

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE



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SHORT TERM MINISTRIES IN NEW ZEALAND, BROOKLYN, ISRAEL & AROUND THE GLOBE!

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dr. Mitch Glaser
President, Chosen People Ministries

REACHING ISRAELIS IN NEW ZEALAND

Thousands of Israelis
travel to New Zealand
each year where our
staff reaches them for
the Lord!



Dear friend in the Messiah,

Shalom in the glorious name of Jesus our Messiah! This newsletter will highlight our various short-term outreach ministries around the globe where we give volunteers and staff the opportunity to reach Jewish people.

In fact, I am writing to you from the South Island of New Zealand where we have tremendous opportunities to reach young Israelis for the Lord!

This morning I had an unforgettable experience as I walked outside my hotel room very early and came face to face with stars and constellations (in reverse configuration!). All I wanted to do was shout *Hallelujah!*, but it was too early so I restrained myself. I had what I can only describe as a “King David moment” as all I could think of was the Psalmist’s description of what he saw in the night sky above Israel reflected in Psalm 8.

David declared,

*O Lord, our Lord,
How majestic is Your
name in all the earth,
who have displayed Your
splendor above the heavens!* (Psalm 8:1)

And, dear friend, all you have to do is to take one look at the pristine array of stars filling the night sky rising high above the mountains of the South Island in New Zealand and you would want to do the same!

King David continues to describe what he saw,

*When I consider
Your heavens, the work
of Your fingers, the moon
and the stars, which You*

*have ordained; what is man that You take thought
of him, and the son of man that You care for him?*
(Psalm 8:3-4)

I told one of my travel partners as we passed stunningly beautiful mountains and snow-covered cliffs rising above chilly blue rivers, glacial lakes and fast churning rapids, that I have never felt this small since the day I accepted the Lord Jesus as my Messiah standing among the immense and towering trees of Northern California’s Redwood Forest.

The chairman of our New Zealand Board of Directors, who has a great heart for Israel and the Jewish people, told our little group that the reasons he wanted us to participate in this tour was so that we fully understand why Israeli young people, after completing their two or three years of service in the IDF, choose to travel to New Zealand, which is an expensive trip for every Israeli.

The natural beauty and the testimony of God’s glory in nature is so compelling that even the most secular young Israeli is easily overwhelmed by the very power and untamed beauty of the South Island. And many have had their eyes and hearts opened to the existence of a God who created the heavens and the earth and who is also gracious and merciful and wants us all to experience a personal relationship with Him through Jesus the Messiah.

The ministry in New Zealand has grown quickly over the last few years because there are literally hundreds of Christians living in this country who have opened their hearts and homes to traveling Israelis, inviting them to stay and enjoy the beauty of the island. These wonderful believers are also able to tell the travelers about Jesus by showing them His love and concern for them through their generosity and, when asked, to share the Good News of Messiah and pass along Gospel books in Hebrew, including the New Testament.

I asked our chairman, Chris, and his wife Margaret, who are farmers by trade, how they developed this ministry among young Israelis, what it has meant to them personally, and what kind of impact they and others have had on the Israeli backpackers.

MITCH: *Tell me how you started your ministry of hospitality among Israeli backpackers and describe for me how you went about serving these young people?*

CHRIS: *About eight or nine years ago, we had been to Bible school after farming for decades, and during school we had a home group where we taught the Jewish background to the faith. As a result, we became interested in the Hebrew roots of our faith. We took a trip to Israel and were encouraged to try hosting young Israelis traveling through New Zealand.*

We have a nice home with a beautiful view and any visitor who comes up our driveway sees the sign saying “Engedi—Place of Refreshing.” They then see a cross with the words FORGIVEN written on it and as they turn to see the view there are New Zealand and Israeli flags flying. We provide an out-of-the-ordinary experience. The Israelis wonder why we offer our home to them without charge. Our guests come into our home and we hug them instead of shaking their hands to immediately make them feel like family. This breaks down any barriers.

