



Celebrate **MESSIAH**

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In Partnership with Chosen People Global Ministries

ВОКЗАЛ

WHEN I LOOKED INTO HER EYES

REPORT FROM FAR EAST RUSSIA • WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR THE MIDDLE EAST



ISRAEL & EGYPT:

Historic Enemies, Future Friends

Dear friend,

The Middle East continues to destabilize as the turmoil seems to spread to a new Arab country each day. This is unsettling for those of us who love Israel and the Jewish people, as we simply do not know the long-term results of these national upheavals and what the attitudes of the new leaders will be towards Israel. I have some concerns!

Egypt and Israel: An Uncomfortable History and a Difficult Present

In some ways, Israel and the Jewish people have a unique relationship with Egypt. Some Bible commentators have phrased it this way: “Israel was formed in the womb of Egypt.” There is a lot of truth to this—even though it would not have been the choice of the sons and daughters of Abraham to endure 400 years of slavery in preparation for their national birth!

The relationship between Israel and Egypt continues to be important, as Egypt has been a key player in all of the attempts to establish lasting peace agreements in the region—especially the Camp David accords. Yet today we are looking at a very different Egypt than the country of a few months ago. We do not know where Egypt will end up in its attitude towards Israel, and Egypt has the potential to be one of Israel’s most proactive

enemies. This remains to be seen and is cause for prayer.

I am not a political analyst and it is not my intention to analyze Egyptian politics in depth or to pass judgment on the ethics and impact of Mubarak’s fall from power. Rather, I view what has happened in Egypt to be representative of what we might see throughout the Arab world. I do not want to sound hopeless—because I do have a great hope that I want to share with you in just a moment—but in general, I do not see the pan-Arab revolution as especially beneficial for Israel or for the West.

Isaiah 19: The Role of Egypt in the Plan of God

In Isaiah chapter 19, the prophet describes God’s judgment upon Egypt, and later in the passage, Isaiah predicts the future restoration and glories of Egypt. The judgment Isaiah describes is severe and extensive, affecting almost every area of Egyptian life. In verse 1 of chapter 19, Isaiah predicts that the Egyptian gods would tremble in the presence of the one true God and the hearts of individual Egyptians would melt.

In verse 2, the prophet describes a civil war in which Egyptians will fight against their brethren, and in verse 3 he speaks of the day when Egyptians will turn to idols, ghosts, mediums and spiritists for guidance. Another harsh judgment is described in verse 4, where Isaiah says that the

Tzipi Livni, current Israeli Opposition Leader, visits a bombed out kindergarten classroom and meets with former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak.



Egyptians would be ruled by a cruel taskmaster some time in the future. Many Old Testament commentators have tried to figure out who this cruel leader might be.

In verses 5-8, the prophet describes natural disasters that would befall Egypt—including the drying up of the Nile River, which was viewed by the Egyptians as the very source of their life and sustenance. The economic destruction of Egypt is predicted in verses 9-10, and in verses 11-13 there is a specific judgment upon the rulers of Egypt, who would act unwisely and, according to the prophet, would be viewed as fools who led Egypt astray.

The complete dissolution of Egyptian society, politics and commerce is described in verses 14-16. Then, in verse 17, Isaiah prophesied that the land of Judah would be a “terror to Egypt”—a symbol of the complete destruction that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has planned for Egypt. Interestingly, in verse 18 the prophet tells us that five cities in Egypt will speak Hebrew and will swear allegiance to the God of Israel.

What follows is probably seldom preached in Christian circles. In some ways, chapter 19 of the Book of Isaiah is similar to the prophecies of Moses in Deuteronomy 28 and Leviticus 26, which describe both the future judgment of the Jewish people and their end-time return to the God of Israel. It appears that Isaiah predicts the same thing for the Egyptians.

