



CHOSEN PEOPLE MINISTRIES
SPECIAL EDITION

I FOUND SHALOM

THROUGH THE MESSIAH



DEAR FRIEND,

Everyone loves a good story.

I know I do! They may be funny and make me smile, or even laugh out loud. They may be emotionally moving—causing me to feel deeply what others have felt and even make me shed a sympathetic tear. Or the story might even be filled with new insights that lead me to an “a-ha” moment that can significantly change my life.

Storytelling holds a special place in Jewish life and tradition. The Hebrew Bible is full of stories. So is the Talmud. Jewish people have skillfully enlisted storytelling in service to religious truth for thousands of years.

We all know that a good story does not simply tell you what happened, but engages you mentally, emotionally and even spiritually. Good stories often lead to a point designed to make an impact in your life and the lives of others. A good story draws your imagination into a vivid world that holds out the promise of transformation—a promise that it is often able to deliver. These are really the best kind of stories! God made us to be very complex creatures and we need all of our senses

engaged in order to be moved to the point where we can actually consider changing our behavior or begin thinking differently about life.

Mark Twain, in his little book entitled, *How to Tell a Story*, writes, “I do not claim that I can tell a story as it ought to be told. I only claim to know how a story ought to be told, for I have been almost daily in the company of the most expert story-tellers for many years.”

Storytelling is more than just a skill. It is an art. Some of us are better than others in spinning a yarn, telling a shaggy dog story, recounting a humorous incident or simply describing events in the way that helps the listener or reader feel as though they experienced the event for themselves. Not everyone can easily communicate the emotion, feelings, poignancy and pathos of life’s events. So many of us will admit that when we go to synagogue or church and listen to a sermon, we walk away remembering the point made through a story far more than anything else the rabbi or minister said.

Mark Twain added his thoughts on the most difficult stories to tell, “There are several kinds of stories, but only one difficult kind—the humorous...The humorous story bubbles gently along, the others burst. The



humorous story is strictly a work of art—high and delicate art—and only an artist can tell it... .”

I think the author of Proverbs puts it best: *A joyful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit dries up the bones* (Proverbs 17:22).

We all like a good laugh and a good cry. Stories, whether told, written, filmed or acted should be viewed as a gift from God to His creation. From Genesis on, our distinctively Jewish take on creation and humanity is reflected in our stories. As Rabbi Nachman of Bratslov once declared, “People tell their children stories to put them to sleep. I tell people stories to wake them up.”

I hope you will enjoy these moving stories of individuals who found *shalom*—peace—through their encounter with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob through Yeshua, who is called the Prince of Peace. And may I be so bold as to say that I hope they “wake you up”?

THE I FOUND SHALOM WEBSITE

This is one of the reasons we created the I Found Shalom website (www.ifoundshalom.com). After all, if there’s one story we can all tell—it is the story of our lives. It is very difficult to argue or debate another person’s experience and try to determine if it is true or false. But if we are receptive to another’s story, we may find that it reaches us in unexpected ways. I hope that you will enjoy the following stories, which describe the ways in which these individuals had a personal encounter with the God of the universe.

Each one of the storytellers is Jewish and experienced what may be described as a “dramatic encounter” with the Messiah of Israel—Yeshua (Jesus). We have condensed and summarized their more lengthy and very personal accounts, which are on the website, for you to read and enjoy. After you have read them, I hope your interest will be piqued enough for you to go to the website and watch them. These men and women come from every walk of life: business professionals, moms, dads, old, young, men and women. Yet all of them say something that is remarkably similar—that meeting their Messiah has enabled them to experience the peace and joy of knowing the One who made them.

I hope that you will enjoy these stories and pass along copies of this newsletter as well

as the website link to family and friends. If you are already a believer in the Messiah, I know that these stories will greatly encourage you as you see God work in the lives of others. If you are a seeker and not yet a follower of Messiah Yeshua, I hope that these written summaries and then the video stories themselves will make you laugh and even move you to the depths of your soul. My prayer is that you might discover exactly what these storytellers have experienced as well.

