

JEW[★]FOR JESUSTM

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For the Christian who wants to learn about Jews and Evangelism

A few months ago, our Jews for Jesus U.S. board of directors visited the city of Prague in the Czech Republic. From there we travelled to nearby Tereisenstadt, a concentration camp that was the major deportation site for Hitler's most infamous camps—Auschwitz, Buchenwald and many others.

Tereisenstadt holds the only remaining crematoria, a vestige of the Nazis attempt to carry out their awful “final solution.” Because of their monstrosity painstaking record keeping, we know who was cremated on what day and where their ashes were buried. Jewish families today can visit with certainty the spot where their loved ones' remains were interred. This was especially meaningful for us because one of our European Board members had told us that his aunt, his mother's

exactly 50 years later to the day. To me this was no mere coincidence but a powerful symbol of the irony of Jewish history; death and yet life, slaughter and yet survival.

Several of us stood by the aunt's grave and recited together the ancient Jewish prayer known as kaddish. “Yitgadal v'yitkadash sh'mei raba...Magnified and Sanctified be God's great name throughout the world...”

To sanctify God's name or perform

that once bustling Jewish community and the place of buried ashes we'd seen just the day before. First we visited the Ashkenazi synagogue, an old and simple yet well maintained Jewish house of worship. Nearby

were plaques with the names of all the Jews of Prague who had been deported to concentration camps, most likely through Tereisenstadt.

We felt compelled in that place at that moment to stand together and sing the Shema: “Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One.” Recited every day in the synagogue, Jews throughout the ages have also recited this ancient Jewish declaration of faith from Deuteronomy 6:4 is upon approaching their own death. These words sanctify God's name and they have been on the lips of Jewish martyrs in every generation.

After that we visited the Spanish Synagogue, a beautifully ornate synagogue with high ceilings that capture a powerful sense of awe and holiness. During World War 2, Adolph Hitler chose to keep that synagogue “untouched” for the purpose of having a place to store confiscated artifacts and



David Brickner
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A People of Destiny

sister, was buried there.

When he learned I would be visiting Tereisenstadt my friend gave me the location of his aunt's grave stone. Then he told me a remarkable story. His aunt was murdered in Tereisenstadt on May 15, 1945. His mother, her sister, had died this year, also on May 15;

“kiddush ha Shem,” is considered to be the highest honor for a religious Jew. To set God apart from all others, to declare to the world that He is holy—this is the very reason God called the Jewish people into existence. Our continued existence despite constant efforts throughout history to wipe us out bears witness to a holy God who keeps His promises. We are a people of destiny created by a holy God to bear witness to both the tragedy and the triumph of the Lord Himself and of His special people.

The following day we visited the Jewish quarter of old Prague. Very few Jews are left there, and we had a deep sense of the connection between



furniture once belonging to the Jews of Prague. He intended to call it "Museum of an Extinct Race."

While the Spanish Synagogue is used for religious purposes on occasion, weekly synagogue services do not take place there. Instead, it has been repurposed for tours and evening music concerts. We went back that evening for an amazing concert of classical music as well as some contemporary Czech melodies. Among the most moving for me to hear was HaTikvah (The Hope), the Israeli national anthem.

How ironic that the lyrics to this music so well known to Jews world-wide, were written in 1886 by Naphtali Herz Imber, a Jewish poet originally from Bohemia (Czech) and that the melody was originally a Bohemian folk song. There in that synagogue, as the music soared to the heavens, the sense of destiny was inescapable. Hitler had lost. Satan was

thwarted. We are not extinct. Out of the ashes of the Holocaust came a hope and a future for the Jewish people and Hitler's "dream" of a world with no Jews was forever buried.

I look at history and I read my Bible—and I see God's hand of providence in both the survival of the Jewish people and the reality that, once again, the nation of Israel is back in the land God promised to Abraham and his descendants. These bear witness not only to the existence of a sovereign God but also to His faithfulness to keep all of His promises.

This month in Israel and all around the world, Jewish people will observe the "High Holiday" Feasts of the Lord; the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement. I believe such observances continue to point out that the God of the Bible exists. Christians can take great encouragement to know that "Am Yisrael Chai," the people of Israel live. Whether in faith or in doubt and disobedience, the Jewish people are indeed a people of destiny and evidence of God's promise keeping power.

