

The background of the cover is a photograph of a man in a grey t-shirt and a blue and white kippah, seen from behind, with his hands pressed against the Western Wall. A young child in a yellow shirt is clinging to his back, looking over his shoulder towards the camera.

**The
Chosen
People**

Volume XV, Issue 2 February 2009

GOD'S ROADMAP FOR PEACE

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GOD'S PROMISE OF PERFECT PEACE IN ISRAEL

*"You will keep him in
perfect peace, whose mind
is stayed on You...."*

ISAIAH 26:3

Cover Photo - AP Images

Shalom from New York City!

We do not live in peaceful times. The United States is still at war on two fronts overseas—and the terrorist threat from abroad, which many seem to have forgotten, continues to loom over us. Here at home, we are coping with an economic calamity that is the worst we have experienced in over three decades.

Disillusionment, anxiety and gloom are widespread, and many are skeptical that the new administration will be of much help to the average person any time soon. But as serious as our problems are in North America, they pale in comparison to the challenges faced in most other places—Israel included. In Israel, survival is not thought of primarily in economic terms, but rather in terms of life or death.

There is not a family in Israel who cannot count their own losses or those of someone close to them.

Peace is not an abstract concept to Israelis. Peace means a dinner table around which every member is seated, unscarred by war. The hunger and thirst for peace in Israel gnaw at the spirit. Where can peace be found? How will it be achieved?

Negotiate or Not?

The long, drawn out history of enmity between Jews and Arabs in the Holy Land is now so much a part of the culture of both peoples that many have lost hope for finding a realistic political solution any time soon. Right now, there are very influential factions on both sides that are dead set against any form of negotiated agreement. Hamas, which controls the Gaza Strip, is still openly committed to Israel's destruction. Having made considerable political inroads, they are a force that cannot be ignored. The Palestinian Authority's president, Mahmoud Abbas, is thus weakened by Hamas and lacks the popular support to reach an agreement

with the Israeli government, even if he were seriously inclined to do so.

Meanwhile, the Israeli government has been weakened by scandal. Many Israelis have lost confidence in their leaders, which puts the government in a poor position to make concessions that may seem to compromise the hard-won improvements in overall national security. Although the average Israeli deeply longs for peace, Israeli citizens also do not want to return to the chaotic conditions that live in recent memory.

Given the complex and challenging history of the Middle East, the new administration in the United States may be reluctant to continue its mediating role in this conflict. Is there any wonder that a sense of despair and desperation looms over Israeli society? The Zionist dream, built upon the dreams of an idealistic generation of pioneers, seems unable to sustain hope. Where can the people turn?

A Glimpse of the Kingdom Through Hope in Messiah

If you have been receiving news from Chosen People Ministries through this newsletter or through our web communications, you already have some understanding of the challenges our staff members face in Israel. And you also already know something about the real strides we have made in expanding Messiah's ministry there. Stressful conditions produce spiritual turmoil. Young Israelis, hungry for spiritual truth but turned off by conventional Judaism, are looking to New Age teachings or other paths that are "off the beaten track." Their plight has made them open to new things—although some of these new things are not very healthy.

This is an opportunity for our ministry to meet their needs! Many of

us have traveled a similar route, and we know that God can answer the need of a sincerely seeking heart. We also know that once we are able to form meaningful relationships and communicate the Good News, with the Lord's help, many will respond. They have been responding already! As our Mission becomes more firmly established in Israel with each passing year, and as our staff becomes better trained and more experienced, we gain increasing credibility with those to whom we are called and to whom we have demonstrated our commitment.

The Apostle Paul teaches that as we learn to place our faith in Messiah, we are promised that *"the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 4:7).

This peace does not depend on external circumstances. It cannot be manufactured or imitated. It is derived from only one source—a living relationship with the God of Israel, who has acted through Jesus the Messiah to bring about our forgiveness and reconciliation, *"for He Himself is our Peace"* (Ephesians 2:14).

This is the peace for which our broken, sinful humanity cries out—both Jew and Arab alike. As we pray and partner together to share Messiah's message with those who live in the Holy Land, we are privileged to glimpse what the power of the Gospel can accomplish; for example, the dozen or so former drug addicts who have received Jesus at our congregationally-sponsored drug rehabilitation center in Tel Aviv. Or the softened expressions of Holocaust survivors as they begin to understand the source of the love we extend to them. These wonderful ministry moments are what our missionaries in Israel live for. The affirmation of the Lord's peace, as we see it dawn on

the face of a new believer, is encouraging beyond words.

