

The Chosen People



Volume VIII, Issue 12 December 2002/January 2003

*“I see Him, but not now:
I behold him, but not near;
a Star shall come
out of Jacob;
a Scepter
shall rise out of Israel...”*
(Numbers 24:17)

Hanukkah and Christmas

The Messianic Connection

Dear friends,
Shalom and happy holidays.

Jewish people around the world have just completed the celebration of the eight-day festival of *Hanukkah*. The holiday came so early this year that it was almost lost for Americans in the midst of Thanksgiving!

In Hebrew, “Hanukkah” means “dedication.” You can search all you want for Hanukkah in the Old Testament Scriptures, but you will not find it! In fact, the only time Hanukkah is mentioned in Scripture is in John chapter 10 where Jesus Himself celebrates the *Feast of Dedication*.

Hanukkah has been a great inspiration to Jewish people throughout the ages. The holiday also contains some lessons that can encourage those who follow the Messiah Jesus.

The Story of Hanukkah

Let me tell you the story of Hanukkah. Antiochus IV, a descendant of one of Alexander the Great’s generals, inherited a portion of the Greek empire that included Israel. He attempted forcibly to impose Greek culture and religion on the Hebrews. One of his delegations even set up a statue of Antiochus in the middle of the village of Modiin. They demanded that the Jewish people worship this vain and wicked ruler, whom the people of Israel called “The Madman.”

The men and women of that small town refused. They killed the members of the delegation, destroyed the statue and fled to the surrounding hills to wage guerrilla warfare against the Syrian Greeks. This continued from 168 through 165 BCE and eventually, the Jewish people prevailed. Soon after, the leading family of the Jewish fighters—called the Maccabees—assumed power. Although they were not descendants of the house of David, they established what came to be known as the Hasmonean dynasty.

The Significance of Hanukkah

Many people know the tradition that during the Maccabees’ revolt, the Eternal Light had been extinguished at the Temple and that when the Temple



was recaptured by the Jewish fighters, they only had enough olive oil to rekindle it for one day. According to tradition, a miracle happened! The one day's oil supply endured for the eight days necessary to procure more.

There have also been a number of Messianic traditions linked to the holiday as well.

For example, Antiochus was so enraged by the Jewish refusal to worship him as a god that he sacrificed a pig on the Temple altar in Jerusalem. Since there was no way for this defiled altar to be ceremonially cleansed, the Maccabees tore it down. They piled up the "unclean" stones to wait for the coming of the Messiah who, according to tradition, would cleanse the stones.

Some would suggest that the stones "taken up" to be used against Jesus in John 10:31 came from this very pile. Clearly, He claimed deity in the preceding verse where the Messiah declared, "I and the Father are one."

Hanukkah and Christmas— From One to the Other

Growing up in a Jewish home in New York City, Hanukkah and Christmas seemed to be worlds apart. Hanukkah belonged to the Jews and Christmas to the Gentiles. This was the understanding I had. To me, the sharp differences between Hanukkah and Christmas were symbolic of the impassable chasm between Judaism and Christianity. We—the Jewish people—lit menorahs, whereas Gentiles lit ornaments on trees!

As a believer in Yeshua the Messiah, I have come to see a very profound truth: without Hanukkah, there would be no Christmas. The Feast of Dedication celebrates the fact that the Jewish people were saved from extinction. Antiochus tried to destroy the identity of the Jewish people and was defeated by the power of the living God, working through the dedication of His loyal followers.

Antiochus failed, and the culture, hopes and faith of the Jewish people were not destroyed. If he had succeeded, what would have happened

to Mary and Joseph? If Jewish identity had been destroyed, there would have been no Jewish family to bring the Messiah!

God used the Maccabees to defeat the Syrian Greeks and prepare the way for the birth of the Jewish Messiah.

Without Hanukkah, there would be no Christmas. I am not referring to the traditional trappings of our current Christmas celebrations, but the heart of it all: the Incarnation of our Messiah and Lord, Jesus of Nazareth.

The Blessing of Abraham for the Nations

The Incarnation—the real "reason for the season"—flows directly from the covenant made by God with Abram in Genesis 12:1-3. In this great passage, God promises to make Abram's seed a great nation and to use this nation to bless the other nations of the world.

