

**SAM**

**THE ROCK THROWER**

and other times of

**Witnessing in Israel**

**AVRAM YEHOSHUA**

This book is dedicated, in loving memory, to  
my father, Robert Louis Sestac (1914–1994).

No man ever loved his sons more than he  
loved his 'two boys.' He led a sacrificial life for us.

He taught me how to love and how to share,  
and because of his prayers I came to find  
the Pearl of great price.

# SAM THE ROCK THROWER

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**BOLD UPPERCASE** text refers to Avram's times of witnessing.

Indented **bold** also refers to his times of witnessing.

Indented, plain and *italicized text* refers to Avram's testimony.

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## Key Events in Avram's Life

- 1951 ..... May 24—Avram is born in Brooklyn, New York
- 1960 ..... Bacon and Eggs
- 1964 ..... Avram's *bar Mitzva*
- 1971 ..... 'God, if You're real...' The Journey Begins
- 1975 ..... October—Born Again in Tampa, Florida
- 1979-1983 ... Master of Divinity—ORU—Tulsa, Oklahoma
- 1983 ..... January—Marriage to Robin Meredith
- 1983 ..... June—The Seed of Abraham begins
- 1984 ..... October 12—Zavdi is born
- 1986 ..... December 18—Yoel is born
- 1989 ..... February 27—Robin leaves with our sons
- 1989 ..... August 3—Marriage to Ruti<sup>1</sup>
- 1995 ..... June—Jerusalem, Israel
- 1997 ..... April—**SAM** the **Rock** Thrower
- 1997 ..... June—Return to the States
- 1999 ..... January—Return to Jerusalem, Israel
- 1999 ..... April—Move to Tiberias, Israel
- 2001 ..... August—Move to Eilat, Israel
- 2004 ..... November—Move to Ramat Gan, Israel
- 2008 ..... July—Zavdi and Yoel come to Israel
- 2013 ..... April 3—Imprisoned for 10 days & Deported from Israel

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<sup>1</sup> Ruti grew up in Le Sueur, Minnesota where she was known as Diane Laabs. In April 1989 the Lord led her to take the name Ruth. A name change by God indicates that He will change one's character. The Lord was also aligning Ruti with her Jewish people and preparing her to be my wife. 'Ruti' is an affectionate way of saying Ruth in Hebrew. Diane had grown up thinking that she was a Gentile, but the Lord revealed to her, in a number of ways, that she was Jewish, having Jewish lineage on both sides of her parents.



## **Acknowledgements**

I am grateful to my wife, Ruti, for the many hours she proofread the initial manuscript and her offering of fine suggestions to enhance this book. Also, for being an example, a practical example in her daily life, of how one loves others, especially those who are no so lovable. For this, and her tenderness and love for the Lord Yeshua and me, I am eternally grateful.

I am also grateful to Beth, for her proofreading of the 'next to last manuscript' and of her many helpful insights and suggestions.

In re-reading the manuscript and making a number of changes, all typographical and grammatical mistakes that remain are mine.

All the events are true. May Yeshua bless you as you read,<sup>2</sup>

**SAM the Rock Thrower!**

*Aram Yehoshua*

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<sup>2</sup> Last revised on Wednesday, January 3, 2024.



## SAM THE ROCK THROWER

A sower went out to sow his Seed...(Luke 8:5)

After having lived in Jerusalem for more than a year and a half, we were now living in Mevaseret Zion, a small town just outside of, and to the west of Jerusalem. On Wednesday, April 2nd, 1997, at about 11:00 AM, after having walked to the grocery store with a small upright cart, which now had some bananas, avocados and oranges, etc. in it, I was on my way back home when I saw a man working on his car in the driveway. Two weeks earlier the man had been driving by when he saw some of his friends talking with me. He stopped and got out of his car to see what it was all about. I was speaking with eight Jewish men about Yeshua being the Messiah (Yeshua is the Hebrew name of Jesus). When he found that out he cursed Yeshua, spit on the ground toward me, got back into his car and took off!

As I walked by his driveway that day he was working on his car and I said, '*Shalom yedidi!*' (The peace of God to you, my friend!) He came out to me cursing Yeshua and me and telling me to get out of Israel!

'You have no right to be here! Go back where you belong!' he shouted.

I told him the Lord had given the Land of Israel to Fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and their Seed, and that I had every right to be here.

He was about two feet (two-thirds of a meter) in front of me now, about five years older than me (making him about fifty at the time), medium build and a little taller. He continued in Hebrew, 'Yeshua was an illegitimate son born out of wedlock!' (That's the gist of what he said without getting profane.)<sup>3</sup> I said

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<sup>3</sup> In order to make Yeshua as theologically repulsive to any Jew who might want to check out His claims to being the Messiah of Israel, some ancient Rabbis invented a number of slanderous stories about Yeshua. This places a theological brick wall in front of the Jewish people in order to stop them from proceeding any further. The story of Yeshua being illegitimate is one such lie. In *Sanhedrin* 106a Yeshua's mother is said to have been a whore that had sex with many men and that's how Yeshua came into existence. Another version of that says that Mary was raped by a Roman soldier and that's how Yeshua came to be conceived. In Dt. 23:2 it speaks of an illegitimate child not being allowed to enter the Congregation of Yahveh, nor his descendants, even to the tenth generation. Of course, any Jew hearing this about Yeshua would turn away immediately in shock and disbelief. How could someone conceived like that be the Messiah of Israel?! The power of a lie is in its

## SAM THE ROCK THROWER

that it wasn't true. He spit in my face! I said I loved him and that Yeshua wanted to give him a new heart. He grabbed one of my four *tzit'ziot* (tassels; Num. 15:37-41) and ripped it out from the left side of my pants where I had it attached with a safety pin, and he threw it on the road. I stood there and told him again that Yeshua loved him and wanted to give him a new heart, one that Ezekiel the Prophet had spoken of (Ezk. 36:24-27).

He went back to the sidewalk, to the steps that led up to his house, and picked up a rock. It fit nicely into his hand. It was about four inches (10 centimeters) through the center and weighed about two pounds (one kilo). Cursing Yeshua and me, he threw it at me with all his might! He was about ten feet (3 meters) from me and I saw it coming, but I didn't try to dodge it. The Lord of Glory hadn't brought me to Israel to dodge rocks, but to proclaim His holy Name to my Jewish people.

The rock hit me on the inside of my left forearm, just below my elbow. Immediately my left elbow and left knee gave way and I stumbled back a few feet. The force of it surprised me. I hadn't expected the impact to be that strong. After I regained my balance I told him that Yeshua was really our Messiah and that He loved him.

Cursing Yeshua and me again, and telling me that I was crazy, he went to where the rock had fallen, picked it up and went back to his throwing position. From there he threw the rock at me again!

This time his aim was a little better and it hit me on my left shoulder. Again I staggered back. Again I told him that I loved him and that Yeshua loved him and wanted to give him a new heart. He went to where the rock had fallen, picked it up, and still cursing Yeshua, me and my parents, went back to his throwing position by the curb.

By this time people were gathering around—and encouraging him! This is Israel and the name of Yeshua is a curse word, not to all Israelis, but to many. There were two women in front of me to the right, and two men in the street; one to my left and one to my right, along with some people looking on from a distance. By now I was in the middle of the road.

With the rock held high over his head he began to take a few steps toward me. In that moment I knew that he wanted to come over and bash my skull in. I half closed my eyes, not relishing what looked like 'a new experience in the Lord,' and he stopped.

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ability to deceive.

### *Sam the Rock Thrower*

He must have sensed that I wouldn't move to try and avoid him, or to defend myself. He threw the rock again. This time it sailed past my left ear, missing it by about an inch. I had moved my head ever so slightly to the right. If I hadn't it would have hit me on the left side of my face.

Then the man to my right began to come toward me. I didn't turn to him, but I could see him out of my peripheral vision. He grabbed hold of my beard and yanked me down the road a few feet, telling me to 'Get out of here!' He didn't like the message, either. He let go of my beard and I stopped being dragged. I turned to him and said that Yeshua really was our Messiah and that He wanted to give him the new heart that God promises us in Ezekiel 36:26. As I spoke I looked directly into his eyes and he looked at me and listened. When I stopped speaking he slowly turned his head away from me. He didn't quite know what to do. I then turned to my right to see the rock thrower. He had picked up an iron pipe, maybe 12 inches long (third of a meter) and an inch (2.5 cm) through the center. He motioned to me with the pipe raised over his head, like he was going to beat my brains out. *Immediately* my arms shot up, with my palms up to the Heavens at '10:00 and 2:00 o'clock,' as if to say, 'Come! I'm ready. I will not run from you and I will not fight you.' I hadn't thought to do that. It was the Holy Spirit—the Grace of God.

Again he saw that I was ready to die. He didn't come any further. I lowered my arms. He threw the pipe down to the ground and then he and his wife came over to me, stood about an arm's length away and shouted at me that my parents were dogs, that I was crazy and that Yeshua was a bastard, etc.

I stood there and by the Grace of Yeshua looked directly into his eyes all the time and allowed Yeshua to love him through me. In a moment or two they were done venting their anger and rage. He was exhausted from the encounter. As they left to go up the steps to their house I quoted Isaiah 53:5 in Hebrew to them,

'But He was pierced-through for our open rebellion. He was crushed for our guilt and wicked hearts. On Him lies the punishment that brings us peace (with Papa God) and by His stripes we are healed.' (my translation)

I told him to read the rest of Isaiah 53. It's *the* chapter on the Suffering Servant of Yahveh<sup>4</sup>—the Messiah of Israel—Yeshua.

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<sup>4</sup> The name of *Yahveh*, the God of Israel, is used 6,823 times in the 'Old Testament.' In most English Bibles His name is usually translated by the title 'the LORD' or

## SAM THE ROCK THROWER

With him and his wife gone I asked Yeshua if there was anything else that He would have me to do. The people had started dispersing. I looked around and I sensed there was nothing else for me to do, so, seeing my *tzit'zit* on the ground I picked it up, and the safety pin that had held it to the inside of my trousers, put them in my pocket and began walking back home. The safety pin was all bent out of shape from being jerked off of my pants. The cart with my food in it hadn't been touched.

Home was only about 80 yards (74 meters) down the same road. I came into the house and said to my wife, 'Shalom, Ruti.' She greeted me, but was busy preparing lunch in the kitchen, cutting vegetables on the counter. She didn't notice what had happened to me. I put the oranges, etc., on the table and some things in the refrigerator, and then headed for the bathroom to wash the spit out of my beard, face and glasses. You won't believe the tune that came into my head as I splashed water on my face:

'When you least expect it, you're elected, it's your lucky day!  
*Smile!* You're on Candid Camera!'<sup>5</sup>

I thought, 'Did one of those rocks hit my head and I didn't realize it? What am I doing humming that tune at a time like this?!' Then the Holy Spirit showed me how appropriate it was. The whole Jewish community would hear about what had happened on Palmach Street—how one Jewish man hated another Jewish man with everything he had inside him—he spit on him, he cursed him, he cursed his parents, he threw rocks at him and threatened to murder him, but the other Jewish man didn't resist him. He only loved him and told him that Yeshua was the Messiah of Israel and that He wanted to give him a new heart.

I went to sit on the bed and began to pray for him and the other people. I asked the Lord to draw him to Himself and to use the incident to win him and other Jews to Him. While praying I realized that I had offered him no resistance. I thanked the Lord Yeshua for that. Tears began to well up in my eyes. Not because I was hurt physically. I was only sore. Not because I was hurt

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'GOD.' Note the use of smaller capital letters for all the letters after the first. Behind these two words is the name of the God of the Hebrews—Yahveh (Ex. 3:15-16, etc.).

<sup>5</sup> Candid Camera is an American hidden camera/practical joke reality TV series, which came to television in 1948 and continued into the 1970s, was revived in the 90s and continues to this day. When the practical joke has had its effect someone comes to the person and says, 'Smile! You're on Candid Camera!'

### *Sam the Rock Thrower*

emotionally. My soul was very much intact. I wept because the Lord had brought me to the place of being able to lay down my life for Him, as Yeshua had done for me. I was so thankful that Yeshua had given me His ability to do that.

Ruti came over and asked if I was alright. I said that I was. I shared with her what had happened and she began to weep because I was hurt, and also, because she felt the Holy Spirit coming upon her for intercession for the man and the rest of the Jewish community. She wasn't angry with the man, but she could see that I was badly bruised. I was grateful that she hadn't been with me.<sup>6</sup>

I felt physically drained. It was as though I had been in a battle. I thought of Stephen and how he was actually stoned to death (Acts 7:54-60), and of Paul, stoned and left for dead (Acts 14:19), and then of Yeshua. How our Lord had been mocked, spit upon, punched, His back lashed open, His beard ripped out, the crown of thorns forcefully placed upon His head and then He was pierced to a wooden pole. How horrible that was for Him! Yeshua really loves us to have gone through all that for us. I also realized that it was 'only the Lord' that I hadn't died—the last rock had missed my head, and it hadn't been crushed-in by the pipe. *Yeshua had stood between death and me* that day. Thank You, Lord.

The bruise on my forearm broke the surface of the skin, but there was no blood, only tenderness to the touch, soreness and puffiness. I had been wearing a short sleeve dress shirt, so the first rock had hit the skin. The bruise on my upper left arm by the shoulder wasn't noticeable, except for some puffiness because the shirt and my t-shirt had taken the edge off the rock, but it was also sore and tender to the touch. Both spots became 'black and blue' as they say, and then yellow and green as they slowly began to heal over the next five weeks before the discoloration and tenderness left.

I thanked the Lord that I didn't have any bitterness in my heart toward the man. I didn't hate or despise him, or want to get revenge. I struggled for a day though, with seeing him again. In confronting the anticipated fear of another episode with the rock thrower, one that might be physically worse for me, I began singing to the Lord. As I sang, the Lord caused me to remember that those who give their lives for Him will be the first to rise from the dead.<sup>7</sup> This

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<sup>6</sup> This was one of the few times that Ruti wasn't with me. We usually go everywhere together. There were other times where rocks and bottles were thrown at us by our Jewish people, but this was the most dramatic time.

## SAM THE ROCK THROWER

comforted me and my fear began to subside.

As I continued to sing and lift Him up I realized that Yeshua would take care of the man. Yeshua would either allow him to throw more rocks or not. My fear was coming from a scenario that he would do it again and the physical pain would be much worse for me—and I was still tender and sore from the day before, but Yeshua comforted me and I was able to say, ‘I’m not afraid of the (possible) pain to come.’ Yeshua was again strengthening me. Now I believed I was ready for my next confrontation with Shmu’el or anyone else. What a mighty God we serve!

Out of all the people that we have shared the Lord with here in Israel, the rock thrower, whom I named *Shmu’el* (Samuel or Sam for short) was the one the Holy Spirit could work on the most because of what happened. *Shmu’el* saw a Jewish man who said that Yeshua was the Messiah. *Shmu’el* hated me with everything he had inside him, but what he got back was the *love* of Yeshua the Messiah for him.

Two days after the encounter, on Friday, April 4th, 1997, Yeshua again strengthened me and gave me a great peace about a tormenting fear that I had—of being stoned in the face. I wasn’t afraid now. I felt that I was again ready to meet *Shmu’el*.<sup>8</sup> I prayed that *Shmu’el*, and many others, would be convicted by the Holy Spirit and drawn to Yeshua.

We covet your prayers for the salvation of the Jewish people. Please take a moment now, if you will, and lift up to our Lord, *Shmu’el*, his wife, all the Jewish people that saw or heard about it, and all the Jewish people in Israel and around the world. Pray that Yeshua will draw them to Himself (Rom.

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<sup>7</sup> Rev. 20:4-6: ‘Then I saw thrones and they sat on them and judgment was given to them and I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded *because of their testimony of Yeshua* and because of the Word of God and those who had not worshipped the beast or his image and had not received the mark on their forehead or on their hand. They came to life and reigned with Messiah for a thousand years. The rest of the dead didn’t come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first Resurrection (for humanity). Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first Resurrection—over these the second death has no power and they will be priests of God and of Messiah and will reign with Him for a thousand years.’ The idea of one losing one’s life for the Name of Messiah means *eternal Life* (Luke 9:24).

<sup>8</sup> I never encountered *Shmu’el* again. About two months after this the Lord led Ruti and me back to the States for a year and a half. We returned to Israel on Jan. 8th, 1999 and since then have lived in Jerusalem, Tiberias, Eilat and Ramat Gan; the Lord moving us in the Land as He wills.

*Sam the Rock Thrower*

11:25-32). Thank you.

By the way, the town's name, Mevaseret Zion means, 'Proclaiming (or Bringing) Good News to Zion!' It's found in Isaiah:

“Get yourself up on a high mountain, you who *brings Good News to Zion!* Lift up your voice mightily!, you who brings Good News to Jerusalem! Lift it up! Do not be afraid! Say to the cities of Judah, ‘Behold your God!’” (Isaiah 40:9)

## SAM THE ROCK THROWER

### *Bacon and Eggs*

I remember a time when my younger brother, my mother and I were at my grandparents' apartment in Brooklyn (my mother's parents). I was about nine years old. We had stayed overnight and as we sat down to the kitchen table for breakfast, Nana (the name I grew up calling my grandmother) asked what I wanted to eat. I told her, 'Pancakes and bacon!' and got a swift kick in my right leg from my mother who was sitting adjacent me. 'Not here!' she scolded me in an angry low whisper, leaning over toward me to emphasize it. I didn't know.

My mother didn't observe her Orthodox Jewish upbringing. Even though I was raised 'Jewish' we never observed the Sabbath and we ate ham and bacon and other unclean meats. These were things that Nana and Gramps would not have approved of, even though they didn't go to the synagogue every Sabbath (Saturday).

I was born in Brooklyn, New York on May 24th, 1951. I would learn about pain at a very early age, my mother's swift kick aside. My mother divorced my father when I was five years old, and I grew up thinking that I was the only kid who didn't have his father living at home. It was hard for me, even though my father loved me with all his heart.

Once every week my father would drive more than 60 miles (100 kilometers) one way, from New York City to Hamburg, New Jersey, to take my younger brother and me out for the day. We'd play baseball, basketball and football *together*. He taught us how to play and I'd grow up to be a good athlete. We'd eat lunch and supper with him and go to the movies, but the best part of it was that he was *with us*. There was a great bond of love between us. One of his sayings, taken from *The Three Musketeers* was, 'One for all and all for one!' He willingly and sacrificially devoted his life to his 'two boys.' I thank the Lord for the father who begat me. He wasn't perfect, but I've never met a greater man. He laid the foundation for God's love by his own example, and built much upon it, without ever mentioning God or Jesus, all the while praying for his two boys to come to the Lord—and we both would give our lives to Jesus in our early adult years and become ministers.

I had an Orthodox *bar Mitzva* (Jewish confirmation of manhood) in Newton, New Jersey in May 1964 because of my grandparents' desire, and my mother wanted to honor them. I was the firstborn. My formal Jewish training began in

## *Bacon & Eggs*

the third grade in the Bronx, New York City, but quickly came to an end (in the third grade) when my mother remarried and we moved to Hamburg, New Jersey. We lived about 14 miles from Newton, and with my mother working as a waitress after I returned home from school, my twice a week Hebrew School education after public school was put on hold. One day though, when I was 12 years old, in the eighth grade, my mother turned to me and exclaimed, ‘Oh my God! You’re almost 13!,’ and that’s when my Jewish training for *bar Mitzva* resumed, six months before my 13th birthday.

Rabbi Blumenthal was a wise man who got me through what would have been an embarrassing situation for me. When I was called to the *bima* (lectern) to read the *haftara* portion (the portion of Scripture from the Prophets that the *bar Mitzva* boy reads in Hebrew) I chanted it melodically, with only two minor mistakes. The only problem was that I had no idea what the Hebrew words meant, or what I was doing, except, ‘Today, I would become a man.’ A few months before my *bar Mitzva*, the rabbi, sensing that my Hebrew wouldn’t be ready in time, made a recording of the Hebrew section for me so I could play it over and over again. I had memorized the *haftara* portion for the reading and the melody and I could read the Hebrew letters, which made up the words.

After the service the men of the synagogue came to me and congratulated me. I felt uncomfortable. I had deceived them. They heard me chant the words, but they meant nothing to me. My heart was far from walking in the ways of the God of Israel, the very meaning of *bar Mitzva*, but oh, what a day it was for me! I received a beautiful gold Seiko watch from my Nana and Gramps, and cash and gifts from other people.

After we got home I went upstairs to my bedroom to count the loot. One of my cousins, Jody, told my mother and she shouted from downstairs, where all the people were, ‘André!!!’ (my American name).<sup>9</sup> ‘You better not be counting that money!’ There’s nothing quite like Jewish guilt.

The next day I assumed my assimilated American lifestyle, which had nothing to do with being Jewish. I was caught up in playing baseball and basketball. I

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<sup>9</sup> Like all Jewish boys and girls born outside the Land of Israel, I was given a name from the culture that I was born into, as well as a Jewish name. I was given my ‘American’ name, André, at birth, due to my father’s French background and my mother’s love for the name. I was also given the Hebrew name Avram on the 8th day of my life, when I was circumcised into the Covenant of Father Abraham (Gen. 17:1-22). The Hebrew name is used in the synagogue, while the other is used outside Jewish circles.

## SAM THE ROCK THROWER

wanted to be a baseball player. My hero was Mickey Mantle and I loved the Yankees. I could tell you at any given moment what Mick's batting average was, how many home runs and RBI's he had, the batting averages of the starting line-up, and how many games in first place the Yankees were, or needed to be. My competitive spirit to win began in those years. If schools had classes on baseball I would have been on the high honor roll. Baseball was where my heart and my head were at, even though I got mostly A's and B's on my report cards, which also came naturally to me.

Left on my own, though, with no real religious training in Judaism or the Person of Yeshua and His ways, I worshiped what many American boys were taught to idolize.

## AUSTRALIAN TEENS

*Fast forward:* February 23rd, 1999 Jerusalem—Ruti and I, now 44 years old, were able to witness to a number of 18-19 year old Jewish teens from Australia. We had just come from the center of Jerusalem, where our post office box was located, to a grocery store that was near where we lived. We had taken bus number 18 and gotten off a few stops before our normal one so we could pick up some fruit, vegetables and other food on *Emek Rafa'im* Street (the Valley of the Giants).<sup>10</sup>

The store had much of their fruit outside and so we got a cart and were putting oranges and tangerines in it when two teenage girls came up to us. They asked if we had time to answer some questions for them about life in Israel. Of course!

