

Chapter 7

ISRAEL – LAND OF MY PEOPLE

Ever since I received the Messiah as a little boy in the Daughters of Miriam Orphanage, I hungered to reach out to my brethren, the Jews.

Even as the rabbi was trying to convince me to renounce this new Gospel I had received, believed and held near to my heart, I was aching to make him understand that Jesus was the Messiah who had been prophesied throughout the Old Testament, the hope of Israel .

From that day forward, I harbored a deep spiritual desire to bring Jews to Christ throughout the world. After all, He had come to the Jews first, and offered the Gospel to them first. Only when the Jews had rejected Him and His message did Jesus command that the Gospel be preached to the Gentiles.

Through the centuries, many Christian leaders believed and taught that the Jews had missed their chance, that Israel was hopelessly lost and could not be redeemed. That kind of preaching led to all kinds of anti-Semitism and killing.

The misinterpretation and hatred reached a boiling point in the early centuries after Jesus' passion with "Saint" John Chrysostom, who said "It is incumbent upon all Christians to hate the Jews."

The crusades of the Middle Ages were not so much a quest to seize the Holy Land as it was a crusade against Jews everywhere. But by far, the most virulent anti-Semite before Adolph Hitler was Martin Luther, the founder of the Protestant reformation.

Luther wrote a tract called "On the Jews and their Lies," in which he spewed forth the most vile filth against God's chosen people that had been committed to paper nearly in all of history.

In this vile tract, Luther demanded that the Jews' synagogues be burned, their books destroyed, their homes wiped out, their money confiscated, their tongues be cut

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from their throats and that “young and strong Jews and Jewesses be given the flail, the ax, the hoe, the spade, the distaff and spindle and let them earn their bread by the sweat of their noses as is enjoined upon Adam’s children...”

Luther also concluded in his tract, “Know this, Christian, you have no greater enemy than the Jew.”

This, from the founder of the Protestant Reformation!

No wonder Jews resisted listening to ministers who tried to preach the Gospel to them! No wonder an enmity had built up between those who were heirs to Abraham’s covenant and those who had been adopted in through the covenant of Jesus Christ!

I could quote many more anti-Semitic “Christian” sources, but the above makes my point: to reach the Jews, I knew I would have to overcome the tremendous wall that had been built between Jews and Christians for more than a thousand years.

I knew this wall was a tremendous shame; Christianity had been very Jewish in the beginning. Christianity had been designed by the Father as the culmination of the Jewish covenant, as the fulfillment of His initial promise to Abraham thousands of years before in the dusty sands of a region that would come to be known as Canaan.

“And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.” (Genesis 22:16-18)

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Jesus had been the ultimate fulfillment of this promise, and though some early Jews had rejected this blessing, others like Peter, John, Paul and the other New Testament apostles had received it with great joy.

As I reflected on the difficulties that were inherent in reaching out to my natural brethren, I began to understand how the Apostle Paul felt when he penned these words:

“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises. Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen” (Romans 9:1-5)

My heart, as Paul’s, was heavy with the difficulty of reaching my brethren with the Gospel. It seemed that no one really had much success reaching the Jews with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. So mighty had the walls between Jews and Christians been built through years of anti-Semitism.

Even Muslims, who many perceive as the Jews’ most bitter enemy, had treated Jews in Israel, during the time they ruled the land, much better than Christians had treated the Jews. Why would any Jew respond at all to a Christian?

I knew that if I was to reach the Jews, I would have to rely solely upon God and His mercy and grace; only a supernaturally conceived plan implemented exactly as God commanded could ever hope to break down this tremendous wall.

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When I visited Israel on my first overseas missions trip in 1955, I knew that I would one day be back to preach the Gospel and win Jews to Christ through the power of God.

In 1959, God had led me to print a brief testimony of my life; how I had been converted to Christianity in an Orthodox Jewish orphanage. That testimony had been printed in Hebrew and distributed to one-hundred thousand people in Israel. But even though I wanted to follow up that mailing with more ministry, God would not give me a release to do so. Instead, He had stressed to me that my ministry at that time was to the Gentiles.

I obeyed God and continued ministering to the Gentile nations of the world, but day after day, I would pray, "God, is now the time for Israel?"

But as I prayed, I would never hear God give me the OK to go ahead and begin ministering to my brethren after the flesh.

In February of 1967, I was in Florianopolis, Brazil, preaching a crusade. Thousands of people had answered God's call for salvation and had given their lives to Jesus. I had completed the ministry there and was en route to Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Argentina is very close to the equator, where seasons of the year are somewhat different from the Northern Hemisphere, where I live. In February, much of the United States and Europe are blanketed in snow, and people venture outside the comfort of their heated homes and cars only if they are sufficiently bundled up in a parka, a scarf and mittens.

But in Argentina in February, it was summertime – hot and sticky.

I was traveling on what seemed to me to be an ancient bus. As I bumped along the ride, I couldn't help but be amazed by the bus I was riding in. I became convinced that inside the bus was at least 20 degrees hotter than outside,

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even though the windows were all open, allowing outside air and lots of dust to billow into the bus with every bump. The bus either did not have shock absorbers, or the ones it had were at least as old as the bus itself. Each bump was like an earthquake, and on some of the “bumps,” I actually came out of my seat as the bus left the ground for a few split seconds.

The ride was to be very long and arduous, so despite the flies that occasionally decided to swarm around the sweaty passengers on this uncomfortable bus ride, I felt compelled by God to make my way to the back of the bus to pray.