The authentic peace of Messiah is nothing less than the sign and guarantee of His presence—"I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). That is why it can be found nowhere other than in a living relationship with Him. That is the gift of the Gospel—a promise that outlives every struggle we will ever encounter in this world.

Our plan is to reach Israelis through direct evangelism (yes—it is legal and possible for our workers, who are mostly Israeli believers), through starting new congregations and by demonstrating the love of our Messiah Jesus through meeting the practical needs of Israelis: food, clothing, help for the elderly, and specialized ministries to children. Recently our staff traveled to Sderot, the small Israeli town next door to Gaza that has received the brunt of the Palestinian missile barrage in recent months. Many of those who live in this beleaguered city are elderly Russian immigrants. Our staff has provided for their practical needs and spiritual comfort and, of course, we have shared the Gospel with these "new Israelis."

Your prayers and support enable us to continue these ministries in Israel, the United States, Canada, and many other countries across the globe that encompass 96% of the world's Jewish population. Please pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Thanks for your partnership in the Gospel—we deeply appreciate you!

Your brother,



Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser
President

GOD'S ROADMAP TO PEACE

The year 2008 ended with another battle between Israel and Hamas, the Palestinian group in control of Gaza. As soon as the truce ended in early December, Hamas began raining rockets into southern Israel. Everyone was expecting Israel to fight back, and of necessity it attacked the Hamas strongholds in Gaza. Regrettably, there were high civilian casualties as well. When will this cycle of violence end? Is it possible for Israel to live in peace with its Arab neighbors? To understand this conflict, we must consider Israel's recent history.

By the 1850s, anti-Semitism was on the rise in Europe and Russia. By 1860, a small number of European Jews began to settle in Palestine, which was part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire at the time. In those days, Palestine was sparsely populated by Bedouins and a relatively small number of Arabs. As Jewish people began to leave Europe and settle in Palestine, they changed the landscape, transforming deserts and swamps into farms—which in turn attracted more Jewish immigrants (*halutzim*).

In 1897, the first Zionist Congress (named after Mount Zion in Jerusalem) was called by Theodor Herzl. The Congress was held in Basel, Switzerland and included 200 delegates representing most European Jewish communities. After some deliberation, the Congress declared that *"Zionism seeks to establish a home for the Jewish people in Eretz Israel secured under public law."*

The Balfour Declaration of 1917 was a classified formal statement of policy stating that the British government viewed *"with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people"* with the understanding that *"nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."*

With the defeat of Turkey in World War I, the League of Nations put Palestine under British control, which lasted from 1921 to 1947. Jewish immigration to Palestine continued to increase under British rule, but the Arab leaders of Jerusalem began pressuring the British government to stop further Jewish immigration. A foretaste of what was to come occurred in 1920 when Jewish youths, nearly all recent arrivals from Europe, paraded in Jerusalem professing the wish for a Jewish Defense Arm. Reaction by Arab religious leaders resulted in an attack on Jews by Arabs in the Old City of Jerusalem, resulting in a number of fatalities and casualties. The police were heavily outnumbered, and the military was called in to restore law and order.

Bowing to Arab pressure, Britain imposed a limit of 5,000 Jewish immigrants per year. Later, in a sad twist of history, European Jews who had escaped Nazi concentration camps and made their way to Palestine by sea were sent back to Nazi-occupied Europe. But by the 1930s, in reaction to the British ban on Jewish immigration, Jews in Palestine began an underground paramilitary movement (called *Haganah*—meaning "the defense") to combat British rule.

Arab resentment of the increasing numbers of Jewish immigrants continued to grow. On October 13, 1933, a "peaceful" procession in protest of Jewish settlement was planned to take place in Jerusalem. The procession rapidly deteriorated into a riot and was followed by further rioting in Jaffa two weeks later. Additional disturbances took place in Haifa, Nablus and Jerusalem.

A British Royal Commission of Inquiry was sent out to propose changes to the British Mandate of Palestine. The commission arrived in Palestine in November 1936 to investigate the reasons behind the Arab uprising. It returned to Britain the following January, and in July 1937 the commission published a report that, for the first time, recommended partition. This proposal was declared unworkable and formally rejected by the British government.

By the end of World War II, the British had lost control of the situation in the Holy Land and asked the newly formed United Nations to handle the matter. In 1947, the United Nations agreed to divide Palestine into two states, one Arab and another Jewish. On May 14, 1948, following the U.N. vote in favor of partition—which was unanimously rejected by all the Arab states—the Jewish state declared its independence, and the modern State of Israel was born. On that same day, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq invaded Israel and a six-month war for survival ensued. Israel lost control of Jerusalem, and finally, a cease-fire was declared. But the state of war with Israel's Arab neighbors continued.

