

The Chosen People



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Praying for Israel's Dependence on Messiah

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Israel Independence Day – Praying for Israel’s Dependence on Messiah

Shalom! I hope you had a happy Israel Independence Day!

On May 14, 1948 (the 5th of Iyyar in the Hebrew calendar), Israel was officially recognized as a sovereign state by the United Nations! Each year, *Yom HaAtzma’ut* (Independence Day) is celebrated in Jerusalem, across Israel and around the world with a joy that a visitor to Israel rarely witnesses on any other day of the year. Thousands of people turn out to the Old City in Jerusalem—much like Times Square on New Year’s Eve.

Though I understand that there are a variety of views among believers as to whether or not the events of 1948 were a fulfillment of prophecy, I am personally persuaded that the birth of the modern state of Israel was nothing short of a miracle.

As the prophet Amos wrote, *“I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; they shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them,”* says the LORD your God” (Amos 9:14-15).

The restoration of Israel is a miracle for which I will continue to praise God for the rest of my days. However, the independence of Israel will only be fully realized when the people of Israel recognize their complete dependence on Jesus the Messiah. This is our hope, and what your Mission to the Jewish people longs to see more than anything.

Just as some of the prophecies related to Israel’s future in the Land

have been fulfilled, we expect that those prophecies regarding Israel’s return to faith will be fulfilled. *“For on My holy mountain, on the mountain height of Israel,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘there all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, shall serve Me; there I will*



Our new center is now furnished and being used for outreach every day

accept them, and there I will require your offerings and the first-fruits of your sacrifices, together with all your holy things. I will accept you as a sweet aroma when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered...” (Ezekiel 20:40-41).

We know the day will come when God will reveal Messiah Jesus to the Jewish people. Along with the Apostle Paul, we long for the day when all Israel will be saved: *“For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel*

until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob’” (Romans 11:25-26).

The Jerusalem Messianic Center

I believe our Messianic Center in Jerusalem is one part of God’s plan to fulfill His promise to Israel. We have sensed His presence in the purchase of the Center from the very beginning. We received more than 12,000 gifts for the Center, which tells me that thousands of believers are committed to bringing the Gospel to Israelis and are praying for us! The Lord cleared the legal paths for the purchase of the building, He provided the funding needed to acquire it without debt, and He is now enabling the Center to be used in many ways to His glory.

We are in the initial stages of starting a Messianic congregation in Jerusalem. Although the Center is not designed to host public worship services, the group of believers who are planting the congregation regularly meet in the Center for prayer and Bible study. Please pray that their congregation will be a light to the community.

I am thrilled about the Bible studies, video clubs and personal evangelism that our staff members conduct at the Center on a daily basis. I am most excited, however, about the training we are finally able to carry out in this facility. For years, there has been a serious shortage of trained leadership in the Land—and I believe



that this Gospel movement cannot grow to maturity without the God-inspired leadership to guide it. I have been praying that God would meet this need by providing a way for lay leaders to receive training in everything from Biblical studies and theology to evangelism methods and counseling. The opportunity is immense and we cannot wait to see what God does through this!

The staff in Israel is also grateful for the valuable office space the Center provides. It sounds mundane, perhaps, to think of the work that must be done in offices, but the evangelistic Russian magazine produced in those offices is not mundane at all. *My Jerusalem* magazine circulates among thousands of Russian Jews every quarter and its gorgeous artwork and design complement the articles about Messianic prophecy, Jewish history and the testimonies of lives changed by Messiah Jesus that are contained within its pages.

I am also excited about the number of ministries that have approached us and asked to use the space for their outreach events. We are committed to working alongside our fellow believers in order to create a unified witness to the transformative power of the Gospel. Therefore, we do our best to allow other Gospel ministries to use this building for Bible studies and other gatherings as much as we can,

although the demand is already so great that we cannot accommodate them all!

What a blessing it is to be able to share the Center with our fellow believers in Israel!

I asked one of our Israeli staff members to tell us more about what the Lord has been doing through the Center, and you can read about this when you turn the page!

Summer in Israel

I am also pleased to report that our summer Israel mission trips are nearly full! Three teams of twelve young people each will spend two weeks at a time ministering across Israel. This is a valuable investment in the lives of these young people from North America, but also in the lives of Israeli believers. As you may know, these followers of Messiah are often persecuted for their faith. It is such an encouragement to the young Israeli believers to have a team of people from abroad—on fire for the Lord—visit them and work alongside them in their ministries.

