

The
Chosen
People



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WITHOUT HANUKKAH THERE WOULD BE NO CHRISTMAS

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NO HANUKKAH NO CHRISTMAS

Dear friend
in the Messiah,
Shalom and
greetings from
the worldwide
headquarters of
Chosen People
Ministries!
Manhattan looks so
beautiful at this time
of the year. The

enormous Christmas tree now lights up
Rockefeller Center, and Radio City Music Hall is
featuring its annual Christmas show. Holiday lights
shine like jewels throughout the
city, especially along Park Avenue.

Of course, your Mission to the
Jewish people is busy sharing the
real reason for the season with
thousands of people in what is truly the
“Jewish capital of America.”

Despite the holiday cheer, we
know that many of those who are
captivated by the excessive material
trappings of this wonderful season
simply do not understand God’s
true purpose for the Incarnation.
The Devil has twisted the loving
message of an all-powerful God
who set aside His power and
humbled Himself by becoming a
servant. How far we have drifted
from worshiping the One who was



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humbly born to die that sinners like you and me might live!

There is much to straighten out about the Christmas holiday!

The Christmas-Hanukkah Connection

There is another holiday celebration I want to mention. Although this one has gifts, it lacks Santas and reindeer. But those who celebrate it believe that the beautiful, lighted candles are enough. It is Hanukkah—the Feast of Dedication—that celebrates the victory of the Jewish freedom fighters over the evil Antiochus Epiphanes of the Syrian-Greek Empire. Did you know that there is actually a strong connection between Christmas and Hanukkah?

Most people do not know what one holiday has to do with the other. I did not understand the link myself for many years. Yet these two great holidays are “joined at the hip” in quite a profound way—and the link goes much further than the giving of presents, the lighting of candles and the times of family togetherness we enjoy during this season.

You see, without Hanukkah—there would be no Christmas.

Hanukkah—A Story of Redemption and Sacrifice

Allow me to summarize the story of Hanukkah.

Antiochus (215–164 BC), who was nicknamed “The Madman,” felt threatened by the Jewish people and decided to turn the Jews into good Greeks. He demanded that the Jewish people bow down to his statue, worship him as a Greek god incarnate and submit to his authority. Now, some of the Jewish leaders may have been willing to accept his political authority, but they could never accept his religious authority. The Jews hated idols and would never bow down to one—and they could never believe that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was incarnated in the person of Antiochus Epiphanes!

The Jews who lived in a town called Modiin rebelled, under the leadership of Mattathias, a Levite who along with his son Judah Maccabee led a grassroots rebellion from about 167 to 165 BC. The Maccabees fought hard and finally took Jerusalem and the Temple back in great victory.

Redemption and sacrifice are key concepts in the Hanukkah celebration, for the victory came at great cost. According to later Jewish tradition, after the victory the Maccabees only had enough olive oil to fuel the eternal light in the Temple for one day—but it took eight days to crush the olives and prepare the oil. The miracle of Hanukkah is this: the oil, which should have only lasted one day, lasted for eight. This is why we celebrate Hanukkah for eight days.

Yet the real miracle of Hanukkah is not the miracle of the lights, but the fact that God once again preserved His chosen people against all odds! The Lord kept His promise to Israel that they would not be destroyed (Jeremiah 31:35–37, Romans 11:29). God preserved His people because He had chosen them for a glorious purpose that was yet to be fulfilled!

The Best Was—and Is—to Come

The best was yet to come. Almost 200 years later, God sent His final and ultimate Word of redemption and sacrifice—Jesus the Messiah—to purchase the salvation of Jews and Gentiles with His own life.

If God had not enabled the Maccabees to overthrow Antiochus, the Jewish people may very well have been destroyed. If the Jewish people had been destroyed, then the birth of the Savior could never have taken place!

