

JEW S F✶R JESUS

Israel Among the Nations-redux

by David Brickner, Executive Director

British Historian Arnold J. Toynbee had a social Darwinian theory concerning the rise and inevitable fall of all nations, including Israel. In his seminal ten-volume work, *A Study of History*, the esteemed scholar reflected on the continuing existence of the Jewish nation despite 2,000 years without a homeland. He concluded that the Jewish nation was a “fossil” floating on the sea of humanity, nothing more than “a vestigial remnant,” a people destined to disappear.

That celebrated historian got it very, very wrong.

Nothing has been more perplexing to skeptics—while giving the faithful cause for thanksgiving—than the perpetuity of the nation of Israel. Despite forcible uprooting and exile from the land of her nativity, despite the lost facility of her mother tongue for common use, despite the woes of being harried and harassed, menaced and even murdered in the lands of her exile, Israel has survived and even thrived. Why is that?

It is because the God of Israel, the Creator of all things staked His own reputation on the preservation of Abraham’s descendants.

King Louis XIV of France once asked the great French philosopher Blaise Pascal to prove the existence of the miraculous. Without a moment’s hesitation, Pascal answered, “Your Majesty—it is the existence of the Jews.” You see it was God who swore an oath to Israel, that because of her disobedience, “I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after



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you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste” (Leviticus 26:33). But it was not for utter destruction that Israel was exiled.

God’s eternal purpose was to preserve His people in the Diaspora and to glorify Himself in their midst. The One who promised to scatter Israel also swore an oath saying, “For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land” (Ezekiel 36:24).

Today, we are witnesses of these things. After 2,000 years of exile, Israel is back in the land of her nativity. With 5.9 million Jews, the size of Israel’s Jewish population now rivals that of the Jewish

population in the United States. If trends continue, within ten to twenty years more Jews will be living in the land of Israel than outside. Remarkable history is being made in our day!

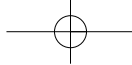
Yet another trend, not as remarkable but still quite significant, is receiving scant attention. That trend is Israeli emigration. While Jews have been returning to the homeland in record numbers since 1948, recently Israeli Jews have been leaving in droves—a kind of “Israel among the nations” situation. Large communities of Israelis are springing up in many countries throughout the world.

Without a doubt, Israelis are more open to the gospel than any other Jewish people in the world today. And when traveling outside of the land of Israel, they are typically more open to the gospel than ever.

That is why over the last three years, Jews for Jesus has been developing a specialized program to reach “Israel among the nations,” particularly the large Israeli backpacking community in the Far East and in South America. This program, called *Massah* (Hebrew for “the Journey”), has sent groups of young Jewish believers in Jesus into remote areas to engage these backpackers and to share the gospel with them.

We hope to expand and build upon the kind of ministry we’ve begun with our *Massah* program. But perhaps you have noticed, you don’t have to go to India or Thailand to meet Israelis. More and more Israelis are visiting major (and even not-so-major) metropolitan

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centres around the world.

Many of these Israelis will eventually return home, but their sojourn in our midst presents wonderful opportunities for believers in Jesus. You may not be able to travel to Israel to take part in one of our Jews for Jesus “Behold Your God Israel” campaigns, but you may very well have a terrific opportunity to share the Lord with Israelis that God has brought to your own backyard.

Maybe you have noticed Israeli vendors at your local mall, selling anything from mobile phones to skin products from the Dead Sea region. If not, keep your eyes open during your next shopping trip. Most Israelis are very quick to engage in conversation, and whether or not you are interested in becoming a customer, they will usually be glad to chat (as long as another customer isn’t waiting!). If you develop a rapport, be sure to visit them again on your next outing.

With the Christian holidays coming up, our family of newsletter subscribers and supporters has a unique opportunity to reach out to Israel among our own nation. Most Israelis have never experienced a truly Christian celebration of Christmas. Many are

quite curious about these holidays and would welcome an invitation to join you and your family to celebrate one of these holidays in your home.

