## THE CHOSEN PEOPLE



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#### Dear friends of Jewish people,

Jewish people are getting ready to celebrate the Jewish New Year, or Rosh Hashanah, at the very beginning of next month. I hope you take the time to wish a Jewish friend, Chag Sameach (Happy Holiday)!

During Rosh Hashanah, we have a wonderful Jewish tradition of serving apples and honey to family and friends, representing our wishes for them to enjoy a happy and sweet year! So, do not be shy. Bring over a nice plate of apples and honey to a Jewish friend or a Rosh Hashanah card as an act of kindness to build your friendships with the Jewish people in your life.

#### A HIGH HOLIDAY GIFT FOR CHRISTIAN CHILDREN

I also have some great news for you: We have completed our latest Jewish holiday animated video-this one is about the Jewish New Year and is ideal for Sunday school-age kids.

We would love to see this resource help Christian children understand their Jewish neighbors and begin to develop a love for Jewish people at a young age. This animated video is delightful and has a very powerful gospel presentation geared for children. You can show it to a Sunday school class, at a Christian school or homeschool group, in your own home, at a Good News Club, or at a Vacation Bible School. All you need is a phone, tablet, or television.

So, dear friend, mom, dad, or grandparent, please use the video. Who knows, maybe you will have the opportunity to show the animation to a Jewish child or two as well!

#### THE JEWISH HOLIDAYS POINT TO JESUS

I love the Jewish holidays because God designed each one to promote some of the most significant themes of Scripture, which describe His person, plan, and promises. Let me start by giving you a few essential facts about Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year.

#### MORE ABOUT THE JEWISH NEW YEAR

I must first tell you the words "New Year" or Rosh Hashanah ("the head of the year") are not used in the Bible. Jewish tradition, however, connects it to Leviticus chapter 23:23, which mentions a day of rest and a day of trumpet (or shofar) blasts. This holiday also falls in the seventh month of the year.

The Hebrew calendar is quite different from the Gregorian calendar most widely used today, and the Hebrew month Tishrei, the seventh month, usually aligns with our September or October, which is why the holiday is observed in the fall.

Why do Jewish people observe the New Year in the seventh month? It is a good question, which most Jewish people cannot

answer. But if you saw the movie Fiddler on the Roof, you probably remember the song, "Tradition!" Jewish tradition tells us the New Year should be linked to the holiday described in the biblical text as the month of the blowing of the shofar, or ram's horn.

> Tradition is not bad, but you must be able to separate tradition from Scripture. The Hebrew word *rosh* means "head," and *shanah* means "year." So, the festival named in the Bible as the "Blowing of the Shofar" is now viewed as the "Head of the Year," or Rosh Hashanah, and the holiday when we blow the shofar.

May I take us one step deeper into the Jewish background and meaning of Hebrew terms? The Hebrew Bible does not include the word "blowing" (Lev 23:24). The Hebrew word used, teruah, is one of the sounds the shofar makes when blown! I find it best to translate the term as "toot toot." Of course, I smile when I write this. But it is true; the literal name of the festival is a sound. But it is a very important sound.

ROSH HASHANAH

> We must dive even deeper, though, into the overall background of the Jewish festivals to better understand this first holiday of the seventh month!

#### THE FESTIVALS' ROAD TO REDEMPTION

We find the seven great festivals of Jewish people meticulously detailed in Leviticus 23. All the festivals point to the past, the present, and the future in one way or another as each festival is prophetic. To help you understand Rosh Hashanah—the first fall festival—let us examine the Sabbath and the spring festivals.

#### The Sabbath (Leviticus 23:3):

Leviticus 23 begins by introducing us to the archetypal festival, the weekly Sabbath.

The Sabbath, which is in many ways the foundation for the seven annual festivals, looks back to God's rest from His labor after creating the heavens and the earth in six days. Moses then commanded Jewish people to cease from work every seventh day from Sinai onward. However, many Jewish people fully understand how the past and present Sabbath also points to a greater Sabbath to come, when the ultimate Davidic King will sit on the throne of David, and there will be peace throughout the earth (Isaiah 9:7). We believe this Davidic King is none other than Jesus, the Jewish Messiah for all.

#### Passover and Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:5-8):

The first holiday of the Jewish year points to the redeeming Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world in a greater way than the lamb slain by the Israelites in Egypt and whose blood they splashed upon their doorposts.

