

ROCK OF ISRAEL

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Update

Fall 2005

Inside:
Is It Worth It?
Jewish Christmas?
Summer Outreach 2005



*The Rock of Israel is
dedicated to reaching
Jewish people with the
good news that their
Messiah has come and
will soon return!*

Reflections From Summer Evangelism Trips



More:
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Is It Worth It?



By Robert Specter

Some people believe that handing out pieces of paper on the street is not a very good way to reach people for the Lord. Some think that you have to make friends before you

can witness to someone. Sure, you should witness to your friends, but I believe that we must go out into the highways and byways and compel people with the message of the Kingdom. We must preach the Word (2Tim. 4:2). We must give our testimony (Rev. 12:11). God has given us His Spirit who gives us the Power to be His witnesses, first to Jerusalem, then to Judea and Samaria and to the whole world. (Acts 1:8)

I have to admit, we don't get thousands of salvations like are reported in Africa, but God is definitely working in the hearts of Jewish people today. For example, please read the following excerpts from correspondence we had with a young Jewish lady we met in Portland (You may remember that in our last newsletter about Portland, OR, I said that Portland was one of the most difficult cities we have dealt with.)

Dear Rock of Israel,

I got this book of hope and a little flyer about "Things to Ponder" from one of your employees at the Max (train)... I thought the flyer was pretty funny. I just finished reading the book, and I think it's probably right. So, what do I do now? I am Jewish but was never really very religious. I was thinking that it might be ok for me to become Christian like you. How do I do that? Do I have to convert or have a ceremony or something?

I just keep thinking about it. I never did before I talked to that young woman. I wouldn't have ever thought about it until then. Now I can't seem to get it off my mind. Sincerely, A [abbreviated for privacy]

Dear A,

Thank you for your email. More importantly than that, thank you for reading "Book of Hope." I assume you read the whole book, especially pages 205-210. Since Jesus (Yeshua in Hebrew) is the Messiah, following Him is the most Jewish thing you could do. Here are some simple instructions:

1) Pray (from your heart) and ask Him (Yeshua) to forgive your sins. In prayer, talk to Him and tell Him that you want to turn from your old life and now want to fol-

low him and ask Him to show you how to live your life in a way that would honor Him.

2) Pray and read the Bible everyday. Reread the Book of Hope, or if you have a Bible, begin to read some in both the Tenach (Christians call it the Old Testament) and some in the New Testament. Maybe look up the prophecies, like Isaiah chapter 53, that are listed in the Book of Hope.

3) Attend a Congregation. Begin to worship God with other Believers.

If you would like, I could have someone call you. ... our office number is 800-722-7625 and our office manager is Debbie.

Shalom, Robert Specter, President, Rock of Israel Ministries

The next day, "A." called our office and Monica led her in a prayer to receive Jesus as her Lord and Messiah. Praise God!

Dear Monica, ["A." mistook Monica for Casey, the volunteer that spoke to her on the train.]

Thank you for your email and for praying with me. ...your praying with me meant so much to me. I really do feel like something incredible has taken place in my life.

...my friend and I went out for a Bible. We looked for one with all of the parts in it. I think we found a good one, and it's a lot easier to read than I expected.

You are a sweet lady. I am so glad to have talked to you. Sincerely, A.

Shalom Doug,

It's very kind of you to write to encourage me. Thank you. I am trying prayer and find it comforting. It's different than I expected. When I met Monica [Casey] at the Max here, and she prayed for my headache, it seemed very personal to her and Jesus. And, her prayer worked! That was why I allowed her to continue to talk to me, in the first place. I felt very nice after praying with her [Monica] at your office last week. I will look into the type of church you suggested. And, the article was nice.

Thank you for sending it. You are nice people there. It is a good decision to believe in Jesus. I feel good about it.

Sincerely, A. ❖



Robert Specter moved to tears at Holocaust memorial in San Francisco

Jewish Christmas?



By *Doug Carmel*

I know it's hard to believe, but in a few short weeks, the Christmas season will be here! One of the many things I do here at Rock of Israel is answer theological questions that people will send in to us from time to time. Occasionally, I will get a question that comments on the pagan origins of Christmas and asks whether it is wrong or right to celebrate it? So with Christmas quickly approaching, I thought I would give you all a public response to this typical question. (And my answer may surprise you.)