It may feel a bit awkward to invite someone you’ve only chatted with a few times into your home for a family gathering, but in Israel such hospitality

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is common and so it would not seem at all strange to them. Besides, it is very biblical. (See Leviticus 19:34 and Hebrews 13:2.) Holidays provide natural occasions to share the gospel with your guests. At Christmas the simple retelling of the Incarnation story as read from Matthew or Luke, even including some of the Messianic passages from the Hebrew

Bible, presents a natural bridge to conversations about Y’shua (Jesus).

Many Israelis would welcome the invitation to share your joy for the holidays, and some may be open to considering the good news as they hear it in your home and see it in your celebrations. Jews for Jesus has an ample supply of literature including Hebrew tracts, New Testaments that you might consider keeping on hand to give to your guest should the opportunity arise.

I truly believe that God is gathering His people from among the nations, but I also see God’s hand in this unusual development of “Israel among the nations.” We have a unique opportunity now—and we don’t know how long it will last—to sow gospel seeds in the hearts of Israelis in our midst and around the world. Even if we don’t see them come to faith in Jesus, God can water and bring those gospel seeds to fruition later—perhaps even when they return to Israel. By taking these opportunities to witness, all of us can have a part in God’s purposes for Israel—and for her ultimate redemption in Jesus Christ.

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SYDNEY EVENTS...one weekend....

***In cooperation with Awesome Church (formerly Harbourside Christian Life Centre)
223 Great North Road, Five Dock***

***Friday 18th December 7 pm
HANUKKAH CELEBRATION
Join Jewish believers in celebrating
the last night of the Festival of
Dedication.
Food and candles and so much more.***

**Saturday 19th December
10am to 3pm**

“JEWS, GENTILES & THE CHURCH”
*A special one-day seminar
taught by Bob Mendelsohn.
Registration is \$50.*

*Please contact the church office
on 02.9713-8990*

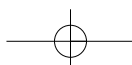
**Sunday 20th December
10 am**

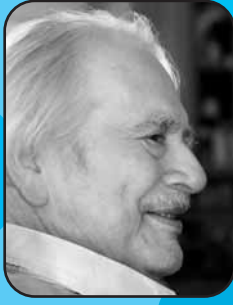
A VERY JEWISH CHRISTMAS?
*Bob will be teaching on Jesus,
Light of the World, as Messiah-
mas approaches*



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AN UNAVOIDABLE ISSUE TO OUR JEWISH PEOPLE WORLDWIDE.**

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Moishe's Musings

on Wrong Ways to Witness

by Moishe Rosen, Jews for Jesus founder

When I graduated from Bible school, my first assignment with the American Board of Missions to the Jews (now Chosen People Ministries) was in Los Angeles. We had a mission house at 5020 Pico Boulevard. I lived there with my family, and I also had a small office there. We had Bible studies and fellowship meetings in our living room. This was a time when we were very discreet. The plaque in front of the house did not advertise the mission; it simply said, "Reverend Martin Meyer Rosen." I had installed the plaque just two weeks after I was ordained. Two months later, I realized that I had done it for the sake of status, and God doesn't need that kind of status.

At any rate, we were listed in the directory as the American Board of Missions to the Jews. I wasn't surprised when a lady came—she said her name was Edna—and asked if she could get some tracts. I was glad to sort through and I gave her several copies of three or four different tracts. She said, "No, I need more; I need more." I gave her a few more, and said, "It's better to use those up, and then, if you need more, I'll get you some." Then, because she'd come rather early in the morning, I asked her not to come before 9:00 A.M.

This went on for several days—not exactly in a row. She'd come and get her tracts, and then come again and get more. But then I got a call from a rabbi at Temple Isaiah, which was on Pico Boulevard, up near Robertson. He said, "We know of you, and we know that this isn't a legitimate Jewish congregation, but you're entitled to believe what you want, and preach what you want. However, please don't imagine that all these pamphlets you're stuffing through our mail chute are being passed on to the congregation. And it's a sin to waste people's money." It's never been my policy to put literature in someone's mailbox (letterboxing in the US is illegal) or on their car wind screen, and I let the rabbi know that we hadn't realized our literature was being used that way.