We know Jesus, the Messiah, fulfills this prophetic picture. The Festival of Unleavened Bread is a picture of how He lived a life without sin, as leaven is a symbol of sin. But this prophetic roadmap to redemption does not end with His death!

#### First Fruits (Leviticus 23:9-14):

The Feast of First Fruits is the third festival in the spring. This holiday was divinely scheduled to fall the day after the Sabbath related to Passover. Jesus died on Friday, the beginning of the Sabbath, and was in the grave Friday, Saturday, and part of Sunday, then He rose in power as "the first fruits of those who are asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20).

#### Feast of Pentecost (Shavuot) (Leviticus 23:15-21):

Pentecost (from the Greek word meaning "fifty") is next and is the day God chose for the Holy Spirit to fall upon the early band of Messianic Jewish future evangelists, who obediently waited for the promise of the Father.

Many Jewish sages and scholars believe the first Pentecost reflects the giving of the law at Mount Sinai when the Israelites saw similar signs and wonders as God Himself gave new revelation.

#### A GREATER ISAAC

The very next festival mentioned in this chapter is Rosh Hashanah (Lev 23:23-25). At the heart of this first fall festival is the blowing of the *shofar*, the ram's horn. In Jewish tradition, this looks back to Genesis chapter 22, known as the Akedah in Hebrew, which translates to "binding" or "tying" in English.

This passage describes Abraham's son Isaac, who was bound to the altar by his loving and obedient father whom God tested to see if he would kill his son with a knife as a sign of his faith. Thank God we know his hand was stayed, and God provided a ram caught by its horns in the thicket as a substitutionary sacrifice for Isaac. His potential sacrifice on Mount Moriah represented the first of multiple thousands of animal sacrifices eventually offered at this same location where King Solomon later built the Temple. Isaac is a type—a pattern—of the Messiah. He was innocent, beloved by his father, and almost sacrificed, though there was no reason for his untimely death. God called Abraham to climb the mountain and sacrifice his son as a test. The shofar is blown to remind Jewish people of Abraham's obedience and Isaac's willingness to be sacrificed. As Messianic Jews and Gentile Christians, we are certain this prophetic pattern was fulfilled in the death and ultimate resurrection of Jesus the Messiah. God, in His great love, sent His only perfect Son to atone for the sins of all humanity.

Yet, we still wait for another blowing of the shofar one day, which will announce the coming of the Lord. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed" (1 Cor 15:52).

We pray for the salvation of Jewish people and all people! We especially pray many Jewish people today will recognize the greater Isaac, Jesus, who through His atoning sacrifice, sets us free from sin and death at the very moment we give our lives to Him and recognize He is our Savior and Lord! Our staff in the

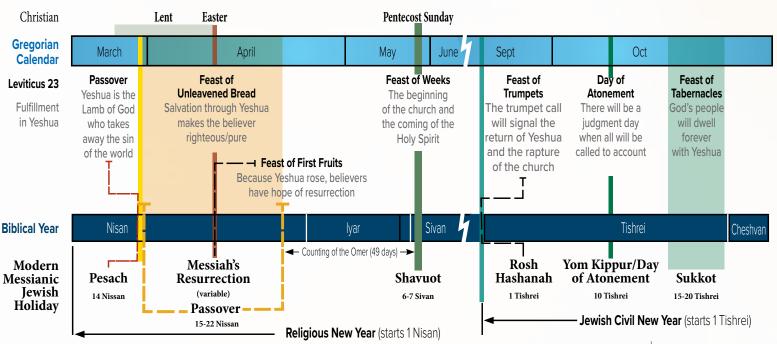
United States, Israel, and eighteen other countries around the globe proclaim this message to our beloved Jewish people.

While we long for His return, we also want more time because we hope to see so many others come to faith. Nevertheless, our hearts still cry out, "Come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20). May we hear the sound of the heavenly trumpet soon!



FROM THE PRESIDENT. MITCH GLASER

Your brother,





Lord will take us back and continue to change us until the day we meet Him face to face, which is His promise and purpose in saving us from our sin! Paul writes,

For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. (Romans 8:29-30)

Rosh Hashanah in Jewish tradition is all about repentance. Now, we know repentance cannot save us. If so, then God would not have called upon His ancient people to offer blood sacrifices (Leviticus 17:11). Yet, if we confess our sins—agreeing with God about the lethal nature of our sin-and turn to Him,

He will forgive us and cleanse us (1 John 1:9-10). Followers of Jesus can learn valuable lessons from this Jewish festival about the power of repentance. It is for all of us who love the Lord and want to grow in Him.