A people needed to exist and be preserved through time to bring these promised blessings to the world. God has and always will be faithful to His covenant promises. We see this clearly in the way His powerful hand has preserved the Jewish people until that appointed day in history when the Savior of the world was born. For it is in Yeshua—God Himself in the flesh—that the promises of God to Abram are fulfilled.

Hanukkah and Christmas both remind us that the One who was faithful in the past will be faithful in the future. His promise to the Jewish people did not cease with the Incarnation. God's people also look



ahead to complete redemption at His Second Coming. And His chosen people still have a vital role to play in the future. As the Apostle Paul writes,

For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? (Romans 11:15).

The festival of Hanukkah and the reality of the Incarnation remind us that God will keep His hand on His chosen people—sheltering, rescuing and preserving the Jewish people—until He comes to reign over His redeemed earth.

Chosen People Ministries Waiting and Serving

Until that day, your Mission to the Jewish people will continue to witness, to disciple new believers, to plant Messianic congregations, and to do all we can to find the remnant of Jewish people God has prepared today to receive the Gospel message.

This has been a wonderful year and I cannot tell you how many Jewish people have heard the Good News through our staff. Hundreds of Jewish people have come to faith, and new works are growing everywhere from Israel to Germany and Canada to the United States.

We could not have enjoyed these blessings without you who read this letter and support Chosen People Ministries sacrificially with your prayers and gifts.

The worldwide staff of Chosen People Ministries appreciates you and joins me in wishing you God's best during this holiday season.

Your brother in
the Messiah,

Mitch
Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser
President

P.S. Your generous end-of-the-year gift is especially needed at this critical moment. A number of our missionaries, especially those in Israel and overseas, have not been able to raise their full support and need your help. Thanks for caring!

The Star in Pro

One of my favorite passages of Scripture is the Creation story in the Book of Genesis. By merely speaking a word, God created from nothing this wondrous world in which we live. The stars that inhabit the universe are an important part of God's Creation. There are more than we can count, each one an object of indescribable beauty and power. Yet in the Creation account, Moses mentions the creation of the stars almost as an afterthought: "He made the stars also" (Gen. 1:16). Perhaps this is Moses' subtle way of expressing the unimaginable power of God, for the creation of a star is no more difficult for God than the creation of a blade of grass. "Is anything too hard for the LORD?" (Gen. 18:14).

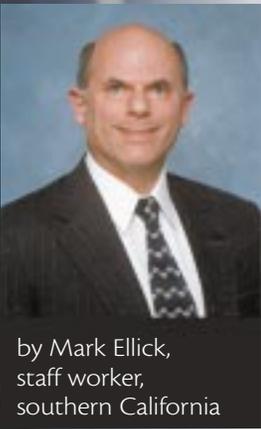
In addition to giving light to the evening sky and acting as guides to ships at sea, the stars play an important part in prophecy. In Numbers 24:17, the prophet Balaam said that at the end of days, "A Star shall come out of Jacob; a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and batter the brow of Moab, and destroy all the sons of tumult." In the ancient world, it was believed that the birth and ascension of great kings was announced by the appearance of stars. In Balaam's prophecy, the star

is the scepter that shall rise out of Judah in fulfillment of Jacob's prophetic blessing to his son Judah (Gen. 49:10). The scepter is a symbol of the future ruler in Israel, the Messiah, who will rule in Israel and destroy all her enemies.

Guided by a Star

Because a star is used in foretelling the coming of the Messiah, it is fitting that God also used a star to announce Messiah's coming. In the Book of Matthew, it is recorded that after Yeshua (Jesus) was born in Bethlehem of Judea, "...Wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him'" (Matt. 2:1-2). The Magi were a caste of wise men specializing in astronomy and the natural sciences. After making inquiry in Jerusalem, the Magi continued on their journey, and "the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was" (Matt. 2:9).

