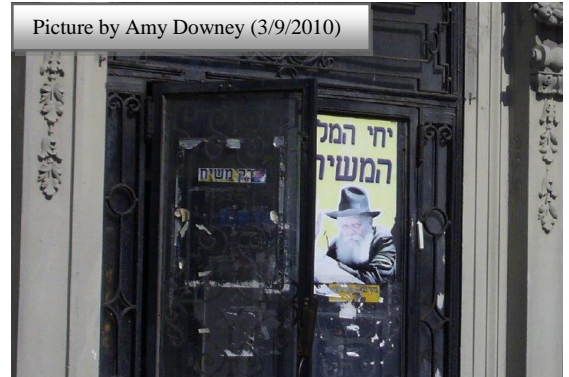


Surreal Adventure and What the Lubavitch Can Teach Us...

Did you know that in addition to doing the work of Jewish evangelism through Tzedakah Ministries, I also teach at Arlington Baptist College? And so during Spring Break 2010, I decided to take an adventure back to my town – aka New York City! It was part homesickness, part adventure, and part pilgrimage to the home of the Lubavitch Hasidic Jewish community and to the ohel (grave) of Rebbe Meanchem Schneerson.



Picture by Amy Downey (3/9/2010)

The trek to Crown Heights and Schneerson's ohel can only be described in one word ... **SURREAL**. Surreal because of the picture (see above) taken while I was in Crown Heights (Brooklyn) in which I noticed this picture with the words written above him (translated as some of the Hebrew letters are obscured) – **“Long Live the King Messiah.”** Surreal because this alleged “Messiah” Menachem Schneerson died in June 1994. Surreal because so many of the Lubavitch still believe that this man dead 16 long years might still be the Messiah for whom they have been waiting.

However, the surreal nature of this pilgrimage was just beginning because the following day I took one long subway ride and a longer bus ride to a section of Queens, New York, that borders very close to Long Island. I walked down a very pretty and peaceful street filled with lawns and homes only to arrive at another house with a different purpose than living.



Picture by Amy Downey (3/10/2010)

For this is a house (pictured on the left) leading to the gravestone of Menachem Schneerson. Once you enter these doors (as I did) you discover a world devoted to memorializing and perhaps even worshipping a man gone from this world for almost sixteen years. Space will not allow for a complete breakdown of the steps I had to take in order to be “ready” to visit the Rebbe. However,

you should know that it was a long process filled with symbolism that many might expect to find in a Roman Catholic Church.

(article continues on page two)



Surreal Adventure/Lubavitch... (article continued from page one)

Out of respects for my surroundings, I somewhat participated in these steps; however, I attempted to include a prayer to the true Messiah Jesus as I undertook each ritual. And when I walked away from this gravesite and this house, I was filled with a terrible ache in my soul for these lost souls who are praying to a man who must be at this moment begging his followers to believe that Jesus is the **TRUE MESSIAH**.

However, we as Christians and as people dedicated to sharing the real Gospel message can learn something from these Lubavitch followers of a long-dead rabbi. They are dedicated to the mission of spreading Schneerson's message to every corner of the world. Though they only number approximately 200,000 in the entire world, 4,000 of them have gone to every corner of the world, even if only a handful of Jewish people live in the area, in an attempt to bring Jewish people back to Judaism. Think about this fact for just a second. Two percent (2%) of their people are in such far-flung places as Northern Ireland to Viet Nam because they are spreading a message that is nothing but a lie. Christians have the truth of Jesus but many will not cross the street to share this message with a descendant of Jesus the Messiah. Wow! My mind is staggered just thinking about this tragic reality.

So as was begun in the January newsletter, I am imploring you and your church to join alongside Tzedakah Ministries through the **Romans 1:16 Response Team**. We have the true Messiah ... should we not be as busy as the Lubavitch in sharing the name of Jesus of Nazareth?

Think about it! Shalom!



Acts 20:24,



Amy Downey

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE ...

**ISAIAH 49:5-6: WHAT THE OLD TESTAMENT
TEACHES ABOUT MISSIONS TODAY...**

BOOK REVIEW ... MY JESUS YEAR (COHEN)

Isaiah 49:5-6: What the Old Testament Teaches about Missions Today...