> How wonderful to have these holidays to remind us of the need to be regularly cleansed of our sins as we walk through this life.

We must remember in Jesus, everything is made new-or rather, **renewed** and restored to our God-intended purpose and glory. As Jewish people prepare to usher in the year 5785 on Rosh Hashanah, the gospel's invitation to embrace a new life, a new heart, and, indeed, the New Covenant is as relevant as ever.

## NEW YEAR-NEW LIFE IN THE MESSIAH!

Shalom and Happy Jewish New Year! According to the Jewish calendar, we are about to begin year 5785! Traditional Judaism teaches year zero marks the year of creation. Although most modern Jewish people might not accept this position, they still celebrate the holiday known as Rosh Hashanah, "the head of the year," on the first two days of the Hebrew month known as Tishrei. The corresponding Gregorian date changes from year to year as the Gregorian calendar and Jewish calendar do not align. This year, Rosh Hashanah begins at sunset on Wednesday, October 2, and concludes at sunset on Friday, October 4.

If, for some reason, we wander off the path in our relationship with the Lord, the holiday of Rosh Hashanah teaches us there is always a way back into His presence (Revelation 2:4-5).

#### REPENTANCE AND RENEWAL FOR ALL

The way back is through repentance as illustrated by the waiting father who embraced his prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32). The

#### 130 YEARS OF CELEBRATING THE JEWISH HIGH HOLIDAYS FULFILLED IN JESUS THE MESSIAH

Rosh Hashanah begins what is often called the "high holidays" or "high holy days" and is followed by Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. These holidays are "high" and "holy" because of the weightiness of their themes. On Yom Kippur, according to Jewish tradition, the fates of all Jewish souls are sealed for either blessings or curses for the upcoming year, and the measure used by God to seal their fate is the quality of one's repentance, good deeds, and prayers.

Perhaps you can now understand why, 130 years ago, Rabbi Leopold Cohn discovered the incomparable new life Jesus offers by His atonement and became deeply burdened to proclaim this message among his fellow Jewish people. We honor his memory and celebrate 130 years of faithful service for the Lord through Chosen People Ministries this year.

Rabbi Leopold Cohn, the founder of Chosen People Ministries, emigrated from Hungary to New York City, where he heard the gospel preached in Yiddish, his mother tongue. After reading some of the New Testament, he came to faith in Jesus. When one tastes the free gift of the new and abundant life in Jesus for the first time-especially after having had to work hard for God's blessing and favor every new year—he not only relishes the joy but hungers to tell others.



A passionate new believer, Cohn wrote about his meeting with Jewish members of his local community, "I showed them from the Scriptures that to believe in Yeshua [Jesus] was Jewish faith, real Jewish faith."1 This was to become Leopold Cohn's life calling and also a guiding principle for the ministry he soon founded in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, New York, in 1894.

CHOSEN PEOPLE MINISTRIES—THEN AND NOW

Cohn launched various forms of outreach based on both the spiritual and practical needs of his poor immigrant Jewish community. It included congregational meetings, benevolence ministry, English classes (where he would have Jewish people read the English New Testament), sewing classes, children's camps, and Bible studies. Since the days of Cohn, the Lord has given growth and multiplied the fruit of Chosen People Ministries among Jewish people—everywhere!

Today, Chosen People Ministries is a global ministry located in twenty countries and twenty-six cities within the United States. Perhaps not even Cohn himself could have envisioned the extensive work we do today, especially in Israel and during the high holy day season.

Chosen People Ministries branches and congregations in the United States and around the globe enjoy visits from Jewish people at this time. Often, these Jewish people are brought to our services by their Gentile Christian friends. We use our holiday services as a way to renew our own faith and as prime opportunities to highlight the Jewishness of Jesus, who is the fulfillment of these high holidays. The fall festivals are a beautiful setting for the diamond who is Jesus. He shines so beautifully in His Jewish setting.

#### JESUS AND THE JEWISH HOLIDAYS

But what exactly is Jesus' relationship to these Jewish holidays, and, more importantly, how does He fulfill them? The festivals of Israel serve as a roadmap to redemption. They are, by nature, prophetic patterns unveiling God's plan for a sinful and broken world in need of salvation.

The fall festivals found in Leviticus 23 highlight the themes of repentance on the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah), redemption on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), and rejoicing on the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot). Jesus has already fulfilled the spring festival of Passover because He died as the Lamb of God. Additionally, He fulfilled the Feast of First Fruits by His resurrection and Pentecost (Shavuot in Hebrew; Pentecost in Greek) with the giving of the Holy Spirit.