The next major war was in June 1967, when Israel was under threat of imminent attack by the combined forces of six Arab nations. In six days, Israel utterly defeated the Arab forces and took control of the Sinai, Samaria, the Golan Heights and, most importantly, the city of Jerusalem. Vowing revenge for the Six Day War, Egypt's President Nasser led a coalition of six Arab nations that invaded Israel in 1973 on its holiest day, *Yom Kippur*. After a series of defeats Israel counterattacked and ten days later its forces reached the outskirts of Cairo, Damascus, Amman and Beirut. After threats from Russia, the main backer of the Arab states, Israel pulled back to the 1967 borders and signed a cease-fire. In the years that followed,

by David Sedaca

Israel negotiated peace accords with Egypt and Jordan, returning all of Sinai to Egypt and securing its borders with Jordan.

Outright war by Arab countries was then replaced by terrorist attacks. Beginning with the murder of the Israeli Olympic team in Munich in 1972 and continuing to the present day, repeated terrorist attacks forced Israel to seek accords granting autonomy to the West Bank and Gaza. The idea of the “two-state solution” was formalized in Oslo, Norway on August 20, 1993, and partial progress has been made. This process has been called “The Roadmap to Peace.” Israel has pulled back from the West Bank, which is self-governed, but Gaza has been under control of the terrorist group Hamas, with the backing of Syria and Iran. It is in Gaza that the recent conflict has erupted.

But what is God’s “Roadmap to Peace” for Israel? The first step is found in the vision of the Valley of the Dry Bones in Ezekiel 37:11-14: *“Thus says the Lord God: ‘Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel’”* (v. 12).

Today the modern State of Israel is indeed alive, but this prophecy is not yet completely fulfilled, because it also says, *“I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it...”* (Ezekiel 37:14). Israel has not yet received the Spirit of the Lord, but the day will come when *“...all Israel will be saved...”* (Romans 11:26).

The second event that will usher in God’s plan for Israel’s peace is the return of Israel’s Messiah. Nations will again rise against Israel, as the Lord told the prophet Zechariah: *“For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled.... Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives... the LORD my God will come, and all the saints with You.... And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be—‘The LORD is one,’ and His name one. All the land shall be turned.... The people shall dwell in it; and no longer shall there be utter destruction, but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited”* (Zech. 14:2-11).

Although there is a constant concern about the current events in the Middle East, we who trust in the Lord and believe His Word know who is in control and how the conflict ends. Meanwhile, *“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. ‘May they prosper who love you...’”* (Ps. 122:6). 🌈

David Sedaca has been a leader in the Messianic Jewish movement for over 30 years. He currently serves with Chosen People Ministries as a Vice President. His wife, Julia, is the Office Manager of Chosen People Ministries’ International Headquarters.



PEACE IN THE MIDST OF CONFLICT

Racheli Being an Israeli citizen and also a believer in Messiah means that I have peace in everything I do and experience, because I know that God knows the outcome. Therefore, I know that He knows all my capabilities and that He won’t allow me to go through anything I am unable to handle.

I have peace because I know that this is where I and my family are called to be. I want to continue ministering to teenage girls who have been abused, and working with women who have troubled pregnancies and with seekers who are open to the Gospel.

I know that God loves the Arabs. I have no hatred toward them personally, but I also think that those who are seeking our destruction are not in agreement with God’s will.

Although we are in conflict, I have peace because I know that God protects us where we are. This may sound strange to you, but as an Israeli I actually feel safer here than I would in other countries. 🌈

This testimony was given on December 30, at a time when Hamas missiles were falling only twenty miles from Racheli and Brian’s home near Netanya.



Racheli S. lives near Netanya with her husband, Brian, and their three children.

Shirley Peace was not something that I ever really hoped for while I was growing up in Israel. I got used to hearing about all the violence and the bombings and came to expect these things. It was not surprising to hear of terrorist acts, and I became callous to them. My family also is very conservative, and never believed that there could be peace between the Jews and the Arabs.

I became a believer after I came to America, and then I began to see things from a biblical perspective. I know now that all the world events play a part in fulfilling the biblical prophecies, and the things I hear about on the news all fit together to bring about that which God has ordained. I still view the potential for peace in Israel much the same as when I lived there. However, the main difference is that I now know that one day there will be peace in Israel, but only when Yeshua (Jesus) returns. That is something for which to be hopeful. 🌈

SEE THE BIBLE THROUGH JEWISH EYES

BY DANIEL GOLDBERG, TH.D., D.D.



Dr. Goldberg serves as International Ministries Representative for Chosen People Ministries and lives in Pineville, North Carolina with his wife, Madeline.

