

Children's Outreach: Past, Present & Future

Presented to the LCJE, Los Angeles 2001

Kirk Gliebe – Director: Devar Emet Messianic Jewish Outreach

There has been a great deal of talk in the last few decades regarding the difficulties of children growing up in America. Rising divorce, growing economic disparity, declining morals, school shootings and juvenile crime have led some to call for drastic measures to deal with the negative results that our social “freedoms” have brought us as Americans for the long term sake of our children. Even our previous First Lady, Hillary Rodham Clinton, has written a book on this subject, discussing society’s responsibility to assist in the proper nurturing and development of children. Most of the discussion being done today is based on a secular sociological framework, and not based on a believing framework. For us as believers many of the solutions presented appear misguided and without long-term viability. These current social difficulties are not just Gentile or “Christian” problems anymore, but today these issues have become an enormous problem facing Jewish children. The current social issues facing the Jewish community, and Jewish children in particular, provide for us as believers an open door of opportunity for Outreach and Ministry.

In Matthew 19:13-15 we read of a special interaction between Yeshua and children and, I believe in it, catch a glimpse of the high priority Yeshua had for children in his ministry:

“Then children were brought to him (Yeshua) so that he might lay his hands on them and pray for them, but the talmidim rebuked the people bringing them. However, Yeshua said, “Let the children come to me, don’t stop them, for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these.” (JNT)

The Scriptures are filled with references to children and of God’s command for them to be taught His Scripture. The Shema portion in Deuteronomy 6:7 is the most obvious as it commands us to “Impress them (God’s Instructions) upon your children. Recite them when you stay at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up.” Within Jewish religious literature there has always been a very strong emphasis on children’s religious instruction. From the Talmud we read the following example emphasizing the special righteousness of someone committed to children’s religious education:

Once Rab came to a certain place and decreed a fast but no rain fell. The Reader then stepped down at his request before the ark and recited, ‘He causeth the wind to blow’, and the wind blew; [he continued], ‘He causeth the rain to fall’, and rain fell. Rab thereupon asked him, What is your special merit? The latter replied: I am a teacher of young children and I teach the children of the poor as well as those of the rich; I take no fees from any who cannot afford to pay; further, I have a fishpond and any boy who is reluctant [to learn] I bribe with some of the fishes from it and thereby appease him so that he becomes eager to learn. (Tractate Ta’anit 24a)

Jewish People are well known for their concern for children, showing their concern by their emphasis on children’s education and social welfare. It would therefore seem important to those of us involved in outreach among Jewish People to also have a strong focus on children as well.

Although there are current ministry works among Jewish children today, almost all of them are focused on the children of Jewish believers. We still currently do little more than throw the proverbial bone to the cause of reaching out to and discipling Jewish children. This has not always been the case. We have had many great examples within the last 100 years of effective outreach to the Jewish community through outreach to Jewish children. It is my objective in this paper to encourage individuals, organizations and congregations involved in Jewish outreach to consider active efforts of outreach to Jewish children with the Message of Messiah Yeshua as part of their holistic approach to reaching out to the Jewish community.

A Historical Perspective

Jewish outreach organizations today tend to refrain from any overt outreach to anyone under the age of 18 unless a parent provides written permission to allow interaction. This is the established policy of several groups that I am familiar with and is understandable as we reflect upon Jewish history and the absolutely indefensible efforts some so-called “Christians” employed in the past to convert Jewish children. Unfortunately today this fear, instead of guiding us, is limiting us. In the first half of the 20th Century most outreach efforts, both in Europe and America, used some kind of children’s outreach as part of their overall effort to impact the Jewish community with the truth of the Message of Messiah Yeshua. The social and religious upheavals of their time provided an open door of opportunity for outreach among Jewish children.