The true link between Hanukkah and Christmas is very simple: *God is faithful and always keeps His promises.*

This same God continues to keep His promises to the Jewish people, and one day an even greater deliverance will take place, as the Apostle Paul

predicts in the power of the Holy Spirit that “all Israel will be saved.”

We can see the signs of this today. Vladimir Pikman, the director of our ministry in Germany, sent me this heart-warming report: “A few weeks ago, my wife Inna and I along with other ministers took part in a concert in Dachau, the city in southern Germany where the first Nazi concentration camp was located. The concert was related to this history in an attempt to bring life in the Messiah to this former place of death. About 300 people participated in this event. Inna performed some songs that really touched their hearts, and I delivered a message about Yeshua (Jesus). God was powerfully at work during this concert, and at the end, ten people prayed to receive new life in the Messiah! Praise the Lord!”

If that is not life from the dead, I don’t know what is!

The day is coming when the Jewish people will turn with great fervor to Jesus the Messiah. I look forward to that great day of redemption, but until that time, your Mission to the Jewish people will continue to proclaim the unchanging message of the Gospel.

Would you please remember and pray for the dedicated evangelists on our staff who have committed their lives to bringing the message of the Gospel to God’s chosen people, and are now serving in a dozen countries across the globe?

Thank you so much for caring and especially for your generous gifts of support at the end of this year. It has been a challenging year for us, as it has for most ministries, so your generosity during this season is much appreciated.

Merry Messiahmas and a Happy Hanukkah. May His glorious light shine brightly in your heart and home!

Your brother,



Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser
President



HANUKKAH— FESTIVAL OF FREEDOM FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE

The eight-day festival of Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication, will be celebrated December 12-19 this year. Hanukkah is a holiday that has become more meaningful to the Jewish people with the passing years—especially in America. Although it used to be a relatively minor feast, Hanukkah grew in stature mainly in response to the pressures of the commercialization of Christmas in a predominantly Christian culture.

But as the Jewish people have felt themselves under an increasing level of danger in today’s world, the themes of Hanukkah—dedication to God and faithfulness under persecution—have become increasingly relevant. Perhaps it’s time to look once again to the past for inspiration.

Honoring the Faithfulness of Our Forebears

Hanukkah commemorates the victory of the Jewish freedom fighters, the Maccabees, over the forces of the tyrannical Antiochus Epiphanes, the reigning monarch who violently sought to suppress Jewish observance in the Land of Israel.

As the story is told, when the Temple was recaptured, it needed to be rededicated and its supply of holy oil replenished so that the eternal light could once more burn brightly. The miracle of Hanukkah was that a small cruse of oil—enough to last only a day—burned for eight days until more oil could be procured.

Remembering the Past with Customs for the Present

The most visible custom of Hanukkah is the lighting of the eight candles with a ninth, called the *shamash* (servant). We light one candle for the first night, two for the second and so on—until on the eighth night, all the candles are burning brightly, banishing the darkness. The menorah is meant to be seen by all, and so it is put in a place of honor, by the window.

Like many Jewish holidays, Hanukkah has acquired customs not originally associated with the event itself. One is the spinning of the *dreidel*—a game played with a top, the sides of which are decorated with Hebrew letters that stand for the phrase “A Great Miracle Happened There.” Another custom is the distribution of Hanukkah *gelt* (coins). Here in America, chocolate coins covered in gold foil have been popular for years.



Celebrating the Jewish Way—With Food

What Jewish celebration would be complete without food? Are you looking for a health-conscious menu? Then don’t look here! To commemorate the miracle of the Temple oil, foods fried in oil are the specialty of the season. *Latkes* (potato pancakes) are a tradition that originated in Europe, and you can try some yourself.

In Israel, the dish of choice is *sufganiot* (jelly donuts). Although these donuts lack a hole, no one seems to miss it. The dough is injected with a jelly filling, cooked in oil and eaten hot. Try some yourself, but be careful—they’re delicious and habit-forming.

