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The Chosen People

REACHING JEWISH PEOPLE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM



'I believe
with perfect faith in
the coming of the
Messiah!

- Maimonides' 13 Principles of Faith

...but recognizing **Him**
may not be so easy!

DIRECTOR'S LETTER

I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah.

If Judaism has a creed, Maimonides' *Principles of Faith* is a cornerstone of it. Messiah's coming brings with it the prospect of transformation for the Jewish people, and even the entire world. That is something to hope for!

This newsletter tackles a controversial topic. I believe Messiah has come and that his name is Yeshua. If that is so, there are implications. It is then fitting for all to concede that he is the one sent by God. Does the claim that Yeshua is the Messiah foretold by the Hebrew Scriptures have any bearing on the Jewish people today?

It is my experience that the greatest new beginning imaginable in any person's life is that received upon faith in Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah. Regardless of how this leaflet may have reached you, I would like to take the liberty of encouraging you to read through it with an open mind. Are you ready for a new beginning? Maybe, maybe not, but I hope that as you look over the contents of this leaflet, you will be given food for thought.

Of course it is a great challenge for us as Jews to accept that Yeshua could be the Messiah. Everything we have ever been told, by parents, teachers, and peers, tells us that it is impossible. Again and again we have heard that 'Jesus is not for the Jews.' But what if this isn't true? What if a Jewish person who accepts him as the Messiah actually is embracing an essential part of their Jewish identity and religion? What if belief in Yeshua is actually the way to have a relationship with God and is not a form of idolatry?



UK Director
Daniel Nessim

The answers to these questions hinge on the identity of Yeshua. He was a faithful and observant Jew to his last breath. So were his disciples. So were almost all of his followers in the first decades. Was he the Messiah as he claimed, or was he simply a revolutionary leader? Is he rightly called our Lord, or was he simply deluded?

As you read, you may wish to discuss these issues further. I invite you to email me at daniel@chosenpeople.org.uk, or to contact us at 020 8455 7911.

Your friend,

Daniel Nessim

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Presenting the Word of God as a unified Jewish book, the **Complete Jewish Bible** is a translation for Jews and non-Jews alike. It connects Jews with the Jewishness of the Messiah, and non-Jews with their Jewish roots. Names and key terms are returned to their original Hebrew and presented in easy-to-understand transliterations, enabling the reader to say them the way Yeshua (Jesus) did! [3080]

Order the **Complete Jewish Bible** for only **£23**
plus £2 Postage and Packing

You Are Invited . . .

A special evening with **Dr. Mitch Glaser** of Chosen People Global Ministries, at our residential **Messianic Centre in Golders Green, Tuesday, October 16, at 7:00 for 7:30 PM.**

This will be a tremendous opportunity to meet others and to hear about the work of Chosen People Ministries around the world. Call 020 8455-7911 or email to let us know if you can come.



A Word to Our Christian Friends . . .

The New Testament affirms that Jewish evangelism is not an option; it is a Scriptural command and, as such, it must be faithfully heeded. In his letter to the Romans, the Apostle Paul writes of the interconnectedness of the Jewish people and the Great Commission:

I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! (Romans 11:11-12)

In other words, far from being finished with the Jewish people, Paul reminds the Body of Messiah of its debt of gratitude to the Jewish people—which is expressed in taking the Good News to the people of Israel to bring them to the fullness that God intended from the beginning.



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

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Three Reasons I Believe

If Not Yeshua, Then Who?

As Jews, it seems we have had our fill of messiahs. I have on my bookshelf a copy of Abba Hillel Silver's book *A History of Messianic Speculation in Israel*. The catalogue of false messiahs mentioned seems endless. Of course, he does mention Yeshua (Jesus), but is Yeshua really just one of a string of maladjusted hopefuls and misfits?

I struggle to think of any other Jew who has come close to fulfilling the requirements to be Messiah. The Hebrew Bible describes them all. There is his ancestry, place of birth and manner of death, all predicted in what amounts to a pretty good ID card. Beyond that, clues are given about his life, friends, enemies and relationship to God. Sometimes I have tried to look at this with a sceptic's eye—but I always come back to the question: If it is not Yeshua, then who?

