

The Chosen People



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SPECIAL ISRAEL PRAYER EDITION



**INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE:**

Where's the Peace? • Peace Is Possible with Prayer • Your
Wedding Invitation to the Marriage of the King's Son

Shalom in Messiah Jesus,

Shalom is the Hebrew term most often translated *peace*. It also means “hello” and even goodbye! Beyond its everyday use, *shalom* also conveys the timeless hopes of the Jewish people looking toward the day when Messiah comes and reigns on His throne. In that day, as Isaiah prophesied (2:4; 11:6), the wolf will lie down with the lamb, instruments of war will be transformed into instruments of farming and nations will live together in total harmony!

As believers in Jesus, it is wonderful to know that we have peace with God today (Romans 5:1) because the Prince of Peace dwells in our hearts! We also look forward to experiencing the glorious fullness of *His shalom* when He returns. Until then, we will live in an imperfect, sin-tainted world where we have the joy of serving as His ambassadors of the coming Kingdom.

We also understand that when we *pray for the peace of Jerusalem*, as David

described in Psalm 122:6, we are in fact praying for the Lord to bring His peace through the Messiah to the hearts of individuals as well as to cities and nations fractured by war and seemingly unsolvable conflicts.

The challenges to peace in Israel today are geo-politically complex but also spiritual in nature. The Bible predicts that Israel’s conflicts with her neighbors will continue and grow more intense until the Messiah returns. We will continue to hope, pray and work towards temporary solutions, as every single day without war is a mark of His presence and grace. **Yet true and lasting peace in the Middle East is ultimately impossible without the Messiah.**

So how should we *pray and work for the peace of Jerusalem* today—before He comes? Your mission to the Jewish people is bringing the message of peace and hope to the Middle East by bringing the Gospel to Israelis, and we see the Lord bringing peace to

individuals throughout the Land of Israel—day in and day out! Every Jewish person who comes to faith in Jesus today is a signpost of His mercy, evidence that He has not forgotten His chosen people (Romans 11:25-29) and that one day—in His time—He will return to fulfill the remaining promises in His Word.

Please allow me to share a few stories, which I hope will encourage you to continue praying for and believing that God can indeed bring peace to a troubled land. These are stories of individual Israelis who have found the only peace that will ever last—the “peace that passes all understanding” that the Gospel promises.

Henry N.—From Slavery in Addition to Freedom in Messiah’s Service

Henry N. was born in Moscow in 1961 to a well-known family of musical prodigies. His extraordinary prowess as a pianist seemed to promise a great career for young Henry. However, drug and alcohol addiction dogged his steps from his youth. He tried every avenue of help—from psychiatry to hypnotism—to free himself. For a time, suicide seemed the only way out. In 1991, Henry and his wife, Irena, decided to relocate to Israel. Henry continued to abuse alcohol while Irena worked two jobs to support them. Despite a change of scenery, the old patterns persisted.

One day while reading the newspaper, Henry and Irena noticed an announcement about a meeting being held by Jewish believers. Now desperate for any lifeline, Irena urged Henry to attend. For the next two months, they did not miss a single meeting at Chosen People Ministries’ Messianic congregation near Tel Aviv. Finally, in September of 1991, Henry received Jesus as his Messiah and was immediately healed of his alcoholism and drug addiction. Two months later, Irena also received the Messiah. Now Henry is the congregational leader of

Where’s the Peace?



Chosen People Ministries' work in the West Bank city of Ariel, where he works to bring the hope of the Gospel in one of our Mission's most stressful field assignments.

Henry and Irena's two children are both exceptional musicians. Their son has already won various awards and is viewed as one of the finest young pianists in Israel. What a marvelous testimony this young man—who is a committed believer—will have! In a sense, Henry's career as a pianist “bowed the knee” to a pastoral calling, but his son will now take up where his loving father left off. Pray for Henry and his family, who faithfully serve a population of Russian Jewish immigrants in a very dangerous community located near the heart of the hostilities in Israel.