Well, that was Edna. That was her idea of witnessing. But she was bold, and if she had an opportunity, she would confront the person face-to-face. She came to witness to a woman named Eilee, who had been a

radio actress in the Philadelphia area. There were a lot of well-known radio personalities back in the '50s and early '60s. Anyway, she'd come to California. One day, Edna appeared on her doorstep, handed her a handful of pamphlets, and said, "I want you to know that for the sins of adultery, you are going straight to hell." Edna turned around, and left.

Eilee found my phone number on one of the pamphlets and called me up. She was really shaken. I began trying to apologize for Edna. What I didn't realize was that Eilee was really shaken because she was concerned about sin in her life. She believed exactly what Edna said. It turned out that Edna had been her personal maid and housekeeper in Philadelphia, and knew her well.

Eilee asked if she could meet with me and we had a visit. Yes, I told her, there is a sin called *adultery*, and yes, you probably did commit that sin, and all sinners go to hell. She said, "What can I do?" I said, "Well, I believe that Jesus forgives sins." And she prayed with me to receive the Lord, there and then.

She became a member of Hollywood First Presbyterian Church, was in a lot of their dramatic presentations, and as much as people can be a testimony in Hollywood, she was.

The important thing is: God used what I would have described as the wrong way to witness. I learned to stop apologizing for the way that other Christians do things. Eilee didn't seem to think that there was anything wrong with Edna, or with the way she did things.

I could go down a list and think of dozens of times where I would have to say that if there was a wrong way to witness, Christians chose that wrong way. Nevertheless, people came to believe in Jesus.

I firmly believe in training our missionaries as best we can, and in sharing witnessing tips with anyone else who is interested. But the bottom line is the Holy Spirit. He seems willing to use our best, and sometimes our worst, efforts in His sovereign work.

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Merry *Messiah*-mas

By Bob Mendelsohn
National Director, Australia

The messiah has come, and his name is Y'shua.

That slogan filled the neon-electronic billboard high above Times Square in New York City in 1982. Millions of tourists and locals pass by this activity hub during December, and we Jews for Jesus chose to broadcast this slogan/message three times every hour during the entire month. We received great response. Phones rang, mail increased, and all over town, people were speaking about the person of Y'shua, and who he was— who he is.

We placed full-page advertisements that year in the New York *Times* as well, with a similar, albeit lengthier message. We offered a book for anyone who replied via the coupon. And hundreds of New Yorkers took us up on the offer and replied. What a great moment in history that was, and I was privileged to participate.

That was Christmas 27 years ago. That fact is amazing to me, since it feels like only a couple years ago. What makes it feel so proximate and makes me remember it so closely may be that we are still proclaiming that message, in December and throughout our days. In fact, that newspaper advert was the same one we placed in Perth in May 2007 and in Adelaide earlier this year. Many of you reading this gave financially to help us get the message out, and we are so grateful. As are the enquirers who wrote in for the book, and to whom we sent the literature then and to this day.

Why did we choose Christmas in 1982 for our message? Even in religious America, sometimes religion is a taboo message. But for most, December is a month in which religion can be addressed, and the major magazines and television shows, even sports teams, seem to speak of it. The movies might feature a Christmas theme of sharing and giving, which is close to the real message, if only they wouldn't leave out the main person, the main reason, the star of Christmas, Y'shua himself.

So we choose to highlight him. We choose to **proclaim him** during this season (and all seasons). We hand out more Gospel tracts this month in Australia, and in most of our other branches, with a holiday outreach that intensifies our efforts. At this time, more secular people think of God and religion, and this includes our Jewish people, too. So we don't want to miss an opportunity to announce our Saviour.

In the Northern Hemisphere, the days are getting short, and the darkness falls earlier. The lights of Christmas and Hanukkah (the Jewish holiday usually celebrated around the same time) shine brightly in winter against a dark backdrop. How fitting then that Y'shua chose to make it clear to everyone who he was during this holiday.

