

# The Chosen People



Volume XIV, Issue 2 March 2008

## The Righteous Gentile and the Jewish People

*"Garden of the Righteous among the Nations"*  
- Yad Vashem, Jerusalem

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# To Whom Honor Is Due

# Righteous Gentiles

## of Jewish Evangelism

*Dear friend in the Messiah,*

Shalom from New York City! Thank you for caring about reaching Jewish people for Jesus the Messiah. Your love, prayers and support are a great encouragement to our staff across the globe.

In March we celebrate the Jewish festival of Purim (see last month's newsletter) and we are on our way to Passover on April 19. Purim and Passover are two festivals that speak of the powerful hand of God in delivering the Jewish people from certain destruction.

The Lord used Esther and Moses as His instruments of deliverance for His people. But God also uses non-Jews to help the Jewish people! In this issue, we want to focus on some Gentiles who have taken to heart the Scriptural promise, "*I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you*" (Genesis 12:3a). These men and women have been used by God to bless the children of Israel!

### **The Righteous Gentile in Jewish History**

I would like to introduce you to a term that is well known in the Jewish



community: the "Righteous Gentile." It is traditionally used to refer to those Gentiles who have been a great help to the Jewish communities of the world in times of persecution. At *Yad Vashem*, the Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem, there is a place called the "Garden of the Righteous among the Nations."

This term was popularized as a way to honor non-Jews who protected and saved the lives of Jewish people during the Holocaust. Many of those who saved Jewish people during these difficult days were motivated by their love for the Jewish Messiah. How could they allow His kinsmen according to the flesh to be mercilessly slaughtered? This

caused many dedicated believers in Jesus to risk and sometimes sacrifice their lives to save Jewish people from certain doom.

I want to expand the definition of Righteous Gentile to include those who have been involved with saving the lives of Jewish people by helping us come to know Jesus as our Messiah. Therefore, in some ways you are a Righteous Gentile! Your love for Jewish people that motivates you to reach out to Jewish people with the Good News about Jesus is a sign of your love for the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and for the Jewish Messiah!

There is a splendid example of a Righteous Gentile in the New Testament, and I would like to introduce you to him.

# At Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem, there is a place called the “Garden of the Righteous among the Nations.”

## The Centurion: A Role Model for Righteous Gentiles

I am sure you are familiar with the centurion in Luke chapter 7. A number of Roman centurions are mentioned in the New Testament, but this particular centurion amazes me, as he clearly stands out because of his gracious character and deep love for the Jewish people.

A quick reading of the first five verses of Luke chapter 7 shows us that this centurion is unique among his professional military counterparts:

*Now when He [Jesus] concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, “for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue.” (Luke 7:1-5)*

You can see why I am so impressed with this unnamed centurion. The very idea that a Roman centurion would love the Jewish people and treat them with kindness—and even believe in the Messiah of Israel—was scandalous! This man was everything a centurion should not be! He loved his slave, he esteemed the elders of the Jewish community in Capernaum, and he regarded Jesus with great respect, believing the Messiah had the power to heal his servant. In addition to this, the centurion built a synagogue for the Jewish people of Capernaum, which was his way of showing his

love for the Jewish people and his love for God.

In my opinion, the centurion of Luke 7 is the ultimate Righteous Gentile. His love for the Jewish people was founded upon his faith in the God of Israel, for when we love the God of Israel, we cannot help but love His chosen people.

## The Roll Call of Righteous Gentiles in Jewish Evangelism

As the “Garden of the Righteous among the Nations” so eloquently testifies, there are many ways to sacrifice on behalf of Jewish people. Over the decades, there have been a number of unsung heroes—Gentiles who have given their all for the sake



**No exact numbers are available of Jews rescued through the assistance of individual non-Jews, though their numbers run to the many tens of thousands. More than 200,000 Jews survived in Hungary, a great many of them through the heroic efforts of Raoul Wallenberg and Carl Lutz.**



of Jewish evangelism. They include men and women who courageously assisted the Jewish people of war-torn Europe during the Holocaust.

One particular example occurred in Vienna, where a window of escape remained open for Jewish people between 1938 and 1940. Missionary

organizations to the Jewish people active at that time, such as the Swedish Israel Mission and the Society of the Friends of Israel Mission of Basel, did everything in their power to get the Jewish people—especially Jewish believers in Jesus—out of Austria.

