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The Chosen People

REACHING JEWISH PEOPLE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM



Celebrating a Jewish Homeland

1948-2008



Greetings in our Messiah's Name, The last few months have seen the Lord bless our work in London, and we have had some wonderful reports come in from our ministry in Israel. Thank you for your support of this ministry among the Jewish people.

Getting the word out—the life-giving word of salvation through Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah—is accomplished in many different ways. Even within the Jewish community itself, we often have very different audiences in mind. People who aren't likely to hear through one medium might well give an attentive ear through another. Sometimes we get the word out via on-street surveys, other times simply through one-to-one visits to loved yet non-believing friends. We hold outreach services and Passover dinners, and sometimes provide humanitarian services. All of this is so that in all kinds of circumstances we might save at least some (1 Corinthians 9:22).



**UK Director
Daniel Nessim**

It is in this vein that we are very much looking forward to a couple of debates we are sponsoring this spring—one in London and one in Oxford—between two very scholarly, well-known, and respected authorities. Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, who will argue for the point of view of those who do not believe that Yeshua is the Messiah, is a prolific author, accomplished debater, and is passionate for Judaism. Dr Michael L. Brown, a Jew who does believe in Yeshua, has authored the four-volume series, *Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus*. It goes without saying that we are looking forward to a lively and productive exchange.

God willing, the first debate will be held at the Friends House, opposite London's Euston Station, on Monday, 12 May. The second, in Oxford, will be held the following evening in Oxford Town Hall. I invite you to set one of these dates in your diary—it will be well worth attending! It is our desire that in this honest debate, the claims of Yeshua to be the Messiah of Israel and Saviour of the world will receive a hearing from people who would not normally hear his case presented clearly and compassionately, in a way that makes sense to Jewish minds. We will present more details in our next newsletter.

In the meantime, it is worth mentioning that we would appreciate any gifts before May to help us manage the costs of this special event, and our other outreaches. We trust that with your support and prayers, many more people might hear the Good News that our Messiah has come. We know who He is—the cornerstone that the builders, the ancient leaders and rabbis of the Jewish people, have sadly set aside.

Your friend,

Daniel
Daniel

FRUIT THAT REMAINS

Michael Z., who directs our Israel work, has had some extraordinary opportunities to reach Jewish people for Jesus. In his own words:

"I want to mention one fellow—we'll call him Dovid—to give you a good sense of the kind of work we do. Dovid came from Russia. He was single, well-educated and struggling to become established. We met him through one of the free tours we give of the holy biblical sites. This is just one of many creative ways we have of meeting people. Seekers won't simply show up on our doorstep, so we must constantly do all we can to meet Israelis who are seeking the Lord.

"At the end of each tour, we always offer an invitation to visit our congregation. Dovid began attending, although very irregularly, sitting in the last pew. Yet the Spirit of God worked in him and finally one day after a service he said, 'I want to become a follower of Messiah. What should I do?'

"I discipled Dovid; he became part of our Tel Aviv congregation and grew rapidly as a believer. Dovid married another member of the congregation and they have two children and are expecting a third. He now serves as an elder in the congregation."

There are many more like Dovid being reached through Chosen People Ministries in Israel. They are coming to faith through the congregations we have planted and nurtured, and also through more direct forms of evangelism.

BEAUTY FOR ASHES

Jerusalem staff member Victor B. reports the sad news that the facility which houses the Messianic congregation he leads was set ablaze by arsonists, causing at least £15,000 in damage. Victor writes, "We are praying for these people, knowing that the Lord can give beauty for ashes—and we've seen already that indeed He does!" This beauty has come in the form of many expressions of God's love and encouragement, not only through secular, but also through religious Israeli neighbours. One of the rabbis of a neighbouring synagogue actually offered Victor's congregation the use of their facility for their services. This expression of support is a blessing beyond words!



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

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The Jewish Homeland – Symbol of God’s Lasting Promise

If there is a political state that is more a state of mind than the State of Israel, it doesn’t exist on this planet. Where else is there such an intense collision of soaring hopes and harsh realities? Where else do heaven and earth intersect with such intense results?

The creation of the Jewish homeland is a story of almost unfathomable complexity. To some, it is yet another demonstration that the God of holiness who rules over all is able to use the questionable motives and impure character of fallen humanity to bring about His sovereign will.

The Zionist Vision

In the late 1800s, the vague dream of a Jewish homeland achieved a concrete political form through the vision of Theodor Herzl, a Hungarian Jewish lawyer and journalist living in Vienna. Outraged and alarmed at the rise of anti-Jewish feeling that was sweeping Europe, Herzl wrote a small book that contained a large idea: *The Jewish State*. Herzl’s idea spread, and in 1897, in Basel, Switzerland, the first meeting of what would be dubbed “the First Zionist Congress” established the World Zionist Organization. Its mission was as simple as it was far-reaching: “Zionism strives to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law.”

Zionism was first and foremost a secular movement. It is now a mostly forgotten fact that prior to World War II, the Jewish religious community was in large measure opposed to the creation of a Jewish State. Reform Jews were intent on entering the mainstream of post-Enlightenment Western civilization; the Orthodox could not countenance a Jewish state that was not ruled over by the King-Messiah.