In the same way, all of us who follow Jesus, whether Jew or Gentile are also a people of destiny. The apostle Peter tells us: "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1

"Hitler had lost. Satan was thwarted. We are not extinct. Out of the ashes of the Holocaust came a hope and a future for the Jewish people and Hitler's "dream" of a world with no Jews was forever buried"

Peter 2:9).

Jewish people prove we are a people of destiny by our very existence. Christ followers prove it by proclaiming His praises. Our lives and our words ought to sanctify His great name throughout all the earth.

The name of Jesus on the lips of those martyred in Libya or North Korea was a powerful testimony to the truth of our Lord. Think of the Christ-like forgiveness that family members of the victims of the Charleston massacre extended for the love of Jesus; this too testifies to His great name throughout the earth.

How will each one of us fulfill our destiny? By declaring His praise among the peoples. That is what we've been doing in every Jews for Jesus outreach around the world, and I invite you to share with us in this destiny for His saints.

Let me give you a special way to do that this month for the Jewish people. Go to a well stocked greeting card store and buy a card for the Jewish New Year (Rosh ha Shannah) to send to someone you know who is Jewish. Write in it something like this: "Because I love God, I am thankful to Him for the Jewish people. Your life continually reminds me of His faithfulness to keep His promises. Happy New Year! Your Friend ____." Then watch and see what God will do with your declaration of faith.

David Brickner is also an author, public speaker and avid hiker. For more about David, his writings, speaking schedule and possible availability to speak at your church, see <http://www.jewsforjesus.org/david-brickner>



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JEWS FOR JESUS™



Partners in the gospel

by Julia Pascoe

National Director of the UK Branch of JFJ,
living in London

“I hope you’re not going to be upset with me but I’ve become a born again Christian and I’ve asked Jesus to forgive all my sins.”

Those were the surprising words of 88-year-old Leah* to her 70-year-old daughter, Lilly, just a few months ago.

Raised in an Orthodox Jewish orphanage, Leah’s strict upbringing included keeping kosher and attending synagogue regularly. Once she was on her own, like many Jewish people, she remained strong in her Jewish identity, but departed from “the rules and regulations.”

I first met Leah four years ago at our Rosh Hashanah service. As far as we could tell, Leah enjoyed the traditional blowing of the shofar, the familiar Jewish liturgy and the apples and honey along with various sweet cakes celebrating the New Year after the service.

What she thought about the message—which pointed to Yeshua (Jesus) as our Messiah—or the personal testimony of the Jewish believer that was part of the service, I don’t know. She was not ready to speak to me about spiritual matters . . . not yet. She had come with her new Christian friend Carol.

How these two came to be friends is a story in itself. Carol had been door knocking in Leah’s area and Leah, expecting someone else, let her in. Then, completely surprised to see Carol, she asked, “How did you get in? I don’t open the door to people I don’t know.”

Carol replied “I’m a Christian and I have been praying for people who live in this neighborhood. The Bible says ‘See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name’” (Rev 3:8). This made quite an impression on Leah!

Though Leah did not have much to say about our Rosh Hashanah service, Carol continued to invite her to various church services and special events over the years.

Last year, Carol once again brought Leah to our Rosh Hashanah services. And once again, Leah was not ready to discuss spiritual matters with me. But clearly, Carol was continuing her faithful witness.

And then it happened. This year, Carol and Leah came to our Passover event—and Leah even brought her daughter. She was clearly more open to the gospel than previously, and we talked about getting together.

Leah has very severe cellulitis in both legs and is quite unwell, so it was a couple of months before we actually had our visit. Carol was with us as we read Psalm 23 and John 10. Leah understood that king David called the Lord his shepherd. And she was delighted to see Jesus claiming to be the good shepherd in John’s Gospel! She finally understood that He is God.


Leah told me that over the years she’d come to love Jesus and even to believe in His death and resurrection for a while. I explained that believing who Jesus is is not the same as receiving Him. Leah was perfectly alert and focused as she responded, “You mean I need to have him live inside me.” She’d had all of the usual fears about repercussions with her Jewish family. But praise the Lord, He overcame those fears on our very first visit! Leah agreed to let Carol lead her in a prayer of repentance.