So I made my way to the back seat and stretched out to pray.

Quietly, so that I didn't draw any unnecessary attention, I began to pray to my Father, to thank Him for the miraculous wonders He had just done, and to give Him the glory for the incredible ministry He was doing every day. As I prayed and glorified Him, I began quickly to forget about the barbaric ride I was enduring. I forgot about the dust that I inhaled with every breath. I forgot about the blistering heat that had soaked my shirt and my socks.

I found myself lost in the glory of God, and there's never been any place I'd rather be, no matter where I am physically. I was completely focused on God and on His incredible Presence. Suddenly, God spoke something to me I would never have expected to hear from Him on a dusty, crowded, steaming hot bus in the middle of Argentina.

“Son,” God said to me gently. “turn your eyes to the Middle East, for now is the time to work for My people, Israel.”

Immediately my mind snapped to attention and intense scrutiny on what God was telling me. God had often spoken to me things I had not expected, but this case was completely different. My heart had ached for Israel for so long, and I had never heard anything from God regarding ministering to Israel, but here I was in Argentina and God had given me the directive to minister to Israel – I was in rapt attention.

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“The time is now...go to Israel!”

Israel hadn't been in my plans for this ministry trip. I had scheduled other stops, but not Israel. I knew that in my long-term plans, I would minister in Israel, but this was unexpected.

“Son,” He continued. “Do not be afraid. Go; I will open a door for you in Israel unlike I have ever opened.”

God had answered my question before I ever asked it: “How will I reach the Jews, Lord?”

He knew the desire of my heart, and He had alleviated my fears before I could even mention them. God had assured me that, just as He had told me before, this is not the work of a man, but of the Holy Spirit. His Spirit would be in charge of ministering to the Jews, and He would draw them to Himself.

I immediately began to think of the scripture in the book of Psalms: “Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.” (Psalms 102:13)

God began, like lightning, to reveal His plan for reaching the Jews...His plan to “have mercy upon Zion.”

Because the Jewish religion is based upon the law handed down by God to Moses, the Jews are very literate people – some of the most literate people on the entire planet. To follow the law, one must read it, and to read the law, one must be able to understand and implement what one reads...therefore, one must be literate.

Many Christians had tried through the years to reach out to Jews by standing on a corner or outside a synagogue to hand the congregation a tract or to preach a sermon to them as they entered or left. But I knew that wouldn't reach into the heart of a Jew and open it for Christ.

As God revealed the plan for the Jewish World Outreach, I reached inside my baggage, grabbed a pen and a piece of paper, and began writing down God's plan to reach the Jews.

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Part of the plan was so simple I was surprised I had not thought of it before. The original plan of building God an army was more necessary with Jews than it was in almost any other country! No Jew wants a Gentile preaching to them. God showed me that I would need to raise up Jews to reach the Jews, just as I trained Argentinians to reach Argentina and Africans to reach Africa. God made it clear to me that I was to make plans to hold a Deeper Life Conference in Israel (Deeper Life Conferences were the predecessor to the modern-day Schools of Ministry) to train Israelis to reach their own nation for Christ.

The second part of the plan God gave me to reach the Jews in Israel involved a concerted, sustained effort to minister through literature to these most literate of people to the truth about Jesus, not the lies they may have heard over a lifetime of propaganda.

As soon as I had finished my scheduled crusade in Kumasi, Ghana, I made arrangements to fly immediately to Israel and begin implementing the plan God had given me.

The climate in Israel was not geared to be receptive to the Gospel message. Even though the Israeli constitution granted religious freedom, most Jews interpreted that to mean that Jews could worship as Jews, Muslims could worship as Muslims and Christians could worship as Christians.

It was very direly frowned upon for one religion to try to convert members of another – especially for Christians to try to convert Jews.

In addition, the prevailing thought in Israel at the time was that it was impossible to separate a Jew from his religion, Judaism (even though we had no intentions of doing so, the Jewish perception was that to become a Christian meant no longer being a Jew).

But a few Jews were experiencing a stirring in their spirits that told them there was something more...

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One rabbi had even stated so in the *Jerusalem Post*: “We know that something is taking place right now in the stream of our religion,” he wrote, “but we are frustrated because we do not know what it is.”

Months before the June 1967 Six-Day War in which Israel liberated Jerusalem from Jordan, I was in Israel publishing my first Messianic booklet, entitled *Besorat Shalom*, which means the Gospel (or good news) of Peace.

I mailed this first booklet to twelve thousand Jewish homes in Israel, and the response was tremendous. From that first mailing, more than two thousand Jews responded – a phenomenal response rate of 16 percent!

But God was not done with the Gospel of Peace.

Someone gave me the name of a mailing house in Tel Aviv where I could mail my booklet to even more homes, so I visited the owner of the mailing house.

When I arrived, I placed *Besorat Shalom* on the man’s counter in the front of his business and, point blank, I said, “Sir, I would like to mail this literature to whatever names you might be able to rent me.”

The man looked at me with a strange look on his face, as if no one had ever asked a question quite the same way. He looked down at my booklet, and then back up at me.

“Who are you,” he asked me, matter-of-factly.

“I’m a Spirit-filled Jew,” I replied to him. I figured a point-blank question deserved a straightforward answer.

His look grew even more puzzled as he seemed to be pondering what I had just told him. I’m certain it wasn’t every day this man met someone who called themselves a Spirit-filled Jew.