FINDING SHALOM IN THE MESSIAH

It was more than 40 years ago that I had the same experience! I was raised in a traditional Jewish home in New York City. When I was 19 years old, my two best friends became followers of Jesus the Messiah. Quite frankly, I was not looking for a relationship with God and I especially was not looking for Jesus. Like many of my generation, I was raised to believe that He was the enemy of the Jewish people and inspiration for antisemitism. Most Jewish people I knew believed the same way.

But, my two best Jewish friends became followers of Jesus amidst a host of incredible circumstances. Although I couldn’t deny their experience, I would argue to the best of my ability to show that they were wrong and that Jewish people should not believe in Jesus. They did not argue back! As I watched their lives change and their new stories continued to touch my life, I saw their shalom in the midst of difficult circumstances. I was amazed to see them pray and speak to God as if He was right next to them. Then I began reading the Bible. I was completely mesmerized by the parables—the stories that Yeshua told in the New Testament. Slowly, my eyes began to open and finally I recognized that Yeshua was the Messiah of Israel for both Jews and Gentiles.

I hope you enjoy these delightful and sincere storytellers! Again, please pass along this newsletter, visit the website and watch the videos and request the booklet you will find offered there!

And now... on to the stories!



Dr. Mitch Glaser

President of Chosen People Ministries
(and one of the storytellers!)



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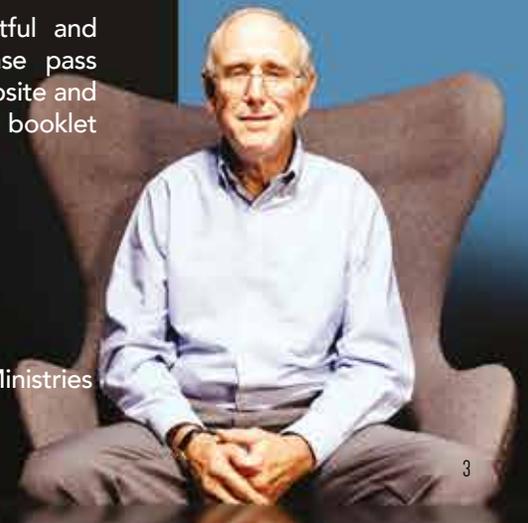
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STEPHEN FRIEDER

Stephen grew up in a Reform Jewish household. His Judaism was a key part of his identity, but he never really thought about where God fit into it. It was only after one of his children asked him, "Why don't we believe in Jesus?" that he felt like a bad Jew for letting Jesus into his house. Stephen knew very little about Jesus and even questioned His existence. What he did know—or thought he knew—was that Jesus was not for the Jewish people.

His child's question and a whole chain of events began Stephen's search for what he believed. A near death experience on Yom Kippur, the funeral of a Christian woman who cared for him as a child, hearing Gentiles talk about studying David, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and his research which showed that Jesus was Jewish and all of the first followers of Jesus were Jewish, caused Stephen to become intrigued. He continued to research the Torah and Hebrew Scriptures, and came to the conclusion that the historical information, as well as taking a step of faith, proved that Jesus is the Messiah for both Jews and Gentiles. With the addition of God and his great Jewish heritage, Stephen feels more Jewish than ever.

JENNIFER GOETZ

Jennifer did not grow up with any religious identity and it was her Catholic neighbors that introduced her to religious topics. They were also the first to talk with her about the Holocaust, a subject she knew nothing about.

Despite having a fun life that took her on international trips with celebrities and musicians, she felt empty. She had the chance to stay in the best hotels and take private

trains. It was everything she wanted, but when the tours were over she felt completely lost and empty. She describes it as climbing a mountain only to find out the other side was completely void of everything. Jennifer was left questioning what life was about, especially when art couldn't keep her fulfilled and satisfied.

Having enough of a meaningless life, she gave herself 35 days to figure out what life was really about. During a tour in Europe she stumbled upon a Bible in a hotel room. She stole it and began to read it. She found a new way of looking at life. Several experiences, including reading the Gospel of Matthew and the works of C.S. Lewis, helped her come to the understanding that Jesus is exactly who He claimed to be—the Messiah of Israel.

MOTTEL BALESTON

Growing up, Mottel's only contact with Christians was with Italian Catholics; therefore, he pictured Jesus as Italian. He was shocked to discover Jesus was Jewish and the New Testament was written by Jewish men. He grew up Jewish and was told to stay away from the Christian Bible. So he did what any person does when forbidden to do something, he began reading the New Testament! He expected to find an antisemitic handbook, but was surprised it began with a statement about three Jewish men (David, Abraham and Jesus) and how one is the anticipated Messiah of Israel.

