

The Chosen People



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THE GOSPEL AND THE JEWS OF FRANCE

INSIDE: Reaching Jewish People in France During the Holocaust •
The Ministry of Jesus to His Brothers: Hebrews 2:12-18



Dear friend of the Jewish people,

Shalom from our headquarters in New York City. It is always a joy to write to you in our Chosen People Ministries newsletter each month. My wife and I just returned from Israel where we had a very encouraging time with our 20+ staff members serving in the Holy Land. It would be impossible to try and communicate to you all that these dedicated servants of the Lord are doing in reaching our Jewish people everywhere—in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and many other locations. We are beginning to see many young Israelis interested in the Gospel and this is very exciting.

One of the most notable changes in Israel is the rise of the French Jewish population. French Jews are now the largest group of Jewish people taking advantage of the Law of Return, immigrating to Israel each year. Israel is a *safe haven* for Jewish people around the globe who are experiencing antisemitism and persecution, simply because they are Jewish. The Russian Jewish immigration to Israel continues, mostly from the war-torn areas of Ukraine, but undoubtedly the arrival of the French Jewish population is one of the most significant demographic changes within Israel.

A Focus on France

Did you know that France has the largest Jewish population in Europe? In fact, after Israel, the United States and probably all of the countries of the former Soviet Union, France has the largest Jewish population in the world. The Jewish people in France thrived after the end of World War II, but in recent years, primarily because of the rise of militant Muslims in France, the fate of the Jewish people there is now more fragile.

Let me also add that the evangelical church in France is small and struggling, but dedicated. Unfortunately, there are fewer than twelve people dedicated to Jewish ministry there at this current time. My dear brothers and sisters, it is time to pray fervently for the Jewish people of France.

To meet these needs, Chosen People Ministries has initiated a number of new strategies to reach the Jewish people of France. Along with our direct missionary and publication ministries that have been going on since the 1930s in France, we now have two websites in French that are touching the lives of French Jewish people in many ways. The first site is an Isaiah 53 website where we are offering the book *Isaiah 53 Explained* in French through Facebook ads. These ads include the testimonies of French Messianic Jews who are part of the Isaiah 53 French website. The ads are reaching French Jewish people in France, Israel, Montréal and around the globe. Hundreds of French Jewish people have already ordered the book.

We also have initiated an online *aliyah* helpdesk that allows us to engage with French Jewish people trying to move to Israel. In 2014, 7,500 Jews made *aliyah* from France, the highest number in 30 years, making France the number one country for Jewish immigration in the world. In 2015 that number was exceeded with 8,200 new immigrants. It is expected that the 2016 immigration number will be even higher because French Jews continue to be frightened for their safety and that of their children.

We are offering these immigrants information, various kinds of help both online and on the ground. This is a ministry of love on our part in which we are extending bona fide help to Jewish people leaving France and

Attendees of Muchan-France, a Chosen People Ministries conference for Messianic young adults.



The Chosen People

moving to Israel. Through the relationships that we build we hope to tell them about the Jewish Messiah who loves them and who died and rose so that they might have everlasting life.

We need your prayers for both of these efforts.

There is no doubt that the Jewish people of France are living in difficult days and some have even suggested that if indeed the persecution intensifies, France will lose most of its Jewish population as they will move to Israel.

Persecution in France

Let's look at some recent events to better understand why so many French Jewish people are leaving France.

The 2006 murder of French Jew Ilan Halimi was a major wake-up call for the Jewish community who no longer felt safe in France. It could be argued that it was around that time that French Jews started to get organized and planned to make *aliyah* to Israel.

In 2012, the "Toulouse Massacre" of seven people, including a rabbi and three students at a Jewish day school, reinforced the reality that France had a problem keeping its Jewish community safe.

There were many more acts of antisemitism that continued to take place until the ominous year of 2015 when two major acts of terrorism took place on French soil.

The January 2015 "Charlie Hebdo" massacres included a kosher supermarket hostage situation and resulted in the death of four Jewish patrons. French Jew Olivier Melnick, one of Chosen People Ministries' workers, recalls:

I saw the hostage situation unfold on live French TV on my computer in the USA. I quickly realized that the store was in my home town. It was a store that I had frequented many times in the past. My niece, who lives 40 yards from the store, happened to be inside, shopping for Shabbat with her little boy, fifteen minutes prior to the gunman entering the place. My mother was also on that street the same morning. I immediately called her to reassure her and ask her to stay put behind locked doors. She still lives in the same building where she witnessed her father being taken by the Gestapo in 1942, to die in Auschwitz. I tried to comfort my mother who started to cry on the phone as she asked me, "Are they coming back for us?" I didn't know how to respond!