“What is a Spirit-filled Jew?” the man finally asked, looking a bit amused by this time. His body language had relaxed a bit, too. He appeared to be intrigued by both the

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title of my booklet and by the straightforward answers with which I was handling his questions.

I began to slowly explain to him that I had been orphaned and raised in a Jewish Orthodox orphanage, and that I had, after much study and many questions, come to understand that Yeshua (Jesus) was the Messiah that had been prophesied throughout the Torah and the Prophets, and that I had become a believer in Jesus Christ as my Lord.

The man looked at me again, and then back down at my booklet. Once again, he looked at me, as if sizing me up to see if I was pulling his leg. It was obvious by his hesitation that this man didn't deal with Christian Jews very often, if at all, and he was mentally chewing on all I had just told him.

Finally, he sighed and looked at me again.

"Look," he said, "I'm a businessman. I don't believe religion should be governed by the state or anything else. If you want to mail this literature out, I will mail it for you."

I was elated. Finally, I had found a way to reach a significant number of Jews through literature that explained exactly Who Jesus was.

The man and I began to talk about how many names we would be able to mail the booklet to, and how much it would cost. The man explained to me that he only had one list to rent out to me, a list of thirty thousand Jewish professional people.

Thirty-thousand seemed to me like a good place to start, but I knew it was only the tip of the iceberg. I knew that God had called me to reach every single Jew, and I knew that eventually I would be given the opportunity.

I decided that thirty thousand was a foot in the door toward my eventual goal of reaching every Jew, so the man worked up a contract to distribute *Besorat Shalom* to the thirty-thousand professionals.

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I thanked the man and said good-bye, preparing to leave and make arrangements to have thirty thousand copies of the booklet printed and delivered to the man for distribution.

But as I was about to leave his business, the man stopped me.

"Mr. Cerullo," he said, with a puzzled look on his face. "Don't ask me why, but I have the strangest feeling that I am supposed to do something else for you."

My ears immediately perked up.

"How would you like to send your literature to every single registered voter's home in Israel?" the man asked.

If it was physically possible, my jaw would have hit the ground right there in that man's shop. I was flabbergasted. EVERY VOTER'S HOME in Israel? It was beyond my wildest expectations. I wanted to make sure I had heard him correctly.

"I beg your pardon," I said to him, I'm sure the look on my face was comical with surprise.

"I have only one list for rent," the man continued. "And that's the list you rented. But I also manage and control the list of voter registration for every Jew in the entire nation of Israel."

Numbers began to fly through my head. A minute ago, we had been talking about thirty-thousand names, which was staggering enough – more than enough to populate a small town. But now this man was talking about mailing my booklet to every single voting Jew living in Israel.

"There are more than four-hundred thousand names on the list, representing every registered voter's household in Israel," the man continued. "Are you interested?"

Interested? I was ecstatic. I could hardly believe my ears. I had been prepared to leave with my foot in the door, but it appeared that God was ripping the door completely off its hinges right before my very eyes.

"How do I get permission to use this list?" I asked, Surely there would be months and months of red tape and

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paperwork. I knew from my years of dealing with foreign governments that nearly any bureaucrat along the lines of any situation had the power to stop a deal dead in its tracks, simply upon a whim.

This deal sounded almost too good to be true. Certainly there would be a complicated process to go through and many bureaucratic hurdles to be cleared. I thought that even though this man's offer was generous, I would have to go higher to get permission from someone to use this massive list.

"I can give you permission to use the list," the man surprised me by saying. Again, I could hardly believe my ears. The miracle God was working was beyond my comprehension to grasp. Not only would I be able to mail *Besorat Shalom* to thirty-thousand professional Jews, but if what this man was saying was true, I would be able to mail to four-hundred thousand Jews all over Israel, and all I needed was this man's permission! It was one of the most incredible breakthroughs I had ever seen in such a short time.

But it's a good thing I don't faint easily, because my surprise was about to become shock. The man continued speaking:

"In fact," he said. "I will let you use the list for free."

Have you ever been in the middle of an important situation and just felt like jumping up and down and shouting "Praise the Lord!?" If you have, you know how I felt at that moment. No sooner had the man offered to let me mail the *Besorat Shalom* booklet to every house in Israel – without a charge for the use of the mailing list, than God's words came back to me clearly from the dusty bus in Argentina: "Do not be afraid. Go; I will open a door for you in Israel unlike I have ever opened..."

Instantly, I knew that my meeting with this man who owned the mailing house was a fulfillment of this promise God had given me in Argentina.

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I remembered what God had shown me on my first visit to Israel twelve years earlier – that everything should be done in the timing of God. Now that God’s timing had come, the pieces of the puzzle began falling into place almost effortlessly.

After I thanked the man and began arranging details, I immediately set about making arrangements to print and deliver four-hundred thousand copies of *Besorat Shalom*.

The timing couldn’t have been more perfect.

In the time it took to get four-hundred thousand copies printed and arrangements made to deliver them to the mailing house in Tel Aviv, the nation of Israel had been attacked from all sides by armies of its neighbors, but in six days in June of 1967, the Israeli armed forces had defeated all their foes, who had them greatly outnumbered.

Even though this victory was tremendous and miraculous, a foreboding quickly settled in throughout the land of Israel, as the people realized that they still weren’t at peace with their neighbors, and the threat of all-out war loomed never more than a few bullets away.

