



**The  
Chosen  
People**

Volume XVII, Issue 2 March 2011

# PURIM: GOD IS FAITHFUL TO HIS PEOPLE

**INSIDE  
THIS  
ISSUE:**

Man Cannot Destroy What God Promised to Protect • Changed Lives in Brooklyn • Paying Tribute to the Government and to God

# MAN CANNOT DESTROY WHAT GOD PROMISED TO PROTECT

Dear friend,

Shalom from the New York City headquarters of Chosen People Ministries. We are getting ready to observe one of my favorite Jewish holidays—Purim. It is also called the Feast of Esther, because it commemorates the beautiful Queen Esther's role in foiling Haman, the Persian official who plotted to destroy the Jewish people, as told in the Book of Esther.

There are a number of colorful Purim traditions, including improvised children's plays depicting the story of Esther, and the reading of the entire Book of Esther out loud. During the reading of the *megillah* (scroll), the children (and many adults) cry out "BOOO!" at the top of their lungs when the name Haman is read and "HOORAY!" when Mordechai's name is mentioned. Children also wear costumes of their favorite Purim characters (or Jewish heroes in general) and go around their neighborhoods collecting candy—something of a Jewish version of Halloween.

In the more religious neighborhood near my house in Brooklyn, there is dancing in the streets and lots of joy and laughter in celebrating the survival of the Jewish people and the faithfulness of God.

You might want to attend a Purim service at a Chosen People Ministries Center or local Messianic congregation if you're near one—you will enjoy the experience! (Call 888-2-YESHUA and ask Marcie to

help you find one!) You can even attend a Purim play held at a local synagogue or Jewish community center. There is nothing about Purim that a born-again believer could not affirm—it is a joy-filled reminder of God's grace and covenant faithfulness.

## Three Lessons from the Book of Esther

We can learn many lessons from the Book of Esther that will strengthen our walk with the Lord. Let me offer just three:

**1** *God is always here, but His presence is sometimes veiled.*

Although God's name is not mentioned once in the Book of Esther, His presence is always felt. There is a series of "providential events" (holy coincidences) that could only have been orchestrated by the one true God of Israel. This tells us that He is always aware of the troubles and challenges faced by His people.

For example, the very circumstances leading to Esther's selection to replace the fallen-from-favor former Queen Vashti were providential in nature. After Esther met King Ahasuerus for the first time, he immediately fell in love with her and chose her as his new Queen (Esther 2:18). God was evidently at work behind the scenes, preparing Esther for her nation-saving role in the not-too-distant future!

**2** *The Lord places His people in the right place at the right time to accomplish His will.*

This is perhaps the major lesson of the entire Book of Esther. Many believers throughout the centuries have memorized and quoted the words of Esther's uncle Mordechai, who said,

*"...Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews. For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"*  
(Esther 4:13-14)

We learn from the Book of Esther that the Lord is always in control. He places His servants in the right place at the right time for His purposes. The Jewish people would certainly have been destroyed if the Lord had not intervened through Esther!

Sometimes the Lord begins moving us into these "right places" well before the time comes to perform the particular task He has in mind. Our responsibility is to be open to His leading and ready to go!

Years ago, I was serving the Lord in San Francisco when my dad, living in Brooklyn, had a massive heart attack. I traveled east immediately to be at his side, but because he was in the Coronary Care Unit, I wasn't able to spend hours at a time at his bedside. I would take many walks around Coney Island Hospital in Brooklyn, praying for my dad (who was not a believer) and for the many Orthodox and



Hasidic Jewish people I was passing on the streets.

At the time, I was very happy in San Francisco: enjoying a fruitful ministry, being the new father of two little girls, living in a nice home and much more. But as I walked around Brooklyn, I became profoundly unsettled and sensed the Lord was calling me to move back to Brooklyn, where I was born!

This sense in my soul grew over time, and I could not deny that it was the Lord's leading. We moved our young family to Brooklyn and initiated a wonderful ministry among Russian Jews through planting a Russian-speaking congregation and establishing English as a Second Language courses and other outreach activities. For a long time, I thought our ministry among Russian Jews was "the end of the story." After all, we had seen dozens and maybe hundreds of Russian Jewish people come to faith in Jesus; it had been exciting and fruitful. But now I realize that our past ministries among Russian Jews in Brooklyn were only Chapter One! The Lord seems to be writing a novel, with the next chapters about the Brooklyn Messianic Center and seminary program being written right now!

You see, like Esther and Mordechai, we often know very little about why God places us in a certain family, community, congregation or ministry until He is ready for us to know. We do not need to understand every detail of the full plan ahead of time; all we need to know is the next step and to be willing to take it. The only question that really matters is this: are you available for God to use for His Kingdom?