The missions viewed relief work and even the “smuggling” of Jews out of Vienna not as contradictory to their missionary task, but rather as part of their obligation to serve the Lord and the Jewish people. As they helped Jews out of Austria, these missionaries were able to speak to Jewish people about Jesus. Their testimony was made all the more powerful because of the risks they took.

## Carrying the Work Forward

As I hope you can see, Chosen People Ministries and all those who show their love for Jewish people are part of an ancient and godly tradition. The Jewish people do not need Righteous Gentiles in North America to help them by building synagogues, but our people still need the spiritual help that only comes through knowing Jesus the Messiah. When you do what you can to help Jewish people find Jesus, you are doing the same thing—in your way—that the centurion did in the first century.

I pray you will ask God to give you a centurion's heart for the Jewish people.

Thank you for being a Righteous Gentile!

Your brother,



Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser  
President



## The Righteous Gentiles of Jewish Evangelism

Does it take one Jewish person to lead another to faith in the Jewish Messiah? The answer may surprise you: "Certainly not!" As the number of Jewish believers has increased, it is true that many Jewish people do come to faith in Jesus through the witness of Jewish followers of Messiah. But the fact is that many others are led to Messiah through the witness of faithful non-Jewish believers who have heeded the call of the Apostle Paul that the Gospel is "to the Jew first" (Romans 1:16).

These are the "Righteous Gentiles of Jewish Evangelism" who have faithfully followed the Lord's leading to reach out to Jewish people. Doug P., one of Chosen People Ministries' most experienced and committed evangelists, is such a person. Doug's heart for the Jewish people shines through his testimony.

Chosen People Ministries knows the value of Righteous Gentiles of Jewish Evangelism—men and women who are called to bring the Gospel to the Jewish people. This is why we have so many short- and long-term mission opportunities for non-Jewish believers to join us in this mission. If you want to know more about our Summer Training and Evangelism Program (STEP) in New York City, eXperience Israel, Outreach Israel and other opportunities for service, please visit our website, [www.chosenpeople.com](http://www.chosenpeople.com), or call our office at 212-223-2252.

*Everything in my Faith is Jewish, but Me!*

"Everything in my faith is Jewish, but me!" This is a startling statement to most of my Jewish friends, but it is totally true! Most Jewish people are unaware that I, a gentile, believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I have often said, "If I followed the religion of my forefathers (Gentiles), I would be an idol worshipper, but today I worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!"

I came from a non-religious background, and at age 11 I cried out to God that I wanted to know Him, but that He would have to do this, as I knew that I could not make myself know God. At that moment, I was filled with an awareness of God that I had never known before. I felt that "the whole world should know about this!"

The New Testament, written mainly by Jewish authors, calls it a "spiritual birth" or being "born from above" (John 3:3). Moreover, when I began reading the Hebrew Bible, which was now like a living book to me, I saw that the God of Abraham, Moses and David was the same God who had come into my heart. I realized that the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament complement each other!

### *One God for Jews and Gentiles*

As we read the New Testament, we find statements such as, "They glorified the God of Israel" in response to the healing work of Jesus the Messiah among Jewish people of Galilee (Matthew 15:31). The Jewish writers of the New Testament were unquestionably referring to the God of Israel — never to a "gentile god!"

The Jewish writers of the New Testament often quoted Scriptures from the Hebrew Bible to validate what they were saying. One of many examples of



## Opportunities Abound

One of the most destructive stereotypes that discourage non-Jewish believers in Jesus from reaching out to their Jewish neighbors is the thought that all Jewish people are unwilling to hear about Jesus. This is simply not true, as shown through the many encounters our staff members—both Jewish and non-Jewish—have with Jewish people who are curious about Jesus and the Gospel.

One of the most effective methods of outreach is a literature table. Doug and his co-workers set up these tables at various places around New York City, such as in parks and on the city's many college campuses. Doug describes a few of the wonderful encounters that have taken place at his literature tables around the city:

At our Central Park literature table, a young Israeli man, Gabriel,\* told one of our staff members that he had been in America for just a short time, but he was planning on remaining here to work in his field of computer technology. After reading with me the first page of the New Testament in Hebrew, which gives the genealogy of Jesus going back to Abraham, he exclaimed, "I can't understand why the rabbis say that this is a forbidden book to us!" He was surprised at what he had just read—a genealogy just like the kind he had seen in the Hebrew Bible.