The Underlying Lesson of the Feast of Dedication

Amid the celebration, Hanukkah reminds us that the faith of the past can only live if it is shared by those who live in the present. Most of us do not face a life-or-death choice to affirm or deny our faith in God—but one day, we may. Will we be prepared, as the Maccabees and their followers were? Through Messiah’s strength, may it be so! 🕎

Zhava’s Quite Unhealthy Potato Latkes

Hanukkah, which starts at sundown December 11 this year, isn’t Hanukkah without a steaming plateful of savory *latkes* (potato pancakes) fried in oil.

- 4 medium potatoes, peeled
- 1 medium onion
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 3 tablespoons flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- tons of oil for frying
- applesauce or sour cream (optional)

Grate potatoes (OK, you have my permission to do it in a food processor—just don’t tell anyone). Now here’s the important part: MAKE SURE you remove as much liquid as possible from the grated potatoes! Now grate the onions, combine with the potatoes, and mix together with the eggs, salt and flour. That’s all! Now drop by heaping tablespoonsful into hot oil in a frying pan, and smooch a bit with your spoon until they measure about 3" across. Fry until the latkes turn nice and brown. Don’t turn them over more than once, though, or they’ll get soggy, and I’ll have to say, “I told you so!”

Latkes are traditionally served with applesauce or sour cream—I like them with both! Come on, this recipe is way too easy and too delicious NOT to try.

Makes about 12 small latkes, which is definitely not enough! Have a Happy Hanukkah! 🕎

“Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”
(Matthew 24:44)

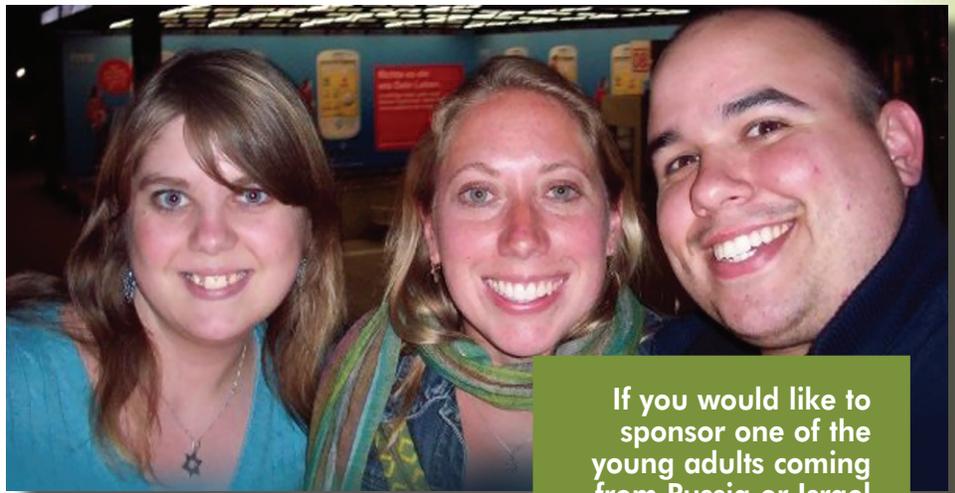
Muchan means “ready” in Hebrew—and it is a word that sums up the devotion and zeal of the next generation of believers in Messiah who will gather for a conference from December 27 to January 3, 2010. Geared for 18- to 35-year-olds, the event will bring together young Messianic believers from around the world.

This first-ever Global Young Adult Messianic Conference will take place in Berlin. The keynote speakers will be seasoned staff members Larry Feldman, Chosen People Ministries’ West Coast Director; Vladimir Pikman, Director of our work in Germany; Lawrence Hirsch, founder and Director of Celebrate Messiah (Chosen People Ministries’ Australian ministry partner) and Dr. Michael Rydelnik, Professor of Jewish Studies at the Moody Bible Institute.