When a booklet titled *The Good News of Peace* began to arrive in their homes in September and October of 1968, Jews all over Israel immediately read it all the way through to see what this booklet had to say about the peace they felt was so elusive after their quick and decisive war.

But if I was surprised at the miracle God had worked in allowing us to mail the booklet to so many homes, I was completely overwhelmed when the responses began pouring in by the thousands. Thousands of Jews all over Israel were writing to me to tell me that they had received Jesus as their Messiah after reading *Besorat Shalom*.

But I didn’t have any time to rest in the awesome miracles God had performed in our first mass mailing to Israel. Part of the plan God had given me on that bus in Argentina was to hold a Deeper Life Conference in Israel to

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both strengthen the Christian walk of Jews who had received the Messiah, and to reach out to those who had not received Him yet.

Again, however, I knew we would need a direct miracle from God for a Deeper Life Conference to even get off the ground. After all, even though I was a Jew, most Israelis never saw past the “Christian” label, and it would seem very unlikely that any Israeli would rent a place large enough to me to hold a conference of any size.

When I was in a hotel in Jerusalem, I saw a man I thought I recognized from twelve years earlier, during my first trip to Israel. If I was correct, the man had been a desk clerk at the same hotel all those years ago. I was surprised he was still working at the hotel.

I approached the man, and as I neared him, it became clear to me that he was indeed the same man I had met and befriended in 1955.

“You used to be the desk clerk here,” I said to the man as he looked up at me, recognition spreading over his face. “What are you doing now?”

The man smiled and looked at me.

“I’m not the desk clerk any more,” he said, the smile still beaming on his face. “My brother and I own the hotel.”

Again, I could feel God’s providence intervening to open doors in Israel. First, I had found favor by the grace of God from the man at the mailing house, and now I had miraculously found a man I had befriended twelve years earlier who now owned a hotel that would be perfect for hosting a Deeper Life Crusade.

“I want to rent your hotel,” I told him. “I want to rent the kitchen, the dining room, every room – the whole hotel.”

The smile disappeared from the man’s face as he leaned forward a bit, as if to see if I was kidding. It was probably quite unusual that someone would request to rent the whole

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hotel. I didn't know it at the time, but that hotel in the heart of Jerusalem was considered one of the most staunch Orthodox Jewish hotels in all of Israel, because of its proximity to Hechal Shlomo, the seat of the chief rabbi of the state of Israel.

"You must be crazy," he said to me. "What do you want my hotel for?"

"I want to have a religious conference," I replied. I knew the next statement would catch him by surprise, but I had to continue and be as forthcoming as I could so that everything was on the table. "You know I'm an evangelist, and I preach and pray for the sick and miracles take place. I want to have a meeting like that in this hotel."

The man laughed out loud. But as he looked at me, he could see I wasn't joking, so a more serious look came over his face.

"I've never heard anything so ridiculous in my entire life," he said. But then he got a puzzled look on his face as he continued. "But I will talk to my brother and see what he says about it."

I knew right then that God was preparing to give favor again to our meetings.

He had called me to hold a Deeper Life Conference in Israel, and He was about to make it happen before my very eyes.

I began praising God silently for the victory that I was sure would come at any time after the man had a chance to consult with his brother.

I went on about my business and went to bed that night, both praying for the outcome I desired and praising God for the miracles I was sure He was performing on behalf of the Jewish souls we were destined to reach.

The next day, when I saw the man in the hotel lobby, he came over to me and pulled me aside.

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“I don’t understand it,” he said. “I talked to my brother about your idea, but he didn’t think it was crazy at all. We talked about it, and decided to rent the hotel to you.”

I was no longer surprised at all, because God had worked so miraculously in securing the list of every Jewish registered voter’s home in Israel. This miracle fell into place in just the same way. Clearly, God was at work, and He had a plan for the Deeper Life Conference.

The day I signed the contract to rent the hotel was just six weeks before the Six-Day War – who could have known at the time the prophetic significance of the time we were living in, and the time in which God had moved me to begin ministering to the people of Israel?

When I left Israel, I flew immediately to a crusade in Orebro, Sweden. When I left that tremendous crusade, I flew immediately to Michigan, where I was scheduled to host two eight-day Deeper Life Crusades during May.

The schedule of a Deeper Life Crusade was packed full, with hardly any time for things such as a prophetic sermon, but in Michigan, God began to urge me to deliver a prophetic sermon.

“God is about to return the old city of Jerusalem to the Jews,” I told the congregation that was gathered. “His prophetic time is NOW!”

At the time, no one expected Jordan to enter into the conflict that was building in the Middle East. Egypt and Syria were expected to attack Israel, but it was Jordan that controlled Jerusalem, and Jordan was living in relative peace with Israel.

June 5, 1967, only a few short days after I preached that sermon in Michigan, Israeli Premier Levi Eshcol sent a communication to King Hussein of Jordan, assuring the king that if Jordan did not enter the war that was brewing, Israel would not attack Jordan.

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But when King Hussein received the communication from Premier Eshcol, his warplanes were already in the air, and he had no way to call them back.

Six days later, Israel had recaptured the old city of Jerusalem – a city that had not even been expected to be a part of the war between Egypt, Syria and Israel.

When the smoke cleared in September of 1967, I began to busily prepare for the Deeper Life Conference. I knew it would be no walk in the park. We had to convince believing Jews to risk ridicule or even more serious consequences to attend a meeting with an American evangelist, and we had to believe God to bring in nonbelieving Jews whose hearts would be ripe to receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Because we would be training prospective ministers, we wanted to be sure we invited everyone who should come.