Any one or two of these predictions can be explained away. The explanations are not always convincing, but they are there. The problem is that there are so many predictions, and they have been fulfilled so tellingly in the person of Yeshua that explaining away just will not do. If what is the clearest and most common meaning of these verses is consistently contested by complicated arguments, then what seems more probable? Is it the special pleading or the plain sense of what is written? It seems to me that the weight of the evidence is for Yeshua.

If Not Then, Then When?

Just down the street from me, in Golders Green, a faded bumper sticker implores, 'We Want Messiah Now!' So do I, for I empathise with the words of the New Testament, 'Come, Lord Yeshua!' I think there is awareness within our Jewish community that the time for Messiah is ripe. In fact, a few years ago would have been great. A few centuries ago might have been even better. A few years ago, some people were so hopeful that Messiah's reign was imminent that hundreds of thousands pinned their hopes on the elderly 'Rebbe' of Brooklyn, New York. The Rebbe was a great man. He was brilliant, a leader and a scholar. Unfortunately for his followers, he does not appear to have been the Messiah. He certainly did not match the Bible's criteria for the Messiah. Now his grave is a venerated place where his followers pray.

The problem to me is that the timing seems all wrong. Not only are there difficulties with someone who has never been to Israel being acclaimed as the Messiah, but the Scriptures seem to say Messiah should be here by now. Daniel 9:25-26a reads:

Know, therefore, and discern that seven weeks [of years] will elapse between the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until an anointed prince comes. It will remain built for sixty-two weeks [of years], with open spaces and moats; but these will be troubled times. Then, after the sixty-two weeks, Messiah will be cut off

and have nothing. The people of a prince yet to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary...

Prophecies are sometimes hard to understand, especially the bits about all the years. Nevertheless, some phrases here are crystal clear. Firstly, the anointed prince comes after the rebuilding of Jerusalem (this was done some centuries BCE). Secondly, after the rebuilding, Messiah is cut off (this is a description of execution). Thirdly, after this execution, another prince would come and destroy Jerusalem and the Temple (sanctuary). This is exactly what happened when Yeshua came, lived and died just prior to the destruction of the second Temple. Even Rashi (a famous Jewish commentator on Scripture), while explaining the 'rebuilding' as a future rebuilding of the Temple, connects this verse with the Messiah. I just think his timing is a little off.

I say, if not then, then when?

If Not Divine, Then What?

The Scriptures do describe Messiah in ways that exceed mere humanity. Since they recognized this, early believers in Yeshua, being good Jews, were at pains to make sure that no one thought them to be idolaters. This appears to be why Rav Shaul (Paul) wrote (1 Corinthians 8:6) that:

for us there is one God, the Father, from whom all things come and for whom we exist; and one Lord, Yeshua the Messiah, through whom were created all things and through whom we have our being.

Shaul asserts that there is a divine connection between the Messiah and God—the Father. It is, after all, God who created all things. There is a connection of identity here, but clearly not polytheism, clearly not idolatry.

Some sort of divine connection is essential for the Messiah. In the *Tenach* and in the *Siddur*, he is the *go'el* (redeemer) of Israel. What kind of redeemer? He is the kind who brings righteousness to his people and delivers them from their foes, establishing a kingdom of righteousness. The descriptions of his kingdom in the *Tenach* are nothing less than stunning. The phrase 'the lion shall lie down with the lamb' has even passed into the common English language as a picture of harmonious bliss. I may be blind, but I do not see this as being anything other than a picture of something that is beyond the reach of any mortal man.

What Then?

Choosing to believe that Yeshua is the Messiah is a big step—a huge step, and not one to be taken lightly. I encourage you to think it over, to research the issue from both sides, and most of all to pray. Yeshua said those who seek shall find and happy are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. I encourage you to search and to ask God for His help to know the truth. Messiah Yeshua's claims are too significant to dismiss lightly because, if He is the Messiah, you do not want to miss out.