The fall festivals, though, await a future fulfillment. As the sound of a trumpet initiates the call to repentance on Rosh Hashanah (Lev 23:24), believers today still await the last trumpet blast announcing Jesus' return. Moreover, this sound will serve as a national call leading all Israel into spiritual repentance, when they will behold Him "whom they have pierced and mourn for Him as one mourns for an only son" (Zechariah 12:10, cf. John 19:37). At last, they will accept Jesus' high-priestly redemption, thus fulfilling the Day of Atonement, and as the apostle Paul prophesied in Romans 11:26, "All Israel will be saved."

Finally, this national redemption will inaugurate the messianic age with the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot). King Jesus will sit on His throne, God will fully and completely dwell on the earth as envisioned in the book of Revelation, and all nations will come up to Jerusalem to partake in this festival's great rejoicing (Zech 14:9).

#### PROCLAIMING NEW LIFE IN THE MESSIAH FOR **130 YEARS**

In the meantime, what Jewish people today need for a new year of new life and new blessings—and what we have been proclaiming for 130 years—is the new heart of the New Covenant:

"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people . . . for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." (Jeremiah 31:33-34)

Rabbi Leopold Cohn knew his fellow Jewish people needed to hear the Messiah had come and died for their sins. Under the Law, almost everything was purified with blood-especially in matters as grave as forgiveness and atonement—and every covenant was initiated with blood (Genesis 8: 20-22, 15:9-19; Exodus 12). According to Scripture, "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Hebrews 9:22). Through the New Covenant, God promised to give Jewish people a new heart and the assurance of forgiveness of sins. We know these promises are for all who believe, both Jewish and Gentile, in the per-

fect Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world through

His sacrifice (John 1:29).

This month, we are celebrating 130 years of our ministry's proclamation of the power of Jesus' blood for salvation-"to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16)! May the high holidays this year not only be rich in repentance but also covered in the blood, which brings new life.



<sup>&</sup>quot;Our Story," Chosen People Ministries, https://www.chosenpeople.com/our-mission/our-story/.



# A HIGH HOLIDAY BIBLE STUDY WITH RICH FREEMAN



Rich Freeman, DMin, serves as the vice president for Church Ministries and Conferences with Chosen People Ministries and lives in South Florida with his wife, Julia.

hile Rosh Hashanah 2024 will commence the high holiday season on October 2, it more often than not occurs in September. One of the traditions of the Rosh Hashanah service is the reading of what is known as the *Akedah*, the binding of Isaac, found in Genesis 22. In this story, the Lord tested Abraham, and one of the reasons was to see if he truly put God first in his life. For believers in Jesus, we can appreciate this as a portion of Scripture in which

Isaac serves as a type (or pattern) of the Messiah to come: "Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' He said, 'Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you" (Gen 22:1–2).

Today, we possess the luxury of additional information in the New Testament about this important text in Genesis. It helps us notice the parallels between Isaac and Jesus. In Hebrews 11:17–19, we read, "By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; it was he to whom it was said, 'In Isaac your descendants shall be called.'"

Here are some of the parallels between Isaac and Jesus, thereby affirming Isaac as a type of Messiah:

- The first parallel is not in Genesis 22 but is nevertheless clear—the miraculous birth. A teenage virgin and a ninetyyear-old woman giving birth are both physically impossible by natural means. Both are miracles only God could work.
- 2. Parallel number two is Isaac's appellation, "Your only son" (Gen 22:2). Anyone familiar with John 3:16 will immediately see the connection: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son."
- 3. Parallel number three is debatable, and it is an opinion based on the context of the passage. Jewish tradition and Christians tend to see Isaac as a younger man, perhaps even a teenager, in this passage. However, I believe Isaac and Jesus were the same age at the time of