But as preparations proceeded, many began to ask the same question: “Do you think anyone will come?” After all, it was Israel, and even those who desired to come might be afraid of their peers.

When the day of the meeting came, Orthodox Jews assembled outside the building to protest the Christian meeting that was scheduled to go on inside, but their protests did not stop a sizable crowd from assembling and packing the hotel to enter into a Deeper Life – it was standing-room only.

I took my message that night from Isaiah 53: *“Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our grief’s, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the*

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chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

Everyone before the meeting had seemed to have questions. Would Israelis who actually did come to the conference respond to the message? Was the veil lifted? Was it really God's time to move upon Israel to minister to the hearts of Jews? Even as I had left my hotel room that night on my way to the service, someone had spoken to me and said, "Brother Cerullo, no one ever gives altar calls in Israel, because these people will not go forward to altars in response..."

But as more than 150 previously nonbelieving Jews risked everything, including possibly their lives, and gave their hearts to Jesus, accepting Him as their Messiah during the altar call, those questions were answered!

They risked castigation of their friends, hostile crowds who had gathered outside the conference, possible loss of their jobs and maybe even being disowned by their families! They

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were willing to sacrifice all to come to a deeper knowledge of the Messiah, who had sacrificed Himself for them!

Perhaps the biggest breakthrough besides the salvations that happened was the fact that, just months after the Six-Day War, where Jews and Arabs had viciously fought each other, in the Deeper Life Conference, Jews and Arabs worshiped God together, in peace and harmony!

Truly, as God had promised, he had thrown open the doors of ministry in Israel to World Evangelism...but these tremendous breakthroughs were only the beginning.

In 1969, I led a tour group of World Evangelism partners through Israel, to see the Garden Tomb, the Upper Room and many other sites in the land where the Bible had been written.

One Saturday night, I was in my room preparing for the message I was to deliver that night to the tour group during a communion service at the Garden Tomb, where we would remember the blood Jesus shed for us and the flesh that was torn for us.

I began earnestly praying to the Lord for our infant ministry in Israel. He had shown us great success and incredible breakthroughs, but what did He want us to do next? The seed of ministry had been sown in Israel, but I was sure that wasn't all He wanted me to do.

For three hours, I sought the Lord like that in prayer.

Finally, He answered:

"Son, prepare a special Bible correspondence course and send it to all those who are interested in knowing more of God and His Son, Jesus Christ!"

It was a tremendous revelation – an overwhelming sense of "Of course!" Sometimes when God speaks to us, we later find it hard to believe that God had to point out what He had said to us – the idea was so simple.

Many years before, in the early years of my ministry, with my heart yearning to reach out to my physical brethren, I had

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spent days and days preparing an exhaustive study outline on Christ as revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures.

It was this outline that became the basis for the Bible Correspondence Course, which was sent to 2,000 Jews in Israel, who signed up to receive it.

Each issue dealt with salvation and the new walk in Christ from a Jewish perspective, building a strong foundation for the messages in the Old Testament and then showing how those messages were carried through in the New Testament. As the correspondence course continued, more and more Jews signed up to receive the teachings, which were designed to both lead the unbelieving Jew to Jesus and to build a solid foundation for the Jew who had already accepted Jesus.

In 1970, we embarked on our second mass mailing to Israel, this time with my book, *Hear O Israel*, which taught, that Jesus was the same God who was in the Old Testament; that Jesus was indeed the Messiah that God had promised to send to redeem Israel and to be King in David's seat. The book did not reveal the voice of a 20th Century preacher from New Jersey, but the timeless witness of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, who all testified of the coming Messiah!

After I had sent out the first mailing to four-hundred thousand homes of *Besorat Shalom*, I assumed that tension in Israel would close that door to me forever, but when we prepared to mail out *Hear O Israel*, we were shocked to learn that the same mailing house owner offered to make his list available to us again, but this time, the list contained five-hundred thousand names! This mailing was sent out to one-hundred thousand more homes than our initial mass mailing of four-hundred thousand.

The size of *Hear O Israel* was double the size of *Besorat Shalom*, meaning the cost of typesetting it, translating it, printing it, binding it, and mailing it would also be doubled.

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But those logistical details did not stop the most expansive outreach that had ever been attempted in the history of Israel.

It was a tremendous breakthrough at a time when a book that sold five-thousand copies in Israel was considered a best-seller. But no sooner had the book hit the mailboxes of a half a million homes in Israel than letters began to pour in to our office in Jerusalem responding to *Hear O Israel*. The list of people receiving the Bible Correspondence Course expanded from its original two-thousand to more than fifteen-thousand, and then twenty-two-thousand Jews, receiving teaching about Jesus the Messiah!

One important aspect of *Hear O Israel* went barely noticed by us when it initially was printed and distributed. Every one of the Old Testament prophets we quoted were required reading for every Jew in Israel when they went through the school system – except for one prophet, Daniel.

The lady who translated our book into Hebrew was a born-again Jew who also was a Hebrew teacher in Israel.

As she was painstakingly translating the book from the English in which I had written it into the Hebrew that would reach into half a million homes, she noticed a problem. The translator did not have a copy of the Book of Daniel written in Hebrew – without which she could not guarantee an accurate, word-for-word rendering of the Scriptures for the Hebrew edition of *Hear O Israel*.

