

The Chosen People

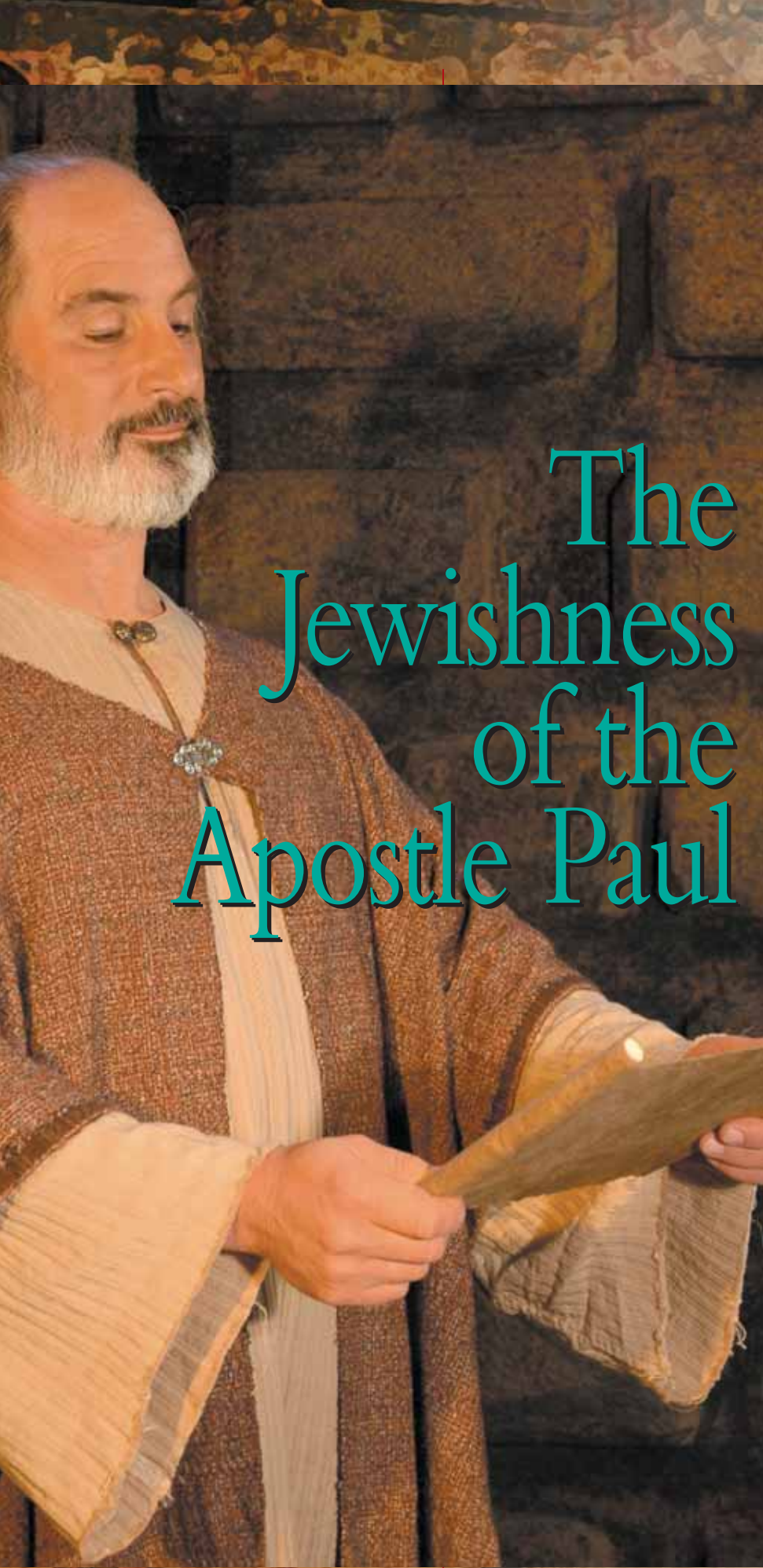


Volume XII, Issue 2 February 2006

The Jewishness of the Apostle Paul

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

The Jewishness of the Apostle Paul • Romans: Blueprint for Salvation
New Bible Study: David "A Man After God's Own Heart"