The first girl, Hanna (feminine for 'grace' in Hebrew) began by asking what we thought about living in Jerusalem. Ruti shared that we had only been back a little over a month (since Jan. 8, 1999), but that we had lived in Jerusalem a year and a half earlier, for two years (1995-1997), and that we loved being back in Israel. We thought that Israel was the only place for Jews to live.

Then Ruth, the other teenage girl, asked how we were going to vote in the upcoming elections. I told her that we weren't going to vote. We left those things in God's hands.

The girls were here on vacation for about two weeks. They wanted to know how people liked it in the Land because they might one day want to live here.

Hanna asked how we'd vote if we did vote. I turned it around and asked them how they'd vote if they could. They both said they'd vote either Labor or Meretz, and I knew we were in trouble : ) Labor is the party that wants to give 'land for peace,' and Meretz, if they could, would give all of Israel to the Arabs for 'peace,' and we Jews wouldn't have a land of our own.

I briefly shared with them about the history of Israel being reborn in 1948, when six Arab nations declared war upon the tiny Jewish state, and how the United Nations had put a plan, a partition plan, to the Arabs that lived here before the war, that they'd have half the land and the Jews the other half. The Arabs living here would have none of that, though, being told by Egypt, Syria and Iraq that they were to leave their homes and 'get out of the way' because

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<sup>10</sup> This valley is where David fought the Philistines one time (2nd Samuel 5:17f.).

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their armies would come in and throw all the Jews into the sea (the Mediterranean Sea; i.e. murder them). Then those Arabs who had been living here could come back and plunder all the Jewish homes. Most of the Arabs here thought that was great, and so, they left their homes and waited for the Jews to be murdered, but God had other plans, and those Arabs who had been living in the Land of Israel were caught between a rock and a hard place when the war ended. None of their Arab ‘brothers’ from the warring countries wanted them. The Arab nations would use their brothers as pawns to pressure Israel through the world press. I told the girls they continue to do that to this day.

In the war of 1948 Jordan captured land west of the Jordan River, biblically known as Judah and Samaria. The media today call it ‘the West Bank’ (in relation to the Jordan River), but no nation, not even the Arab nations, recognized Jordan’s claim to the land.<sup>11</sup> Jordan also took the eastern part of Jerusalem, which they immediately desecrated by destroying *all* the synagogues and overturning Jewish gravestones and using them for latrines. Animals don’t do that. For the 20 years that eastern Jerusalem was in Jordanian hands, no Jew could go to the Wailing Wall and pray.

In 1967 the Arabs were looking a third time to try and destroy tiny Israel, after they had tried in 1948 and 1956, but Israel recaptured Judah and Samaria and the eastern part of Jerusalem, and the Old City with its four quarters: Arab, Christian, Armenian and Jewish. With it came the Temple Mount area and the Wailing Wall (a section of retaining wall on the southwest that helps support the Temple Mount platform, upon which one time stood the Temple of Solomon). God had given back to us the rest of our homeland.

Ruth, the Australian student, interrupted me and asked,

‘Shouldn’t the Palestinians have a land of their own?’

I said,

‘Sure! But why do they want the land that God gave to us Jews?’

That took us to the Scriptures. I said the Land of Israel doesn’t belong to the Arab people and it doesn’t belong to the Jewish people, either. It belongs to the God of Israel who gave it to the Sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to live

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<sup>11</sup> Only Britain and Malaysia recognized Jordan’s ‘right’ to the conquered land. Of course, the British government was still looking for ‘favor’ and influence among the Arab nations of the Middle East (i.e. oil). Politically, they were very anti-Semitic, as their record from 1930-1948 reveals.

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in (Lev. 25:23). No one has the right or the authority to give away the Land that God has given back to the Jewish people after 1,800 years of wandering. No one, not even the Israeli government, which continually tries to do so for the false peace the Palestinians hold out. The government does it because it, like much of Israel, is very secular and far from the God of Abraham and King David.

Then we got into other things like, 'Is there really a God?' and isn't the Bible 'just written by men, so how can we be sure?' To our delight, a few more teens had joined us, all part of the same group from Australia. I shared with them that the only way for true peace to come to the region would be when our hearts become like God's heart. I told them what God said through the Prophet Ezekiel, how He would bring us Jews back from all the lands where He had scattered us and He would *sprinkle clean water* upon us to take away our filthiness that we had picked up from all the nations in the world where we had lived (Ezk. 36:22-27). Just then, a man from the store, because the sun was beginning to set, started to roll back the awning above us and *water* fell upon some of us! We laughed!

The point wasn't missed by a girl named Irit. She had been smoking and playing the 'cool one,' but as I shared about real *Life* from God I could see in her eyes that her heart was yearning. I told them that God wanted to take out their hearts of stone and replace them with hearts of flesh and to give us His Spirit (Ezk. 36:24-27).

Then to my pleasant surprise a few more teens joined us and before we knew it I was speaking to about 14 Australian Jews on *Emek Rafa'im* next to the fruit and vegetables. I told them there can be a great deal of difference between religion and God. I said that I knew God personally by His Spirit and His Word and that it was the Holy Spirit who made God's Word come alive, and that God wanted them to have His Spirit, too. God wanted them to really know Him, just like Moses, King David, Isaiah and all the Prophets knew Him, by His Spirit and His Word.

We began to go down another rabbit trail, but a teen by the name of Michael (whose name means 'who is like God') said,

'I can see that you really believe in God, but that might be just for you. You are strong in your faith.'

I told him,

'No, I'm not strong in my faith, Michael. I have walked with God for 23 years and I know how weak and sinful I am.'

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When I first came to God I thought I was strong, but I've come to see my weak, wandering and rebellious heart. Yet, God loves me and forgives me and enables me to walk with Him over and over again. Because of His love and forgiveness I love Him more today than ever before and you can know His love, too.'

Hanna said that we Jews must be the *light* to the nations and so shouldn't we let the Palestinians have their country? (It's amazing how one can talk and think others are listening :) I told her I was,

'in favor of giving the Palestinians a country, just not ours. They have never had a so-called Palestinian country of their own in this land or any other, so their insistence upon 'rights' to this land is totally fabricated...it's a lie.'

'After World War One the British promised to give to the Jews *all* the land that is now Jordan, for there was no Jordan then, as well as all of Israel, but after World War Two, with different people in their government, they reneged on it and set up Jordan in 1946. That's where the Palestinians who live in Israel should be living, if anywhere. Actually, there are many Palestinians living there now. Jordan is their country.'

'To give them a country called Palestine, in Judah and Samaria, with some of Jerusalem as its capital, is a mockery of history and justice. Their cry for a country, that the land is theirs, is just not true. Yes, many of them lived here before the war of Independence in 1948, but most of them left voluntarily. They've never had their own government and Jerusalem has never been their capital. They're just Arabs who lived here who came from different Arab countries in the last century to work for the Jews because the Jews paid them more than their Arab brothers paid them to farm in their own country. Their culture is Arabic as well as their language. There is no Palestinian culture or language that's different from other Arabs, something that makes up all different groups of people. There's really no difference between them and their Arab brothers who live in Jordan, Lebanon or Saudi Arabia.'

'When Jordan conquered parts of Judah, Samaria and some of Jerusalem in 1948 no one ever heard of a 'Palestinian' Arab. As a matter of fact, they called the Jews who lived here

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‘Palestinians.’ The Arabs would have none of that designation. They prided themselves on being Arabs.’

‘Also, these so-called Palestinians today never spoke of having their own country when Jordan ruled them from 1948 to 1967. Only some years after Israel re-conquered their biblical land in 1967 did those Arabs begin to say they had ‘rights’ to ‘their’ nation and to call themselves Palestinians. It’s all a ruse of Yasser Arafat and the Arab nations that still want to drive the Jewish people into the sea.’

Then we went down another rabbit trail, of bringing in the humanistic Golden Age of Brotherhood among Mankind, which would lead me into sharing about Yeshua. The Golden Age is popular among liberal Jews who are known as either secular or Reform Jews. I told them,

‘If Man hasn’t been able to love one another in 6,000 years, it wasn’t going to happen now. Man is wicked, all over the world. The Germans don’t like the French, and the Japanese look down upon the Koreans, while the Russians don’t think too highly of the Americans, etc. etc. etc. Man’s heart is evil, and there’s only one cure and that’s God’s cure. It’s only through the Messiah that we can have a new heart.’

Then I shared with them that we had found the Messiah of Israel in Jesus. I waited, not knowing how they’d react. They didn’t and so I continued. I asked them if they knew of the two streams of Messianic thought in Rabbinic Judaism. None of them did, even though many of them had studied in the synagogue. This isn’t unusual because the Rabbis don’t want to open up something that would lead to Yeshua being seen as the Messiah. I told them the ancient Jewish Sages and Rabbis saw,

‘two different streams of thought on the Messiah in the Scriptures and they came to the conclusion, because they couldn’t reconcile them, that there must be two different Messiahs. One, Messiah the Son of David, would reign forever (2nd Sam. 7:12-16), but the other, Messiah the Son of Joseph, would die for our sins. They named him the Suffering Servant because of what Isaiah 53 says about this Servant’ (Is. 52:13–53:12).

‘But God threw the Rabbis a curve ball and sent Messiah the Son of Joseph to die for our sins 2,000 years ago, raising Him

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from the dead to sit at God's right hand. He will send this same Messiah back soon as Messiah the Son of David, to rule on David's Throne and over the House of Jacob forever' (Zechariah 6:12-13; Lk. 1:30-33; Acts 2:30). 'One Messiah coming at two different times to accomplish God's purpose for Israel—redemption and eternal life.

'Like Joseph who was sold into slavery by his own brothers, yet rose to second in command of all Egypt because God had a plan to save his brothers through Joseph, so too, with Messiah Yeshua, the Hebrew name of our Messiah, called Jesus by Christians. He was also rejected by His brothers, us Jews, as a nation, by our High Priest (Psalm 118:22; Is. 53:4; Mt. 27:1f.) and yet He rose from the dead by the mighty power of the God of Israel' (Ps. 16:10; 22:1-31; Is. 53:10-12) 'to prove that He was God's Suffering Servant and our Messiah King' (Mt. 12:39-41; Acts 2:31, 36). 'Only He can redeem us from our sins and give us the new heart that God promises us through the Spirit of God.'

'I wasn't there and I didn't see His resurrection, but when I gave my life to Jesus and asked God to forgive me of my sins, the Holy Spirit came upon me and I *knew* that Yeshua was real. If you'll seek the God of Israel and ask Him if Yeshua is your Messiah, you'll come to know for yourself the *Life* that God has for you in our Messiah.'

We must have been talking for over an hour. Ruth then asked Ruti (my wife) about women's lib and being free, because Ruti wears a head covering and hadn't said a word up to that point. Teenage Ruth asked Ruti:

'Don't you feel like you're in prison, having to do all the religious things?'

Ruti shared that she thought she was free when she was young, when she wasn't walking with God and doing whatever she wanted to do, but she said that she had only come to know true freedom by giving her life to Messiah Yeshua. My wife then poured her heart out to the girls and they were impacted by her genuine love for them.

By the end, some had left, being called away to go on their next outing in the Promised Land, but many stayed a little while longer, even to the point of being late for their next excursion. They were riveted by the Holy Spirit, who

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was drawing their souls to the *Fountain of Living Waters* (Jer. 2:13).

I gave them our names and telephone number and told them to call us if they had any questions or if they just wanted to talk some more. Please pray for them, especially the ones whose names we remember: Michael, Hanna, Ruth, Carli and Irit—Jews from Australia who need to know their Messiah and return to live in the Land that God gave to their Fathers. Thank you!

## *The Journey Begins*

At 20 years old I was attending Bergen Community College in Paramus, New Jersey (1969-1971). I remember one day turning onto Rt. 17 from Rt. 4 to go to the pool hall where I made my living shooting pool. I would eventually graduate from Ramapo State College in Mahwah, NJ with a B.A. in Political Science with no distinctions (Dec. 1974). My heart was into shooting pool and my real education came from the pool hall where I got an M.A. in 'Banking' and a Ph.D. in 'English.' :)

My life was one where I did whatever I wanted to do. Leaving home at 18 I made the pool hall my new home where I could be found about 60 hours a week. I smoked grass, did hash and some LSD, too. I learned what sex was about and also saw that I was not as ethical as I had imagined myself to be, but lately, something was stirring inside of me. As I entered the ramp to go onto Rt. 17, the road which would take me to the pool hall, I looked up into the sky and said,

'God, if You're real I want to know. If You're not, then Heaven and Hell don't mean anything, but if You are real then You're wise enough and strong enough to get in onto a guy like me.'

That began my spiritual journey. Oh, I 'knew' that God existed. I had heard about Him in one way or another all my life, but God meant no more to me than George Washington. I knew that he had existed, too, but Mr. Washington didn't directly effect my life, at least not as I could see it in 1971, and neither did the God of my Fathers. Where was *Life?!*

I was hungry for *reality*. I began searching for God in Transcendental Meditation. I found something there called 'nothingness' that I thought at the time was great. I looked into Zen Buddhism. I loved it. I thought it was the perfect answer to reality, but I would come to see that God was not there either, just a heightened sense of self-awareness. I would wander down that spiritual lane for the next four years, until I moved to Tampa, Florida with Tommy Vince, a friend of mine from my Bergen Community College days.

I had played pool for five years and was good enough to become a professional, but pool was losing its appeal and my heart wasn't into hustling people. I had come to see that in order to make money at the game I would have to become insensitive to people and to any morals that I might have had left. I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life, but I knew that I didn't want to shoot pool for the rest of it. I could see that 'to be the best' you had to give

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your soul to the game, which I had done, but the game didn't satisfy my soul. It took my soul and left me empty.

I would have gone to California, but I didn't think my '67 Buick Skylark would make it. Tommy and I decided to head to Florida. It was September 1975 when we took off from New Jersey and came to Tampa, Florida. I had only brought a few books with me, but one of them would radically change my life forever.

I had heard many good things about the book over the past few years, and so, when I began to read it in October I thought it was going to be like a number of other 'self-help' books that I had read before. I was into the 'pull myself up by my own belt loops' philosophy and that's why I thought this book would be similar to them. It wasn't.

The God of Israel wooed me to Himself through the book. It had stories about people who were searching for *reality* and for hope, life, love and the knowledge of the one true God. Each one found their answer in Jesus of Nazareth. I was deeply impressed. I had never read anything like that before.

Growing up with my limited Jewish understanding, I knew nothing of the terrible things Christians had done to the Jewish people over the last 1,900 years, officially in the name of Jesus.<sup>12</sup> My grandparents and parents had never mentioned that Name, and so I wasn't turned off by His Name when I read it in the book, as many Jewish people would have been.

By the time I had gotten halfway through the book I could see how Jesus was everything my soul had always yearned for. I gave myself to Him right then and there, in the middle of the book, asking Him to come into my heart and to forgive me of my sins, as the book instructed me to do, and the most incredible thing happened. He did! As I surrendered myself to Him in that simple, but heartfelt prayer, an indescribable *living peace* came over me like a gentle waterfall. I'd later come to understand that it was the Holy Spirit. All I knew was that it was real! God was real! Jesus was real and He was the Messiah of

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<sup>12</sup> If you're not familiar with the persecution of the Jewish people by the Church over the last 19 centuries you might want to read Max Dimont's paperback, *God, Jews and History*, or any Jewish history book starting from the time after Jesus. More Jews have been persecuted and murdered 'in the name of Jesus,' with infants literally ripped from the arms of their screaming Jewish mothers, synagogues burned to the ground with the Jewish people of the town inside them, etc., than all other 'names' combined. Is it any wonder that the name of *Jesus* is a curse word in the Jewish community?

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Israel, my Savior!

I also knew that I had made the right decision about Jesus, or as I would later come to know His Hebrew name—Yeshua. The God of Israel was affirming Himself to me. I now had an *experiential* awareness of the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth. He had revealed Himself to me as He had done to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and countless others. One journey came to an end, while another one began.

## THE FIRST DAY IN TIBERIAS

After returning to Israel on January 8th, 1999 we were in Jerusalem only three months, until April, and the Lord moved us up to Tiberias. Tiberias is a small city of 40,000 people. It's on the western side of the Sea of Galilee, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) north of Jerusalem. Ruti told me that the Galil (Galilee) is like San Diego. Palm trees everywhere and the weather is pleasant when it's not so humid (which is much of the summer here).

We would stay in Tiberias for two years and four months, planting Seed into the hearts of many Israelis. We had moved six times in the last 27 months, an average of once every four and a half months, and three of those moves were across the Atlantic. I'm looking forward to settling down one day, as God has promised us (2nd Sam. 7:10), but until then we go wherever His Spirit blows the sails of our sailboat—the HMS Yeshua!

The first full day we were in Tiberias the Lord moved upon the heart of a Jewish man. Having prepared to leave Jerusalem for about a week (of packing things) and finally moving on Monday, April 5th, we arrived in Tiberias about 6:00 PM. We stayed up until midnight, unpacking and putting things away and collapsed into bed. When we got up on Tuesday morning we were still exhausted, so I told Ruti that I didn't want her to cook. I took her out to eat so she wouldn't have to labor at that and it would give us a break because we still had things to unpack and put away. We took off for the city, which is down the mountain about three miles away. Literally, the heart of the city is only a mile away as the crow flies, but the road to it first goes north, then east and then south into the downtown area.

We took the bus and when we arrived we asked the bus driver where a good restaurant was. He told us and we set out walking, but before we got to the one he told us about we saw another one, and we were hungry. It was the Lord. It was a Moroccan restaurant. The Jewish man who owned it had come from French and Arabic speaking Morocco.

We ordered some things, ate and were paying the check when the owner, Eli (meaning 'my God') told me that I was a *tzadik* (a righteous man). He said that I had 'a sweetness' about me and that there was 'a *Light* around' me. He had pictures of many famous rabbis on the wall, not an uncommon thing for religious Jews, and he pointed to them saying that I had more righteousness than them. I was impressed because it's very unusual for a Jewish man to elevate a stranger above his esteemed Rabbis. I thanked him, realizing that Eli

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was very special because the Lord was opening his eyes to Himself through my demeanor.

He then asked if Ruti wasn't sweeter than me—that was the Frenchman in him! I told him, 'Yes!' Then he said that he felt, and he paused for a moment to consider what it was he was feeling, that he felt 'happy' when he looked at us or came to serve us. We knew the Lord was manifesting Himself to Eli through us, drawing Eli to Himself and we began to silently pray as how to proceed.

Eli then told us that he had been praying very intensely to God that day for God to help him. He was having a hard time financially. He told us he was divorced and asked us to pray for a wife for him. We told him that we would. All during this time I'm seeking the Lord as to whether to share Yeshua with him and I sense I'm not to do it today.

I did tell Eli that we wanted to come back and share about God and Messiah with him. He was open to that. Ruti was also sensing that we were to wait so that we could pray and fast for his salvation. (We use Sundays to pray and fast for the people that Yeshua brings to our heart.) I hugged him as we left and he kissed me on the cheek, a very French thing to do, and I did the same. When we got outside we immediately began praying for him out loud as we walked down the street. Eli is 61 years old, about five foot six inches tall and about 40 pounds overweight...the French like to eat!

Later that night we took a gift to our new landlord, Avraham (English: Abraham 'father of many people') and his wife Varda (a word for 'rose' in Hebrew) and their four children, ranging in age from 25 to 18: Rotem, Merav (strife), Keren (rays of light) and Dotan. We had bought some Moroccan sweets at Eli's restaurant, some fruits and such that he made into dried 'candies,' as they do in Morocco. I had wanted to get Avraham and Varda something when we were still in Jerusalem, but with the packing and such it hadn't worked out. So we took the Moroccan candies up to their place, which was right above ours in their two story dwelling house, and they invited us in.

One thing led to another and Avraham told us that he didn't like the realtor who had brought us together. His name was Yosi (a nickname for Yosafe—Joseph, which means 'to add'). We had shared Yeshua with Yosi when we first came to Tiberias and had looked at Avraham's rental place. It seems that Yosi presented himself to Avraham as Rotem's friend (Avraham's oldest son), but Avraham didn't realize that he would have to pay Yosi something for arranging the deal. We also had to pay Yosi for helping us to find the place, which was half a month's rent. On top of that Avraham wasn't pleased that Yosi had

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gotten him down from the \$550 to \$600 range, to the \$480 that we finally settled on for a month's rent. I could see there was a bad taste in Avraham's mouth about the whole deal. He had agreed to the \$480, but he wasn't happy about it.

Ruti leaned over to me and said that she had been thinking that we should pay him at least \$500 a month. I sensed that it was important, for the sake of their future salvation, that we do the right thing in Avraham's eyes, and not hinder the Gospel over money. I told him that we didn't want to steal from him and that we wanted to do what was right for him. He said that he had already given his word and I could see he meant it, but I knew we were to go the extra mile.

I thought about giving him \$500 a month, up \$20 from our \$480, but that would only be a token offering, especially as he had been asking for \$550 to \$600. After internally struggling with the Lord over this, I told him that we would pay him \$550 a month. I reached into my wallet and pulled out \$210 in Israeli shekels. I gave it to him and said that this was to be added to the first three months rent that we had already paid him for three months, which is a standard way of paying rent in Israel (three months at a time).

I hoped that I wasn't presuming upon the Lord. I know how the enemy likes to come in and pervert the true Way that Yeshua wants us to walk in, to cause doubt. Ruti would later tell me that she believed that it was what Yeshua wanted. This helped to confirm for me that it was what the Lord wanted me to do. It was an additional \$70 a month, which would bring the rent to \$550, a very high sum for us, but this was Israel and it's not an uncommon rental price.

By doing this we immediately saw that the Lord took the bad taste out of Avraham's mouth. His countenance changed, toward Yosi a little, and toward us a lot. He softened up. We stayed a little while longer and before we left, Avraham asked us if we would come for dinner the next day. We were glad to.

As for the candy we had brought from Eli's place, Avraham questioned me about it, wanting to make sure that it was 'kosher' (that it had been made by a Jew and that there wasn't anything in it that was unclean), and when he was satisfied about it, that it was acceptable, he appreciated it. To Avraham, Ruti and I were Christians, even though we were Jews, and Christians eat many unclean animals like pig, catfish, shrimp and lobster (cf. Lev. 11).