The sessions will focus on three themes—Identity, Community and Action. Participants will address issues such as, “Who are we in the Jewish community as Jewish believers in Yeshua (Jesus)?” “What should we be doing together in our congregations?” and “What can we be doing to broaden our vision and propel the movement forward to expand the reach of the Gospel to the Jewish people?”

In addition to the keynote speakers and workshops, the group will take a two-day trip to Poland for a solemn journey to the Nazi death camp Auschwitz, as well as other sites important to the Jewish life of Eastern Europe. By confronting the heinousness of the Holocaust, participants will wrestle with the difficult questions of the sovereignty of God in light of the horrors of history, as they pray to and serve the God of faithfulness proclaimed in the Scriptures.

Muchan means “Ready”—ready to serve the Lord, His people and the Jewish people who have yet to hear and to respond to the Good News of the Messiah.



If you would like to sponsor one of the young adults coming from Russia or Israel for this great conference, please see the enclosed card. Most of these young people are not able to attend without our help. Thanks for your prayers and support for our next generation.

GETTING “READY” FOR MUCHAN



Rachel G.

I am excited to meet with young people from different parts of the world to learn about where we have come from and most importantly, where we are going. What unifies us is our faith in the Messiah Yeshua. Together we will praise the Lord at the very place that once aimed to destroy the Jewish people. We will learn from our Scriptures and hear the exciting news of what it means to share our faith within our worldwide Jewish communities, and to serve those in need of mercy and benevolence. We are ready for such a time of leadership development, as we discuss together how to step forward in this new generation.

Ryan K.

*Muchan (“Ready!”) will be a momentous occasion. As Jewish believers, we will gather in a place that once spewed the most ravenous antisemitism in history. We will learn from Messianic leaders who have blazed the trail before us and will declare that **we are ready** to influence the next generation for Messiah. It will be exciting and enlightening to see how God is working with Jewish people and in Messianic communities around the globe.*

Shayna M.

I’m looking forward to hearing stories: both personal stories of faith from other Jewish believers, as well as stories of how God is using young people my age to advance His Kingdom in communities across the world. It will also be very interesting to share perspectives on what it means to be a Jewish follower of Jesus among people from so many different cultures and backgrounds. I hope to come away from Muchan with new friends, new insight on the faith we share and new inspiration for impacting my world for Messiah.

Jennifer R.

The Lord has certainly been working in the lives and communities of young Messianic believers worldwide. At Muchan, I am most looking forward to seeing the evidence of His work firsthand as I meet, share with and have opportunity to serve and encourage young Jewish believers from around the world. I also expect to be greatly encouraged in my own walk and ministry through relationship building, hearing dynamic speakers and taking the challenging journey to Poland. ☺

SEE THE BIBLE THROUGH JEWISH EYES

BY DANIEL GOLDBERG, TH.D., D.D.



Dr. Goldberg serves as International Ministries Representative for Chosen People Ministries and lives in Pineville, North Carolina with his wife, Madeline.

MOUNTAINTOP EXPERIENCES WITH THE KING OF KINGS (Matthew 17:1-8)

In Bible times, great events often took place on mountaintops. The Law was given on Mt. Sinai, Isaac was offered upon Mt. Moriah, and Messiah died on Mt. Calvary and ascended from Mt. Olivet. In our text, the mountaintop experiences of three special disciples are noteworthy.

GOD’S “AFTERWARDS” ARE WORTH WAITING FOR (Mt. 17:1)

“Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, led them up on a high mountain . . .” (Mt. 17:1).

After six exhausting days of labor, including an encounter with religious hypocrites (Mt. 16:1-4), the Lord had prepared a time of excitement and refreshment. There will always be a Sabbath time of rest for disciples who labor here below because *“There remains therefore a rest for the people of God”* (Heb. 4:9) and God’s “afterwards” are worth the wait.

