



Your Partners in
Reaching Jewish People
for Jesus

April 2023

Freedom Isn't Free

by David Brickner, Executive Director

As we focus on Passover and Resurrection Day this month, the phrase “Freedom isn’t Free” echoes in my heart and mind—not just from a historic speech or a popular song—but as the biblical key to receiving and proclaiming the gospel.

The Cost of Liberty

Passover is all about God liberating Israel from slavery in Egypt. And yet Israel’s liberty—or freedom—wasn’t free. It cost the Egyptian people the lives of their firstborn sons, and it would have cost Israel the same, except for the blood of a sacrificed lamb.

Just as freedom from bondage comes at a cost, so does the post-bondage life of freedom. The people of Israel no longer belonged to Pharaoh, yet they were not free to live however they chose—they belonged to God and were obligated to trust and serve Him. They had to step out in faith and into a life of obedience that included wandering and seasons of deprivation.

Proclaiming Liberty

God reminded Israel that freedom and obligation go together when He instituted her 50-year Jubilee. Note the seeming contrast between “Consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land” and “For the children of Israel . . . are My servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 25:10, 55; emphasis added). Belonging to God liberates us to serve Him. **As Jews for Jesus continues in our own Jubilee, our 50th year of ministry, we feel these verses at our core.**

We are especially captivated by that beautiful command to proclaim liberty. This resonates in our Jews for Jesus DNA—to us it is a clarion call to serve God through even more widespread gospel proclamation. We are celebrating our 50th year with a three-month series of 20 very different evangelistic outreaches to proclaim liberty to our diverse Jewish audiences. I am so grateful that you are sharing in this wonderful proclamation celebration.

While we've worked hard to discover meaningful ways to approach each group, the heart of our message remains the same. Proclaiming liberty means pointing to the reality of spiritual slavery and the price Jesus paid to set us free. He became our Passover Lamb. By His blood and through His sacrifice, we can be free. We are committed to this message—but our proclamation doesn't end there.

As the blood of the Passover lamb had to be applied to the doorposts throughout Israel, we need the blood of the Lamb of God, Yeshua, applied to our lives. We need to step out in faith and into a life of obedience that may include seasons of wandering and deprivation.

The Obligations of Freedom

Our freedom places a profound obligation on us that includes a brand-new identity that is chosen for us, not by us. "Do you not know . . . you are not your own? For you were bought at a price" (1 Corinthians 6:19–20). That's not an easy verse to live by, but we need to embrace it tightly because it is crucial to experiencing and to proclaiming real liberty—especially during this cultural moment in time. The world declares and celebrates that people are free to carve their own path and choose their own identity. This false notion of freedom wreaks havoc, enslaving people to their own misguided opinions and desires. The fallout from this "freedom" is brokenness, bondage, and despair.

Our freedom in Jesus runs contrary to popular notions and so must our message. Our identity has been paid for and chosen for us by God. We belong to Him and are obligated to Him, but that obligation goes hand in hand with freedom. We are both free and obligated to love God and others, to serve God and others, and not be bound by selfishness and sin. And there is no greater joy than to see others find that new life, new identity, and new purpose in Jesus.

Another testimony: Individual liberty

Recently a man who had lived most of his 30-plus years in one of the most restrictive of ultra-Orthodox

Jewish communities came to faith and entrusted his life to the Messiah, Jesus. His wife took his children and left him. His community shunned him, and he was deprived of his only means of earning a living. Yet this man possessed an irrepressible joy. I asked him how it was that he seemed so free to celebrate his newfound faith despite all that he was enduring. His answer was simple. "Because now I belong to Yeshua."

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Bible Study continues

Since lockdown three years ago, we have conducted weekly Bible classes at 10 AM Sydney time on Fridays via Zoom. We are continuing with a new series of line-by-line unpacking of the book of Zechariah beginning 21 April. Bob Mendelsohn is teaching the class again. If you want to join us, (and perhaps even invite a Jewish mate!), please write to admin@jewsforjesus.org.au and request the zoom information.

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Your Praise Report from Ukraine

by **Leonid Vasserman** in Odessa

Throughout the winter months we endured constant sirens, missile strikes, and drone attacks. Power outages and frequent interruptions of mobile and internet services knocked out heat, light, water, and communication for hours at a time. But praise God Almighty, in the midst of these hardships, ministry was blessed and fruitful.

We continued to visit Jewish people, including Alex, a former gymnast. He is 73, and his sight is very poor, but he can still do a couple of turns on the horizontal bar. Alex was open to a spiritual conversation, and the following Saturday he came to our service and professed faith. Since then, he's come to every service. He prays, talks constantly about God, and discusses the Lord with his wife. He says, "It's so wonderful to have fellowship with God Almighty! It's like my eyes were opened. I'm patiently waiting for my wife's eyes to open as well."

