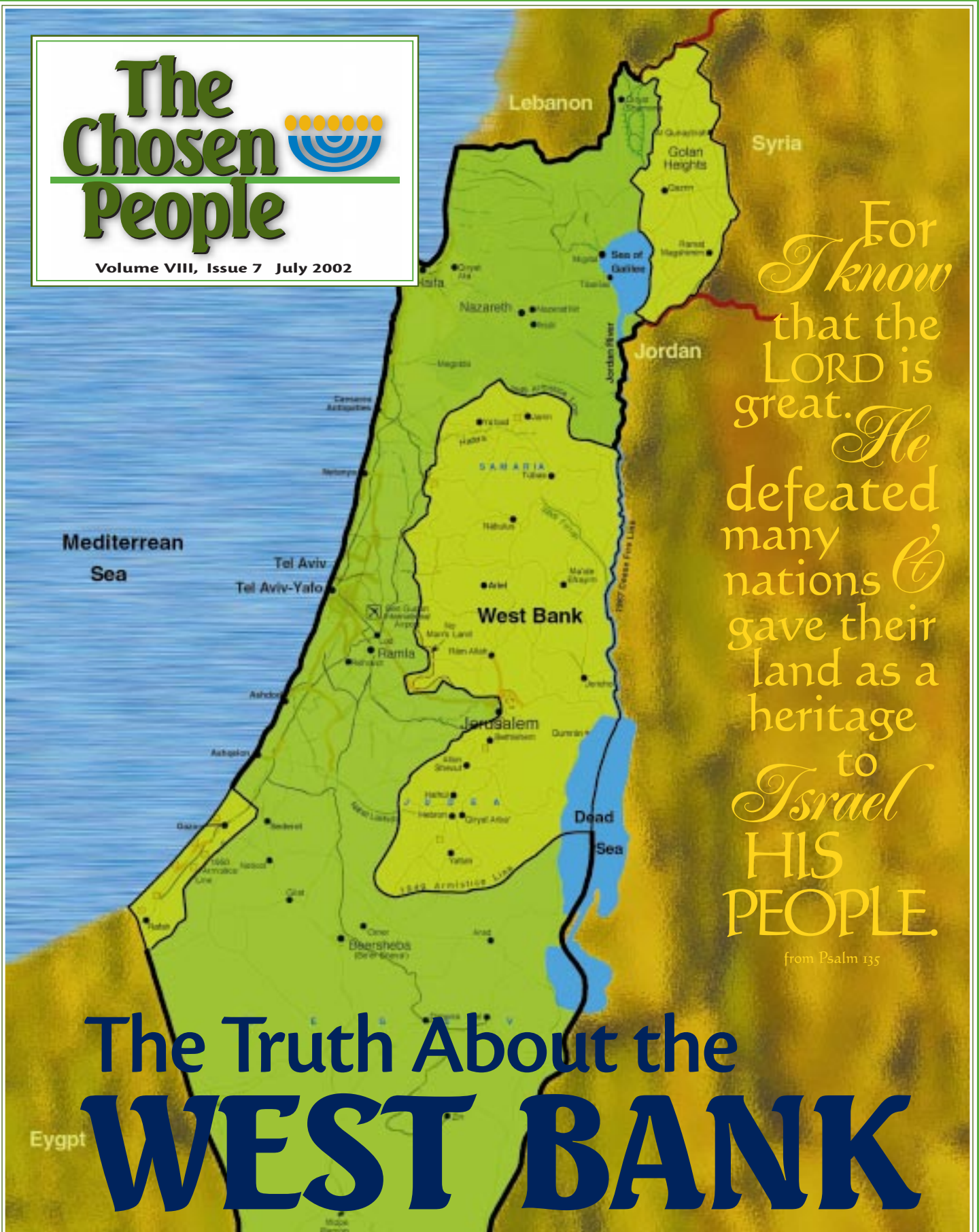


The Chosen People



Volume VIII, Issue 7 July 2002



For
I know
that the
LORD is
great.
He
defeated
many
nations &
gave their
land as a
heritage
to
Israel
HIS
PEOPLE.

from Psalm 135

The Truth About the **WEST BANK**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE: The Truth About the West Bank • A Brief History of Ariel • Henry and Irina N. • Essentials for a Successful Witness



Shalom from New York City,

Your Mission to the Jewish people is busier than ever this summer preaching the Gospel to both Jews and Gentiles. We rejoice in the many hundreds of people in the New York area who have heard the message of the Messiah through the witness of our short-term STEP (Summer Training and Evangelism Program) workers.