While my family and I don't personally put up a Christmas 'tree' for Jewish cultural reasons, (however, we do put up tons of lights around the house since Jesus is the light of the world) I do believe Christmas itself is a very good thing.

Of course, I don't believe Jesus was born on exactly December 25th. Yes, I am well aware of all the pagan connections associated with that day. But isn't 'redemption' the whole message of the Bible? How that God can take something which Satan meant for evil and turn it around for His glory. Isn't that the theme over and over again in scripture?

Look at how God redeemed Haman's evil date for the killing of the Jewish people into an annual joyous celebration called Purim. (Esther 9:24-25) Also the story of Joseph in Genesis 45 is a great showing of how God turns man's evil plans into something good for the world. In the New Testament, look at Paul's response to men preaching the gospel with bad motives. (Philippians 1:15-18) Paul rejoices that at least the gospel is being preached!

If Paul rejoices that the gospel is preached (even though these men had bad motives) then isn't the same thing true with Christmas? Sure, most of the world has bad motives in celebrating Christmas, (gifts, money, etc.) but no one can deny that the real reason for Christmas is Jesus' birth. Even the most ardent atheist knows that.

Think about a place like Saudi Arabia. A country with a strong satanic hold. Would I want Christmas exported to them? A big resounding yes! Why? Because I know that some people would hear the gospel. Even amidst all of the commercialism, some would certainly ask questions about the real meaning of Christmas and eventually get saved. But with Christmas banned in that country, it will never happen. Is that what God wants for

the world? Banning Jesus' name? I don't think so. Again – look at Philippians 1:15-18 to see God's heart on the name of Jesus being told to the lost.

The key verse in all this is Romans 14:5. If you don't want to have anything to do with pagan Christmas – then certainly feel free to 'opt out'. It's your right. But please don't put a damper on those of us who want to use this time of year to lift up the name of the One who came to die for us.

Let the Lord's High Priestly prayer in John 17:23 be our guide in all non-essentials of doctrine. He prayed that we would be 'one' so that the world might hear the gospel. I love that advice. ❖



On several occasions Doug Carmel has had his sons help him hand out tracts in downtown Chicago. I too, have had my children help me do street evangelism. Just a short time ago, my son Daniel (who took the photos), and my daughter Sarah went with me to Oktoberfest in Cincinnati. In the two days (a couple hours each day), we handed out 2,000 tracts! There were thousands of people there to get food and beer. So I thought, "why not hand out something that would lead people to the Bread of Life and the new wine?". Of course there were many who refused, and some who threw it on the ground, but many read the tracts and others put them away in their pockets or bags to read later.

My one regret was that I had no other volunteers to help me reach the masses of people.



Robert and Sarah

The Rock Of Israel Summer



By Robert Specter

Our summer was filled with 6 outreaches (Cincinnati, Portland, Chicago, Washington DC, Denver, and Toronto, Canada). The teams averaged about 7 (volunteers and staff). We handed out over 185,000 gospel tracts this year! Altogether, I believe we had 32 people pray to receive Jesus as Lord!

CHICAGO

In Chicago our team consisted of Joanna and Sylvia Jakubisin, Luann Kehoe, Karen Tilburg, Janna Specter, Doug Carmel and myself. On one day, Pastor Hugh Smith, his wife Nancy and their two daughters Emily and Julie, and a church member came downtown to help us out.