**3** *God will never allow His chosen people to be destroyed!*

The third and final lesson I'd like to share is that the Lord arranges earthly events for the sake of His glory. He made sure Mordechai was honored by the king. He placed Queen Esther in just the right time

and place to save her people from the destruction that the wicked Haman had devised.

The Book of Esther is a poignant illustration of God's faithfulness to His covenant promises and to the Jewish people. Historically, God has judged those nations that have tried to destroy us. This is His promise—not because of the righteousness of the Jewish people, but because of God's choice and faithfulness (Romans 11:28-29).

Let's continue to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, for the salvation of Jewish people, and for our country and churches to be a blessing to Jewish people. Let's keep remembering that the greatest blessing we can bring to God's chosen people is His most precious gift—the Messiah Jesus.

Have a joyous Purim—and remember that we serve a God who always keeps His promises!

Your brother in the Messiah,



Mitch

P.S. Please continue to pray for our new Brooklyn Messianic Center and ask the Lord if you might participate in some way in the renovation project to prepare it for ministry. Thanks for caring!



Dr. Mitch Glaser  
President



Reading the megillah; a Purim parade in Israel; artist's illustration of the biblical story of Queen Esther (right).





# Shining His Light in Brooklyn

Did you know that the Jewish population of Brooklyn is comparable to that of Jerusalem? We believe that the Lord has placed us in the midst of this very Jewish borough of New York City in order to shine the light of Messiah among His chosen people. God is miraculously transforming lives and drawing Jewish people to Himself through our multifaceted outreach and our Brooklyn Messianic Center.

## Russian Messianic Congregation

Establishing a Russian-speaking Messianic congregation in Brooklyn is a rewarding and fruitful venture! We have been thrilled to see the way Russian Jews—many of them former atheists—have opened their hearts to the Messiah. Peter Shirokov and Klaudia Zhelezny worked faithfully toward this goal for the last two years and now the congregation, which meets in our Brooklyn Messianic Center, has a solid core group of regular attendees. We praise God for this new Russian-language congregation—especially because of the passion these new believers have for reaching out to their spiritually needy neighbors.

Sometimes a simple invitation can be life-changing: one Saturday morning, a congregant brought a friend with her and after the service, Rebekah\* asked for prayer. Peter

listened and prayed for her as tears flowed from her eyes. Rebekah was ready for God to change her life. She had never read the Bible, so Peter gladly gave her one. Rebekah returned the next week and prayed to receive Jesus as her Messiah.

Peter describes the *new* Rebekah: “She came to our morning service glowing with excitement about God’s presence in her life. The Lord had answered her prayers in a very specific way and she could not wait to tell me. Rebekah is now reading the Bible and learning to walk with the Lord each day.” There are many others like Rebekah and we rejoice to see her transformation and the way our Messiah Jesus is building the new congregation—one changed life at a time.

## English and Bible Classes

Our English as a Second Language classes enable Russian Jewish immigrants to learn English, which is necessary for their survival in this new country. This is one way we show His love to Russian Jewish people—they know that we care about them. This program harkens back to our roots, when Rabbi Leopold Cohn founded Your Mission to the Jewish People in Brooklyn back in 1894. He offered practical help to poor Eastern European immigrants who, like himself, had arrived on the shores of America with merely the clothes on their backs. He provided English classes, medical help, food and even job training, which was the foundation of his successful ministry, now 117 years old!

All of the help we offer, from English classes to ministries for those who are alcohol- and drug- dependent, give us the opportunity to witness to many people and have a positive and visible presence in the community.



Staff member Klaudia Zhelezny, herself an immigrant from the former Soviet Union, rejoices over one of her English students who is now a sister in Messiah: “With much joy, I want to tell you that a Jewish woman, Liora,\* received salvation. Liora is the mother of drug-dependent Dennis\* (age 17) and she is one of my Bible group participants. Now she has joined the congregation. Please pray for her spiritual growth and for Dennis’ salvation.”

We continue to marvel at all the Lord is doing through the love of our missionaries for these precious people.

### Addiction Counseling

The Brooklyn Messianic Center hosts a vital, Gospel-centered rehabilitation ministry for those who have become dependent on drugs and alcohol. Participants receive prayerful support, Bible classes and practical help in how to overcome addiction. There are also support groups for family members of addicts. Our staff worker Viktoria, herself a former addict, works tirelessly to help others find freedom in Messiah.

God’s blessing on this outreach has been surprisingly abundant, as many of the participants come to faith as they complete the program. During last year’s Simcha Messianic retreat, several people from the drug rehab ministry were baptized.

