

Shomer Yisrael

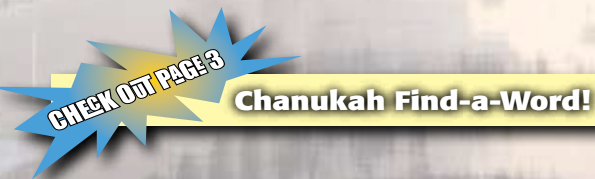
UMJC International Conference, 2012

This year's theme for the UMJC conference is *Shomer Yisrael: Advocacy for the Jewish people, the Jewish state, and the Jewish Messiah*. The conference focuses on equipping advocates to stand with the land and the people of Israel during this critical time, and to stand for Yeshua as Messiah through it all.

The conference will be held in the greater Baltimore area at the **Turf Valley Resort, Ellicott City, MD, July 19-22, 2012**. The Baltimore Washington International Airport (BWI) provides easy access to the resort.

This all-inclusive, 1000-acre resort has amenities to spare, including pools, golf, meals, playgrounds, tennis, and volleyball. Rates are reasonable at \$99 per night or \$114 for a suite. The resort is totally self-contained. Parking is free. A fee-based shuttle runs from the resort to BWI for those who do not want to rent a car. ■

See Howard Silverman's column below for more details.



Howard Silverman

From the Office of the President . . .

One of the many concerns that we have as a Messianic Jewish community is the security and future of the State of Israel. On September 21 several thousand people converged on the Dag Hammarskjold Plaza near the United Nations in New York to protest the UN Council for Human Rights, called "Durban III." I was there along with a group from our congregation, Beth Messiah, Columbus, Ohio, and MJAA member congregation Beth Messiah, Cincinnati, who rode together on a bus all night to participate in the demonstration. There were people from a variety of messianic congregations, organizations and Christian Zionist groups who were there to protest the blatant anti-Israel sentiment exhibited by many of the UN delegations present for Durban III, as well as the General Assembly meetings of the United Nations. It is important that we stand as advocates for the survival of our people and our historic homeland.

Soon, Chanukah will be upon us. Along with the latkes, lights and presents, we remember another time and situation when the survival of Jewish identity in Israel was threatened. Most of you

SPREAD THE LIGHT

With your help, the UMJC is spreading the light of Messiah through activities like . . .

- ✧ The K20 initiative, providing matching grants for future leaders serving as interns in UMJC member congregations, awarding its first scholarships this semester to future leaders working toward rabbinic ordination, and providing its first grant for leadership transition at a member congregation.
- ✧ Translating our top-level classes into Russian to help strengthen the movement for Yeshua among Russian Jews.
- ✧ Another national Kabbetz HaEsrin conference coming in 2012, coordinated by the UMJC Twenties Committee co-chaired by Shaletha Riggs and Zack Feinberg (who tells his story on page 3).
- ✧ Continued support for Israel, including a major emphasis on advocacy at next year's conference.

All of these efforts depend on your partnership, so please consider a generous, year-end gift to the UMJC!

By mail, 529 Jefferson St. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87108, or online at umjc.org. Your tax-deductible contribution right now will help us firm up plans for spreading the light in 2012.

Happy Chanukah,
Russ Resnik
Executive Director



UMJC News

בנין תבא



Welcoming Messiah Home

QUARTERLY • WINTER 2012

Chanukah

— Jonathan Roush, leadership team member Beth Messiah Congregation, Gaithersburg, MD

“When the light shines in the darkness, they will see God.” These are the opening lyrics to a song that my mom wrote for a musical a few years ago. Every year, around this time, the refrain from that song once again floats back into my head. Its powerful imagery helps us look towards kindling our own lights for Chanukah.

I've heard the story of Chanukah every year. I've sung *Maoz Tzur* more times than I can remember, and eaten more latkes and sufganiyot than can possibly be healthy. Still after all these years the story continues to instruct and inspire me in new ways. This is probably not surprising considering there is no shortage of inspiring events in the story: from the bravery of the Jews in the face of such persecution and devastation; to the faithfulness of God to help a few overcome so many. Of course I can't leave out the reclaiming of the temple which involved the miracle of the oil lasting eight days instead of only one day.