Doug led the team all over downtown, in the city that he is acutely acquainted with. We went to the “Taste of Chicago”, the Fourth of July fireworks on the lake, and business and shopping areas. (Besides having a lot of experience doing evangelism in Chicago, he used to work as a manager of a store downtown before he came on staff with Rock of Israel Ministries). He sent in this glimpse of our week in Chicago:

“In Chicago we had a good team of seven that loved the Lord, worked hard, and laughed a lot during breaks. We passed out just over 40,000 gospel tracts, and while we didn’t see any immediate salvations on the street, I know that the Lord used our efforts to reach many with the message of the Messiah. One of the more ‘fun’ moments on the team was meeting a Jewish deli-

catessen owner who was a bit overwhelmed when he saw so many “Jesus –the Rock of Israel” t-shirts walking into his small deli for dinner! He was a funny man and had many on our team laughing while he made our dinners. Most of the team ordered his special overstuffed “corned beef on rye.” What a mountain of a sandwich it was! (Sorry, but we here at Rock of Israel are partial to big deli sandwiches. If you haven’t had one in a Jewish deli, you don’t know what you’re missing!) Of course, while he fed us, we tried to feed him! We tried to share the gospel with him and even left him with a ‘Book of Hope’. Let’s hope that somehow the light of Yeshua shone through us all that evening.” (Also, one of the calls the office received was from a Jewish man named Nathan in Chicago who wanted the free tape mentioned on the tracts. When he was asked if he believed that Jesus was the Messiah he answered “I don’t know.”)



Chicago Team



Washington DC Team

Summer Outreach 2005



Toronto Team

WASHINGTON, DC

In Washington DC we had a team of 10. The volunteers were: Dennis Brooks, Bill & Katherine Sieckman, Sheila Wright, Pat Sekanic, Rosalind Greiner. Scott Roberts and I led the team, and two came for part of the week: Clara Begay, a supporter of ROI and resident of Washington D.C.; and Steve Kaplan, Missionary in Atlanta. (We also had some help from our friends at Jews for Jesus.)

We handed out over 44,000 gospel tracts. We gave them to people going to work, people touring Washington DC, politicians going to the Capital, homeless people, people going to the National's baseball games, and people at Artscape (a festival in Baltimore). Besides the hundreds of witness conversations, we had 13 Salvations!

DENVER

In Denver we had a booth at General Council and did Street Evangelism. The team was small, only Hugh and Nancy Smith, Doug Carmel, and Scott Roberts. I manned the booth most of the week while they hit the streets with the gospel. Denver, of all places, was the only city where the rain stopped or shortened the outreach time. The four of them were still able to hand out 4,000 tracts and had some good contacts including a Jewish man whom Doug is continuing to witness to through email.

TORONTO

In Toronto we had our first full week of evangelism in a foreign country. Toronto is a very cosmopolitan city evidenced by the vast number of different eateries. We ate at a different ethnic restaurant every evening. We had nine on our team, which included one Canadian, Mark Caputo. He was a great help since he knew the downtown area and Toronto's public transportation. The others on the team were: AJ Stone; Janna Specter, my sister; Wayne Gilbert; Alice Hatcher; Dennis Brooks; Casey Grist, who is on staff at "Light of Messiah" in Atlanta; Elizabeth Melick; and myself.

40,000 tracts were handed out, which was impressive since the business people were so reluctant to take the tracts. We had better response at tourist and shopping areas. We also handed out tracts to the many people going to the Canadian Exposition. There were nine people pray for salvation! It was interesting that we had so many conversations with Muslims. I think that they were confused that we had "Jesus the Rock of Israel" on our tee-shirts. They would stop to talk to us. We have some of their addresses that can be followed up. Even Muslim taxi drivers would pull over, honk their horns, and ask for a tract!

Jason, one Jewish young man I spoke with was also confused by our shirts. Of course he thought that you can't be Jewish and believe in Jesus. His mother is Jewish and he said his father was Marxist. We are sending him a book of Jewish testimonies. Please keep him and all the others we ministered to in prayer. By the way, in Toronto we had an encouraging word given to one of our volunteers, he said that 15 years ago someone was handing out tracts and he picked one up off the ground. He read it and got saved. Just think about it, even discarded tracts can have a purpose - an eternal purpose. ❖

A Fight or Flight, What Is Right? The Gaza Dilemma



By *Scott Roberts*

Over the last few months, I have been frequently asked my opinion concerning Israel's decision to pull out of the West Bank. Should the Jews living in the Gaza resist to the point of fighting with their Jewish brothers or should they leave peacefully as most of them did? Should the Israeli government have conceded to the demands of their proven enemy or should they have defied them and further continued settling the recaptured "God given land", the West Bank?