Racheli S.—Born in Israel and Born in Messiah

Born and raised in the town of Bat Yam, just south of Tel Aviv, Racheli S. grew up in a traditional, religious Jewish home. Her parents had immigrated to Israel; her mother came from Canada and her father, a Holocaust survivor, came from Germany. Her testimony bears witness to the way the Lord is able to draw people from around the world to serve His sovereign purpose. While walking in her neighborhood with a girlfriend, she met a young man from Ghana who was studying at a local university. A friendship began, and through this young man, who was a believer, Racheli was drawn to visit a congregation where African foreign workers worshiped. Racheli enjoyed the worship, particularly the music, and the Lord began speaking to her through her African friend as well as through a young German woman who was also a student. Racheli became increasingly open to the Gospel. She was particularly impressed by the connection between Yeshua (Jesus) and the prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures, which helped her to



Left: Tel Aviv Messianic Center
Right: Brian and Racheli S., serving in Israel



see the Jewishness of the Gospel message. She received the Lord in 1990.

Several years later, she met Brian, who was originally from Los Angeles and had moved to Israel. They were married in 1997. Brian is currently the managing director of Chosen People Ministries' soup kitchens and related ministries in Netanya. Racheli serves as executive secretary for a Messianic retreat center in the Tel Aviv suburb of Petach Tikvah. They have three young children who are being raised as Israeli Messianic Jews! The family attends one of the wonderful Israeli Messianic congregations in the beautiful seaside town of Netanya.

Offering the Lord's Message to All Who Will Hear

I wish I could tell you that we have discovered the secret to solving the political problems in Israel. But this much I (and many other Jewish people) do know: Yeshua is the One who offers eternal *shalom*. It is through His death and resurrection that you and I—as well as Israelis and Arabs—have the opportunity to know God's peace in our hearts. The Good News is this: His peace is available now if we receive Him as our Lord and Messiah!

This is what your Mission to the Jewish people is all about. We are bringing the Good News of reconciliation with God to Jewish communities in Israel, Brooklyn, Los Angeles, Chicago, Berlin, and many other cities around the globe—one precious person at a time, heart to heart

and home to home. This has been our mission for 117 years and hopefully will continue until He comes!

I want to remind you of one theme that shines through both testimonies above: the theme of legacy! I cannot tell you how excited I am about this new generation of Jewish believers in Jesus—raised in godly Messianic homes—emerging as talented young people, committed to Jesus and to making a difference for the Lord in the days to come. I wish I could introduce you to all the children of our staff around the world and to their friends. We are witnessing an explosion of Messianic Jewish young people who are zealous for the Lord.

This is why I am so enthusiastic about our camping and internship programs, youth retreats, the Charles Feinberg Center for Messianic Jewish Studies and other leadership ministries sponsored by Chosen People Ministries. I believe we are entering a new day and I am expectant and hopeful that the Lord is going to use many young Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus to be His instruments of peace in a broken world.

Thank you for helping us bring His peace to the Jewish people!

Yours awaiting
Messiah's return,


Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser
President

Peace Is Possible with



As believers who love the Lord and His people, we are called to “pray for the peace of Jerusalem” in Psalm 122:6. But how can we pray more specifically for shalom (peace) in the Holy Land, a beautiful land that is loved by God, yet torn apart by conflict?

Knowing more about today’s Israeli and Palestinian leaders can help us pray more effectively for them. Please join us in praying for each of these men and women as they govern their people amidst the difficult political and social realities of today’s Middle East.

ISRAEL’S POLITICAL PARTIES

LIKUD PARTY



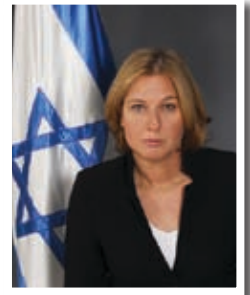
Benjamin Netanyahu

Benjamin Netanyahu is currently the Prime Minister of Israel for the second time; he also served from 1996 to 1999. Netanyahu has risked his life to defend his country: he fought in the Yom Kippur War (1973) as a combat soldier in an elite unit of the Israel Defense Forces. He was first elected Prime Minister in 1996 in response to the Intifada and its attacks on the civilian population. Netanyahu believes strongly in Israel’s right to the Golan Heights and Jerusalem, and will not negotiate with the Palestinians unless they recognize Israel as the homeland for the Jewish people. In 2010, he entered talks with the United States regarding a two-state solution, but reiterated his view that peace cannot be achieved because of the terrorist groups’ unrelenting attacks on Israel.