It wasn't 15 minutes after we had left that Rotem came back. He, too, had been striving against us for the sake of more money for his father. I knew they would tell him what we had done. When we saw him later that day, the look

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of appreciation on his face toward us was thanks enough for what I had done. We thanked the Lord for using the money to open him up, too, in a much greater way, to soften the ground of his soul for the Seed to be planted.

The next day, Wednesday, Avraham came down to get us and we went up to eat. The ‘children,’ as Varda calls them, all except for Merav, were gone. Merav was in her room, not hungry to eat, and so it was just Avraham, Varda and us. I was disappointed. I had thought the whole family would be there so I could share Messiah with them, but the others were at the homes of different friends.

Avraham cooked some steaks, chicken and *kabab*, which is like a cylindrical hamburger made from lamb that had delicious seasonings on it. There were also different kinds of salads, olives, rice and some lemon slices that had been soaked in olive oil, salt and paprika. It was all delicious.

We started off with just general conversation, but after a little while I sensed an opening and began to speak of Yeshua the Messiah. The Lord started me off by asking Avraham why there was,

‘a need for an altar of sacrifice? Does God need blood? Does He eat the meat from the animals?’

He said that God didn’t eat the blood or the meat, but he couldn’t give me an answer to the question. (Judaism proclaims itself the direct descendant of Moses, but doesn’t have sacrifice, altar, Temple or priesthood. As such, it’s a pale and perverted imitation of what God gave to Israel at Mt. Sinai. That’s why Avraham, and many Jews like him, know nothing of the need for sacrifice for the forgiveness of their sins.

I asked him why there was an Altar in Heaven? We see Isaiah coming before the Lord and declaring that he’s very sinful. Then a Saraf (a Burning One) takes a live coal from the heavenly Altar and puts it on Isaiah’s tongue, and he is cleansed and forgiven of his sins (Is. 6:1-7). Avraham didn’t have an answer for that either, and so I asked him how could we expect to live in the very presence of God, which the Scripture tells us is a consuming Fire (Ex. 3:2, the Burning Bush; 19:18, God descending upon Mt. Sinai; Dt. 4:24; Mal. 3:2), *unless He cleanses us from our sins and transforms us to be like Him?* I said,

‘Man is only flesh and blood, and if he were in God’s presence he would burn and die.’

I said the Altar in the Tabernacle and Temples was a picture of the sacrifice of Messiah Yeshua and how His Blood cleanses us from sin *and* transforms us

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into the very nature and being of God the Son. His Flesh is the real Bread from Heaven that was pictured in the Manna. If we eat of Him we will be transformed and live forever with God in His presence.

I then spoke of Joseph, and his brothers who hated him, but that God was with Joseph and raised him up to be second only to Pharaoh. This, too, was a picture of Yeshua. Messiah's brothers, Israel, hated Him, but God His Father raised Him from the dead to be second in command only to the Father. Just as Joseph's brothers meant it for evil, so too, did we, Israel, mean it for evil, when we as a nation crucified Yeshua, but God would use it for our good.

Joseph was a savior to his brethren when there wasn't any food for them, and Yeshua is the Savior for His brethren Israel, and all the Gentiles who would become part of Israel through belief in Messiah. Yeshua gives us living Bread to eat—Himself (John 6:31f.).

Both Avraham and Varda were listening and interested in what I was saying. I then asked Avraham why Moses couldn't come to the Promised Land, when he had led Israel for 40 years in the Wilderness. When God told Moses he couldn't come, Moses pleaded with God, but God told him not to ever bring it up again! (Dt. 3:23-28) 'Was God being *mean* to Moses?'

Avraham said that Moses couldn't come because he had sinned (Num. 20:1-13). He was right and I said, 'For just one sin God told Moses that?' He didn't know what to say. I told them,

'Moses, even in his death, is a picture of Messiah Yeshua. Moses dies and the Sons of Israel come into the Promised Land under Joshua. Messiah Yeshua had to die in order for Israel to cross over to Heaven, the greater Promised Land, which *is* the New Jerusalem, whose spiritual *reality* is like burning fire. Joshua is a picture of the risen Messiah bringing Israel into the greater Promised Land.' (cf. Revelation 21-22)

Then I shared how Isaiah 53 spoke of Messiah dying for us, for our sins, and that the ancient Rabbis thought there would be two Messiahs. One they named Messiah the Son of David, who would rule and reign forever. The other they named Messiah the Son of Joseph, who like Joseph, would be rejected by His brothers and die, and yet God would raise Him from the dead never to die again. I spoke some more, much of this in Hebrew, even though my Hebrew wasn't fluent. Varda spoke some English, but Avraham didn't speak much English. While I had been talking, Merav had come out and washed the dishes in the next room, the kitchen, and so I knew that she had also heard about

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Messiah Yeshua because I was speaking loud enough, and Merav may have come out just to hear what I was saying.

I sensed that although they weren't closed to hearing about Yeshua, they weren't hungry to hear more, and so I settled back and thought that this would be enough for now. Well, who should walk in just a few minutes later but Eli, not the Moroccan restaurant owner, but Varda's younger brother from Tel Aviv. This was my first time meeting him.

Avraham was 52 years old, Varda was 50 and Eli was 46. Eli came in with a pack of cigarettes in his hand and I could see that he was the typical Israeli—little care for God or religion and very self sufficient. He sat down with us at the table and had some things to eat. Before I knew it though, much to my delight, Eli asked me what I did for work. I told him my work consisted of sharing the *Life* that Messiah Yeshua brings to us. Then he began to mock me asking, 'Where is this Messiah?'

I thought for a moment and told him that Messiah Yeshua, like God, was right there with us. That kind of stunned him and he asked the same question again, still mocking, and I said, 'Haven't you read that Messiah is God's Son?' Eli said that Messiah was the son of a man. I told him that in Psalm 2 it says the nations rage against God and His Anointed One (Messiah), and God calls the Messiah His Son (v. 6). 'The Messiah, like God, is everywhere.'

At first I didn't like Eli, but I asked the Lord to give me His Love for Eli and I found myself really caring for him. I knew that was the Lord and I knew that this was something that every human being picks up on and needs. We talked more about Messiah, and Ruti would later tell me that Avraham and Varda, who had been waning about Messiah, were now very much listening as Eli asked me some good questions. My attention was focused on Eli, who was sitting at the head of the table to my right, and so I didn't see Avraham, Varda, who were across from me to my left, and Ruti, who was to my left.

He asked why we came to Tiveria (Tiberias, as they say in English) and I told him that we sensed Yeshua wanted us to live here for a season. I told him of our 'chance' meeting with Yosi the realtor at a gas station in town, and then coming to Avraham, and how the place just opened up for us. We had prayed that night, after having seen Avraham, and sensed that we were to take the place, as there was no resistance to our belief in Yeshua.

It's ironic that if Avraham had kept to his original desire of \$550 for the rent, we might not have taken it. The place is actually bigger than Ruti and I need. I had told Yosi that we wanted a place for \$400 to \$450. Avraham, having come

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down to \$480, made it acceptable to us, but now we were paying him the \$550 that he wanted! The Lord very much had wanted us here.

Eli then asked if God spoke to me and I told him that sometimes He did. I shared a time when God's very presence of *love* overwhelmed me. I said that I not only 'believed' in Messiah Yeshua with my head, but also with my whole being because I *knew* that Messiah Yeshua was real, by His Spirit and by the Word of God. I knew a little of who the God of Israel was because the Son is the perfect reflection of His Father (Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:1-4).

I asked Eli who the Angel of the Lord was, that He could stop the sacrifice of Isaac by his father Abraham when God had initiated it (Gen. 22). He didn't know. I asked how Hagar could proclaim that she had seen the God who saw her, and that He had spoken to her, when God was never mentioned in the passage—only the Angel is there (Gen. 16:7-14).

It's interesting how the Lord works because that very morning, when I had been reading the Scriptures and praying, the Lord had put those passages on my heart and I sensed that I would be sharing them with someone. I told him that this 'Angel' or literally 'Messenger' in Hebrew, was Yeshua, God the Son, the Messiah of Israel, before He was conceived in the womb of Miryam (Mary), and that those who had seen Him in the *Tanach* (Hebrew for the Old Testament) said they had seen God.<sup>13</sup>

Eli then asked me how many Jewish people in the United States believed in this Messiah? I told him about 150,000 and he was surprised. He asked about Israel and I said there were about 8,000 Israelis who believe that Yeshua is the Messiah. There were congregations in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa and Tiberias, etc. He was surprised again that there'd be some congregations in Tiberias, and I told him that I'd take him to one if he liked. He politely declined.

He questioned me as to where I prayed. In Judaism, men pray together in the synagogue, reading out of the same prayer book every day. He was asking me which synagogue I went to. I told him that I didn't wear a *kippa* (Jewish head covering) and without it they won't let you pray.<sup>14</sup> I said that I prayed in the

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<sup>13</sup> For more on Who this Messenger is, see *The Angel of the Lord* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Angel-of-the-Lord.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> See *The Kippa* at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Kippa.pdf> for its pagan background and why I don't wear it any longer. Actually, if a man wears any head covering at all (e.g. a hat), the synagogue will let him pray with them. The point is that the head *must* be covered in order to pray, but this is nowhere commanded in the Bible.

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house, and that I didn't wear a *kipa* because it's a symbol of sun worship that the Pope wears, so why do the Jews wear it? Where was the *kipa* found in God's Word? Eli and Avraham agreed that it wasn't in the Scriptures. I said that God's Word was our standard for what was right and wrong, and that we needed to follow Him, and not the Rabbis, when there was a disagreement.

Eli asked me, 'What prayer book do you use?' In Judaism the prayer book is called the *sidur*. I told him I didn't use a *sidur*, but that I prayed from my heart. Eli said that was like Moses. Now I was pleasantly surprised. He was comparing me favorably to Moses.

Eli also knew that Yeshua was a Jew and I told him that many, not all, but a number of Christians loved the Jewish people and that this was what God was doing in them. He said that for many hundreds of years Christians hated the Jews. I said that was true, but it wasn't what the New Covenant tells them to do, and those Christians were evil, just as there were Jews who didn't love Moses and who did evil things.

He told me that all Jews loved Moses, and I asked him about Yosi Sarid. Yosi Sarid was a member of the *Kenesset* (Israeli Senate) who despised God and religious Israeli Jews, and came against them at every turn. Sarid didn't like Moses, either. As the head of a party in the *Kenesset* there were, of course, many Israelis who had voted for him. Eli and Avraham agreed with me that there were many Jews who didn't walk in what Moses taught. Eli was more 'religious' (in a good way) than I had first thought.

Eli asked me what I had done before I came to Messiah. I told him that 23 years ago I drank, did drugs and chased women. He smiled that lustful smile that most Israeli men do when it comes to women. I also said that I had gone through college, but I had made my living shooting pool. I could see that it meant something to him that I hadn't grown up in this belief of Yeshua, but that I had another life of being part of the world.

Eli asked about my father and mother. Were they like me? Were they Jewish? I said that my *Abba* (Papa) , on his mother's side, was of Russian and Turkish Jewry. He had died five years earlier, but had believed in Jesus. My mother was a Jew of Russian, Polish, Ukrainian and Lithuanian descent, but she had left the Orthodoxy of her childhood and didn't practice Judaism (like most American Jews).

Jews want to check my pedigree to see if I'm *really* Jewish. If a Christian presents himself as a (spiritual) Jew,<sup>15</sup> and the Jew finds out about this, that he's really not Jewish, then the Jew can shrug off the 'Jesus thing,' saying the

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person is not really a Jew, and so, ‘he doesn’t count’ because he doesn’t really know what it’s like to be a Jew. There I was though, a Jew in their eyes, telling them about Messiah Yeshua. They couldn’t shake it off so easily.

Please lift up *both* Eli the restaurant owner and Eli the brother of Varda, along with Avraham, Varda and their children: Rotem, Merav, Keren and Dotan. They desperately need Yeshua as parched land needs rain. Pray that the Lord would remove all the obstacles that stand in the way, so their hearts will be free to come to their Messiah. It’s through our prayers that the eyes of their hearts will be able to see Him who is the Messenger of the Living God.<sup>16</sup> Thank you!

Our first few days in Tiberias started off wonderfully! We were so grateful to Yeshua for this.

I praise You, Lord Yeshua! I could still be shooting pool and doing drugs if it weren’t for You.

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<sup>15</sup> See *Is the Gentile Now a Jew?* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Is-the-Gentile-Now-a-Jew.pdf> for why the Gentile is not the ‘spiritual Jew’ (of Romans 2:28 “For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.”)

<sup>16</sup> See *Messiah—The Sent One* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Messiah-The-Sent-One.pdf>. Yeshua calls Himself ‘sent’ of the Father/God 39 times in the Gospel of John. The *Messenger* of Yahveh (what is usually translated in English as, the Angel of the LORD), is one who is sent. The word *apostle* means ‘sent one’ (cf. John. 20:21; Hebrew 3:1).

## AVRAHAM THE LANDLORD

In the evening of August 17th, 1999 four months after we had come to Tiberias, Ruti and I were outside in the backyard with Avraham and Varda. We were in the backyard for about an hour and a half talking with them about different things—their children, what Avraham did for a living (he drives a truck for a fig and date plant in the area), etc. Varda spoke of getting ready to go back to teach school soon and how her foot was healing, but not as fast as she would have liked. She had suffered a severe break in her foot, actually three, in March and had already had a couple of operations. She was walking on it, but still limping.

Ruti and I had shared the Lord with them a number of times since that dinner, and I had a strong desire to share Him again with them, so as we talked I silently prayed for the Lord to lead me. I sensed an opening and I told them of the *Life* the Lord had given me 24 years ago and that if I died that night I knew that I'd be in the New Jerusalem because of my faith and relationship with Yeshua and what He has done for me.

We had been talking about the earthquake that just hit Turkey and had killed over a thousand people, with more than 10,000 unaccounted for. I used it to say that no one knew the time when they would die. Certainly not those people, especially as it struck at 3 AM. They both agreed.

I told Avraham and Varda that because I believed that Yeshua was our Messiah, I had been forgiven of my sins. He had given the Holy Spirit to live within me so I could begin to know God, to really know Him, and be assured of the New Jerusalem. When I sinned I could call upon the Father in the name of His Son because of His sacrificial death, to forgive my sin.

Avraham spoke and said that all the 'great ones' in the Hebrew Bible would be there, too. I said,

“Yes! They will be there because they knew Messiah Yeshua, too. King David said in Psalm 110:1, ‘Yahveh said *to my Lord*, ‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.’”

‘David literally saw Messiah Yeshua. Who was *King* David calling *his* Lord other than Yahveh? It was Messiah Yeshua.

David knew Yeshua. Father Abraham knew Yeshua, too. Abraham saw Yeshua when he was about to sacrifice Isaac. Yeshua was the Messenger (wrongly translated as ‘Angel’ in Gen. 22:11, 15) who stopped Abraham from sacrificing his son, Isaac.’

‘Jacob spoke on his deathbed of the Messenger (‘Angel’) who had redeemed him from all evil (Gen. 48:16). They all knew Messiah Yeshua, and when they stand before Him on Judgment Day they will enter into Messiah’s eternal Kingdom.’

I then told them of the prophecy in Daniel 9:24-26, when Daniel was told by the angel Gabriel that,

‘the Messiah would come *before* the destruction of the Second Temple, the one that would be built by Ezra and Nehemiah.’

‘Messiah came and died for our sins, as the angel Gabriel spoke to Daniel, and Messiah Yeshua was raised from the dead by God the Father, never to die again, to show us that Yeshua is truly God’s Son, and that the Father is offering eternal *Life* to us through His Son.’

‘Forty years after Yeshua’s death and resurrection the Second Temple was destroyed. According to Daniel, the Messiah of Israel had to come before 70 AD. He did come. Yeshua is our Messiah. If not, where is the Messiah that Gabriel said would come before the destruction of the Second Temple?’

As I spoke I saw Avraham’s eyes getting heavier and heavier. I’ve noticed this before, when sharing about Messiah. Please pray that the Lord would open his eyes to the Truth about Messiah Yeshua and not allow the enemy to close them.

Then I made an emotional appeal. My heart was so heavy for them. I told them that I felt so frustrated for them. I loved them and wanted them to come to know the Messiah of Israel and the *Life* that God had for them. My voice rose as I shared this and I know they could tell that I meant every word of it.

Please keep Avraham and Varda on your prayer list. We were very loving toward them, and of course, this is unusual anywhere in the world. They were both attracted to us because of that, and so we frequently spent time in their company and that of their family, both their children and their prospective mates, and their brothers and sisters. Of course, whenever we got together I sought to bring Yeshua into the conversation. Much good Seed was planted in their souls and I praise Yeshua for that.

## LEVI AND THE YESHIVA

On Tuesday, September 7th, 1999 at about 4:00 PM, I was walking in downtown Tiberias on my way to getting some fresh squeezed orange juice. A religiously observant Jew, a *Hasidic* man about 23 years old, dressed in a black coat, black pants, black hat and white shirt, stopped me and asked me where a kosher restaurant was.

I began to tell him and one thing led to another and for the next two hours we stood there on the sidewalk, in front of stores, and talked about Yeshua and Judaism. His name was Levi. He was from Austria. He had been in Israel for five years ‘off and on.’ He taught young people in his branch of *Hasidic* Judaism.<sup>17</sup>

Levi belonged to the Lubavitch or *Habad* sect of Judaism as they are known. *Habad* is an acronym in Hebrew (h-b-d) and stands for loving-kindness (*hesed*), understanding (*binah*) and knowledge (of God; *da’ah*).

I didn’t start off immediately talking about the Lord, but as soon as I saw an opening I asked him a question—had he ever done any studies on the Messiah? He began to share with me about the Rabbis and their criteria for determining who the Messiah would be. He said that if someone does many miracles, but doesn’t fulfill *all* the *rabbinic* criteria, then he isn’t the Messiah. This was a direct argument against Yeshua, as He did many miracles, but Yeshua didn’t bring in world peace, etc. The Rabbis have also devised a way of countering His miracles by denigrating them. They learned it from the Pharisees who said that Yeshua did His miracles by the power of Satan (Mt. 12:22-28).<sup>18</sup>

I could see that Levi didn’t know much about the *scriptural* criteria for the

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<sup>17</sup> *Hasidic* comes from the Hebrew word *ha’seed*, which means one who practices God’s faithful, forgiving-loving-kindness. *Hasidic* Judaism is a mystical Judaism that is steeped in Kabbalah—Babylonian witchcraft in Jewish clothes. See *Kabbalah* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Kabbalah.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> What the Pharisees said about Yeshua healing people through the power of Satan made its way into Talmud *Sanhedrin* 43a. There it says that Yeshua healed by sorcery. Of course, this would be another theological wall that would keep many Jews from wanting to know anything about Yeshua, especially as it was being fostered by the people they trusted, the religious authorities. In this, Judaism parallels Catholicism, where one believes whatever the rabbi says, and if not, can be excommunicated and go to Hell.

### *Levi and the Yeshiva*

Messiah, so I began to share with him about the two rabbinic streams of Messiah in the Scriptures. To his credit he was aware of Messiah *ben David* and Messiah *ben Yosafe* (the Son of Joseph). Because it's ancient, most Jews aren't aware of it and it's not taught in the religious schools.

I told Levi that I had found Messiah *ben Yosafe*, the Suffering Messiah that is spoken of in Isaiah 53. He was Yeshua from Nazareth. That didn't seem to upset Levi because I think he had already figured out that I believed in Yeshua. We kept on talking. Like a good Catholic, in relation to the Pope, he told me that we must believe all that the Rabbis say. Then he said to me, the Rabbis say that Yeshua 'was a deceiver, a fake and was boiling in hot feces now.'<sup>19</sup> 'Oh, really?' I said, 'Why? What did He do to deserve that?'

He told me that it wasn't so much His life, but what happened after His life, meaning that Christianity is another religion and that Christians have hated the Jewish people for many centuries. Jesus was responsible for that.

I asked him if he had ever read about Jesus because he had been telling me some things that were supposed to be about Yeshua, but I told him they were old wives tales. He told me that he couldn't read the New Testament because the Rabbis had banned it. Any Jew who reads it would be excommunicated from the Fold and go to Hell.<sup>20</sup>

In the beginning of our talk he told me that I needed to go to *yeshiva* (a school of higher learning in Judaism where Talmud is taught)<sup>21</sup> and study with the

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<sup>19</sup> Talmud *Gittin* 57a states that Yeshua is in Hell boiling in hot excrement.

<sup>20</sup> Talmud *Sanhedrin* 90a says that those who read the New Testament 'will have no portion in the world to come' (i.e. Heaven). This is similar to Catholic doctrine about reading the Scriptures in one's own language. In countries like Mexico, Catholics are told they'll go to Hell if they read the Word of God in Mexican. 'Only the priest' can give the proper interpretation of the Word. Everyone else is forbidden upon penalty of excommunication and Hell.

Alexander Hislop spoke of this as 'priestcraft,' a religion devised by men to keep Catholics *enslaved* and under their control. Yeshua, quoting Isaiah, said of the Pharisees: 'in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines' (of God) 'the commandments of men' (Mt. 15:9; Is. 29:13) and they kept others from entering the Kingdom of God: 'But woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees! Hypocrites! For you shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men! You neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in!' (Mt. 23:13)

<sup>21</sup> The Talmud is approximately 24 volumes. It's a compilation of Jewish thought and deals with biblical, academic, life, and legal matters that encompass many centuries. Originating in Babylon around the fourth century BC, it was written down about 220 AD. Before that it was known as the Oral Law (or in the New

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Rabbis there. They would set me straight, he said, and keep my soul from going to Hell. Levi said there were some (perhaps he?) who thought that Menachem Schneerson, the late Lubavitch Rabbi, was the Messiah. I told him that was impossible. Scripture states in Micah 5:1 (English 5:2) the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Schneerson never even visited Israel, let alone was he born in Bethlehem.

Levi told me the Rabbis had changed that criteria. Talk about *hutzpah* (audacity, arrogance). I said,

‘The Lord of the Universe admonishes us that we are not to add to, nor take away from His Words.’<sup>22</sup>

That didn’t concern Levi. He was speaking of the rule or the criteria of the Rabbis (the Oral Law or Talmud, their edicts, etc.) that must be obeyed to the letter and are more authoritative than the Word of God. The Rabbis teach that the Oral Law goes back to the days of Moses at Mt. Sinai. It doesn’t, but this gives them their ‘authority from God’ to change whatever they desire or don’t understand, claiming from God the authority to do so, but it, like its Catholic counterparts (the Popes, the Councils and the Traditions of the Fathers), is a false authority.