Dozens of men and women have found healing and hope through this ministry—and we will be able to reach many more through the new Center. Klaudia writes, “Pray that our ministry would continue to be a ‘buffer zone’ which is open to receive new people right from the streets who seek Jesus as their Helper. We plan to expand these efforts when we open the new Feinberg Center in Brooklyn and have more space.”

### Special Evangelistic Fellowship

As those who attend our addiction rehab program try to leave behind their destructive lives, they need time to be integrated

*\*names have been changed*

into the faith community, to learn to worship, pray effectively, study the Bible for themselves and so many other essentials for living a Jesus-centered life! This kind of learning is best done in a community that focuses on the special needs of this group.

Some of these precious people have visited our Russian-speaking Messianic congregation, but since they are either new to the faith or not yet believers, there is much they do not yet understand. To better minister to them, we have begun a special evangelistic fellowship on Saturday afternoons that draws about 20-25 people each week.

Please pray and partner with us as our Brooklyn team works together to develop these dynamic and life-changing ministries for those who especially need the touch of the Great Physician.

### A Center of Vibrant Ministry

The Brooklyn Messianic Center is home to these ministries and much more—including off-site ministries such as evangelistic book tables, where interested passersby stop to have sincere conversations about faith; and outreach concerts that draw hundreds of people, many who visit for the first time.

Sometimes the Lord uses our ministry efforts in unexpected ways. Once, during a prayer meeting, a young lady named Natalia\* dropped in. Her visit was completely unexpected, but our Brooklyn staff knew it was God’s leading. After speaking with our staff members and receiving answers to her questions about Messiah, Natalia prayed and asked Jesus to be her Savior! She now wants to witness to her husband, in the hopes that he will come to faith as well.

Our current Brooklyn Messianic Center has outgrown the facility and we are regularly overcrowded. The new Feinberg Messianic Center, which you have helped make possible, is located in the very epicenter of Jewish Brooklyn and will enable us to expand our existing ministries. Pray with us for the growth of the Lord’s work among the Jewish people of Brooklyn! 🌈

Artist’s rendition of our new Brooklyn Messianic Center (below)





# SEE THE BIBLE THROUGH JEWISH EYES

BY DANIEL GOLDBERG, TH.D., D.D.



Dr. Goldberg serves as International Ministries Representative for Chosen People Ministries and lives in Pineville, North Carolina with his wife, Madeline.

## THE KING'S COUNSEL ON PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE GOVERNMENT AND TO GOD

### (Matt. 22:15-22)

During Passover season in biblical times, thousands of lambs were offered to the Lord, and each lamb was examined carefully. Only a lamb without blemish would qualify (Ex. 12:5). Chapter 22 of Matthew relates the public examination of Jesus: first by the Herodians, then the Sadducees, and finally the Pharisees. This occurred prior to Jesus offering Himself up as the spotless *"Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"* (Jn. 1:29).

The Herodians were a Jewish political party that supported Roman rule through the dynasty of Herod, an Edomite sitting on "the throne of David" as Rome's puppet ruler.

The Sadducees were a party of Jewish aristocrats or persons of social rank. The New Testament (Acts 5:17) and Josephus testify that all wealthy, high-priestly families belonged to the Sadducean party. They generally elevated the Law of Moses above all, and when conversing with them, Jesus quoted only Moses.

The Pharisees were a religious sect that opposed Roman rule in Israel as well as the Roman poll tax. They resented submitting to

a Gentile power and despised the reverence given to Caesar as a god.

### TRIBUTE TO CAESAR? (Matt. 22:17)

The Pharisees were determined to get rid of Jesus. In a new tactic, they decided to send their disciples to team up with the Herodians for the purpose of throwing Jesus off guard. The question they crafted was, "Is it lawful (from a religious point of view) to pay poll tax to Caesar?" If Jesus said yes, He would offend the Pharisees and the Jewish population. If He said no, He would alienate the Herodians and the Roman authorities.

Jesus asked for a denarius, a coin used to pay taxes. This silver coin represented an average daily wage. Next, He asked whose inscription was on the coin. The Pharisees answered, "Caesar's."

Then Jesus responded, "*Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's*" (Matt. 22:21). Jesus' response was simply profound, and is the basis of biblical teaching on several important doctrines:

(A) Believers must pray for, honor, and obey rulers (Rom. 13:1; 1 Pet. 2:13-17; 1 Tim. 2:1-4).

(B) Believers have dual citizenship—in heaven and on the earth (Phil. 3:20).