THE KING'S DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAM

Matthew 10

Discipleship was already a well-established practice in Jesus' day. Not only did King Jesus have disciples, but His famous contemporaries such as Hillel and Shammai, to whose schools the New Testament alludes (Mk. 10:2-12), also had theirs. The great Apostle Paul sat at the feet of Gamaliel, another notable teacher of Israel (Acts 22:3).

Discipleship of the Apostles – The Gospel to the Jew First Matthew 10:1-15

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus chose twelve apostles (*apostolos*, meaning “messengers”). The men whom Jesus chose had little formal education or position—yet no other group this size ever made so great an impact upon the world.

The original apostles of Jesus had two specific qualifications. The first was to have had fellowship with Jesus, the Teacher, while He was on the earth. The second was to have been a personal witness of Messiah's bodily resurrection from the dead (Acts 1:21, 22).

The King chose and commissioned His “cabinet” to go to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Mt. 10:6) and declare that “the kingdom of heaven is at

hand” (Mt. 10:7). These twelve received special power and authority to perform miracles, thus certifying their apostolic credentials.

Before Messiah's departure, the King's “great commission” was expanded to include the Gentile world (Mt. 28:18-20). Some thirty years later, Paul reminded the Roman Gentile believers of the priority of preaching the Gospel “to the Jew first” (Rom. 1:16).

Discipleship After the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit Matthew 10:16-23; Acts 1:4-8

The King forewarned of the future persecution of those who circulate the “good news” (Mt. 10:16-19). He declared that religious, secular and family pressure would be brought against believers (Mt. 10:17-23). Therefore, dependence upon the Holy Spirit would be essential. Jesus declared that “it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak, for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you” (Mt. 10:19-20).

The Rewards of Discipleship Matthew 10:24-31

There is indeed a cost of discipleship, as the Scripture points out. But there are also great rewards

that far outweigh our “light affliction” (2 Cor. 4:17).

Comfort in Earthly Conflict – Three times our Lord exhorts His disciples, saying, “Do not fear” (Mt. 10:26, 28-31). In Mt. 10:26, we are told not to fear our persecutors; neither Satan (v.25), nor unbelievers whose evil deeds will be uncovered.

In Matthew 10:28, disciples are told not to fear death because it only involves the body, but not the self or soul. We are not to fear because God who redeemed us values His redeemed ones far above His entire creation (Mt. 10:31).

Confession Before Heaven's Hosts – Those who confess belief in Jesus the King-Messiah before men will be honored by Him in the presence of the Father and before all the inhabitants of the universe (Mt. 10:32-36).

Compensation Throughout Time and Eternity – Discipleship involves discovering the true value of dedication to serving the King. It is the discovery of a new life (Mt. 10:39; 2 Cor. 5:17). Eternal rewards will be given for even a “cup of cold water” (or a hot cup of coffee!). All believers will appear before the bema (judgment seat) of the King to be compensated (1 Cor. 3:14). 🌈

NEWS BRIEFS

FAITH DECISION IN TEL AVIV

Last month something special happened in Tel Aviv, Israel. Zoya, the elderly Jewish mother of Chosen People Ministries staff member Neriya A., had a major stroke. After much prayer, Henry and Darlene M. sensed that they should talk with Zoya about her need for Jesus.

As Darlene stayed in Jerusalem praying, Henry went to visit Zoya in the hospital. The Holy Spirit was present in the room and touched her heart. After the Gospel was presented, and through much intercessory prayer, Zoya made a faith decision to receive Jesus, the Son of God, as her Savior.

It was in May 2007 that Zoya's husband also came to know Jesus the Messiah as Lord. We thank God for His mercy as one salvation at a time has come upon this family!

A NEW SISTER IN MESSIAH

Carole B. has a heart for reaching elderly Jewish people in South Florida with the message of Messiah. Recently, Carole had the opportunity to share the Gospel with a woman named Joan,* who was very interested and asked several questions. When Carole asked if she would like to accept Jesus as her Savior and Lord, Joan said yes, and asked Jesus to come into her life.

The next day, Carole and Joan went to the Christian bookstore to buy a Bible, and they spent over an hour exploring the Scriptures together. Joan bought a Bible and has been reading it faithfully.

Carole writes, "Please keep Joan in your prayers and please pray for me that the Lord will give me His wisdom in sharing His Word."



