their Messianic congregation in Tel Aviv and was more open to discussion about the things of God. There, in the presence of the congregation's loving witness, V. received the Lord and has asked to be baptized. Neriyah writes, "It was such a long journey for V. to come to Jesus, but finally he is in the kingdom. Please pray for him."

### **NEW MESSIANIC CENTER IN BERLIN**

Chosen People Ministries in Germany has purchased a building for staff and outreach ministry in Berlin, funded almost entirely by German Christians. As one of our Germany staff workers says, "It is really a wonder in our eyes. Just think: God has given the Jewish people a Messianic Center in Berlin, the city in which the decision was made to kill all the Jewish people in Europe (the 'Final Solution'). It is like a 'city on a hill, that cannot be hidden' and we believe it will be a light in the world. We can only praise our God and stand in awe before Him."

### **JOE GRAY REJOINS CHOSEN PEOPLE MINISTRIES AS CANADIAN DIRECTOR**

Rev. Joseph Gray, who served in the late 1990s as Toronto Branch Director, has rejoined Chosen People Ministries as National Director of Canada. Joe, who is a Jewish believer, is a graduate of Boston College and Princeton Theological Seminary. His wife, Beth, is the Executive Director of the Kitchener/Waterloo Crisis Pregnancy Center. Joe will be overseeing the Mission's work in all of Canada beginning July 1 and is particularly looking forward to expanding the ministry in Toronto. The Grays have two grown daughters.

### **MONTREAL MESSIANIC PASSOVER BRINGS GOSPEL BLESSING**

Reports of the Lord's blessings during the Passover season continue to reach our headquarters. In Montreal, Percy Johnson has wonderful news about a family of Jewish believers. They brought their mother, who was not a believer, to the Messianic Passover Banquet held by the congregation that Percy leads. One of the members shared her testimony, and the Jewish woman found it so compelling that she promised to return to hear more. She later visited with her believing son and started reading the Bible. After a time, she admitted that she did believe in Jesus, but was uncertain about what was required of her. She is now continuing to learn about the Messiah and the Good News of salvation.

### **ONE SOWS ON THE GROUND, ANOTHER REAPS IN THE AIR!**

Ryan Karp, the son of long-time staff members Dennis and Tina Karp, has recently begun speaking at local churches. Ryan received a call from the pastor of a church where he had spoken about Jewish evangelism. The pastor had been encouraged to share his faith with Jewish people through Ryan's presentation. He could not wait to tell Ryan that he had led a Jewish woman to the Lord on an airplane flight while on the way to South America on a missions trip. Ryan, of course, was equally thrilled to learn of the inspiring effect his message had on this pastor and his church.

# Special Dedication Tour

## THE JERUSALEM MESSIANIC CENTER



**NOVEMBER 8-18, 2005**

Our upcoming "See Israel through Jewish Eyes Tour" will be special, as we plan to dedicate to the Lord's service the recently purchased ministry center in the heart of Jerusalem during this November Tour.

Your visit will be filled with a variety of destinations throughout Israel. During this 10-day tour, you'll sail the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus

taught the disciples and quieted the storm. You'll visit Jerusalem and retrace the steps of Jesus the Messiah during His last days on earth. You will experience a baptism service in the River Jordan and a communion service at the Garden Tomb. You will also have the opportunity to meet our Israeli staff, and hear firsthand reports of their work.



*Dr. Ben Alpert, who is a Jewish believer in Jesus and on staff with Chosen People Ministries, will be your tour leader. He has led more than 40 tours to Israel. Dr. Alpert's knowledge of ancient cultures and of the Scriptures will enlighten you about the Jewish roots of our faith.*



*The tour group will be joined for the dedication portion of the tour by Dr. Mitch Glaser, president of Chosen People Ministries, and his wife Zhava. This is a rare opportunity to be part of a moment of historical significance in Jewish missions!*

**To request additional information, or to sign up for the trip, please call**

**1-800-459-9402**

## Special Pre-order!!

### The Messianic Jewish Art Calendar

The Chosen People Ministries Messianic Jewish Art Calendar is filled with Messianic prophecies and breathtaking traditional Jewish art. This is the perfect gift to give your Jewish friend. Order one for your own home, too, and experience the beauty of the Jewish holidays throughout the year. This 18-month calendar goes from September 2005 through December 2006.

calendar 5005 • \$13.95\*\* (pre-order; available August 1, 2005)

Chosen People Ministries  
SEE ISRAEL THROUGH  
JEWISH EYES TOURS



### 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)