

Proclaiming
Jesus



In a
Distinctly
Jewish Way

Rock of Israel Ministries



P0 Box 18038 Fairfield OH 45018
Call us: 513-874-2566

Since 1971



Celebrating
50+
over 50 years



Ministry Pres. Robert and Carrie Specter

January 2024: Here's an update of the ministry in the past month.

We LOVE encouraging notes! Rockofisraelministries@gmail.com

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To visit our online store: <http://www.rockofisraelstore.org/>

Post to social media with links here:



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***** Special note to Gmail users *****

1) Please check your Spam or Promotions folder each month
Sadly, sometimes email servers send our newsletter there.

2) Gmail sometimes shortens our newsletter!
If so, then click this at the bottom.

[Message clipped] [View entire message](#)



What we were able to accomplish in 2023.

Can you believe 2024 is here? Where does the time go? There has been so much happening in the world recently, but that is not the focus of this newsletter. This month we wanted to look back at the past year and see what God has done through Rock of Israel.

Many of you have just recently started getting our newsletter, so to “introduce” ourselves to you – Rock of Israel is a small, “mom and pop” sized ministry that has been around since 1971. Robert Specter is the ministry president and there are three staff members that work

under his leadership: Doug, Greg, and Pat. We are all Jewish believers in Jesus except Pat, who is not Jewish but is married to a Jewish believer. You can read all our [background stories here](#).



ROI staff (L to R): Doug, Robert, Pat, Greg

Our Board has eight members, of whom all but three are also Jewish believers in Jesus.

1) We all desire to share the salvation message of the Messiah, Yeshua (Jesus in Hebrew) with our Jewish people. 2) We also desire to see the church come to recognize Yeshua for who He is – namely the Messiah of Israel and the fulfillment of God’s promises to His Jewish people.

These two goals are the focus of all our work endeavors. We try to accomplish these goals via several paths.

- 1) State & County Fair Booth Outreaches
- 2) Online outreach (Ads)
- 3) Church services and Conventions

Let’s look at the past year and how each one of these paths reached people for the Lord.

State / County Fair Booth Outreaches

About sixteen years ago, we had a desire to reach Jewish people in Florida with the Messiah. But how to do that in person? Going door to door was out of the question. So instead we tried renting a booth at two fairs in Florida. Did it work? Yes!

Well, here we are 16 years later and we have spread out to nine State and County Fairs a year... all over the country. In 2023, we spoke to just under 1,200 Jewish people at our booths! Most took the literature that we offered them.



Christians love our booth! And Jewish people are often amazed to see a “Jewish booth” at a secular event. They stare at our products and will often times happily buy things. We almost always give them, in their bag or hand, some sort of literature explaining who we are. This past year we were able to be at places like the State Fair of Texas (one of the largest in the country), The Florida State Fair, The San Diego County Fair, The Ohio State Fair, The Canadian National Fair, and more.

Here are just a sample of the hundreds of conversations that we had at our booths this past year:





** A Jewish woman who works at a Reform Synagogue came to the booth and looked at all our mezuzah. She bought like five of them (the inexpensive ones) as she said the Synagogue likes to put one in each welcome packet for a new Jewish family that attends. I told her that we were Messianic Jews and she said she knew that. I put our bookmark in the bag with her items.

** A Sephardic Jew came by our booth. He said he had been looking on the internet about Jesus. He seemed generally open. He took a bookmark and my card.

** An Israeli woman asked me if I spoke Hebrew. I said, "Bar Mitzvah Hebrew." I asked her if she believed in God. She said, "No, I am an atheist." I gently asked how something could come from nothing. The woman's face became agitated, and she said, "I don't want to debate." I told her that I just asked her a question. She walked away, but I wish we could have had a conversation.

** A Jewish woman had a Christian boyfriend. Susan (Greg's wife) said, "I have so much to tell you." The Jewish woman said, "And I want to hear all you have to say." She had a long conversation for about 20 minutes, covering many topics. However, she seemed to be intently listening.

There were dozens more stores like this from 2023. We posted many of them on our website. [Click here to read more of them.](#)



** VIDEO ADS

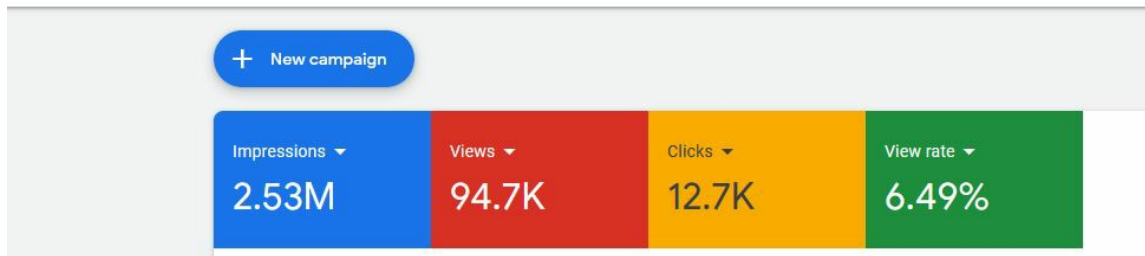
If you want to get a message out in the world, Google / YouTube is a big way to do it. The interesting thing about Google is that you can tell them exactly where you want your ads to show up – and they will do that. For instance, if we say show this ad only in Israel, they will do that. And that's what we do - only for our video ads.