In Europe

Before the horrors of the Holocaust and World War II there were many active efforts by Christian missionary organizations to reach the European Jewish Community. Mitch Glaser in his Doctoral Dissertation: A Survey of Missions to the Jews in Continental Europe, 1900-1950 reports on the wide ranging methods people used to reach Jewish people. It is quickly obvious that one key approach was children’s outreach as this quote from Glaser’s work discussing the methods of Polish Jewish Outreach attests:

“Regarding methodology, these missions generally followed the traditional mission center approach. The center usually included a building with a hall for gospel meetings, a reading room for Bible Study and discussion...Many of them convened children’s meetings. Uniquely, Leon Rosenberg maintained an orphanage in Lodz that was successful.”¹

Although the quote says that Leon Rosenberg did unique work with an orphanage, he was not the only one as the American Board of Missions to the Jews (now known as Chosen People Ministries) also ran a children’s home in France.²

One unique method of outreach to Jewish children was Mission Schools. These were established all over Central Europe by different organizations as a way to teach Jewish children secular studies as well as about the Bible and Yeshua. As Glaser writes:

¹ Glaser, Page 63-64

² Ibid, Page 339

“The LJS (London Jews Society), especially under the leadership of J.H. Adeney had developed an extensive ministry to the Jewish People through establishing mission schools. These resulted in literally thousands of graduates who were biblically well informed concerning Christ and the gospel. This bolsters one of the anticipated findings that the gospel bears greater fruit where there has been a significant, long-term missionary activity. This was true in Romania and Hungary as well.”³

Besides these three examples, Glaser’s work repeatedly details the significant role of outreach to the “under 18 crowd” throughout Europe. If outreach to the European Jewish Community could include children’s outreach, then surely in America this effort must be possible.

In New York City

Rabbi Leopold Cohen, the founder of the mission now called Chosen People Ministries (CPM), early in his work, established children’s outreach efforts in America. In Harold Sevens’s A Rabbi’s Vision, a history of Chosen People Ministries, we read of several important efforts to reach non-believing Jewish children throughout CPM’s history. Rabbi Cohen established, in October of 1896, the first boy’s club for the Jewish boys of Brownsville and called it the Young Friend’s Hebrew Club of Brownsville. They met weekly at 3:30 every Tuesday afternoon. The club had a dual purpose: physical protection as well as matters concerning spiritual growth.⁴ Some time later Joseph Hoffman Cohen while still just sixteen expanded on his father Leopold’s early vision as we read in a quote from Cohen himself:

“I had not been attending the meetings in the Manhattan Avenue Mission this fall very long before I noticed that a meeting for boys specially, would not be out of place; for there were a number of boys who regularly attended the meetings for adults... We decided to hold two meetings a week, one on Sunday afternoon at 3 o’clock, which was to be carried on like a Sunday School, and another on Monday night when the boys could enjoy themselves by playing games and reading books.... At the first meeting (which was a Sunday), there were present some fourteen boys...So we went on, the attendance varies and numbers anywhere from six to fifteen boys. ... (They are all Jewish boys) ... who are fourteen to eighteen years of age...”⁵

By the early 1970’s there had been several different methods of children’s outreach employed throughout CPM’s long history including clubs, camps, vacation bible school and, of course, Hilda Koser, who I understand deserves a category of her own. Sevens says it best in describing her as “...a ‘child of the Mission’ herself, and as one who deeply believed in the importance of reaching children with the Gospel...”⁶ Joseph Hoffman Cohen makes the following statement attesting to the incredible impact of her children’s outreach in Coney Island, NY despite opposition:

“Here an all-year round population of 100 thousand Jews gives us a challenging field.... The heartaches, the joys, the difficulties, the persecutions, of this unique field will never be known by any of us, we suppose, until the records are revealed on the eternal shores where sorrow and sighing will be no more. But to this almost titanic challenge, our dear and faithful Hilda Koser has consecrated ever fiber of her being.... The block where our building is located has been picketed day after day, and children have been

³ Glaser, Page 200

⁴ Sevens, Page 38

⁵ Ibid, Page 70-71

⁶ Ibid, Page 139

*seized and threatened with all sorts of dire consequences if they dare to attend the Gospel meetings. Be it said that some of these children have their hearts so deeply planted in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, that they defy these threats and come anyhow!*⁷