But what I find most inspirational is lighting the menorah. It is such a dramatic statement. We wait until the darkness has almost taken over the evening, and then we light the candles. And we light it near a window so that it can be seen by others. We don't light the menorah simply as a reminder for ourselves. It is a proclamation to everyone that God is the protector of Israel.

In Matthew's gospel, Yeshua charges his disciples to let their “light shine before others.” Why? “So that they may see your

good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16 ESV).

Just as Jews across the world will be lighting Chanukah candles and shining them out into the world on those eight nights, so we are commanded to live with this idea in mind every day! Those eight days and nights are a remembrance of the defeat of King Antiochus and his army. What are we doing with the other 357 days and nights of the year?

The Chanukah candles allow light to overcome a literal darkness. The light of our *gemilut chasadim*, our good works, can overcome the darkness of sin and separation from God. And Yeshua calls us to this! It is our vocation, our calling, to be beacons of hope. We are lights shining in the darkness testifying to the truth of the God of Israel, his Torah and his Messiah, and to the deliverance of his people Israel both then and now.

This year as we gather with our families to celebrate the Festival of Lights let us not lose sight of the powerful image of candles illuminating the dark. May our lights shine as we remember the deliverance of old, may they cause others to remember, and may they bring others into the light of Messiah. ■



Jonathan and Monica Roush



Special Chanukah Edition

Celebrating the Festival of Lights with personal stories that help spread the Light of Messiah. See page four to learn how you can help spread the light, too.

- **Zack Feinberg**
Zack Shares Some of his Personal Stories and Insights
- **Gabi's Story**
From Argentina to Israel, the States and Finally Home: One Woman's Journey to Connection
- **Shomer Israel**
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Thoughts from Howard Silverman: Israel in the world; Chanukah Season

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My testimony is not a story about searching far and wide before finally finding Yeshua. It is not about hitting

rock bottom or a near-death experience that brought me to the LORD. I was born into the Messianic community as the son of a rabbi, and have always attended Messianic Shabbat services regularly. My challenge has been to grow into my own identity as a believer—developing and maintaining a personal relationship with God, especially when life gets busy.

My family moved to Tel Aviv for a year when I was six years old and applied for citizenship. Living in Israel was a major cultural change, but it was also a big challenge spiritually because we did not belong to a Messianic synagogue. This is when I first started to incorporate “quiet times” into my life—reading my Children’s Bible and praying independently. Quiet times became a major staple in my spiritual life, and the way I was able to feel closest to God.

I continued studying scripture throughout my adolescence as the way to know the Word and grow closer to the LORD. I started to recognize the clear correlation between keeping my prayer life and quiet times and God’s obvious blessings. One of my favorite instances of this

happened when I was still in high school. I was playing on the varsity golf team and in the middle of a hectic school load, competing in a major tournament en route to the state competition as one of six golfers from my school. The night before the tournament I had been studying the portion “Eikev,” noting the following passage:

“If you pay attention to these laws and are careful to follow them, then the LORD your God will keep his covenant of love with you... You will be blessed more than any other people... the LORD your God will send the hornet among them until even the survivors who hide from you have perished” (Deut. 7:12-20).

The next day at the golf tournament, I struck a solid 6 iron from 172 yards, and I watched my ball kick off a slope on the green and find the bottom of the cup for a hole-in-one! I knew instantly God had used nature to bless me. Just as He promised in Deuteronomy that He would send the hornets, He utilized the slope in the green to bless me for giving Him time amidst my busiest season. No matter how hard you try, you can’t out give God!

When life gets busy it is too easy to crowd the LORD out. No matter how hard it seems, we must make time for God. He must be a priority in our lives. My regular quiet times have enabled me to sustain a strong relationship with God throughout college, even while living far away from my home congregation. It is often easiest to call on God when times are hard, but it is more important to find time for Him during our busiest moments. I have found that I can prove how strong my character is based on how I act during crunch time. And I particularly need to heed my own advice now as I enter the busiest time, writing up my dissertation for my PhD! ■

From the Office of the President...