REACHING YOUNG ADULTS IN NEW YORK CITY

Chosen People Ministries staff member Ryan K. has launched a new ministry called "Metro Moses Manhattan," aiming to build the 18- to 35-year-old Jewish believing community in New York City. The group meets weekly to study the Scriptures together, encourage each other and reach out to Jewish people in the same age group. There are hundreds of thousands of Jewish young adults living in New York

City who need to be reached with the Gospel of Jesus the Messiah—New York University alone has over 10,000 Jewish students! Please pray that the Lord would use this ministry powerfully in outreach and discipleship.

REACHING GERMANY WITH THE MESSAGE OF MESSIAH

Chosen People Ministries' work in Germany, led by Vladimir Pikman, is slowly changing. The Jewish population in Germany—more than 300,000 in number—is different than in the 1990s when our ministry there began. Immigration of Russian Jews is slowing, and the former immigrants are becoming integrated into German life. Thus, the Chosen People Ministries staff is finding new ways to reach the Jewish people of Germany. Strengthening of Messianic congregations and their testimony in German society, Messianic adult education, retreats for children, youth, and adults, concerts and special events, friendship evangelism and discipleship—all these are part of the regular activities of their staff in more than a dozen cities. Vladimir writes, "We have great expectations of God powerfully working through us!"



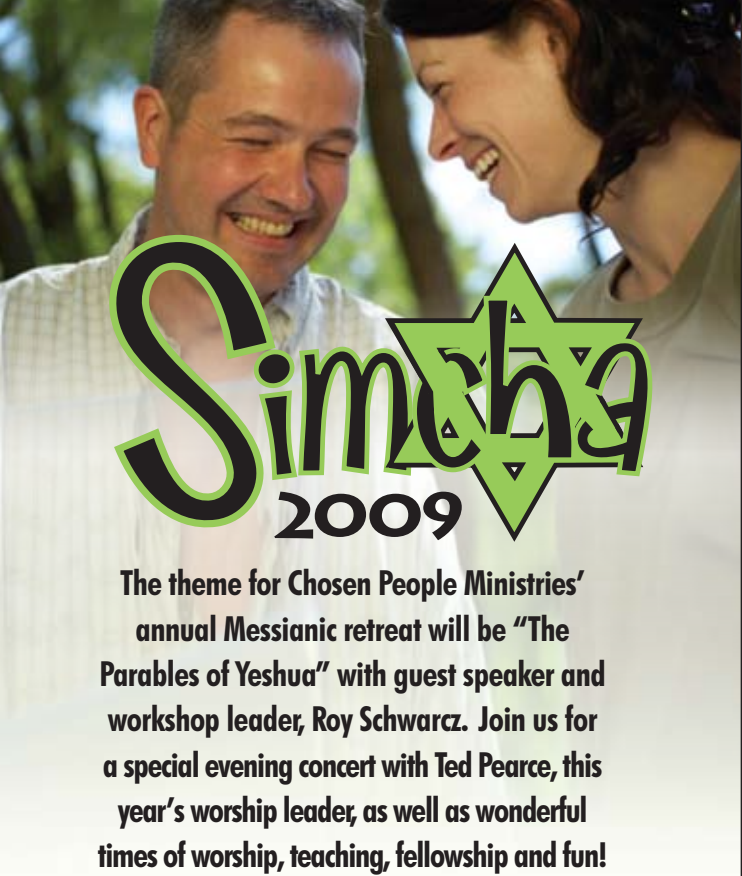
OUTREACH EXPANDS IN LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles-based staff member Michael Cohen and his wife Lisa partner with Messianic Congregation *Adat Yeshua* (assembly, or witness, of Jesus). They teach the children during services, and Lisa also teaches a monthly women's fellowship. Michael helps disciple new believers and often preaches when the pastor is out of town.

Two years ago, Michael was asked if he would be interested in praying at a nursing home. What began as a monthly outreach soon became a weekly ministry of prayer, evangelism and discipleship at two facilities.

Michael has been sharing with a Jewish woman named Ruth* who at first had refused any type of prayer or witness. However, over time, she has allowed Michael to pray and witness to her, and she is very close to receiving Messiah. Michael reports, "So far, we have prayed with over a dozen people to receive the Lord!"

*indicates name has been changed



Simcha 2009

The theme for Chosen People Ministries' annual Messianic retreat will be "The Parables of Yeshua" with guest speaker and workshop leader, Roy Schwarcz. Join us for a special evening concert with Ted Pearce, this year's worship leader, as well as wonderful times of worship, teaching, fellowship and fun!

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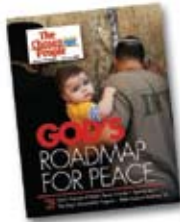


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Please remember Chosen People Ministries in your will. "I will bless those who bless you." (Genesis 12:3)



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