The Jewishness of the Apostle Paul

Dear family in the Messiah,

Shalom from New York City...or as we call it—Jerusalem West! The Lord continues to be faithful to your Mission to the Jewish people. We are now in our 113th year of ministry among God's chosen people, and the work has never been better. We have more staff and are serving in more cities and nations across the globe than ever before. Yes, Chosen People Ministries has a great heritage, and I am grateful that we have this foundation to build upon.

Yet I am sure our founder, Rabbi Leopold Cohn, would agree that **we must keep building!** We rejoice that the Gospel is now preached through the Messianic Center in Jerusalem—but there is more to do! There are more Centers to be established! Why? Because less than 1% of the 15 million Jewish people in the world today believe in Jesus as the Messiah.

Thank you, dear family, for your faithful prayers and financial support—and for entrusting us with the hundreds of Jewish people you know by asking us to send them letters, by sharing our materials with them and also by bringing them to Chosen People Ministries conferences and events!

Thank you also for inviting Jewish people to visit our web site, www.chosenpeople.com, as we have an excellent section especially designed for Jewish people who do not yet know the Lord.

I have a great sense that we are truly one family in Jesus serving His greatest purpose: to bring the Gospel to our broken world—to *the Jew first and also to the Gentile* (Romans 1:16).

The Jewishness of the Apostle Paul

If there is one distinctive mark that I believe has characterized Chosen People Ministries for more than a century, it is this: we preach the Gospel outlined by the Old Testament and

detailed by the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians, where he writes,

Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved...that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures (I Corinthians 15:1-4).

In fact, as twenty-first century Messianic Jews, we not only follow Jesus, but we also walk in the footsteps of Paul, who invited us to imitate his relationship with the Messiah (I Corinthians 4:16, 11:1).

This is one of the reasons we have dedicated this issue of the newsletter to this great first century Messianic Jewish leader! And it is my hope that by reading through this issue, we will all become imitators of him in living for the Lord and loving His ancient people.

I fear that often the *Jewishness* of the Apostle Paul is missed and misunderstood. Sometimes Paul's Jewish identity is relegated to his past, as if when he came to know the Lord, he stopped being Jewish. This of course is not true. After all, Paul himself claims to be a Messianic Jew when he writes,

...For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin (Romans 11:1).

We must follow the Apostle Paul by asking the Lord to give us this same broken heart for the Jewish people expressed in his prayer,

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved (Romans 10:1).

The Apostle Paul: Friend or Foe of the Jewish People?

Within the Jewish community, the Apostle Paul is often viewed as a non-Jew. According to some Jewish

scholars, Jesus may have been an acceptable though perhaps misguided Jewish religious reformer. But many of these same scholars will say that Paul was guilty of a far greater transgression: that he tried to *twist* the faith found in the Hebrew Scriptures beyond all recognition in order to make it palatable to non-Jews.

Now, some of the unfavorable Jewish response to Paul has been influenced by a long history of Christian interpretation that did not take Paul's Jewish identity fully into consideration. However, there are many evangelical Christian scholars today who have *rediscovered* Paul's Jewish identity. This welcome development is very helpful to believers, for it enables us to understand Paul as a Jewish man and rabbi who loved Yeshua (Jesus) with all his heart.

I remember when I first came to know the Lord. For some reason, before I opened the New Testament, I was convinced that Paul was not Jewish. Whoever heard of a Jewish saint?! Was I surprised to discover that the Apostle Paul was really Rabbi Saul! And when I learned more about the Apostle from the Scriptures, I also found that he did not leave his *Jewishness* behind. This freed me, like him, to find my own Jewishness fulfilled in Jesus the Jewish Messiah.

In fact, by the time I was finished reading the New Testament for the first time, I felt there were two people who really understood me as a Jew: Jesus and Paul!