I said the Oral Law couldn’t go back to the days of Moses. Not one sage or rabbi mentioned in it goes back past the days of the Babylonian captivity (586-516 BC).

Also, there isn’t any mention of an oral law that was authoritative when Joshua came into the Land of Canaan. Only what was *written* was commanded by God to be read to the people. Scripture states,

“all the words of the Law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is *written* in the Book of the Law’ was read to Israel.” (Joshua 8:30-35; cf. Dt. 27–28)

There’s no mention of any oral tradition that we must follow, and certainly

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Testament, the Tradition of the Elders; Mt. 15:2; Mk. 7:3, 5). There are helpful things in it, like the services of the Second Temple, how the sacrifices were performed and who did them, etc., and when the Rabbis thought Messiah would come, along with things that aren’t so helpful and very superstitious. There’s also an anti-Yeshua spirit that pervades some of it.

<sup>22</sup> Dt. 4:2 states: ‘You must not add to the word, which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of Yahveh your God, which I command you.’ Also, Dt. 6:18; 12:8, 28, 32; 13:18; 28:14. For the opposite of this, of not walking in God’s ways, see Judges 17:6; 21:25.

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nothing that says it must be obeyed when it *contradicts* God's Word. On the contrary, Yehoshua (Joshua) declares to Israel,

‘Be very firm, then, to keep and to do all that is *written* in the Book of Torah.’ (i.e. Mosaic Law; Joshua 23:6)

Joshua makes no mention of an oral tradition, let alone that there was one that was more authoritative than the Word of God. Also, when the High Priest Hilkiah, under the direction of King Josiah (637-608 BC), found the Book of the Law, there wasn't *any* mention of an oral law being practiced at that time that ‘kept them in the Way.’ There was no Oral Law then (2nd Kings 22–23).

Levi just brushed all that aside. I asked him if he had read the book of Daniel. He told me that he had and so I spoke of the prophecy in Daniel 9:25, which says the Messiah *must* come and die *before* the destruction of the Second Temple. I said, ‘All the ancient Rabbis believed this and were looking for Messiah at that time.’ He said, ‘Then they all missed Messiah?’ I told him,

‘Not all, but many, and that was because their hearts were more like the hearts of our Fathers in the Wilderness, who provoked God and died in the Wilderness than like Joshua and Caleb. Our Fathers despised God. They held Him in contempt and *chose* to *not* believe what He wanted to do for them in bringing them into the Promised Land.’

‘Instead, they said that God brought them out of Egypt to murder them and to give their women and children to the Canaanites (Num. 13–14). It's written,’

“And Yahveh said to Moses, ‘How long will this people despise Me?! And how long will they not believe in Me despite all the signs which I have performed in their midst?!’” (Num. 14:11)

I also said to Levi,

‘Today, if you hear His Voice, Levi, do not harden your heart as our Fathers did in the Wilderness, for He was angry with them.’<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> ‘Today if you hear His voice do not harden your hearts as at Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the Wilderness when your Fathers tested Me, they tried Me though they had seen My works. For forty years I loathed that generation and said they are a people who err in their heart and they do not know My ways. Therefore, I swore in My anger, truly they shall not enter into My rest.’ (Ps. 95:7-11) I put

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One of the strange things the Rabbis teach is that Yeshua flew. I told him that I didn't know where they got that from. They had to be making it up because it's nowhere to be found in the New Covenant. Yeshua walked upon water, but that's not flying. (They could be stretching His ascent into Heaven in Acts 1:9-10, but it's not like He flew from Galilee to Jerusalem every day.)

Levi also told me that Yeshua's mother, Miryam, wasn't a virgin, but that a Roman soldier had raped her and that's how Jesus was born. I told him it was a lie made up by the Rabbis to keep Jews like himself from checking out the claims of Yeshua being his Messiah. I said he needed to read the New Covenant and find out the real story because the God of our Fathers would speak to him through it.

He asked me about Yeshua being born of a virgin and if I believed that. I said 'Yes,' and he told me the place in Isaiah which speaks of this does not mean a virgin.<sup>24</sup> I told him the Hebrew word there, *almah* means 'a young maiden' and *every place in the Bible where it's used it always refers to a young maiden who is a virgin.*

In Exodus 2:8, when Moses was placed in his hovercraft among the reeds of the Nile by his sister Miryam, Miryam is called an *almah*. She can't be more than 12 years old. Another place is when Rivka (Rebecca) is brought to marry Isaac. She, too, is called an *almah* (Gen. 24:43) and no rabbi would ever say that she was anything but a virgin, especially when Scripture declares her to be a virgin in the same chapter (Gen. 24:16).

Then I asked him if he knew of the Septuagint, the Hebrew Bible translated into Greek by Jewish sages about 250 years *before* Yeshua was born. It was the authoritative Greek Old Testament for all the synagogues outside the land of Israel in the days of Yeshua and Paul.

Levi wasn't familiar with it, but I told him the Jewish sages who translated it into Greek used the specific Greek word for *virgin* (*parthaynos*) in *translating Isaiah 7:14*. Those Jewish sages must have believed that a *virgin* would conceive and bear a son who would be the Messiah, and that He would be 'God

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Levi's name into it to make it personal for him.

<sup>24</sup> Isaiah 7:14: 'Therefore, Yahveh Himself will give you a sign: Behold! The virgin (*almah*) will be with child and bear a son and she will call His name Immanuel.' The word for *sign* in Hebrew means a miracle. It's not a miracle for a young maiden to conceive, they do it all the time, but it is a miracle for a young maiden who is a virgin.

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with us.’<sup>25</sup> The Septuagint reveals that three centuries before the birth of Yeshua the Jewish people also believed that.

Then I spoke of how I had come to know the *living* God, and that He wanted to cleanse Levi of his sins and fill him with His Spirit because of Messiah Yeshua’s atoning sacrifice. He told me that for one to believe that, one had to leave his intellect ‘on the side.’ In other words, only *ignorant* Jews could believe that Jesus was the Messiah.

I told him that I wasn’t an ignorant Jew and that for the last 24 years I had seen, over and over again, that Yeshua was the Messiah, and that if I had seen that He wasn’t, I would have stopped believing in Him. I went on to share many other things about Yeshua, and as we were ending I told him of the forgiveness and real *shalom* (peace) that I had come to know because of the blood sacrifice of the Lamb of God, and of the Holy Spirit dwelling within me. I could see it had a powerful impact on Levi.

That was one of three times during our two hour conversation that I saw the Holy Spirit breaking through his defenses to draw him to Yeshua. True to his Jewish stubbornness he regrouped and said that I needed to come back to Judaism and not deceive myself. I could tell though, that his heart wasn’t in what he said. The Spirit was working on him. Thank You, Yeshua!

By the end of our conversation he had rethought what he said about me going to a yeshiva and said that I shouldn’t go. ‘Why not?’ I asked. ‘You would be too dangerous in a *yeshiva* because you would lead other Jews astray.’ Thank You, Yeshua!

When we parted, we did so on good terms, much to his credit. I went home and was concerned for Ruti. I should have been back hours ago. (I didn’t have a cellphone then to call her.) She, too, was concerned for me, although things like this have happened before. She was glad to see me alive and well.

I told her all that the Lord had done with Levi, and she shared with me that just a little after I had left, she began to feel a heaviness from the Lord. At first she didn’t realize what it was, but she realized that she needed to pray. She began to pray and intercede for me, and she sensed that she was also praying for someone that I was witnessing to. I couldn’t believe it for joy as she told me that! I told her the Lord had made us quite a team! Then we both sensed we

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<sup>25</sup> See *Recognize This Man?* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Recognize-This-Man.pdf> for more understanding of the word *almah* and how the virgin conception is foreshadowed in the conceptions of Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.

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needed to pray some more for Levi and we did.

I don't think our meeting was an accident. I think that Levi may very well have been looking for someone to talk to about Yeshua, and the Lord put me in his path.

Would you pray for Levi now, and add Levi, and the others, to your prayer list? His name means 'one who clings' to the Lord. Yeshua is moving in his life and I truly believe that one day we'll see him in the Kingdom of Messiah Yeshua!

## *The Way of the Jew*

When my mother divorced my father in 1956, my younger brother and I went to live with Nana and Gramps for about two years in Jackson Heights, Queens, New York City. I was five years old and my brother Noel was three. My mother had become disillusioned with my father, wanted her independence and wanted money, a nice house and the brass ring of life..

My mother began to work and earn a living, but she didn't live with us. Perhaps Nana's place was too small for all of us, or perhaps she didn't like her parents controlling her night life. Whatever the reason, during that time a very special bond developed between my grandmother and me. After two years my mother took us back and we lived in the Bronx on a sixth floor 'walk-up' apartment (no elevator).

My grandfather (Gramps; Philip) came from Lithuania about 1912. He was 14 years old. His father, *Mosheh ha Levi* (Moses the Levite) Fritzel, owned a large farm, had farm hands and a mill in Salant. He was fairly well off, but his wife died of cancer when their only son Philip (Gramps) was ten years old. Philip had three older sisters (Zelma, Saka and Basha) and they were married, or close to it, when their mother died.

Philip Fritzel was sent by his father to the USA to live with some friends of his deceased wife, in Brooklyn, NY. I don't know why his father did that, but it would save him from being murdered in the Holocaust. About 95% of the Lithuanian Jews died in the Holocaust. (Two of his sisters and their husbands, children and relatives were murdered by the Nazi Beast.)

The apartment building Philip came to live in turned out to be the same building that his future wife (and in-laws) lived in. They were married on Monday, October 28th, 1929, one day before the Wall Street Stock Market crash of 1929, which sent the US and the rest of the world, along with two Jewish newly-weds, into the Great Depression.

My grandfather worked in the garment district of Manhattan, New York City. He had learned the trade from his then future father-in-law. When I got to know him my grandfather never said much. When Noel and I would come to visit he'd say, 'How are you doing in school?' Before we would leave for home he'd say, 'Be good.' That's about the extent of the verbal contact (relationship) we had with him. He wasn't a harsh man; far from it. He just didn't know how to communicate or be a grandfather. I will always remember him sitting on the couch near the window, reading *The Daily News*, going over the race track results for the horses. I don't know if he ever bet on the horses, or

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even if he ever went to the tracks, but he loved to go over the results.

My grandmother, Sadye (Gordon) Fritzel, was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY. She was the youngest of six children born to Meir and Sarah (Deinowitz) Gordon. Sarah and her parents had come from Bialystok, Poland, and Meir from Kiev, Russia (Ukraine). Sarah came from a middle class family, but Meir was very poor and he wouldn't accept any money from his in-laws. Sadye (Nana) would come home from school and all that she'd have for lunch would be bread and applesauce. Sarah would put pots of water on the stove to boil, so that anyone who came in would think they had some food. Meir had studied to be a rabbi, but wasn't able to find a synagogue. He was highly loved and respected for his religious knowledge and practice, to the point that when he died in 1950, his casket was viewed *inside* the synagogue—something that was reserved for only highly esteemed rabbis and Jewish scholars.

In the 1960s Sadye, my grandmother, worked in a department store as a sales clerk to earn 'extra' money. Whenever my brother and I would come over to visit she'd make sure that we left with a few dollars in our hands. It was just another way that she loved us. Whenever we came she'd always have my favorite soda (Canada Dry Black Raspberry), or next to favorite (Canada Dry Ginger Ale) and there'd be special meals. When we woke up in the morning she'd ask us what we'd like for breakfast. I had learned early-on not to ask for bacon : ) Pancakes were always a favorite, with plenty of butter and maple syrup, as well as the hot cereal Farina, with lots of heavy cream and sugar. I didn't know about nutrition in those days.

My grandparents, although Orthodox, weren't so observant in the sense of going to the synagogue every Sabbath. The only time they went was for the High Holy Days in the fall, which centers around the holiest day of all, *Yom HaKipurim* (the Day of Atonement), when all Jews fast and pray for forgiveness of sins. We never read the *Tanach* (Old Testament) in their home. We didn't discuss the commandments and we didn't pray before meals, although Nana did keep kosher. We'd keep Passover, with the traditional reading from the *Hagada* (the ritual prayer book for Passover), but it was more a time of a festal family dinner than an actual spiritual acknowledging of Passover's significance.

After my mother married a second time, a Southern Gentile man from Alabama, we moved to Hamburg, New Jersey, and so I didn't grow up in a Jewish community (there were only 2,000 people in the town and I think we were the only Jews). I never heard the name 'Jesus' mentioned from my mother or her parents (Nana and Gramps) or my father. I knew the name *Jesus*, as some of

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my friends were Christians, but they were about as Christian as I was. Our gods were baseball and basketball, the movies and sugar (soda, cake and ice cream).

I never suffered any anti-Semitism from Christian boys who went to church, most likely because we didn't do anything associated with being Jewish. Growing up the way I did it's no surprise that I didn't hear of the Holocaust, either from my family or from the public schools I attended.

I gave my life to Jesus in mid-October 1975, in Tampa, Florida, and two years after that I began working for a photocopier company in St. Petersburg, FL. They sent me for training to Miami. It was winter, and Nana and Gramps were there from Brooklyn, taking a two week respite from the snowy and cold New York weather.

I went to see them one afternoon. After we had gone for supper at Horn and Hardet's Automat (a special cafeteria for Jews from New York), we came back to their small hotel room. I remember my grandfather sitting down on one of the single beds, to my left, with his back to the window, facing me, and Nana standing in front of me when I said,

'Nana, I have the most wonderful news!'

'Oh, what is that André?' she said.

'I believe in Jesus!'

I couldn't have been happier. I expected her to be happy, too. I was very ignorant of Christian anti-Semitism in Europe and America. If I had taken a knife and plunged it into her belly, the shock and pain on her face would not have been different. A deep sadness came over her. She was very hurt. I was stunned. My grandfather didn't say anything. I didn't know what to do. What I thought was the most terrific thing in my life had deeply hurt my Nana.

A few seconds passed, which seemed like forever. She said some words to Gramps, 'Nu? What can you expect? Bob (my father) is a Christian.' Gramps agreed. They were both very sad and resigned.

They had thought that my father had led me to Jesus. He had grown up as a secular Jew, but had come to the Lord at an early age, yet he never spoke of Jesus to me until *after* I had given my life to the Lord. My grandparents didn't know that, and I wasn't in a place where I could tell them.

There wasn't much said after that. A little while later I left and it would be years before my grandparents would even talk with me over the phone. They couldn't deal with their first Jewish grandson betraying them and all they held

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dear. I would come to understand their pain, later.

At the time in the hotel room, I didn't know about the Holocaust or Christian anti-Semitism or my grandfather's two sisters and their families lost to the Nazi Beast (his father Moses had died just before World War Two). Saka and Basha and their families were no more. Zelma, his oldest sister, had moved to South Africa with her husband before the war. They were spared. The Holocaust was more than just a television documentary to my grandparents. The pain of it was very real, and so it is to any Jew who feels any kind of affinity with 'being a Jew.'

Over the years I reached out to my grandparents and after about ten years (1987), I was able to speak with them. How my heart yearned for them to know their Messiah. In April of 1988 I began sending out, from Tulsa, Oklahoma, the Jewish Newsletters,<sup>26</sup> which would eventually go to all the Jewish people in the greater Tulsa metropolitan area and into about 40 states, and some into foreign countries. These Jewish didn't know Yeshua and the Newsletter was designed to show them 'Jesus' from the Tanach (Old Testament). I sent them to my grandparents. They didn't like that. I understood. My mother and her younger brother, my Uncle Jack, came against me *hard* for doing it. My mother would say things like,

'Don't you have any respect for them?! They don't want what you're sending them and neither do I! Stop it!!!'

I wouldn't stop sending the Jewish Newsletters to them, or to my mother or to my uncle and his wife. I loved them too much. I'd lose my uncle over this, and my mother would never understand why I continued to send the Jewish Newsletters to her parents. I told her,

'I love Nana and Gramps very much. I know they're upset with me for sending them the Newsletters, but this is the most loving thing I can do for them.'

Of course, my grandparents couldn't understand my reasoning, either, as it went directly in the face of their life experiences about Christians. Gramps died at the age of 93 (Dec. 10, 1897—May 19, 1991), and Nana died ten years later at the age of 96 (March 8, 1905—April 6, 2001). It was hard for her

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<sup>26</sup> The Jewish Newsletters (Jewish Newsl) are found at The SeedofAbraham.net. They are typically four to eight pages of biblical understanding that center around something from the *Tanach*, like the Tabernacle of Moses, or what Isaiah said about the Suffering Servant of Yahveh (Is. 53), etc., and how Yeshua is seen in all those things.

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without Gramps. It was hard for me without her. She was a very special person in my life. Next to my father, no one ever loved me more.

I struggled over where Nana and Gramps will be after Judgment Day. They were just two ordinary Jews who never got a real opportunity to know about their Messiah because of *Christian* anti-Semitism and persecution of the Jews by the *churches* and peoples of Europe, Russia and the USA. If the Christians had reached out to the Jews and loved them, as Paul writes of (Rom. 9:1-3; 10:1, etc.), instead of persecuting and murdering them for the last 1,900 years, my grandparents, as well as many other Jews, would most likely have come to believe in their own Jewish Messiah.

I know that Yeshua says that no one comes to the Father except through Him (John 14:6), and also that Yeshua is merciful and righteous, and so, I leave their eternal fate in His hands, and go about with the Work that He has given to me of evangelizing Jews and Gentiles, and teaching His Body, The Hebraic Perspective.<sup>27</sup>

Yeshua has given me a love for all people, but especially my own Jewish people.<sup>28</sup> Evil has been done to me and to those I have loved, but because of Yeshua, I have forgiven them. Yeshua has forgiven me of so much, and I extend that to all who have sinned against me, my family and my Jewish people. His love and forgiveness is that real:

‘Surely He has borne my grief and carried my sorrows.’<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> The Hebraic Perspective reveals that every Christian should walk out their faith in all the rules of Moses that apply to them, and forsake *illicit SEX* (which is an acronym for **S**unday, **E**aster and **X**mas, which also entails the eating of unclean animals and an aversion to Mosaic Law).

<sup>28</sup> See *The Transformation* at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Transformation.pdf>.

<sup>29</sup> My personal translation of Isaish 53:4a.

## ELI

On Wednesday, Oct. 27th, 1999 Ruti and I ate at Eli's Moroccan restaurant in Tiberias. We had been there twice before and had spoken of Yeshua to him the last time. He listened and we were encouraged. As we entered that day Eli began thanking God for bringing us back again. We hadn't seen him since June. He was so glad that we were there. In the middle of our meal, at our suggestion, Eli came over and sat down with us.

We gave him a Hebrew handout (*A Picture of Messiah*).<sup>30</sup> It's something that I've arranged that has some major messianic prophecies from the *Tanach*, along with New Covenant Scripture, that show reveal Yeshua as our Messiah. He read it at our table and commented, 'Why not?' It wasn't with any conviction that he said it though. He was saying it for us.

I went over to his seat and gave him a Bible in Hebrew (Genesis through Revelation) and told him that I'd like for him to read Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Acts, and that when we would come back we'd talk about Messiah Yeshua. When we left he told us that his restaurant was 'ours' and that we could come back anytime and eat and not pay him, if we liked. It was his way of telling us that he loved us. He also said, a number of times, in his broken English, 'I like you very much!' We told him that we loved him and would return soon.

## *Eitan*

Eitan lived in the home next to us and was about 60 years old. Short and round, he and his wife Hiyah owned a nice house and a jewelry business in town. I had shared with him about Yeshua before, and on Thursday night, Oct. 28th, 1999 70 years to the day when my grandparents married, he asked me, 'How long are you going to stay in Avraham's house?' I said that I didn't know, but the Lord Yeshua would lead us. I didn't know what we were going to do in April 2000 when our year lease expired, but that was six months into the future. I told him that as long as the Lord wanted us to stay we would stay. He said, 'How do you get money to pay for this?' I told him the Lord moves upon people to send funds to us to live in the Land of Israel and share Messiah Yeshua with our Jewish people. He then asked me why I didn't wear a *kippa*. I

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<sup>30</sup> This was changed to *A Biblical Picture of the Messiah* and can be seen at *The Prophecy Card* at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Prophecy-Card.pdf>, along with other witnessing tools.

## *Eli*

told him that for 14 years I had worn one, but one day Yeshua showed me that it was pagan. I asked him if he ever noticed that the Pope and his Cardinals wore a *kipa*? He thought for a moment and said, ‘Yes!’

I told him they got it from Babylon and Canaan, where the priests of Baal would shave their heads in a *circle* as a sign that they were the priests of the *sun* god, God commands us not to do this in Leviticus 21:5. The pictures of the medieval Popes have the same circular haircut (bald on top, called the clerical tonsure). It’s symbolic of the sun, the same shape as the *kipa*—round. It’s been only about a hundred years since the Catholics have gone from the clerical tonsure to their *kipa*. *They both symbolize sun worshippers*. Of course, the Catholics don’t call it a *kipa*, but a rose by any other name is still a rose.

I told Eitan that I couldn’t wear something the Rabbis had made a very religious piece of clothing, and was pagan on top of that. I said,

‘In order for a Jew to enter a synagogue he must have his head *covered* with a *kipa*. In order to approach where the Torah scrolls were kept (the Word of God, God’s presence, so to speak), the Jew must be *covered* with the *kipa*.’ I said, ‘There’s not one verse in Scripture that tells us that this is what God wants.’ And,

‘The only *covering* that has ever been acceptable to God is a blood sacrifice. It was the blood of the lamb that spared the firstborn of Israel from death when God freed Israel from Egypt, and it’s the Blood of God’s Son Yeshua, the Lamb of God, that frees us from judgment and eternal death when we stand before Him on Judgment Day.’

I told Eitan, who was a secular Jew who didn’t wear a *kipa*, that Messiah’s Blood cleanses us from our sins and that he needed this to make his heart pure and right before the Lord. God sent Yeshua so that we might have *Life* today and in the future. Ruti, who was in the house, later told me that even though I was outside by the fence, she heard what I had been saying to Eitan about the Lord. I was glad because then I also knew that our landlord and his family, who were upstairs, could hear it, too.