According to verses 19 and following, the day will come when Egypt will build an altar to the God of Israel within the borders of the country, and this altar will become a signpost of God’s loving presence

within Egypt. The altar will have such impact that it will cause the Egyptians to cry out to the true God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, “*and the Egyptians will know the Lord in that day*” (Isaiah 19:21). Furthermore, the prophet predicts that the Egyptians will worship the Lord with sacrifices and offerings, as well as vows of obedience. In response, the Lord will heal the Egyptians in a dramatic and glorious way at that time.

I believe that it is essential for believers in Jesus and those who love the Word of God to live our lives today in light of God’s plan for tomorrow. Knowing that one day the Lord will bring the chaos of our present age—especially in the Middle East—to a glorious conclusion gives us hope, understanding, patience and the motivation to continue praying for the peace of Jerusalem. We know that when Jerusalem and the nation of Israel embrace Jesus (Zechariah 12:10, Romans 11:11-15, 25-29), these blessings promised by God will overflow to the entire Middle East and will keep flowing until the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters fill the sea!

Understanding the Times and Serving the Lord

I hope that you enjoy the rest of this newsletter, as we explore the escalating Middle East crisis in greater depth and hopefully give you

“fuel” for your prayer life. But please don’t forget what God has planned for the future! There’s no doubt that Egypt, Israel, Iran, and perhaps most of the Middle East will live in crisis and even experience a greater degree of judgment—but, as the Psalmist writes, “joy comes in the morning.”

Meanwhile, as followers of the soon-coming King, we have a mission to proclaim the Good News of salvation to the Jew first and also to the Gentile. I cannot tell you how excited I am about the work that our missionaries are doing all around the world. We are extending our messianic witness through the presence of Messianic Centres in Jewish communities like in Brooklyn as well as in Melbourne Australia. I ask you to please pray for the work in Australia led by Lawrence Hirsch. We continue to need your support and prayers as we share the Good News of Yeshua with our Jewish people.

As you pray for the peace of Jerusalem, please remember for the salvation of Jewish people everywhere.

Your brother in the Messiah,

Dr. Mitch Glaser
President, Chosen People Ministries
in partnership with Celebrate Messiah



THE WINDS OF CHANGE



TUNISIA

FORMER LEADER & YEARS IN POWER:

President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, 28 years

POPULATION:

10.5 million

STORY OF THE REVOLUTION:

The citizens of Tunisia were tired of unemployment, rising food prices and political corruption. They began doing something unheard of—talking about revolution—and slowly became more assertive about their desire for a better country. Easy access to social networking sites allowed the organization of demonstrations and publicity. With these tools, they toppled the government in less than four weeks—an unprecedented development in the Arab world.

REVOLUTION'S RESULT: On January 14, 2011, the President of Tunisia stepped down. This sparked additional revolts and changes throughout the Arab world. Protesters in Tunisia continued to demonstrate against having members of Ben Ali's regime in the new government.

COMMENTS ON THE CRISIS: The Tunisian hero of the revolution was Mohamed Bouazizi, a computer science graduate who could only find a job selling vegetables without a permit. He set himself on fire in protest to the government's ignoring of his complaints that he was beaten by the police.

VIEWS TOWARDS ISRAEL: Before the uprising there were few anti-Israel slogans. If extremists take over the government or the civilian marketplace, Tunisia could turn against Israel.

✧ **PRAYER POINTS:** Pray for Tunisia to provide greater opportunities for its citizens and its next generation. Pray that the Tunisian people will use their newly-won democracy and freedom of speech wisely.



EGYPT

FORMER LEADER & YEARS IN POWER:

Hosni Mubarak, 30 years

POPULATION:

83 million

STORY OF THE REVOLUTION:

The demand for change from Mubarak's repressive regime began on January 25 through social networking discussions and through protests in Tahrir Square. Although Mubarak tried to appease the public and keep control, the people persisted and continued to gather by the thousands in Tahrir Square. Within a few days, even the

Egyptian army sided with the people. Mubarak promised to step down in September and hold elections, but the people called for his immediate departure.