Sevener sums up the impact of her work:

*“Over a span of thirty-seven years, Hilda Koser faithfully served her Lord in Coney Island. Through her children’s programs, mothers’ classes, Sunday school program, Holiday services, Dorcas society, etc... thousands of Jewish people heard the Gospel.... Because of her love for people (children in particular) the Mission at Coney Island became known around the world. Many of the ‘Coney Island kids’ went on to Bible College and are now serving as pastors, teachers, and missionaries...”*⁸

Because of the initial vision of Rabbi Cohen, extensive work has been done in most of the 20th Century to reach the Jewish Children of New York. Space does not allow for all the details concerning the camps, clubs and the lives touched for eternity through the efforts of these workers committed to taking the Gospel to Jewish children. But again, the work in New York was not unique for its time.

In Chicago

While Rabbi Leopold Cohen and his son Joseph were building their outreach to the Jewish People of New York, David and Esther Bronstein were beginning a work among the Jewish People in Chicago. And like their counterparts in New York and Europe, the Bronstein’s were focusing largely on outreach to Jewish children as part of their plan to reach the entire Jewish Community.

David and Esther were immigrants from the Shtetlach of Russia’s Pale District, arriving in America with their separate families around the turn of the Century. It was soon after their marriage that they became believers in Yeshua. After attending Moody Bible Institute they were approached by the Presbyterian Church to reach out to Jewish People in the then growing Jewish Community of Humbolt Park on Chicago’s northwest side. It was the 1920’s and the immigrant Jewish Population was growing. They initially were at a loss as to how to begin their work. In the book Esther their story has been preserved and it points out that very quickly they stumbled onto children’s outreach as a means to impact their Jewish Community for Yeshua. Starting with a playground they soon organized activities for the children including a “Vacation Summer School” which in its initial run brought in over 220 Jewish Children!⁹ With a great deal of commitment, effort and time they developed and perfected an entire system of children’s outreach methods including camps, Bible classes and clubs during their ministry years which stretched from the 1920’s to the 1960’s. As an outcome of their work among Jewish children, they noticed the natural opportunities they had to reach the parents of the children who attended their meetings. Children’s Outreach then became not an end in and of itself, but a means to reach the entire Jewish Community in which they ministered. Ultimately their efforts bore fruit in the establishment of the First Hebrew Christian Church of Chicago, which still exists today as Adat HaTikvah of Evanston, Illinois.

⁷ Sevener, Page 140

⁸ Ibid, Page 141

⁹ Esther, Page 119-120

Current Trends

The Jewish community has changed a lot in the last 30 years. So has outreach to the Jewish community in the name of Messiah Yeshua. Unfortunately the strong interest in outreach among Jewish children seems to have waned and in some cases almost completely disappeared. Despite a growing presence of Messianic Jewish congregations along with the continued existence of Mission organizations both large and small, programs to reach out to and disciple Jewish children are very hard to find. Some might surmise that with the Jewish community reproducing at levels unsustainable for population growth it would seem unwise to invest in efforts to reach a shrinking percentage of the Jewish community. Others might suggest that it is no longer possible to reach out to a Jewish community that is affluent and capable of swatting down our efforts through either legal threats or their own better “in-Community” activities to keep the Jewish children beyond our reach. There is some level of reality to these objections concerning children’s outreach. Yes the Jewish community has fewer children. Yes the Jewish community is no longer an unsettled immigrant community. An investment to develop new and more sophisticated methods of outreach with no guarantee of success would be required. Overall though, excuses opposing outreach among Jewish children are not accurate and are unnecessarily affecting our willingness to enter into the needy harvest of children’s outreach.

