

The Chosen People



Volume VIII, Issue 4 April 2002

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Dear friend,

Shalom from New York City. Thank you for your continued prayers throughout this busy Passover season. Our Chosen People Ministries workers spoke in hundreds of churches around the country demonstrating the *Messiah in the Passover*.

This unique presentation shows the links between the Jewish Passover and the Last Supper. The one comment we heard over and over again last month is “Communion will never be the same for me!”

If you missed having a Passover at your congregation, it's not too early to begin scheduling one for next year. Just fill out the enclosed card with your local church information, or call our Church Ministries

Department at 1-888-405-5874. They will tell you how to schedule a Chosen People Ministries speaker at your congregation.

By the way, if you did not have the joy of seeing a *Messiah in the Passover* this year—or even if you did—we are introducing a new video produced by one of our former staff members, Albert Israeli. His *Messiah in the Passover* video will leave you breathless! It is an incredible story of God's grace and redemptive power. Don't miss it! See more about this video and how to order it on the back page.

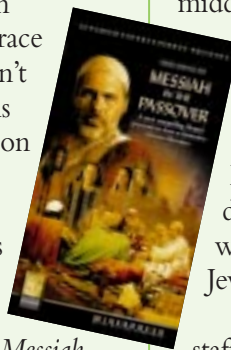
Again, this past month was exciting and fruitful as dozens of Jews and Gentiles gave their lives to the Lord as a result of the *Messiah*

in the Passover demonstration. You were part of our ministry—everywhere we traveled. On behalf of our worldwide staff, now in ten countries around the world, thank you for your prayers and support.

Remember the Holocaust

April 9 was *Yom Ha Shoah*, Holocaust Remembrance Day. I think you will find the article in the middle pages of the newsletter to be helpful in answering some of the objections your Jewish friends and loved ones have about Jesus with regard to the Holocaust. How many times does this horrific event come up when you are speaking to your Jewish friends about the Lord?

I was asked by our newsletter staff to prepare an article describing



some of the lessons we can learn from the Holocaust. This was not an easy thing to do.

As a Jewish person, I was raised with photographs of my grandparents' families in Europe. Whenever we viewed the pictures, the question always asked was, "Did they die in the Holocaust?" Unfortunately, the answer was all too often, "YES."

Grasping the Reality

The events of 9/11 changed my understanding of the Holocaust. Not that it was even in the same category of "loss." But like the Holocaust, the destruction of the Trade Towers—and more importantly, the people working in the Towers, at the Pentagon, and flying in the four planes—was an unforgettable tragedy.

Can we compare Bin Laden to Hitler? I think so. Although their destructive acts hurt many others, both were most intent on destroying Jewish people. If the "Spirit of Anti-Christ" is anything, it is a spirit of anti-Semitism. It has and always will be the goal of the devil to destroy the Jewish people.

However, I learned lessons about God's grace in New York City that now help me notice the signposts of His goodness—even in the midst of tragedy. This includes the Holocaust.

Grace in the Midst of Tragedy

As I prayed, I began to wonder about instances when God's grace was present in the Holocaust. I knew that Chosen People Ministries had a significant ministry throughout that terrible time and wanted to see what we might have in written form. So, I began looking through some of our old archives.

Eureka! I found gold. In our archives, I discovered a testimony pamphlet written by Dr. Leslie Flynn, a retired pastor of a church in the New York area, and a great lover

of the Jewish people. He wrote the story of Joseph Herskowitz, a Jewish man who found the Lord during the Holocaust.

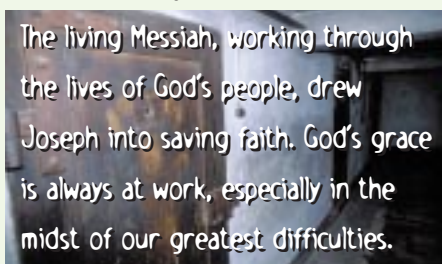
If I gleaned one outstanding lesson in God's grace from this story, it is simply this—*the Lord uses tragedy to draw believers to trust in His strength and non-believers to find hope and salvation through the Messiah.*

This is exactly what God did in the life of this Jewish man.