A Chosen Vessel: A Role Model for Messianic Jews

Saul, the rabbi from Tarsus, has become my role model for following Jesus the Messiah—as a Jew! I hope you will enjoy reading about him in this issue of *The Chosen People* newsletter.

For the past thirteen years, one of our beloved staff members, Alan Shore, has been presenting a one-man dramatic piece on the life of the Apostle Paul. This masterful and skilled presentation, *A Chosen Vessel*, is now available on DVD.

Be sure to look at the back cover of this newsletter to read about this exciting new video!

Thanks so much for your love and faithful support in helping your family members at Chosen People Ministries fulfill the vision of our founder, Rabbi Leopold Cohn, to reach our Jewish people with the message of the Gospel!

And thank you for building the future of Jewish evangelism with us! We look forward to the day when our job will be done, as Rabbi Paul reminds us:

For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins" (Romans 11:25-27).

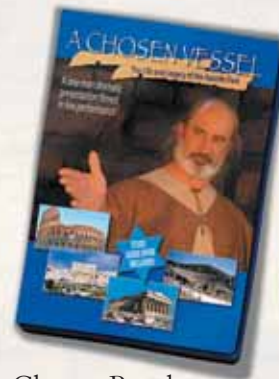
May each of us discover our God-appointed role in working towards Israel's salvation!

Thank you again for your love and support... we could not do this work without you!

Your brother,



Mitch



Dr. Mitch Glaser
President

The Book of Romans

Blueprint for Salvation

by Alan Shore



Saul of
Tarsus –
evangelist,
theologian,

Hebrew of

Hebrews and Apostle

to the Gentiles. That's quite a

résumé! Paul's letters reveal a brilliant mind and an unquenchable faith. But they are also more than the sum of their parts. As God's revealed Word, the Epistles convey timeless spiritual truths and instructions for holy living. Yet they are also a blueprint for the salvation of the Jewish people—and the world.

Most of Paul's letters are of a pastoral nature. They often address specific circumstances in the various congregations or the lives of people he knew who were in his care. But there is one letter that is different: the Epistle to the Romans. Written to a fellowship he did not found and had not yet visited, Romans is the most extensive, closely reasoned exposition of the Gospel that Paul produced in his lifetime. It is also filled with human emotion, as we read of the ache of Paul's heart for the salvation of his Jewish people.

Paul and the Jewish People

For someone known as "The Apostle to the Gentiles," Paul certainly spent a lot of time preaching in synagogues. It's true that he declared in Corinth, "*From now on I will go to the Gentiles*" (Acts 18:6). But that same chapter records that when he came to Ephesus,

...he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. When they asked him to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, but took leave of them, saying, "I must by

all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing..." (Acts 18:19-21).

There is no doubt whatsoever that wherever Paul went, he never stopped praying for his Jewish brethren. His own words say it best:

I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh... (Romans 9:1-3).

Where in Scripture is there a more heartfelt plea?

But great as Paul's love for his own people might have been, he never allowed it to blind him to the knowledge that the Gospel was also for the nations—that the Gentile people were also God's beloved, for whose sake Messiah had suffered, died and risen from the dead. And as Paul wrote to the Romans, we see the birth of a spiritual truth so sweeping in its scope that it is literally breathtaking: **it is that his love for the Jewish people would be best served by carrying out his commission as the "Apostle of the Gentiles."**

Why? The answer is as startling as it is true.

The Mystery of Jewish Unbelief

One of the themes that Paul touches upon in Romans is why so many of the Jewish people seem to have rejected the Gospel. This

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MAY IT ALSO BE OURS.



An Old Testament scroll

First century lamp and coins

rejection was no small mystery to the early believers to whom Paul wrote. For who, if not the Jews, were equipped to recognize the Messianic credentials of Jesus? Yet, could the present Jewish unbelief itself be part of God's unfolding revelation? It is precisely this argument that Paul advances.