This precious lady spent many weeks searching, scouring old libraries and resale shops until she finally was able – at great effort – to obtain a Hebrew translation of Daniel, and at last *Hear O Israel* was finished and mailed.

A few months later, the man who was my project manager for Operation Israel, George Ekeroth, was visiting with some Jewish friends in Jerusalem late one evening. The friends all gathered together in a discussion of the prophets, and the Jews

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displayed a stunning knowledge of all the Old Testament prophets – after all, they had learned about the prophets all their lives. But when the conversation turned to Daniel, George’s Jewish friends looked puzzled.

They were not familiar with Daniel’s prophecies, and asked George what was so significant about Daniel. As I had written in *Hear O Israel*, the Book of Daniel was one of the most important prophetic books, because it pinpointed the exact time of the arrival and death of the Messiah!

When George shared that revelation with his Jewish friends, they were shocked.

When George shared that story with me, it confirmed what God had been speaking into my spirit. Though they are some of the most educated and literate people in the world, most Jews had never read the prophetic chapters of Daniel, because those chapters had never before been translated into Hebrew and distributed in Israel!

Daniel had been written in Aramaic, the language of the captivity in Babylon, not in Hebrew, so most Hebrew scholars had never read these most important prophecies from one of Israel’s most powerful prophets!

The only existing translations of Daniel into Hebrew were extremely rare, and the average Jew did not have access to them. One of the most stringent import laws for Bibles in Israel was that the passages of Daniel that were written in captivity be kept in the language of the captivity – Aramaic. Most Jews could not read Aramaic, though, so they were left out of some of the most powerful passages in the Bible.

God confirmed to my heart that I needed to provide a new translation of this powerful prophetic book into Hebrew and distribute it to Israel – for the first time in history! Literally for the first time ever, Jews in Israel could now read the Book of Daniel in its entirety and understand how Daniel had prophesied the coming Messiah! It was a breakthrough

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of tremendous significance! Half a million Jewish homes, for the first time in history, had a copy of the Book of Daniel in Hebrew, eight and a half by eleven inches for display of great art with charts and commentaries for easy understanding!

As we intensified our efforts to reach the Jews through literature, I knew that we had only just begun.

Only when a point is demonstrated using the Scriptures will a practicing Jew give it any credence. It must be biblically sound, or the entire publication will be ripped to shreds as intelligent Jews point out flaws and unsupported statements.

So with each publication we sent to Israel, the entire ministry team spent hours in prayer, in study and in checking facts and statements over and over again, going over the publications with a fine-toothed comb so that we were sure everything we said was air-tight.

We didn't want our human flaws to come in the way of our goal, bringing Jews to Christ through the publications with which we were flooding the Holy Land.

But our outreach did not end there, and it did not end with publications. God had called me in Argentina to begin an all-out campaign to reach every Jew on the face of the planet, and I knew that to accomplish this goal, I could not rest for a minute, I could not slack off or relent in any way. I had to keep up the intensity of the effort, for it was persistence alone that would produce results in a culture so predisposed to reject Christianity.

In 1972, I began a weekly radio broadcast to Israel on a signal that covered the entire country, saturating it with the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ to a nation that so desperately needed Him.

Initially, the broadcast originated in Jordan, but we quickly found out that the signal did not transmit as clearly as we desired, and it was not as reliable as we desired, so after much prayer and negotiations with the authorities, we moved

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the broadcast to a medium-wave radio station on the island of Cyprus, which is in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea. What this new location meant was that practically anyone with a tiny transistor radio would be able to receive our transmissions that testified of the Messiah of Israel.

In 1973, I was able to hold my second meeting in Israel at the Baptist campgrounds, where hundreds of Jews came to hear the preacher who was raising all the ruckus through his mailings and radio programs.

As I ministered under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the effects on the audience were tremendous; many Jews were touched by the Word of God, and they received a powerful witness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ – one they could not deny.

In 1974, I again was afforded an opportunity to conduct a meeting in Israel, at which more than one-hundred Jews bravely stood to accept Jesus as their Messiah, despite the fact that they knew they would face almost certain persecution from their friends and possibly even their families for the decision they had just made.

Such public displays of receiving the Messiah were very dangerous, especially given the fact that leading rabbis in Israel had begun to denounce Christian ministries and begun to angrily demand that Jews ignore any Christian missionary materials. This was in response to reports that more and more Jews were making decisions for Christ and becoming believers in Jesus as their Messiah. But that persecution did not stop the effectiveness of the ministry God had called me to.

God had promised in 1967 on the back of that bus in Argentina that He would open a door like none had been opened before, and the Jewish ministry was a testimony that He indeed kept His word!

God was blessing and prospering our Jewish World Outreach beyond our wildest dreams. Not only had we been granted

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unprecedented access, the stories were pouring in of Jews who had received Jesus as a direct result of our persistence, but we had not even really gotten going yet – God had more direct and powerful plans for us to reach His chosen people.

In 1975, God began dealing with me to produce a television special targeted at a Jewish audience that would tell the story of one of the Jews' greatest military defeats and moral victories that became a rallying cry for an entire nation of people that such a massacre would never happen again. That special dealt with the story of the Roman razing of Jerusalem and one dedicated band of Jews who holed up in the desert fortress of Masada, holding off the vaunted Roman empire for months.

Many Jews who are now living in Israel saw *Masada* when they were still living in America, and it was broadcast on prime-time television all over the nation. Responses to the powerfully anointed *Masada* special poured in like nothing we had ever done before in the history of the ministry. Literally two-hundred thousand responses came to our offices in San Diego of people who had either given their lives to Jesus or wanted more information.