REVOLUTION'S RESULT: On February 11, after eighteen days of peaceful demonstrations and relatively minimal bloodshed, the people of Egypt saw the resignation of Mubarak. After the revolution's conclusion, the people even cleaned up their tent city in Tahrir Square with brooms and trash collection!

VIEWS TOWARDS ISRAEL: Israel and Egypt signed a peace treaty in 1979 during the Camp David Accords. This treaty featured the recognition of the State of Israel—Egypt was the first of the Arab states to recognize Israel's legitimacy. Worries that Egypt will become more aggressively Muslim and turn its back on the treaty are genuine, but unfulfilled at this point.

✧ **PRAYER POINTS:** Egypt holds a lot of influence in the Arab world. Pray against the influence of radical Muslim groups, and pray for Egypt's new leaders to have wisdom as the country begins to make the transition to democracy.



LIBYA

LEADER & YEARS IN POWER:

Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, 41 years

POPULATION:

6 million

STORY OF THE REVOLUTION:

At the time this issue of the newsletter went

to press, Gaddafi had appeared on state television vowing that he will never surrender despite NATO's continuing heavy bombing of Tripoli. He has vowed that he would be removed from power only by a bloody fight and his death saying that martyrdom would be a million times better than given in to pressure from the West. Back in March, a multi-national intervention by coalition forces (namely the United States, United Kingdom and France) of the U.N. Security Council imposed a no-fly zone over Libya. The United Nations sees this as a way to protect Libyan civilians, and to help the rebels oust the Dictator. Evidence has emerged that the Libyan leader ordered his soldiers to carry out mass rapes of women.

REVOLUTION'S RESULT: The final outcome is yet to be seen, although the protesters are prepared to die in the fight to secure their freedom. Gaddafi's long reign as dictator is under threat.

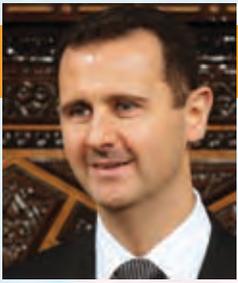
LIBYA

EGYPT

COMMENTS ON THE CRISIS: When Gaddafi came to power 41 years ago, Libya was transformed into a police state. The media was heavily restricted and political dissidents were often executed in public. Censorship, arbitrary jailing and torture all became commonplace during Gaddafi's rule. He even formed an international ring of assassins to kill critics abroad.

VIEWS TOWARDS ISRAEL: Gaddafi's Libya has hated Israel and the West, and can be quite militant. Gaddafi has shown no hesitance to attack his country's own citizens or to export terrorism. One extreme case was the Lockerbie bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Scotland in 1988. The bomber was from Libya.

✧ **PRAYER POINTS:** Pray that the citizens of Libya would remain safe and unharmed. Pray for Gaddafi's heart to change and for him to cease his aggression. Pray for wisdom for the U.N. in dealing with this situation.



SYRIA

LEADER & YEARS IN POWER: President Bashar al-Assad has been in power for 11 years, and his Ba'ath Party has ruled Syria for almost 50 years.

POPULATION: 22.5 million

STORY OF THE REVOLUTION: Protests broke out in March with demonstrators demanding major reforms in Syria. These protests targeted the Emergency Laws (in effect since 1963)—a feature of many Arab countries allowing people to be arrested without warrants and imprisoned without trial. In an attempt to stay in power and appease the activists, Bashar al-Assad promised to lift some of these laws. Just as in Egypt, these promises were immediately rejected by the people, who called for the complete removal of the Ba'ath party from the government. At the time this issue of the newsletter went to press it was reported that Syrian forces had killed at least 70 protesters in one of the bloodiest days since the start of an 11-week revolt against the authoritarian rule of president Bashar al-Assad.

COMMENTS ON THE CRISIS: Such demonstrations would have been unthinkable some months ago in Syria. The revolution began as a "silent protest" through social media networks and

was inspired by the major events that unfolded in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. The Syrian government is one of the most repressive in the Middle East and deadly violence has gripped cities across the country during protests against the ruling Ba'ath party.