For Paul, the rejection of Jesus by the Jewish people was not a cause for doubt or confusion, as he recognized a familiar pattern in Israel's history. He knew that this pattern of disobedience, chastisement, repentance and restoration existed within a more glorious and expansive framework of God's will for all Creation.

Paul also understood Israel's stubbornness first-hand, and he knew of God's unfailing love for Israel, a love that he knew would bring about the right outcome. To Paul, the history of the Jewish people is like a train leading to one destination: the Messiah. When His presence came into view, the Jews who refused to believe were like passengers who chose to disembark and strike out in their own direction. Meanwhile—and this is of utmost importance—the Gentiles were allowed to climb aboard.

The Role of Non-Jews in Jewish Evangelism

The inclusion of the non-Jewish "late arrivers" in God's Kingdom on the same faith basis as believing Jews bears witness to the authority of God's prophetic Word that Messiah would indeed be "...as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth" (Isaiah 49:6). It is the practical outworking of this revelation that caused Peter to marvel in the household of Cornelius:

In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him (Acts 10:34-35).

The entry of the Gentiles in the covenant promises of the Lord is truly Good News for the nations. But with this great privilege comes a special commission. The Gentile believers are now to be a blessing to those through whom they have been so richly blessed: the Jewish people.

Paul's heartfelt question in Romans 11:11, "*Have they stumbled that they should fall?*" could be our question also. And so could his resounding response, "*Certainly not!*" For in this confident cry is the heart of Paul's purest understanding of the triumph of the will and way of God. If Jewish unbelief has opened the door for the Gentiles, then the Lord will use the disbelief of the Jewish people as the very instrument through which they must eventually be restored: "*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).

But the non-Jewish members of the Body of Messiah must do their part! This is why Paul so urgently and diligently carried out his mission to the Gentiles. He knew that it would be these same Gentiles—once far from God, but now reconciled to Him through faith in the Messiah—who would be the instruments through whom the Jewish people would one day turn to Him.

Responding to Paul's Charge

Paul's words to the Romans have yet to be fulfilled. The "fullness of the Gentiles" (Romans 11:25) has not yet come in. "All Israel" (Romans 11:26) has not yet been saved. And that is where we come in!

Jewish and non-Jewish believers both have a part to play today in bringing Paul's words to pass. Both have been given the task of bringing the Gospel to the Jewish people. But the non-Jewish members are to take this task particularly to heart, for the Romans 11:11 charge to the Gentiles to "provoke the Jewish people to jealousy" remains in full force.

The repentance of the Jewish people, the return of Jesus, the fullness of the Kingdom and the restoration of Creation itself are bound together. This is the sweeping vision of the Apostle Paul. Let it be our vision also, as we continue to bring the Gospel "to the Jew first..." (Romans 1:16).

See the THROUGH JEWISH EYES Bible

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



Introducing David “A Man After God’s Own Heart”

Who would you like to see first in heaven? For me it would be the face of the One marred at Calvary for my sins; then a glimpse of the great Apostle Paul. Next, I would look for David. This article is the beginning of a series on the life of this most interesting Bible character.

The Qualities of David’s Heart

What made David “a man after God’s own heart,” even in light of his adultery and murder? The Scripture reveals a number of his “heart” qualities.

He was loyal to the Lord and never denied Him or turned to idolatry. David was loyal to his nation, tribe and family, as well as to Jonathan and his friends. He was tender in his love for the Lord

(Psalm 18:1), in his mourning for Saul and Jonathan (II Samuel 1:12,17) and in his grief for his son Absalom (II Samuel 18:33).

David was also brave. As a shepherd boy, he slew a lion and a bear, killed the giant Goliath and conquered the Philistines and other enemy nations. David never forgot his origin as a humble shepherd (Psalm 23), and he knew the value of a contrite spirit (Psalm 34:18).

David’s heart also demonstrated penitence, as he lamented and repented of his great sin with Bathsheba (II Samuel 12:13). David penned the greatest repentance chapters in all of Scripture (Psalms 32 and 51). God can work through a man with a remorseful heart.

Who Was David?

