

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

125 YEARS

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GOD'S STRATEGIC PLAN FOR HIS HOLY PURPOSES | SHALOM NEW YORK | HEBREWS BIBLE STUDY



God's Strategic Plan for His Holy Purposes



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear friend,
Happy Passover and Easter!

I love this time of year. As a Jewish believer in Jesus, my faith and love for my heritage converge in perfect harmony during the Passover/Easter season. At this time of year, we celebrate the coming of the perfect Lamb of God, which was predicted in the biblical passages that tell the story of Passover and in Isaiah chapter 53. He is the One who died for our sins, rose from the grave, and ascended to heaven—and now we wait patiently for His return!

Chosen People Ministries will have more Jewish people attend our Passover Seders and come to faith in Jesus during this season than at any other time of year. So please pray for us as we have Messianic Passover Seders in dozens of cities in North America and in sixteen other countries around the globe where we serve among the Jewish people.

Passover in the Bible

Passover is an eight-day festival that combines the one-day Feast of Passover with the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. As Moses

said to the children of Israel, *"In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the Lord's Passover. Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread"* (Leviticus 23:5–6).

Jewish people traditionally observe the holiday by celebrating a Passover Seder (Hebrew word for "order"), or dinner, on the first two nights of the holiday.

Growing up in a Jewish home in New York City, my family always attended the Seder led by my grandfather in Brooklyn. He was a very religious Jewish man, and I loved him dearly. He had fled eastern Europe before the First World War, as Jewish people were terribly persecuted, and came to the "Golden Land" of America where he hoped to live as a Jewish man without fear.

I am sorry to say he was not very happy when I became a believer in Jesus at nineteen years of age. No matter how many times I explained it and attended all of our traditional family holiday celebrations, my faith was still foreign to my beloved grandparents.

It is not easy being Jewish and believing in Jesus. I often feel like an outsider in my own family and community. But Passover is a great comfort and joy to me since it is evident that Yeshua fulfills the festival in so many glorious ways. The lamb of Exodus 12 points to Jesus. The lamb was killed and its blood shed so that the firstborn sons of the Israelites would be spared. Now, we understand that this points to the blood of the perfect Lamb that spares us from the consequences of our sin! As Paul, the great Jewish apostle wrote, *"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Romans 6:23). We have this great gift of salvation through His shed blood and atoning sacrifice.

Jesus was sinless and innocent. According to the prophet Isaiah, this perfect lamb would die an undeserving death and rise from the grave (Isaiah 53:10–12). This is the triumphant message of grace and redemption—for the **One who died now lives forever, and we will live forever with Him.**



Paul summarized forever the heart of the gospel message to the believers in Corinth when he wrote, "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

I know you might be reading quietly, but feel free to give a shout of Hallelujah! I just did!

My Spiritual Forefather: Rabbi Leopold Cohn

When I first came to faith, I thought I was the only Jewish person in the world who believed in Jesus, aside from my two best friends who were Jewish and led me to the Lord. After a few months, I met representatives of Chosen People Ministries (then called the American Board of Missions to the Jews) and they disciplined me.

For a long time, I did not know that Messianic Jews had a history beyond my own generation! It was then that I was introduced to the written testimony and legacy of Rabbi Leopold Cohn, the founder of the Mission I now have the privilege of leading.

Leopold Cohn was a Jewish immigrant from Hungary who came to faith in Jesus the Messiah in 1892. According to his story, while walking the streets of the Lower East Side of Manhattan on his way to visit his rabbi, he noticed a sign outside a Dutch Reformed church that piqued his curiosity. The sign welcomed Jewish people to a meeting inside the building. He listened from outside and was intrigued. Afterwards, he spoke with the fiery young Polish Jewish preacher who gave him a copy of the New Testament. Rabbi Cohn then came to faith and was immediately burdened with reaching his people. He began Chosen People Ministries in 1894.

God has sustained Chosen People Ministries. But the real story of the Mission is a story of God's grace, mercy, and faithfulness.