I’ve been in close contact with Leah ever since. Despite her concerns, she was quick to tell her daughter Lilly about her faith. She also told Lilly (and me) that every time she says Jesus’ name she tingles! And when Leah said she wanted to come to the grand opening of the Jews for Jesus shop in Hendon, Lilly said, “Oh Mum, I want to come too!” (Sadly, Leah was not well enough to attend.)

Would you pray for Leah to grow in faith, and that her Good Shepherd would heal her? Please also pray for her 70-year-old daughter Lilly to turn to Jesus; I’m hoping to meet with her as well.

Thank you for your prayers and support that enable Jews For Jesus to meet and minister to people like Leah. And praise God for Carol, whose faithful love, witness, and willingness to bring her friend here and there bore fruit for the kingdom.

*not their real names





Quick Questions

One of our readers asked:

I have had a slight confusion which was brought to the front burner when I read one of your articles about Tisha B'Av. I always thought there were three temples, although reference is made in your article to two. I have counted them as 1) Solomon's, 2) Ezra/ Nehemiah's, 3) Herod's. I would appreciate it if you could clarify this for me.

Thank you, and God bless.

Paula

Hi Paula,

Thanks for your email. Ezra/Nehemiah's Temple and Herod's Temple were both the Second Temple—the difference is that Herod built the Temple up much more magnificently than it was originally in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. But it would still be the same Temple, namely, the Second.

Hope that clarifies things,

Rich Robinson

scholar in residence, SF



PRAYER PROMPTERS

Please pray for:

- ✧ Salvation for Howard in New Jersey, Yakov in Israel, and Dmitry in Essen
- ✧ Spiritual growth for Eva in Budapest and Lisa in London
- ✧ Eugene, Gregory, Alex, and the hundreds of Jewish enquirers in Sydney to whom we continue to bear Gospel witness
- ✧ Wisdom as our missionaries reach out to as many diverse Jewish people as possible, including LGBT, with the gospel
- ✧ God's favor as we invest in the next generation of Jewish believers in Jesus, particularly through University outreaches,
- ✧ Our Moscow campaign in the next few weeks and the people with whom we shared the Good News during our South Shore Israel campaign in early September

one more story from Israel

Igal Vender reports

"Recently we received a contact via Facebook. Aaron is 28 years old and lives in Ashkelon. He is from a Karaite traditional family, where his father believes only in the Tanakh and does not accept the Oral Torah (rabbinical laws).

"I asked Aaron what he believes. He replied that he does not believe the same way as his father and that he always knew it was not for him. He also does not understand why religious people are hypocritical and so hard, 'missing love.'

Aaron told me that he was reading the New Testament, and I asked him what he

thought about Yeshua. He replied that Yeshua seems to be a good person, speaks about love and says many of the right things.

"I asked Aaron what he expects to find from faith, and he answered that he would like to be happy, joyful, to have an inner peace and most importantly to live the right way. I shared with him my testimony: what Yeshua did for me, how He set me free from drugs and how He gave me His peace. It has been ten years now since I became a believer; how very happy I am that I chose this way!

"We spoke for about five hours over a cou-

ple of days. I gave Aaron Scriptures about Yeshua being the way, the truth and the life. I told him that the moment we know the truth, it will set us free. I told him that if he wants to see that kind of change in his life, he needs to invite Yeshua into his heart. Aaron said that he truly desires this. We prayed together over the phone, and he received Yeshua as his Savior. Praise the Lord! Next week, I'm traveling to Ashkelon to meet him in person.

Please pray that Yeshua will strengthen Aaron's new faith, that he will be able to walk the way and become His true disciple."



Judaism teaches . . . or does it?

A small crowd had gathered around two people: a Jew for Jesus and a Jew who didn't believe in Jesus. The second man decided to turn off the conversation like a faucet. He said, "Judaism teaches that the Messiah will not be a person; it will be a time of worldwide peace."

One bystander interrupted, "You must be a Reform Jew. Real Judaism teaches that the Messiah will be a man who comes on the clouds of heaven!" Another said, "Ideas of the Messiah had their origins in desperate times when we needed hope for deliverance."

The first bystander replied incredulously, "Do you mean to say that the Messiah is no more than a notion born out of desperation? Is that what your rabbi teaches?"

The man responded with great bearing and dignity: "I am the rabbi."

Some might imagine that the phrase "Judaism teaches" always introduces a universally shared consensus opinion. But in fact, the body of rabbinic literature contains all kinds of teachings, many of which contradict one another—all presented as Judaism.