## MICHA AND THE INQUISITION

One night after that, on Friday evening, Oct. 29th, 1999 about 6:30 PM, Ruti and I were sitting in Avraham's backyard in Tiberias. It was very pleasant. Around the corner of the house came Micha, another brother of our landlord's wife Varda, with Varda, Avraham and Dotan, their youngest son 'in tow.' (Dotan is 19 years old.) They sat down and the inquisition began. Micha asked, 'What are you?! Christian or Jew?!' I said that I was a Jew. He said, 'But you are a Christian!' I asked him, 'Who was Yeshua, a Jew or a Christian?' He didn't know.

I told him that Yeshua was born in Bethlehem, just as the prophet Micah (Micha's English namesake) spoke of about our Messiah. Yeshua was certainly a Jew, coming from the line of King David. Both Varda and Avraham agreed. I told him that the prophet Micha wrote where the Messiah would be born:

'But you, Bethlehem Ephrata, though you be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall He come forth to Me, one who is to be Ruler' (King-Messiah) 'in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from eternity.' (Micah 5:2)

'Yeshua was born in Bethlehem, just as the prophet said.'

Then I told them that the words, 'from old, from eternity' means the Messiah would be deity in the flesh—the Son of God—God the Son, for who can be from *eternity* except God?

The prophecy was seen by the ancient Rabbis as revealing the preexistence of Messiah before the Creation of the universe.<sup>31</sup> Then I told him that 'the verse

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<sup>31</sup> Risto Santala, *The Messiah in the Old Testament in the Light of Rabbinical Writings* (Jerusalem: Keren Ahvah Meshihit, 1992), p. 115. Rashi, a famous rabbi who lived a thousand years ago wrote of Micah 5:1, whose 'origins are from old, from ancient times' that 'the Messiah, the Son of David, as Ps. 118' (v. 22) says, is the 'stone which the Builders rejected, and his origins are from ancient times,' for 'before the sun was, his name was *Yinnon*.' *Yinnon* comes from Ps. 72:17, 1-8f., and speaks of the duration of His Kingdom (as long as the sun shines) and that Messiah would come from the stump or line of Jesse (David's father; Is. 11:1). 'According to the Jewish Sages,' Rabbi David Kimchi (1160–1235), of whom without 'there is no correct biblical exegesis,' states that 'Messiah is *El (God)*, which is how he' (Messiah) 'is from old, from ancient times.' These quotes of Santala's can be found in the *Mikraoth Gedoloth* commentary.

### *Micha and the Inquisition*

just before that speaks of the Messiah being beaten on His cheek with a rod! Who is our Messiah, Micha!? He is Yeshua!’ Micha the prophet said, ‘They shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod on the cheek!’ (Micah 5:1; Mt. 27:30)

‘How could this happen to the Messiah of Israel?! But it’s in God’s Word! This is part of a picture of Yeshua.’ I quoted Isaiah 53:5 to him:

‘But He was pierced through for our open rebellions. He was crushed for our perversions. The punishment for our peace (with God) fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed.’ (my translation)

All this kind of took the steam out of Micha, as he could see that I had a foundation in *Tanach* for my belief in Yeshua. Then *he* said the Messiah would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey, and I said,

‘That’s exactly how Yeshua came into Jerusalem! (Zech. 9:9; Mt. 21:1-11; cf. 1st Kings 1:38) He was a picture of how David’s son, Solomon, became King of Israel. Solomon rode on King David’s mule (a cross between a horse and a donkey). The donkey portrays a man of peace—the horse, a man of war.’<sup>32</sup>

Interesting, too, is that Solomon’s name means *peace*. Yeshua is God’s *peace* for us. We have peace with Papa God because of what Yeshua did in reconciling us to His Father and who Yeshua is. I told Micha that I didn’t just believe in Yeshua, but that,

‘I *know* that He was, and is, our Messiah because Yeshua has given me the Holy Spirit, as God promised to Israel through the prophet Ezekiel in 36:27.’

I said that only Yeshua could give Micha the *living waters* from God. I shared my experience, when I first came to Yeshua, about how the Spirit of Shalom came upon me and how I knew the *living* God for the first time in my life. I said that Yeshua wanted to take out Micha’s heart of stone and give him a heart of flesh, as Ezekiel also spoke of:

‘Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new Spirit

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<sup>32</sup> When Yeshua returns Rev. 19:11-16 states that He will be riding a white horse, which means *war*, and that He will deal severely with His enemies.

## SAM THE ROCK THROWER

within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.’ (Ezk. 36:26)

I asked him, ‘Why do you need the Messiah? A Messiah who died for you?’

Micha didn’t know. I told him because ‘our hearts are evil compared to our holy God.’ Both Ruti and I spoke of how our lives changed for the better when we came to Yeshua and how we began, for the first time in our lives, to read and study God’s Word and to walk in His Torah. We were more Jewish now than we had ever been before. Belief in the Jewish Messiah Yeshua *doesn’t* make a Jew into a Gentile. I said,

‘Messiah Yeshua died for us, to be an atonement for our sins so we could be forgiven, cleansed and filled with His Holy Spirit and come to know our God.’

I also related how the Lord had come to Father Avram (Abram) and told him that his Seed would be as many as the stars of the Heavens. Avram *believed* God, and God counted it to him as righteousness (Gen. 15:5-6).

‘On the other hand, the Sons of Israel in the Wilderness chose *not* to believe that God would lead them into the Promised Land, even though God had delivered them from Egypt, parted the Red Sea, gave them Manna from Heaven and they saw the Cloud of Glory every day!’

‘We, too, have a choice to believe God, or not to believe Him about Messiah Yeshua. Those who believe are filled with *Life* now and escape judgment on *that Day*. We’ll live for eternity in the New Jerusalem because of the *Life* that is in the Blood of God the Son.’ (Rev. 21–22)

I asked him about Moses and the shattering of the first of the Stone Tablets of the Ten Commandments. What did that mean? He didn’t know. I said,

‘It pictured Yeshua being shattered or crucified for us when He first came, for He, too is known as the Word of God.’ (John 1:1, 14; Rev. 19:13; cf. Gen. 1:3)

‘When Moses got the second set of Tablets they remained permanently in the Camp, and when Yeshua comes the second time, for He is returning, He will remain forever in the Camp of Israel—this Jerusalem, and then the New Jerusalem. Both sets of Tablets pictured Messiah as the Word of God—in

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His crucifixion and His Second Coming.' (Dt. 9:9-17; 10:1-5;  
Rev. 20:1-6; 21:1-27)

All the while that I was speaking, Avraham was looking very intently at me. Almost as if he were gazing into my soul to see if Yeshua was real. I noticed a change of attitude in him, more in, respect for me in the days after this. We were on good terms before, but it got better. Our prayers were being answered, at least as far as Avraham was concerned. He didn't get drowsy! He heard the Great News about Yeshua. Thank You, Lord!

Then something welled up within me, and I felt so *impassioned*. I said, 'I am ready to die for the name of Yeshua, I love Him so!' I said this to show them just how much I 'believe' in Yeshua being Messiah. I wanted them to know this in a powerful way. I believe it was the Holy Spirit, no doubt, who rose up within me.

I had been very intense while speaking with Micha. With 'all my being' I was pleading with him. I wanted him to come to know his Messiah. I had spoken with much passion. I wanted so much for him to believe. Ruti would later tell me that my fervor and zeal couldn't be mistaken for indifference. Even that, she said, was a witness to them. She told me that someone who was lukewarm was,

'not going to talk like it was in the marrow of their bones, and you were definitely talking like that tonight.'

After it ended we were just thrilled. We had such a wonderful opportunity to share with Micha, Avraham, Varda and Dotan.

Just before Micha and company had arrived, there were three little girls we had seen, two who lived across the street from us. We called them to come over because we had some treats for them. When Varda came she didn't know that we had called them to us in the backyard, but before they got to us she had cut them off from coming. We weren't aware of it. She told them not to come in the front yard. Varda now started speaking about how terrible they were and that she had told them not to come anywhere near her house. She was afraid they might walk off with something.

I told her that we had called them to us because we wanted to give them some treats. She said she hadn't known that. I asked what they had done and she said they had gone into someone's yard and had gotten some of the grapefruits that had fallen down from a tree and had thrown the grapefruits into the street. I thought of calling Elliot Ness, but decided against it.

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I told her that we needed to teach the girls the Word of God. It wasn't right, in God's eyes, to take something that was not their own and destroy it. It changed the conversation from one of denigration of the girls, to what we as adults should be doing with those children. The children were Israeli *Russian* Jews.

Avraham was born in Iraq and had come to Israel with his parents when he was only a baby, in 1950. Varda's parents were from Iraq, too, but she had been born in Israel. What I heard was prejudice against the *Russian* Jews, not an uncommon thing in Israel. Writing about it now it would have been good to have asked them if they, as Israeli Iraqi Jews, had suffered any prejudice from Israelis who weren't from Iraq. I know they did, as the Ashkenazi Jews looked down upon Jews from Iraq, Iran and northern Africa (e.g. Morocco and Tunisia). And then have asked them what they had felt when that happened to them (cf. Lev. 19:33-34).

After Micha and company left us, Ruti and I prayed for them that Yeshua would open their eyes and bring them into His Kingdom. Then I said that we needed to go over to where the two girls lived and give them and their friend the little cakes that we had bought for them. We had a package of eight individually wrapped little cupcakes.

We crossed the street and the front door to their house was open. The husband and one of the girls was watching TV. I knocked on the door and the wife came to us from the kitchen, near the door, the husband turning around and the little girl getting up to come over to us. The two other girls came out from another room where they had been playing. We introduced ourselves and found out their names. The husband was Alex and his wife Aela, Jews from Russia who had come to live in the land of their Fathers.

They had only been in Israel a few years. The girls, whom we had met and talked with on other occasions were two sisters, Dalia and Diana, and their cousin Genya (seven, four and five years old, respectively).

We said that we had wanted to give the cupcakes to them earlier. One of the girls told us they had tried to come over, but that a woman had told them they couldn't. I said that we had just found that out, and the woman didn't know that we had called them over earlier, but that's why we were there now. We gave the cupcakes to the girls, and the mother, Aela, was so appreciative.

The Russian Jews are resented by many 'native' Israelis. They are seen as outsiders. The Russian Jews may be Jews by lineage, but they're not Israelis. That's a great difference to many Israelis. This is nothing new for Israeli society. Israel is fragmented with various types of Jewish people from over 100

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different nations. Some of them don't get along with anyone outside their previous nationality, but these Russian Jews didn't realize that yet, and so they felt like outcasts—not being able to speak Hebrew fluently and so not feeling welcome, like most foreigners in any land. With the massive immigration of Russian Jews in the '90s, they number about 20% of the Jewish population of six million Jews here. There is no love lost between many Israelis and Russian Jews.

When we brought the girls the cupcakes I could see that it was very special to Aela, that we would even consider doing something like that, not being Russian Jews ourselves. We were humbled and felt a connection. They invited us in, but we couldn't stay at that time, and so we thanked them and said that we'd come back another time. We spoke Hebrew and they did too, and so we could converse a little in Hebrew. They didn't know English and we didn't know Russian.

On Tuesday night, Nov. 2nd, at a tiny pizza place not far from where we lived, we saw Lena, Eena and Grecia, more Israeli Russian Jews. The post office was a couple of stores down from it, and so I was always going past the pizza place to pick up our mail. We had seen them before, eating pizza there and we had exchanged greetings. Now Ruti and I were having a slice—no, Ruti wasn't having any pizza, but I had two slices, and they came and sat down next to us on the picnic style tables and benches that the pizza place had outside.

One of Lena's (the mother's) first questions to us was, why had we come to Israel? She asked me, but I said that I was going to let Ruti answer, as I thought it proper for Ruti to speak to her. (Lena's daughter Eena was about ten, and Grecia, her son, was about eight years old.)

Ruti, usually very reserved, launched right into,

‘We believe that Yeshua is the Messiah of Israel and that He has brought us to the Land of Israel so that we can tell our Jewish people about Him.’ (Some of my passion must have rubbed off on her : )

Lena looked a little like she knew what Ruti was saying, but didn't want anyone around us to hear it. Then little Grecia looked up from eating his pizza and said that he knew that ‘the name of God was Yeshua.’ Wow! Lena though, wasn't quite there, yet. She said that she knew there was, ‘Someone up there,’ but she didn't really know much about Him.

I regretted not having the Russian Gospel tracts on me, that someone had giv-

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en me a few weeks earlier, so that I could have given one to her. We talked some more about Messiah Yeshua and then we left.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Because of this meeting I added some Russian tracts to the other things that I carry on me to hand out: *A Picture of Messiah*, some Jewish Newsletters in English for English speaking Jews, and some booklets of Matthew in Hebrew for Israelis.

I would add to this collection over the years; the latest one being Acts 2–4 in Hebrew because it speaks of Yeshua being proclaimed as the Messiah by Jewish people, and the promised Holy Spirit coming to the 3,000 Jewish men (not counting the women and children, as was the custom in those days), who believed in Him (Acts 2:41). It also relates how the Jewish religious authorities came against the Jewish Apostles for proclaiming Yeshua as the Messiah, and so it reveals where part of today's antagonism against Yeshua stems from.

Most Jews 'know' the name of Jesus, but they don't know anything about Him. Acts 2–4 presents Yeshua as the long awaited Messiah, the Son of David, the King and High Priest of Israel. Chapter two even leads one into believing in Yeshua, something that is rare in the Gospels, so it's an important section of Scripture for Israelis who only know that 'Jesus isn't for the Jews.'

## MIERO AND ASHER

Miero and Asher are brothers that own a restaurant on the Sea of Galilee. Ruti and I went there on Wednesday, Nov. 3rd, 1999 to eat salad and eggs. The view of the lake, mountains surrounding it and the sky is just beautiful. We had finished our food and were leaving and as we went past them I asked Miero what his name was. I shared mine with him and then his brother told me his name and asked us to sit down. We were in a hurry to get back home and finish the ‘hundred and one things’ that we needed to do, but we immediately realized that this was ‘the one important thing’ that He wanted us to do. After about 30 minutes we left and I told Ruti what I had thought of when we first sat down with them, that we had needed to get back to the work that awaited us at home. She had the exact same thoughts, too, and that this was the important thing.

Asher asked me if I worked and I told him that I worked day and night. He wanted to know what I did. I told him that I believed that Yeshua was the Messiah of Israel and that I wanted all Israel to know this. This kind of confused them at first, Ruti and I looking ‘very Jewish,’ and Jews are not supposed to believe in Jesus. In the time that followed I spoke to them of Yeshua being the Stone the Builders rejected, but which became the chief Corner-Stone of the new Temple (Ps. 118:22; God’s dwelling place).

Asher was studying to become a lawyer and liked philosophy. A number of times he would counter my belief with things like, ‘Everyone can believe what they want.’ I would tell him,

‘That’s not Jewish. In the *Tanach* the Lord commands us to worship Him, and Him alone,’ and he would agree.

I said that Yeshua was Messiah the Son of Joseph. The ancient Rabbis saw that Isaiah 53 spoke of a Messiah who would be rejected by us, and yet, die for our sins (vv. 2-6f.). In this, Yeshua is like Joseph, rejected by his brothers, yet God raised up Joseph to be second in command of all Egypt, and only Pharaoh was greater. We spoke much on that theme.

I asked them if someone came up to us now and said that he was the Messiah, how could we tell? Asher told us that he only believed in himself and that he really didn’t care. I said that we can only know the Jewish Messiah from the Hebrew Scriptures. I told Asher that he needed to know God by His Spirit, through Messiah Yeshua, and that’s why Yeshua came, so that we *could* all know God. I spoke of Jeremiah’s prophecy, that God was going to give us a

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New Covenant, because they both said that I believed in the New Covenant, but they, as Jews, didn't. They were shocked when I read this from Jeremiah to:

“Behold! Days are coming’ declares Yahveh, ‘when I will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah, not like the Covenant which I made with their Fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My Covenant which they broke, although I was a Husband to them,’ declares Yahveh. ‘But this is the Covenant which I will make with the House of Israel after those days,’ declares Yahveh. ‘I will put My Law (Torah, which is Mosaic Law) within them, and on their heart I will write it, and I will be their God and they shall be My people. They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother saying, ‘Know Yahveh!’, *for they will all know Me*, from the least of them to the greatest of them,’ declares Yahveh, ‘for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.’” (Jeremiah 31:31-34; cf Heb. 8:10; 10:16)

I told him that I didn't ‘just believe’ that Yeshua was the Messiah, but that I *knew* He was, by the Spirit of the Holy One within me. Then I gave them each a handout. Asher got the English Jewish Newsletter because he wanted to read from something in English to further his English reading ability, and I gave Miero the Hebrew handout, *A Picture of Messiah*. Ruti would later tell me that Miero, for all his seeming indifference, was listening very intently to what I was telling Asher, whom I had been focusing on most of the time.

They immediately began to read them and then someone approached, whom they knew. Asher quickly folded up the Jewish Newsletter<sup>34</sup> so the other person couldn't tell what it was. Miero didn't care and kept on reading! This new person was a ‘skipper’ of one of the boats that took tourists out on the Sea of Galilee, and obviously, was well known to Asher and Miero. He asked what we had been talking about. I didn't want to embarrass them and said, ‘God's business.’ We excused ourselves and left and began praying that the Lord

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<sup>34</sup> The Jewish Newsletters were sent by postal mail primarily to Jews in Tulsa, Oklahoma, who need to know Messiah Yeshua, with a smattering also sent into 40 other States, as well as into some countries. All the Jewish Newsletters we have sent out over the years can be seen at the website under Jewish Newsl. They are great witnessing tools to Jewish people who don't know Yeshua.

*Miero and Asher*

would open their hearts to His Word. Ruti and I are so grateful to the Lord for these opportunities to share our Messiah with the House of Israel. We ask for your prayers that Miero and Asher, and all Israel would come to know their Messiah. Thank you!

## *The Way Of Broken Dreams*

For the first eight years of my life in Jesus (1975-1983) I prayed much, devoured the Bible and walked in 'traditional' Christianity. From the very beginning I felt the Lord's call upon my life to minister, but I struggled for three years 'to make sure that it was the Lord and not me.'

At the advice of a man of God, I applied to seminary at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, OK and was accepted. I entered the Master of Divinity program in August 1979 and left in March 1983 just a month and a half before I was to graduate. An acquaintance of mine had reported to the Dean of Theology that I had slept with my wife to be, a month before we were to be married. It was sin for me to do so, but it only came to the Dean's attention two and a half months after we were married. We were both suspended.

It was shattering for me—four years of my life and no degree to show for it. Ironically, I had more than enough credits to graduate and a 3.6 grade point average (an A-). As one professor sympathetically said to me, 'You certainly got quite a seminary education.' What he meant was that I not only got an academic education, but also a strong taste of perverse Christian ethics. What I was suspended for could have been forgiven. Yeshua would work around the Dean's harsh punishment, and my sin, for His glory (Rom. 8:28).

A year before the suspension, one of my fellow students, a man by the name of Mark Wexler, came into a class I had with him and announced that he wanted to be called by another name, 'Mosheh.' It was his Jewish name. I didn't like that because I saw him as 'parading' his Jewishness, but the Lord would soon lead me down a similar path.

After the suspension, my wife Robin and I began holding worship services at our apartment clubhouse on Saturdays, as our Sundays were filled with church. I was proceeding on with ordination in the United Methodist Church and Robin was a youth minister at a United Methodist church.

At one Saturday meeting the Lord brought a Gentile couple into our little congregation. They spoke to me about Messianic Judaism. I had never heard of it before. They said it was a Judaism that believed in Jesus. (It's *supposed* to be a biblical form of Judaism versus Rabbinic Judaism.)<sup>35</sup> They told me there were more than 100 such congregations (or Messianic synagogues) in the

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<sup>35</sup> See *Goodbye Messianic Judaism!* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Goodbye-Messianic-Judaism.pdf> for why Messianic Judaism has failed to satisfy many Jewish and Gentile believers and why I disassociated myself from it.

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United States, 30 in Israel and that they were springing up on Earth in every place where God had dispersed us Jews. I began to check into it. As I prayed during the summer of 1983 I came to see that the Lord was leading us to establish a Messianic synagogue in Tulsa. By September I officially severed my relationship with the United Methodist Church because they were going one way and the Lord was leading me another. So I embarked on a journey into unknown territory with Messiah Yeshua.

It was at that time that I sensed from God that *I was to begin using my Hebrew name*, the name given to me at my circumcision when I was eight days old. André gave way to Avram (Hebrew for Abram; father of a people). That year the Lord would cause to come alive in me a deep love for my Jewish people—a love that I had never known before—His love for Israel.

In the spring of 1984 a prophetess came to the congregation where Robin was the youth minister. After her message she asked if there was anyone that wanted prayer. I got up and came down front. As she prayed for me she placed her right hand on my stomach. I don't remember if I felt anything, but I believe that God used that to impart to me a love for my own people. The Seed began to grow. She also mentioned something like, I'd travel to many nations (and teach them).

In September 1984 the synagogue confirmed me as their rabbi. I knew the title was cause for much misunderstanding in the traditional Jewish community, but which of the branches of Judaism had a patent on the title? If one did have a patent the others wouldn't be able to use it! Also, 'rabbi' was a much used title in the Messianic community.

The title of rabbi is one of honor among the Jewish people in their respective branches of Judaism for their own rabbis, but who in the traditional Jewish community (those who didn't believe in Yeshua as the Messiah of Israel) would give me honor because of the title? None that I knew of, and that's what I experienced as some called me a false rabbis, etc.

The title of rabbi in the Christian community is totally foreign. Both camps told me that I was wrong for having it, but I came to see that God allowed me to have it for a season as a badge of humiliation. I was following in the way of my Rabbi, Yeshua.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> I would carry the title of rabbi for 16 years. When I came to Israel I saw that when I would speak of the title with secular Israelis many would be turned off to any further conversation about the Messiah because their idea of what a rabbi was, was influenced by the experience they had with rabbis in Israel, which many times was

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After the prayer of the prophetess, 'Israel' became so strong in my heart that I thought the Lord was sending us over to Israel to live. About this time Robin was pregnant with our first child, whom we believed would be born in Israel.