Then there was the November 2015 attack that claimed the lives of 130 people. It is widely believed that the main thrust of the terrorist attack on the *Bataclan* concert venue was organized to hurt the two owners of the place who happened to be Jewish (incidentally they had sold the place a few months prior).

A Burden for French Jews

My heart goes out to the French Jewish community. It has been my prayer for many years to be able to reach that very community with the Gospel of Yeshua. French Jews have been comfortably established in France

for a while and they are agnostic for the most part. Because of the rebirth of antisemitism in Europe and its current exponential growth, French Jews, among other European Jewish communities, are scared and hopeless. But we can offer them hope.

It is very sad to see France losing its Jewish community. This will undoubtedly affect France as a whole, more than just demographically. Yet, I invite you to pray with me for the salvation of the French Jews who, while they might be lost to France, can still find hope in Yeshua, the Jewish Messiah.

If you would like to give a special gift this month to reach the Jews of France, then please note that on the enclosed card. As always, we do need your support to keep our missionaries in the field as they serve the Lord in the United States, Israel, France or in any of the other 13 nations where Chosen People Ministries is reaching Jewish people with the Gospel.

I hope you enjoy the brief history of Chosen People Ministries' outreach to the Jewish people in France during and after the Holocaust! It is a story that is not often told.

We deeply appreciate your prayers and loving support.

Many blessings,

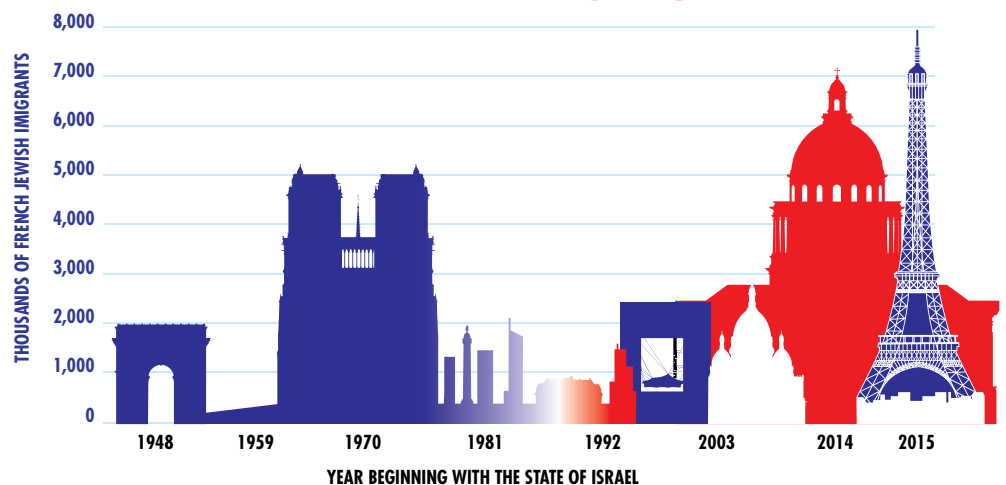


Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser
President

French Jews Making Aliyah





Reaching Jewish People in France During the Holocaust

By the Second World War there were 300,000 Jews in France, 180,000 of whom lived in Paris. Some were French Jews who had lived in France for centuries, but the others were recent immigrants from Eastern and Central Europe and from Africa and Asia.

This vast number of immigrants captured the heart of the French Protestant Church, which began to grasp their responsibility to the Jews. Many Protestant churches were active in trying to minister to the needs of these Jewish people, both materially and spiritually, as reported by a global inter-mission organization called the Christian Approach to the Jews:

Over 100,000 Jews from other parts of Europe had moved to France since 1933 and the immigrations were stepping up at this time and so relief work for the Protestant and non-Aryan refugees is organized by a committee of the Federation Protestants de France.¹

Chosen People Ministries, then known as the American Board of Missions to the Jews (ABMJ), was also beginning to work in France. The son of our founder, Joseph Hoffman Cohn, had a particular burden to help the Jews of France hear about Jesus. He also wanted to care for their physical needs, as the looming shadow of the coming Nazi terror was already known by many. Joseph Cohn and other Jewish ministry leaders saw the horror coming, but, of course, could not have imagined in their wildest dreams the extremes to which Hitler would go to destroy the Jewish people.