There is a story behind the story!

I believe that reaching Jewish people for Jesus is at the very heart of God's plan for the ages. He never rescinded the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12:1-3) in which He promised to create a people and grant this people a land. God promised He would one day have a vital personal relationship with His people and that the Jewish people would become His vehicle of blessing to the nations.

We must remember the events that are still to come, as one day God will turn the eyes of the Jewish people to Jesus the Messiah and then the Lord will return. This is the promise in Zechariah 12:10 and described in Romans 11:11-15. In that



day, I believe wholeheartedly that **our Chosen People Global Ministries family will joyfully be "out of work."**

I believe the reason God is faithful to our ministry is because the Jewish people are critical to His strategic plan for accomplishing His holy purposes. The glorious future promised to Israel will one day produce great blessings for the entire world (Genesis 12:3).

Our Future Is Settled... But, What About Today?

We believe what God said in the Bible will come to pass. Yet, we also have the joy of helping to make it happen! We are called to bring the good news of the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles. As Paul pens, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16).

This is the "life verse" of our ministry, and we will continue to proclaim His Word until He returns! I especially hope you will pray for our ministries in New York City, which still has more Jewish people than anywhere else in the world. This is why our international headquarters is in Manhattan, and we have more staff based in the greater New York area than anywhere else. Israel is a close second, of course.

This summer, we are hoping and praying to recruit 125 staff members and volunteers for two weeks of front line evangelism in New York City. It is not too late for you to come! All you need to do is indicate your interest on the enclosed card or visit www.shalomnyoutreach.com. We will get in touch with you and tell you how you can apply to join us!

Thank you for your love for the Jewish Messiah and His people. Your prayers and support mean so much to us. We could not do this work without you. I hope you enjoy this newsletter as you learn more about our work in New York City.

He is Risen!

Your brother,

Mitch

P.S. Please consider sending a \$125 gift of support to Chosen People Ministries this month in honor of our 125th anniversary. For your generous \$125 contribution or more, I would like to send you a beautiful medallion you can display as a reminder to pray for our ministry among the Jewish people.



Ministry in New York City

“I’m in a New York State of Mind”

These famous lyrics, penned by New Yorker Billy Joel, seem so appropriate when it comes to bringing the gospel to the Jewish people. There is hardly a more accurate statement. For many decades of our 125-year ministry, Chosen People Ministries’ International Headquarters has been in New York City. In fact, from our very inception in 1894 (when we were called the Brownsville Mission to the Jews), Your Mission to the Jewish People has had a New York state of mind.

Rabbi Leopold Cohn, founder of Chosen People Ministries, began handing out gospel tracts on the streets of Brownsville in 1894, just two years after coming to faith in Jesus. With an ever-growing burden to reach his Jewish kinsmen with the good news, Cohn expanded his outreach to include the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn and changed the name of the ministry to the Williamsburg Mission to the Jews. In 1924, the name changed to the American Board of Missions to the Jews as we advanced into the epicenter of New York life—Manhattan.

The ministry grew during these past 125 years beyond both state and international borders, with missionaries now serving in seventeen countries around the world. Yet, because New York still maintains its large and vibrant Jewish community, it is a critical focus of our ministry.

The concentration of Jewish people in New York City and the surrounding counties is impressive. Almost 8.5 percent of adults in the region identify themselves as Jewish by religion. The total number of Jewish people in the five boroughs of the city, including those who claim Jewish ancestry with no religious affiliation, edges just above

two million people. Thirty-six percent of the New York Jewish community resides in Brooklyn and thirty-seven percent of those claim to be Orthodox—an astounding number!

Effective Jewish outreach must include this growing group of Jewish people. Our Charles Feinberg Messianic Center, in the heart of Orthodox Jewish Brooklyn, is ideally placed for this ministry. It is becoming increasingly important to hold conferences at the Center that are specifically geared towards training others how to reach the ultra-religious in Brooklyn.