We got our passports in order and waited for Robin's piano to sell. This would give us airfare to Israel and some cash to start a new life. Our son was born on the third night of *Sukote* (the Feast of Tabernacles), the 17th of Tishri 5745 (12 October 1984) in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

We named him Zavdi, the name the Lord had given to Robin *before* he was even conceived. Zavdi means, 'My gift' (to you). It was like the Lord was saying, 'This is My gift to you.' He certainly was. What a joy to my soul that I had never known before, and I am the oldest of six, having raised the last four from diapers. I loved them with all my heart and they loved me.

My mother would leave for waitressing work when I got home from school (my stepfather already working the evening shift). My younger brother Noel and I would be left to feed, bathe, nurture and put to bed our three youngest brothers and sister—David, Sarah, Matthew and Joseph.

I wouldn't think that the love that I had for my brothers and sister would ever be exceeded, but Zavdi took a place in my soul that I had never known before. There was such an intense love and *oneness* that we had. I had never experienced anything like Zavdi.

In January 1985 three months after Zavdi was born, I spoke to Yeshua in prayer one day and told Him, 'I guess I missed You on Israel.' The Lord Yeshua spoke to me and said,

'The Israel that I have called you to are the Jewish people of Tulsa.'

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not good. Some of the rabbis are very unscrupulous and dishonest and have been exposed on television and in newspapers as such.

On the other hand, when I would share Messiah with many Orthodox Jews they wouldn't want to continue because I wasn't a rabbi of their sect. The Orthodox look down upon the secular Israelis as 'sinners' and so they don't associate with them, causing much strife and contention among the two groups.

In the year 2000 I was led of the Lord, through the challenge of Michael Moses, a friend in the States, to drop the title. I had already seen how counter-productive it was to reaching out to both religious and secular Israelis and so after much prayer I dropped it. The Lord had given me a greater spiritual appreciation of Mt. 23:8: 'do not be called rabbi.'

### *The Way of Broken Dreams*

With that I knew that God was planting me in Tulsa to reach out to my Jewish brethren with the Great News of God's *Life* for us in Messiah Yeshua. Unbeknownst to me at the time He was training me for Israel—to live and to be a witness for Him there in the midst of my people.

It was a busy time for me—husband, father, Rabbi of Zhera Avraham Synagogue (The Seed of Abraham), substitute teacher for the Tulsa Public Schools and a full time graduate student at Oklahoma State University.

I had gone back to graduate school because I loved counseling people, that being one of my strong points at ORU. I entered OSU because I saw the need for finances to support my family. Having a Masters in Marriage and Family Therapy would give me a source of much needed funds. There wasn't much money being a Messianic Rabbi.

I enrolled for a Master of Science degree in Community Counseling at OSU and switched to Marriage and Family Therapy by my second semester. Little did I realize that the Lord had other plans for how He was going to provide for me.

## ELI 2

On Thursday night Nov. 4th, 1999 Ruti and I went into Tiberias to get some food at the supermarket. We bought \$50 worth of groceries and they had a free 'gift' for us. After putting our food into plastic bags I went to the service desk...and waited. A woman, who also must have merited a gift, was arguing with the clerk about the size of the shirt. Finally, they sorted it out and I presented the receipt to the clerk. Ruti was standing about 15 feet from me (4.5 meters), in front of one of the cashier aisles, watching over our food.

As the clerk gave me the 'gift' I saw that we certainly could have done without two bottles of JUMP soda (which I had never heard of before). I thanked her, turned around and saw Eli. He was in the midst of packing his food at a far cashier, had just seen Ruti and had stopped what he was doing to come over to her. As he did he saw me coming toward him and his delight just increased.

We embraced as the French do, 'kissing' each other on both cheeks. I have French heritage on my father's side and I've come to love the embrace because with Eli it has much meaning. Tonight it held even greater meaning. He said,

'The book you gave me! Very interesting! Very interesting!'

He was excited and speaking of the Hebrew Bible we had given him. He had read some of the Gospels. Now he was speaking with 'much meaning!' He told me,

'Your hands are gold! Gold! When will you come to see me at the restaurant?'

I didn't understand what he meant by my hands being gold. At first I thought he had said something about 'God,' but when he said it a second time I knew he said 'gold.' I didn't comment on it, but told him that we would see him next week. He was very glad.

The next night Ruti and I were discussing what had happened and how when she had first seen Eli at the counter packing his food, that her heart leapt with joy for him. When Eli had recognized her, he too was happy, and when he had seen me his face just lit up more. Ruti has felt such a heavy burden for him. We can see that he's weighed down by what 'life' has done to him.

I shared with Ruti about him saying that I had hands of gold, but that I didn't know what he meant. She said, 'Because your hands gave him the Book.' 'Oh,

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of course!’ Ruti ‘connects the dots’ for me.

The interesting thing about our meeting Eli that night was that it wouldn’t have happened except that I had to wait for the ‘gift.’ How our Lord loves to use the things that ‘disrupt’ our lives for His greater purpose.

Ruti and I went to see Eli on Wednesday, Nov. 10th. As always, he was glad to see us. We sat down in anticipation of leading Eli to his Messiah, but it wasn’t to be that day. It was very disappointing, but our eyes were given greater discernment as to where Eli was at, so our prayers would be more focused for him. All this about Yeshua was very new to him, and of course, ‘goes against everything Jewish.’ He had been reading the New Covenant and told us that in another two weeks or so, he’d be finished with what I had asked him to read (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Acts). I was glad.

We spent about three hours with Eli and most of the time we spoke of Yeshua. At one point, a man came in to speak with Eli and Eli sent him away, saying to the man that he was busy. Eli came back to our table and told us that he would rather be with us.

I pulled my chair over to Eli and read to him about Messiah Yeshua, who, one day soon, would be seen by all Israel. Zechariah the prophet wrote,

‘all will look upon Me whom they have pierced and they will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only son.’ (Zech. 12:10)

After that I read a few verses later, in 13:1, saying, in that Day,

‘a Fountain will be opened for the House of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and impurity.’

I spoke of Yeshua’s crucifixion being prophesied by King David in Psalm 22, where it not only speaks of His hands and His feet being pierced,<sup>37</sup> and thinking He was forsaken by God, but that He was surrounded by ‘bulls and dogs’ (wicked human beings) who would mock Him about being the Messiah, while He was being crucified (Luke 23:35). David wrote Psalm 22 about a thousand years before it happened, and eight hundred years before the Romans made crucifixion a form of death.

Then I took him to Mark 15:22f., where these things happened to Yeshua, with His clothes being taken by the soldiers and lots cast for it, just as King

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<sup>37</sup> See *Lion Hands* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Lion-Hands.pdf> for the difference between the Jewish rendering and the biblical understanding of the verse that states that the hands and feet would be pierced.

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David said in Psalm 22:18: ‘They part my garments among them and cast lots for my clothes.’

I told Eli part of my testimony, saying to him that 24 years ago, before I came to Messiah Yeshua, that,

‘I was a nobody, going nowhere, doing nothing, but wrongly thinking that I was a somebody, going somewhere, doing something. Then I read about Yeshua in a book. I got halfway through the book and asked Jesus into my life. Immediately I knew that He was real because the Spirit of the Holy One descended upon me and I knew, I didn’t just ‘believe,’ but I *knew* that our God was real and that Yeshua was our Messiah.’

I told Eli that as he read the New Covenant, Ruti and I would be praying that the Messiah of Israel would reveal Himself to him.

I spoke of Jeremiah 31:31-34, in that God told us through the prophet that we’d *all* come to *know* God, from the least of us to the greatest, because God would place His Spirit within us to know Him, His Torah and His ways. Then I spoke of how God says that He will forgive our sins:

‘Belief in Yeshua is how God planned to forgive us, from before Creation, and to fill us with His Spirit of *Life*.’

I went back to the Blood of the Lamb of God and the picture of the Passover in Egypt, where the firstborn of Israel were spared because of the blood of the lamb, and how it pictured Messiah’s Blood being shed for both Jew and Gentile so that we could be forgiven by God Almighty. The Passover night pictures the great Day of Judgment (Ex. 12:12), when God will judge all peoples according to if they truly believe in what He has done for them, in sending Messiah Yeshua to take their sins upon Himself, and are Born Again.

I told Eli that life beats us down, again and again, and Eli nodded in agreement. I said that Yeshua was beaten in our place and that He was despised and rejected by our people 2,000 years ago, even though many Jews believed in Him, as Eli had read for himself in the New Covenant. When we come to believe in Yeshua, we are like dirty shirts that Yeshua takes and washes in the *living waters* of the Holy Spirit, again and again and again, so we can be cleaner and purer than ever before.

Eli said that it was good that Ruti and I believed that. He could see that we were strong in this faith. I told Eli there were three times, as Jews, that God

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*required* that we really believe Him. The first time was with Father Abraham in Genesis 15. Yahveh tells Abram (his name won't be changed until Gen. 17) that Abram's Seed would be as many as the stars in the Heavens and the sands of the seashore. Abram *believed* Yahveh and it was counted unto him for righteousness (Gen. 15:6). He *believed* that God *could do the impossible!*

Then I related how the Sons of Israel in the Wilderness (Num. 13–14) sent out 12 spies. When they came back they all said how good the Land of Canaan was, but ten of them rebelled against God. They said there were giants in the Land and that Yahveh was sending Israel there to be killed by them, so the Canaanites could take their wives and children! Joshua and Caleb got up and said,

'Hold it! If Yahveh is with us we'll tear'm apart! Just believe!'

Israel *wouldn't* believe, even though Yahveh had saved them from Egyptian slavery. Egypt was the most powerful country of its day, but God made Pharaoh bend his knee to Him. Israel was set free by Pharaoh's command (Ex. 12:29-32). After that God split the Red Sea open for Israel and they walked across on *dry* ground (Ex. 14:21-22) and they saw their Egyptian enemies, who wanted to murder them, drown in the Sea.

God fed them with manna (Ex. 16:13-21, 35), but they thought that His plan for them was for evil, when it came to really believing Him for the land that He had promised to them. Because of their wicked attitude; because they refused to believe in God at that point, they would all die in the Wilderness (Num. 26:62-65), all except for Joshua and Caleb, but the next generation would *believe* in Yahveh's strength, love and goodness toward them and they would inherit the Land that God had promised to Fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their descendants.

I told Eli that in our day, we have to *believe* the word, the Good News, that God sent the Messiah. I took a napkin from the table, and folding it up, I pretended I was slapping the face of an imaginary person. Eli, being of French descent, knew full well that it was a great insult. I told him,

'When we don't believe that God our Father has sent His Son, Yeshua our Messiah, to deliver us from sin and the Kingdom of Darkness (symbolized by Egypt) then we are slapping God in His face and calling Him a liar.'

I told Eli that he must determine whether Yeshua is really the Messiah or not. It's not enough for Ruti and me to believe, and for him not to know. I said that

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as he read the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit would speak to his heart about the Truth of Yeshua being his Messiah. When he knew this, and gave his life to Yeshua, there would be *great joy* in his heart. I told him what Yeshua said in Matthew 11:28, about those who are beaten down by life:

‘Come to Me, all you who *labor* and are *heavily burdened* and *I will give you rest.*’

I spoke of this picturing the Sabbath rest of Creation *and* of Redemption from Egypt (Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11; Dt. 5:12-15), and God Himself says that He will give Israel rest (Ex. 33:14). In Yeshua we find true heavenly rest for our souls. Yeshua is the *reality* that the Sabbath pictures and when we come to Him, He takes the burden of our sins from us, sins that weigh us down, and He gives us shalom, God’s peace, rest and freedom.

I emphasized the fact that Yeshua, by His Spirit, and the Father, were within Ruti and me, and that this is exactly what the prophets Ezekiel (36:22-27) and Jeremiah (31:31-34) spoke of. We were now the dwelling place of God! The ancient Tabernacle of Moses and the Temple of King Solomon, as the dwelling place of Yahveh among Israel, were pictures of what God would do through His Son for us. We are the new Temple that God dwells in by His Spirit! (1st Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19-20)

We spoke of other biblical things, and when we were done, I asked if we could pray for him. He shared some problems in his life—he’d been divorced twice and he gave his last wife everything. He told us that his rent was coming up in a week and he needed \$1,100. (That was for three months rent.) He asked to borrow a thousand dollars. We wanted to help, but told him we were very sorry. We didn’t have a thousand dollars or anything near it. He also said that one of his four children (all grown) was in a mental hospital in Jerusalem. She was 15 years old.

I prayed that the Lord Yeshua would bring the money in that Eli needed for rent and that the Holy Spirit would open Eli’s heart to see Yeshua his Messiah. Ruti prayed that Yeshua would heal Eli’s nose. He has a nasal problem and Ruti felt the Lord impressing her to pray for that. He appreciated it. We told him that we would return in another week, Lord willing.

This Scripture came across my path, a little while after our time with Eli, and deeply impacted me. May the Lord impact you, too:

‘For Zion’s sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest until her righteousness goes forth as brightness and her salvation as a lamp that burns. The Gen-

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tiles shall see your righteousness and all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of Yahveh shall name. You shall also be a crown of glory in the hand of Yahveh, a royal diadem in the hand of your God.'

'You shall no more be termed forsaken, neither shall your Land any more be termed desolate, but you shall be called *heft'zibah* (My delight is in her) and your Land *b'oulah* (married), for Yahveh delights in you and your Land shall be married. For as a young man marries a virgin, so will your sons marry You, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so will your God rejoice over you.'

'I have set watchmen upon your walls, Oh Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace, day or night. You that make mention of Yahveh, keep not silent. Give Him no rest until He establishes and until He makes Jerusalem a praise in the Earth. Yahveh has sworn by His right hand and by the arm of His strength.'

'Surely I will no more give your grain to be food for your enemies, and the sons of the stranger shall not drink your wine which you have labored for, but they that have gathered it shall eat it and praise Yahveh, and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the Courts of My holiness.'

'Go through, go through the gates! Prepare the way for the (Jewish) people! Cast up, cast up the highway! Gather out the stones! Lift up a Standard (Yeshua!) for the people! Behold! Yahveh has proclaimed unto the ends of the Earth,'

“Say to the Daughter of Zion! Behold! Your Salvation comes! Behold! His reward is with Him and His Work before Him!’ They shall call them, ‘The Holy People, the Redeemed of Yahveh’ and you shall be called, ‘Sought out, a city not forsaken.’” (Is. 62:1-12)

Jerusalem is more than a city—it’s the reservoir of all the pain, suffering and hope of the Jewish people for the last 2,000 years. I know this next verse specifically refers to Yeshua, but in relation to Eli, and many other Jews, I felt the Lord leading me to see that it also pertains, in some small way, to me:

‘The Spirit of the Lord Yahveh is upon me because Yahveh

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has anointed me to preach Good News to the meek. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.' (Is. 61:1)

Please lift up Eli to our Messiah, and join with Ruti and me as we reach out to our Jewish people, for Zion's sake.

A week later, on Thursday, Nov. 18th, we saw Eli again at his restaurant. We greeted him and his 18 year old son Yosafe (Joseph) and his cook, Sarah. We sat down and had some delicious Moroccan food and invited Eli to join us. We spoke for a little while and then I got up out of my chair and came over to him with a new and better version of the Hebrew Bible (both Old and New Testaments). We had gone to Jerusalem to buy 25 of them (along with some in Spanish and Russian for Jews here who read those languages better than Hebrew).

I told Eli that it had the same thing in it as the first one that I had given to him, but this one had larger and clearer print and would be easier for him to read. I asked him if he had finished reading from Matthew to Acts and he said that he hadn't, but he was finding it 'very interesting.' By this time, Sarah had come out and as I shared more about the *Life* that Yeshua had to give us who believe, I asked Sarah if she would like a Bible, too.

She asked me if it had the New Covenant in it and I told her it did. She said that it was forbidden for her to read. I told her that I knew the Rabbis had banned it, but that it really was from the God of Israel and that in reading the New Covenant she would see that it reflected the *Tanach*. Then I felt led to ask her to read Isaiah 53 in Eli's new Bible. After she was done I asked her who that spoke of and she said, 'Yeshua.' I couldn't believe she said that! Eli told her that I really knew what I was speaking about and that I had a great faith, and that he was coming to believe that Yeshua was the Messiah, too!

I could see when Sarah said 'Yeshua,' that she wasn't about to believe in Him. I know. It boggled my mind, too. How can one see Messiah Yeshua in Isaiah 53 and still not give her life to Him? The reason is because of Christian persecution over the last 1,900 years, and the turning of the Jewish Messiah into a pig eating, Sunday keeping, Christmas gift-giving Christ. Jews rightly know their Messiah won't invalidate the Law of Moses. The Lord amplified Mosaic Law (Mt. 5:17f.; cf. Lk. 24:44)—He didn't do away with it.

Jews are also very community minded and need to be part of their people. To believe in Jesus is to betray not only family, friends, rabbis and everything it

## *Eli 2*

is to be Jewish, but also, to desecrate the memory of parents and grandparents who have died, many at the hands of anti-Semitic Christians over the last 1,500 years. Christians have blocked the way into Yeshua's Kingdom by their persecution of the Jewish people.

I asked Sarah if she would read in Hebrew for us out of Zech. 12:10 and 13:1. It speaks of the Sons of Israel who pierced Messiah, mourning for Him as one would mourn for a young son who has just died. It also says that God will open up a Fountain of cleansing for Israel's sins, because of the Messiah's death. She read it.

I spoke of how Zechariah lined up with Isaiah 53:5, as it too, speaks of the Messiah being *pierced through* (v. 5, Hebrew). Again I asked Sarah who this might be. There was a general consensus that it was Yeshua, but Sarah had been trained in the ways of the Rabbis. She had studied their books and knew that anyone who believed in Yeshua would not be part of the Jewish community any longer. There would be nothing for her among the Jewish people. It takes a giant leap of faith, for a Jew like Sarah (or Eli), to believe and profess that Yeshua is the Messiah, knowing the ostracism and contempt it entails. Ruti and I could see that this was a major part of what was holding her back. Sarah, by the way, was Eli's former wife. We found that out today.

I spoke with Sarah for about an hour and a half, with Eli not only listening, but also upholding my words. He'd say things like, I was right, and that I knew what I was talking about. He appreciated my knowledge of God's Word, as one who reveres God's Word, but hasn't studied it.

We parted on good terms with Sarah, and thanked Eli for the delicious meal. I hugged him and we 'kissed.' Ruti kissed Sarah on the cheek. As always, we paid for the meal and left a generous tip.

Eli again asked me for \$1,000 for rent that was due two days earlier. The landlord had told him that if he didn't have it that day, that he should pack the next. I told Eli that I didn't have it, but I'd pray for him. I lifted it up to the Lord and I sensed that Eli was in a great position to call upon Messiah Yeshua to help him.

I began explaining to Eli about the Sons of Israel having the Red Sea at their backs, with Pharaoh and his army of charioteers coming to murder them. God Himself had orchestrated the Sons of Israel to be at the Red Sea because He was going to get glory at Pharaoh's expense (Ex. 14:1-4). Eli was in a similar position.

I asked Eli if he understood what I was saying. He said that he did, but that he

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wouldn't ask Yeshua, only God. Now I began to see a little clearer as to how Eli 'saw' Messiah Yeshua.

I said to Eli to ask God if Yeshua was his Messiah because Yeshua wanted to prove Himself strong for Eli. I shared a time when I didn't have any money and Yeshua provided for me in an incredible way!

I told Eli that Messiah Yeshua was able to do that for him, too, if he could *only believe...*

## RAV AVRAHAM

I had met Meir a few of days before, but hadn't shared Messiah Yeshua with him. He had a need for some money and we gave him \$50, which I believe was what the Lord wanted. I also sensed that it was to be the last time that the Lord wanted me to give him any money.

On Monday, Nov. 22nd, 1999 Meir brought another man with him to our home, a man whom we had seen a few days earlier at the post office; Rav (Rabbi) Avraham. He stood about 6' 2" (1.9 meters) and weighed around 260 pounds (118 kilos). His glasses were slightly bent and his clothes were sloppy. His hair on the sides of his head stuck out and he had a scraggy beard. He wore a large black *kipa* that covered his head and *tzit'ziot* (plural for tassels; Num 15:37f.). He had an easy disposition and was about 40 years old.

There was a knock on our door about 8:30 PM. I had been working on a letter on my computer. I invited them in and they sat down on the couch. Meir told me that Rav Avraham needed some money, and Meir said he could use some, too. Hmm...

Meir was about 30 years old and could work, but didn't. Before I could tell them 'No,' Rav Avraham began questioning me if I went to the synagogue across the street. I told him that I didn't. He asked me where I prayed and I said in the house. Rav Avraham had taught at the synagogue and other places in Tiberias, as well as in other cities in Israel.

He asked me if I 'put on' *tefillin*. *Tefillin* are two black leather boxes containing portions of Mosaic Law written on parchment (Ex. 13:1-16; Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21). The boxes are fastened to black leather straps. Religious Jews put one on their left bicep with the straps running all the way to their hand, and the other around their head, every day except the Sabbath. They do this during morning prayer. I said that I didn't 'wrap (or lay) *tefillin*' as the expression goes. I've come to see that it's a rabbinic perversion of Scripture not sanctioned by God.<sup>38</sup>

Then he noticed that I didn't wear a *kipa*. He asked me if I was Lubavitch (a *Hasidic* sect within Judaism), or Bretzlav (another *Hasidic* sect) and I told him that I wasn't. He asked me what my profession was, thinking possibly

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<sup>38</sup> See *Tefillin: To Wear or Not to Wear?* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Tefillin-To-Wear-or-Not-to-Wear.pdf> for why neither Yeshua, nor His Apostles, ever wore *tefillin*, and obviously, we shouldn't either.

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that I was a professor. I told him that I was like a professor in that I taught people about God and Messiah.

Then I asked him if he wanted to know who the Messiah of Israel was. He told me that he did, and I said that I would give him the name of the Messiah, but he would have to stay five minutes after that so I could speak with him more about Messiah. He agreed to that.

I got out a Hebrew Bible and opened it to Isaiah 53 and asked him to read it. He read it and asked me,

‘What is the name of the Messiah?’

I asked him,

‘You don’t know after having read that?’

He told me the name wasn’t there. I said that the Messiah who is mentioned there is called Messiah the Son of Joseph, a name given to the Messiah by our ancient Rabbis because Messiah, like Joseph, would be rejected by us, and also, pierced through and die as atonement for our sins.