In the April 1936 edition of *The Chosen People* magazine, Cohn describes the work of Your Mission to the Jewish People during the early days of the Holocaust. He wrote:

I arranged with our honorary director in Paris, Pastor Henri Vincent, together with our missionary, André Frankel, to open up a relief station where we shall be able in the name of the Lord Jesus to bring immediate relief to substantial numbers of these destitute families. Our method is to give them tickets, which entitle each one a meal at a restaurant in the Jewish ghetto district of Paris down below the Bastille. These tickets will then be returned to us by the restaurant keeper and we will redeem them at the price of three and one-third francs per meal, about twenty-four cents in our money at the old rate of exchange. We will also provide, whenever we can, clothing, either by purchase or from gifts which Pastor Vincent will receive from friends in France. Pastor Vincent will also form a central committee, which will have charge of this relief work. Let us pray that this venture on our part will be used of God to bring a saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ into the hearts of many of those who now seem to have lost all hope. We must remind them that Israel's God still lives, and that He will send help when all else fails.²

The work of the ABMJ continued to grow in the period between the wars. The Paris edition of *The Shepherd of Israel* was available in Yiddish and French by 1936. Added to the staff in January 1938 were Mlles. Jermaine Mellon-Hollard and Salomon.



Your Mission to the Jewish People has been reaching the Jewish people of France since the early 1930s and especially during the Holocaust period.



By the summer of 1940, the work of the Mission was forced to end and the missionaries were scattered. Cohn included a portion of a letter from Mrs. André Frankel, which provides us with a description of the tragedy of those days:

*My dear director and friend, My thoughts are so often with you, and I know you pray for us in our distress. I am at the above address with my mother after a terrible travel. We are here without money and luggage. We left Paris on June 10th. André decided to leave the day after and join us, but he never came. I have no news from him and I am in terrible anxiety. He may be in danger or in prison, and as the letters do not arrive from all the parts of France where the Germans are, I do not know what to do. No news from Jean Tanguis and Pastor Vincent. And what about all our people we helped? I think we shall be able to return to Paris in some weeks. In any case our work could be continued as soon as Paris will be free, but perhaps not exactly the same. Until that time our sadness is deep. The situation everywhere is and will be distressing. We have to pray to God more than ever and to accept to suffer much more as before. Do write me at the above address at Royat, will you? I need to hear something from you. I hope you are well, believe me. Yours affectionately, Jermaine Frankel.*³

Regular missionary efforts were becoming nearly impossible.

Cohn reported on the Chosen People Ministries efforts in Paris in a 1941 issue of *The Chosen People* magazine. It is evident from the report that there was deep concern for the fate of the Mission staff in Paris:

*From Paris we hear nothing. This is the occupied area and there is no way for us to get money into Paris or for our beloved workers there to write letters to us. We have had some letters from third hand connections, in one case a Quaker lady with an American passport who had been able to get out of Paris and to reach the Atlantic seaport. She wrote us of the terrible suffering through which our workers are going and she bemoaned that there is no way for us to get help to them. We can only pray for André Frankel and for his good wife Jermaine and for that brave mother, and we must not forget to pray for Pastor Vincent who was in the beginning of the war at the battle front at Dunkirk and Bologna; through an indirect source we learn that he had been demobilized and was again back in Paris.*⁴

Of course, Cohn could not possibly have known the full impact of the Nazis' savagery against the Jewish people.

Finally, in 1944, Cohn added a note in his lead article of *The Chosen People* magazine. He wrote:

Praise the Lord! Just as we go to press, we must rearrange our forms to flash the news that has come to us this moment from Paris by way of a brother in the Lord. Henri Vincent is alive. And praise be to His name, our beloved Jewish missionary whose name we cannot give you at this time (but you all know who he is) is alive! Here is one paragraph only from the letter we received.

"Pastor Vincent of Paris has been used of the Lord in hiding the above Jewish pastor in his building in order to keep him from falling into the hands of the Germans. Many Jewish families have been kept

*from German torture through the fine work of Vincent and the members of the Baptist Church of Paris. What has been done by these Baptists has also been done by other Christians of other Protestant churches all throughout France and Belgium. One of these days a story can be told of how the Lord's work continued during the past four years."*⁵

The following letter from Jermaine Melon-Frankel printed in the December 1944 issue of *The Chosen People* magazine gave more of the details:

*My dear director and friend, It is such a blessing to be able to write again after these terrible years. I do hope you are well. Give me your news. Here in Paris we are safe, Vincent as well as my husband, our little girl, myself and all the staff. Our work among Jews was never stopped. But we saw our people secretly and André did not live at home, but went to hide himself in three different places in friends' homes. During this time the police came twice at home to arrest him, but he was not here, and all was well. And now is a splendid liberation! André is at home again and all the work begins again. We have now to see so many new people who are waiting for the gospel. We shall send a full report as soon as the correspondence with the U.S. will be possible again. With all our affection and gratitude.*⁶

Cohn reported what proved to be the beginnings of a unique post-Holocaust ministry among the Jewish people of France and of all Europe. Chosen People Ministries' post-war ministry in Paris was an expression of the nature of our ministry from the very beginning: a deep concern for the spiritual well-being of the Jewish people, of course, but also a deep concern for the physical well-being of each individual Jewish person and for the Jewish community as well:

*Many of the refugees from the Nazi persecutions know that our mission in Paris is to be the rallying center when the war is finished for Jewish wanderers in exile. And there they hoped once more to meet their loved ones. The address of our Paris mission is in the pockets and memories of thousands of these unwanted Jews as they now hide themselves in the forests and the hills, behind the rocks, from Nazi hunters.*⁷

Cohn again wrote regarding the post-war plans for the ABMJ center in Paris:

*Perhaps we should just say by way of reminder that France will soon be open to us and we want to meet the barest needs of that desolated country when the war is done. We want to reestablish homes, we want to reunite families, we want to gather a much larger staff to headquarters in Paris. As we told you in a previous issue, God wonderfully preserved our workers through all the Nazi occupation and we cannot praise Him enough for his goodness to us.*⁸

1 Minutes of European Sectional meeting IMCCAJ 1940:4

2 April 1936 edition of *The Chosen People* magazine

3 CP 1940c:2

4 CP 1941a, 5:14

5 CP 1944c, 2:21

6 CP 1944d, 3:13

7 CP 1944b, 8:5-6

8 CP 1945a, 5:9

SEE THE BIBLE THROUGH JEWISH EYES

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



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THE MINISTRY OF JESUS TO HIS BROTHERS, INCLUDING JEWISH AND GENTILE BELIEVERS: HEBREWS 2:12-18

Although the Book of Hebrews relates to every believer, the initial audience was likely a group of early Jewish followers of Jesus. The author demonstrates the superiority of Jesus compared to all earthly and celestial powers, which includes His greatness compared to angels. This is why He chose to become associated with “the seed of Abraham,” rather than take on the form of angels (Heb. 2:16-17).

I. THE JEWISH ORIGIN OF THE MESSIAH (Heb. 2:16)

While on earth, Jesus joined the Jewish community at both the synagogue and the Jerusalem Temple (Mk. 1:21; Mt. 26:55). In every way Jesus identified with the Jewish community.

The author cites three passages from the Hebrew Bible to illustrate how the Messiah identifies with His people. He first quotes Psalm 22:22 to show how Jesus the Messiah faithfully reveals the Father to His Jewish family (Heb. 2:12).

Second, he quotes Isaiah 8:17 where Isaiah identifies as part of the faithful people of Israel anticipating the Lord’s intervention and deliverance (Isa. 2:13).

Third, the author introduces the next quote with the words, “and

again” (Heb. 2:13; Isa. 8:18), in order to show how the Messiah, like Isaiah, identifies with His numerous “children.”

II. MESSIAH, THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST (Heb. 2:17-18)

In Hebrews 2:17, we have for the first time the words “HIGH PRIEST.” No other New Testament book utilizes this title for Jesus, the Messiah. Here we are introduced to the central thought of Hebrews.

In the book of Hebrews, we discover Jesus’ main occupation is a priest who mediates between God and humanity. Sin drove a wedge between God and His people; Jesus’ work restores this relationship.

In Hebrews 2 we are introduced to Jesus as our great High Priest. The author picks up the theme again in Hebrews 7 and 8. No other book within the Bible expands on the Priesthood of the Messiah like Hebrews.

As the Great High Priest, Jesus the Messiah is both MERCIFUL and FAITHFUL (Heb. 2:17).

Messiah Jesus is a merciful High Priest. He is full of pity, compassion, grace and sympathy in

all our sorrows. He is faithful in bringing down all the gifts of God to us.

He is mindful of our fears, tears and sufferings. No one wishes to comfort us and take us by the hand when we are weary, sad and exhausted like Jesus.