PRAYER REQUESTS: *Pray for Netanyahu to be a wise, humble leader and to know what is best for his country while under international pressure.*

KADIMA PARTY

Tzipi Livni, a lawyer by profession, leads the *Kadima* party in today’s Knesset. She has been active in politics for over fifteen years, holding positions in the Ministries of Justice, Foreign Affairs, and Agriculture. In contrast to Netanyahu, her party favors a two-state solution to the conflict in the Holy Land. Livni herself is a key leader in negotiations with Palestinians, and she is admired for her honesty and integrity.



Tzipi Livni

PRAYER REQUESTS: *Pray for Livni to seek God’s direction for Israel. Pray also for protection for herself, her husband and two children.*

YISRAEL BEITEINU PARTY



Avigdor Lieberman

Avigdor Lieberman’s family immigrated to Israel from Russia in 1978. He strongly believes in the idea of Israel as a Jewish state, which has sparked some controversy and friction with Israel’s large Arab population. Lieberman supports a two-state solution, but proposes trading away areas of Israel with large Arab

Prayer

populations in order to gain Jewish settlements in the West Bank, where he lives with his wife and three children. He is currently under investigation for his business dealings.

PRAYER REQUESTS: *Pray that Lieberman would learn to balance his strong convictions with diplomacy; that he would be a humble public servant; that he would be honest about his business and personal affairs.*



Eli Yishai

PRAYER REQUESTS: *Pray that Yishai would become increasingly open to defending the civil rights of secular citizens of Israel, and even of Messianic Jews.*

OVADIA YOSEF – SEPHARDIC RELIGIOUS LEADER

Ovadia Yosef was born in 1920 in Baghdad, Iraq and four years later, his family immigrated to Jerusalem in what was then the British Mandate of Palestine. He grew to love studying Torah and Talmud (Jewish rabbinic tradition), becoming one of the world's foremost scholars. He was elected the Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Israel in 1973 and remains highly respected among Orthodox Jews to this day. Yosef helps to govern Israel's religious identity and rules, and is zealous for strict obedience to *halakha* (the collective body of Jewish law). He has often been criticized for controversial statements about Arabs and secular Jews.



PRAYER REQUESTS: *Pray that the Lord would open Yosef's eyes to the truth found in the Hebrew Scriptures that the Messiah is Jesus!*



YONA METZGER – ASHKENAZI RELIGIOUS LEADER

Yona Metzger was born in Haifa in 1953, and in 2003 was appointed as Chief Ashkenazi Rabbi of Israel. Although this is a powerful position for Israel's European Jewry, it is not nearly as influential as that of the Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Israel, Ovadia Yosef. Metzger places a priority on building relationships with diverse groups of people; he is known for his interfaith dialogue

initiatives. He is an ardent Zionist and is very moderate in his approach to Jewish religious rules for the country.

PRAYER REQUESTS: *Pray that Metzger would be a conscientious and effective leader, and that he would come to know Jesus the Messiah, so he can use his influence for the Lord.*

ISRAEL'S TERRORIST NEIGHBORS

The Palestinian people themselves are not enemies to the State of Israel. There are many friendly Arab-Israeli villages scattered throughout the Holy Land, where members of both peoples live, work and study together in harmony. There are also three influential Arab Israeli parties working alongside the Jewish members of the government. Israel's true enemies are Hezbollah, Hamas and Fatah—the three major terrorist organizations that, sadly, seek Israel's destruction.

Hamas, led by Ismail Haniya, won a decisive majority in the 2006 elections in the Palestinian government. Hamas' military wing has been the source of much violence against Israel, including suicide bombings and rocket attacks. The organization's charter calls for replacing all of Israel with an Islamic Palestinian state.



Before Hamas gained control, **Fatah** was the governing body. Although not currently active in terrorist movements, its charter calls for the complete liberation of Palestine and the eradication of Zionist existence. Its founder was the late Yasser Arafat (1929–2004). In the 2005 elections, Fatah endorsed Mahmoud Abbas, the current President of the Palestinian National Authority. Abbas has called for peace and engaged in talks with Israel, but violence and terrorist attacks have continued during the period of his presidency.