I asked him if he knew of anyone like that. He didn’t know of anyone. Then I said that the name of Messiah was Yeshua from Nazareth. Just ‘matter of factly’ he said,

‘Tell Yeshua to come to Tiberias. I want to meet him.’

I smiled and tried not to laugh. I said,

‘Didn’t you just read about the Messiah of Isaiah dying and God raising Him up? Messiah Yeshua is now seated at the right hand of God and will return soon as Messiah, the Son of David.’

Then it dawned upon him that the Messiah I spoke of was the same one as the Christians believe in. To my delight and surprise he didn’t immediately leave or curse me. Meir got a little fidgety though.

I told them that the Messiah has been given to both Jew and Gentile, as the prophet Isaiah spoke of in chapters 42 and 49. We turned there and read,

‘Behold! My Servant whom I uphold! My Chosen One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him. He will bring forth justice to the *nations*’ (*nations* meaning Gentiles; Is. 42:1).

‘I am Yahveh! I have called You in righteousness. I will also

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hold You by the hand and watch over You and I will appoint You as (a) Covenant to the (Jewish) people and as a *Light* to the *nations*' (Gentiles; Is. 42:6).

“Yahveh says,

‘It’s too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the Tribes of Jacob and to restore the remnant of Israel. I will also make You a *Light* to the nations (Gentiles) so that My salvation may reach to the ends of the Earth!’” (Is. 49:6)

I then addressed the reason why I didn’t wear a *kippa*. It was because I had found that it was pagan in origin, coming from Babylon.

Rav Avraham delved into Kabbalah, the mystical part of Judaism that came from Babylon. I told him that it wasn’t what the God of Israel wanted for His people, but that we should place our trust in His Messiah, who was sacrificed for us. He was the only covering (atonement) for sin that was acceptable to God, and He would also give us the Holy Spirit. We don’t need the unclean spirit of Kabbalah.

By this time they were asking me questions in Hebrew that I didn’t understand and so I asked Ruti to go upstairs and see if either Merav, the landlord’s daughter, or Varda, the landlord’s wife or Rotem the landlord’s son, could come down and act as translator. While Ruti was gone I told them,

‘Belief in Messiah Yeshua allows the fountain of *living waters* to come to us. Only with belief in Messiah Yeshua can we be filled with the Holy Spirit and really know the God of Israel, as the prophet Jeremiah spoke of.’

Then I read Jeremiah 31:31-34 to them, which speaks of the New Covenant and about knowing God and that He would forgive our sins. They had never seen this before. Most Jews haven’t.

Merav joined us and it became a lively discussion. I centered in on the New Covenant and our ability to know God by His Spirit because of the sacrificial death or blood of Messiah Yeshua, pointing back to Isaiah 53.

Rav Avraham told Merav that they believed I was a Jew, like themselves, and so my speaking of Messiah *Yeshua* took them by surprise. They said they had to leave, but Rav Avraham said that he would like to think about what I said and perhaps come back again.

Rav Avraham called me a ‘*Gaon*,’ which is a special title of distinction given

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to great spiritual leaders in the Jewish community, and he said that I was ‘very interesting.’ I think he said that because he saw how I used the Hebrew Bible to present Yeshua from it. In other words, I knew the Tanach in relation to the Messiah of Israel. He most likely had never seen those Scriptures before, and of course, not in relation to Yeshua.

I mentioned something in the New Covenant and asked him if he would like to read it, but his immediate response was ‘*Ah’sur!*’ (‘Forbidden!’) At that point, Rav Avraham and Meir got up and headed for the door, but I was able to give Rav Avraham the Hebrew handout, *A Picture of Messiah*.

Ruti and I prayed that he would read it and be led to see Messiah from it and come back and want to continue to learn more about Yeshua. The ‘five minutes’ that I had asked Rav Avraham to stay had turned into more than an hour. We walked them outside and they left. Then I turned to Merav and thanked her for translating. A few weeks earlier I had given Merav the Hebrew handout and so I questioned her about it. She told me that she ‘was happy in’ her ‘belief’ and really wasn’t interested in what I had to share.

I asked her what her belief was. She said that she believed in God and that was enough. I said there were millions of Gentiles in the United States that believed in God and many of them are going to Hell because belief in God is not enough. I told her,

‘Look in the Torah and show me where belief in God will give you *eternal Life* or acceptance before our holy God on the Day of Judgment. It’s not there, and the reason it’s not there is because the God of Israel has sent His Son, our Messiah, to die for us, that His Blood could be our covering—not the *kipa*, which is pagan, or whatever else anyone wants to believe.’

I said,

‘There were only three major times of belief in Scripture. The first was when Father Abraham believed God when God said that his sons would be as the stars of Heaven. God counted it as righteousness for him.’

‘The second was when the Sons of Israel were in the Wilderness and they chose *not* to believe God when He said that He was going to bring them into the land of Canaan. This, despite the fact that He had set them free from Egypt, parted the Red Sea and was visibly present to them every day in the

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Cloud of Glory, and He fed them with Manna every day.’

“They, too, ‘believed’ in God, but they died in that belief in the Wilderness because they didn’t mix their belief with trust and faith in God. They were afraid of the giants and they said that God hated them and wanted to kill them and give their wives and children to the Cannanites.”

‘The third belief is about Messiah Yeshua. Only belief in Him can give us the Blood of forgiveness and allow His Blood and His Spirit to transform us into someone like Him, so we can marry Him at the end of the Age. For God the Son can only marry someone like Himself. This belief, walked out in faith with Him, is the belief that the God of Israel wants us to have.’

Merav stood there and heard me out, but I could see that only by the Holy Spirit opening the eyes of her heart could she perceive the *reality* of the Gift of what our God had done for us. The Lord wasn’t done though. Ruti spoke to Merav and said that ‘No one knows the day of their death.’ She told Merav about her younger sister in Minnesota, who had died in a car accident when she was only 17 years old (and Ruti was 20).

Merav was 24 years old and engaged to Ro’i (my shepherd), who was studying to become an engineer, but would later become a fireman in Tel Aviv. I asked Merav if she would like a Bible with a New Covenant. She declined. I told her the offer would always be open to her and thanked her again for translating for us. I asked her if she wanted any money for translating and she looked at me in mock-horror. I said, ‘I didn’t think you would, Merav. Thanks.’

Two days later, on Wednesday, Nov. 24th, Ruti and I went out to eat in a Chinese restaurant in Tiberias. When we got there for lunch it hadn’t opened yet and so we waited. Another woman also arrived early and we began to speak with her. Her name was Diganit and she was from Rosh Pina, a town about half an hour north of Tiberias. She was 32 years old.

After exchanging names and where we all lived, I asked her if she believed in God. She said that God hadn’t been very good to her. I said that wasn’t the God of Israel. He is *only* good, but He has made this world the way that He wanted for His purpose.

I asked her if she thought that God was mean or harsh to Father Abraham because God tested Abraham by telling him to sacrifice his son (Gen. 22). She

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said that God was mean for that. I told her,

‘for three days, Abraham thought in his heart that his son Isaac was dead, for that’s how long it took them to go from Beersheba to Mt. Moriah, but this test would prove that Abraham loved God more than his most precious possession, his son Isaac. With Isaac being 33 years old he could have told his father that he wasn’t about to be sacrificed. What could Abraham, who was 133 years old, do to Isaac? Isaac surely could have overpowered his father if he wanted to, but here we see that Isaac loved his father more than he loved his own life.’

‘God wasn’t mean to Abraham, but was showing us what He and His Son, our Messiah Yeshua, would go through to forgive us of our sins and prepare us for eternity in the New Jerusalem. We might not know how God the Father would feel, in sacrificing His Son, but we can imagine what Abraham and Isaac were going through. Abraham would have rather tried to pull his own heart out than to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac.

Isaac may have panicked at first and struggled to resolve to do what his father wanted. He was certainly startled by this turn of events. Both men, though, exemplify death to self, that the will of another may be carried out. With Abraham and Isaac we have a glimpse into knowing how God the Father and God the Son felt when the Son laid down His *Life* for us at the behest of His Father, and also of Their great love for us in doing that.’

She listened, but wasn’t interested. We invited her to eat with us as our guest. She accepted. We went into the restaurant and ordered some food and while she was eating her cellphone rang. She was on it for only a minute, but after she got off she said, ‘Why can’t Israelis say something without shouting?’ (A common Israeli trait.) We could see that it had upset her and I said the Bible calls it sin:

‘Many Israelis are not considerate or loving of others, yet God’s commandment tells them to love you, but they love themselves ‘too much’ and care too little for the feelings of others. This is sin and it hurts.’

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Then I felt impressed to say that Yeshua wanted me to tell her this. Messiah Yeshua says this to you, Diganit,

‘Come to Me, you who are weary and over burdened, and I will give you rest.’

I told her that Yeshua was the *reality* behind the Sabbath rest and that only He could give rest and true *shalom* to her soul:

‘I have been in Transcendental Meditation and Zen Buddhism. They are counterfeits that would deceive us. Only in Yeshua can one find true *shalom*, and this we know because He has given us the Spirit of the Holy One. We don’t just believe, we also know. We *know* the God of Israel, as the prophet Jeremiah spoke of—that all would *know* Him, from ‘the least to the greatest.’ (Jer. 31:34)

Ruti also shared with Diganit (‘little bread’) that before she came to Yeshua her life was horrible. She was depressed, an alcoholic and on drugs, but Yeshua gave her *real Life*. He had, in one moment of time, completely changed her whole life around and filled her with joy.

We spoke of other things about the Lord, and His desire to fill her with *shalom*. We were with her for more than an hour. As we finished the meal she said that she had to leave. She thanked us for the food and the time together. I gave her the Hebrew handout (*A Picture of Messiah*) and told her that if she had any questions, to call us. She told us that we were ‘very nice people’ and said that she hoped that we’d meet again. I responded with, ‘I hope so!’

After she left we stayed at the table and looked out onto the Sea of Galilee. This restaurant is also next to the Sea, further north from Miero and Asher’s restaurant. It’s incredible, knowing that our Lord Yeshua literally walked on the shores and *on* this Sea! He did so much of His healings and teachings in the villages around the Sea. Now we were there to proclaim Him to another generation of Jewish people.

We ordered some tea and stayed a while longer, reading some letters from friends that we had picked up at the Post Office, and allowing the food to digest. We gazed out over the Sea every once in a while and the mountains that surrounded it. We were at peace.

I left to use the bathroom, and so Ruti was at the table by herself. Another woman came in and sat down at the table in front of us. By the time I had come back from the bathroom, Ruti was holding a conversation with her. Her name

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was Pat and she was 75 years old. She came to Tiberias to visit the hot springs that are here. Many do, as some find them medicinally helpful.

She had been here years before and said that she was healed of something then. She lived in the Chicago area and we listened as she shared her ailments and some of her Catholic teachings. Before we left, Ruti sensed that she was to pray for Pat's eyesight—both physical and spiritual. She had an operation for a cataract, but her vision wasn't good and her doctrine was worse. She told us that she would see a step as a line in the floor and knew now how older people could fall so easily. We prayed for her and she appreciated it. Then we left to go to a store.

On our way to the store, who should call out to us, but Rav Avraham. We had met him the night before last. Meir was with him again and they wanted us to come to their place of study. I asked him if he had read the paper (*A Picture of Messiah*) that I had given him and he told me that he had. It didn't seem to do anything for him though.

We were literally right in front of their place. Just then, another man with what looked like a white stocking cap on his head (a sign that he was part of the Bretzlav branch of *Hasidic* Judaism) came by and Rav Avraham invited him to meet me and to come with us. Rav Avraham began explaining who I was. The man leaned over to me and asked who the Messiah was. I told him 'Yeshua.' He became very upset with Rav Avraham. He told Avraham that he was crazy for being with me—'a missionary!!!' He abruptly left.

That didn't deter Rav Avraham. He and Meir took us up some stairs and led us to a room that had no glass in the cement surrounding the open windows. The room was about 22 feet by 12 feet (7 x 4 meters). Dirt was on the floor and they had two or three old mattresses on the floor where they and others slept. The ceiling was open in parts to the sky and some pigeons were perched on it. They had an old refrigerator and a hot plate in this abandoned building.

Rav Avraham took me aside and asked me if I could give them \$45,000 to make the place presentable. I told him that silver and gold I didn't have, but what I did have, the Holy Spirit, in the name of Yeshua, I wanted to give to him. He said that was good and then asked me if he could have just a little money. I told him that I would pray about it.

We walked outside and he told us the whole two story building was theirs. It must have been abandoned for some years. We had seen another room that did have a floor and some books in it and he told us there was a basement, also. He wanted to make it a place for learning Judaism. I thought it could be a

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great place to learn about Yeshua, but Avraham would have to come to Him first.

Ruti came up to me and said that she felt impressed that we should give him 100 shekels (\$24). I asked him if he was hungry (wanting to take him to a place and feed him), but he told me that it wasn't for him, but for the others. (We had seen one man in the dirt floor room and another man in a room on the way to the dirt floor room.)

I was about to give him a hundred shekels, when, from behind us came the Bretzlav man, racing toward me with another man who was dressed in black (the traditional dress of Orthodox Jews). This man wore a flat, black hat. The Bretzlav man was very angry now. His eyes were 'burning fire' and he came charging at me, waving his hands in a gesture that I took to mean that he wanted to tear me apart. He was pounding his fists together and then breaking them apart. He was also gnashing his teeth as he was shouting at me.

I looked him straight in the eye and he stopped approaching, but continued to motion with his hands, shouting and cursing me. They both approached a little more and spit on the ground toward me. I think he was mistaken as to who was crazy.

Avraham told them that I was a good man, but they didn't accept that. They told me to leave. With all the commotion going on, some other men approached and one began asking me who the Messiah was. Another asked if I was a Jew. They said that I should go back to where I came from. I listened and spoke of Yeshua as the opportunity arose, speaking of Messiah from the *Tanach*. As I did, the friend of the crazy one placed his fingers in his ears, so as not to hear and kept shouting '*Sheh'ket! Sheh'ket!*' which usually means 'quiet,' but the way he was saying it meant 'Shut up!' The others kept on talking *at* me. I didn't continue. They didn't like that I looked like a Jew with my full beard, my black hat and my *tzit'ziot*. The man with the flat, black hat took it off and hit me with it a couple of times on the head and left shoulder, coming close to me and then backing off, scared that I might go after him. I didn't do anything about it except to say, '*Haver, haver, hay'vanti*' (Friend, friend, I understand). It didn't calm him down. Then another Orthodox man came and said that he wanted to cut my beard off and left to find some scissors. That concerned me.

I began to testify. I told them that I *knew* that Yeshua was the Messiah of Israel because He had given me the Holy Spirit, just as our Prophets had spoken of. They weren't interested. Different ones were doing and saying different things in a mocking way. A number of times they asked me if I was a Jew and

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they wanted to see some identification. I told them I wouldn't give them any. (Israelis have what is known as '*tudat zehute*,' an official government identification card. On it is listed, among other things, if one is Jewish, Arab or Christian.)

As I sought the Lord as to what to say and what to do, Ruti said there was only 'contention' there and that we should leave. They had begun 'to back off' and I thought Ruti's suggestion was from the Lord. I turned to leave and half a brick was thrown at us. It didn't hit us. I imagine the flat hat man threw it. We continued to leave. Then they came at me again. They were very angry. Some were mocking me, while others were telling me never to come back there again. Ruti stayed close, but she was outside the circle of the men who were 'pressing in upon me.'

By this time I was surrounded by about eight men. Avraham and Meir had receded into the background and these men were telling me that my dreams would not amount to anything here and that I should leave Tiberias. One man, the white-capped one, had begun asking Ruti a question about her *tudat zehute* in order to see it. I never heard it because I was occupied elsewhere, but Ruti would later recount it to me. She was standing about seven feet behind me and she said to him,

'Is that what God is concerned with, or does He look at the heart?'

That's my wife! It kind of disabled him. He spoke something again, but Ruti said that she shouldn't speak to him as it wasn't proper for him, a man, to be speaking to another man's wife. He left her alone after that.

Then another man asked Ruti why she wasn't screaming or upset, seeing that her husband was in a dangerous situation. Ruti knew the man's motives were not right. She wouldn't answer him. She was praying all the time while this was happening.

A new man joined the group and grabbed hold of my left wrist and was asking me about Messiah. The crowd continued to press in. I told him that Yeshua was the Messiah and that I knew this for a fact. He said that if I ever came back there again that I would die. I told him, 'Kill me now! Don't threaten me!' They continued to tell me that it would be bad for me if they saw me again. I asked them, 'Where is the *bet din*?!' (A *bet din* is a court made up of rabbis that judge religious matters and if these men had already judged and condemned me for my belief in Messiah Yeshua, they were acting outside of the realm of Judaism, but lynch mobs usually aren't concerned about technical

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matters like a fair trial, and this group was no exception.)

During this time the flat-hatted man, who had hit me with his hat, began kicking and shoving me. He kicked me three times—once by my left knee, another time in my left buttock and a third time on my left hand by the fingers. Then he grabbed my hat off my head and threw it into the air to another man who kicked it in the dirt. After that someone took off with it and I never saw it again. Then my glasses were knocked off. I think it was the flat hat man. There were so many around me that I didn't see who did it.

My glasses fell to the ground and I thought that one of them would surely crush them, but Ruti, right behind us, picked them up before anyone could get them. There would only be a minor scratch on the left lens.

Into all this chaos came Eli's son, Yosafe! He came up on my left so I didn't see him until he was almost by my side. He moved away the man that was there, making room for himself and told them that I was a good man and that he knew me because I had come to his father's restaurant. I was very impressed with this 19 year old boy in the midst of the men. They immediately began questioning Yosafe about where his father's restaurant was, and I was concerned for Eli.

Finally, the man with the grip on my left wrist told me to get out of there and never return. As we walked away, some women who had joined the group cursed us and threw some coins that hit us in the back. We kept on walking. The incident was over.

*Two witnesses* had spoken out on my behalf, telling the mob that I was a good man. Avraham did it in the beginning and Yosafe at the end. Dt. 19:15 states,

‘A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed. On the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.’

The Lord had sent two witnesses to the mob, but they wouldn't listen to whom God had sent to them. Of course, they wouldn't listen to me, either, whom God had sent to them to tell them of their Messiah.

We returned to the house and prayed. The adrenaline was still flowing in me and we needed to be with the Lord. We prayed the Lord would use the incident, especially in Avraham and Meir's life, to show them that Yeshua really was the Messiah, and that the conviction of the Holy Spirit would fall upon all those who came against us. As we prayed the Lord moved Ruti and me into some deep intercessory prayer and praise. Please pray for those men. We felt

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very impressed with God's love for them. Please don't let their sin take your eyes off of Yeshua, who has forgiven us of much, much worse. This song, by Marty Goetz, came to me:

For Zion's sake, I will not be silent.  
For Zion's sake, I'll not hold my peace.  
I've set watchmen on your walls, oh Jerusalem,  
They shall never, hold their peace.  
Day or night, all you who call upon the Lord,  
Call upon the Lord *for Zion's sake*.<sup>39</sup>

The altercation had an adverse effect upon me. The next day the spirit of fear came in through the back door and I didn't realize that I needed to rebuke it. Now I was afraid of seeing them again and getting physically hurt. Pity joined the party, and so for two of months I was 'taken out of the Way.' It's not as though I completely shut down, but I wasn't right in my soul and didn't realize spiritually, what had attacked me. There was a lot of stress in my life at that time and I tried to carry it myself, instead of giving it to Yeshua and seeking Him as to what was going on.

The loss of my sons, Zavdi and Yoel (eleven years earlier) overwhelmed me. The loss of a spiritual son to death, less than a year earlier, added to my misery and grief. These, along with other points of pity and pressing financial concerns, drove me away from the joy of my Lord. I should have pressed in closer, but my desire wasn't there. I was seeing my own carnal heart lead me. I had no ability to fight it. I began to binge-out on sugar—chocolate, cake and soda. It was my flesh's way of dealing with fear, sorrow and pain, and sabotaging me. Eating was a form of pleasurable escape from an intolerable situation. Doubt also came on board and I found myself asking,

'Why did I have to lead such a life as this? Couldn't I be just as effective, perhaps more so, in the States, where I wouldn't have to put my life on the line all the time?'

Ruti prayed for me in her times with Yeshua, but she wondered if I would ever return. I wondered at times, too, not knowing the depth of Yeshua's patience, forbearance and forgiveness for 'things I knew better' than to do. In a sense, I was trusting in Him as much as I could, that He would heal me and set my crooked places straight. So, I just 'let it all hang out.' There was nothing else I

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<sup>39</sup> This is taken from the album by Marty Goetz, *The Love of God*. The Scriptures are taken from Isaiah 62:1, 6.

*Rav Avraham*

could do, but I knew that He is faithful even when I am not (2nd Tim. 2:13). I wasn't haughty about it. I was spiritually sick. I was weak, just as one who has no strength cannot lift 400 pounds (181 kilos). I was helpless to save myself. I was sinning in over-indulgence, pity, fear and doubt.

I saw that the time with Sam the ~~rock~~ thrower was 'all Yeshua' in me. Messiah made me strong that day, two and a half years earlier. Now, here I was trembling at the thought of running into the mob again, and of them man-handling me or worse. Yeshua was allowing me to see more of 'me.'

Then one day it all began to come together. I had no desire to over-eat. I knew it was the Lord answering our prayers. Fear hadn't completely subsided, as it would still poke it's head out on my Path, but it wasn't able to take me out of the Way.

Doubt and pity were also dealt with and they left. Yeshua had come to my rescue in the inner workings of my soul and had healed me, and I was walking with Him again in a way that overcame my fears, sinful condition and outer circumstances. I had gotten my eyes on the problems and myself and had fallen off the Road. In all that I came to see my own failures and sins, and His ability to forgive, strengthen and give *Life*, where only sin, darkness and death had been.

Thank You, Yeshua!!! You *are* more precious than gold, yea than much fine gold! (Psalms 19:10; 119:127)

'Consider Him who endured such hatred against Himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart.'  
(Hebrews 12:3)

## ELI 3

On Thursday, Dec. 9th, 1999 Ruti and I went to Eli's restaurant and saw Eli and Sarah. Eli was very glad to see us. He told us that he had hired a group of Israeli Moroccan singers and they had sung last Saturday night and they would be back the following week. The place had been packed out, probably about 80 people. He was excited and wanted us to come this Saturday night. We told him that we would pray about it. After we had something to eat, Eli came over and we began to talk some more.

