

# The Chosen People



Volume VIII, Issue 6 June 2002

## *The Messianic Movement in the Ukraine*

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# STEPPING

## Forward for the Lord

Shalom from New York City!

This summer we will have three versions of STEP (our Summer Training and Evangelism Program). Our “regular” STEP begins in a few days and will last for a month. Most of those participating are between 18 and 35 years of age. This is a life-changing experience, and if you can’t join us this year, why not start praying about next summer? Please also pray especially for our efforts on July 4th, when we hope to distribute about 40,000 Gospel tracts to the crowds watching the fireworks display in Manhattan!

Then we will conduct a one-week STEP outreach in New York City for those who cannot spend a full month with us or are a bit more mature in years! “STEP in a Week” will include classroom training, tours of Jewish cultural sites and, of course, lots of street evangelism. The time is shorter and the pace a bit slower—but the witnessing opportunities will be just as abundant!

It’s not too late to be part of this dynamic new Chosen People Ministries program. If you are interested and able to dedicate July 7-13 to Jewish evangelism, call us or go to our website to find out how you can participate!

There is also “TeenSTEP,” July 13-21, which is designed to give older teenagers an experience in urban missions. TeenSTEP will encourage and equip these youthful servants of the Lord to share the Gospel with Jewish people throughout their lives.

We are also still planning to send a group of twenty Gen-Xers to Israel as part of our “eXperience Israel” ministry tour. We know it is dangerous, but with God’s help, our experienced guides and leaders will keep these adventurous and dedicated young people safe and fruitful! However, we would not even dare to go without knowing that friends like you are praying for



### Witnessing T-Shirts

Want to proclaim your faith? Just wear “Is Jesus the Messiah?”—Chosen People Ministries’ newest T-shirt. Designed for the STEP 2002 participants, these T-shirts are sure conversation starters. On the back of the shirt is printed Chosen People Ministries’ website.

T-shirt price \$14.95

Sizes: S (5105); M (5106); L (5107); XL (5108); XXL (5109)

us. The dates for eXperience Israel are July 14–28 and we still have a few slots available.

Please call us at 212-223-2252 and speak to Stewart Jefferson, who coordinates recruitment for these programs. He would enjoy talking to you about serving with us this summer.

## Ministry among Russian Jews

One of the many groups that our STEP teams will reach in New York City is the Russian Jewish people. I have dedicated this newsletter to bringing you up to date on how your mission to the Jewish people has been active in reaching Russian Jews around the world—in Israel, the United States, Germany, Australia and, of course, in the former Soviet Union.

I can speak of this in the first person. In 1990, when I arrived in New York City after having served as a missionary to the Jewish people in California for many years, I became deeply involved in the work of outreach and discipleship among this new generation of Russian Jews coming to America. From the start there was a tremendous response to the Gospel!

I met two Russian Jewish believers and asked them if they would start a Bible study in their home to help witness to and disciple the many Russian Jews who were so open to the Lord. They agreed and we began a Bible study at Vladimir and Klaudia Zhelezny's home in the Bensonhurst section of Brooklyn.

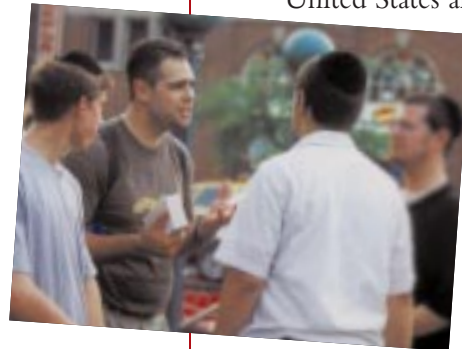
The Bible study eventually grew into a congregation—*The Hope of Israel*. The Zhelezny's son, Greg, became the full-time pastor.

We soon realized that the Russian Jewish immigrants had a great need to learn English. Soon we started English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. We saw dozens of Russian Jewish people receive the Lord through the English and Bible classes. Many of the new believers joined *The*

*Hope of Israel* congregation. Today the core group of that congregation includes many of those who came to know the Lord as a direct result of the English classes.

The ESL outreach grew and became an independent ministry, now called the Russian Community Life Center (RCLC). The RCLC has its own board, the majority of whom are Russian Jewish believers. They continue the English classes, citizenship classes, Bible classes and other types of ministry to the Russian Jewish community in Brooklyn.

Leslie and Del Macmillan, two friends of our ministry, came from Olympia, Washington, to serve on the leadership team of the RCLC. Leslie now serves as the full-time Executive Director. This growing ministry now has an office in Brighton Beach, which is the heart of the Russian Jewish Community in Brooklyn. They now have almost 150 students taking English classes and, more importantly, Bible classes on a weekly basis.



Street evangelism in New York City

## Opposition to Our Effort Continues

In the early days of *The Hope of Israel* congregation, we often had dozens and sometimes hundreds of protesters outside our services. In 1993, when Chosen People Ministries conducted a Passover Seder at Kings Highway Baptist Church, more than 500 Orthodox Jewish protesters gathered outside. The police came because the protesters claimed that the missionaries had kidnapped a child and were holding him in the church.