What's more, we are already receiving inquiries about our 2007

trips and creating a list of young people who want to participate. And we will soon have trips for more “mature” adults as well. As you will read on the next page, we recently hosted a ministry tour to Israel for adults. If you would be interested in taking a short-term mission trip to Israel, please indicate it on the enclosed card. This will not be a sightseeing tour only, but an opportunity to serve the Messiah in the land of His birth as well.

I hope you are as excited as I am about the future of Israel during this month in which we celebrated Israel Independence Day (it fell on May 3 this year). I trust that you will join me in praying for Israel to become spiritually dependent upon the God who chose us to be His special and *treasured* people (Exodus 19:5-6) and who gave His Son to be our Messiah. May the words of the prophet Isaiah, “...Return to Me, for I have redeemed you” (Isaiah 44:22) continue to be fulfilled in our day.

In Him,

Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser
President

Report from Jerusalem



For those of us who have never been to Israel, it's difficult to imagine what a typical day at the Jerusalem Messianic Center looks like, and what effect it has already had on the Israeli believers. To help us imagine more clearly what our brothers and sisters in Israel are doing in ministry, we recently sat down with Eugene (pictured above), one of our newest staff workers in Jerusalem, to talk about what is going on at the new ministry center in the heart of Jerusalem. Eugene is a native of Russia who immigrated to Israel shortly after his time as a foreign exchange student in Montana, where he first came to know the Lord.

● *How has the Messianic Center enabled your ministry to grow?*

When I first started working with Chosen People Ministries, we couldn't organize the leadership training seminars that we felt were necessary. We felt that, in order to make the seminars effective, we needed a place where people could feel at home. We wanted to be able to offer a place for those who had traveled a long way to stay the night, as well as enough room to allow the leaders to fellowship together before and afterwards. We are now doing this at the Jerusalem Messianic Center.

One of the most important things about the Center is that we now have a place to bring unbelievers in a home-like setting where they feel safe and comfortable talking about their lives, giving us the opportunity to share the Gospel with them in the most natural and unimposing way. The Center is ideal for this sort of relational evangelism because it feels like a home!

● *Tell me about these training seminars.*

We are hosting one- or two-day seminars for Messianic leaders in the Center. Eventually, these seminars will happen about once a month. We've already had training for youth ministers and worship leaders. These classes are needed because most people who work in congregations have never had any training and just figure out what to do as they go. We usually have 10 to 15 people attending each seminar.

● *How has the Messianic Center affected the community of believers in Israel?*

It has been exciting to see the diverse community of believers in Jerusalem come together because of this building. It has helped people to understand the importance of uniting in a combined effort of being a light to those who need the Lord. The Center is able to provide a place to meet with enough space and a convenient location.

Adult Ministry Tour Impacts Israel

Last month, I had the blessing of leading a group of thirteen people from my home church on a trip to Israel. In addition to the Biblical sites we visited, we also ministered in different ways while we were there. We visited *Dugit* ("little boat"), a coffee house ministry in Tel Aviv. That same morning, we did street evangelism in and around an open-air market with Neriyah A. and Henry M. One member of our group led an Israeli in a prayer to receive the Lord during this outreach. That encouraged us all! We also visited a crisis pregnancy center, where we received insight into the staggering number of abortions that are performed in Israel—a social problem we seem to hear little about. We worked several hours at "Joseph's Storehouse," a food bank that also distributes clothing and other necessary goods to the poor in the Land. The staff at Joseph's Storehouse expressed their gratitude as we cleaned up a bit and helped them organize their inventory. We also spent some time with Michael Z. at the Messianic Center in Jerusalem, where he graciously gave our group an orientation to our growing work there. All in all, it was a worthwhile and fruitful time.

— Rich Freeman

Vice President of Church Ministries

The Chosen People

Hamas: Israel's Unapologetic Enemy

From 1968 until 1994, the Palestinians residing in the Land of Israel were largely governed by one man, Yasser Arafat. Arafat rose to power as the head of a political party, *Fatah*, which was founded on the premise that the Palestinians should engage in self-liberation, by force if necessary. During that time, Arafat and Fatah encouraged hundreds of terrorist attacks, many of them through affiliate groups that were officially separate from Fatah, though in name only.

After Arafat's death in 2004, Fatah lost its revered leader and has struggled to recover. Last January, the world — including many Palestinians — was shocked when the opposing *Hamas* party won the majority of seats in the Palestinian elections. Political leaders and Israelis were unsettled by the victory of the more militant group, as it signifies a disturbing shift away from peace in the region. Though much remains to be seen about how Hamas will approach its new role, its historic opposition to negotiations and treaties makes it doubtful that this will be a time of renewed peace for Israel.