The above 6-second video ad ran thousands of times in Israel last year.

As you can see from the screenshot below, (taken directly from our Google Ads account) in 2023, our combined video ads (including the one above) have been shown on Israeli YouTube almost 95,000 times with over 12,700 people clicking through to see our website.

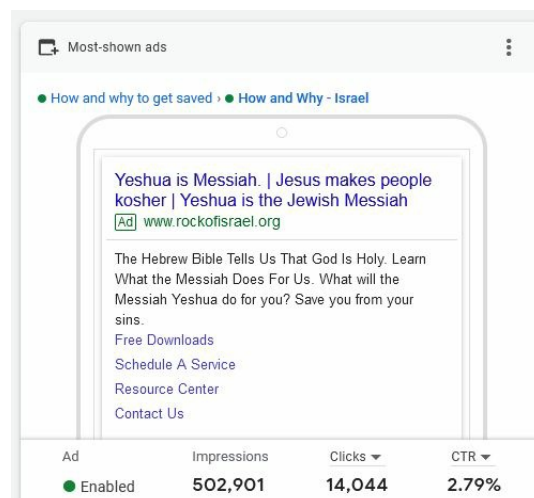
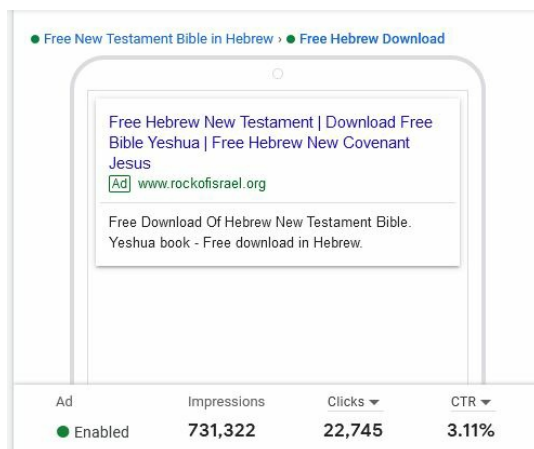
The longer ads were "started" 2.5 million times in Israel, but most people clicked "skip" after 6 seconds. That's ok, as even 6 seconds worth of input is worth it, in our view. To see two more of the ads [click here](#). (They are the first two that load on top.) Again, these ran only in Israel.



**** TEXT ADS**

As the name implies, these are small text ads on web pages that people can ignore or click through for more information. We placed these ads in Israel and also places like Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Egypt and more. The one offering a free New Testament in Hebrew (see below) appeared only in Israel.

As you can see from the screenshot below, our text ads appeared 1.48 Million times with 45,600 people clicking through to read more.



Just two of our text ads that ran in Israel and the Middle East.

We got responses. Some were good – others were filled with rage.

**** CHURCH SERVICES**

Maybe you met us this year at your church or congregation? This is

something that we love to do. We share with congregations all over the country about Jesus in the Hebrew Bible, the Passover Seder, and more. In 2023, our small staff shared in 135 services and spoke to thousands of people combined. Below is just one of the comments received after our services:

“Thank you for coming to Cross Point yesterday. Your presentation was fascinating! I learned so many new things. I brought my sister-in-law, who is not a believer, and she thought you were an excellent speaker and found the information to be very interesting...”



We also do other “smaller” level outreaches like daily correspondence, online Q&A, YouTube comments, and similar with Jewish people (and others). Here are a few of the remarks directed towards us from 2023:

** “You cannot be a Jew and venerate a human as a g-d. You cannot believe in Jesus and be a Jew. That’s not how it works. Every group has rules. This is ours”

** You have it all wrong! The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, of Brooklyn, is the Messiah. When the Lubavitcher Rebbe returns on clouds of glory, you will see for certain that he is the Messiah

“First of all, you have no right to determine who the Jewish messiah is. When he comes, we will all know. Secondly, in no religion did Jesus fulfill the messianic prophecies.”

**** AND A FEW OF THE MANY EMAILS THAT WE RECEIVED:**

Name: Mohammed

Message: I want to learn Christianity and I want to change my name, but my family does not allow and the country where I am is not allowed there is racism, even my name I do not want this name.