Current Sociological and Religious Trends concerning Jewish Children

The Jewish Community today recognizes that new unsettling trends exist among Jewish people that have to be considered:

“Dramatic demographic shifts have occurred in Jewish life in the past twenty-five years. American Jews in the 1990s are preponderantly third- and fourth-generation and are far more acculturated to and accepted by an unprecedentedly open society than were their parents and grandparents. Current patterns of family formation reflect those of other middle-class Americans, and are markedly different from patterns in the two decades that followed the Second World War. Jews as a group have exceptionally high levels of secular education, and the majority of them are relatively affluent. Many of these changes are the result of some larger trends in American society, while some are particular to the Jewish community.”¹⁰

While this might seem to bode well for the American Jewish community, there are concerns:

“The changing milieu of demographic and religious identity poses a critical dilemma for the Jewish community. How well the community responds and promotes the continuity it so ardently wishes to preserve will be tested in the next decade and beyond.”¹¹

Sociologists within the Jewish community have been very concerned by the changes in American Jews. Their view and concern is often related to the issue of continuity, meaning “Are my grandchildren going to be Jews?” Those of us who are Messianic Jews can obviously share this concern, but the purpose of this section will focus more on the spiritual issues. The real issues we need to be aware of have to do with the dissolving social and religious structure concerning Jewish children and the opportunity this dissolution provides us for meeting spiritual needs among Jewish children.

¹⁰ Sternberg, Page xii

¹¹ Ibid, Page xxi

Intermarriage

The first area of social and religious dissolution concerns intermarriage. “Levels of intermarriage among younger Jews and among Jews who have married in the 1980s are strikingly high.”¹² This quote really seems unnecessary, as it is commonly known that over half of all Jews today marry someone who is not Jewish by birth. What is not discussed very often is the result intermarriage has on the children born of such a marriage. According to the following quote from the American Jewish Yearbook there is a lot of confusion among children born through intermarriage:

*“...American Jewish leaders wondered whether the community was about to experience massive demographic erosion. New evidence that such erosion was likely came in a study, ‘Children of Intermarriage: How “Jewish”?’ by Bruce Phillips of Hebrew Union College, which appeared in Studies in Contemporary Jewry. Phillips found that 34 percent of the children of intermarriage were being raised as Christians and only 18 percent as Jews, while 25 percent were being raised in both faiths.”*¹³

There is one vitally important statistical percent they left out: 23 percent of these children are raised with no religion at all! This means that not only is there the problem of religious confusion, but there is the problem of a religious vacuum! Children in these homes are not exactly sure whom they are when it comes to a religious/spiritual identity!

With such high percentages of the Jewish community marrying non-Jews and producing children without the guidance of a clear religious structure and identity, we need to consider what we can do to reach out to them with the Message of Messiah Yeshua. In many cases these children, along with their parents, are open to religious studies, activities and youth groups that can explain the Jewish part of their life to them. Developing programs and methods to do this can provide for them not only a more clear identity as a Jewish person, but also the opportunity to know who God is and about His Messiah Yeshua.

Secularization

We live in a secular society where religion and religious practices are not looked upon too highly when practiced openly in the public arena. The Jewish community has incorporated this negative attitude toward public religious practice and is today one of the most secular ethnic groups in America. Samuel C. Heilman, a leading Jewish demographer details the reality of this from the 1990 National Jewish Population Study (NJPS):

*“Jewish identity for many American Jews, as we have also seen, is no longer something associated exclusively with religion, long the most acceptable and hence common way American Jews had for characterizing themselves. Instead, Jewish identity seems to have moved increasingly toward ethnicity or heritage and culture, while being a ‘good Jew’ has been defined in vaguely moral terms. In fact, 69 percent of those reported on in the 1990 NJPS (and even more of those who were ‘Jews by choice’ or those who were born Jews but who claimed no religion at the time of the survey) identified themselves as a national group, a culture...”*¹⁴

¹² Ibid, Page 106

¹³ American Jewish Yearbook 2000 Edition, Page 213

¹⁴ Heilman, Page 135

This movement within the Jewish community toward secularization of course has long-term ramifications for the children.