At the end of 2022, we held holiday services for refugees, disabled people, and other underprivileged Odessans. 240 people received food packages, mothers received diapers, and some families received power banks and rechargeable flashlights. Though our services were held by the light of flashlights and without sound equipment, those who came listened attentively. They all prayed to repent, professing faith in Messiah Jesus! Praise the Almighty!

Please keep praying for peace to come to Ukraine! Pray that those who have heard the gospel would come to faith in Messiah Jesus, and that those who have already professed faith would grow in it!

Names are changed to protect privacy.

Sydney News

Tour Thanks

From Sydney Rebekah went to New Zealand and Bob went up the coast as each shared in churches each day during their two-weeks' speaking tour about the good news of Jesus. He died and rose and that drama is foretold in the "Christ in the Passover" presentation that each gave to very good receptions everywhere. Both Bob and Rebekah were delighted with the responses, and especially grateful for all the help and the hospitality shown them. It was Becks' first such tour, and it was Bob's 44th!

Wills and such

We'd much rather you kept on living and serving the Lord wherever you are, but we all have a use-by date, and recently two of our long-time supporters passed into Eternity. They left a portion of their estate to Jews for Jesus, and we have created a special fund from those bequests. Our Board of Directors is overseeing the maintenance of that fund and it's the first time we've had such. If you want to ensure our ongoing viability, please consider a milestone donation to us as well. See your solicitor to make that happen. We would be very grateful.

Capstone Outreach in Sydney

David Brickner mentioned in his article our 20 different global outreaches to select peoples and here in Sydney, we are focusing on one of those. The Jewish people of Sydney's east are in view, especially the spiritual but not religious! We will be using a gallery space on Oxford Street, Darlinghurst, and renting it for the month of May to invite folks to see the Art Exhibition entitled "Walls: Walls of Pain and Walls of Hope." In this age of hostility and chaos, we are often walled away, separated from one another, and walled away from God! We hope to use the art pieces to represent both that truth as well as the reality of walls protecting us, from as early as our mother's womb to the Walls of Jerusalem. Each visitor will receive a booklet with each image and a narrative to describe the Gospel in a beautiful way. We would love it if you can join us after we have set up; please be in prayer!

We will also be conducting special catered meals in the space, inviting select Jewish people to join us and to experience our community life in such an atmosphere. MUCH to pray about, amen?

The gallery space will also invite participants to interact, to share their thoughts via video or Legos, or via a self-expression canvas as well.

Maybe you have time in May to join us?



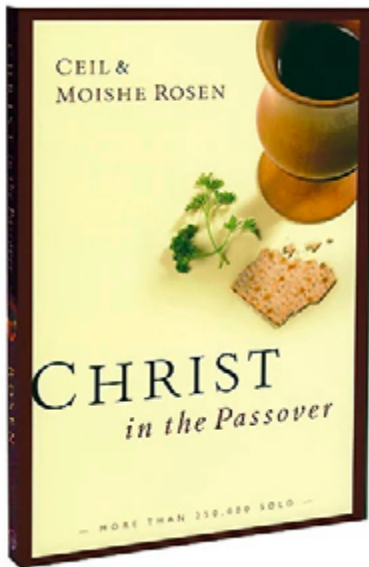
Messianic Resources

FEATURES RESOURCES FOR YOUR LEARNING, CELEBRATING AND GROWTH
GIFTS FOR YOUR HOLIDAY SHARING:

Christ in the Passover (Revised, updated)

Written by Moishe and Ceil Rosen.

Year in and year out this book continues to be one of the bestsellers at Jews for Jesus. Do you know why Jesus is the true Passover Lamb? Do you understand the nuances of the Last Supper? You'll be enriched in your understanding of God's Word and the observance of communion. Updated in 2006, contains a sample service for churches. **COST: \$25**



Puzzle

Children's Jerusalem puzzle, with camel and the Tower of David and a colorful view of Jerusalem. 24 pieces. Drawing by E. Barashkov. Good for ages 3-9. 9" x 13" (size of a cake pan). Palphot. **COST: \$16**



Engaging with Jewish people

This short book is designed to help both Christians and whole churches understand more about the variety of Jewish people we might work with, meet or know, and to reach out to them with the good news of the gospel. Written at a level that everyone can understand, the book emphasizes the importance of forming loving, honest and open relationships as part of the way we engage with our Jewish friends. **COST: \$22**



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