Name:

Message: You are like the nazis. the only difference is that they wanted to murder us while you want to murder our souls. Wiser people than you tried for thousands of years and they did not succeed (sic). You won't either, you bunch of heirs of the Spanish Inquisition

There was SO MUCH MORE that happened in 2023. Remember this is all just the tip of the iceberg.

We want to thank you for even reading this newsletter as it encourages us to keep moving forward. For those who supported us last year with gifts or prayer – this was all done because of your generous support. If you would like to donate to help this type of outreach continue in 2024 [click here](#).

We have lots on our plate for 2024. With the Lord's help, it will be a fruitful year.

January reminder:

When things look bleak - He's got you



NOW SCHEDULING FOR 2024

**2024
SCHEDULE**

All of our ministers are scheduling their 2024 speaking calendars.

Would you like us to come and share with your congregation, or even a large (15 people or more) home gathering?

We can share on a variety of topics like, A Christ in the Passover Seder, Jewish evangelism, Jesus in the 7 Feasts of Israel, and more. [Just click here and send us a note](#) and we will contact you.

This month's offer:



Star of David Coffee Mug - Blue

Normally \$12 - special \$9 (no code needed)

<https://www.rockofisraelstore.org/products/star-of-david-mug-blue>



"The toughest thing about being a success is that you've got to keep on being a success."

- Irving Berlin

TRIVIA

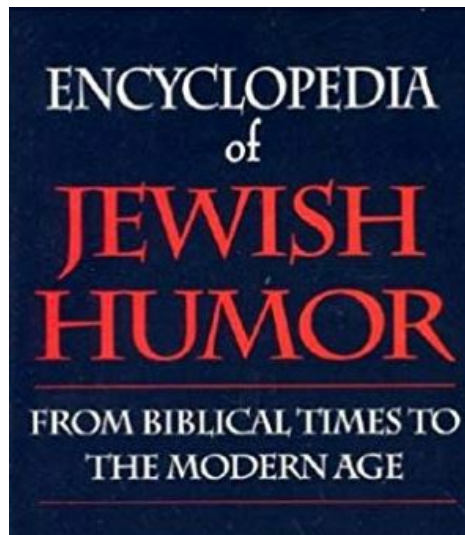
C H A L L E N G E

THIS MONTH'S TRIVIA:

Which of these comedians was/is not Jewish,

- A) Jerry Lewis
- B) Jerry Seinfeld
- C) Ben Stiller
- D) Johnny Carson

Answer near bottom

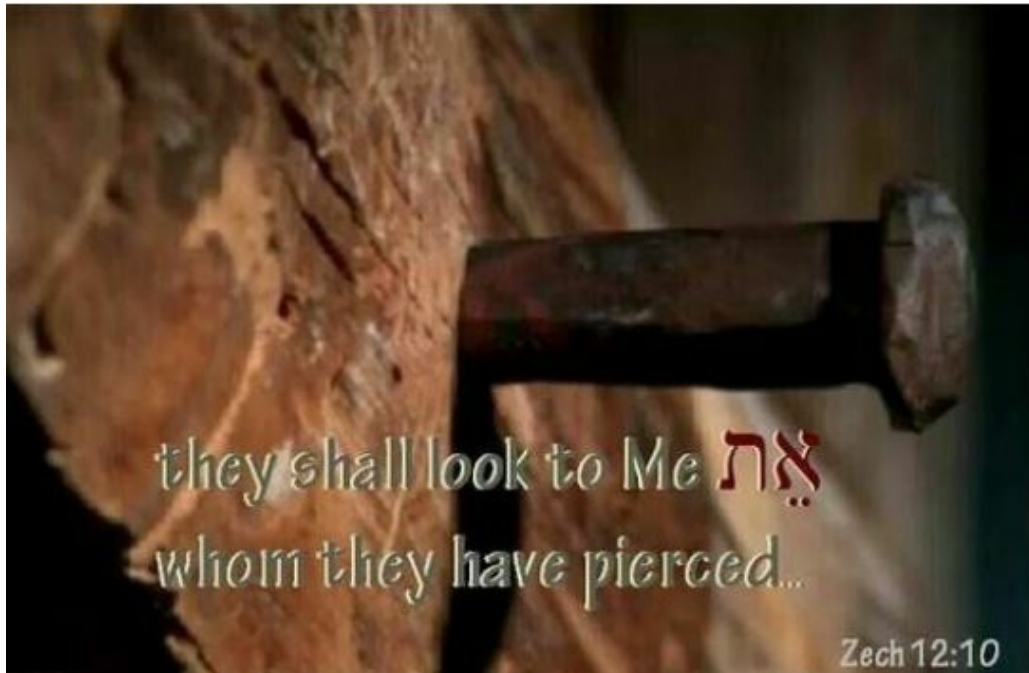


This Month's Jewish Humor

Things you will never hear a Jewish mother say:

- * "Let me smell that shirt -- yeah, it's good for another week."
- * "I don't have a tissue with me -- just use your sleeve."
- * "Run and bring me the scissors! Hurry!"
- * "Yeah, I used to skip school, too."
- * "You don't have to call me every week I know how busy you are."
- * "Well, if Timmy's Mom says it's okay, that's good enough for me."
- * "I think a cluttered bedroom is a sign of creativity."
- * "Don't bother wearing a jacket -- it's quite warm out."