A recent study on affiliated Jewish teenagers was done both by Brandeis University's Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies and the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) seeking to ascertain the religious attitudes and involvement of Jewish youth after Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The Brandeis study focused on Boston area Jewish youth in general while the JTS study was focused on Conservative Synagogue youth. The JTS study found that Jewish teens affiliated with Conservative Synagogues at least a majority of the time were over-all positive about their Jewish identity and synagogue experiences including Hebrew School. At the same time the study still found a significant drop off of synagogue involvement by post Bar/Bat Mitzvah teens. In the Brandeis study they detailed that by a vast majority over-all Jewish teens in the Boston area held negative views of their Jewish experiences including Hebrew School. The conclusions of the Brandeis study showed that "Judaism is 'important' to today's teens, the authors write, but 'only as it fits into their lives and their goals in a secular, pluralistic society.'"¹⁵

Family

The dissolution of the Jewish family has been well on its way. Barna in his many studies of religious Americans did a study on divorce and found that Jews are among those most likely to divorce (30% have) compared with the general US population (24% have). Who would have thought that the Jewish community today would be confronted by divorce, blended families and single parent families, yet this is precisely where things are.

Single parent Jewish families are important for us to discuss as we are focusing on outreach to Jewish children. Although single parent families make up a small percentage of Jewish households, they actually represent a fairly large percentage of Jewish children. A study done to determine this found that between 12 and 20 percent of all Jewish children today are being raised in single parent homes.¹⁶ Women head most single parent homes. There are of course incredible difficulties related to this including time, finances and also community acceptance. Although divorce and single parenthood are still social stigmas even in our day, this unfortunate social problem does provide for us an open door of opportunity to help meet the obvious needs of Jewish children in these home situations.

The Jewish family has changed in some other areas as well. There are far more two income families in the Jewish community today. Both parents are gone during the day leaving many children with far too much unsupervised time on their hands. This leaves Jewish children at risk for early experimentation with sex, drugs and other destructive behavior. Many sociologists now call the weekday afternoon from 3:00 to 6:00 the most dangerous time for children concerning these behaviors. Voices within the Jewish community are beginning to realize this and are calling for more Jewish sponsored activities and after school programs to meet this pressing need.¹⁷ An active Messianic Jewish congregation or outreach could meet a great need and also be a bold witness by sponsoring programs to meet the needs of their Jewish neighbor's children.

¹⁵ Chicago Jewish News – Vol 7 No. 21 – February 23 – March 1, 2001

¹⁶ Sternberg, Page 65

¹⁷ Ibid, Page 73-74

Current Outreach Trends concerning Jewish Children

In preparation for this paper I made some phone calls and checked with some sources to see what efforts were being made to reach out to Jewish children with the Message of Messiah. I also sent out a survey to 75 of the congregations associated with the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations. The results of my search and survey were not encouraging.

In phone or e-mail contact with several people associated with Jewish outreach works I found some limited efforts to work with the children of Jewish believers. For example, Josh Sofaer with Jews for Jesus holds a special position within that Mission, focusing on the youth of Jewish believers. There are others I know who have worked on curriculum as well within the different missions developing programs for the children of Jewish believers. Unfortunately, **I could not find a single effort specifically focused on, or even open to, reaching out to the children of non-believing Jewish people.** Now my efforts were not exhaustive and I am quite sure that there must be some organizations and congregations out there who are trying to do some work with Jewish children, but I am reporting that I couldn't find them. On the contrary, when I talked with people about even the idea of reaching out I was reminded of the aforementioned policies to not reach out to Jewish children under the age of 18. Again, my not finding any specific outreach efforts to Jewish children does not mean that they do not exist, but it is an indication of a **general lack of emphasis** by Messianic Jewish congregations and outreach organizations concerning taking the Message of Messiah Yeshua to Jewish children.

I do have to add an important paragraph here about a rebound in children's camping. Ariel Ministries, Jews for Jesus and Chosen People Ministries have been leading the way in working with the children of Jewish believers through their children's camps. These efforts are built on decades of experience in using camping as a tool to disciple Jewish children who come from believing homes. Unfortunately, based on my analysis, these camps do not appear to have as part of their design a clear objective of bringing in non-believing Jewish kids. I believe these camps could serve as a very practical outreach tool for non-believing Jewish children and their families if this would be changed.