We are not told how the Magi identified the star, nor are we told what sort of star it was. Perhaps it was a literal star, or an angel. Maybe the star was a manifestation of the Shekinah



by Mark Ellick,
staff worker,
southern California

French Holiday Butter Cookies

Makes 18-20 cookies

Holidays are a time of celebration—and for Jewish people, that means eating yummy things. Olivier Melnick, our resident Messianic French-Jewish chef (and Art Director, too), shares this recipe:

- 6 egg yolks, lightly beaten
 - 1 tablespoon of milk
 - 2 cups of flour
 - $\frac{7}{8}$ cup of superfine sugar
 - $\frac{7}{8}$ cup of lightly salted butter, room temperature, cut in small pieces
1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly butter a large heavy baking sheet. Mix one tablespoon of the egg yolk with the milk to make a glaze and set aside.
 2. Sift the flour into a large bowl and make a well in the center. Add the lightly beaten egg yolks, the sugar and the butter. Use your fingers to mix and work together until smooth and creamy.
 3. Slowly add a little extra flour to form a slightly sticky dough.
 4. Using floured hands, pat out the dough to 1/2 inch thick and cut out 3-inch cookies with your favorite holiday cutter or simply with the open end of a small glass. Transfer the cookies to the baking sheet, brush each one with the egg glaze and score them with the back of a knife to create a lattice pattern.
 5. Bake the cookies for about 12-15 minutes at 350°F until golden. Let them cool on the sheet for another 15 minutes, then carefully remove them from the sheet and store them in an airtight container. Or better yet, share with your loved ones and eat them on the spot. Happy Holidays!

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glory of God, similar to the pillar of fire that guided the children of Israel during their journey in the wilderness (Ex. 13:21). We do know that in some miraculous way, God used the star to inform the Magi of the birth of the King of the Jews, and that the star pointed them to the actual spot where the newborn King was to be found.

The Star Who Rises in Our Hearts

God, in His wisdom, used a star to point the way to the coming of Yeshua, the One who is *“the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning star”* (Rev. 22:16). We who are believers look forward to Yeshua’s soon return, when the day dawns, the morning star arises in our hearts (2 Pet. 1:19), and we spend eternity in heaven with Him.

During this special season of the year, let us show God our appreciation for sending us His Son by sharing the good news of Messiah with others, so that they too may rejoice in His salvation. Let us make a special effort to share the Gospel with our Jewish friends and neighbors, and by praying for and supporting the work of Chosen People Ministries. By doing this, we will fulfill God’s desire that we share the Gospel, which is the power of God for salvation, *“to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile”* (Rom.1:16). ☆



For centuries, vocal skeptics have pointed to what they call a lack of “contemporary proof” of the existence of Jesus of Nazareth outside the Gospels. This objection may at last be silenced. Possible archeological evidence of the life of Jesus has recently come to light in the form of an *ossuary* (bone casket) that has been in a private collection for some years. Its inscription, which had long gone unnoticed by the owner, was recently translated “James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus.”

Dated to around the year AD 63, the Aramaic words etched on the box’s side are in a form of writing used only until AD 70. Further lab tests also confirmed that the ossuary’s limestone composition is from the Jerusalem area, that it was kept in a cave for a lengthy time and that it

Jesus, Joseph and James – Archeological Proof?

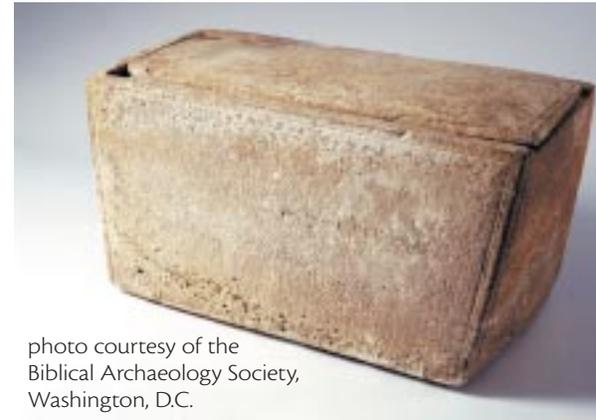


photo courtesy of the Biblical Archaeology Society, Washington, D.C.

shows no trace of modern materials.

Until the destruction of the Second Temple, it was common practice to move the bones of the deceased from the burial site to ossuaries that often bore inscriptions. Another related, noteworthy archeological find occurred in 1990, when the tomb and ossuary of Caiaphas the High Priest were uncovered in Jerusalem. It was Caiaphas who interrogated Jesus (Mark 14:60-62) before handing Him over to Pontius Pilate for trial.