In 1977, God dealt with me that it again was time to send a mass mailing to the Jews – not only in Israel, but those in America, too. Even to this day, the largest concentration of Jews anywhere in the world besides Israel is in the United States of America.

God led me to write one of the most powerful witnessing tools to Jewish people in the history of the Christian Church. In this anointed book, God led me to compare the lives of two men who, although they lived four-thousand years apart, led very similar lives, except for the fact that one had become a total failure and the other had become a total success.

The book, *Two Men From Eden*, compared the lives of the first and second Adam – Adam, the first man created, and Jesus, the man who redeemed all mankind.

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Two Men From Eden demonstrated how Adam was created in the image of God and how Jesus was the image and likeness of God, how Adam was created to be God's companion and Jesus had always been the Father's companion, how Adam was formed of the earth and Christ was of Heaven, not earth. The book showed how Adam received his life from God, and how Jesus Himself was that life.

Two Men From Eden was our most ambitious mailing project to date. We sent this powerful prophetic ministry tool to three million, two hundred Jewish homes in North America.

Even today, I am staggered by the immensity of mailing such a book out to so many people. Many best-sellers in the publishing world would be ecstatic if they sold and distributed a million copies, but we sent three and a half times that out at no cost to the recipients!

More than ten-thousand Jews responded to that initial mailing of *Two Men From Eden*, testifying that they had received Jesus as their Messiah as the result of reading the book.

When I wrote *Two Men From Eden*, I knew that it was to be a ministry to the world, not just to North America or Israel. So, in 1979, at the leading of the Holy Spirit, we had *Two Men From Eden* translated into five languages: Spanish, French, German, Portuguese and Hebrew, so that people who read only those languages could receive this powerful and timely message in their own language and receive Jesus as the Messiah. The book ended with a powerful call to make a decision for any Jew reading the book – now that they were fully informed as to the biblical truth that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Messiah Who had been promised, they had to make a decision – would they serve Him or not...

And thousands upon thousands did indeed make that decision and turned their lives over to Jesus Christ as their Messiah.

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But as we prepared to mail *Two Men From Eden* into Israel, new laws were passed forbidding mass mailings to Israelis. It appeared that the doors were closed.

But God had a plan and we stepped out on faith in 1980 and began mailing twenty-five thousand copies of *Two Men From Eden* to strategic homes throughout Israel in a test to see if we could pull off the new strategy God had laid in our hearts.

We found that we could mail the book in increments of twenty-five thousand throughout Israel, and in 1980, we did just that. The response was astounding as scores of testimonies flowed into our offices of lives that had been changed by the Second Man from Eden!

In 1981, the ministry that had been flowing to Israel from the United States became a two-way street, as I traveled to Israel to film *The Sound of Trumpets*, a television series filmed on location at the actual historical and archaeological sites in Israel, recounting the ministry of Jesus and the tremendous miracles and prophetic fulfillments that followed His life on earth.

In *The Sound of Trumpets*, we imported musicians and we also had musicians directly from Israel, who sang powerful songs of praise to God. We filmed from Cana, where the water was transformed into wine and Jesus transformed an ordinary wedding into His first Bible miracle. We filmed from Gethsemane, the garden where Jesus went through the agony of the price He paid for our souls. We filmed from Chorazin and from the Pool of Siloam, where Jesus healed the blind man.

On the video, we interviewed former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and other dignitaries. The response from the forty television segments of *Sound of Trumpets* was incredible, as Jews from all over North America who had been intrigued by the chance to see the Holy Land also saw the Messiah.

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In 1983, God led me to hold the very first School of Ministry in Israel, with a time of reverent prayer in the Garden Tomb where Jesus had been laid after His death, and from which He arose three days later. During that tremendous School of Ministry, hundreds of Christians were trained to minister salvation to Jews and Gentiles alike. In 1985, we again held a School of Ministry in Israel, again with tremendous results as many believers received their marching orders to reach the Jew and the Arab with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

From 1987 to 1989, using the incremental approach God had shown us in 1980, we were able to distribute more than one-hundred and fifty thousand copies of *Two Men From Eden* LEGALLY in Israel, despite the laws that had been passed against mass mailing, because of a loophole in the law that allowed our incremental approach to work. Though these mailings were slower than our initial mailings to Israel in the 1960s and 70s, God's timing was perfect, as testimonies came in a constant stream of people whose lives had been changed as a result of reading *Two Men From Eden*.

But even though our outreach to Israeli Jews had surpassed our wildest imagination, God still was not done reaching out to Jews elsewhere. He had given me a goal of ministering the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every Jew on the planet at least one time before Jesus returns – though I couldn't possibly accomplish such a lofty goal face-to-face with every Jew, through the twin attack plan of literature and face-to-face training of soldiers in His army, I knew that the goal of reaching every Jew was possible.

But one obstacle had always seemed a bit too high to jump. I knew that God wouldn't call me to reach every Jew if He wasn't prepared to provide a way, but I couldn't understand how God possibly expected me to reach behind

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the Iron Curtain of the then-Soviet Union to reach out to the hoards of Jews who lived under Communist domination.

But in 1991, God miraculously provided a way, as more than one-hundred thousand copies of *Two Men From Eden* were translated into Russian and distributed to Russian Jews in Moscow and Jerusalem by the power of God.