When I sent my survey out, a copy of which is attached along with the cover letter, I fully expected to receive a good number of responses. Surely there would be interest from these leaders, some of whom I knew personally, in this effort to understand and encourage children's education and outreach in the Messianic Jewish Movement. I was very discouraged by the poor response. Out of 75 surveys mailed, I only received 11 back. Our main interest in the survey was to ascertain each congregation's emphasis on children's programming. We of course could not attend each place and qualify the responses people gave us, as this would just be beyond the scope of this simple paper. The fact that 64 congregations didn't respond could indicate that there is only limited interest in the topic of children's outreach and programming within the Messianic Jewish Congregational Movement at this particular time.

According to the surveys all eleven of the responding congregations conduct some kind of a Shabbat School for their children. This is important, as a structured activity for children during regular services is helpful in developing in them a positive congregational experience. Beyond Shabbat School most of the responding congregations admitted having little else for children.

Only one congregation mentioned that they conducted an activity in which children participated on Wednesday nights, but it was not clear if this was an actual children's event or just a congregational event in which children could participate. Only four congregations mentioned that they conducted a Hebrew School of some kind, but based on specifying notations on the surveys it is probable that most of these Hebrew classes were part of their existing Shabbat School as a language supplement and not the typical "Hebrew School" for children that most Jewish people would recognize. One piece of encouragement was the response concerning Teen Programs. Nine out of the eleven responding congregations noted that they had active teen works. Again it is not possible to qualify this, but the fact that this space was specifically marked and followed in some instances by additional notations shows some interest in teen programming among the congregations, even if it is limited to service times.

For the past three years our organization, Devar Emet Messianic Jewish Outreach, has been working to develop a children's club as a tool to reach out to and disciple Jewish children in Skokie and West Rogers Park, Chicago. We had begun two years prior to this to take different children we had met to a church about 20 minutes away from our offices that had an Awana program. Awana is a Christian children's club which is widely used by churches to both reach out to the non-believing children living in their community as well as to disciple the children within their own churches. Because we could only take a few children as the distance was long, and also because Jewish parents were unwilling to let their children go to a church, we began our own children's program, calling it **Club Maccabee**, as a Jewish way to reach Jewish children. As our slogan says: "Teaching Jewish children Biblical Truths within a kid focused environment". In the past two and a half years we have grown the club from 10 to 25 children with between 60 and 70% of the children on average coming from homes in which at least one parent is Jewish. Of the 18 Jewish children in the program, 11 come from believing homes while 7 come from homes where the parents are not believers and in some cases are not even open to the Message of Messiah Yeshua. They allow their children to come because they see the value of the program for their children, and also because we have developed an open and honest relationship with them, being very upfront in all of our promotional materials and activities that we are Messianic Jews. To ensure that there is no confusion as to who we are and what we believe, all of our materials contain the following statement: **This activity is sponsored by *Devar Emet Messianic Jewish Outreach*, an organization which believes and teaches that Yeshua (Jesus) is the promised Jewish Messiah**

In the time that we have been doing outreach to Jewish children we have not seen large results. We have seen a few children make decisions to accept Messiah Yeshua and we have seen some children demonstrate sincere interest in living their lives based on the teachings they have heard in the Scripture lessons. The opportunities we have had to reach out to, and minister to, the parents of these children have been remarkable. We recently had our annual "Grand Prix Car Races". We had 25 kids racing cars that they had made out of wood blocks. It was a huge success not just because we had so many kids come out to have some good wholesome fun, but that we were able to see six non-believing Jewish fathers come to the event, two of whom we had not been able to successfully meet up to that point. Children's outreach is time consuming, thankless, costly and personnel intensive, yet it does bring solid, long term benefits. And it can most definitely be done among non-believing Jewish children.