Joseph Herskowitz – His Story

Joseph was an Austrian Jewish atheist. Soon after Hitler marched into Vienna, Joseph's wife, a non-Jew, suggested to Joseph that he hide in a mission to the Jews in Vienna, where they were willing to help Jewish people leave Europe. The only drawback was that the mission asked those who stayed to be part of a daily Bible study.

What neither Joseph nor his wife knew is that this mission to the Jews was part of a partnership between the American Board of Missions to the Jews (renamed Chosen People Ministries in 1988) and another mission to the Jews based in Sweden.



The missionary leading the work was an ABMJ (Chosen People Ministries) staff member, Emmanuel Lichtenstein.

Joseph went to the mission and was attracted to the Lord by the kindness of Lichtenstein and the others. Unfortunately, he was caught one day and sent to Dachau, one of the worst of the concentration camps.

Curiously, during his time in Dachau, he met a number of Christian pastors who resisted Hitler and were constantly berated and beaten by the Nazi guards. Their courage and

willingness to stand for the Lord, rather than swear their allegiance to Hitler, impressed Joseph.

By some miracle, Joseph was released from Dachau and through the continued ministry of Emmanuel Lichtenstein and the kindness of an American Christian couple who sponsored his immigration to the United States, Joseph became a believer in Jesus. The living Messiah, working through the lives of God's people, drew Joseph into saving faith.

God's Grace at Work

What lesson ought we to draw from this almost forgotten story?

God's grace is always at work, especially in the midst of our greatest difficulties. Sometimes His grace is hidden when life is going well. Tragedy opens our eyes to His presence in ways that good times never can. It is during the difficult times that we recognize that He is always present and powerful and that even death cannot keep us from Him.

This is why the Apostle Paul so powerfully wrote, "*For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*" (Romans 8:38-39).

It is good to remember the Holocaust and the evil intent Satan still has in mind for God's ancient people. This will make us more faithful in praying for the peace of Jerusalem. But it is also good to remember His grace—available and abundant in the midst of life's difficulties.

May the Messiah comfort you with these words.

Your brother,


Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser
President

Hard Questions about the Holocaust

HOLOCAUST. It is a word that has the power to haunt us—a word to be spoken only in hushed tones. For Jewish people, the Holocaust serves as a reminder of the precarious foothold the Jewish community holds in this world—and how quickly the world can turn against us.



For Christians, the Holocaust presents another kind of dilemma. How can believers make the claims of the Gospel credible, when the mass murder of six million Jewish people was allowed to take place under the nose of the rest of the “Christian” world?

If there is any event in history that Jewish people point to as an illustration of why they cannot believe in Jesus, it is the Holocaust. Here are some of the common Holocaust-related questions Jewish people might ask—along with some suggested responses.

#1 If there is a God, where was He during the Holocaust?

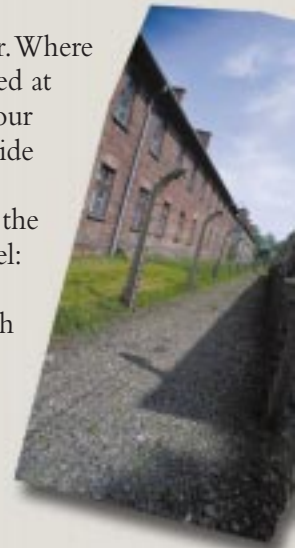
This question may be asked in two ways. The first already assumes that the answer is self-evident: nowhere. The question may also be asked in a sincere effort to come to grips with the terrible mystery of God’s unfailing goodness and the horrors of human history. Where was God? Who has not, at some time, cried out as the Psalmist did, “*Why do You stand afar off, O Lord? Why do You hide in times of trouble?*” (Psalm 10:1)? What answer can we give?

As believers, we hold to the revelation contained in the Scripture. God is holy—the source of all righteousness and justice. However, apart from miracles, the sovereign God permits the laws of nature to operate and the actions of humanity to unfold according to human decision.

God permitted the Holocaust to occur. Where was He? In the same position He occupied at Calvary. As Jesus suffered on the cross as our Messiah, so we find Him suffering alongside those who were mercilessly killed by the enemies of the God of Israel. It is one of the most compelling distinctives of the Gospel: our God suffers with us and for us. Whatever difficulty you are going through at this time, He is with you. He allowed men and women to have choices—sometimes evil choices with terrible consequences. But He bears those consequences with us.