We do not bring up Jesus or religion but wait for them to ask. Their curiosity is so great they cannot help but ask. The rest of their time with us is spent relaxing, picking vegetables from our garden and when possible, we speak to them about the Lord...most importantly, they leave our home knowing that true Christians love them and love the Jewish people.

MITCH: *Can you tell me what the young Israelis are like and what types of conversations you have with them?*

CHRIS: *The young Israelis are polite and considerate and because we treat them with trust, they return the favor and we have never had a problem with any type of bad behavior. They are very respectful.*

We talk to them about the history of Israel from a biblical perspective, and sometimes, if they allow me...I speak to them about the “crimson line of redemption” in Scripture from the blood of Abraham’s sacrifices to the cross. They prefer to not talk about politics, but enjoy their break from the stress of living in Israel, preferring to discuss the geography of New Zealand.

MITCH: *How has this ministry impacted you and your other Christian friends who have been opening their farms, homes, and lives to the travelers?*

CHRIS: *Our whole perspective of the Bible has changed from looking at it from a Western perspective to recognizing the Hebraic culture and roots of our faith. This alone has changed our lives profoundly. We also began a group dedicated to praying for Israel, which has grown from six to thirty people and is still growing. These friends are committed to the Jewish people and Jewish evangelism. This has also led to my serving on the Board of Chosen People Ministries in New Zealand and we both enjoy the fellowship of our Messianic Jewish friends and the ministry God has given us in reaching young Israelis for Him.*

I am so grateful for Chris and Margaret and the other believers across the great country of New Zealand who open their homes to Israeli backpackers. Chosen People Ministries is able to stay connected with many of these young people in Israel as well.

Some of the young Israelis who are already believers have come to New Zealand to volunteer at Zula Lodge—the very comfortable 50-bed youth hostel our staff in New Zealand purchased this past year. We provide free housing for the travelers and extend the same love and grace to the

backpackers as people like Chris and Margaret have done for years. We never push the Gospel on anyone, but simply make ourselves available for conversations, practical help and advice, and of course giving them some good ideas on how to get the most out of the beauty of the South Island.



Zula Lodge enables many Israelis to live in a believing environment for a few days without cost. In fact more than a thousand backpackers stay at the lodge over the course of the summer season. One of the great events during the week is the corporate Sabbath dinner. Sometimes 50-60 Israelis gather together to eat and celebrate the Sabbath. The young Israelis often help cook the meal and help lead the service as well. These evenings last well into the night as conversations about life, travel, and the Gospel happen so naturally between the travelers and staff.

Most importantly, the relationships that are built continue past the visits in New Zealand, back to Israel when the travelers return home. Our Israel staff is following up on the travelers we meet in New Zealand and other spots where we have short-term outreach among Israelis.

As you continue reading in the newsletter you will find out more about some of our other short-term mission opportunities—including *Shalom Brooklyn*—a two week journey into the heart of Orthodox Jewish Brooklyn—with some experiences in Manhattan and other parts of New York City as well. These are also wonderful opportunities where both young and old who love the Lord and the Jewish people can experience the very heartbeat of Jewish life in Brooklyn and speak to Jewish people about the Messiah Jesus.

We also do the same in Israel where we have *two trips every summer* for younger people to the Holy Land where we reach out with the Good News of Yeshua to Israelis in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and across the country of Israel.

I can promise you one thing—if you participate in a short-term outreach, whether it be in New Zealand, India, South America, Brooklyn, or Israel—your life will be transformed!

On behalf of our global staff, thank you for your faithful financial support, prayers, encouraging notes, and for your loving testimony among the Jewish people right where you live! We never underestimate the value of all you do in your everyday relationships with Jewish friends, family, and neighbors.

Thanks so much for all you do to help us tell our beloved Jewish people about the Messiah.