A Covenant of Hatred

A brief look at the 36 articles of its Covenant, which was published on August 18, 1988, leaves no doubt as to the goals of Hamas. The Covenant's preamble lays out its agenda toward Israel in stark terms: "...Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it."

Therefore, according to Article 13, "Initiatives, and so-called peaceful solutions and international conferences, are in contradiction to the principles of the Islamic Resistance Movement...Initiatives, proposals and international conferences are but a waste of time, an exercise in futility."

Hamas has produced 113 suicide bombers since 1993. In the time since the intensification of Israeli-Palestinian hostilities that began in September 2000, 227 Israeli civilians have been killed and 1,393 wounded in suicide bombings carried out by Hamas.

Hamas' recent electoral victory has completely changed the political landscape in Israel. People of good will may wrestle with the question of what is fair and just for both Jews and Palestinians in this terribly complex and painful situation. But for members of Hamas, even one square inch of Jewish homeland in the Mideast is an unacceptable insult.

But there is more. According to Hamas, the Jewish people crave world domination. As Article 32 of the Hamas Covenant explains, "The Zionist plan is limitless. After Palestine, the Zionists aspire to expand from the Nile to the Euphrates. When they will have digested the region they overtook, they will aspire to further expansion, and so on. Their plan is embodied in the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*..." However, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* was forged in 1905 by a Russian anti-Semite. Though this document was proved to be a total hoax and forgery decades ago, it continues to shape the opinions of people worldwide, including the policies of Hamas.

What can Israel do in the face of such implacable hatred? There is no easy answer. But one thing it must do while there is time is to turn to faith in Messiah, in whom all promises — to Jew and Arab alike — are fulfilled.

	FATAH (CONQUEST)	HAMAS (ZEAL)
ESTABLISHED	Disputed date; some time between 1952 and 1968	1988
IDEOLOGY	Secular and nationalist	Militantly Islamist
SUPPORTERS	Supported by moderate Gulf States, primarily Saudi Arabia	Supported by militant Islamist states such as Iran
MAIN FUNCTIONS	Political and military activities	Military activities and distributing welfare; its political life is a recent development
NOTABLE QUOTES	<p>"...the Palestinian Arab People's armed revolution is a decisive factor in...uprooting the Zionist existence, and this struggle will not cease unless the Zionist state is demolished and Palestine is completely liberated."</p> <p>– Articles 7 and 19, Fatah Constitution ["Zionist" is a typical Arab euphemism for Israel]</p>	<p>"There is no solution for the Palestinian question except through Jihad. Initiatives, proposals and international conferences are all a waste of time and vain endeavors."</p> <p>– Hamas charter, Article 13</p>

Sources consulted:
 Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs – www.mfa.gov.il
 Jewish Virtual Library – www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org

See the THROUGH JEWISH EYES Bible

by Daniel Goldberg, Th.D., D.D.

DAVID – The Shepherd Boy Slayer of Goliath

*“But God has chosen...the weak things
of the world to put to shame the things
that are mighty...that no flesh should
glory in His presence”
(I Corinthians 1:27-29).*



The above Scriptural principle is grounded in Israel’s history almost from the start, and there is no better example of it than the youthful David’s impressive triumph over Goliath of Gath. Imagine it—a shepherd boy with no military experience in combat with a seasoned Philistine army giant, nine feet, six inches tall!

GOLIATH OF GATH AND THE PHILISTINE THREAT

The history recounted in I and II Samuel unfolds against the backdrop of a continual Philistine menace to Israel. Samuel, Saul and finally David battled the Philistines, yet they were not subdued until David’s day. David’s reputation for military prowess, so crucial to his success, revolved around his

victories over the Philistines and the Amorites—beginning with the giant Goliath.

No doubt Goliath was a descendant of the gigantic “sons to Anak,” who, according to Joshua 11:22, were still residing in the Philistine cities of Gaza, Gath and Ashdod. Scripture’s description of Goliath resembles that of a walking tank. The giant’s defensive equipment was made of bronze, but his weapons of attack were made of iron (I Samuel 13:19-22), which gave the Philistines a decided military advantage over Israel.

Goliath’s coat of armor weighed approximately 125 pounds, and the head of his spear about 17 pounds. Is it any wonder that his pride was offended when the young shepherd challenged him? Not only did

Goliath curse David, but he cursed the God of Israel (I Samuel 17:43).