We read in John 10 beginning in verse 22 that Y'shua was walking in a particular setting in Jerusalem, in the Temple area near Solomon's portico. The setting is also defined as "winter" and "Feast of Dedication." That's the translation of the Hebrew word, "Hanukkah." In other words, this month is the anniversary of that walk. And the announce-ment he made that day. In verse

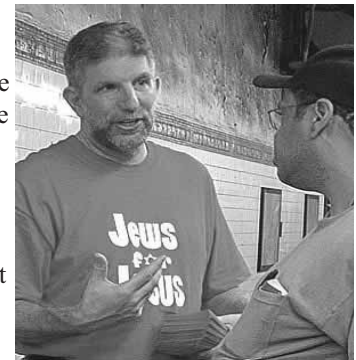
30 he said, "I and the Father are one."

You might meet some people who assert that Jesus never **claimed to be the messiah**, or certainly never claimed special deity. But John 10.30 shouts loudly against that assertion. How do we know what they thought, those who heard his announcement? The next verse tells us that those who heard this picked up stones to stone him. What's that about? That was because they understood what he was saying. Was Jesus claiming to be a special messenger, a prophet, a hero? No, for none of those would stones have been right. He even asked them what they were doing, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning me?"

Verse 33 fills in the answer for us, and for anyone who is really wondering what Jesus claimed. "For a good work we do not stone you, but for blasphemy; and because you, being a man, make yourself out to be God."

They answered. They understood what he was saying about himself. Yes, Y'shua believed and spoke, he told us he was deity, the divine Son of God.

On Hanukkah, celebrated by Jewish people as a victory of the few (the Jewish people) over the many (the Syrian Greeks) *a la* David and Goliath, this may make sense. The story took place in 165 BC. The Greeks under Antiochus IV had brought their dark religion into the land of Israel and attempted to make all Jews idol worshipers. The few pushed the enemy army out of the Temple area and re-dedicated it to the Lord and his purposes. And light shone out of the darkness of history.



At that time of year, when the story of burning oil was aglow in the minds of Jewish people worldwide, and the story of light vs. darkness is on their lips, Y'shua chose to declare himself singularly the Son of God. And light shone out of the darkness of our history again.

Maybe that's why we still like to announce him as Son of God, and Messiah, in December. We hope our Jewish people will welcome him as some Jews did back in the First Century (e.g. Peter, Paul, tens of thousands of others). We hope that many more will receive his love and grace in these days.

For those who live in Singapore, New Zealand, and here in Australia, we are including **one of our Gospel tracts** we use so you can pray for us and if you want, make some copies and share them with your mates. We have many other titles, of course, but this one is pretty good. By giving, by praying and by sharing this tract (and any other evangelistic information), you join us in our mission and we don't take that lightly. Thanks be to God for giving us His Son, Y'shua, Light of the World! One more thing...

Do you have **any extra Bibles**, even in foreign languages? We give away Bibles every week in our book shop, used, new, foreign, almost anything. If you live nearby, drop them in. If you want to post us some (to the book shop, please), we welcome any Bibles. Thanks.

Israel

Yarden, originally from Ukraine, was following up with Rosa, a Jewish Russian woman we met through phone calling during our Behold Your God Gush Dan campaign. Yarden reports, “Rosa was so happy to receive a New Testament in Russian. She is a highly educated biologist and believes in God with all her heart. For a long time, she has been curious about Jesus, wondering why He is called ‘the Son of God’ and why He was crucified.

“I answered some of her questions and encouraged her to read the Bible. Then we read Isaiah 53 together and I was amazed to hear her say, ‘So Jesus took away all our sins and He was raised from the dead so God proved that Jesus is His Son!’ Please pray for her that God completely will open her eyes and she will be saved.

“After that I needed to take a cab to my next visit but had a hard time finding one. It was so hot; I prayed that the Lord would send me help. Just then a cab stopped for me. I witnessed to him on the way to my visit and he gave me his contact information.

“My second visit was with Liora, another contact from the Gush Dan campaign. Liora is about 60 years old. She was very open to the gospel and prayed with me to receive the Lord.

“I praise God for His faithfulness. Please pray for these people and praise the Lord with me, ‘For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost’ (Luke 19:10).”



from the branches

London

Yoel reports, “Last March, I was handing out our gospel broadsides in Golder’s Green, an area where many Orthodox Jews live. (Yoel is part of our Israel branch, but has had assignments in the UK and US.) I chatted with Asif, an Israeli who gave me his address and phone number so that we could continue the conversation.