Isaiah 53

¹Who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD
been revealed?
²For He shall grow up before Him as a
tender plant,
And as a root out of dry ground.
He has no form or comeliness;
And when we see Him,
There is no beauty that we should desire
Him.
³He is despised and rejected by men,
A Man of sorrows and acquainted with
grief.
And we hid, as it were, our faces from
Him;
He was despised, and we did not esteem
Him.
⁴Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.
⁵But He was wounded for our
transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace was upon
Him,
And by His stripes we are healed.
⁶All 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.
⁷He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
Yet He opened not His mouth;
He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,
And as a sheep before its shearers is
silent,
So He opened not His mouth.
⁸He was taken from prison and from
judgment,
And who will declare His generation?
For He was cut off from the land of the
living;
For the transgressions of My people He
was stricken.
⁹And they made His grave with the
wicked—
But with the rich at His death,
Because He had done no violence,
Nor was any deceit in His mouth.
¹⁰Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him;
He has put Him to grief.
When You make His soul an offering for
sin,
He shall see His seed, He shall prolong
His days,
And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper
in His hand.
¹¹He shall see the labor of His soul, and
be satisfied.
By His knowledge My righteous Servant
shall justify many,
For He shall bear their iniquities.
¹²Therefore I will divide Him a portion with
the great,
And He shall divide the spoil with the
strong,
Because He poured out His soul unto
death,
And He was numbered with the
transgressors,
And He bore the sin of many,
And made intercession for the transgressors.

BY NIKKI H.

My Orthodox Grandpa

Because of family circumstances, my grandparents helped raise me and were like second parents. They were Orthodox Jews, so every morning and evening, Grandpa went to *shul* (synagogue) to pray, and they sent me to a *Yeshiva* (Jewish religious school) and to Hebrew school. I remember at age nine telling my grandparents that I made a vow to God that I would never worship an idol (of course in my mind at the time that meant the 'Christian gods'). I grew up hearing stories of how my grandparents' seven brothers and sisters and parents all died in concentration camps. I was told the Nazis who murdered them wore on their belt buckles the words, 'For the Glory of Christ.' After becoming a believer in the Messiah, I could barely talk about my grandparents with anyone without breaking down in tears. I loved them so much, and I could not see how they could ever come to know their Messiah.

My Grandpa had a vague sense of what I believed because over the years, we had many discussions about prophecy and the Scriptures. However, every time I tried to actually tell him about the Messiah, I would be thwarted by my grandmother or another relative (all of whom were certain that 'it would be the death of him'). When my grandfather became ill and went into a nursing home, I felt compelled to go to Florida to try again to talk with him. Everyone in my family had threatened to disown me if I dared to talk to him about God (they meant Jesus). I must admit that I, too, secretly feared that, in his state now, if I talked about my faith, I could easily give him a heart attack.

Visiting him for three days, I did not mention Yeshua (Jesus), but I explained God's plan for relationship with us through sacrificial atonement. Finally, on the fourth day, I told Grandpa that this atonement would come through the Messiah. The next day I would tell him who the Messiah was.

The day came and this time I wheeled him into a private room. I asked him if he remembered what I was going to tell him that day. 'Yes,' he said. 'You're going to tell me who Messiah is. So, who is he?'

I explained that it was Yeshua and began to go through the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. As I spoke, my Grandpa's head began to nod off as though he was having a heart attack. I thought now I had really 'done it.' I had killed my Grandpa by talking to him about Jesus. I prayed quietly and suddenly he looked up and began to argue with me (a good sign as to his lucidity, since I would have been a bit suspicious if he had just complied with what I said). He wanted to know why, if Yeshua was the Messiah, he was sick. Why was there war? Why did the Prince of Peace not bring peace? I explained that the Messiah came first to bring peace in our hearts and was coming again to bring peace on earth.

We had a great discussion that culminated with my asking Grandpa if I could say a prayer for him and ask God to reveal to him if indeed Yeshua was the Messiah. Instead of my saying a prayer, my Grandpa suddenly began to pray out loud all by himself. 'God,' he said, 'if this is true, then I want to know. I want to know this Messiah Yeshua, as *Bruchah* (my Hebrew name) described.'

Tears began to flow down from his eyes. He looked up at me and said. 'Bruchah, you're beautiful. Thank you.'

Grandpa died three weeks later. Before his passing my mother had asked Grandpa if he remembered my visit that day. 'Of course,' he said. When she asked him what we discussed, he replied, 'We discussed "heavenly things."'