Dinah,\* an Israeli woman, stopped at another table with an Israeli companion to read the text of Isaiah chapters 52:13 through 53 in Hebrew that was displayed on a sign at the front of our table. Beginning to read this passage, she exclaimed to her friend, "How come I've never read this before?" She then asked incredulously, "Is this in our Bible?"

Her friend, seeing the Isaiah title at the top of the passage, replied that it was. Reaching the end of the passage, she declared resolutely: "This is talking about Jesus!" She soon accepted Him as her Messiah! At a Messianic Rosh Hashanah (New Year's) service a month later, she declared, "I feel like a newly born baby!"

\*Names changed

this is found in Acts 3:18, which says, "But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets [in the Hebrew Scriptures], that the Messiah should suffer, He has thus fulfilled."

We find another example in the words of Jesus Himself, when He says to His Jewish disciples, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me" (Luke 24:44).

The initial followers of Jesus were Jewish, and the first Gentiles to believe in Him came some time later. This development was a big surprise to the large body of Jewish believers in Jesus. The same message that Peter had preached to his own Jewish people earlier at Shavuot (Pentecost) was now preached to the Gentiles — "To Him [Jesus] all the prophets [of the Jewish Bible] witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43). Peter again appeals to the Hebrew prophets as evidence of Jesus' Messiahship.

Thus, "everything in my faith is Jewish, but me." Jesus was Jewish, as were His first followers, and the Bible I read is a Jewish book! Looking back over the years, I can say that this simple declaration about the Jewishness of my faith has always come as a surprise to Jewish people. It has led to many fruitful discussions about the Messiahship of Jesus.



# See the THROUGH JEWISH EYES Bible

by Daniel Goldberg, Th.D., D.D.



## THE LAST DAYS AND LEGACY OF DAVID

The last days of Israel's great King David were filled with a multiplicity of troubles. The sad fact is that although the Lord forgave David's sins, their consequences clung to his life and added a dimension of tragedy to his declining years. 1 Chronicles 21:1 informs us that Satan prompted David to number Israel, which displeased the Lord. As a result of David's iniquity, the Lord's wrath consumed 70,000 souls, after which He relented (2 Sam. 24:15-17). Adding to David's misery was the rebellion of his sons Absalom and Adonijah, both of whom attempted to usurp the throne (2 Sam. 15-18; 1 Ki. 1:5-53).

As his days were ending, David wisely listened to the advice of Nathan the Prophet and of Bathsheba, who reminded the king of his oath that Solomon would succeed him. David

took proper action to install Solomon as Israel's next king, thus thwarting Adonijah's rebellion (1 Ki. 1:28-53). Little wonder then that Bathsheba, acting in the will of God, is referred to in the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah (Matt. 1:6).

### DAVID'S LAST WORDS

Scripture records that the last words of David were a testimony to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit concerning the Everlasting Covenant. David testified, "*The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue...the Rock of Israel spoke to me...*" (2 Sam. 23:1-3; see 2 Sam. 7:12-16). This text alone certifies the inspiration and inerrancy of the entire account of David's history as well as of all the Davidic Psalms.

Finally, David "...died in a good old age, full of days and riches and honor..." (1 Chron. 29:28). Before he left the earth, David exhorted Solomon to obey the Lord's instructions recorded in the Law of Moses (1 Ki. 2:1-4).

### DAVID'S LASTING LEGACY

Acts 13:36 records that "...David... served his own generation by the will of God..." Before his death David purchased the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite (1 Chron. 21:18) and built an altar on Mount Moriah, the site where Solomon later built the glorious Temple.

Recognized as a man possessing integrity and a man "*after God's own heart*" (1 Sam. 13:14), David is quoted numerous times in the New Testament. Not only is the Messiah referred to as the Son of David (Matt. 1:1; 22:41,42), but Jesus also quoted from David's writings on a number of occasions (Matt. 22:41-45; Mk. 2:25,26).

The Apostle Peter made reference to David's predictions about the Messiah (Acts 2:25-35; 4:25,26). The Apostle Paul especially cited David as an example of how God saves people by grace, apart from works (Rom. 4:6-8). James, the leader of the Jerusalem Council, mentioned David as the Council deliberated how the Gentile believers should be included in the new fellowship of faith in Messiah (Acts 15:16).

Finally, the author of the Book of Hebrews treated David as a role model for faith (Heb. 11:32), warning us about unbelief (Heb. 4:7-11). Not only did King David serve his own generation, but future generations as well.

This article concludes our series on the life of David.