Robert Walter, the Brooklyn branch leader and one of the coordinators of our conferences for Orthodox outreach, shared this:

This conference was very informative and helpful for me in my ministry, as we now have contact with religious Jewish people we never would have met if we did not take the time to better understand the culture and find ways to better communicate the love of the Messiah with them.

We also recently placed Facebook ads in Yiddish (the language spoken by most ultra-Orthodox Jewish people) that are designed to inspire religious Jewish seekers to view a ten-minute version of the Jesus film in Yiddish. The advertisement was quite successful. We believe this is a difficult but precious group to reach for the Lord, and many are open and searching.

In addition to the Orthodox population, there is a large Russian-speaking Jewish population. Hundreds of thousands of Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union now live in New York City. By God’s grace, Chosen People Ministries has a Russian ministry that operates out of the Brooklyn Messianic Center. Klaudia Z. has led this work now for more than twenty years. Once a month, she holds meetings for pastors of Russian congregations in Brooklyn. She wrote:

A couple of days ago, one of the attendees of the Bible study brought a Jewish man to our group. We shared the gospel with him, and he prayed to receive Jesus as his Messiah and Lord! Afterward, he wanted to understand more about his decision. It was a touching moment, especially when it had become clear to him that Jesus was the Messiah he had been searching for all his life!

What a tremendous blessing to be able to hear the gospel in your native tongue even when so far from home. God’s provision is abundant!

The opportunity to evangelize the vast numbers of Jewish people in New York City demands we do our best to train workers for the harvest field. The Charles L. Feinberg Center for Messianic Jewish Studies exists by God’s grace. The program, a partnership between Chosen People Ministries and Talbot School of Theology of Biola University, was established in 2007. The seminary now occupies the second and third floors of the Brooklyn Messianic Center, and the basement holds a library of more than ten thousand volumes. The building serves as a place of education and as a base for ministry.

One of the students in the program had a remarkable ministry experience in Brooklyn, just down the street from our ministry center. As he was setting up a book table outside of the subway station, he encountered a man whose bicycle had just been stolen. He had this to share:

I started asking him questions and discovered he was an Israeli. I began to share with him a bit of my testimony, and God put it in my heart to offer to pay for his trip home. His eyes lit up, “Thank you so much! But why would you do that?” I told him that Jesus called us to love our neighbor, and I believed in that wholeheartedly. What a joy it was to share the love of Messiah with this young Jewish man.



The reality is that the work of reaching two million Jewish people in this city needs to get done.

Summer Outreach

In the same way that Roman roads were used in Jesus' time to spread the gospel throughout the world, the subway system is a useful tool to spread the gospel throughout New York City. The boundaries of ministry are almost limitless since the trains connect the four boroughs of Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx to each other!

We take advantage of the ease of public transportation during our annual summer outreach. And to celebrate Chosen People Ministries' 125th anniversary year, *Shalom Brooklyn* has become *Shalom New York!* This outreach will be our largest single effort ever to reach the Jewish people of New York City. God willing, 125 people each week from all over the world will join together on the streets of New York City for two week-long missions: July 27–August 3, and August 3–10.

Participants will be staying in Manhattan and Brooklyn. Teams will be trained and then sent throughout New York City to engage in a vast variety of street ministries. At night, there will be follow-up phone calls and visits, gospel cafés, debates, and even an opportunity to experience the richness of Jewish culture in the Big Apple!

Richard Flashman, the director of *Shalom New York*, described an encounter during *Shalom Brooklyn* last year:

I met Ben in Borough Park. He is a member of the ultra-Orthodox Jewish community. He graciously agreed to stop and answer my survey questions. This led to an in-depth gospel conversation. We seemed to make a connection. Since then, we have had a number of email exchanges through which Ben has been examining the Old Testament evidence for the Messianic identity of Jesus.*

While this type of openness does not happen every time we witness on the streets, it certainly can. We hope you will join us in prayer for this kind of receptivity as we prepare for this intensive summer outreach in New York City.