Some acknowledge the dissonance among Jewish authorities but make it appear as if there is unanimity on at least one important matter: the messiahship of Jesus. It is as though the very existence of Judaism depends on conformity in this matter. In order to be authentically Jewish, it is said, one must not embrace Jesus as Messiah and Lord as Christians do.

We hear that "Judaism teaches" it is not necessary to have a Messiah die for the sins of the people and rise again to return and finish the work

of redemption. The rabbis say that the idea of a substitutionary atonement—one person dying for the sins of many—is not what Judaism teaches. The notion that the Messiah should come back from the dead is regarded as preposterous.

But there are many reasons to seriously question a supposedly monolithic picture of what "Judaism teaches."

Here is just one example. One could hardly find a sect of Judaism more committed to what it understands to be traditional Judaism than the Brooklyn-based Lubavitch sect. Lubavitchers are so strict that they will not accept kashrut (kosher) standards set by other rabbis but insist on glatt kosher (an extra measure of kosher observance). They are peerless in their level of commitment to and observance of what they understand to be Jewish law.

The followers of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Menachem Schneerson, (who died on June 12, 1994, at age ninety-two), were the ones who chanted, "We want Moshiach now." That chorus began as early as 1981. At first they only whispered that their rabbi was Moshiach. Then they openly declared it. Finally, they published huge newspaper ads and rented billboards to tell everyone that their rabbi was the promised Messiah who would bring worldwide redemption. When he suffered a stroke that rendered him unable to speak, some of his followers applied to him the suffering servant text of Isaiah 53.

We are generally told "Judaism teaches" that the suffering servant passage applies to Israel, and not to the Messiah. Yet any number of rab-

bis besides the Lubavitch Hasidim, particularly the earlier sages, have said it does apply to the Messiah.

Decades after Menachem Schneerson's death, a significant number of the Lubavitch sect still believe he is going to be resurrected and complete the work of redemption. Is belief in a Messiah who dies or a Messiah who rises from the dead contrary to what "Judaism teaches"? Not really. It is only contrary to what many Jewish scholars teach today.

For the person who puts up roadblocks to the gospel by telling you "Judaism teaches," it's not too difficult to discuss a variety of things that "Judaism teaches" that your friend neither believes nor adheres to. Apart from views about Jesus, many if not most Jewish individuals do not conform to what might be described as what "Judaism teaches."

It is not so much the teachings of Judaism as the real possibility of being rejected by the Jewish community that keeps many from considering the gospel. Does that help you know how to pray for your Jewish friends? Does it help you know how to speak the truth in love?

This article was adapted from a much more detailed teaching by Moishe Rosen, originally published in ISSUES, which is written for Jewish seekers. You can see the article at <http://bit.ly/JudaismTeaches1>. We cannot afford to mail ISSUES to our Christian friends, but all past editions are available for you to peruse online at <http://www.jewsforjesus.org/publications/issues>. You might find them helpful in addressing specific issues with your Jewish friends. If you'd like us to offer your Jewish friend a free subscription, go to: <http://www.jewsforjesus.org/refer-a-friend>



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by Sharon Wilbur

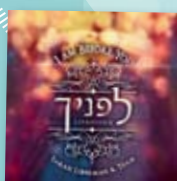
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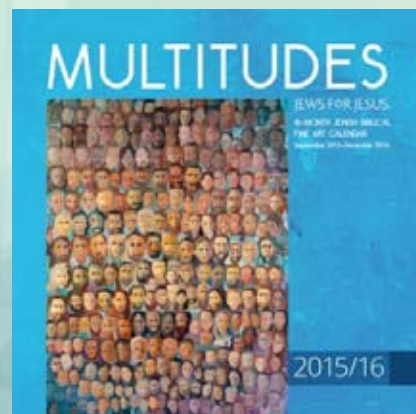
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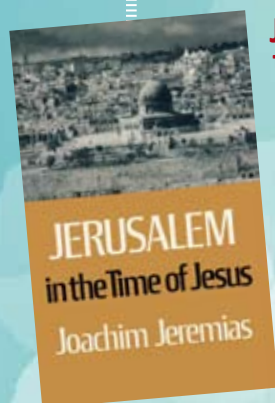


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Cost: \$32 (NZ add \$5)



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