REVOLUTION'S RESULT: As of the printing of this newsletter, the outcome has yet to be determined. The downfall of the Ba'ath party may be the most difficult to date.

VIEWS TOWARDS ISRAEL: President Bashar al-Assad is a close ally of Iran and its regional armed groups, Hezbollah and Hamas. Hezbollah seems to be stockpiling weapons in Syria.

✧ **PRAYER POINTS:** Each revolution represents so much possible change within the Middle East, and regime change in Syria could be very beneficial for Israel. Pray for a quick outcome, as a number of civilians have been killed by Syria's army and by snipers.

JORDAN, BAHRAIN, ALGERIA, YEMEN AND IRAN

These countries have not hit the news as fully as the others, but their people also are calling for freedom and regime change. One can only speculate what the outcomes might be. It would be incredible to see the downfall of Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad through national protests as seen in Egypt and Tunisia. Six months ago, who would have imagined revolution in the Middle East to this scale? Revolutions in these countries would continue the domino effect of change around Israel. Let's pray for peace and safety throughout this unstable region. 🙏



Contributions from Rachel G. in Israel





by Louise Hirsch

WHEN I LOOKED INTO HER EYES

When I looked into her eyes, she reminded me of my husband's *bubbe* (grandmother) whom I had grown to love at the age of 15. Even though there was a language barrier, our eyes met and it was an instant connection. Her name was Clara and she was in her 80's. Through an interpreter I learnt that she had come to the Jewish Autonomous Region with her parents as a little girl in 1938. This was the "homeland" that Stalin had promised the Jewish people so they could start a new life for themselves. Little did they realize that it was a mosquito invested swampland, Stalin's version of Zion, his solution to the "Jewish Problem." The Jewish Autonomous Region was established in April 1928, twenty years before the existence of the modern State of Israel.

Being as productive as the Jewish people are, they built a wonderful shtetl for themselves in the main town called Birobidzhan. Jewish life was thriving with Yiddish schools, newspapers and street names. Clara recalls the wonderful singing and dancing in the streets as a child. She is the first of four generations of her family living in Birobidzhan.

Surely the connection we felt to each other was Yeshua our Messiah

because this dear lady is one of the new believers in Messiah who have come to know Him through the work that Celebrate Messiah started in September 2004. When we first heard that there were Jewish people still living in the Far East of Russia we just had to go and see for ourselves. Birobidzhan is situated just North of the Chinese border, further East than Siberia and Mongolia with the river Bira running through the town.

Since the fall of communism in the early 1990s many Jewish people began to leave Birobidzhan and make "aliyah" and return to Israel. Yet there is still a large number of Jewish people living in Birobidzhan and other scattered towns and cities around the region like Khabarovsk and the port city of Vladivostok. It is to this remnant that we felt the call of God tug at our hearts.

Since pioneering this work in Birobidzhan many other Jewish people like Clara have come

to faith in Messiah and Celebrate Messiah has helped establish outreaches in eight towns and cities throughout the Far East and Siberia. In Birobidzhan itself, Valeria and Andre are our two outreach workers who work tirelessly serving the Jewish community in this small isolated city.

Early in July Rita Ivenskis, together with a small team from Melbourne, will return to the Far East of Russia to continue the work of Celebrate Messiah across the region visiting Vladivostok, Khabarovsk and Birobidzhan.

Travelling to the Far East of Russia from Australia is quite an arduous trip although closer than the Western side of Russia. You need to fly from Melbourne to Hong Kong then onto Korea. From Seoul you fly to either Khabarovsk or Vladivostok, and then by train to Birobidzhan. When one arrives at the station in Birobidzhan you are greeted by the name of the town in Russian and in Yiddish and many of the streets signs are similarly signposted. The town square has a massive menorah in the centre of a fountain and a statue of the character Tevya from Fiddler on the Roof fame. It is surely a surreal feeling and one wonders if you are in Russia or perhaps Israel.