GOD’S MOUNTAINS ARE WORTH CLIMBING (Mt. 17:1)

The Mount of Transfiguration was probably Mt. Hermon, near Caesarea Philippi. Its summit is 9,200 feet above sea level and it is

the source of many blessings to the land below (Psa. 133:3).

There was a special blessing awaiting the three disciples when they reached the mountain’s summit. Peter, James and John had one quality in common: they were climbers and not quitters. They had what it took to finish the journey to the place of special privilege.

GOD’S VISIONS ARE WORTH SEEING (Mt. 17:2)

On earth, the disciples knew the poverty of Jesus, but now they viewed Messiah, transformed and transfigured, a glimpse of the Savior’s divinity. They saw Him as heaven’s richest monarch. He was dressed in Heaven’s best; His raiment was white as the light.

GOD’S PRESENCE IS WORTH FEELING (Mt. 17:4)

Peter declared: *“Lord, it is good for us to be here”* (Mt. 17:4). It is the presence or absence of God that makes a situation good or bad. The presence or absence of Jesus defines the authenticity of a true church. His presence is totally sufficient, for when the disciples *“had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only”* (Mt. 17:8).

GOD’S WORD IS WORTH HEARING (Mt. 17:5)

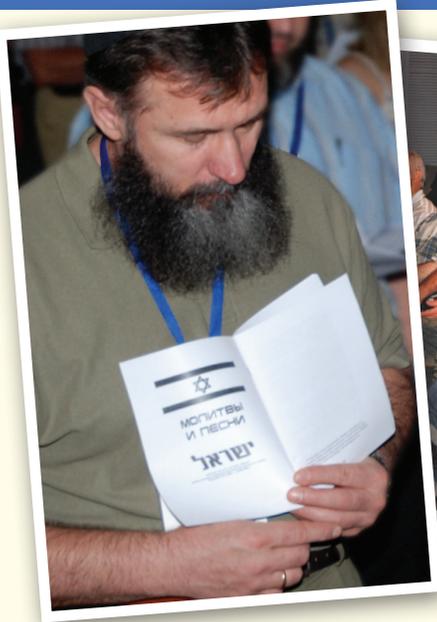
On the mountaintop the great law-giver, Moses, appeared and no doubt expounded from the Torah. Later, the fiery prophet Elijah came as a representative of the prophets. But when Jesus was transfigured, God’s voice sounded, saying, *“This is My beloved Son . . . Hear Him!”* (Mt. 17:5; Jn. 1:17).

GOD’S CALLING IS WORTH RESPONDING TO (Mt. 17:1)

“Jesus . . . led them up on a high mountain by themselves” (Mt. 17:1). It is always the call of God that separates us to perform His will. Just as Jesus separated these three disciples for their ordained purpose, the call of God always leads and equips believers to perform the will of God. Have you been able to discern His call and follow it?

GOD’S GLORY IS WORTH SHARING (Mt. 17:22)

On the mountaintop, Jesus shared God’s glory with His disciples (Jn. 17:22). Peter never forgot this experience and wrote, *“we . . . were eyewitnesses of His majesty . . .”* (2 Pet. 1:16). The glory of this world is passing (1 Jn. 2:16, 17), but the weight of eternal glory lasts forever. 🌈



Second International Conference on Russian Jewish Evangelism

WORLD CONFERENCE OF RUSSIAN MESSIANIC LEADERS HELD IN JERUSALEM

With Chosen People Ministries helping to take the lead, the Second World Conference of Russian Messianic Leaders was held in Jerusalem this fall. The theme of the conference was “Israel Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow” and representatives from almost three hundred Russian-speaking Messianic congregations came from eleven countries. The conference included teaching workshops, reports and testimonies from congregational leaders and tours of special sites in the Holy Land. Dr. Mitch Glaser was privileged to address the group.