Campus Ministry

In addition to *Shalom New York*, the urban environment also lends itself to ministry on college campuses in and around New York. Staff member Darlene is working with the three campuses at Rutgers University. She said:

This is uncharted territory at Rutgers University. We do prayer walks on campus and conduct an outreach book table weekly at the student center where we meet and interact with students and offer gospel literature to them.

Doug, who has been serving the Mission for decades, is still active in campus ministry at Queens College and New York University. Here is just one of his stories:

Two weeks ago at Queens College, I experienced one of the best days I have ever had on campus. Arash, a young Jewish man from Iran, stopped by our table. He looked at Jesus' wonderful statement in Luke 24:44 in*

which the Messiah said clearly that Moses and the prophets were speaking about Him. With a smile on his face, Arash said quite unexpectedly, "What would my relatives say if I told them I was a believer in Jesus?" This is a very real challenge for many Jewish people.

Looking to the Future

Reading about all the wonderful opportunities the Lord has been giving us may call to mind Jesus' statement in Matthew:

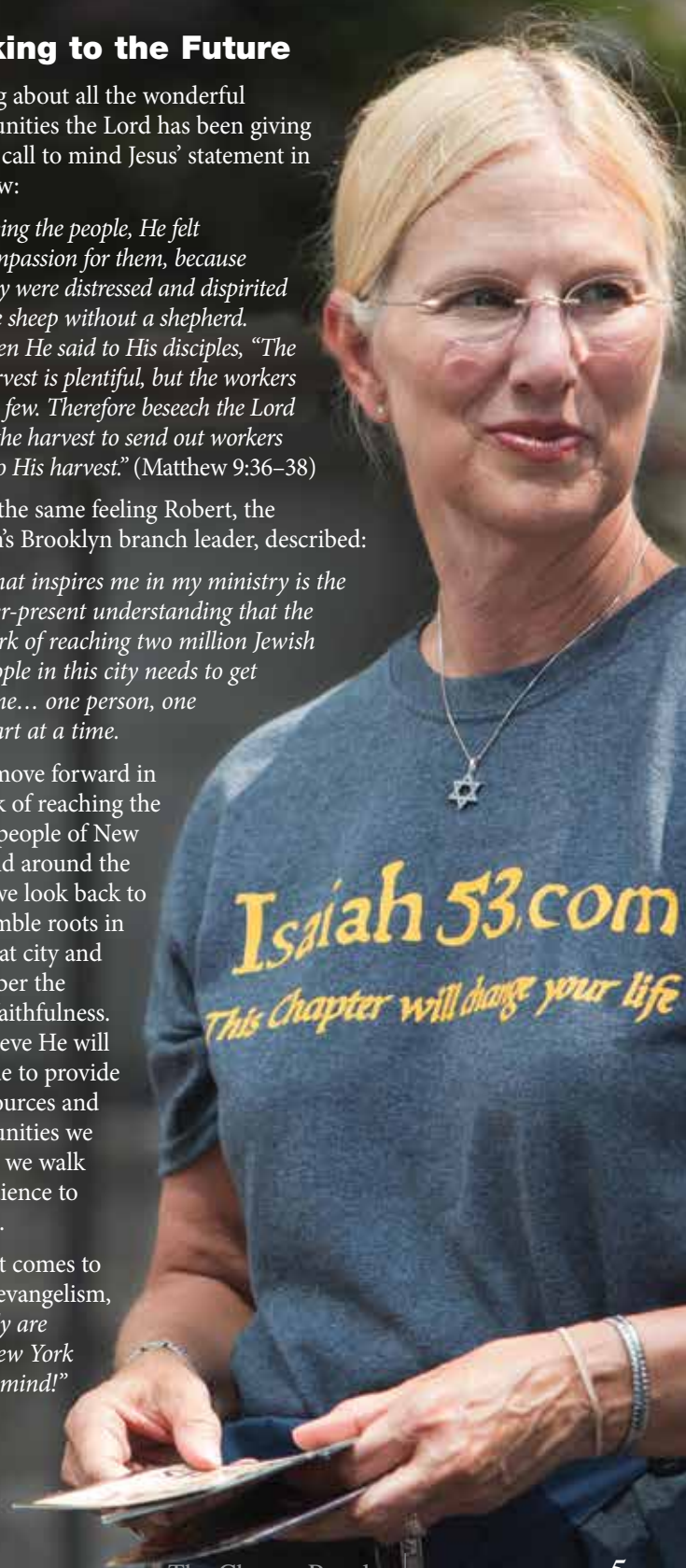
Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest." (Matthew 9:36–38)