#2 Where was the Church?

C.S. Lewis, the eminent Christian author, once observed, “When the Church has found its place in the world, then the world has found its place in the Church.” History tells us that after the early fourth century, Christianity became the preeminent faith of the



Western world. It also became its most powerful political force.

As a political power, the Church soon became immersed in the intrigues common to all powerful institutions. It became more concerned with wielding power and in its own survival than in bearing the cross of Messiah, regardless of the cost. In many instances, it became corrupt. This corruption, combined with the entrenched anti-Semitism often encouraged by the Church, helped to create the environment that spawned the Holocaust. It is not a pretty picture.

However, not all the churches of Europe stood idly by. There were notable exceptions, such as those churches in Holland and even in Germany that saw clearly the choice between good and evil and acted accordingly, often at great cost. The book by Corrie Ten Boom, *The Hiding Place*, illustrates the willingness of some true believers to suffer and die along with God's ancient people.

#3 How can the Gospel be true if Christians killed six million Jews?

We must remember that Christians did not perpetuate the Holocaust—the Nazis did. Many believing Christians died in the

Holocaust and many risked their lives to help the Jewish people. *Yad Vashem*, the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Jerusalem, has even dedicated a part of its site to commemorate non-Jewish “rescuers” who helped Jewish people escape death at the hands of the Nazis. It is called “The Garden of the Righteous.” The list of those honored numbers over 19,000, and does not include the many whose acts of heroism are unrecorded. Not all of those heroes were Christians, but many of them were.

It is true that Christians as a whole did too little, too late. However, it is unfair to put the blame for the Holocaust upon the Christians. One can make a far better case that the philosophers and scientists who trumpeted the “survival of the fittest” fueled the fire that enabled Hitler and his ilk to speak of “inferior races” and the “Final Solution.”

The Gospel rests on its own unshakable merit. If anything, it confirms the view that humanity is sinful and in need of forgiveness. Even the Hebrew Scriptures say, “*The heart is*

deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9)

#4 What will happen to the religious Jews who died during the Holocaust?

We've saved the toughest question for last. It is often used in an attempt to trap us, for if we say (as the Scripture proclaims) that only in Christ is salvation found, our Jewish seeker will accuse us of condemning the Jewish millions not only to the ovens, but to eternal condemnation in Hell. “Is this the act of a righteous God?” he or she will demand.

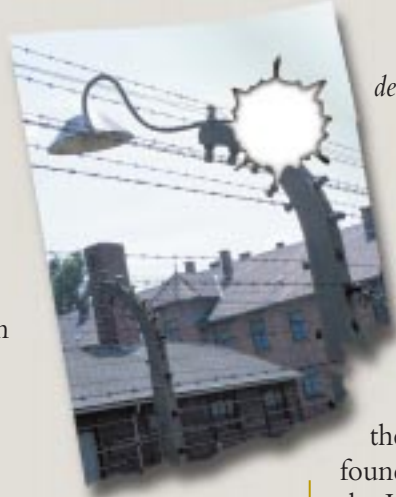
We need not surrender the Gospel message in an attempt to justify God. Jesus said, “*I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me*” (John 14:6). However, no one is able to know the destiny of another—or the lengths to which God will go to reveal Himself in the final moments of an earthly life. For the Scripture also proclaims, “*Salvation belongs to the Lord*” (Psalm 3:8).

Although it is not given to us to know the reasons behind many things, we can say with confidence that a righteous and just God is far more righteous and just than we are: “*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*” (Genesis 18:25). We believe that **only** those who consciously trust in Jesus will be saved—we simply do not know what happened in the hearts of individual Jews and Gentiles prior to their death. Only God knows!

Show Them the Way

There is no greater nor more terrible blight on humanity than the Holocaust. Easy as it may seem to place the blame wholly on Hitler and the German people, we know nothing is that simple. There is a far darker cause that underlies the attempted extermination of God's chosen people. It is Satan's wrath poured out on the canvas of human history. It is the sin that blights our creation. Perhaps, for the Jewish seeker and for many others, the awareness of sin can serve as the signpost that points to something far greater: the holiness and goodness of God and the Gospel that saves us.

