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# The Chosen People

SERVING THE JEWISH PEOPLE SINCE 1894



## REACHING WANDERING ISRAELIS

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Israelis in Argentina and  
New Zealand Search for Truth

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Dr. Mitch  
Glaser Director

**S**halom!

I was recently in Jerusalem and visited with a couple who served as volunteers for six months at the new Chosen People Ministries youth hostel in New Zealand. This is a strategic spot as thousands of Israelis wander through the South Island of New Zealand each year to enjoy the spectacular scenery and hiking trails. In fact, the word on the street is that the Israelis who go to New Zealand after the army are looking for God through nature—as opposed to those who go to India who are so often searching for God through drugs and eastern religions.

This wonderful young Israeli couple shared so many of their conversations and experiences with the 750+ Israeli young people who have wandered through what we call the Zula Lodge. They told my wife and me story after story about conversations they had with Israelis seeking the Lord. These spiritually focused conversations often took place late into the night and early hours of the morning.

I was encouraged to find out that the Hebrew version of the book I wrote, entitled *Isaiah 53 Explained*—which is at the heart of our Isaiah 53 outreach around the globe—was distributed to hundreds of these wandering Israelis.

Sometimes it is really difficult to share the Good News with people who know little about Jesus or who are resistant to the Gospel. Most Israelis fall into this category as they are raised in traditional, but modern Jewish homes that simply do not know anything about the Lord Yeshua, our Messiah. Many of these young and, most often secular Israelis also pick up on the resistance to the Gospel prevalent among Jewish people for so many generations. I am happy to say that this attitude seems to be changing and many

Israelis are opening up to Jesus! This is especially true of Israeli young people who are travelling around the globe looking for the answers to life after having gone through a stressful season of military service.

There is no doubt that we have undergone a slight shift in our strategy for reaching these wandering and wondering Israelis. In the past, we have sent short-term mission teams, usually Israeli believers who live in Israel, to reach their counterparts across the globe—from New Zealand and South America to India and even in the United States. However, we have now discovered that setting up permanent facilities where we can house wandering Israelis allows for a deeper and more intimate ministry. This enables us to take our presentation of the Gospel to a new level!

### *Argentina*

This is why we have recently established another centre for travelling Israelis in Buenos Aires, Argentina—a city of almost 300,000 Jewish people. Chosen People Ministries has been serving in Argentina since 1942, when one of our missionaries from Austria helped many Jewish believers and non-believers escape the Holocaust and flee to Argentina from Vienna. He followed them and began the ministry of Chosen People Ministries in Argentina.

We have two wonderful facilities in Buenos Aires where we are teaching Bible studies, planting a congregation and utilizing the Spanish version of our Isaiah 53 online campaign. God has really blessed this work, which is now a partnership between Chosen People Ministries and the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptists.

The Lord has recently provided us a believing Argentine Jewish couple who also lived in Israel for many years and learned to speak Hebrew. Their knowledge of Israeli culture will allow them to connect



with the young Israelis who travel through our centres. Thousands of Israeli former soldiers travel to South America to hike near the lakes and through the mountains.

We have renovated a large house in Buenos Aires that serves as living space for our missionary couple, some volunteer staff, and as a hostel for about twelve Israeli backpackers. These young Israeli travellers begin their journey in Buenos Aires before they embark on the trek across South America. We greet them warmly and provide housing in a safe and comfortable atmosphere; all with a loving Argentine Jewish couple who are willing to have hours of conversation with them about Jesus!

### *Getting Involved*

There are lots of ways you can get involved in helping us reach *wandering* Israelis throughout the world. We especially need your prayers. Please pray that God will open the hearts of these wandering young Israelis to the Messiah. When this happens everything else is easy! But we do need your prayers also for God's wisdom in running these various youth hostels, His guidance during late-night conversations and very simply for His hand in directing those He wants to reach through our efforts in Argentina, New Zealand and elsewhere.

I also ask you to get the word out that Chosen People Ministries is offering these opportunities to serve the Lord in short-term ministry in both New Zealand and Argentina. These are great winter ministries as they fall during school breaks and some are in our target

areas. This is a perfect mission trip for those who are looking for something to do during the winter, as the touring season in both Argentina and New Zealand is at its height during January and February.

Your gifts to Chosen People Ministries UK helps to support the work of reaching Israelis around the globe! Please ask the Lord what He would have you give to reach Jewish people in Great Britain, Israel and around the world. Even a gift of £15, or £25 will make a big difference in serving the Jewish community and let me remind you that giving through Gift Aid allows the Lords work to receive additional funding from the government. And of course, a commitment to monthly giving via Standing Order will allow your mission to the Jewish people to better plan for our ministry. Thank you so much for your generosity and prayers!