One cannot benefit from roads, education, justice and freedom without making a contribution. Jesus taught that if you enjoy Caesar's benefits, you should pay Caesar's taxes.

### WORSHIP BELONGS TO GOD

Jesus said "Yes" to paying Caesar's taxes, but "No" to rendering worship to Caesar.

Believers have a loyalty higher than to government (Matt. 22:21). The Greek word for "render" (*apodote*) means "give back"—so we must give back the coin bearing Caesar's image. But we must give ourselves back to God, through Messiah Jesus, because every person bears God's image (Gen. 9:6). Jesus' reply left a deep impression upon the memory of the early Church (Rom. 13:7; 1 Pet. 2:13,14).

Every believer must discern the areas where "Caesar" or the government has no right to dictate. If any conflict exists, remember, "*We ought to obey God rather than men*" (Acts 5:29). 🌈

## DIVINELY APPOINTED SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

Staff worker Robert Pristoop was recently invited by a friend to attend a mega-church. At the end of the sermon, the pastor said to turn to the people behind you and pray with them. The couple behind Robert asked if he was Jewish, and when he said he was, they asked him if he would be willing to talk to a Jewish couple they'd been witnessing to. Robert now has dinner plans with the Jewish couple—and they have invited another Jewish couple to hear his testimony as well! Please pray that both couples would be receptive to hearing the Gospel through a Jewish believer.

## MOTHER AND DAUGHTER COME HOME TO MESSIAH

Manuel Goffman, who leads our Hispanic Messianic Jewish congregation in Florida, reports that Marta\* found the congregation through its website, and she and her eight-year-old-daughter began to attend. Marta came from a Catholic background, had been married to a Jewish man and had begun to attend synagogue, where she didn't quite feel comfortable. Some time later, she was divorced from her husband and began to look for a Hispanic Messianic Jewish congregation that would bring together Jesus and Jewishness. Manuel rejoices, "She has now been worshipping with us for three months, received Yeshua as her Lord and Savior and is bringing her friends! Please pray for Marta and her daughter."



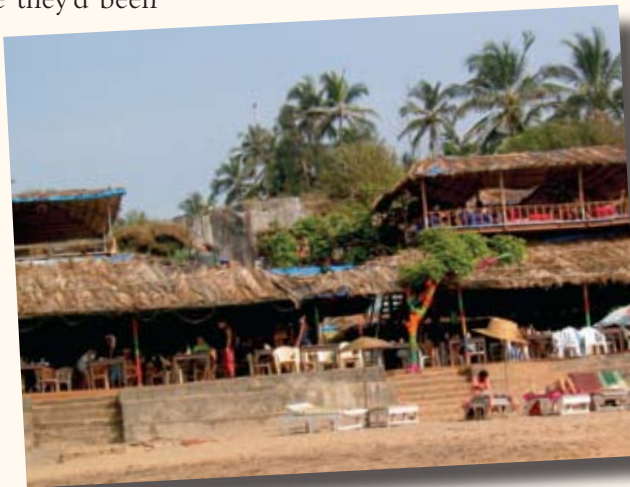
Manuel and Rosa Goffman

## SPIRITUAL CHAT IN THE SHOWER

With every Israeli guest who stays at Scott B.'s campground in New Zealand, God is faithful to provide an opportunity for significant conversation about spiritual issues. One day, while Scott was in the middle of his usual late-night cleaning of the shower block, Natan\* entered and they began to chat. "What did you do before you came to New Zealand?" he inquired. As Scott shared his journey as a Messianic Jew, the conversation—held in both Hebrew

*\*names have been changed*

and English—turned to atonement, the Torah and Yeshua. The next day, as Natan and his friend Eitan\* were departing, Scott gave them a package of Hebrew Scriptures and Gospel literature, telling them that these truths have transformed the lives of thousands of Jewish people. This is just one example of hundreds of such encounters Scott has with Israelis traveling in New Zealand.



## REACHING ISRAELIS IN INDIA

We recently sent a team to India to share Messiah with Jewish and Israeli travelers. At a gathering at sunset on the beach, team leader Robin started a conversation with the people sitting next to her. After Robin mentioned that she is

a Jew who follows Yeshua, Mati\* lit up with curiosity, saying he had met Jewish people with many different beliefs, but had never heard of a Jew who believes in Jesus. He and Robin spoke for a long time, and he asked great questions as he sought to understand how Jewishness and belief in Jesus fit together biblically, historically and culturally. Nomi,\* an Israeli woman, also approached Robin with spiritual questions, wanting to connect more with God. Robin reports, "I shared my testimony and some Scripture. At first she was a little surprised, then curious. We spoke for a while, and now I've been in touch with her online." Please pray for the Lord to grow the seeds planted among dozens of Jewish people in India.