The next series will be an exposition titled "Matthew – Gospel of the King."

## PRAY FOR "ISRAELI NIGHT" OUTREACH MINISTRY IN NEW YORK CITY

Randall and Luda Ford, who minister in the large community of Jewish people in Queens, New York, are planning a new and creative outreach this month—"Israeli Night." Since perhaps 200,000 Hebrew-speaking Jews from Israel live in the New York metro area with only a handful of believers, this is a field ripe for harvest. The Fords will be offering an evening of Hebrew worship songs, Israeli dancing, dessert and a Bible message. If it goes well, there will be more to come. Pray that this form of outreach will strike the right chord—and please add the Israelis of New York City to your prayers for Jewish people.



## ARAB MAN FINDS JEWISH MESSIAH IN JERUSALEM

Henry and Darlene M., who minister in Israel, know first-hand that Messiah's love is the only force that will bring peace between Arab and Jew. The Lord brought Ahmed,\* an Arab man who had become desperate because of personal problems, into Henry and Darlene's life in Jerusalem. Ahmed was in tears as he poured out his heart, and Henry and Darlene boldly asked him to give Jesus an opportunity to bring him peace. When Ahmed understood that he was a sinner for whom Jesus died, he prayed by the Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem to receive the Lord. The next day he visited the Messianic fellowship to meet true believers who will help him grow in the Lord.

## COFFEE SHOP MINISTRY TO ORTHODOX MAN

Daniel and Deborah N., who minister in the highly Orthodox Jewish neighborhood of Golders Green, London, are making inroads slowly but surely as they become known in the neighborhood. When Daniel stopped at Starbucks to peruse his email, Ber\* dropped by to say hello. He is a friendly, Orthodox Jewish man who wears the traditional black coat, slacks, shoes, and hat. In the anonymity of Starbucks, Ber confided in Daniel that he had been feeling suicidal. They talked for a good while, and Daniel was able to share just a little with him about God and about His Son Yeshua (Jesus). Daniel says, "Coffee shops in the neighborhood are such a great way to meet people!" Pray that the seed that was planted takes root in Ber's soul.

## "IT SEEMED THAT I HEARD MUSIC"

The Berlin Messianic Center is rejoicing in several faith decisions in Messiah in the past month. One of them, a Jewish man, had experienced problems in his business. During this time, his wife, a new Jewish believer, was sharing the Gospel with him and the Berlin congregation was praying and treating him as a welcome friend. Finally, he came to Vladimir Pikman, our Germany director, for guidance. Vladimir urged him to receive Jesus the Messiah in wholehearted prayer. Three days later, the man returned to say he had prayed as Vladimir had suggested. "So, what happened?" Vladimir asked. He smiled happily and said, "Suddenly it seemed that I heard music." Pray for this brand-new Jewish believer as he grows in the Lord.

## MESSIAH'S PERFECT LOVE CASTS OUT FEAR

Peter Shirokov, who ministers among the large population of Jewish people in Brooklyn, New York, recently prayed with Anna,\* a woman who was brought to his fellowship by a Jewish friend. She opened her heart to God that evening and told about spiritual oppression that she was experiencing through her daughter-in-law's connection with the occult. Anna shared her mounting fears and Peter explained to her about Messiah's promise of peace. That night, Anna prayed for redemption and received the Lord. She has started to read her Bible and to pray, and although her fears have eased, she is ill with what may be a malignant tumor. Please hold Anna up in prayer at this crucial time.

## JEWISH FAITH DECISIONS IN CHICAGO

Chosen People Ministries staff member Kirill Swiderski takes great joy in living in the midst of the large Jewish community of Chicago. Now his prayers have been answered for a church to allow him to use their facilities to conduct an evangelistic outreach to Russian Jewish people. After Kirill preached at the first meeting, he asked, "Do any of you want to accept the sacrifice of Yeshua, the Messiah of Israel?" Then two elderly Jewish people, who had just heard the Gospel for the first time in their lives, raised their hands. They all prayed together as these precious souls came to faith in the Messiah.

\*Names changed



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To help you begin this process, or if you already have an estate plan, to assist you in reviewing your existing plan, our staff has prepared a **Guide to Planning Your Estate**. Please write for your free copy today.

### Chosen People Ministries

241 East 51st Street, New York, NY 10022

Phone: (888) 2-YESHUA, E-mail: [giving@chosenpeople.com](mailto:giving@chosenpeople.com)

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## The Chosen People Newsletter

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

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



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