III. CONCLUSION: MESSIAH JESUS CONTINUES HIS HIGH PRIESTLY MINISTRY ON OUR BEHALF FROM HEAVEN

What Jesus accomplished at Calvary was a “finished work,” but His engagement in our lives continues by interceding and advocating on our behalf. As a “man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,” Jesus is able to rescue those that are tempted, for He knows and understands our concerns.

Our Lord Jesus is the Great High Priest of heaven. He is worthy of our full trust and allegiance. Place your full trust and faith in Him and serve the Savior.

NEWS BRIEFS



JEWISH COLLEGE STUDENTS MEET THE MESSIAH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Joseph, a leader in our Brooklyn congregation, has been taking a class at Brooklyn College called *Messianic Movements in Jewish History*. On the first day of class he identified himself as a Christian and the teacher asked him to present “Jesus as Messiah, particularly stressing His historical Jewish context in first century Israel.” The teacher also asked Joseph to share key texts “regarding this matter found in the New Testament.”

Knowing that almost every student in the class was Jewish, Joseph used the Old Testament to demonstrate Jesus as Messiah. He made copies for every student of a commentary showing agreement between the early rabbis and Christians in the interpretation of key Messianic prophecies. One included Isaiah 53, the clearest picture of the atoning work of Jesus on the cross, and another showed that the Messiah would come and be “cut off” before the destruction of the Second Temple, the very same year that Jesus was crucified (Daniel 9)!

Please pray for the seeds that were planted among the 25 students in Joseph’s class, most of whom are religious Jewish kids.

GERMANY’S JEWISH “CHURCH” CONTINUES TO GROW

Weekly fellowships at our Berlin congregation are “on a roll!” Three months ago our German leader, Vladimir Pikman, encouraged the congregation to begin meeting in weekly fellowship groups, and already there are more than twenty such communities.

These small communities include two women’s fellowships (one in German and one in Russian), two youth fellowships, two prayer fellowships, five Bible fellowships, two evangelistic fellowships, fellowships for women with little children, an Israeli fellowship, and a fellowship at a Jewish retirement home. There is even a Persian Messianic community that is beginning to grow. Praise the Lord!

THE GOSPEL IS PREACHED TO JEWISH PEOPLE IN CRIMEA, DESPITE DIFFICULTIES

Kirill, a staff member in Ukraine, was on a mission trip in Sevastopol, Crimea in mid-March. He was visiting the two Messianic Jewish congregations in Sevastopol and Eupatoria. After one of the services Kirill met with the former head of the local traditional Jewish community, Abram.* Abram has become a believer and has a passion to see his fellow Jewish people come to know their Messiah. Abram told Kirill about the difficulties faced by the elderly and the disabled people; most people are experiencing financial troubles. We want to ask you to join in praying for these precious people.

THE GOSPEL AT 30,000 FEET

Recently, Darlene, one of our staff members serving in the New York area, was on a small jet seated in the aisle seat next to a thirty-year-old man, Pete,* in the window seat. Across the aisle (same row) sat Jake* (also thirty years old) in the window seat. She was reading some Messianic literature and apparently it caught Pete’s attention and he began to ask her questions about Israel and Messianic Jews.

They had a conversation about Jesus and the Torah. Pete has a heart for Israel and the Jewish people and he is searching for the truth. Darlene answered Pete’s questions, pointed to Jesus being the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 53), and talked about Nicodemus and baptism. As she was talking to Pete, Jake switched his seat and sat in the aisle seat, leaving only the two-foot aisle space between them. Darlene writes, “I sensed Jake was listening to Pete and me. Unbeknownst to me, I later learned while waiting at baggage claim that Jake is an Israeli from Tel Aviv!” One thing is for certain: both these young men heard the truth about Jesus, and His Gospel!



*names have been changed

MESSIANIC RESOURCES



They Have Conspired Against You: Responding to the New Anti-Semitism

A new trend of antisemitism is surfacing worldwide with the advent of the Palestinian Intifada in the fall of 2000. As told by Olivier Melnick with chilling realism in his book, *They Have Conspired Against You*, Jewish people are again the target of antisemitism around the world, particularly European Jews. This book will expose, educate and call to action.

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2. You can provide for your family, even after you die, *and*
3. You can leave a legacy of love for God's chosen people.

This allows you to bless surviving family members and continue with your ministry priority of sharing the Messiah with Jewish people everywhere.

We invite you to leave a legacy of evangelism for your children and grandchildren, and for ages to come, in this simple but profoundly important way.

And experience the blessing of God as you bless Israel!



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)