But slowly, the world powers began to take notice of the Zionist vision. In 1917, Arthur James Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, penned the now historic words of the Balfour Declaration to the Baron Edmond de Rothschild, a wealthy and influential Jewish benefactor: “His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.”

It was the first time a world power had expressed support for the idea of a Jewish state. It set into motion the forces that would one day, after a degree of suffering unimagined even by this suffering people, form the impetus that would finally make Herzl’s dream a reality. To the dismay of the Arab world, the United Nations recommended a partition of Palestine that granted over half the territory to the Jewish State. On 14 May 1948, the State of Israel was proclaimed. Each year, *Yom HaAtzma’ut* (Independence Day) is celebrated in Jerusalem, across Israel and around the world with a joy which is tempered with the knowledge that the Jewish homeland is surrounded by enemies who would love nothing better than for it to disappear. For even as it was instantly recognised by both the United States and the Soviet Union, it was just as quickly invaded by forces from the Transjordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq. Each time Israel has repulsed its enemies, it has been with the knowledge that it only needs to lose one war to be deprived of its existence.

Conflict and Consolation in the Land of the Prophets

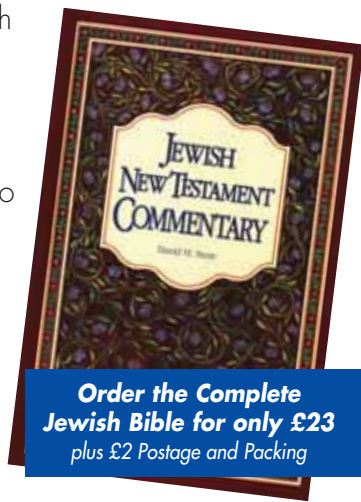
In the six decades that have passed since the State of Israel was established, the Jewish homeland has seen more than its fair share of warfare and conflict. It has managed to survive and triumph in significant ways in the midst of both the implacable hatred of its neighbours and internal conflict that has at times threatened to tear it asunder. Yet, although it faces external threat and internal difficulties, Israel has stood as a beacon to the Jewish people around the world. Although life there is not easy, it has been a haven for Jews from many different countries who have sought refuge from the oppression and persecution that has been the lot of Jewish people in so many places.

It is good to remember that when we pray for the peace of Jerusalem, we are praying for far more than political peace. Jewish believers in Jesus the Messiah



The Jewish New Testament Commentary

Rediscover the Jewish roots of your faith! David Stern's Jewish New Testament Commentary is a companion volume to the New Testament portion of the Complete Jewish Bible. The JNTC offers an exciting way for believers to understand the New Testament from a Jewish perspective.



A Messianic Jew living in Jerusalem, Stern seeks to bridge the spiritual and cultural gap between Christians and Jews as he relates the New Testament text to the Tenach (Old Testament), the historical setting of the first century, rabbinic writings, and Christian theology. An engaging and informative resource! 938 pages, paperback.

For more Messianic Jewish products, visit us online at

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A debate
between Rabbi
Shmuley Boteach
and
Dr. Michael Brown

Is Jesus God?

THREE JEWS, TWO OPINIONS!

Orthodox Rabbi Shmuley Boteach and Messianic scholar Dr. Michael Brown are to debate the burning question, "Is Jesus God?" on Monday, 12th May, at 7:00 PM, at The Friends Meeting House, opposite Euston Station, London. The debate will be chaired by the noted scholar and authority of Messianic Judaism, Rabbi Dr. Dan Cohn-Sherbock.

A second debate will be held the following day in Oxford, at the Town Hall. Information will be available at www.jewishdebate.com. This is a truly star-studded cast and an event you won't want to miss!

understand that as welcome as a cessation of hostility would be, what is even more important is the lasting guarantee the Scripture provides in the words of Messiah Himself: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

Believers in Yeshua the Messiah—especially those who live and minister in the Land—know that the peace we are called to "broker" cannot be politically defined or implemented by human effort alone. Real peace is found in a Person—Jesus the Messiah. Acknowledging His Lordship is the first step in God's authentic peace process.

A Glimpse of Prophetic Fulfillment

The prophet Amos wrote, "I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; they shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them," says the LORD your God" (Amos 9:14-15).

Modern Israel's founders were secular, but there is no denying that these words of the Lord have come to pass in our days.

So then, Israel is many things to many people. And whatever place the State of Israel may hold in God's unfolding will, to men and women of faith it is a compelling sign that God's promises to Israel have not been revoked. As modern Israel approaches the 60th anniversary of its founding, there are still those alive who are old enough to remember how, suddenly, the promises and prophecies of the Scriptures spilled out of the ancient pages of the Bible and onto the pages of the daily newspapers on that fateful day in May 1948.

For many believers, the creation of the State of Israel is nothing less than the vindication of God's prophetic timetable in our time. But whatever viewpoint one may hold about that, there is no denying that the improbable story of the Jewish people returning to the land of Israel to build a country is as marvellous as it is unlikely.

Men and women of faith hold on to the hope that Israel's destiny will only be fully realised when the people of Israel recognise Jesus as their Messiah. We look ahead, along with the Apostle Paul, to the long-awaited moment when Messiah returns and "all Israel will be saved" (Romans 11:26).

"Zionism strives to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law."