Hezbollah, led by Hassan Nasrallah, is a heavily-armed organization in south Lebanon that is supported by Iran, Syria and Saudi Arabia, among other nations. In 2006, Hezbollah initiated a thirty-four-day barrage of Katyusha rockets on Israeli civilian towns, causing much heartbreak on both sides as Israel entered the war to defend herself. Recently, Hezbollah has been instrumental in collapsing the government of Lebanon.



PRAYER REQUESTS: *Pray that the Lord would bring into power Palestinian leaders who recognize the State of Israel and who are willing to take drastic measures to stop terrorism. Pray also for the Gospel to be shared among the Palestinian people, and that many would put their faith in the one true God and His Messiah, Jesus. 🇺🇸*

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.

YOUR WEDDING INVITATION TO THE MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S SON

Jesus related two parables about marriage and its likeness to the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew's Gospel (Mt. 22:1-14; 25:1-13). Each of them is addressed to its own set of invitees.

In the first wedding parable in Matthew 22, an invitation is actually extended by the Father/King to two separate groups of people. In Jewish history and custom, the father of a family played a prominent role in arranging the wedding for his family members.

Matthew 22: Two Invitations in One

The first invitation was presented to the nation of Israel. When Jesus, the Son of God, first appeared on earth, "He came to His own [people]..." (Jn.1:11). Jesus first instructed His disciples as follows: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles... But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel... saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand'" (Mt. 10:5-7).

Comparing Matthew 22:1-14 with Revelation 19:7-9 helps us to understand that God the Father is making grand preparations for the coming

wedding of His only begotten Son. The wedding invitation in that chapter declares, "Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb..." (Rev. 19:9).

The refusal of Israel nationally to accept the invitation to the wedding supper is amplified in the parable that Jesus told along with its terrible consequences, namely, the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 (Mt. 22:4-7).

The second invitation was broader in scope: "Therefore go into the highways and as many as you find, invite to the wedding" (Mt. 22:9). It corresponds with the Great Commission where Jesus stated, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations..." (Mt. 28:19).

This second invitation is stated in the last words of Jesus recorded in Acts 1:8, "you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem...and to the end of the earth..." Here the wedding invitation is extended to both Jew and Gentile throughout the ages.

Thus the parable (Mt. 22:1-14) contains two gracious wedding invitations of the great King—the first to national Israel and the second to individual Jewish and Gentile persons scattered throughout the nations. All who

submit to the King's authority and believe His Word are invited to the great wedding supper to come.

Matthew 25: Another Invitation—and a Warning

In Jewish tradition, a bridegroom would first travel to his bride's house and afterward conduct her to his home for a marriage supper. On the way, they would be joined by various guests, who would all attend the wedding feast.

Jesus, the bridegroom, has promised to return from heaven to take His bride (the true Church) to be with Him (Jn. 14:3, 1 Thess. 4:16, 17). The warning to believers is to be watchful and prepared for the return of Jesus at any moment (Mt. 25:13). Preparation in the parable is depicted by the "wise virgins" who had enough "oil in their lamps" (or perhaps in today's terms, "gas in their tanks") for the journey.

All genuine believers are part of the Bride of Christ (Rev. 21:2,9) and will receive a special reward for preparedness in anticipation of the return of Christ, the Bridegroom (2 Tim. 4:8).

Will you be present at the marriage supper of the Lamb? 🍷

NEWS BRIEFS



ACT OF KINDNESS SPARKS CURIOSITY

We recently moved our Feinberg Center library into a temporary storage facility until the Brooklyn building is completed. Bob Seemar, who is in charge of the renovation, befriended Seth,* a young Jewish man from the moving company who was curious about the books and the seminary. Bob gave him his card and recommended that he read *Isaiah 53 Explained*. After many hours of work, the moving truck had a flat tire and Seth had to wait for the tow truck for over an hour. Bob decided to stay with him until the tow truck arrived—at 12:30 AM! Seth repeatedly and gratefully thanked Bob for staying, and Bob told him to call if he had any further questions about Yeshua. Pray that this kindness shown to Seth will translate into a hunger for the Messiah!