This is the same feeling Robert, the Mission's Brooklyn branch leader, described:

What inspires me in my ministry is the ever-present understanding that the work of reaching two million Jewish people in this city needs to get done... one person, one heart at a time.

As we move forward in our task of reaching the Jewish people of New York and around the globe, we look back to our humble roots in this great city and remember the Lord's faithfulness. We believe He will continue to provide the resources and opportunities we need as we walk in obedience to His call.

When it comes to Jewish evangelism, we really are "in a New York state of mind!"



* name changed



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.

THE AUTHOR AND PERFECTER OF FAITH: Hebrews 12:1–3

Hebrews chapter 12 begins with a statement referring back to the great “Hall of Faith” in chapter 11: “*Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us.*” The writer of Hebrews uses an athletic event to compare the Christian life to a marathon. Because of this illustration, some people interpret the cloud of witnesses as spectators, watching our marathon race in some angelic stadium along with our departed, believing, loved ones. This is not the case. Rather, these saints are “witnesses” not because they are currently witnessing our lives but because their lives are a testimony to us of their faith in God. The use of the term “cloud” is fascinating, since these witnesses are presently without resurrected bodies. According to Daniel 12:2, these Old Testament saints are awaiting the resurrection of their bodies at the second coming of Messiah.

With this great cloud of witnesses surrounding us, encouraging us by their faith, we are to “*lay aside...the sin which so easily entangles us.*” An encumbrance is not necessarily sin, but anything that might weigh us down and hinder our running the race effectively. Many years ago, *Moody Monthly* printed a cartoon that effectively communicated what the writer of Hebrews was saying here. It was a picture of a runner in a race trying to run while carrying two large suitcases. Believers will sometimes try to run the Christian race while holding on to their baggage from the past. To run our race effectively, we need to leave our baggage behind. We also need to “*lay aside the sin that entangles us.*” The Jewish believers receiving this letter were in danger of leaving the faith. It was like trying to run the race with one’s running shoes tied together, which is what the word translated as “entangles” implies.

The writer continues: “*and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.*” Imagining the believer’s life to be a marathon, not a hundred-yard dash, he tells us how we can finish that race well. A marathon runner needs to pace himself so that he has enough stamina to finish.

I remember watching the New York Marathon on television and seeing an unknown runner take the lead. He stayed in front for quite a few miles, but eventually, the other runners caught up and passed him. He had not run the race with endurance; he had not properly paced himself.

In Hebrews 12:2, the writer exhorts us to run while “*fixing our eyes on Jesus*” and by keeping our eyes on the goal of finishing well. Yeshua (Jesus) needs to be our primary example of endurance. By referring to Yeshua, the author is emphasizing our Lord’s humanity, especially in regard to His endurance of the pain, humiliation, and shame of the cross. The writer of Hebrews, nevertheless, describes these challenges as “*the joy set before Him.*” The great joy that Jesus

experienced was the joy of obediently submitting to the will of His Father. He finished His race victoriously “*and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*” The picture of Him sitting at the right hand of His Father implies a time of rest that follows the completion of His task, which, for Him, was the redemption of mankind through His death, burial, and resurrection.

Finally, as a further means of encouragement—and also providing an insight into the struggles of these particular Jewish believers—the writer of Hebrews says in 12:3, “*For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself.*” They were to meditate on Jesus and the cross, so that they would not over estimate the harshness of their own struggles in their faith. By doing so they would “*not grow weary and lose heart.*”

HEBREWS 12:1–3 NASB

¹ Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.