He recalls how even as a child he knew there was something more to knowing God than just traditions and texts. He recalls, "One of the most vivid memories I have from my childhood is sitting alongside my grandfather in synagogue and watching him pray for what seemed like hours to my young self. It was in an old *shul* in Brooklyn, and he hushed my questions during the service. Afterward, when I asked him why we were there, he simply said:



‘Because we’re Jews.’ Well, that answer didn’t satisfy me so I asked again. He said something along the lines of ‘to have our sins forgiven, to be righteous.’ I pretended I understood that, but really I didn’t.”

Mottel’s life was changed when he discovered that the New Testament is a story about a Jewish man, living in a Jewish village, in a Jewish country, claiming to be the Jewish Messiah—and following Jesus is the most Jewish thing a person can do. Mottel tapped into a powerful truth for himself and his Jewish people. And now he can say, “I have embraced Jesus as my Jewish Messiah and my atonement, and many thousands of others who love their Jewish heritage have done the same thing.”

NAOMI*

Naomi was only one of two Jewish kids in her middle school, which made middle school and the transition into high school difficult. Even though her home life was filled with love and laughter, the “whirlwind” of life kept her from finding peace and a firm relationship with God.

It was not until she spent some time with a Christian family that she saw how people who have a relationship with God deal with issues. Naomi was able to spend time with this family because her parents were spending a lot of time in the hospital taking care of her little brother.

She saw that this family had a deeper connection with the God of Israel than she did. This caused Naomi, to search for the truth of who Jesus is. She grew up believing that you can’t be Jewish and believe in Jesus, but what kept nagging at her is the fact that her friend’s family, who were not Jewish, had a stronger relationship with her God than she did.

When she accepted Jesus as her Messiah, Naomi felt as if she was pulled out of a storm. She felt renewed. Her faith in the God of Israel was strengthened by her faith in

the Messiah of Israel. She found she was able to face life with new strength. Her faith was emboldened when she found other Jewish followers of Yeshua. Naomi says that today she feels like a new person and her Jewish identity is stronger than ever.

DAVE BRODSKY

Dave grew up in a Jewish family that valued education, so he grew up reading and learning a lot about religion, specifically Greek mythology. He saw the claims of Jesus as nothing different than anything he read in his mythology books.

Learning about family members who perished in the Holocaust caused Dave to pursue a strong Jewish identity. He was committed to Jewish life and the Hebrew Scriptures. The loss of his grandmother caused Dave a lot of pain. In fact, her death was sudden and tragic, and it forced Dave to question a lot of things in life at an early age. Struggling with these questions for years left Dave empty and depressed.

Reaching his lowest point, one day he decided to commit suicide. As he was walking home to kill himself, he saw his friend’s car parked outside his house. They ended up talking and his friend shared her faith in Jesus the Messiah with him. She talked him out of killing himself and left Dave contemplating the Gospel of Jesus. It was through a series of supernatural events that the Messiah of Israel, Jesus, was revealed to him. In one moment he realized Jesus was the Messiah and called out to Him. Immediately, he felt a sense of peace.

He quickly found a Bible and began to study it. As with many Jewish people, he was surprised to find the New Testament to be a very Jewish text, about Jews, written by Jews. He was able to sort his life out because the Jewish Messiah gave his life meaning and purpose.

*Name has been changed



YOU CAN FIND SHALOM TOO!

THE MESSAGE OF PEACE IN A VIOLENT WORLD



Our storytellers believe that Yeshua is the ultimate answer to the violence we see in our country and around the globe. Have you ever noticed how many times the word peace is associated with the Messiah? He is the Prince of Peace according to the prophet Isaiah,

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6; 9:7 in the Hebrew Bible).

In the New Testament, a book that has also changed the lives of our storytellers, we read that Jesus, at His last Passover Seder (Last Supper) assured His disciples that His peace could reign in their lives even during the difficult times when He leaves and returns to His Father;

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful (John 14:27).

I remember years ago when I was part of a traveling singing group invited to perform in Northern Ireland. The violence at the time was extreme and we actually witnessed a half dozen bombs go off during our time of ministry.