Please pray for our New York staff as we follow up on the many contacts we have gleaned through our ministry during STEP. We also need your prayers as we begin TeenSTEP. We will have more than a dozen teenagers sharing the Gospel in the subways, on the streets and in the parks of the greater New York area for the next week!



A view of Bethlehem on the West Bank

The Truth About the West Bank

Thanks for caring and for your faithful support and friendship. Without your help, we could not continue. You are a vital part of our outreach team!

Ministry in Israel

We also just sent off our “eXperience Israel” team of twenty college and career age young people to witness in Israel. These courageous young people will be proclaiming the Good News throughout Israel for two weeks.

There was a lot of pressure on us to cancel the trip, but we prayed and believed that the Lord would protect the team. And besides, our safety is not the most important issue at stake! Israelis are open to the Lord at this time because of the current tragic

problems in the Land. Now is the time of opportunity, so please keep our team in Israel in your prayers.

Judea and Samaria: The Biblical Boundaries

This issue of *The Chosen People* is dedicated to our ministry in one of the world’s hot spots. This area is commonly called the West Bank, or more accurately, by the biblical terminology “Judea and Samaria.” Many Israelis also use the term “Liberated Territories” for the region. Does it matter what we call it? It does. Whether we know it or not, what we call the area reflects our view of the conflict and points to the issues at stake.

Who really owns Judea and Samaria? This subject can be

approached from a political perspective or from a biblical point of view. I prefer to look at the issue biblically.

Clearly, the boundaries established by God in His covenant with Abraham include both Judea and Samaria. How else could we possibly understand the following passage of Scripture?

On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates—the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites" (Genesis 15:18-21).

If we take Scripture literally, then we must come to the conclusion that the nation of Israel is one country and that Judea and Samaria, the West Bank, is part of Israel—deeded by God to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

This should not surprise us. The fact that God sets the boundaries of Israel is consistent in both the Old and New Testaments. As Paul wrote,

And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us (Acts 17:26-27).

The Lord God establishes the boundaries of every nation on the planet—including and perhaps even especially Israel. The link between the Land of Israel and the Jewish people was established by God, not man. And this "Land of Promise" includes the West Bank.

The Land of Israel Today

Many ask, "When does Israel have the right to take ownership of the land promised to them by God? Now, or when the Messiah returns to rule?" Whatever God's timing may be, I do not think this question determines the issue of Israel's rightful boundaries. Whether the Land will become Israel's possession at the return of Jesus or prior to that time does not alter the truth that the Land is deeded to Israel.

Let me summarize. The Land of Israel was promised by God to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This includes what is commonly called the West Bank. In addition to this, the right of ownership to the Land of Promise began the moment God made His covenant with Abram. Therefore, the Jewish people have always had the right of ownership to the entire Land of Israel, including all its biblical boundaries. However, that does not mean that the Jewish people will have peaceful possession of the Land prior to the establishment of Messiah's kingdom on earth.

This time of *shalom* to come is linked to Israel's embracing the person of Jesus, as promised by the prophet Zechariah:

And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn (Zechariah 12:10).

The Length of the Divine Lease: Forever

We might ask a further question: how long a lease did God establish with the Jewish people? The answer is

made clear by the prophet Jeremiah:

They said, "Repent now everyone of his evil way and his evil doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD has given to you and your fathers forever and ever" (Jeremiah 25:5).

The phrase "forever and ever"* is used thirteen times in Scripture and most often refers to the nature of God. This time, the prophet uses this unique double mention of the Hebrew term *olam* in reference to the nation of Israel to demonstrate that God's promise of the Land of Israel to the Jewish people would endure for all time.

The Bible could not be any clearer on this issue. This lease exists as long as the earth endures—in whatever form. Whether or not the Jewish people live in the Land in peace depends upon Israel's obedience to God. But Israel's obedience or disobedience does not alter God's unconditional promise of the Land of Israel to the seed of the Patriarchs (Genesis 35:11-12, Psalm 135:12).

Chosen People Ministries on the West Bank

I hope this helps you understand why we view the West Bank as part of the nation of Israel. This war-torn region is part of the territory promised by God to the Jewish people.

But our ministry in Samaria is not to land—it is to people.

As you turn the page and learn more about what your Mission to the Jewish people is doing on the West Bank, I hope you will pray for our workers. But also pray for the peace of Jerusalem—and especially for Judea and Samaria—as we reach both Jews and Arabs for the Messiah.

Thanks for caring and praying.

Yours in Him,

Mitch
Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser
President

* The author is grateful to Stuart Dauermann for pointing this passage out in a recent conversation.



The start of a new Jewish settlement on the West Bank

of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one

mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn (Zechariah 12:10).