“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts”
(Isaiah 55:9).



See the through Jewish Eyes Bible

by Dr. Daniel Goldberg



Horns and Craftsmen: Zechariah's Second Vision

Zechariah's first "vision in the night" vividly illustrates the Lord's intense anger against the nations that oppressed Israel (Zechariah 1:14,15).

Now, in Zechariah 1:17-21, the Lord has given Zechariah a second vision of how God would deal with Israel's persecutors. This vision comes in the form of four horns and four craftsmen.

One thing that must be kept in mind is that Zechariah's seven night visions (1:7-6:8) are all related. These visions extend through the centuries and onward to the establishment of Messiah's glorious Kingdom over Israel and the world.

Four Horns (Zechariah 1:18)

The Hebrew word *qeren* indicates the horn of a ram, goat or ox. It is not a difficult symbol to interpret, for it frequently appears in Scripture as a sign of strength. Jeremiah 48:25, for example, employs it as a symbol of national power.

The four horns symbolize the four great world powers that constitute "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24), which began with Judah's captivity in Babylon. These four monarchies are the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian and Roman empires and correspond to the four empires of the Book of Daniel, which are described in chapters 2 and 7. Each of the horns did evil to Israel in its own time.

In direct reply to Zechariah's query, the interpreting angel informs the prophet, "...these are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem" (1:19). The Hebrew word *zeru*, which is used to express the scattering, is quite vivid. It means to winnow, separate or scatter by means of the wind. (See Isaiah 41:16; Jeremiah 15:7; Ezekiel 5:2,10.)

Today, most of the Jewish people (over 12 million) live in various nations outside of Israel. This centuries-long dispersion is a testimony to the truth of these verses.

Four Craftsmen (Zechariah 1:20)

In the Hebrew text, the word *charash* means "craftsman"—a worker in wood, stone or iron. These four craftsmen are workers employed by God to terrify and cast out the world powers who have persecuted the Jewish people. The Lord showed Zechariah that the craftsmen were God's workers for cutting even superpowers down to size.

Without understanding God's purposes, the nations who were designated as the four horns are now employed as craftsmen. Thus, in history, Media-Persia overthrew Babylon, Greece overthrew Media-Persia and Rome overthrew Greece. The Lord God is able to turn those who seek to conquer Israel into instruments of their own destruction.

Four Truths

There are four great truths that may be gleaned from Zechariah's second night vision. The first is that God takes notice of every "horn" lifted up against His people (1:19). God also has complete knowledge of the extent of the injuries done to His people (1:21). He has already determined the punishment for every foe of His people (1:18). Finally, God has determined to honor His covenant promise to Abraham concerning his offspring.

"Behold I have created the blacksmith... who brings forth an instrument for his work... No weapon formed against you shall prosper" (Isaiah 54:16,17).

"And has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David" (Luke 1:69). ☆

Holocaust Survivor Comes to Faith in Florida

Estelle,* an elderly Jewish Holocaust survivor, was recently led to faith through the ministry of two generations of Chosen People Ministries staff members. First, Estelle was befriended by Rita, the mother of Rich Freeman, Chosen People Ministries' Director of Church Ministries and Conferences. Estelle confided to Rita that a number of times during her incarceration in the concentration camp, she felt that the guidance and direction of Jesus had kept her alive in the most dire circumstances. Rita brought Estelle to the Branch office, where she met with Rich. After about an hour of sharing, Rich led Estelle in a prayer to receive Jesus as her Messiah.

Jewish Woman Finds "Rest" in Messiah

Chosen People Ministries missionary Ken Alpren recently returned from a trip to Nashville, Tennessee, where his ministry was blessed with a decision for Messiah by a Jewish woman named Ruthie.* After the service, she asked a number of questions. Listening to her, Ken was led to ask, "Did you pray the prayer that I led?" She answered with a broad smile, "Yes, I did!"

Afterwards Ruthie, who suffers from a sleep disorder, prayed for an unbroken night's sleep. That night she slept until morning. She said, "It was the best sleep I'd had in years!"

Jewish Visitor Comes to Faith

Naomi,* a Jewish woman from a Conservative Jewish family, visited the Messianic congregation Chosen People Ministries is planting in the Raleigh, North Carolina, area.