- * "Just live with him.. you don't have to marry him."
 - * "My meeting won't be over till later tonight. You kids don't mind skipping dinner, do you?"
 - * "Mother's Day, Shmother's Day you just go to the beach and enjoy yourselves."
 - * "Your wife knows best - forget about the advice I gave you"
-
-



So who "was pierced"?

A very interesting passage that is often overlooked is Zachariah 12:10. Before we even begin to look at it, you need to know there is a debate among Jewish and Christian scholars as to how this verse should be translated.

First the traditional Jewish view.

If you read a Jewish translation of this verse it will appear as follows:

“And I will pour upon the house of David, And upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, The spirit of grace and of supplication; *And they shall look unto Me* because they have thrust him through; And they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, And shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.” (JPS)

So their interpretation is as follows. There will be a suffering Messiah who will be ‘thrust through’ and this will cause the Jewish people to “look unto” - towards God.

The Babylonian Talmud says about this verse:

“One holds that it was for the Messiah the son of Joseph who was killed, as written in Zechariah 12: When they look on me, whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child.” [Tractate Sukkah, Chapter 5]

You may not have known this, but in traditional Judaism, there are TWO Messiahs who are spoken of, a Suffering Messiah (called Messiah ben [son of] Joseph) and a Reigning Messiah (called Messiah ben [son of] David.)

Just as Joseph, in the book of Genesis, suffered in his life, so too Judaism believes there will be a suffering Messiah who will die in battle. However, his death will not atone for sins, according to their theology. He will just be a great military leader who will die in battle and Israel will mourn for him.

So Zechariah 12:10 is used in Jewish theology to support this concept of a suffering Messiah. Of course, most Jewish people have never even heard of a ‘suffering Messiah’ in Jewish theology since it is not stressed a hundredth as much as the ‘Reigning Messiah’ is stressed.

Getting back to Zechariah 12:10. Christian Bibles translate it in this way:

"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn." (NASB)

So this translation has God Himself being pierced – “they will look on Me whom they have pierced.”

Do you see that?

The Jewish translation has them looking “unto Me”, in other words, they look **unto God** after this one has been pierced.

The Christian translation has them looking “on Me” who was the One pierced.

(Note: the “Me” refers to God in either translation.)

So which one is right?



Well, the Hebrew word can go either way. And since this is not an exhaustive article, it is important to see several quick points:

1) Either way, the Jewish people are the ones who did the piercing. The “they,” earlier in the verse, refers to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. So if God was pierced or the suffering Messiah was pierced either way, it seems to point to someone very significant being pierced.

2) The realization of the piercing will cause deep, deep mourning. The text says the mourning will one day be like a parent who loses their only son. That is some deep bitter mourning. I could not imagine losing an only son, yet this is exactly what the mourning will feel like when they realize it. This is no ordinary death.

3) Zechariah 13 continues with what happens after this mourning is realized (remember, there are no chapter breaks in the Hebrew text), “On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity.” (Zechariah 13:1) **So the ultimate result is a happy one! The Jewish people realize something about this death and it brings about a good result.**

So was God pierced or was the Suffering Messiah pierced?

For us, the answer is BOTH! Yeshua/Jesus is both.

The complete fulfillment of this verse awaits in “the last days”, when the Jewish people will realize that Yeshua/Jesus is the One they have pierced. This will cause “mourning”, but ultimately bring cleansing.

Remember, the term “Messiah the son of Joseph” comes from Joseph’s character in the Torah. Joseph was rejected by his own people, exiled to the Gentiles, believed to be dead and forgotten entirely.

Meanwhile, among the Gentiles, Joseph was welcomed and became

a great and important leader. He performed wonders in their midst and eventually, Joseph appeared before his brothers again. And this time – they didn't reject him, but accepted him and mourned for him with bitter tears.

This is a mirror image of what will happen in the future when the Jewish people acknowledge Yeshua/Jesus as their Messiah.

QUIZ ANSWER:

Answer - D

We are thankful for your support each month to do this work.

**We are not a big "world-wide" TV ministry
with tens of thousands of donors.**

We are a small ministry - seeking to do BIG things for the Kingdom of God.

Our office staff is waiting and ready to help you with any questions you might have. 513-874-2566.



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or

Call (Tues - Fri) 800-722-7625 // or // 513-874-2566

3) Paypal

<https://www.rockofisrael.org/donation/>

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