Although Jesus, James and Joseph are fairly common names, their appearance together and the unusual mention of a brother shows that this Jesus must have been a well-known figure.

Hershel Shanks, editor of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, was recently quoted as saying, “The James ossuary may be the most important find in the history of New Testament archaeology. It has implications not just for scholarship, but for the world’s understanding of the Bible.”

Independent historical proof of Jesus’ life is fascinating, but hardly surprising, given the record of Scripture. ☆

In Memoriam – Dr. Louis Goldberg (1923–2002)



**Dr. Louis Goldberg
in 1965 at Moody
Bible Institute**

Chosen People Ministries has a scholarship fund for students training to enter missionary service to the Jewish people. Gifts may be made to the Scholarship Fund in memory of Dr. Louis Goldberg and will be used to further his vision of seeing Jewish people reached for the Messiah.

Chosen People Ministries is saddened by the passing of Dr. Louis Goldberg, who died on October 22, 2002. For many years, Dr. Goldberg held the position of Professor of Theology and Jewish Studies and Coordinator of Jewish Studies at Moody Bible Institute.

The following tribute was submitted by Chosen People Ministries' staff member Dr. Dan Goldberg, who is Dr. Louis Goldberg's younger brother:

Louis experienced a dynamic salvation experience in 1948 while employed in the engineering department of a Chicago telephone company. He immediately began a powerful witness for his Messiah to his parents and was influential in winning me, his younger brother, to the Lord. For over 30 years, he trained thousands of students for worldwide missionary service, especially in Israel. He truly exemplified II Timothy 2:2— "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

Dr. Michael Rydelnik, who is currently professor of Jewish Studies and Bible and coordinator of Jewish Studies at Moody Bible Institute, sent these words of remembrance:

He was my mentor and friend for the past twenty-eight years, ever since I studied under him at the Moody Bible Institute. More importantly, Dr. Goldberg was the patriarch of the entire Messianic movement.

Above all, Louis Goldberg always put Messiah Yeshua first in His life. He lived out Matthew 6:33, seeking God's Kingdom and His righteousness first. Louis was the first in his family to recognize Yeshua as Messiah, and that decision, as a young adult, cost him dearly in terms of family relationships. Throughout his life, Louis faced serious obstacles, but no matter what happened, he was determined to love and follow Yeshua above all. His walk with the Lord was not an academic theory but a vibrant relationship. He filled prayer notebooks and was devoted to bringing the needs of all those whom he touched to the Lord.

Chosen People Ministries' staff member Henry Matarrita, who sat under Louis Goldberg's teaching, added these comments which he read at Dr. Goldberg's funeral:

Dr. Goldberg, you touched many lives by teaching and preaching the Gospel of Messiah. We will keep your memory fresh as we fulfill God's calling, the way you always taught us: "To the Jew first, and also to the Gentile" (Romans 1:16).

Dr. Louis Goldberg was born in Los Angeles in 1923. He held degrees from the University of Southern California, Roosevelt University, Northern Baptist Seminary and Grace Theological Seminary. He joined the faculty of Moody Bible Institute in 1965, where he taught until 1994.

Dr. Goldberg wrote several books, including commentaries on Leviticus, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, and served on the translation teams for both the NIV and NKJV Bibles. He contributed to various Bible encyclopedias and journals. Most recently, he edited *Counterpoints: Two Views on Messianic Movements* for Zondervan.

Dr. Goldberg leaves his brother, Dan; daughter, Stephanie Anderson; and two grandchildren, Elashva and Aaron Ariel Anderson of Charlotte, North Carolina. He was predeceased by his wife, Claire, who was his beloved helpmate in the Lord.

FAITH DECISION IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

When Chosen People Ministries' Mark Ellick (see Mark's article on the Star on page 4) preached about the raising of Lazarus, he didn't realize that a week would pass before one of his listeners got the message. Rita's* coming to faith was the culmination of many prayers. About a year ago, Rita's sister called our office concerned that her sibling needed the Lord. We invited her to services and prayed that she would come. She finally did, and heard Mark preach. It took her a week of struggling with the decision, but Rita received the Lord; now she is bringing her teenage daughter to services! Pray for Rita's growth in the Lord and for her precious daughter's salvation.