Our workers in Birobidzhan, Valeria and Andre, typify the story of Gods saving power in Russia. Andre born into a Jewish family in Birobidzhan, his stepfather used to beat him up so at the age of 15 he chose a life on the streets. Soon he was involved in petty crime and then found himself spending the next 27 years of his life in a Soviet prison. It was in prison that



NEWS BRIEFS

Andre came to faith in Yeshua as the Messiah through reading a book called "Son of Man" by Alexandra Men. While reading the book he had a vision of the Lord who showed him his black heart. He started praying the Lord's prayer and the more he prayed the more he saw his heart being healed and change colour to a healthy red heart. He recalls he prayed that prayer about 40 times in anguish and tears before finally accepting forgiveness and surrendering his life to Yeshua.

Later he met Valeria who was working for an organisation helping Russian Jews return to Israel. They married and began working with us in reaching the Jews of Birobidzhan.

They have become known for their commitment to the Jews of Birobidzhan through their love and benevolent care.

On one of our mission trips we were in the town of Magadan in the far north of Far East Russia. This town is infamous for Stalin's gulags in the region. While we were there we contacted the local Jewish community and offered to bring them food and share a Shabbat dinner with them. We introduced ourselves to them and shared our faith in Messiah. Surprisingly they were very open. After our Shabbat dinner, one lady came up to talk to me and I shared with her the story of the Good Shepherd who had left the 99 sheep to find the one lost sheep of the house of Israel. She looked at me with tears flowing from her eyes and said, "I am that lost sheep and I want the Messiah in my heart." We held hands and we prayed together.

[Please pray for Rita, Sally and Anna as they travel to Far East Russia in July reaching out to the "forgotten Jews" of this region. Please pray about supporting this mission trip financially as well. You will be able to designate a donation to this endeavour on the response card in your newsletter. Thank you so much for your prayers and support.]

A mission team from Celebrate Messiah led by Rita Ivenskis will be travelling in July to Far East Russia to encourage the work. Valeria and Andre are pictured above



PASSOVER BANQUETS LEAD TO SALVATION

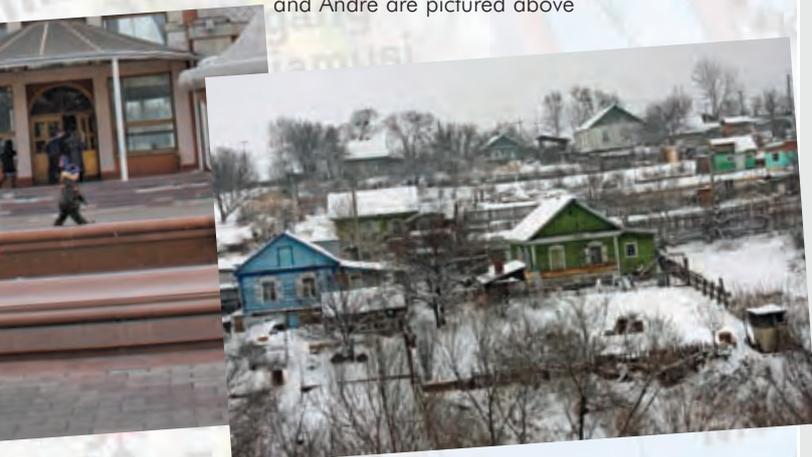
This year Celebrate Messiah held Passover Banquets in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria with great opportunities to share Messiah with Jews and Gentiles alike. In Melbourne a Jewish man came to a messianic Passover Seder for the first time. His wife had come to faith in Messiah last year and he was curious to see what it was all about. The following day Rita Ivenskis visited with him and he was touched by what he has experienced the night before and was ready to receive Yeshua as his Lord and Messiah. During this time another young Jewish man contacted Lawrence Hirsch to find out more about faith in Messiah. He too was able to attend a messianic Passover Banquet and the following week at Beit HaMashiach Messianic Congregation he prayed to receive Yeshua as Messiah.