A Chosen People Ministries worker was physically attacked and yet the Lord used this situation to bless the work with greater confidence and boldness. Also the opposition helped many of the

Russian believers understand the cost of walking with Yeshua.

We are still accused regularly of taking advantage of unschooled and religiously untrained Russian Jews. Yet, in my opinion, the Russian Jews are better educated and more critical of others' views—especially regarding religion—than most people.

The accusation of taking advantage of “helpless Russian Jews” is blatantly false—yet we still face these charges constantly.

## Russian Jewish Ministry Today

In spite of the opposition, this movement of the Holy Spirit among Russian Jews continues today in the United States and around the

world. We have recently joined hands with believers in the Philadelphia area to plant yet another Russian Messianic

congregation. We are excited about the work that Ilya L. and his wife, Pnina, are doing there!

I hope you will enjoy the reports of what God is doing around the globe through Chosen People Ministries missionaries among Russian Jews—everywhere from Israel to Germany to Ukraine.

And remember to pray for us—the best is yet to come. As these Russian Jewish believers mature, they will develop new ways to reach the millions of Russian Jews around the world. Your mission to the Jews will be part of this movement as long as God allows!

Thanks for caring!  
Have a great summer.

Your brother in  
the Messiah,

  
Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser  
President



Left: Chosen People Ministries Russian staff members who are serving other Russian Jewish believers around the world

Opposite page: Ascension Square in Lvov—in the background is the Bernardine Monastery; Ploshcha Rynok (Market Square) in Lvov; the original Chosen People Ministries Ukraine team

# Chosen People Ministries: To

One of the greatest chapters of revival and spiritual blessing in the 20th century belongs to the revival among the Jewish people of the former Soviet Union. Chosen People Ministries has had the privilege of making a significant contribution to this story, which began during the peak period of Jewish immigration during the late 1970s.

These faithful efforts did not emerge from a vacuum. They are, in fact, the flowering of seeds planted by faith and watered by tears in the sacrificial labor of God's people for the last 150 years.

## In the Former Soviet Union

The history of Jewish missions in the former Soviet Union stretches back to the mid-19th century. The roll call of men and women of faith who labored among the Jewish people is too long to mention here. Some of their names have been lost to history—although God knows them.

Yet without the work of these early missionaries to the Jewish people, the seeds of the Gospel that blossomed with such vigor toward the end of the 20th century would not have been planted.

The fruit that Chosen People Ministries is reaping today comes in large measure as a result of the heroic work of these pioneers of faith—often carried out despite harsh opposition.

## The Ukrainian Jewish People

Ukraine has figured prominently in Jewish history. Tradition tells us that Israel ben Eliezer (1698-1760), father of the Hasidic movement, who became known by the title “*Ba'al Shem Tov*” (*Master of the Good Name*), was born in Ukraine—as was Golda Meir, the late Prime Minister of Israel. A number of noteworthy movements in Jewish history originated in Russia, such as the Khazars, a Turkic people who converted to Judaism around the 8th

century. There have been Jewish people in Kiev, Ukraine's capital city, since the 10th century.

Sadly, Ukraine also has a long history of anti-Semitism. It has been the scene of horrific outbreaks of violence against the Jewish people. For example, over 100,000 Jews were killed in the pogroms of 1648-49. Another 100,000 Jews lost their lives to anti-Jewish murderers in 1919-20. Great numbers of the Ukrainian population collaborated with the Nazis during World War II to annihilate the Jews. On the whole, the Jewish experience in Ukraine has not been a happy one.

## Chosen People Ministries and Russian Jewish Evangelism

Statistics from *Jewish Communities of the World* tell us that the latest waves of Russian-Jewish immigration began in the 1970s, when about 250,000 Jewish people took advantage of a relaxation in Russian emigration policy and left. About 140,000 of this group went to Israel. Others came to the United States. In this time period, about

150,000 Jewish immigrants from Russia and its satellites moved to the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

The next major movement of Russian Jewish people came under Mikhail Gorbachev's rule. In 1991 190,000 emigrated and in 1992 another 150,000 followed. From 1989 to the mid-1990s about 700,000 left Russia. The vast majority went to Israel, which has absorbed about 900,000 altogether.<sup>2</sup>

In the early 1990s Germany took an active hand in making a home for the Russian Jewish immigrant population and a community numbering over 150,000 has settled there.

Brooklyn, New York, Israel and Germany have been the most important centers for Jewish evangelism in the late

Potsdam and Heidelberg. Boris Galinker (from the same group in Kiev) is now serving in Munich, Germany, as well.

### On to Israel

It was inevitable that Chosen People Ministries' Ukrainian connection would extend to the Promised Land. Michael Z, who directs our Israel work, is another example of God's wonderful work among the Ukrainian Jewish people. Born in Lvov, Michael immigrated to Israel in 1989. Shortly after his arrival he came into contact with believers in his Hebrew language class and was led to faith. He now

of the early disciples to spread the Gospel, the Ukrainian Jewish believers have joyfully taken God's Word wherever He has led them.