Before we left for this trip, the president of my university at that time prayed a prayer with my wife and me that I will never forget. Dr. Cook said,

“Lord, teach Mitch that safety is not the absence of danger, but the presence of the Lord.”

His prayer meant so much to me especially during some very tense moments when we were in the midst of an outdoor concert and heard the BOOM of an explosion and witnessed the fear of the crowds as they scattered in search of safety!

I learned that peace is not something you feel, but rather it comes from knowing that the Lord is with you and will never forsake you—especially during difficult times!

Yeshua also told His disciples that His peace is not dependent upon circumstances but is founded upon the promise of His presence.

These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

The Messiah tells us to expect tribulation and challenges in this present sin-tainted world. He warns us of problems to come that He allows and are intended to drive us to find rest in His powerful arms. He wants us to respond to the “big” problems of war, persecution, world terrorism and other seemingly insoluble problems by learning to trust Him and thereby experiencing His shalom!

He wants us to have a similar response to the problems we face, whether they be financial, challenges with children, grandchildren or parents, or the variety of health issues we face day in and day out... No matter what the difficulty might be—He wants us to have His peace by learning to trust Him.

As the prophet Isaiah promises,

You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You (Isaiah 26:3).

Clearly, the Rabbi Saul—the great Apostle Paul, again, writing in the New Testament, understood this as well. He writes,

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7).

I want to assure you that we have a sovereign God who wants us to enjoy His peace in every circumstance. One day our Messiah will come and conquer the enemies of God and of Israel and He will reign on His throne of peace in Jerusalem.

I look forward to the day when authentic and lasting world peace, will come...don't you?

But, like our storytellers, we do not need to wait for His return to experience His peace. It is available today.

THE PATH TO PEACE

Rabbi Saul tells us that before we can experience God's peace we must have peace with God! He writes to the Romans,

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1).

It is through the death of Yeshua that God made atonement for our sin and forgives our sin...forever!

We are no longer His enemies, but have become His beloved children.

I am sure the great Rabbi Saul based his understanding on the words of Isaiah the prophet, who wrote,

How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace and brings good news of happiness, who announces salvation, and says to Zion, "Your God reigns!" (Isaiah 52:7).

In this newsletter, you have met a few Jewish people who have come to know Jesus as their Savior and Messiah, and there are many, many more stories just like theirs. Jewish people have come to faith in Israel, among the elderly Holocaust survivors and in the heart of Orthodox Jewish Brooklyn. They are young and old...those with deep experiences in life and others just beginning their pilgrimage on earth.

The common testimony of those I have met coming to faith is that they now have peace! You can see it on their smiling faces!

I hope that you will turn to the Messiah and Prince of Peace today and tell Him from your heart that you want Him to come into your life and to make peace in the depths of your soul. Tell Him you have sinned, that you believe Yeshua died and rose for your sin and that you hope to follow Him from this moment on as He enables you by His grace.

And now,

May the Lord bless you, and keep you; the Lord make His face shine on you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance on you, and give you peace (Numbers 6:24-26).



THE PROMISE OF A MESSIAH

» HE WILL BE A DESCENDANT OF ABRAHAM

The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." (Genesis 12:1-3)

» HE WILL BE FROM THE TRIBE OF JUDAH

The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his. (Genesis 49:10)

» HE WILL BE GOD HIMSELF

For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

» HE WILL BE FROM THE HOUSE OF DAVID

When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you,

who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. (2 Samuel 7:12-13)

There is no person
in all of recorded
history who fits
these descriptions
more perfectly than
Yeshua (Jesus)!

» HE WILL BE A PROPHET LIKE MOSES

The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. (Deuteronomy 18:15)

» HE WILL BE BORN OF A VIRGIN

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14)

» HE WILL BE BORN IN BETHLEHEM
But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times. (Micah 5:2)

» HE WILL COME HUMBLY
Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. (Zechariah 9:9)

» HE WILL BE CRUCIFIED
For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots. (Psalm 22:16-18)

» HE WILL BE A SUFFERING SERVANT
But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our iniquities was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:5-6)

I am Jewish and want to know more about Yeshua (Jesus). Please send me the FREE booklet, *I Found Shalom*. **3167UJ**

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