YESHUA REVEALED TO ORTHODOX JEWISH WOMAN

Last month, a Jewish woman attended our Messianic congregation in New York City. Shaina* had been attending a modern Orthodox synagogue. During a service at her synagogue, Yeshua (Jesus) revealed Himself to her through the reading of the Sabbath liturgy that was taking place. She stood up and said, “Yeshua!” The rabbi told her she cannot say that name. Shaina would not stop, and they asked her to leave. Staff member Carol says, “I am convinced that as the days grow closer to the Lord’s return, He will be revealing Himself to others that are of the House of Israel. Please pray for this young lady and her friend that visited us.”

MISSIONARY IN RUSSIA REACHES ELDERLY JEWISH COUPLE

A large part of our ministry in Russia is aiding disabled and elderly people. In November 2018, the doctors diagnosed one of our staff members K.* with many serious health concerns, yet these difficulties and problems pushed him to seek God more. One day, while praying and reading the Bible, K. was led to Psalm 41: “How blessed is he who considers the helpless; the Lord will deliver him in a day of trouble. The Lord will sustain him upon his sickbed; in his illness, You restore him to health” (Psalm 41:1,3). It was a clear answer to his prayer, so K. started visiting Jewish families every week and bringing them food and medicine. Many Jewish families live below the poverty line. These people not only need food and medicine, but most importantly, they need to know God and be saved through Yeshua. K. spent time with a couple, Lev* and Tanya,* who are about ninety years old. They are very frail people who have no children and live alone. K. always prays with them, and he is seeing their hearts gradually open to the Lord. So please pray for this ministry, for God’s guidance and power, and for financial provision for it to continue.

CHINESE CHRISTIANS MEET JEWISH PEOPLE FOR THE FIRST TIME

Last month, some of our Israeli staff had the opportunity to visit churches in Hong Kong and to share our teachings there. It was a very blessed time and our staff were received well. At one of the meetings, there were young women from the underground church in China. They had come a long way to hear about Israel. They were touched to see “real” Jewish people from Israel and even cried. In one of the meetings we met an Israeli woman who is not a believer. We had a chance to share our testimonies and the gospel with her. She had never met any believers, and God brought her the good news all the way to China. I ask you to please pray for her; her name is Tali*.

* names have been changed

“DESPISED JEW” RESCUES “PURE ARYAN”

By TOM OLSON, a Gentile believer of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a lover of the Jews.

One of Hitler’s “Pure Aryans” learned a lesson recently when his plane crashed into the sea off the English coast. For Lieutenant M. E. Jacobs, Jewish Officer in the English army, swam 300 yards to save the Nazi ace from drowning. Lieutenant Jacobs was aware of Hitler’s hatred toward, and persecution of the Jews, yet he threw himself without hesitation into the sea to rescue one of Hitler’s pilots who helped spread death and destruction in England! That is an example of grace—undoubtedly surpassing the expectation of the ace pilot!

The Shepherd of Israel
Joseph Hoffman Cohn

ISRAEL'S Glorious Future

SANDY COVE

Friday, May 31 - Sunday, June 2

Sandy Cove Ministries Retreat Center in Maryland

Every year, Chosen People Ministries holds a special retreat called *Simcha*, which is Hebrew for “joy.” This year, we are going to combine this joy-filled time together with a celebration of Chosen People Ministries’ 125th anniversary!

Our speakers include Dr. Darrell Bock, Professor of New Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary; Rev. Stuart Rothberg, Teaching Pastor at Sagemont Church in Houston; and Dr. Mitch Glaser, president of Chosen People Ministries. Marty Goetz, a modern-day psalmist and world-class musician, will lead us in worshiping the Lord together.



Register online at chosenpeople.com/igfsandycove or call 1-888-405-5874, or request a brochure by checking the box on the enclosed card. The event will take place at Sandy Cove Ministries Retreat Center, 60 Sandy Cove Rd., North East, MD 21901.