We don't yet know how far the story will continue. However, judging from how He has worked already, we have great hopes that God will enable and use our Ukrainian Jewish brothers and sisters mightily.

<sup>1</sup> *Jewish Communities of the World*, published in 1998 by the World Jewish Congress and Lerner Publications Company.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

# Ukraine With Love

20th century. It is no mistake that Chosen People Ministries has concentrated much of its efforts and resources to reaching the Jewish people residing in these locations.

### In Ukraine and Germany

Chosen People Ministries established a presence in Kiev in the early 1990s. A Messianic congregation sprang up and God began to raise up Jewish leaders to carry the work forward. Among those who came to faith were Vladimir Pikman, who is now the director of our work in Germany, and Alexander Dukhno, Boris Galinker, Alexander Sereda and Gregory Kryshevich.

After receiving the Lord in 1992 and attending our Messianic congregation in Kiev for a time, Vladimir was selected for further training in Jewish evangelism in New York City. In 1995 he relocated to Germany and began a thriving work in Berlin among immigrants of the former Soviet Union—many of them from Ukraine—that has expanded to other German cities such as Düsseldorf,

oversees the work of our other Russian-speaking Chosen People Ministries staff: Neriyah, Leonid and Henry. Through Michael's leadership, Chosen People Ministries has active works in Tel Aviv, the West Bank and a newly established ministry center in Jerusalem.

In Israel, where innovative ministry is the order of the day, one of the most promising developments is the recent publication of the first Israeli evangelistic magazine printed in the Russian language. Published under the oversight of Chosen People Ministries' Israel staff, *My Jerusalem* has articles on various topics such as Bible teaching and current events.

The vision is in place and the work continues to grow.

### The Story Continues

Just as the early Church was scattered after the stoning of Stephen, the Ukrainian Jewish people have often had to journey far under duress. But just as God used the persecution



 +900,000

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# See the through Jewish Eyes Bible

by Dr. Daniel Goldberg



## ISRAEL—“THE APPLE OF GOD’S EYE” Zechariah 2:8

Zechariah lived in a day similar to our present times, a day of the restoration of Israel to their own land. The prophet’s message was a comfort to his own people and a warning to those nations who afflict God’s people Israel.

In Zechariah 2:8 the word translated “apple” is literally “gateway” or *bahvah* (כַּבֵּהַ in Hebrew) of the eye where the rays of light pass to the retina.

### THE “APPLE OF GOD’S EYE” EXPRESSES SIX SENTIMENTS TOWARD ISRAEL

#### I. As the “Apple of God’s Eye,” Israel is very precious to the Lord.

Moses wrote, “The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number...but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath He swore to your fathers...” (Deut. 7:7-8).

Because it is dear and priceless, men guard “the apple of the eye” even more than precious gems or books. So God treasures the Jewish people as His precious possession (See Ps. 17:8).

#### II. As the “Apple of His Eye,” injury to Israel is especially painful to God.

“In all their affliction He was afflicted...” (Isa. 63:9). Injury to the pupil of a human eye causes intense pain. Likewise, an injury to Israel causes intense pain and discomfort to God. Isaiah indicates that when Israel is mistreated, God considers His very name and excellence to be blasphemed (Isa. 52:5).

#### III. As the “Apple of His Eye,” God supernaturally protects and preserves Israel.

The Psalmist recounts Israel’s past history: “When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people, He permitted no one to do them wrong; Yes, He rebuked kings for their sakes, saying, ‘Do not touch My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm’”

(Ps. 105:13-15). (See also Gen. 35:5 and 12:17.) In the future a large remnant will be hidden away from the vindictive pursuits of the devil himself (Rev. 12:13,14).

#### IV. As the “Apple of His Eye,” nothing arouses God’s wrath like injustice to Israel.

In Romans 9:13 Paul quoted from Malachi 1:2,3: “As it is written, ‘Jacob have I loved, but Esau I have hated.’” This statement does not refer to the two brothers but to the nations they founded, namely Israel and Edom. Edom supported the enemies of Israel in seeking her annihilation (Obadiah 1:14). For this God wiped Edom off the map of human history.

Some injuries to the eye, this sensitive part of the human anatomy, cannot be repaired. How can the slaughter of six million Jews in Europe ever be remedied?

#### V. As the “Apple of God’s Eye,” the light of God’s salvation enters the world through Israel.

Light rays from without enter the pupil of the human eye and penetrate to the retina. This results in our seeing objects before us. Likewise, God chose Israel as His entrance way for the light of salvation to enter the world. To the woman of Samaria, Messiah Jesus declared, “...salvation is of the Jews” (Jn. 4:22; See Acts 9:15; Isa. 2:1-4).

#### VI. As the “Apple of God’s Eye,” every kindness to Israel will be rewarded.

First of all, those who pray for Israel will prosper (Ps. 122:6). Secondly, those who love the Jewish people will be blessed of God (Gen. 12:2,3). Thirdly, at His return to earth our Messiah will declare, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom...inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me” (Mt. 25:34, 40). ☆

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Summer**

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

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