

## Focus of the January Newsletter ... A Change of Plans

There has been a change in plans from what was highlighted as “Coming in the Next Issue” (October 2006). Since the last issue, Tzedakah Ministries has encountered and confronted “Christians” who speak and act in a way that can at best be described as hostile towards Israel and the Jewish people.

Surprised by this last paragraph? You should not be in light of the slow and subtle but very real anti-Jewish movement which is growing and prefers to attack with euphemisms and innuendos.

Just a few weeks ago, I was informed by a “fine church lady” that the Jewish people had their chance and did not really deserve a second opportunity to hear about Jesus. Two *Baptist* pastors also indicated to me that Jewish evangelism was just not a part of their mission outreach.

Now on the surface their comments might appear to be two separate issues, but I personally believe they are two sides of the same coin. On one side, you have a woman who at least is honest in her opinions regarding the Jewish people. On the other side are men who apparently have no true care or concern for the eternal condition of God’s Chosen People. And, unfortunately, while I wish that these could be the worst examples of anti-Jewish bias by “Christians,” I have more to share with you.

Recently, a world-renowned missiologist advocated in the *International Journal of Frontier*

*Missions* that the solution to the crisis in the Middle East is for all Israelis to relocate, perhaps to Australia. When challenged in a later issue about his statement, he resorted to an anti-Semitic stereotype by writing about the Jewish people, “...despite **their** [emphasis mine] controlling the media...”

In addition, a Jewish believer by the name of Jonathan\* (*name has been changed*) emailed me about multiple examples of blatant “Christian” anti-Semitism on the web (this subject will be examined further in the next issue). After discussing his concerns with me via email, Jonathan granted permission to print these thoughts, “It is important for Christians to know that the greatest hindrance to Jewish people being open to Jesus is that they feel vulnerable and threatened by the growing anti-Semitism around the world. Jewish people who do not know the true source behind anti-Semitism need to be reassured that **true** [emphasis mine] Christians love and care about them.”

While one should not be surprised by what is written on the anti-Semitic websites and blogs, one’s heart must break to realize that missiologists,

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pastors, and church members are all falling victim to this anti-Jewish bias which implies that the Jewish people should not be of evangelistic concern for the church. This bias is tragic, especially considering the fact that it is contrary to Scripture.

God's purpose for His people is written clearly written across the pages of the Old Testament. Both Jesus and Paul preached a Jewish evangelism mandate (Matt. 10; 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Rom. 1:16; 9:1-5; 10:1; 11:11) and Paul's first stop to a new city began whenever possible in the synagogue.

Every soul living in the world today (be it Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist, Atheist, or otherwise) needs to know the saving message of Messiah Jesus. For this truly to be accomplished, true Christians must fight the sin of anti-Jewish bias. Then and only then will the Gospel message reach all people but beginning first with the Jewish people (Rom. 1:16).

*Amy Downey*

## Jewish Evangelism in 2007 – What's Next?

What's next? Tougher question than you might expect. What can Tzedakah Ministries do to better equip the Lord's church to reach His Chosen People with the Gospel? How can this ministry be a more effective servant to churches so that they can grow in their knowledge of the importance of Jewish

evangelism and the role the church must play in making this dream, this Biblical mandate, a reality?

One of the newest tools which Tzedakah Ministries prays will assist you in being a more effective witness is a 3-5 minute DVD evangelism tract entitled, *Mystery Solved*. This DVD, which utilizes Old Testament prophecies as a means of proving Jesus' identity, will be for those who are nervous about witnessing or for those who have already planted seeds and are praying that this might be the final salvation step. In other words, *Mystery Solved* will be for anyone who longs to see the Jewish people receive Jesus as Savior and Lord. *Mystery Solved* will be filmed this spring and prayerfully will be available for mission outreach by the fall.

Of course, Tzedakah Ministries will always continue to be a ministry in which you can email and/or call with your questions, concerns, and prayer needs. Recently, Alice\* (*name has been changed*) emailed the ministry about an Israeli salesman she had met who was at least open to the Gospel. Alice felt that perhaps Roger\* was more interested in a sale but that did not stop her from asking Tzedakah Ministries about how to share the Gospel with him.

The most crucial task of Tzedakah Ministries is to go to local churches, Sunday School classes, etc. to equip you personally on both the Jewish roots of the Christian faith and how to use this information as a means of sharing the Gospel with the Jewish people God places in your path. Take advantage of this and all the ministry outreaches mentioned by contacting the ministry at 817-921-8703 or by email at [info@tzedakahministries.org](mailto:info@tzedakahministries.org).

## **The Significance of Purim to the History of the Jewish People**

The story of Esther, Mordecai and Purim is one of the most intriguing stories of the Bible. For example, one does not find the word “God” mentioned at all in the Book of Esther. This is also the story of a Jewish woman who hides her identity in order to win a “beauty contest” in which she becomes the wife of a pagan king, Ahasuerus.

This is also the story of disobedience in a rather interesting way. Esther and Mordecai were among those people who did not return in 539 BC after the declaration of Cyrus (see Ezra 1:1-4). They were actually among those who seemingly preferred to stay in the lands of captivity than to return home to the Promised Land.

However, despite and maybe even because of their disobedience, God foresaw a crucial role for Mordecai and Esther to play in Jewish history. Most of us know the story of Esther, Haman, Mordecai, and Ahasuerus. The king grew “tired” of his wife Vashti’s disobedience to his commands and held a beauty contest to select a new wife. Mordecai instructed Esther to enter this contest but to keep her Jewish identity a secret. Esther won the contest and became Queen of the Persian Empire.

Consequently, Mordecai uncovered and helped to spoil a plot to assassinate the king. However, there was still one player who was a virulent enemy of the Jewish people – Haman. The prime minister’s hatred of the Jewish people grew when Mordecai refused to bow before him. Haman sought and found a way to destroy all the Jewish

people. And the only person standing in the way of this destruction was Esther and Mordecai (Esther 4).

The end of the story is well-known. Haman was killed. The Jewish people were once again saved from destruction. In other words, God utilized their choice to stay in Persia as means of saving the entire Jewish race. Therefore, one primary lesson to be learned from the story is that God’s omniscience is greater than man’s disobedient choices.

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## **Ministry Calendar**

**January 14, 2007 – “Mothers of the Messiah” (Ladies Sunday School), Heritage Baptist Church, Waxahachie, Texas**

**February 11, 2007 – “Jesus in the Passover,” (p.m. service), Freedom Baptist Fellowship, Weatherford, Texas**

**March 24, 2007 – “Mothers of the Messiah and Jewish Evangelism,” Ladies Mission Conf., Bethel Baptist Church, Springtown, Texas**

**April 1, 2007 – “Jesus in the Passover,” (a.m. worship service), Westside Missionary Baptist Church, Nacogdoches, Texas**

**April 4, 2007 – “Jesus in the Passover Banquet,” Calvary Baptist Church, Huntsville, Texas**

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## **COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE ...**

✧**The Iranian Crisis – What Are Our Options?**

✧**Anti-Semitism on the World Wide Web ...**

**and in the Church**

✧**PASSOVER – The Missing Connection**