## JEWISH BELIEVER BAPTIZED IN CUBA

New York area-based staff member Jeff Siegel had the opportunity to minister in Cuba along with four Christian doctors and a lawyer. The team brought humanitarian aid, spoke in churches, did children's ministry and trained leaders. In one house church, the pastor asked them to assist with doing baptisms in the ocean. As Jeff was about to baptize the first person, he asked, "¿Su nombre?" (Your name?) The man replied that his name was Hymie. Jeff asked him if he was Jewish, and he said yes. Jeff remarks, "There are only approximately 1,000 Jewish people in the nation of Cuba and I had the privilege of baptizing one of them. What a God we serve!"



# Why I Support Jewish Missions

My grandfather, a strong believer, had a deep love for Israel. In May of 1948 when Israel became a nation, I remember my grandfather getting so excited and saying, "See, that's what has to happen before the Lord returns!" This love for Israel has come down our family line. What an example my grandfather was! He taught me to love and pray for the Jewish people and to support Jewish missions, and I do so to this very day. – Betty K., age 82.

For more information on ways you can be involved in giving, please contact us today. Call 1-888-293-7482 (or in Canada 1-888-442-5535) or email us at [giving@chosenpeople.com](mailto:giving@chosenpeople.com).

## Passover: "Do This in Remembrance of Me"

**Messianic Passover Haggadah (#3008) / \$6.95<sup>us</sup>**

This Haggadah has been prepared to show God's redemptive grace in the Passover through the death, burial and resurrection of His Messiah, Jesus, and to symbolize God's spiritual redemption of His people.

**Matza Tash (#5026) / \$21.95<sup>us</sup>**

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

**Seder Plate (#5024) / \$17.95<sup>us</sup>**

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

**Kiddush Cup (#5025) / \$16.95<sup>us</sup>**

This silver Kiddush Cup is about three inches tall.

**COMPLETE SET - includes Haggadah, leader's guide, matza tash, plate and cup (#5027) / \$59.95<sup>us</sup>**

For phone orders call 800-333-4936 in the U.S. Or for even more resources visit us online at [www.chosenpeople.com/store](http://www.chosenpeople.com/store).



# Simcha 2011

Plan to join us Friday May 27 through Monday May 30 at Chosen People Ministries' annual retreat in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Our theme this year will be "The Book of Daniel: Living for Yeshua in the Lion's Den," with Dr. Rich Freeman as our speaker. You'll enjoy fun, fellowship, Messiah-centered teaching and lively worship featuring Neal and Kim Surasky. There will be programs for all age groups—plus recreational opportunities and family activities. Call 212-223-2252 for registration information, or visit us online at [chosenpeople.com/simcha](http://chosenpeople.com/simcha).



# MAY 27-30, 2011



## The Chosen People Newsletter

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

The Chosen People newsletter is published monthly by Chosen People Ministries. For more information or to receive *The Chosen People* newsletter, write to: Chosen People Ministries, International Headquarters, 241 East 51st Street, New York, NY 10022. In Canada, write to: Box 897 Station B, North York, ON, M2K 2R1 ([www.chosenpeople.ca](http://www.chosenpeople.ca)). In Great Britain, write to: P.O. Box 47871, Golders Green, London, NW11 1AL ([www.chosenpeople.org.uk](http://www.chosenpeople.org.uk)). In Australia, write to: Celebrate Messiah Australia, P.O. Box 304, Caulfield, South Vic 3162, Australia ([www.celebratemesiah.com.au](http://www.celebratemesiah.com.au)). Contributing Editors: Zhava Glaser, S. McHugh, Alan Shore; Designer: Lois Gable. Cover © haya\_p | istockphoto.com

Serving in: Argentina • Australia • Canada • France • Germany • Hong Kong • Israel • Netherlands • New Zealand • Russia • Ukraine • United Kingdom • United States

Chosen People Ministries U.S. Board of Directors: Mr. Tom McHugh, Chairman • Mr. Roy Adams • Mr. Terry Amick • Dr. Darrell Bock • Mr. Jeffrey Branman • Ms. Cindy Forbes • Dr. Mitch Glaser • Dr. Gregory Hagg, Vice-Chairman • Mrs. Barbara Medlin • David Schiller, Esquire • Mr. Rande Spiegelman



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



Visit us on the Web at [www.chosenpeople.com](http://www.chosenpeople.com) Our Spanish website is [www.pueblolegido.com](http://www.pueblolegido.com) ©2011 Chosen People Ministries

Printed in the USA