Your brother,


Mitch

HOW SHORT-TERM MINISTRY WORK IMPACTS JEWISH MINISTRY IN BROOKLYN ALL YEAR

BY ROBERT WALTER

The author of Ecclesiastes surmised that, *“There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven”* (Ecclesiastes 3:1). Over the past two years, we have come to realize that ministry in the Feinberg Messianic Center in Brooklyn has a certain ebb and flow to it. There is a time and season for each kind of outreach here! One of those special times is during the summer months when we host both our internship program as well as our two-week mission trip, Shalom Brooklyn. With an injection of zeal, passion, and manpower, we are able to maximize the potential of these programs and make a concerted push to reach the Jewish community. The results of these summer efforts are often felt throughout our ministry during the rest of the year.

One example of this ongoing impact came out of our internship program. Since we host interns for up to two months, we like to assign them a special project to work on and launch during the summer. Last summer, after much prayer and planning, they were able to come up with a concert/coffeehouse ministry to reach Jewish young people. These interns transformed the first floor of the Feinberg Center into a relaxed atmosphere, with live music by different local musicians, and an assortment of artisanal coffees and teas. The response was great and we have since taken this ministry and incorporated it into our long-term plans to reach Jewish college students with the Gospel.

Similarly, even though it only lasts for two weeks, Shalom Brooklyn produces results that are often felt throughout the year. With nearly 50 people volunteering each week, our teams are able to spread out across Brooklyn and Manhattan to meet and engage with Jewish people. The Lord consistently makes connections, and our teams are able to start many conversations with Jewish people about Jesus. By the time Shalom Brooklyn ends, we often have nearly 100 new Jewish contacts for our staff to follow up with who are interested in continuing those conversations about Jesus.

I am reminded of a recent testimony from Shalom Brooklyn. A young Jewish man, seeking spiritual truth in Buddhism and eastern mysticism, met one of our volunteers who told him about the Jewish Messiah, Jesus. They had

a great discussion on the street and he shared his phone number to continue the conversation. One of our local Brooklyn staff called him up a week later. They connected, had coffee, discussed the Scripture, and he prayed to receive the Lord! This blossomed into a lasting discipleship relationship that continues to this day. One year later during the next Shalom Brooklyn, he was baptized in the ocean waters off of Coney Island, surrounded by our next team of volunteers!

If you have a heart for the Jewish people, we encourage you to come be a part of this exciting ministry event this summer!

5 REASONS TO BE A PART OF SHALOM BROOKLYN

From July 22 to August 5, 2017 believers from all around the world will gather in Brooklyn, New York to bring the message of God’s peace to the Jewish people of the greater New York City area. Here are five reasons to come be a part of this exciting outreach – Shalom Brooklyn!



It Is Biblical: Paul writes in Romans 1:16 that the Gospel is meant to go “to the Jew first.” God loves the nations, but biblically, Jewish evangelism always comes first.



It Is Strategic: Many Jews are part of unreached people groups. Reaching the unreached Jews of New York City will stretch and grow you in ways you never imagined.



It Is Respectful: Paul makes it clear that the Gentiles owe a debt of gratitude to the Jewish people (Romans 15:27). What greater gift could there be than to bring the precious Gospel of grace to them in a way they can understand and receive?



It Is Guaranteed: Paul says, “there is a remnant (of Israel) chosen by grace” (Romans 11:5). God has His people among the Jews of New York. This gives us great confidence to preach the Word boldly!



It Is Transformational: Shalom Brooklyn will change your life! You will team up with other like-hearted ministers of the Gospel, forming “a band of brothers and sisters.” This experience will not only prove to be the glue of lifetime friendships, but will also make our time together a delight.

And it may just be the adventure God prepared in advance for you to do. (Ephesians 2:10) But the best reason to participate in Shalom Brooklyn is the call of God. Let us know if you hear it!

events.chosenpeople.com

ISRAEL: THE EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

BY JUSTIN KRON

For nearly 20 years I have had the privilege of leading young adults on a two-week pilgrimage of faith and service to the homeland of Jesus. We call it eXperience Israel. The big X symbolizes that Israel is at the crossroads of ancient, modern, and prophetic history. This program is one of our short-term ministry trips, and we have discovered that they can be a life-transforming experience!