“Another Israeli, Amir, overheard me explaining the gospel in Hebrew and came over to tell me he had been reading the New Testament and was beginning to believe. Well, it isn’t every day that you hear that! He and I also exchanged phone numbers.

“Asif did not return my calls, but Amir and I began to have regular visits. Much spiritual groundwork had

been laid as a friend had been sharing the gospel with him and taking him to church.

“Shortly after we met I had a three week speaking tour in the U.S. and Amir went on holiday with his parents. I thought it would be a daunting task for him to tell them that he had been attending a church and seeing a missionary. But Amir took it in stride and was very open about his investigation.

“Once we were back in London, Amir told me that he understood why Jesus tells us that our love for Him should be even greater than love for one’s parents. Not only did Amir stand up for Jesus, but he gave his life to the Lord a week later at his church in London! We are now learning together what it means to be His disciple. I am reminded of the verse: ‘I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor’ (John 4:38).”

South Africa

Teresa reports: “Simone is a vibrant Jewish lady, married to a Christian. She and I met twice to discuss the Messiahship of Jesus and whether a Jewish person can believe in Him. I gave her the book *Betrayed*, which she read and enjoyed. Then there was a long silence; I left many messages for her and waited.

Recently I phoned Simone—this time she answered. She said

‘I can’t believe that you phoned me today, Teresa; Jesus is really out to get me.’ She proceeded to tell me that she’d attended her uncle’s funeral the previous day.

While walking to the grave, her cousin shared with her that she is a Jewish believer in Jesus and that she would love to meet with Simone to discuss Messiah. I pray that the Lord will use Simone’s cousin in a mighty way. I am also pleased that Simone as agreed to meet with me again. God. He just never gives up on reaching out to the lost.”

>BRAND NEW> Starting with this issue, our Australian newsletter will be available in three other languages: Spanish, Korean and Chinese. Check the website for each. If you would like print copies, please write and let your request be made known. Thanks.<<<

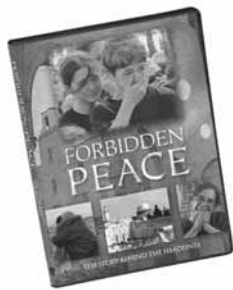
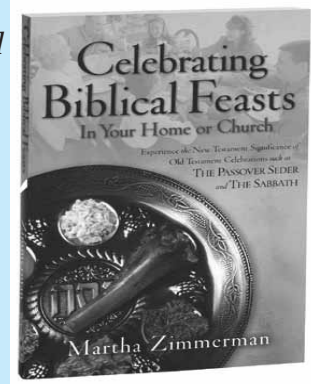
Resources for understanding, witnessing, and celebrating



The classically-styled branches of this elegant Hanukkah menorah arc upward as arms extended in supplication to the Lord. A Star of David holds the center candle aloft. 3-1/2" diameter

round base; 11" high. Usual cost \$55. This edition...only \$50.

This unique book offers a "guided tour" through seven Jewish festivals from a New Testament perspective. The author carefully explains the significance of each feast, the materials necessary to observe them, and full directions for the events. Usual cost \$18. This edition...only \$13.



Almost daily, we are bombarded with images from Israel; graphic portrayals of violence permeate our media and our minds. Yet these pictures don't tell the whole story.

Beyond the bloodshed and despite decades of hostility, Israelis and Palestinians are joining hands and forging a peace agreement long-thought forbidden. While the world cries out for a solution to end the conflict that grips the Middle East, these people have found true peace, not in a political plan, but in a person, Messiah Y'shua.

Forbidden Peace offers a powerful, poignant and positive perspective you are unlikely to find anywhere else...straight from the hearts of Israelis and Palestinians who have put their trust in Jesus and found true shalom. You are invited to join them as they share how, despite fierce opposition, they have chosen to follow Jesus and how He has brought about reconciliation in every sense of the word. Usual Cost \$25. This edition: only \$20.

This Star of David pendant features a star and cross design made from 100% lead-free pewter and plated in 22Kt gold. 1"H x 7/8"W. 24 inch curb chain. A great conversation opener. Usual cost \$39. This sale cost \$33.



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