(Continued from Page 4.)

Israel. Classes will include apologetics and a review of resources, to equip participants to be advocates and activists for Yeshua as Messiah among our Jewish people.

Please be praying for everyone associated with planning and organizing the conference, that it would be an encouraging and challenging time for everyone. Mark your calendar for **July 19-22, 2012, at the Turf Valley Resort in Ellicott City, Maryland, and check umjc.org for details as the date draws closer.**

Finally, let us take every opportunity to stand as advocates for our people, our land and our Messiah. *Happy Chanukah!* ■



My life has been a series of miracles, from surviving a dangerous childbirth (my mom survived as well), receiving the gift of life, to overcoming other childhood challenges and personal bad choices. God was always there, whether I knew it or not.

I was born to a Jewish family in Argentina, moved to Israel when I was little, and grew up there. God has blessed me with many opportunities, including bachelor’s and master’s degrees, a PhD, and then coming to San Diego to do my post-doctorate.

I was always aware of God’s presence in my life, but only at a great distance, believing he did not need to be bothered with my little things. And the distance seemed to grow greater and greater. But God had something else in mind. While attending a meeting of Israelis in La Jolla, Calif., in August 2010, expecting to spend some time with my countrymen, God sent his good servant, Raul, to bring me back to his presence. Raul came to that meeting to practice his Hebrew. I offered to help him, and we became friends. Soon he was talking to me about the God of Israel and the Tanach.

When I saw how much Raul knew I became jealous. Why did he, a Gentile, know more about my Bible than I did, and why did his peace seem greater than mine? Just as Paul said in Romans 11:11, Raul was making me jealous.

Raul persistently ministered to me about our Messiah Yeshua from the Tanach and then from the Brit HaChadasha. On Yom Kippur 2010, Raul took me to a service at Kehilat Ariel, a Messianic Synagogue in San Diego, led by Rabbi Barney Kasdan. I came reluctantly, and after the service I marched towards Rabbi Kasdan to tell him what I thought of his congregation. But I was speechless, and he gave me a book, the Brit HaChadasha.

At first I refused to even look at it, leaving it on my dinner table, and eyeing it suspiciously when I passed. Occasionally I dared to open it, but then closed it immediately. Eventually, I asked God to forgive me for what I was about to do, and sat down to read it for the first time in my life. Suddenly I noticed how Jewish this book is, and that even Yeshua was a good Jewish rabbi! God was also working inside me, leading me to ask if Yeshua is really our Messiah.

I began to ask for a personal revelation: that was the only way I would ever be able to believe in him. Be careful what you ask for, because God showed me a powerful vision that brought me to my knees. He revealed himself in all his glory as the brightest light in the heavens, and from that light came a man from heaven to earth: God becoming a man. I was so amazed, but as a typical Israeli, I asked God: “Is this vision really from you? Please confirm it to me by showing me the vision again.” (Yes, that’s the Israeli *chutzpah*). God showed me the same vision again! That was when God finally lifted the veil from my eyes and, crying and trembling, I surrendered my life to Yeshua.

Since then, I have known that Yeshua is my savior, my Messiah, and that he is the only truth and the only way. I thank God for saving me and for not giving up on me. ■

Chanukah Find-a-Word

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d	z	y	o	f	a	d	i	b	d	a	d	s	u	h	c	o	i	t	n	a		
r	d	u	n	i	t	v	d	s	a	d	l	o	d	e	t	a	c	i	d	e	d	i
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k	o	s	m	n	z	q	w	a	n	g	t	i	d	r	e	i	d	e	l	a	h	r

Chanukah	Talmud	Nes	Maccabi	Antiochus
Gelt	Kislev	Hiyah	Shimon	Dedicate
Mattityahu	Po	Josephus	Oil	Latkes
Shamash	Candles	Maoz	Gadol	Dreidel
Tzur				