Just recently we received this message from Hannah, one of our past participants,

I can't believe it's been over 10 years since my trip. I count it as a significant turning point in my life. Forever changed.

Pinpointing where these turning points occur for participants on the trip is different for each of them. It can happen during one of our many on-site Bible lessons, our ministry service projects, conversations with locals or other group members, or in a quiet moment alone where they can feel God speaking to their heart. For many it happens when they engage with God's Word near a particular site where a biblical event took place (or will take place) and they see the dots connect in a new way. Engaging in biblical geography has a profound way of illuminating biblical theology.

Take Megiddo, for example. Many people who read the Bible—even the most dedicated ones—are not very familiar with the ancient city of Megiddo, but they have heard of Armageddon, which is Hebrew for “Hill of Megiddo.” History tells us that this was one of the most fought over “hills” in the ancient world because of its strategic location at the intersection of two major trade routes. In the words of Pharaoh Thutmose III (15th century BC), “The capture of Megiddo is the capture of a thousand cities.”

This is also where the book of Revelation tells us that “[the kings] will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers” (Revelation 17:14).

I always enjoy taking my groups to Megiddo and challenging them to consider what it means to be “his called, chosen and faithful followers.” I also like to point out that Jesus grew up just eleven miles away, within eyesight of Megiddo in the village of Nazareth; the place that Nathanael questioned, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46).

For those of us who know and trust Jesus, we answer that question with a resounding “yes!” But for those who don't, we must never forget that there is an epic battle that is raging for their hearts and minds, and it is us, His faithful followers, who have the responsibility to leverage our “Megiddos”—the strategic resources in our lives—to point people to the only redeeming Lord and wise King who has the power to redeem and restore.

That is the lesson of Megiddo, and it is just one of many on our trips, and why we invite you or someone you know to join us. It just might turn out to be a “turning point” that will have ripple effects for generations to come.



IS IT SAFE TO TRAVEL TO ISRAEL?

Many people have dreams of coming to Israel on an organized tour or a vacation but wonder if it is safe. Perhaps friends and family get extremely worried, referring to a news report they recently saw on television, or a story they heard from a friend. It is natural to have concerns; however, the Land of the Bible awaits everyone to discover it.

It is truly inspiring to walk where Jesus walked, and doing so will make the Scriptures come alive! If you are coming on an organized tour, the organization, tour guide and the bus driver are all experienced Israelis who are well connected with the current news and will immediately be called if there is a security situation and take immediate action. The tour guide and bus driver will not bring you to dangerous places. The tourist sites outside Jerusalem tend to be quieter and mainly far away from busy city centers.

If you are coming on your own to Israel, chances are that you are not truly alone. You will have friends or family in Israel who will guide you. If you listen to their advice, you will be fine.

Eight million people live in Israel, many with children. The children are growing up happy and healthy in their schools and playing outside with their friends. If these families can live freely, so can you as you come to experience Israel for a few days or weeks. When you come and see the beauty, experience the rich history of the Bible, and make local friends, you will leave with some amazing stories!

eXperience Israel
Outreach Israel

Hebrews 6:4-8

A Warning Against Apostasy



Dr. Rich Freeman, D. Min. serves as the Vice President for Church Ministries and Conferences with Chosen People Ministries and lives in South Florida with his wife, Julia. Dr. Freeman works with churches throughout the country and abroad, helping to equip God's people to share the Gospel with their Jewish neighbors, friends and co-workers and grow in their understanding of the Scriptures.

Last month we looked at a call for maturity from the writer of Hebrews to a group of Jewish believers struggling in their faith. He exhorts them to “press on to maturity,” reminding them that it is indeed God’s will for them to continue to mature in their walk with Messiah Jesus. Then in Hebrews 6:4-6, he shifts from the exhortation to a warning of the consequences of a failure to mature. This portion of Hebrews is one of the most controversial passages in the Scriptures. There are a number of interpretations to this passage. I would like to look at the two main interpretations and then share with you what I believe this passage is about.

