

PRAY FOR THE PEACE OF JERUSALEM



January 2018

Dear friend,

Shalom and Happy New Year from Chosen People Ministries! We are praying that 2018 will be an amazing year of hope and promise! We are excited about reaching Jewish people with the Gospel in new ways in the new year!

We have developed some powerful new ministries in the United States and abroad—especially in Israel! We now have more than twenty workers in Israel and three centers (Jerusalem, greater Tel Aviv, and the Galilee). We are continuing with our children's camping programs, a ministry among Holocaust survivors, outreach through our Isaiah 53 Hebrew-language campaign, and much more! Our center in Ramat Gan (a suburb of Tel Aviv) opened in 2017, and it is already a bustling hub of ministry activities designed to meet the spiritual needs of young professional Israelis and their families.

Also, I am proud to report that our work in the “other Holy Land,” Brooklyn, continues to grow. The five boroughs of New York City are home to more than two million Jewish people and have the highest concentration of Jewish people in the world outside of Israel. Five years ago, we did not have a presence in Brooklyn, but by God's grace—and the support of our generous Chosen People Ministries extended family—we are now ministering in the heart of Orthodox Jewish Brooklyn! Here is an encouraging comment from Robert W., our Brooklyn branch director:

Recently we met with Sarah, a former Hasidic woman living in Brooklyn. She has walked by our Feinberg Messianic Center building countless times, often enraged by our presence, but, through friendship, the Lord began to soften her heart. We met with her, prayed with her, and rejoice to share that Sarah has prayed to receive Jesus as her Messiah!*

Thank you for your faithfulness which makes the labor of the Gospel possible! We hope to see the seeds sown in 2017 bear fruit in the New Year.

*name changed

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A New Survey

In December, the United States again formally acknowledged Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and initiated the process of moving the U.S. Embassy to the biblical and historic capital of the Holy Land. Israel's neighbors and their supporters around the globe disagree with this pronouncement. The violence within Israel has been limited, but unfortunately an innocent Israeli young man lost his life in a knife attack. We need to keep praying for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6)!

This past summer, Chosen People Ministries, along with Joel C. Rosenberg, helped design and support a survey conducted by LifeWay Christian Resources called "Evangelical Attitudes Toward Israel." The results were released in early December at a press conference held in Washington, D.C. The survey results were discussed by *The Jerusalem Post*, *Jewish News Service*, *The Forward*, *The Times of Israel*, *CBN.com*, *Christianity Today*, *Religion News Service*, and forty-plus news outlets.

We were happy to see that 69 percent of the respondents are positive towards Israel, though that number seems to be going down among younger Christians. When asked about the modern rebirth of the State of Israel in 1948 and the re-gathering of millions of Jewish people to Israel, 80 percent of respondents said these events were fulfillments of Bible prophecy that show we are getting closer to the return of Jesus Christ, and 20 percent said these were simply interesting geopolitical events.¹

Sixty-six percent of evangelicals believe that Israel's existence, security, and prosperity are things they should support. On the other hand, 23 percent of Bible-believing Christians said that the Palestinians should be allowed to create their own sovereign state, while 31 percent disagreed, and 46 percent were not sure! **That is a massive amount of uncertainty for such a crucial question.**

This uncertainty should be a signal to those who love the Lord to think through what the Bible says about the city of Jerusalem because knowing what the Bible says about Israel is so important at this moment. Israel needs the support of born-again Christians. My chief concern at the moment is for the future, because younger Christians are undecided about their views on the modern State of Israel.

Your Mission to the Jewish People hopes to continue influencing the Church with great resources and communications intended to form a deeper love for Israel and the Jewish people among Christians. We are so appreciative of you and others like you who are already supportive of Jewish missions and have a heart for the Jewish people!

¹ LifeWay Research, *Evangelical Attitudes Toward Israel: Representative Survey of 2,002 Americans with Evangelical Beliefs*, 2017, p.3



What Makes Jerusalem So Special?

Do most Christians believe that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel? Most of us do not think of these questions in our daily lives, but, in the coming months, I believe it will become more relevant for us as the process of moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem begins.

We should love and support Jerusalem and the State of Israel. Why? Because God promised the land of Israel to the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Genesis 12:1-3). Again in Genesis 17:7-8, the Lord confirmed His promises to Abraham and his seed:

I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

His promise would include Jerusalem, of course, which King David declared as the capital of Israel when he moved his throne to the city and brought the Ark of the Covenant back to the holy city! Chuck Swindoll, in his wonderful book about the life of King David, writes,

With his headquarters in Jerusalem, David finally had the limitless reign he had been promised as God's anointed leader. He had great power and great blessing from God.
(2 Samuel 5:6-12)²

We also know that the greater son of David, Jesus the Messiah, will rule on the Davidic throne in Jerusalem when He returns and fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah 9:6-7. In that day, the Messiah will reign as King in fulfillment of the promises God made to King David through Nathan the prophet (2 Samuel 7:8-17).

We Should Love Jerusalem Because Jesus Loves Jerusalem

Jesus wept over Jerusalem, because He loved the city where the Temple of God stood (Luke 19:41)! He also showed compassion for Jerusalem, predicting that the Temple would be destroyed because His chosen people were rejecting Him and the Jewish people would suffer at the hands of the Romans (Matthew 23:37-39).

Jesus' words unfolded exactly as He said they would. Two generations after His death, the Romans tore apart the Temple stone by stone, destroying the city and exiling the nation for two millennia (Luke 21:21-24). The next two thousand years were a grim time for Jewish people, as they were dispersed from their land and subject to the hatred and cruelty of Gentile host nations.

² Charles R. Swindoll, *David: A Man of Passion & Destiny: Profiles in Character* (Dallas, Tex.: Word Pub., 1997), 135.



Today, many Jewish people pray for the Messiah to come and restore His throne in Jerusalem, ending the two thousand year exile and bringing about a reign of peace. Yet, most Jewish people do not yet realize that this very Messiah they pray for is Jesus! When the Jewish people as a whole (or at the time of His return) say, "Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord," Jesus will return (Matthew 23:39, Romans 11:25 ff.). What an exciting promise!



JEWISH PEOPLE, IN JERUSALEM AND ELSEWHERE, ARE OPEN TO THE GOSPEL IN WAYS WE HAVE NOT SEEN PREVIOUSLY!

I am especially concerned for many of our staff who are unable to raise their full missionary support. Would you consider giving a generous New Year's gift to help support our staff in need?

Would you begin the New Year with a gift to bless the Jewish people with the Gospel? This is needed and would be appreciated!

And remember to pray for the peace of Jerusalem! *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you"* (Psalm 122:6).

This peace can only come through the Prince of Peace, Jesus, who longs to live in the hearts of all who call upon His name!

Thanks for your partnership and prayers.

In Him,

Mitch

P.S. We have created a beautiful pictorial book about Israel that contains original photographs from Lawrence Hirsch, our Australian director and professional photographer. We would like to send this to you as a thank you for your gift of \$100 or more. In fact, all of the pictures in this letter are from the book!

The events of the twentieth century, the creation of the modern State of Israel in 1948, and the regathering of (most of) the Jewish exiles from the four corners of the earth show us that this time is close at hand.

As 2018 unfolds, help us put Jerusalem and the promises the Lord made to the Jewish people at the forefront of our attention. Together we will look forward to the amazing things God will do this year through Your Mission to the Jewish People!

I am especially excited about our work in Israel, but also about our work in many countries where young Israelis travel after their army service. We are now reaching Israelis in New Zealand, Argentina, Germany, and New York City!

We live in exciting days and in general Jewish people are open to the Gospel in ways we have not seen previously. But,