These questions and more are uncertain in their present context. Only time will reveal the wisdom or lack thereof in Israel's decision to evacuate the Gaza. One thing is certain regarding Israel's present dilemma: she is attempting to be at peace with her neighbors and the world. God's promise of blessing is to the peacemakers not the trouble makers.

Fight or flight is the normal human reaction to a dangerous situation. When we find ourselves in danger, within seconds we decide to stay and fight or run as fast as our feet will carry us from the danger. Israel's decision to leave the Gaza is just that, a human effort to escape a dangerous situation. Even though Israel is reacting normally to a dangerous situation, we must remember that Psalm 121:4 says, "Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." Israel is on course with God's plan for Israel's redemption. Romans 11:25 & 26 tells us that when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, all of Israel will be saved.

We must never allow the smaller picture (the present day evacuation of Gaza) to obscure the larger picture (the Redemption of the Jewish people) and the second coming of Messiah Jesus. The larger picture is what the believer is to focus on. Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3, "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape."

We are to remember that in the dark hours of life, the seeds of redemption begin to sprout. As Jesus hung on a cross, Matthew tells us that from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness all over the land. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out and yielded; He gave up his spirit and died. YES! IN THE

MIDST OF DARKNESS THE SEED OF REDEMPTION BEGAN TO SPROUT, AND THREE DAYS LATER THE RESURRECTED MESSIAH CONQUERED DEATH.

Yes, we live in troubled times: wars and rumors of wars; unusual weather patterns reflecting in record rain fall; frequent large hurricanes and abnormally destructive tornados rip through our land; tsunamis have devastated more than one nation's coastline with a single blow; and horrible earthquakes in numerous places continue to terrorize humanity. Yes, all these things shall take place, and then the end shall come. Luke 21:11 says, "And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven." Yes, troubled times are on us but these are a part of God's bigger picture.

Will you help the Rock of Israel fulfill the will of God and bring redemption's story to the Jewish people? This year we will be in more cities than ever before. Jewish and Gentile people alike are getting saved through our ministry. Thousands of people are hearing the gospel of Jesus. But we need your help more than ever before. We must work while it is still light. Please consider helping us in three ways: one, join us next year at one of our evangelism outreaches; two, pray for us and Israel with regularity, we are under spiritual attack throughout the year; three, be a regular contributor to the Rock of Israel Ministries. It is simple math: the more support we have, the more people we will be able to reach with the truth of the Gospel. Keep your eye on the big picture: the coming of Jesus. ❖



Scott Roberts taught children at a Vacation Bible School in California



BAR MITZVAH BOYS

Mazel Tov to Samuel and David Carmel

Doug's two sons were bar mitzvahed June 18, 2005

He says: "They did very good and I am very proud of them."

EMAILS

Besides calls and emails for our free 15 minute tape "Something to think about" (which is offered on the back of our gospel tracts), here are some of the emails we have received from Christians who got our tracts on the street. Not only are we reaching the lost, we are also motivating and equipping Christians in the cities we go to:

* Received your literature on "Reality TV" this morning. I'm interested in obtaining the CD as mentioned above. How do I go about obtaining same? Dr. J. M.

* I thank God for people like the two ladies passing out the flyers downtown Chicago. They have answered the call to reaching people for Christ with these great flyers. I wondered if it would be ok for me to copy these flyers and pass them out to my community in the south suburbs? I want to answer the call too. God Bless, Be encouraged, J. A.

* Hi, I'm writing to let you know I am praying for Rock of Israel ministries this week. You are on our prayer list through our church in Ocean City, MD. Please let us know if there are any specific needs so that we could join you in prayer. Love, M. G. [We had many, many people praying for our teams. We know this is why we had such successful outreaches]

* Hello, I received a flyer in downtown Chicago about a week ago and was surprised and delighted to read it was about the good news. Although I ride the train from the north suburbs and have overheard some negative remarks about your flyers, I wish to encourage you not to give up and 'be of good cheer... for [Christ has] overcome the world' -L.



* Hello Robert, Coming in to work today perhaps it was you who handed me the "Windows XP a Fluke?" flyer. When I read it I was overjoyed at the message. I want to learn more about your organization so I will be up on your [web] site a lot. I wanted to commend you on your mission and ministry... L.S.