In the first interpretation, it is believed that these are merely *professing* (but not real) believers. It is thought that their description in verses 4 and 5 confirms that they were in contact with believers, and that they enjoyed fellowship with believers, but they were not actually saved. However, the context of the passage would dispute this interpretation. The writer of Hebrews had exhorted them to maturity in their faith in Messiah, and included himself with them when he stated in verse 3, “...and this (*press on to maturity*) we will do, if God permits.”

This brings us to the second main interpretation. It is believed that this passage is speaking about people who were truly saved, but have fallen away and lost their salvation. However, if that were the case, then the believers in this passage would not only lose their salvation they also could never get saved again. Peter writes in 2 Peter 3:9, “*The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*”

So, what is this passage is speaking about? Again, remember the context. Jewish believers were waver-

ing in their faith, because of persecution from secular society and pressure from their own families and traditional Jewish teaching. The writer of Hebrews was trying to intervene on their behalf. His warning to them was that they would face dire consequences if they went back to the Judaism that rejected Jesus as Messiah. They would lose the blessings and privileges promised to those who walk by faith. This is already alluded to in Hebrews 3 and 4. Additionally, if they chose to return to the Judaism of their day, this choice would be irrevocable and result in their remaining in a permanent state of spiritual immaturity.

What the writer of Hebrews had in mind, I believe, was similar to the situation of Israel in the wilderness in Kadesh Barnea, in Numbers 14, following the Exodus. Just as that redeemed generation which left Egypt lost the blessings of entering into the promised land, and spent the next 40 years physically dying in the wilderness, so now, in the same way, this group of Jewish believers, by a definitive decision to return to the traditional Judaism of their day would permanently lose the blessings and

privileges promised to those who walk by faith and press on to maturity.

Verses 7 and 8 present an illustration to these believers of what the writer is describing. Fruitfulness results in God’s blessings and approval; on the other hand, the result of fruitlessness would be God’s disapproval and cursing. Yet, even in that cursing, I believe Hebrews 6:8 says there is still hope for these believers who are so close to being cursed. The thorns and thistles, which are burned, are a picture of the believers at the Judgment Seat of Christ whose fruitless works will be burned up, but the person is still saved (1 Corinthians 3:15).

Read Hebrews 6:4-8 NASB

⁴For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame. ⁷For ground that drinks the rain which often falls on it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; ⁸but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned.



BACKPACKER MINISTRY IN ARGENTINA

Our Messianic center in Buenos Aires has been recently renovated to accommodate Israeli backpackers and other ministries. Staff member David Sedaca shares about his recent trip there.

"We are excited to open our newly renovated Beth Sar Shalom Center in Buenos Aires. In recent years it had broken my heart to see the home where my parents lived for their last 20 years of ministry in such terrible shape. Now, after an incredible renovation project, this house on Billingham Street receives a steady stream of young Israeli travelers who are hungry to know truth! Our new missionary couple, José and Sylvia, are fluent in Hebrew and so good at loving the young Israelis and sharing the Gospel with them! A few weeks ago, I saw several Israeli backpackers celebrating Shabbat dinner in this house while listening to Jose's testimony in Hebrew—what an amazing blessing!"

GOD'S LOVE OVERCOMES PAST HATE

Our staff members Kirill and Elena S. recently traveled to Germany to visit churches and Messianic congregations. They were encouraged to witness German Christians supporting Israel and sharing the Gospel with Jewish people! During their travels they ministered to children of Nazis who suffered in

their spiritual lives and thought themselves unworthy to share the Gospel with Jewish people. After Kirill talked with them for a few hours, they finally understood that the Lord has cleansed them completely and that they are not responsible for the actions of the previous generation! They were as joyful as children! Kirill says, "I have never met believers that were as happy to be saved as these children of Nazis. Their happiness came from the understanding that they are worthy enough to proclaim the Good News to Jewish people. God's plan couldn't be more amazing. In the country in which, following the Holocaust, there weren't supposed to be any Jewish people, there exist more than 20 Messianic congregations where Jewish people believe in Jesus and the children of Nazis are happy that they can share the Gospel with Jewish people and support Israel. God is the victor! Hallelujah!"