Since 1972, we had been ministering to Israel through radio, with a few interruptions caused by political unrest, but in 1992, God provided us with an open door to reach into more than one-hundred thousand Jewish homes in Israel through a powerful television station called the European Superstation. Through this tremendous open door, God allowed us to minister the Gospel to even more Jews in Israel by daily television.

But by far, the biggest outreach and breakthrough in Israel ministry came in 1996, as God opened the doors wider than we had ever imagined possible.

God had long been dealing with my heart to take *Two Men From Eden* to the next level and write a sequel, a book that would take all the Scriptures of the Old Testament referring to the coming Messiah and then show their fulfillments in the life of Jesus Christ – a daunting task, to be sure, but one that I knew would touch the hearts of countless Jews.

The prospect of mailing books en masse to Israeli homes was still very difficult, and a new anti-proselytizing fervor was brewing in Israel, but I knew I could not ignore God's command, so immediately, I began working on the new book, which I initially titled simply *The Messiah*.

As I completed the initial draft of the book, I ran it by many of my Messianic Jewish friends, including several leaders in Israel, all of whom I asked to read it carefully and look for human flaws that may have crept into the manuscript. After the final manuscript was prepared, I sent

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the book to a faithful Jewish believer, who translated the book into Hebrew for distribution to three-hundred thousand Jewish homes. Even this three-hundred thousand would be difficult, but I believed God had opened the door wide enough that we could accomplish that goal.

At the time, the Palestinian Liberation Organization and Hamas were again busily bombing Israelis and threatening to break out in war almost daily as Syrians were lofting rockets down on Israeli cities periodically. At the time, peace was the furthest thing from anyone's mind in Israel, but in the midst of this mayhem, God spoke to me very directly to re-name the book from *The Messiah* to *The Peace*.

Immediately, I saw the brilliance in God's plan.

The reality of religious life in Israel was that many wary Jews would see the word *Messiah* on the front of a book, realize that it was a piece of missionary material, and throw it away without reading it. My goal was to break past that initial barrier and at least get the recipients to read the book, and God's plan struck me as perfect – no Jew in Israel would not want to read a book about peace.

As we were arranging to have the book printed and mailed, another miracle came and surprised us even further. Miraculously, we had been offered access to a list of ONE MILLION Jewish homes in Israel – literally EVERY Jewish home in the entire country!

We had never had such an opportunity – never been given such unprecedented access!

Immediately, we changed all our plans. Although printing, binding and distributing a million books would be three times more expensive than three-hundred thousand, I knew better than to ignore the miracles of God when they happened.

We found a printing house in the ex-Soviet Union that once had been used to print Communist propaganda materials to indoctrinate the minds of the populace that had

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been enslaved by the red beast. But God used this once-nefarious press to print a book about peace, and after a few troubles, we were able to get the books into the mailing house and distributed throughout Israel.

Although we immediately began to hear stories from those who had given their lives to the Messiah as a result of *The Peace*, one thing we hadn't expected was the furor *The Peace* caused in Israel.

Television shows and newspaper advertisements denounced the mailing of the books, and people even held huge bonfires where they piled the books up and burned them in the streets, motivated by the fanatical orthodox forces.

Even more ominous, however, was the fact that the Israeli legislative body, the Knesset, began to consider a law banning all missionary activity from Israel, which could possibly have meant big trouble for the struggling Messianic Jewish congregations in Israel, and any future efforts to evangelize the Jews.

In the midst of the trouble, many people approached the ministry to ask why we had mailed the books to Israel, but I knew God had a plan. Even when things look their worst, even when everyone around can't seem to understand what God is doing, God always has a plan, and He would never do anything to hinder the preaching of the Gospel. Persecution expands the Gospel. Since I had only followed the directive of God in distributing the million books to Israeli homes, I knew God had something He wanted to do in Israel through this uproar.

In a miraculous breakthrough, Nissim Zvilli, member of the Knesset, and the author of the anti-missionary bill, withdrew support for his own bill.

But the anti-missionary fervor was not done in Israel. No sooner had Zvilli's bill been killed than a more restrictive bill was proposed, which would jail those who witnessed for

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Christ for a period of three years and make them pay a fine equivalent to thirteen-thousand dollars.

Initially, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had said he opposed this more restrictive bill, but he shocked many when he voted for the bill himself.

But what the devil intended for evil, God had planned to use for good. In the midst of the fervor that was racking Israel, we teamed together with Messianic churches to sponsor an advertising campaign in Israeli newspapers that not only opposed the anti-missionary bill, but also preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ to EVERY SINGLE SUBSCRIBER to the newspapers in Israel!

It was a tremendous breakthrough for Israel. Once hopelessly divided, the threat of persecution, jail and imprisonment brought the Messianic community together for the first time!

One of the advertisements titled *Who is the Messiah?* said “Rabbi Yochanan said; The Messiah – what is his name?...And our Rabbis said, the pale one...is his name, as it is written ‘Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows – yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him and afflicted.’ (Sanhedrin 98, page 2) If our Jewish tradition attributes Isaiah chapter 53 to the Messiah – why should we claim otherwise? Yeshua is Israel’s Messiah!”

The Messianic Action Committee in Israel was able to run that advertisement in many Israeli newspapers – an advertisement that preached the exact same sermon I had preached in Israel thirty years before! Now they did it openly and without fear!

The anti-missionary law was defeated in the Knesset, and, as of this writing, a newfound freedom for ministering in Israel has been opened – and God only has greater things in store for the Israel outreach!