"I'M GOING TO GIVE MY LIFE TO JESUS"

Chosen People Ministries' team in Arizona, led by Cathy Wilson, is bringing the comfort of the Gospel to the Jewish people. Barry* accepted his friend's invitation to the monthly Messianic fellowship at Cathy's church. Impressed, he continued to attend and also came to the "Jewish Roots" home fellowship. Soon, he found himself agreeing with the truth that Jesus is the Messiah and told his friend, "I'm going to give my life to Jesus." One week after his commitment, Barry was baptized!

A JEWISH GRANDFATHER COMES TO FAITH

Darryl W, a Chosen People Ministries' VIP (Volunteer Involvement Program) worker in Toronto, is rejoicing. Ira,* his 88-year-old grandfather, recently accepted Jesus as his Savior. He came to faith through the ministry of fellow VIP Angela*, who works at Ira's home. Angela has a fruitful ministry bringing the Gospel to elderly people. In this instance, the blessing came to Darryl's own family member and we rejoice with them!

A PLANTED SEED BEARS FRUIT IN ORTHODOX JEWISH MAN

A Gospel seed must sometimes wait many years before finally sprouting. Reuven,* an ultra-Orthodox Jewish man from Brooklyn, first heard the Gospel as a child from his family's cleaning lady. At a recent meeting with Chosen People Ministries staff members, Reuven displayed a deep hunger to grow as a believer in his Messiah. After some further discussion, Reuven expressed a desire to be baptized and he recently took this step of obedience in a moving and meaningful service. Please pray that Reuven will be a bold and effective witness to his family and community.

"YOU HAVE GIVEN ME MUCH TO THINK ABOUT."

Chosen People Ministries' Stewart Jefferson engaged a Jewish heart surgeon in conversation. The man was reading a book on Jewish mysticism, and when he asked Stewart to share his opinion, Stewart suggested that it would be better to read the Hebrew Scriptures, which clearly tell us about God. This doctor thought for a moment and said, "I agree." Then Stewart was able to share the Gospel with him. At the end of the conversation the doctor said, "You have given me much to think about."

MUCH SIMCHA (JOY) FOR SALVATION IN AUSTRALIA

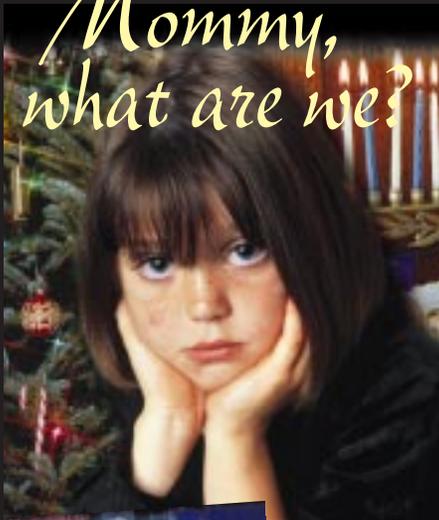
"Celebrate Messiah," Chosen People Ministries' affiliate in Australia, recently sponsored a conference called *Simcha 2002*. This gathering of 160 Messianic believers included Dr. Mitch Glaser as guest speaker. Lawrence Hirsch, Director of Celebrate Messiah, reports that during the conference, God touched Yana, a Russian Jewish young woman, with His grace. Yana and her family immigrated to Australia via Israel about two years ago. They all attended Celebrate Messiah's Russian-speaking camp last year in December. Since then, Yana's mother and father have both prayed to receive the Lord. By the end of the conference, Yana prayed to receive the Lord. Yana and Lawrence's wife, Louise, have been praying and reading the Bible every day.



Lawrence and Louise Hirsch

*names have been changed

Mommy, what are we?



Mommy, what are we?
Are we Jewish or
Christian? Should we
celebrate Hanukkah or
Christmas?

Explore answers to these and
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those in an interfaith
relationship. *Joined Together?* is
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Just call 1-800-333-4936, visit
www.chosenpeople.com/joinedtogether,
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241 East 51st Street, New York, NY
10022, or in Canada write to Box 897,

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Simcha 2003

Friday, May 30 to Sunday, June 1

Schroon Lake, New York

Featured speakers will be:

Dr. Mitch Glaser

President, Chosen People Ministries

Dr. Michael Rydelnik

Professor of Jewish Studies, Moody Bible Institute

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