DAVID VS. GOLIATH

Goliath’s mighty presence was certainly depressing to the Israelites. In order to buck up their morale, King Saul offered one of his daughters, a great deal of wealth and tax advantages to any challenger. But when David volunteered his services, his greatest consideration was to punish Goliath for his defiance of the God of Israel (I Samuel 17:45). And although he was ridiculed by his brothers (I Samuel 17: 28) and demeaned by Saul (I Samuel 17:33), David calmly took his sling and the five smooth stones he had gathered and faced his foe.

In response to Goliath’s taunts, David declared, *“You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied”* (I Samuel 17:45).

The rest of the story is well known. David, the humble youthful shepherd, used his sling to slay Goliath and displayed his severed head for all to view.

DAVID’S FORMULA FOR BRAVERY

The writer of Hebrews lists David along with Gideon, Samuel and the prophets as men of faith (Hebrews 11:32). But the secret of David’s faith, if there is one, is that he viewed the giant not through the eyes of the Israelites who feared him, but through the Lord’s eyes. Goliath may have been a giant among men, but not compared to the man who stands with God. David’s God was big enough to dwarf even the largest giant. How big is your God? ☆

GRACIOUS GIFT OPENS DOOR FOR THE GOSPEL

Boris Goldin met Reuven,* a Jewish man who had lost the use of his legs two years ago after a car accident. He desperately needed some sort of transportation. Boris and his wife, Shulamit (Irina), knew how to help. Shulamit's mother, who recently passed away, left behind a "Scooter" motorized chair.

They decided to give it to Reuven as a gift. When Boris delivered it, Reuven and his wife were thankful beyond words. Through the conversation that followed, Boris was able to speak of the Messiah. Boris writes, "It was a very emotional moment. Later, we brought them a copy of the New Testament, and now they are both reading it. Please pray for the salvation of this couple."

MUSLIM MAN RECEIVES MESSIAH

After a Bible study in New York City, Noel R. had the opportunity to speak with Jalal,* who is from Indonesia, a country that contains over ten million Muslims. Jalal, who had read both the Koran and the New Testament, said he was struggling to decide which book contained the truth. Noel soon realized that Jalal truly wanted to believe in Jesus but was unsure if God would accept him because of some lingering questions about Islam. Noel assured Jalal that God would accept him if he truly believed Jesus died for his sins, regardless of the fact that he still had many questions. Noel then prayed with Jalal as he received the Lord. We believe peace will come one heart at a time through Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

ISRAELI FAMILY FINDS MESSIAH

A small team of Israeli staff and other believers went to a Purim party—held in a big concert hall in Jerusalem and attended by thousands of young people—to distribute literature and start conversations. Maxim, one of our workers, talked for a while with an entire family before being escorted out of the concert hall by the police for witnessing. Fortunately, he had already given the family his contact information before the police arrived. The next morning, the family called Maxim and asked to meet with him at a local coffee shop. They talked with Maxim for many hours, and he showed them Messiah Jesus in the Hebrew scriptures. Before the day was over, the entire family came to faith in Jesus!

DA VINCI CODE DEBATE IN NEW YORK CITY

The much publicized release of the film version of *The Da Vinci Code* provided Chosen People Ministries with the opportunity to examine its claims in a three-way dialogue held at the Hilton Hotel in Manhattan. The panel included evangelical scholar Dr. Darrell Bock, Rabbi Shmuley Boteach and Messianic Jewish author Dr. Michael Brown. The event drew non-believers from across the city. Drs. Bock and Brown shared the truth about Jesus, Mary, and the New Testament records. Rabbi Boteach presented a fascinating Orthodox Jewish perspective on the issues as well. Please pray that those who attended will come to the follow-up Bible studies.



DELEGATION FROM SYNAGOGUE HEARS GOSPEL PROCLAIMED IN CHURCH

Igor Swiderski, Chosen People Ministries staff worker and student at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, was invited to speak at a local church about the importance of Jewish Evangelism. The church advertised this event in the local newspaper and a delegation of about a half dozen Jewish people showed up, headed by their rabbi and a representative of the Jewish Federation. After making the Scripture's case that Jesus is the Messiah, Igor continued by challenging the church with the Biblical principle of Romans 1:16—that the Gospel is still "to the Jew first and also to the Greek." The Jewish people in attendance listened politely and attentively. After the service, the rabbi took the pastor aside and told him that the most disturbing part of the message was the idea that one could believe in Jesus and still be Jewish. Igor says, "The seed has been planted in those Jewish people's hearts, and I hope and pray that it will grow and bring some fruit." Please pray that this will be so.



*Names changed

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