A Brief History of Ariel

The town of Ariel was founded in 1978 on the West Bank—the location of ancient biblical Samaria. The first forty families had a grim task carving a life out of the rocky hills, but they persevered. As houses were built, a school system developed along with other social services. An influx of over 2500 Russian immigrants in recent years has swelled the population to its present size of about 15,000.

Because of its location, Ariel's brief history has been turbulent and its economic growth has been slowed. The issue of the continued presence of Jewish settlements on the West Bank is certain to be a part of any future peace talks.

The Gospel in Ariel – Good News for an Ancient Land

Have you ever known anyone who has lived on “the other side of the tracks?” Or have you even lived there yourself?

“It is what God has told us to do.”

In ancient times, Samaria was considered to be “the other side of the tracks” by other Israelites—a place to be avoided by “respectable” people. In some ways, things haven't changed much over the millennia.

The district of Samaria on the West Bank of the Jordan River is still a neighborhood many Israelis tend to avoid. Although the pioneering spirit that gave impetus to Israeli national

life in its early days is still alive and well, most Israelis prefer the modern life in places like Tel Aviv over life in the West Bank. So did Henry and Irina N.—or so they thought.

In 1997, Henry was an elder in a Messianic congregation in Jaffa when two members, Stanislav and Svetlana, relocated from Tel Aviv to Ariel. Henry recalls, “Our congregation was amazed, because living in the center of modern Israel, we thought that the people in the territories were simply crazy to live there.”

Responding to God's Call

However, Henry began a Bible study in Ariel with Stanislav and Svetlana. After a year, as he got to know Ariel and its people, Henry understood that Ariel's residents were basically the same as other Israelis. Henry and Irina began to sense that God was calling them to live there and continue to build the Bible study they had started. They moved to Ariel in 1998.

Henry and Irina started doing street evangelism and in a short time half a dozen or more people came to faith. One Jewish woman named Marina expressed interest in what it meant to be “born again.” After some explanation and discussion, she received the Gospel and Henry baptized her. Meanwhile, Irina began a Messianic children's choir, which now meets twice a month.

Before long, another Chosen People Ministries Messianic congregation in Israel was born—“Tikvat Shomron” (Hope of Samaria). Henry was ordained as pastor in the beginning of 2000.

The musical talents that originally brought Henry and Irina together in their dark times before salvation now



 Cities where there are Chosen People Ministries workers

became a vehicle for the Lord's service. They founded a music center that features free performances by famous Israeli and Russian pianists. These performances enable Henry and Irina to share the Gospel with those who perform in and attend the concerts.

Irina and Svetlana continue to be active in street evangelism and in distributing Bibles and Messianic tracts. Henry, a skilled classical pianist, also holds Messianic Gospel concerts during which he shares his testimony. The congregation continues to grow.

Their success has not gone unnoticed. *Yad l'Achim*, a particularly aggressive anti-missionary group, recently posted pictures of Henry in Ariel with the caption, “Warning! Missionary!”

In spite of opposition, Henry and Irina plan to remain in Ariel ministering to the people of Samaria. Henry says simply, “It is what God has told us to do.”

Henry and Irina N.



Henry: From Drugs to Discipleship

I was born in Moscow in 1961 into a famous family. My father was a very well known pianist, and our home was steeped in culture and the fine arts. I began to study piano at an early age. I attended Gnesin College of Music, a very prestigious school, where I met Irina in 1976. We became friends.

In 1980, both my father and Irina's mother died and our grief brought us closer. However, we entered a very dark period. We both drank and used drugs, although Irina stopped long before I did. We were together for at least ten years while I continued to use hard drugs and drink.

In 1990, we decided to emigrate from Russia. Irina, who is Jewish, went to the Israeli embassy, and we received permission to make *aliyah* (emigrate). We came to Israel in March 1991.

At first it was just more of the same. I continued using drugs and Irina worked. One day, through an ad in the newspaper, we found some Jewish believers in Yeshua. Irina encouraged me to go to their meetings because by that time I was close to death from alcohol and drugs. I had even attempted suicide. I can truly say that it is only because of Jesus that I am alive today.

We went to their meetings in July 1991 and met several Russian believers who shared the Gospel with us. That August, I received Yeshua as my Lord and Savior. Right away, my life changed. I completely got off drugs and stopped drinking. A few weeks later, Irina, who could see the change in my life, also became a believer.

We became members of Chosen People Ministries' Messianic congregation in Tel Aviv. Five years later, in 1996, I joined the staff of Chosen People Ministries.

Irina: A Faithful Wife Finds Faith in Messiah

I was born in 1961 in Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine. My grandfather, a rabbi, was killed by the Nazis during the Holocaust.