NEW BENEVOLENCE MINISTRY IN MELBOURNE

Celebrate Messiah has recently established a new ministry in Melbourne reaching out to Holocaust survivors and others needy Jewish people. An enthusiastic group of volunteers have been working together on a monthly basis to pack food parcels to be delivered to Jewish homes. This year so far deliveries have been made coinciding with the festivals of Purim, Passover and Shavuot. They have been very well received with much appreciation. Volunteers have been able to simply demonstrate God's love and care for Jewish people often resulting in warm conversations and opportunities to pray for the recipients of the parcels. More volunteers are needed for both the packing and distributing of these parcels. Please call our office and speak to Barry or email barry@celebratemessiah.com.au if you are able to help.

GOSPEL GOES FORTH FROM ENDS OF THE EARTH

We are praising God for another wonder-filled season of outreach in New Zealand! We had an endless flow of Israeli travelers flowing through our holiday park (as many as 18 at a time!). The Lord gave us countless opportunities to share our faith and present Bibles and other Gospel literature in Hebrew. Our weekly BBQ outreaches were no less fruitful, with hundreds of international travelers coming to hear a Gospel presentation and receive Bibles and literature to ponder while trekking through the Creator's best stuff. As He promised, the Gospel is going forth from the ends of the earth!





"We would like to remember Celebrate Messiah in our will, but we are not sure how to go about it."

Giving to Jewish Ministry in Your Will

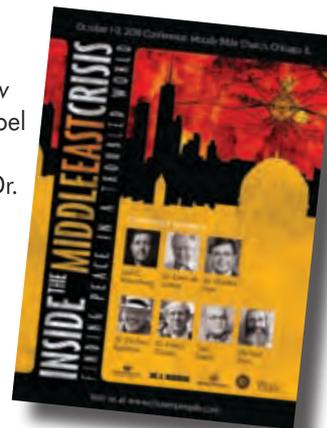
When you remember Celebrate Messiah in your Will, you become a partner in our life-changing work amongst God's Chosen People world-wide as we await the Messiah's return.

If you would like to speak to a Christian solicitor about including Celebrate Messiah in your Will, please call our office on 61 3 9563 5544 for more information.

ISRAEL & PROPHECY

Inside the Middle East Crisis (2-DVD Set)

At the historic Moody Church in downtown Chicago, Illinois, New York Times best-selling author, Joel C. Rosenberg, along with Dr. Erwin Lutzer, Dr. Charles Dyer, Dr. Michael Rydelnik, and Dr. Mitch Glaser, opened our eyes to the events that are unfolding in the Middle East from a biblical perspective and provided practical insight on how to love Israel and her neighbors, come what may.



Inside the Middle East Crisis Price: aus \$20.00

For phone orders call 61 3 9563 5544. Or for even more resources visit us online at www.celebratemessiah.com.au/store.

"GOD IS ON THE MOVE — PREPARING FOR THE RETURN OF THE KING"

Diarise Dates Now!

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In Australia call our office on +61 3 9563 5544
or in New Zealand call +03 431 2564 or
email celebratemessiahnz@gmail.com

Featuring Guest Speaker Noam Hendren together with Dr Ashley Crane (not in NZ) and Lawrence Hirsch.



Noam is a messianic Jewish believer in Yeshua who has been serving the Lord in Israel with his wife Joan since 1982. He is a dynamic communicator with his finger on the pulse of what God is doing in Israel today.



Simcha 2011



Event dates: SIMCHA OZ: 25-27 November 2011, Philip Island Adventure Resort • SIMCHA CHRISTCHURCH: Saturday, 19 November 2011, 10AM - 4:30PM • SIMCHA AUCKLAND: Sunday, 20 November 2011, 3-9PM



Celebrate MESSIAH *"Bringing the Message to the Original Messengers"*

Serving together with Chosen People Ministries in: Argentina, Australia, Canada, China, England, France, Germany, Israel, Mexico, New Zealand, Russia, Ukraine, United States. Cover image: Carly Hennigan.

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