- the Akedah, because in the next chapter, Isaac's mother, Sarah, dies at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven, which implies Isaac was thirty-seven years old (Gen 23:1, cf. Gen 17:17).
- 4. Parallel number four is the connection to the resurrection. When Abraham gave instructions to his servants, he told them they-he and Isaac-would return: "We will worship and return to you" (Gen 22:5). He was going to do what God had asked him to do, but he would return with Isaac alive. The journey, like Jesus' resurrection, was completed on the third day. Abraham considered God as able even to raise his son from the dead. Since Abraham was told all of God's promises would come to fruition through Isaac, Abraham believed God could and would raise Isaac from the dead and thus receive back his son.
- 5. Parallel number five shows both Isaac and Jesus carrying wood on the way toward the place of sacrifice (John 19:17). Verse six says, "Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son."
- 6. Parallel number six is the place of sacrifice. Mount Moriah was a mountain range, which included the area known as the Temple Mount in Jesus' day. This site is likely where the sacrifice took place. I think there is sufficient reason to believe the place Abraham brought Isaac for sacrifice was Golgotha, where Jesus would be executed two thousand years later.
- 7. Parallel number seven is they were both laid upon the wood for sacrifice—Jesus on the cross and Isaac on the altar (22:9).
- 8. Parallel number eight is how neither man fought back as they went to be killed (Isaiah 53:9).
- 9. Finally, we arrive at parallel number nine: Just as we do not see Isaac again in the narrative until he is with his bride, Rebekah (Gen 24), so also we will not see our Lord Jesus again until He comes again and receives us as His bride (Revelation 19:7).

#### NEWS BRIEFS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

### FRUITFUL SUMMER MINISTRY IN GERMANY

Every year, Chosen People Ministries—Germany trains dozens of participants from across the country on how to present the Messiah to people on the streets of Berlin and Munich, especially Jewish people. Every morning for a whole week, there are prayers and classes on the Bible, Jewish history and traditions, apologetics, and outreach, with street evangelism following in the afternoon and evening. Our staff's goals are to bring Messiah Jesus back home to His Jewish people and to raise new leaders for this important ministry.

Earlier this summer, something special took place in the Messianic Jewish community in Germany. It only happens every other year and is always a powerful source of unity and encouragement—a Messianic Jewish Conference. This year, about 300 people from the approximately thirty Messianic Jewish congregations in Germany came together for fellowship, worship, prayer, and teaching. Our congregation in Munich was represented there with twenty-five participants! What a blessing!

Significantly, the conference's leadership changed this year: a dear friend of the ministry who has been organizing it for the last twenty years will be retiring. From now on, this event will be in the hands of a new team of four young Messianic leaders—including one from our staff. Please pray for much wisdom and perseverance, as this conference plays a key unifying role in the Messianic Jewish community in Germany. Please also pray for much faith and the outpouring of God's Spirit!

## GOD PERSISTS WITH ELDERLY JEWISH MAN!

Nathan\* is a Jewish man who has been attending our Messianic congregation in Brooklyn, New York, semi-regularly. Now in his 80s, Nathan confessed he felt the Lord has been speaking to him and calling him since he was a small child. Although Nathan did not grow up in a believing home, both of his parents came to faith in Jesus when he was a young adult (praise the Lord!). Nathan has heard about Jesus and the gospel many times over the course of nine decades!

Our New York staff often sit with Nathan and engage in highly interesting conversations—some humorous, some serious. In a recent conversation with one of our staff members and his wife, Nathan made it clear he believes the Lord can heal him, and he believes most of what the Bible teaches about Jesus. But for some reason he is just not ready to accept Jesus as

Messiah and make a full commitment to Him as Lord of his life.

As much as it is a joy to our staff to spend time with Nathan and hear his wealth of knowledge, and as encouraging as it is to hear him say how close he is to giving his life to the Lord, he is still not quite there. Please pray Nathan will finally yield to the Lord's voice and make Jesus his Lord and Savior.

## COMBATING ANTISEMITISM ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

What do you think when you see a sign proclaiming, "The Final Solution"? For those in Jewish ministry—and Jewish people in general—the phrase clearly brings to mind the Nazi plan to rid Europe and the world of Jewish people during World War II. Yet, one of our staff recently saw a sign with this very slogan on a college campus in the United States! As if calling for the eradication of Israel was not enough, evil is rearing its ugly head and saying the quiet part out loud. Many anti-Israel protestors do not simply want the end of Israel but the end of all Jewish people, everywhere.

Our staff in the Chicago area recently visited the Northwestern University and DePaul University campuses to see the anti-Israel and antisemitic encampments. What they saw was shocking. The vitriol and hatred from the chants and signs were heartbreaking and caused concern about the safety of loved ones in Israel and the United States.

This was precisely why our ministry is planning a Courage Conference for college students. Our goal will be to gather believing college students to biblically encourage, pray with, and offer support and training to help them stand against antisemitism on campus. Topics will include biblical precedents of persecution and students' rights on campus. Please pray as our staff plan the conference to be a force for good during this very troublesome time.



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