Through a friendship with our staff members, Naomi continued to visit the congregation despite her anxiety about her family's reaction. After hearing Chosen People Ministries' Dr. Ben Alpert speak, Naomi seemed quite moved. After the service, Naomi opened her heart to Messiah and prayed to receive Him.

Salvation from Father to Daughter

About two years ago, Kedem,* a Bucharian member of the Jewish community in New York City, was saved through the ministry of Chosen People worker Boris Goldin. Kedem recently traveled to Israel to see his daughter, Anna.* When Kedem shared his faith with her, Anna was quite interested. They visited Chosen People Ministries' Messianic congregation, where Dr. Ray Gannon gave a powerful sermon. When Dr. Gannon gave the invitation, Anna responded by raising her hand to receive Messiah. She stayed afterwards to ask many questions. Praise the Lord.

Anti-Semitism on the Rise in France

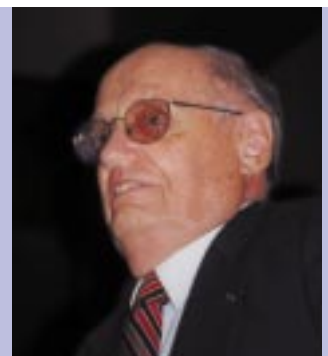
The New York Times reports a dramatic increase in anti-Semitic incidents in France. From 1998 to 2000, reported acts of violence against Jewish people have skyrocketed from just one to 116. Moreover, from 1999 to 2000, other acts of anti-Semitism such as threats and arson escalated from 60 to 603. This does not take into account unreported incidents. Please keep in prayer the 600,000 Jewish people of France, which has the largest Jewish population of any country in Europe. Pray also for Daniel Solomon, who is leading Chosen People Ministries' outreach there.

*names have been changed

Jim Straub, one of our most faithful Board members, passed into the presence of the Lord on February 4th. The Chosen People Ministries family takes comfort in knowing that Jim is now with the Savior he loved and served for so many years. Jim was a management consultant and then Executive Vice President with Chosen People Ministries from 1979 until his retirement in 1983. His many years of service on the Mission's Board of Directors began in 1967, and he was still serving on a Board committee at the time of his death. He also served as the Chairman of the Board at various times throughout his tenure.

Fellow Board member Roy Adams gave comments and the closing prayer at the memorial service. He later said, "Jim was a dear friend and colleague for whom I had tremendous love and respect."

Jim is survived by his wife Frieda, two sons and three daughters, a stepson and a stepdaughter, nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



***In Memoriam:
Chosen People Ministries
Board Member Jim Straub
(1917 - 2002)***

Recommended Reading About the Holocaust

Pursued by J. Vera Schlamm with Bob Friedman

Pursued is the story of Vera Schlamm, a Holocaust survivor who made it her life's goal to be a better Jew. Her tale of survival and accomplishment is inspirational and beautifully told. The surprising path her search placed her on and the destination she reached in her faith in Messiah is a story you'll want to share.

#3103 \$6.95^{US}

Hitler's Cross by Erwin Lutzer

The monstrosity of Adolph Hitler's "Third Reich" remains a stunning chapter in the pages of history. Although the power by which Hitler hypnotized an entire nation is legendary, one question in particular begs an answer: Where was the Church? Erwin Lutzer examines the lessons that may be learned from studying the deception of the church, giving us insight into today's dangerous trends.

#3079 \$15.95^{US}

Messiah in the Passover Video

Get ready for a powerful and challenging experience that will change your life! A dramatic Gospel presentation of the birth of Christianity, showing how one rabbi (Nick Mancuso) becomes a follower of Yeshua of Nazareth. This video powerfully presents the prophetic nature of the Feast of Passover and its fulfillment in Jesus.

#8026 \$24.95^{US}

Shofar The piercing notes of the Shofar (ram's horn) have echoed through centuries of Jewish holiday observances. The shofar calls us to prayer and reminds us of the blessed hope of Messiah's arrival. Now you can treasure one of your own. Because each Shofar is unique, yours may vary slightly in size and shape from the one shown here. They also make wonderful gifts.

#5020 \$36.95^{US}



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The Chosen People Newsletter

Chosen People Ministries has been taking the love of the Messiah to Jewish people worldwide since 1894.

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