I hope you enjoy the remainder of the newsletter where you will read some amazing stories of how God is using our staff in the lives of these young Israelis!

Your brother,



Mitch

International Director



**I**t's normally impossible to talk to an Orthodox Jewish woman on the street about the Messiah, but that's precisely what happened recently! During heavy rain a friend and I ran to shelter under a bus stop and as the 67 bus approached we began a conversation about Gematria. I asked, "I wonder what Hebrew word has the numerical value of 67?" He did not know. Then we added 6 and 7 and got 13.



How about that? We still had no answer! Then I wondered if it could be "6" and "7" symbolising the six days of creation and Shabbat. Without thinking I turned and asked the Jewish lady next to me, who replied, "No... Anyway wasn't it seven days of creation?" I gently explained it was six days and on the 7th day God rested, and this simple mistake opened up a Bible-based conversation between us. At its end I was able to offer her one of our books, "What the Rabbonim say about Moshiach". Deborah asked, "Who wrote it? Is it Reform?" "No,"

I replied, "it's Orthodox." She thoughtfully took the book with a smile and said thank you! Please pray that she would read it and consider the contents carefully.

Equally amazing: back in Stamford Hill I found myself with a rabbi who put Tefillin on me and together we said the Shema! There was no animosity in the room despite my faith in Jesus as Messiah, and whilst it is true that he may just want to convert me... is it not equally true that I want to see the Holy Spirit open his eyes? In his office I saw a book entitled "The Jew and the Christian Missionary: A Jewish Response to Missionary Christianity" and I asked the rabbi about it. He said it was based on a debate that took place 400 years ago, which reminded me that we are involved in a discussion that has been going on for centuries and requires prayerful patience.

It is a joy to tell you that our outreach in Gateshead was a tremendous success! As you may recall, I was invited to come and explore ways to help a 3-year-old church plant build bridges and



create intentional Gospel dialogue with their Jewish neighbours. We worked hard to encourage, inspire and teach the church ways to build relationships with this isolated and hard to reach community. If you'd like to know more details then please email me and I would be delighted to send you a full report!

Lastly I am excited to tell you that I now have four new mobile numbers from Orthodox Jewish men who are willing to continue talking to me after I met them on the street. One man agreed to consider regularly reading the parashah with me. This is an incredible opportunity and requires a great deal of prayer. His name is Moti.

Thank you again for your continued prayer partnership and financial support, without which this work would be impossible and unfruitful.

**FIONA SORBALA REPORTS**

**A**s another **Shalom Brooklyn** outreach comes to an end, I am sad to say goodbye to friends new and old but am rejoicing at what the Lord has done this year. I watched a young woman who

joined us at the last minute, and who had never spoken to a Jewish person let alone witnessed to one, find herself during phone call follow-up of contacts leading an elderly Jewish lady to her Messiah. The true simplicity of faith and her peace in the Lord were evident in the timbre of her voice, and this lonely lady heard it and wanted it too.

I went daily to minister to the Russian-speaking Jewish people and was able to give a number of Bibles away, but the highlight was having an American Jewish man walk up to my table and ask for a New Testament in Hebrew. I was able to witness to him and also invite him to an evening concert that we organised. How wonderful

to see him not only come along but also make contact with our local Messianic congregation!

Each afternoon we went up to the headquarters of the Lubavitch movement, who believe that their leader, dead now for over twenty years, is the Messiah! We went in order to educate the team and to witness about Messiah too. Each time the team went there, we were able to talk to someone. In fact we met one man locally on Friday who had been witnessed to on Monday by our team! You can see him in the photo.



## THE WORKS OF A MIGHTY GOD

Michael, our missionary in Sevastopol, Crimea, attends a Messianic Jewish congregation. Before the holiday of Purim, Michael received an appeal from the Jewish community of the city of Eupatoria for assistance in celebrating Purim. They said that there was an old synagogue in Eupatoria that has been long unused because there is no rabbi. But the Jewish community agreed to resume meeting and to celebrate Purim. Someone advised them to seek the assistance of Messianic Jews. Thus, they found Michael who gladly responded and helped with the Purim celebration.

The director of our work in Russia writes, “We try to use every opportunity to spread the Gospel to God’s chosen people, and we couldn’t miss this opportunity to bring the Good News to the Jews of Eupatoria. Michael organized the Purim celebration and this feast became the day of dedication of the synagogue. Michael openly spoke about his faith in Yeshua the Messiah and also about the changes in his life that occurred through faith in Yeshua. After the holiday, many Jewish people came and thanked him for the wonderful celebration of Purim.” Please pray for Michael and the work in Crimea. Pray that our staff have more opportunities to share the Gospel with Jewish people.

## HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR READS ABOUT HER MESSIAH

Sharon, a full-time volunteer with our Fort Lauderdale branch, reported that Deborah,\* an Orthodox Jewish Holocaust survivor, ordered *Isaiah 53 Explained* because she was curious. She said she was not sure that Jesus is the Messiah, but promised to read the book. Deborah was also interested in trying out a Messianic congregation. She asked for Sharon’s phone number in case she had questions about *Isaiah 53 Explained*. Deborah is extremely open to the Gospel. A similar story happened with another Orthodox Jewish woman, Bobbie.\* This is almost unheard of in our work. Praise the Lord for drawing these two Jewish women to himself. We are honored to be the vessels He uses to tell His Jewish people about the Messiah.

## RISEN FILM IGNITES CURIOSITY FOR JEWISH WOMEN IN PHOENIX

Cathy Wilson, who faithfully ministers in the Scottsdale, Arizona area, writes, “During our weekly Bible study, Sara,\* a Jewish woman who desires to learn of Jesus, and Beatrice,\* a Holocaust survivor who is open, asked if we could view the film focused



## SOWING SEEDS IN BROOKLYN

Joseph, a leader in our Brooklyn congregation, has recently been giving away tracts to Jewish students at a local college. A religious Jewish man from Joseph’s Hebrew class was intrigued and asked Joseph “Is Easter is like a Christian Passover?” Joseph had the opportunity to explain to him that Resurrection Sunday (Easter) celebrates the Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah from the dead, and that three days earlier during Passover, Jesus was crucified as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Please continue to pray that these little seeds will blossom into full-blown opportunities to share the Good News.

on Jesus’ resurrection, Risen. We did! Sara was glued to the screen. She audibly expressed her emotions. The film ended; Sara turned to me and remarked, ‘That was excellent. That was powerful.’ As we discussed Risen over coffee, Sara asked, ‘If we believe in God, shouldn’t we believe in His Son?’ Our studies continue. Sara has been verbalizing greater understanding while yet conveying resistance. Please pray for both these women!”

## I FOUND SHALOM

Do you know a Jewish person who is interested in Jesus? Invite them to watch the testimonies found on our website: [www.ifoundshalom.com](http://www.ifoundshalom.com).

**T**he Lord has blessed us with a thriving ministry among the growing population of Israeli backpackers arriving in Argentina and New Zealand each year. We are there to provide them with the ultimate travel guide for their journey—the Word of God and the truth of His Messiah, Jesus!

Our dedicated worker in Argentina shares the following powerful testimony of his interactions with one Israeli backpacker:

*“Why were they eating the bread and the wine?” This is what Jonah,\* an Israeli backpacker, asked me as we left church one Sunday in Argentina. Most Israelis are intrigued by hearing about Jesus, but almost none of them ever ask to go to church with us. I had shared the Gospel several times and watched a video about Isaiah 53 with Jonah. He had also talked to several of the other volunteers about their faith, and now he wanted to experience what it is like for believers to worship together. On this particular Sunday, we had a guest speaker who preached from Romans 11 about why Christians should love Jewish people and share the Gospel with them. I was a little unsure how he would respond to the part about evangelizing Jewish people, but in the end, he was so amazed by everything that was said that he wished that every Israeli could hear this sermon! He was also very excited to read Jeremiah 31 in Hebrew to see what the Old Testament says about the New Covenant. God’s Spirit was definitely working in that room. Not only was Jonah impacted by the sermon, but people in the congregation began praising God for His plan of salvation for Jews and Gentiles and expressing a desire to love the Jewish people by sharing the Gospel with them.*

*It was this church service that led to Jonah’s question about communion. I began to explain that the Lord’s Supper originated in Passover with the three pieces of unleavened bread that are in every*

*Passover meal. I told him that the rabbis give certain symbolism to these three pieces of bread, but none of them are adequate explanations. When I told him that I believe these three pieces represent God, he blurted out, “Oh! The piece we break represents Jesus!” Without receiving a complete explanation, he fully understood the symbolism that the three pieces represented the Trinity. He understood that the broken piece represented Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, and he readily agreed that this explanation made so much more sense than the rabbis’ explanations.*

Our wonderful staff at the Zula Lodge in New Zealand are blessed with a thriving ministry to the Israelis who come their way. Here are some stories from their work:

*We love it when they come alone. In all recent cases when a single person came alone, he was so open to the Gospel message. I invest so much more time talking to them one-on-one about Yeshua and they each receive my input with enthusiasm. In most cases we pour over an open Hebrew Bible until late into the night.*

*One interesting story was with Gal.\* We spotted a guy in town that looked Israeli. I started talking to him in Hebrew and sure enough, he was Israeli. We invited him to stay with us. It was such an enigma to him that he was unexpectedly approached by followers of Yeshua, “A mere coincidence or is God indeed after me?”, he wondered. In a very similar way to other solo travelers, we had amazing, deep conversations with him including answering his questions and reading from the Old and New Testaments.*

Scott Brown, the leader of our New Zealand work, shares this exciting and heartwarming report:

*“This has to be a fluke. It can’t possibly be this good all the time.”*

*This was the thought that possessed me exactly nine years ago, as Margie and I motorcycled throughout New Zealand’s wild South Island in celebration of our 30th anniversary. Everywhere we*



Every year tens of thousands of Israelis travel the world after being discharged from the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). The IDF does provide local integration options, but many Israelis decide to travel abroad before deciding on a career or school path.

As Israelis desire to see the world and contemplate the answers to life’s questions, we want to be there to give them THE answer: Yeshua. In the midst of intense natural beauty at the end of the earth, we backpack alongside Israelis and share Messiah in relevant and relational ways. Our staff, volunteers and local believers share their spiritual journeys and the Messiah from the Scriptures with these Israelis.



went we discovered scores of young travelers—Israeli and otherwise—who seemed primed and ready for spiritual conversation. For a missionary like myself, it just seemed too good to be true.

Well, you know the rest of the story. We moved to the South Island the very next year to test the surface. And we soon discovered that the evangelistic opportunities here are not what we originally thought...they're even better! Case in point: A few nights ago it took me four hours to finish a 45-minute cleaning chore on the campground. No, I wasn't slacking off, and my sponge wasn't broken. The problem was non-stop interruptions. You see, young Israelis at the camp kept stopping me, wanting to talk about God, Jesus and the Bible. Quite the problem, huh?

As you read this, I will be commencing my 29th year of missionary service with Chosen People Ministries. While it's true that we have witnessed countless works of God in these 29 years, I've never seen anything like this past summer in New Zealand. Through our Israeli youth hostel, evangelistic Shabbat dinners and "Hummus Nights," Jewish holiday celebrations, Hebrew literature distribution, Bible studies, barbecue outreaches and our campground ministry, we have had over 1,000 personal evangelistic encounters with young Israeli travellers.

But what excites me most is their high level of receptivity, enthusiasm and openness to the Gospel. Good grief; some nights I can't even find time to clean the toilets!

Scott also wrote about how he has been able to train other missionaries to do the same type of outreach in another part of New Zealand.



One of the great privileges I enjoy as a missionary in New Zealand is serving as a teacher/mentor to many young Bible school students. For example, as a regular lecturer for YWAM (Youth With A Mission) I teach hundreds of

students for a week at a time, with an emphasis on the Hebraic roots of our faith and our scriptures, as well as Jewish evangelism.

Apparently, God used this teaching to prompt some of my previous students to launch a new, ongoing ministry to Israelis in another part of the South Island! Here is their recent report:

"One night last week we had eleven Israelis at once; it was a full house. The best part is how open they are. We've had some great discussions about forgiveness, hearing God's voice, foundations of Christianity, relationship versus religion, etc. We're very encouraged by this ministry and are thankful for how you helped to prepare us to share Jesus with Israelis."

We are so thankful for all that God is doing through our dedicated team of workers in Argentina, New Zealand, Israel and across the globe. Please continue to pray for our workers, volunteers, short-term missionaries and office staff who work tirelessly to bring the Gospel to these wandering Israelis and all Jewish people around the world.

\*names have been changed

New Zealand

75,000

soldiers are discharged from the Israeli Defense Force each year

1/3 of them travel abroad

they travel for

6 months  
10% travel up to a year

Travel is often done in groups of

5-20

Hostels often serve as a "base camp" allowing travellers to explore local spots and scenery<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.forbes.com/sites/davidyin/2013/12/19/out-of-israel-into-the-world/#54c2f0067d9f>



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\*There is a discounted price for bulk orders of ten or more...contact our office for more details.

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Please remember Chosen People Ministries in your will. 'I will bless those who bless you.' (Genesis 12:3)

*I was searching for God and a friend suggested I read Isaiah chapter 53 in the Hebrew Scriptures. I found myself drawn to the Servant of the Lord described in this chapter in a way that I did not expect!*