As a family, we observed some of the Jewish holidays, such as Passover and the Day of Atonement. But in truth, our family did not really believe in God.

In 1975, I came to Moscow to the famous Gnesin College. There I met my future husband, Henry. At first, I felt there was nothing to connect us. I was an average Jewish girl, and he was the son of a truly great and famous pianist.

But in 1980 something did connect us. That year, both my mother and his father died. I began to smoke and drink and Henry was already using drugs and alcohol. We spent a lot of time together in a dissolute lifestyle. In the midst of it all, we were married. I began to work in a music school. Henry continued his heavy drug use. We finally decided to immigrate to Israel.

Once in Israel, my husband began to attend Messianic services. He suddenly changed. He stopped drinking, and he was absolutely free from his drug addiction. He testified to me about the power of Yeshua and other Bible truths.

Although I understood my sinfulness, it was not easy for me to accept the Messiah. From childhood I was told that a real Jew could not believe in Jesus. However, God's Word and Henry's witness finally convinced me, and I received the Lord.

We spoke with Henry's pastor and some time later Henry and I were baptized together. Now I am happy to testify to everyone that Yeshua saved me from my sins, and He is the One true Messiah of my nation! Praise to Him!

The musical talents that originally brought Henry and Irina together in their dark times before salvation are now a vehicle for the Lord's service. They founded a music center that features free performances by famous Israeli and Russian pianists, which enables them to share the Gospel with concert performers and attendees.

See the through Jewish Eyes Bible

by Dr. Daniel Goldberg



ZECHARIAH 3 & 4 – ESSENTIALS FOR A SUCCESSFUL WITNESS

Long ago, God declared to the nation of Israel, “*You are My witnesses...and My servant whom I have chosen...*” (Isaiah 43:10). There are two essentials for effective witness that are vividly described in Zechariah’s two visions in the third and fourth chapters of his book.

ESSENTIAL # 1 – A RESTORATION OF PURITY

In chapter 3, Zechariah sees a vision of Joshua, the High Priest, who has entered the Holy of Holies to appear before God on behalf of the nation of Israel. The vision depicts a judicial scene at the court of Heaven. Satan appears as the “prosecuting attorney.” He points out that “Joshua was clothed with filthy garments” (Zechariah 3:3), which speaks of the defilement of sin—both of the priesthood and the nation.

However, God rejects Satan’s charge and blesses Israel because of His sovereign choice of Jerusalem, Israel’s suffering for their sin and God’s cleansing of the nation (3:2-9). The removal of iniquity in “one day” (3:9) is a prophecy to be fulfilled when the nation will look upon their Messiah

“whom they have pierced” (Zechariah 12:10, 13:1).

As the High Priest representing Israel, Joshua receives a new and pure wardrobe. “*Take away the filthy garments from him...so they put a clean turban on his head and they put the clothes on him...*” (Zechariah 3:4-5).

On a personal level, the text shows how a sinner’s filthy rags are exchanged for the pure linen of God’s righteousness through our great heavenly Advocate, Messiah Jesus. Purity through Messiah Jesus is essential for both a national and personal witness (1 John 1:7-9).

ESSENTIAL # 2 – THE POWER OF GOD’S SPIRIT

In Zechariah 4, the prophet’s vision encompasses a golden candlestick with seven lamps—each lamp fed with a

supply of oil. Beside it are two olive trees. Each of these carries a special message. The candlestick represents the Temple menorah, symbolizing what Israel was meant to be—the light of God to the whole world.

In addition, oil in Scripture frequently symbolizes the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Exodus 30:23-33; 2 Corinthians 1:21), who alone anoints and empowers believers in their testimony (Acts 1:8). Such is the case here.

The two olive trees represent Joshua, the High Priest, and Zerubbabel, the appointed governor of Judah. But the vision goes beyond this. In Revelation 11:3-12, we are informed that the two olive trees represent the two witnesses during the Tribulation period to come—probably Elijah and Moses, on the basis of Revelation 11:6.

The interpreting angel informs Zechariah that a witness can be successful only through God’s Spirit. “*This is the word of the LORD...Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the LORD of hosts*” (Zechariah 4:6). This great text contrasts divine dynamics and human mechanics!

ESSENTIALS FOR TODAY

Throughout history, we find numerous examples of ordinary men and women standing up for God in extraordinary ways. Even today, God’s witness is going forth throughout the world—often in the face of danger and even death.

The purity of God’s righteousness and the power of God’s Spirit described in Zechariah 3 and 4 are vitally essential both then and now for a successful witness for Messiah. ✨



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