HONG KONG TEAM MEETS ISRAELI HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

Chosen People Ministries’ newly established branch in Hong Kong sent a group of eager evangelists to Israel for ten days. There, they ministered with our Israeli staff to the Holocaust survivors in the town of Sderot and brought them to Tel Aviv for two days of relaxing fellowship, worship and study of the Word of God. Maxim, our Israeli staff member who was with the group of survivors, wrote, “These dear people are open to the Word of God. My prayer is that they would give their lives to the Lord.”

REACHING ISRAELIS IN INDIA

This coming January, a team of short-term evangelists will journey to India to minister to some of the 40,000 young Israelis who travel there, many of them just after having completed their mandatory military service. Team leader Robynne B. says, “We’ll connect on the beaches, over *Shesh Besh* (Backgammon), at open mic events, by traveling together, sharing long dinner discussions, playing music and through various other creative ways of building relationships and sharing the Gospel. It will be an amazing experience to share with Israelis in a unique environment where hearts and minds are open and long spiritual discussions are a normal part of the day.”

JEWISH SEEKER – AN ATHEIST NO MORE

Staff member Peter Shirokov tells about a newcomer who visited the Chosen People Ministries outreach in New Jersey. She called first to ask shyly if she could attend. “I am Russian, and grew up atheist,” she said. “Can I still come? My whole family is Jewish, and I am interested in learning about the Jewish faith.” He gave her a Bible, and after two more visits, Peter sensed she was ready for a conversation about her personal relationship with God. That evening, she opened her heart to Messiah. Her tears flowed as she repeated after Peter a prayer of repentance and her burden was lifted. Please pray for her entire family as Peter and others seek to reach them.

THE WODLINGERS IN WINNIPEG



Michael and Chantal Wodlinger, Toronto staff members, have answered God’s call to relocate to Winnipeg, Manitoba. Their first step has been to begin meeting with local believers for prayer and study. Please pray for the Wodlingers as they seek to fulfill the vision Messiah has given them for Manitoba.



Are you aware of the substantial benefits available when you make a year-end gift?

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Gifts don't need to be limited to cash. Many of our friends give gifts of property such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds, real estate, insurance policies, and tangible personal property, such as a vehicle, jewelry or a collectible item.

We would like to help you with your year-end planning. Our staff has prepared a special planning report, "How to Maximize Your Year-End Giving," to provide more detailed information on each of these planning concepts and to give you ideas of ways you can maximize your giving to God.

Please write today for your free, no-obligation copy of this report. Call 1-888-293-7482 (or in Canada 1-888-442-5535) or email us at plannedgiving@chosenpeople.com.

SAVE THE DATE!



JOB OPPORTUNITY

Do you have a heart to see Jewish people come to know their Messiah? Do you have good phone and internet skills? Then you may be just the person we are looking for! Chosen People Ministries is seeking to hire a part-time Church Ministries Coordinator to secure speaking engagements for our missions staff at churches around the country. E-mail resumés to churches@chosenpeople.com.

Celebrate Hanukkah with These Messianic Resources

The flickering lights of the nine-branched Hanukkah *menorah* remind us that God is mighty to save and that Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah is truly the Light of the World. Hanukkah is a time of celebration! Now you can own this beautifully-crafted Hanukkah menorah from Israel to place in your home as a statement of your faith and hope in the Messiah of Israel and of all the nations of the world.

[5023] • Hanukkah menorah • \$33.95^{US}

Celebrate the birth of Yeshua, the King of Kings, the Messiah of Israel, as you enjoy both Christmas and Hanukkah, the Festivals of Light. Though growing up with the music of Hanukkah, Messianic Psalmist Marty Goetz always enjoyed the music of Christmas. Now, as a Jewish believer in Yeshua, he loves singing them both. Join Marty as he sings the traditional songs of Christmas and Hanukkah with a Messianic emphasis.

[4050] • Festivals of Light CD • \$19.95^{US}



For phone orders in the U.S. call 800-333-4936 OR for more resources go online to www.chosenpeople.com. Please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery.



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



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