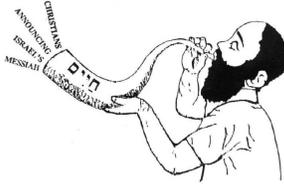


CHAIM TIMES

The Newsletter of CHAIM, "CHRISTIANS ANNOUNCING ISRAEL'S MESSIAH"

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Jews for...Nothing?

A number of years ago I attended a lecture by an "anti-missionary." These are Orthodox Jews (usually) whose main purpose is to oppose anyone who seeks to bring Jewish people to faith in Jesus as Messiah and Lord. This particular anti-missionary was selling a book called *Jews for Nothing*. I think I was the only one who bought the book. He said he really shouldn't sell it to me, but he ultimately wanted to make a sale. I think there was a "buy one get one half off" offer, so I believe I bought two and gave one to another friend in Jewish ministry. It is part of the job of missionaries to the Jewish people to know what the opposition is saying, and those in the opposition are well-trained. It is difficult for those not also well-trained to handle their arguments. I have a whole collection of this material.

The point of that particular book was that if a Jew follows another religion, he is a Jew for nothing, and the only alternative is to be a religious Jew. By the way, he lumped together Hare Krishnas, the Unification Church, Jews for Jesus and Messianic Jewish groups as all being cults deceiving young Jews. Part of his argument is that Christianity has historically been anti-Semitic, and he lists the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, the Pogroms in Russia, the complicity of "Christians" in European persecution of Jews culminating in the Holocaust, and the failures of American churches to deal with anti-Semitism. He also takes note of Marxism, secularism, materialism and intermarriage—all contributing to the decline of the Jewish community. I have long said that the preservation of the Jewish community is a central core value of the Jewish community.

Along the same lines, I recently received an article from the Religion News Service from an old and dear friend. It is called: *What is killing the American synagogue?* and written by Jeffrey Salkin, a Reform Rabbi (Reform being the very liberal branch of Judaism). He has seen synagogues that were thriving in the 60s and 70s wither down to one third their size, merge with other diminishing congregations, and then have their buildings demolished. He sees the problem as being more than demographics. It is a religious issue. Quoting a PEW study he says:

"Jews exhibit lower levels of religious commitment than the U.S. general public, among whom 56% say religion is very important in their lives and an additional 23% say it is somewhat important." The comparative figures for Jews are 26 percent (very important) and 29 percent (somewhat important).

"Belief in God is much more common among the general public than among Jews. Even among Jews by religion, belief in God is less common than among members of other major U.S. religious groups."

The rabbi's answer is to reinvent Judaism, just as Reform Judaism did before. The Reform movement realized Kosher laws were obsolete, so the first banquet of Reform rabbis in Cincinnati in 1883 notoriously served clams, crabs, shrimp, and frogs' legs! But in modernizing, they have also jettisoned basic Jewish ethics on sexuality, rejected the authority of the Bible, advocated liberal politics, and watered down Jewish tradition. It was a temporary fix. So there are two proposals on the table: Orthodox Jews say go back to Torah Judaism, while liberal Judaism says invent a new Judaism compatible with

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contemporary culture and ethics—or lack thereof! What both fail to see is Judaism has already been reinvented, or perhaps we should say, fulfilled and deepened. That is what Jesus did.

A truly Biblical perspective on the New Covenant faith should recognize our connection with our Jewish forefathers. We follow the faith of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Solomon and Isaiah. Jesus came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets—not to abolish them. He came to bring the faith of Israel to its fullest realization. We must never advocate that Jews who believe in Jesus abandon their holidays, their culture, and their people. (Though these must surely be brought under Biblical teaching, and anything not compatible with its fulfillment, such as the sacrificial system and Levitical laws of clean and unclean, must be recognized as obsolete, as Hebrews 8:13 makes crystal clear.)

The Messiah came to bring the faith of Israel to the whole world, to all nations. Too often the church has forgotten our connection with the Jewish people. We need to communicate that Jesus fulfilled the purpose of God to redeem people from the Fall and return them to their Creator. The New Covenant community has expanded Israel beyond ethnic Jews, but it has always included a remnant of Jews who believe. They aren't Jews for nothing. They are Jews for their own Messiah.