David was the great-grandson of Ruth and Boaz, the youngest son of Jesse, of Judah’s tribe, and the second king of Israel. He occupies a unique place as the ancestor, forerunner and foreshadower of the Messiah Jesus, David’s “greater Son.” Paul states that Jesus “...was born of the seed of David according to the flesh” (Romans 1:3). Jesus Himself declares, “...I am the Root and the Offspring of David...” (Revelation 22:16).

David’s life and that of Messiah display striking parallels. Both were born in humble Bethlehem. Both were shepherds—one of sheep and the other of souls. Both were sorely persecuted but “opened not their mouths” and both came to kingship: David over all Israel; Jesus a King with an everlasting kingdom.

With the exception of Messiah Jesus, more Scripture is devoted to David than to any other person. David is mentioned 1,118 times in 28 Bible books. He had nineteen sons, seven brothers, two sisters and eight spouses. His occupation was that of a shepherd, soldier, king of Judah and ultimately, king over all Israel. He died in Jerusalem at the age of 70 (I Kings 2:10).

David: The Gold Standard of Kings and the Sweet Psalmist of Israel

David became the “gold standard” by which all the other kings of Judah’s tribe were measured. They were considered good or bad according to the degree that they were like David (I Kings 14:7-8). But he was also the sweet psalmist of Israel (II Samuel 23:1) who wrote at least 75 of the 150 Psalms.

In our series of studies, we shall attempt to integrate the Davidic Psalms with David’s life experiences. We are pleased to have you join us for what we pray will be an uplifting and enriching “voyage” through the Bible. ✨



SALVATION FOR JEWISH MOTHER IN SOUTH AMERICA

A Jewish woman named Elvira came to faith in the Messiah after attending a Messianic service led by Ricardo Chemi, Director of our work in South America. After the service, Ricardo and Elvira* discussed spiritual matters at some length. The next day, he and a colleague went to Elvira's house. Ricardo writes, "When we prayed for her and for her family situation, she prayed to receive the Lord. I know now that her family is at peace...the peace of the Lord."

DECISION FOR MESSIAH ACCOMPANIES WEDDING VOWS

Dr. Ben Alpert, who helps lead Chosen People Ministries' Messianic congregation in South Florida, had the great joy of bringing a young Jewish man to Messiah through a counseling session with him and his bride-to-be. The parents of the bride, Russian immigrants who had come to America from Brazil in the 1980s, began attending the Messianic congregation to learn how to better witness to their daughter's suitor. They invited the young man to attend with them, which he did. After he proposed to their daughter, Ben began counseling them about spiritual unity, and during one of their sessions together, Ben led the young man to faith. By the way, Dr. Alpert performed the wedding ceremony amid great rejoicing.

"CAPTIVE AUDIENCE" HEARS GOSPEL IN UKRAINE

Alexander Dukhno, our staff member in Ukraine, is always looking for new ways to preach the Good News. In answer to his prayers, the Lord gave Alex an opportunity to visit a prison in a Kiev suburb. There he found Jewish people among the prisoners and he was able to leave books and brochures for them to read. Alex would like to visit on a regular basis, but for this, he needs a special permit. Pray that God would "open prison doors" for him.



NEW AGE FESTIVAL BRINGS NEW LIFE IN MESSIAH

If you think the days of idolatry in Israel are a thing of the past, think again. Henry and Darlene Matarrita, staff members who minister in the Land, shared the Gospel at a three-day New Age Festival of 50,000 "seekers." There they met Sara, a young Israeli woman. After sharing the Messiah with her, they challenged her to consider His claims. Wondering if they would ever meet her again amid the crowd, they were glad to see her two days later. As they stopped at a booth, there was Sara with some friends. After more conversation, Sara declared that she wanted to know Him. Immediately, they prayed a prayer of repentance together and she surrendered her heart to the Messiah. Now a local congregation in Acco is following up with her.