Future Needs

The Jewish community will assuredly continue its dissolution here in America as well as in places such as the CIS, Western Europe, Australia and South America. Taking a new, open look at outreach to Jewish children is essential for us as the opportunity is only going to get larger with time. It is the commitment of my organization, Devar Emet Messianic Jewish Outreach, to develop and produce program materials for Jewish children so that organizations, congregations and others can more effectively reach their entire Jewish community with the Message of Messiah Yeshua.

If you would be interested in interacting about this paper, or if you are interested in running a Club Maccabee chapter in your area, please contact us at:

Devar Emet Messianic Jewish Outreach
P.O. Box 5353 - Skokie, IL 60076 – (847) 674-9146
club-maccabee@devaremet.org

Bibliography

American Jewish Year Book 2000 – Volume 100,

Editors David Singer and Lawrence Grossman,
The American Jewish Committee, NY 2000

Barna Research – Information from their Web Site: www.barna.org

Children in Crisis – The Reference Shelf, Edited by Robin Brown, Volume 66 Number 1
The H.W. Wilson Company, NY 1994

Clinton, Hillary Rodham – It Takes a Village, Simon & Schuster, NY 1996

Esther, Edited by Janet Hoover Thoma from the recollections of Esther Bronstein,
David C. Cook Publishing Co., Elgin, IL 1980
ISBN #0-89191-130-8

Glaser, Mitchell Leslie – A Survey of Missions to the Jews in Continental Europe, 1900-1950,
Doctoral Dissertation in partial fulfillment of Doctor of Philosophy in
Intercultural Studies at Fuller Theological Seminary, 1998

Heilman, Samuel C. – Portrait of American Jews, University of Washington Press, Seattle 1995

Sevener, Harold A. – A Rabbi's Vision, Chosen People Ministries, Inc. 1994

Sternberg, Lawrence I, Gary A. Tobin and Sylvia Barack Fishman – Changing Jewish Life
Greenwood Press, NY 1991

Survey of Children's Programs

Name of Congregation: _____

Address: _____ Phone #: _____

Contact in Congregation: _____

1. What is the average weekly attendance of your congregation? _____

2. How many people are between the ages of: 0-5 years _____

6-12 years _____

13-18 years _____

3. Does your congregation have a: Shabbat School? Yes No

Hebrew School? Yes No

Kids Club? Yes No

Teen Program? Yes No

Other children's program: _____

4. What materials/curriculum do you use for each of these programs?

5. What additional materials do you feel are needed?

6. What difficulties have you come across in finding appropriate curriculum?

October 20, 2000

Dear Friend:

Shalom and greetings in the name of Yeshua our Messiah! We pray that as you serve Him where you are that God is blessing your effort with much fruit.

In the process of working with children, our Outreach has begun developing **Messianic Jewish children's education** programs and materials. To be more effective in this we would like to find out what materials are currently available and how they are being used. Enclosed is a short survey to help us learn about what you are using and what additional materials you feel are needed. I am grateful to **R. Russell Resnik and the UMJC Office** for their willingness to help us with this survey. It is with **their oversight and encouragement** that we are sending this survey to you.

We will be compiling the information from this survey and using it in a paper on Children's Outreach which will be presented at the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism in Los Angeles in March of 2001. Please be assured that we will be keeping **all information strictly confidential**. It is simply our desire to gain insight into the activities and needs concerning children's education and outreach in the Messianic Jewish Community.

In the New Covenant Scriptures we read about Messiah Yeshua's concern for children. In the Tanakh, specifically noted in the Shema, we also are reminded of our responsibility to teach our children. With all of this Biblical encouragement our Outreach has developed a burden and a commitment to develop Messianic Jewish materials and programs to teach, encourage, and reach out to Jewish children from both believing and unbelieving homes. It is our prayer that in this way we can be an encouragement to the Messianic Jewish Community at large.

Thank you for your time. We greatly appreciate any help you can give us by filling out and returning the enclosed survey in the self-addressed envelope provided. You can also e-mail us your information at devaremet@compuserve.com.

Forward for Messiah,

R. Kirk Gliebe
Director