OPEN DOORS LEAD TO OPEN HEARTS

Neriyah and Anna A. hosted a get-together for a hundred elderly people who live near our Tel Aviv Messianic Center. The management of the hostel where these precious people live was impressed that we opened the doors of our center for free—the previous owners of the facility had never offered the use of their property for others. The get-together was a wonderful time, and Neriyah shared his testimony. Neriyah writes, “We praise God that we have this property; through this facility we can bless others, and the biggest blessing of all is the message of our Lord Yeshua (Jesus).”

*names have been changed

WITNESSING THROUGH A NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION

Jon Lieberman recently called the offices of Indiana’s only Jewish newspaper to get a subscription. Later that same day the owner’s daughter and editor of the paper, Janet,* showed up at Jon’s home with a copy—ten minutes after a Jewish believing friend of Jon’s had just “happened” to stop by. Jon reports, “We had quite an interesting conversation when she learned we were Messianic Jews. Janet asked some tough questions, and I explained why the Messiah had to die and that He was Yeshua.” Jon gave Janet a copy of our evangelistic book *Isaiah 53 Explained* and asked her to review it for the newspaper.

INFLUENTIAL JEWISH WOMAN INTERESTED IN JESUS

Ricardo Chemi, director of our work in Argentina, has been meeting with Carmen,* a Jewish woman who is an executive of a well-known medical institution in the country. Their first conversation lasted for more than an hour as Ricardo told her about our ministry and our faith in Jesus as the Messiah of Israel and Redeemer of all humanity. Carmen requested some literature and has now met with Ricardo four times, continuing to ask questions about Jesus. Ricardo asks for prayer for her salvation: “It will be a great blessing if she comes to faith, since most programs in her field of medicine have some kind of spiritual support aspect—and she will be able to influence many other people who need Messiah in their lives.”

LOST IN THE SUBWAY, FOUND BY THE LORD

Doug P. thanks God for those spur-of-the-moment witnessing encounters that are actually “divine appointments.” While riding the subway, he saw a young Hasidic Jewish man puzzling over a subway map and asked if he could help. Looking a little embarrassed, the man said that he had been in the U.S. for just two weeks and didn’t speak English, only Hebrew. Doug remarks, “He seemed so happy to meet someone who spoke Hebrew! I presented him a copy of my book, *What the Rabbonim [Rabbis] Say About Moshiach [Messiah]*, and stepped off the train thrilled that the first encounter this man had in America resulted in him receiving evangelistic literature to read and contemplate!”

May 27-30, 2011

Simcha 2011

Plan to join us May 27-30 at Chosen People Ministries' annual retreat in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Our theme this year will be **LIVING FOR YESHUA IN THE LION'S DEN**, with Dr. Rich Freeman as our speaker. You'll enjoy fun, fellowship, Messiah-centered teaching and lively worship with Neal Surasky. There will be programs for all age groups—plus recreational opportunities and family activities. Call 212-223-2252 for registration information, or visit us online at chosenpeople.com/simcha.



Messianic Resources to Impact Your World

This Haggadah has been prepared to show God's redemptive grace in the Passover through the death, burial and resurrection of His Messiah, Jesus, and to symbolize God's spiritual redemption of His people. Purchase a copy now and celebrate Passover in your own home this year.



[3008] **Messianic Passover Haggadah** • \$6.95^{US}

Do you have Jewish friends who have questions about the meaning of life and spirituality? Maybe it is time for them to go right to the source and rethink their relationship with the Creator. *Isaiah 53 Explained* will help kick-start your friends' personal pilgrimage and introduce them to a chapter in the Scriptures that has the potential to revolutionize their lives!



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For phone orders in the U.S. call 1-800-333-4936. Or for even more resources, visit us online at www.chosenpeople.com/store.

Write to us and share your story of why you support Jewish missions!

Why I support Jewish Missions

Growing up, long before I became a believer, I had a number of Jewish friends and I have continued to have personal friendships with Jewish people. But now, as a follower of Jesus, I am keenly aware of the great difference that fellowship in Christ makes. I want to reach my Jewish friends with the Gospel and I want to help Chosen People Ministries to do more. Supporting Chosen People Ministries is something I can do to make a difference for the Kingdom.

**For more information on ways you can be involved in giving, please contact us today.
Call 1-888-293-7482 (or in Canada 1-888-442-5535)
or email us at giving@chosenpeople.com.**



LEIGH & MIM GERSTENBERGER



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