ANOTHER SOUL ADDED TO THE KINGDOM!

Our faithful staff member, Cathy W., who serves in Arizona, shares this exciting story.

"An observant Jewish friend of mine, Sara*, came to faith in Jesus mid-December during our one-on-one Bible study! This dear woman came to the study exclaiming, 'We have no temple, we have no altar, we have no sacrifice for atonement. How are we forgiven?' On December 15th the blinders were removed! She continued to declare, 'It's all so clear that Jesus is the Promised Messiah, He is God, He is the ultimate sacrifice for sin.' After

praying and truly realizing what God had caused to occur in her heart, Sara said to me, 'I feel infused. I feel as if I have had a Shekinah experience!' I told her that was a most insightful comment and that Jesus now dwells in her heart. Sara proceeded to go through the list of people with whom she'll be sharing regarding her new life in Jesus – including her daughters, friends and her rabbis! And, she has already begun doing so! When we parted, she was BEAMING as she proclaimed, 'I'm a believer in Jesus!' Praise God!"



TEL AVIV MESSIANIC CENTER NOW OPEN

Jason and Janice Rose report from Tel Aviv that Chosen People Ministries' Ramat Gan Center is now up and running! Jason writes, "The reputation of the center is already starting to grow. The owner of the storefront explained to the other renters who we are and what we believe. This opened many doors for interesting conversations with our neighbors. We have already had many chats with the hairdressers and the owner who works at the beauty salon next door to us. We didn't even initiate the conversation, he started by asking us! The Holy Spirit is definitely at work!"

*names have been changed

STEWARD YOUR BLESSINGS

Share the Messiah through Chosen People Ministries

Include Chosen People Ministries in your will and you will be sharing Yeshua the Messiah with Jewish people around the world—even after you are called home to heaven.

A bequest is one of the most meaningful legacies you can provide for your family, friends, and Chosen People Ministries. By establishing a strategic Christian will, you will bless surviving family members and continue with your ministry priority of sharing the Messiah with Jewish people everywhere.

Evangelism. Discipleship. Congregation Planting. Benevolence Work.

Through a Christian Will that recognizes Chosen People Ministries, it all becomes your legacy: Glorifying God while proclaiming the Gospel to “the Jew first and also to the Gentile.”

You can also opt to support future leaders and missionaries to the Jewish people by naming The Charles L. Feinberg Center for Messianic Jewish Studies program in your will or bequest.

- This unique professional degree program is offered in conjunction with Talbot School of Theology, a graduate institution of Biola University.
- It is designed to train those with a call to full-time Jewish ministry as Messianic congregational leaders, outreach workers or educators.

Through your support, you will provide for your family, even after you have gone to be with the Lord—and leave a legacy of evangelism for God’s chosen people.

Experience the blessing of God as you bless Israel. Thank you for your faithfulness!

Please contact Dave Lee today at 212-223-2252 or dlee@chosenpeople.com for more information, or consult your lawyer to include a bequest in your will for Chosen People Ministries.

Passover “Do This in Remembrance of Me”

Messianic Passover Haggadah (#3008) / \$6.95**

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.

Matza Tash (#5026) / \$21.95**

The white Matza Tash is beautifully embroidered in Israel and is a vivid illustration of the unity of God’s nature.

Seder Plate (#5024) / \$26.95**

This silver Seder Plate is made in Israel and beautifully displays the Seder elements.

Kiddush Cup (#5025) / \$27.95**

This silver Kiddush Cup is about three inches tall.

COMPLETE SET - includes Haggadah, leader’s guide, matzo tash, plate and cup (#5027) / \$78.95**

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THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

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