* Hi, my name is K. D. I am twenty years old. ...I am working in the District for the summer, and was given one of your "Windows XP A Fluke?" pamphlets as I exited the Metro rail station this morning. ...I have many Jewish friends, but my friend Steve is unique. ...he has read portions of the New Testament. I have never met a Jewish person who was so interested in Christianity who did not believe Jesus was the Messiah. He and I have discussed faith issues many times over, and he has assured me time and time again that, though he knows that I want him to become a Christian, he will never do so. ...One point he brought up was something I had never heard before. One of the main reasons he said he would never believe in Jesus is that his Messiah, the Jewish messiah, is only supposed to come once. Jesus has come, and will come again, so that poses a problem for him. I don't know enough about messianic prophesy and lore to really respond well to him on that point. Any guidance you have to offer, on this point, other points, or just in general, would be most appreciated.

... I think this ministry you guys have going with these pamphlets is great. The Windows XP framing of the creation discussion is very creative, and does a great job of getting people's attention. Keep it up! I look forward to hearing from you. Take care, and God bless! K. D. ❖

What's New

Discounted Books, CD's & Tapes For Holiday Gifts (Christmas or Hanukkah) Free Shipping included.

Books by Ruth Specter Lascelle;

“Hanukkah & Christmas ” A small booklet

“We Have A Great High Priest”

Commentary on the book of Hebrews &

“A Dwelling Place for God”

A study of the Tabernacle in the wilderness.

3 books for \$25 (normally \$32)

Other books;

“Jacob’s Gift” A childrens story by Max Lucado

“Abraham & David, The Places They Knew”

2 Hardback books for only \$15 (One of each book or
two of one)

Call for prices of Shofars, Prayer Shawls, Mezuzahs, or
other gift items.

For credit card orders please call our office (800-722-
ROCK) or email sales@rockofisrael.org.

Two of the listed CASSETTES for \$15 or two CD's
for \$20

“The Bride”

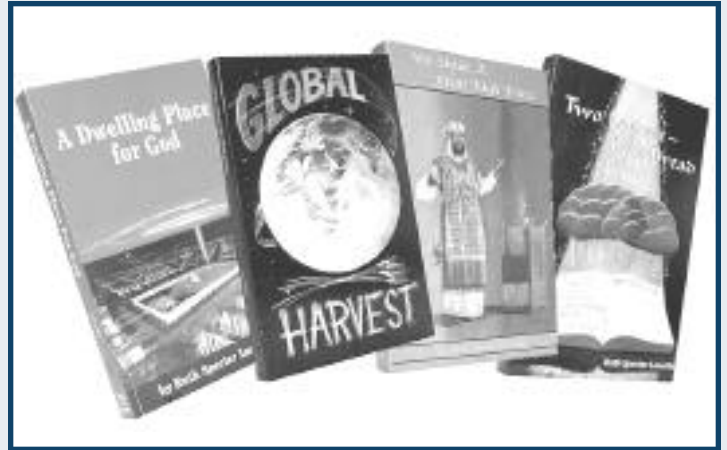
Original songs by Michael LaPoff

“Bury Your Heart In Wounded Me”

by Sally Klein O’Connor (cassette only)

“Come Meet the Author of Life”

by Sally Klein O’Connor



Look on our Web Site for
many other selections.

Evangelism Opportunities:

Missions Trip: Manhattan, New York

Looking for an opportunity to reach thousands of people with God's love? Do you want to get some hands on experience in sharing your faith so that it will be easier to do at home? We have just the ticket. A short term missions trip to New York City during New Years. Doug Carmel will be leading a team of volunteers to reach the hundreds of thousands of people who flood Times Square for the New Year's celebrations. If you or someone you know can be in New York Dec 28-Jan 2, 2006 (beginning with and ending with travel dates, so the outreach is for 4 full days,) we invite you to call our office for a one page application. The cost (which covers materials, the dorm rooms and your meals) is \$250 plus your transportation to the city. Also, if you are not able to join us, please consider sponsorship for someone.