"All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on him" (Isaiah 53:6).

A Legacy of Love

It was right there in black and white, in the words of the prophet, Isaiah.

Yet, somehow Barri had never noticed it before. When the verse was pointed out to her, while at lunch with a friend, she did not know what to make of it.

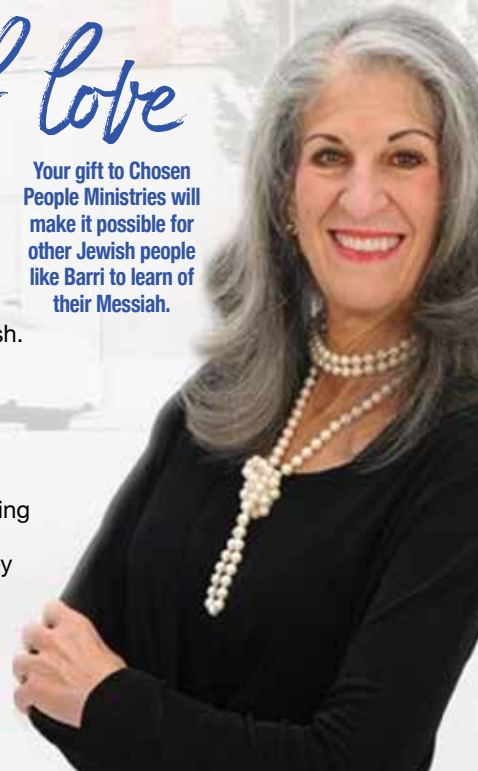
What could it mean? *Upon whom had God laid the iniquity of us all?* She wondered...and she could not rest until she knew! Barri left lunch that day and went immediately to a storefront she knew very well—she had passed it often—it displayed a Star of David, as well as a cross, and a Christian fish.

She went in, seeking answers, and discovered it was an office of The American Board of Missions to the Jews, later to become Chosen People Ministries. After speaking with a staff member who answered her questions, Barri knew that God had revealed Himself to her personally. She left there with the message of Messiah in her heart. Thirty-nine years later, she is still walking with Jesus.

This year, after years of supporting this mission to the Jews, Barri and her husband, Jeff, decided to include Chosen People Ministries in their estate plans, because they want to leave a legacy of sharing Messiah with other Jewish people. "It is beautiful to find 'True North' in a personal relationship with Yeshua, Jesus. It is also a blessing to support ministries such as Chosen People Ministries, because they focus on reaching the Jew first, and then the Gentiles, as noted in Romans 1:16," Barri said.

You, too, can leave a legacy of sharing Messiah with Jewish people through your will or estate plan. You may designate a specific amount as a bequest, or call for a percentage of the remainder of your estate to be donated after you and your spouse pass away and your affairs are settled. For more information, please contact our Partnership Director, Cindy Forbes, at 212-223-2252 or cforbes@chosenpeople.com. Thank you!

Your gift to Chosen People Ministries will make it possible for other Jewish people like Barri to learn of their Messiah.



2019 CHOSEN PEOPLE MINISTRIES EVENTS

May 31–June 2, 2019
Israel's Glorious Future Conference and Retreat

Sandy Cove Conference Center, North East, Maryland with speakers Dr. Darrell Bock, Stuart Rothberg, and the staff of Chosen People Ministries and worship with Marty Goetz!

October 11–13, 2019
Israel's Glorious Future and Feast of Tabernacles Celebration

Lake Lawn Resort, Delavan, Wisconsin
Speakers to be announced later!

November 15, 2019
Grand Finale Banquet

Grand Prospect Hall, Brooklyn, New York



shalom NY

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Week #1: July 27–August 3, 2019

Week #2: August 3–August 10, 2019

For more information, please visit us online or call us

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Just announced! Shalom Philly will be held August 3–4, 2019!
Visit chosenpeople.com/shalomphilly for more information.

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE



A higher standard.
A higher purpose.

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