What the Jewish community really wants and really needs is the New Covenant Faith. They just don't know it yet! That is what we proclaim. Jesus has come to bring the truth of the God of Israel to all nations, "to the Jew first, and also to the gentile." (Romans 1:16) Will you pray and work with us for Jewish revival and a Jewish return to their own Messiah?

CHAIM MINISTRY UPDATES

Rev. Fred Klett, Director

Door-to-Door and "Parking Lot" Evangelism

CHAIM staffers Rick Anderson and Vitaly Kalinovsky (our Russian ministry specialist) have been going door-to-door in Philly's heavily-Jewish northeast. Recently they spoke to an older Russian-Jewish career woman (a total stranger) walking her dog in the parking lot where our PCA congregational plant Rock of Israel meets. Vitaly and Rick spoke to her, Vitaly in Russian. She wasn't interested when he invited her to attend services. But, when she mentioned her husband had died recently, Vitaly asked if he could pray for her. That completely changed her attitude, and, upon being offered a free Russian Bible, she took that and some other literature from him. Vitaly was surprised when this once stand-offish woman then gave him a kiss on the cheek! Rick quipped: "The best response I ever got from someone was just a 'thank you' and a kind word!" Pray for this woman we often see walking her dog.

Rick Anderson Works with the Philadelphia-South Jersey Area Evangelism Explosion Group

Rev. Rick has been very active with the Evangelism Explosion program and is on the Steering Committee. Later this month the Steering Committee meets again in Havertown, PA to discuss their Fall project, and the possibility of having an Evangelism Explosion Day for Rock of Israel PCA.

Rock of Israel Connected Outreach: Russian Festivals, Holidays, Concerts, and Parties

Our first Rock of Israel PCA summer barbeque was held at the Klett's home. Several of us had a chance to talk with Miriam, an American Jewish woman whose parents were Holocaust survivors. I think there was a bit of a breakthrough. Pray for Miriam.

We have plans to do outreach at several Russian-speaking immigrant community festivals. We have traditionally participated in one in the Fall, called Matryoskka, but this year one has been added for June 23. Pray for these events. (You may receive this after the one in June is past, but pray for the people who will have received Bibles and other gospel literature.)

Our ROI Passover Seder went well this year. I was delighted that my long-time Jewish friend, Ron, came out and was very appreciative. He heard the Good News clearly presented and read Isaiah 53 and admitted it does sound like Jesus. Pray for Ron. He is such a great guy and a good friend. I would love to see him come to faith in Messiah.

We are thinking of creative ways to reach out. I am in touch with a very talented harpist, and we have discussed the possibility of her putting on a concert for us that we can invite the community out to. Please pray this materializes.

Philadelphia Independence Week Outreach

The CHAIM Ministry is planning an Independence Week outreach at various places in Philadelphia's "Center City" and Historic District. This year, we've already received more than a few requests FROM volunteers (we usually have to ASK them first!) to join our core team. We'll need at least four teams of evangelists and evangelist-trainees. We'll be using a new street pamphlet that brings the good news through the theme of justice, as social justice is a popular topic now. Pray for the teams going out June 29-July 4 and for full funding to come in for the project. We estimate costs of about \$1,000. A special thanks goes to Valley PCA in California that has provided a gift of almost half of what is needed!

Rev. Kalinovsky Really Needs Support!

If you receive this newsletter but do not already support CHAIM, would you consider supporting Rev. Vitaly Kalinovsky on a regular basis? He is the CHAIM Russian Ministry specialist. Vitaly is also co-church planter of Rock of Israel PCA, but this little immigrant church cannot provide his salary. Vitaly comes from the former Soviet Union, is ordained in the PCA, and does door-to-door and street evangelism regularly. He is the father of a young family of four and is an immigrant himself, so he does not have the usual connections to raise support that American Christians have. This is a cutting-edge work in an unreached community and a great opportunity to support a ministry that really makes a difference!

LCJE in August

Fred Klett and Vitaly Kalinovsky will attend the International Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism in Toronto this August. This is a strategic assembly of those in Jewish ministry world-wide. It will cost us about \$1,200, but is well worth it. If you would like to help with this we would appreciate it!

THANK YOU!

Thank you all for your prayers and support. Keep praying as we reach out through congregational planting, door-to-door and street work, friendship evangelism, parties and events. May the Lord bless you as you serve Him! If we can be of help or encouragement to you, please let us know!