NEW LIFE IN THE MIDST OF MOURNING

Neriyah A. is continuing to serve the Lord with the new lease on life he received through his donated kidney. Asked by a pastor to visit a critically ill 52-year-old believer who was hospitalized in Tel Aviv, Neriyah and his wife Anna did so several times, and were with her when she passed away. At her funeral, Neriyah spoke with one of her relatives who is, like Neriyah, a Bukharan Jew. In the midst of their mourning, Neriyah shared the Gospel with him and he received the Lord.

*Names changed

IN MEMORIAM

JEROME FLEISCHER, EVANGELIST AND TEACHER

Chosen People Ministries mourns the passing of retired missionary Jerome Fleischer, who died on November 22, 2005. Jerome was born January 14, 1921, on the S.S. Rotterdam while his Orthodox Jewish parents were en route from Europe to the New World. He was raised on the East Side of New York City and educated in Jewish schools. Active service in World War II made a profound impression on him and quickened his spiritual search. After he came to faith in Messiah, he entered the Lord's service, and in time, Jerome and his wife Mildred joined the Mission staff in the mid-1970s. The Fleischers planted congregations in the San Francisco Bay Area and saw many Jewish people come to faith. They retired in 1986 and stayed active in the Messianic congregation they planted in Daly City, California. Jerome is remembered as a compelling teacher and a deeply committed evangelist.

Celebrate Passover in Your Home

Order now to receive in time for Passover - April 12-20

The **Matza Tash** (unity) is a pouch with three compartments for matza—a vivid illustration of the unity of God's nature. This white Matza tash is beautifully embroidered. Made in Israel.

Matza Tash (#5026) **\$22.95^{US}**

This silver **Seder Plate** is made in Israel and beautifully displays the seder elements.

Seder Plate (#5024) **\$28.95^{US}**

Each of the four times the **Kiddush cup** is filled during the Passover meal, the story of God's redeeming work among His people is unfolded. This silver cup is about three inches tall. Made in Israel.

Kiddush Cup (#5025) **\$22.95^{US}**

Complete Passover Set (includes plate, cup and Matza tash— #5027) **\$65.95^{US}**

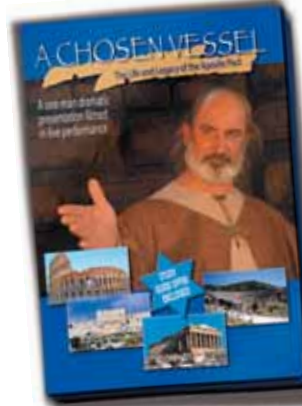
For orders in the U.S. call 800-333-4936. Please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery.

NEW! from Chosen People Ministries

A Chosen Vessel

This full-length play, set in the dungeon where he is awaiting execution, is a faithful recollection of the life of Saul of Tarsus—the "Hebrew of the Hebrews" and the "Apostle to the Gentiles." Presented by staff member Alan Shore in churches, Messianic congregations and learning institutions, *A Chosen Vessel* is now yours to be challenged by and to enjoy on DVD.

A Chosen Vessel DVD (#8034) \$19.95^{US}



2006 Summer Missions Opportunities

Programs are available for individuals and campus/church groups in Israel and in New York City. Opportunities are also available for private internships.

Outreach Israel May 30 – June 18 or June 25 – July 26 or August 1 – 18



Hurry! The June 25 trip is already full!

In the land of Messiah, you will learn to express your faith to the surprisingly secular Israelis and the "unreachable" Orthodox, and help disciple new believers. Bring your love and enthusiasm for the people of Israel and use your gifts and talents to help awaken hearts for the Messiah in the Land where He lived!

STEP July 9-16

Challenging and rewarding! The perfect evangelism program if you only have a week to spare—on the streets of New York City.



eXperience Israel July 9-23

A unique two-week adventure to the homeland of Jesus designed especially for young adults (ages 18 to 35). eXperience Israel is a marvelous mix of hands-on ministry activities and travels to the memorable sites of the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament. Share the love of the Messiah with the people of Israel.

For more information on any of these programs call Rachel at **1-888-293-7482** or visit us at www.chosenpeople.com



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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