Have you ever read a passage of Scripture a dozen times and then on the 13th time you discover something wonderful? I did the other day at a friend's Bible study for the group leader was examining the prophetic significance of Isaiah 49. Steve did a great job; however, I was struck by two verses in the middle of this Servant Song prophecy – verses 5 and 6. Can we take a look at them and see if perhaps the missions structure of Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; and Romans 1:16 was also found in the lines of the Isaiah scroll written around 600 years before Jesus?

And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb to be his servant, TO BRING JACOB AGAIN TO HIM, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength. And he said, IT IS A LIGHT THING THAT THOU SHOULDEST BE MY SERVANT TO RAISE UP THE TRIBES OF JACOB, AND TO RESTORE THE PRESERVED OF ISRAEL: I WILL ALSO GIVE THEE FOR A LIGHT TO THE GENTILES, THAT THOU MAYEST BE MY SALVATION UNTO THE END OF THE EARTH.

(Isaiah 49:5-6 – emphases highlighted by Tzedakah Ministries)

Pay close attention to the words of the Servant Singer (i.e., Jesus) and what He says His mission will accomplish. The Servant's first task is to bring Jacob (the Jewish people) again back to God. The second task is for Jacob to be a light to the Gentiles so that the THIRD TASK will be accomplished – "salvation unto the end of the earth."

So just what does the Isaiah 49 prophecy have to do with missions today? The same thing that was mandated by Paul, under the inspiration of the Lord God, when he wrote – "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16b). The same thing when Matthew remembers Jesus giving the disciples the Great Commission in 28:18-20. And the same thing that Luke wrote when he chronicled the earliest days of Church history in Acts 1:8. If we want to reach the world with the salvation message of Messiah Jesus, we must **first** begin with His Chosen Ones.

I can speak from personal experience that in the 10+ years since I surrendered to Jewish evangelism and missions that my heart's burden for all the lost of the world has increased tenfold.

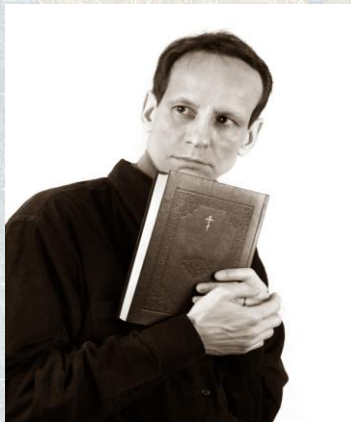
So do we really want to reach the world with the Gospel? If so, let's remember the promise of Song of Isaiah 49.

Book Review ... *My Jesus Year* (Benjamin Cohen)

Early in March, Tzedakah Ministries was given the privilege of presenting a paper on the primacy of Romans 1:16 as both a theological truth as well as a mission's template at the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism North America meeting in Atlanta. It was a whirlwind day because I flew to Atlanta and back to Dallas-Fort Worth all in the same day. It was a very long day!

As per my usual tendency, I had a couple of books in my backpack to read on the plane but for some reason neither of them really appealed to me. So before boarding, I wandered through a book store and discovered *My Jesus Year* by Benjamin Cohen. I began reading the book on the flight to Atlanta and finished this 250-page biography somewhere over Louisiana around 11:00 p.m. that same night. It was fascinating, it was heartbreaking. It is a book that all Christians and pastors should read if for no other reason than to remind us that we often fail at the most important task given to us ... ***Evangelism!***

This true story begins as Benjamin Cohen, an Orthodox Jewish man and the son of a rabbi, begins to truly come to term with his hidden angst and jealousy ... he wants to know what it is like to be a Christian. Cohen then proceeds to to evangelical and mainstream what it is about Christianity that he inundated with the sounds of a T.D. pretends to say confession and receive He attends a Christian Rock Festival Christian Wrestling Forum in the



Cohen ultimately arrives at the was born as an Orthodox Jewish man include, interestingly enough, that Christianity works for those who are not Jewish but as a "good Jew" he must remain loyal to the heritage of his fathers and his faith.

This story's ending itself is tragic enough; however, I was stunned as I finished the story on the return flight to Texas as the ultimate tragedy found within the pages. For you see in Cohen's odyssey through the Bible Belt and through the church doors of Christianity, he was never once given a Gospel message presentation. From the Christian Rock Festival to the "Christian wrestlers", Cohen was in the midst of the Jesus message but never once given the opportunity to receive Jesus for himself. Yet another reason why the **Romans 1:16 Response Team** is so necessary in 2010.

And before I forget the greatest irony/tragedy of them all, Benjamin Cohen is from Atlanta, Georgia.