I asked him about Yosafe, his son. He said that he was back in Jerusalem. It didn't seem like Eli knew anything about Rav Avraham and the mad hatter two weeks before. I asked Eli about his rent situation, as he was in dire straits the last time we saw him. He said that he had borrowed some money from his daughter and that everything was alright. So much for trusting in the Lord.

We drank some tea with mint, Eli and Sarah joining us. I was in no rush to get into talking about Yeshua. I wanted to see if they might bring Him up. Eli blessed God for the tea and I said, 'Amen.' Eli then told us that I would get a double blessing, but he, only one. He asked me if I knew what he was talking about. I told him that according to the Rabbis, I got one blessing for listening to him bless God for the tea, and another for saying 'Amen.' Eli, on the other hand, would only get one because he 'just' said the blessing. We laughed at the rabbinic nonsense.

Then Eli and Sarah began to speak about the hot topic of the day—'*Ain geh'shem!*' (No rain!) It was a drought last year and the weathermen were saying that the rain forecast was going to be much lower than average. None of the weather prognosticators had said so far that it would be another drought year for sure, but this was what it was looking like.<sup>40</sup>

Sarah spoke of all the vegetables, now being so much more expensive because of the lack of rain. I said there wasn't any rain because Israel refuses to come to God. 'Most Israelis don't want to know God.' They agreed with me. I said that this wasn't a good situation. I took the salt and the pepper shakers on the table and I said, 'This is salt and this is pepper. They're supposed to be together.' Then I said,

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<sup>40</sup> *The Jerusalem Post*, Dec. 9th, 1999 reported: 'The dearth of rainfall last year and the lack of significant precipitation so far this winter have been described by Water Commissioner Meir Ben-Meir as the worst drought in Israel in the past century.'

### *Eli 3*

‘The salt is God and the pepper is Israel, but Israel does not want to have anything to do with her God. That’s why there isn’t any rain. God is pressuring Israel, wanting her to look to Him. God wants to give Israel *living waters* through Messiah Yeshua.’

I saw Sarah turn a little, not wanting to hear about Yeshua, but I went on,

‘The New Covenant was promised to us in Jer. 31:31-34 and God also says that everyone shall know Him, from the least to the greatest. Only by Messiah Yeshua does this come about. In Ezk. 36:24-27, which you read for us the last time we were here, Sarah, God says that He will give us His Spirit. That was 2,600 years ago! Where is it?’

‘When I gave my life and my heart to Messiah Yeshua 24 years ago, the Holy Spirit came upon me and I *knew* that it was God, and not me just thinking it. Whenever I turn to God in prayer the Holy Spirit is there.’

I told them that I didn’t just believe Yeshua was the Messiah—I knew it, just as God had spoken through the prophet Jeremiah. Changing the subject, Eli spoke of the death of billionaire Safron, who had died in Morocco the week before. Eli knew him and had prayed with him many times in the synagogue in Morocco when they were young men.

Eli then began to speak of his financial and personal troubles again, and I said,

‘As we take all that is crushing us and turn to God, He will crush us and make us sweet, like fruit. If we don’t turn to God we get hard like rocks.’

I told them that this was why many in Israel were so hard and angry. They didn’t know God and didn’t want to know Him, and the pressures of life in Israel had made them hard and bitter. They both agreed with me.

Eli shared that he had called Morocco and had talked with a friend of his from when Eli was in his late teens. Eli would be 62 in another month. Eli said it was like it was only yesterday. The man remembered him and they had their friendship back again.

Eli said that he was an old man. I told him that he was still young. I told him that Father Abraham was 175 years old when he died. His son Isaac outlived him by five years and died at 180. Jacob didn’t die until he was 147 years old,

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and his son Joseph died at the early age of 110.

Sarah thought that Jacob died at 120 years old. I said that when Jacob stood before Pharaoh he declared that his days of wandering were few compared to his Fathers, but filled with much misery. The Scripture records that he was 130 years old then (Gen. 47:7-9, 28). I told Sarah that she was probably thinking of Moses. He died at 120 years old (Dt. 34:7).

I went on to tell them that Jacob would die 17 years *after* seeing Pharaoh, at 147 years old. Joseph was taken from Jacob when Joseph was 17 years old. One thing that is interesting about the story is that Jacob would know Joseph for 17 years in the beginning of Joseph's life, and 17 years at the end of his (Jacob's) life. Then I asked, how many years did Jacob think that Joseph was dead? Sarah correctly answered 22 years.

In all that time when Joseph was in Egypt, Jacob thought that Joseph was dead. Why didn't God tell Jacob that his favorite son Joseph was still alive? I said that God never told Jacob that Joseph was alive in Egypt because *God was crushing Jacob with grief* in order to refine him and make him into his God-given name—*Israel*. I asked, 'What does Jacob mean?'

I waited. They didn't know. I said that Jacob means,

'ganav (thief and conniver) and that's exactly what Jacob was. He connived Esau out of his birthright, and also, deceived his own father Isaac, stealing Esau's blessing!' (Gen. 25:29-34; 27:1-46)

They understood. On the other hand, *Israel* means,

'one who wrestles with God, perseveres, and finds favor with God and man—i.e. a prince.'

Then I took out the Prayer Gram. It was a special letter I had received from Mike Lewis, a good friend of ours in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. It stated that he and his wife Martha, and Jim, another good friend of ours, and a number of men and women from Mike's Bible study at work and church had specifically prayed for Eli, 'to be touched by the presence and power of the *living* Lord.'

I handed the letter to Eli, asking him if he could read English. He said maybe, but as he looked at it I could tell that I needed to read it for him. I told him there were people in the United States praying for him to come to Messiah Yeshua. He wasn't exactly thrilled about that, but he was polite. That was very disappointing for me. I think that Sarah had adversely effected him about Yeshua, and so he became more 'guarded' around her.

### *Eli 3*

I asked Eli if I could pray for him. He had let us pray for him a number of times before, but this time he said no. He said he'd better not, with Sarah there. She was in the kitchen, having gotten up to take some food plates away and bring us some tea.

After we finished the tea, Sarah got up and took the tea pot and cups, and I spoke to Eli and asked him if he had been reading the New Covenant. He told me that he had and that he was finding it 'very interesting.' I asked him if he had any questions about it and he said that once he read the whole thing he would probably have questions. Ruti and I sensed that his coming to Yeshua wasn't to be that day, and so I just left it at that.

We had given Eli two complete Bibles in Hebrew; the first was a small, compact one and the print was hard for him to read. After he had gotten the other Bible *he gave the smaller one away*. He said there was this Jewish professor from Haifa who had come in to eat at his restaurant, and Eli had given him the compact one. I thought that was great.

I asked Eli for his name, but he said that he had only been in twice, and so hadn't gotten it yet. How God's Word spreads! We prayed for that professor. I had signed the Bible and put our telephone number in it for Eli, and now, the professor could call us if he was led to do so.

Eli liked the larger print Bible. We were glad. Eli told us that he read Psalm 22 everyday. I was delighted. I told Eli,

'the crucifixion of Yeshua is spoken of through King David in that Psalm.'

I said to him that it declares Messiah's,

'hands and feet would be pierced, as Isaiah 53:5 and Zechariah 12:10 speak of, as we had read of before.'

'In the middle of the Psalm it's written that a pack of dogs surrounded Him, and that's exactly what happened at the crucifixion of Yeshua.'

'*Dogs*, in this case, being evil Jews. They taunted Him and said that if He was the Messiah that He should come down from the tree, and *that* would prove to them that He was the Messiah' (Mark 15:32).

'Psalm 22 also says that after His death He would live again and He would praise God in the midst of the congregation of

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His brothers.’

Eli said that he wanted us to come to the Saturday night gala. I told him that we tried to be in bed between 9 and 10 PM. The round-up started at 8:30 PM. He said that we should come and do something that would make us happy. I said,

‘seeking the *living* Messiah every day and entering into His Presence makes us joyful. Heavenly *joy* is different from earthly happiness. God’s joy cannot be made by man doing this thing or that thing.’

I also told him that we didn’t like crowds or loud music, but quiet and peaceful places, like his was at that time. We were the only ones in the place. He said that it would make him very happy if we came. I told him that we would pray about it and if Messiah Yeshua led us to come then we would be there. Sarah, who had returned by now, had disbelief written all over her face. As we left, Ruti hugged Sarah. Eli and I embraced and ‘kissed’ each other on the cheeks.

Ruti and I walked back to the center of town. She wanted a frozen yogurt made with frozen fruit so we stopped at this place that was only 100 yards (90 meters) away from where the incident with the mad hatter and his friends occurred. We ordered our frozen fruit yogurts. A man hurried past us without looking at us. We both looked at each other and I said,

‘Wasn’t that the man who held my left wrist and threatened to kill me if he saw me again?’

He had been oblivious to us now, although he came within two feet of us. He didn’t ‘see us’ as we had our backs to him, standing at the frozen yogurt counter. I commented to Ruti,

‘Isn’t that just like the Lord ‘to hide us’ in the midst of them!’

We finished the strawberry-vanilla yogurt at a table a few feet away from the yogurt place. It was a very pleasant day in Tiberias. We walked to the grocery store just around the corner. We bought what we needed and left and as we came outside, the police were just down the block sectioning off the main street of the town. The bomb squad had been called in and all traffic stopped. Some light explosives would eventually be detonated near a ‘suspicious looking’ bag to see if a bomb would explode inside it. Nothing happened. It was just a bag of garbage.

When we lived in Jerusalem this kind of thing happened every few days.

### *Eli 3*

Someone would see a 'suspicious looking' bag and call the police. They would bring in the bomb squad. Most of the time these things were just someone's old garbage bag, but in this Land sometimes it's a Palestinian bomb that mutilates and murders Jewish fathers, mothers and children.

We went to a little *falafel* stand on the side of the grocery store and put our bags on the table. I got a fresh squeezed orange juice and joined Ruti at the table. We waited about 40 minutes until it was all over and then we were able to get the van-bus up the mountain to go back home.

Please pray for Eli and Sarah, that they would both give their lives to Yeshua, and for Yosafe, their son, who came to help me in my time of need.

Ruti and I covet your prayers, also, that the Lord would strengthen us and continue to use us to sow the Seed of Heaven into the lives of many Israelis.

## *The Way Of Holiness*

After leaving Oral Roberts University in March 1983 Robin and I moved to the east end of Tulsa, Oklahoma. She was 22 years old and I was 31. There was a Quick Trip near us where I liked to play a game called Ms. Pac-Man. It was an electronic video game that cost a quarter to play. I tried to run up my score before being ‘gobbled up.’ I spent too much time and money there. I was hooked and I knew it. I should have been devoting more of my time to the Lord—studying, praying, and witnessing for Him, etc., but I found I had to have my daily fix of Ms. Pac-Man.

One day, after playing for a couple of hours, much longer than I normally did, I said, ‘That’s it! Lord, I’m not going to play again!’ and I meant it, but the very next day I was playing again, and longer than the day before! After I was done I walked back to my apartment and went into the bedroom and started to weep. I found myself ‘in a heap’ on the floor, feeling justifiably condemned for telling the Lord the day before that I’d never play again. I had broken my word to Him.

I didn’t ask for forgiveness because forgiveness was the farthest thing from my mind. I was buried in self-condemnation. As I lay there being crushed by the weight of my guilt, the Holy Spirit came upon me and the guilt immediately vanished. I felt forgiven and clean. I would also find out the Lord had delivered me from my addiction. I had no need or desire to play Ms. Pac-Man again. I was free! Glory and praise to Messiah Yeshua! I had experienced the forgiveness, love *and* deliverance of Papa God and Yeshua through the Holy Spirit. In my enslavement, God was merciful to me. Now I was ready to more fully go on with the Lord.

Shortly after this Yeshua brought an African-American man across my path who would ignite my soul for holiness—a deeper relationship with Yeshua. I had met many good men and some righteous men, but never a holy man. He had been an African Methodist Episcopal Zion minister from North Carolina. For 18 years he had preached *about* Jesus, but he didn’t know Him. Then one day he was Born Again (Jn. 3:3, 5) and the Lord Jesus became real to him and he began ‘to preach Jesus’ like he had never done before. Some elders in his church became very upset with this new change in him. Eventually, they would discharge him, but before that happened the Lord would transform his heart toward the Jewish people.

After his encounter with Jesus his 12 year old son ran away from home. He called everyone he could think of, but to no avail. He looked all over the

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neighborhood, but no one knew where his son was. He came back to his house and sat down on his couch feeling deeply upset and not knowing what to do. As he sat there he looked up to God and cried out in his pain and anguish, ‘You don’t know how I feel! This has never happened to You!’

A soft Voice spoke to him and said, ‘Yes I do. My Son Israel has run away from Me,’ and with that a Seed of God’s compassion for His Jewish people was planted in his heart.

By April of 1985 this man was living with us. Zavdi was only six months old and I was finishing my first year at Oklahoma State University where I had a 3.5 (A-) average in the Masters program for Marriage and Family Therapy. This man’s walk with God though, captured my attention. I saw so much *Life*, joy and the love of God overflow from him as he related to people. Here was holiness being lived out before me. My heart burned for a deeper relationship with Yeshua, as he had.

The man had taken on a biblical name, Givon (Hebrew for the name of the Gibeonites who would *serve* Israel and the Tabernacle of Moses as water carriers and wood cutters; Josh. 9:3-27). It seemed very appropriate. Just before my spring semester at OSU ended, Givon sensed from the Lord that he was to go to Harlem, New York City and minister to his people.

I got out of OSU for the summer break and I set my sights on seeking Yeshua. I began to fast and pray and on the eighth day the Lord Yeshua spoke to me and said, ‘You will learn to trust Me. I will meet your needs.’ I knew in my heart that I wasn’t to go back to finish my MS at OSU or to continue to substitute teach in the Tulsa Public Schools in the fall. I would learn to trust Yeshua for my very food, clothing and shelter, for my family and myself, and this, in the midst of a great financial crises. It would form the basis for my life and ministry—dependence upon Yeshua for all my needs.

It was now the end of May and we were being evicted from our apartment for failure to pay two months back rent. Givon, used by God to spur me on to holiness, had left for Harlem in late April. Our (landline) telephone had been cut off and the electric was about to go. Does it get any more ‘financially critical’ than this? Yes it does. Satan always has something more, to kick you when you’re down. A woman in my own congregation scolded me saying,

‘You need to get a job and go to work until the congregation can support you and your family! You need to be responsible!’

Because of my prayer life and relationship with the *risen* Savior I knew in my

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heart it wasn't Yeshua speaking to me through her. In time spent with Yeshua I knew that He wanted me on my face before Him. We had less than \$100, but the Lord was working out His plan for me. Oh yes, I could have borrowed money to save the sinking ship, but that's not His way. He wanted me to trust Him completely.

One day while speaking on the phone I happened to share my situation with a woman we knew. She said she had the answer. Two months earlier she had left her husband and had leased an apartment for six months. During those two months they had reconciled, and now she wanted to go back to her husband. If Robin, Zavdi and I could come in under her lease we might not have to pay all those charges for entering an apartment, and she wouldn't have to pay for the four months left on her lease. We went to the apartment manager and she approved it.

Two days before we were to move in, Robin, Zavdi and I went back to the manager to see if all was still in order. The assistant manager was there and she told us the manager was on vacation, but that she didn't know anything about our arrangements. It would have to be cleared with the regional manager!

We went to the regional manager, who told us that she couldn't call the credit bureau because it was too close to 5:00 PM (when they closed). I breathed a sigh of relief. Then she said that she was going to contact the manager of the apartment complex where we were currently living. She was going to call the very person who was evicting us for failure to pay back rent!

I was now in my 12th day of fasting (just four days from when the Lord had spoken to me about learning to trust in Him) and you might think that I would have had all the faith that I needed to handle this situation. My reaction? In my mind I said, 'We're sunk!'

The regional manager got on the phone and called the manager of our apartment complex and asked about us. I stepped outside her office to get 'some air' and thought, 'What are we going to do now?! We don't have any money to speak of and we need to leave our apartment.' I could see her talking on the phone. As she ended her conversation I stepped back inside. Robin had been sitting with Zavdi in a chair in front of the regional manager's desk. The manager smiled at me when I came in. She said the manager told her that *we were very fine people and that she was sorry to see us leave!*

I couldn't believe it! Here we were being evicted and the manager that was doing it had given a glowing report about us! The Lord Yeshua would use this

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situation to show me that even though my faith was worse than non-existent, He would not let me down. He would experientially show me who *He* is faithful and merciful and continues to make 'ways' where none seem to exist; the parting of the Red Sea being an incredible time, and His resurrection being the most incredible (Ex. 14:1-31; Mt. 28:1-20).

The following day I went to the manager who was evicting us and asked her why she had said what she did about us. She told me that she 'just wanted to do something nice' for us, and that if it was up to her we could have stayed. Yeshua had made a way where to my eyes, no way existed! We were passing through the Red Sea on *dry* ground! He would do that over and over again as I learned that I could really trust Him for all my needs.

The next day we moved from a one bedroom, one bathroom apartment into a two bedroom, two bathroom apartment, with no money being exchanged. It was June 1985. We were in our apartment for a few days, but we still didn't have any money for the new rent for June 1st! I said,

'Lord, You didn't bring us in here to get us evicted from this place, did You? Is there anything that I need to do that I'm not doing?'

The Lord spoke to me and said,

'That which I have taught you, that you have taught your congregation, you are to teach in the churches.'

It was 10:00 PM and I was already in bed, but when I heard that I got up out of bed and began going through my files. For over a year the Holy Spirit had been teaching me about Father Abraham, the Tabernacle of Moses, the Mosaic sacrifices, the Feasts of Israel, and Moses, and how holiness and Yeshua were interwoven into all of them. I would finish up learning about one teaching and the Lord by His Spirit would lead me to the next one, week after week after week. It was a wonderfully divine time of learning about Yeshua in Torah by His Spirit. Each week I would share with my congregation what I had learned from the Lord.

At my file cabinet I began to pull those teachings out and assemble them. I made up a list of ten teachings that I would offer, and I would send out a letter of introduction to twenty churches every week. I'd call them a few days later and find out if they were interested in having me come in and share on a topic. Many were interested, and with them taking up a love offering after I spoke, it provided another source of funds for us.

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By the time Ruti and I left for Israel the second time, in January 1999 in a period of about 12 years, I had spoken in more than 250 churches, about 500 times. The Lord would minister so beautifully through me, not only academically, teaching the people about holiness and Jesus from the Old Testament, but also by His Spirit. Many people were ministered to and touched by Him, especially after the message when people would come up for prayer. It was a joy to be used that way.

## ASHER AND THE COPPER MINES

On Tuesday, April 4th, 2000 Ruti and I journeyed to the southern part of Israel. We stayed in a kibutz and we were able to witness for Yeshua to the managers, Tomer and Hillary. Then we went to Timna Park, which was very close to the kibutz. It has a life-size model of the Tabernacle of Moses, and in the park was also an ancient site where the Egyptians used Hebrew slaves to mine copper, before and during the days of Moses.

Ruti and I went to a copper demonstration. We found out how copper was mined and how the ancients melted the copper out of sand and combined it with iron to form bronze. After the presentation, an Israeli named Asher, about 24 years old, and his buddy Gidon, who alternated presentations every other hour, offered those present an opportunity to purchase some copper items. Ruti and I, as well as a number of other people, looked at the copper items.

In a few moments only Asher, Gidon, Ruti and I were left. I asked them some questions about themselves and the presentation, and then a very blunt thought came to me—to ask them if they believed in God. I don't usually do that. It was the Holy Spirit.

They told me they were both raised in the Masorati Movement, which is the name for Conservative Judaism in Israel. It's less strict than the Orthodox, but more conservative than the (liberal) Reform Jews, who make up about 70% of religious Jews in the USA, but only about 7% of the religious Jews in Israel. I told Asher and Gidon about the need to know God by His Spirit and His Word. They were captivated.

I shared about the concept of the two Messiahs and how the God of Israel had promised our people that He would bring us back from the four corners of the Earth and sprinkle us with clean water to cleanse our souls and give us His Spirit (Ezk. 36:22-27) so that we might worship Him in righteousness. They hung onto every word and my presentation grew stronger and more powerful in Messiah.

I spoke to them of the Tabernacle of Moses (a replica of which was less than 50 yards [45 meters] away from where we stood) and how the copper-bronze censers that were used in the rebellion of Korah (Num. 16-17) were hammered onto the Bronze Altar as a sign of the rebellion. This was done as a reminder to Israel that God, not Moses, had chosen Aaron as the High Priest of Israel. Korah had accused Moses of placing his brother Aaron in the office. I said that God would bring a dead almond branch *back to life* to proclaim to all

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Israel that God had *chosen* Aaron as His High Priest (cf. Hebrews 5:4).

I related why the Messiah is called by the name or title of the Branch in Jeremiah (23:5) and Zechariah (6:12-13) and other cites as well. I could see they had never heard anything like this before and they were hungry for more. I said that Yeshua was raised in Nazareth and that *the name of the town* means 'branch.'

'Yeshua the Nazarene' I said, 'could equally be translated as Yeshua the Branch. Yeshua was crucified for our sins as the prophet Isaiah (53) and Zechariah (12:9-10; 13:1) spoke of.'

"God raised up this *dead* Branch named Yeshua (whose name means *Yahveh's salvation*) so that all Israel would know that Messiah Yeshua is what Aaron's *dead* branch that came back to *life* pictured. Yahveh has shown us who *His* High Priest for '*eternal* Israel' is. Just as ancient Israel needed Aaron to mediate between God and Israel, so Israel today needs the heavenly High Priest Yeshua to bring us into the presence of the *living* God."

A group of Israeli kids came in for the next copper presentation and Gidon took his place on the stage. Asher, Ruti and I sat down in the back and continued to talk. He was very interested in Messiah Yeshua. After awhile I saw that our time was over and we gave Asher two Hebrew Bibles (Genesis to Revelation) and *A Picture of Messiah* for him and Gidon, and our phone number and email address.

I told him to seek the Lord with all his heart and to read the first five books of the New Covenant because the Messiah of Israel would reveal Himself to Gidon and him. Asher said something about only seeking the God of Israel, and I told him the Messiah said that anyone who saw Him, saw God (Jn. 14:9-11). He shook my hand several times and parted. Asher was very grateful and appreciative, as were Ruti and I.

We left and immediately began to pray that our High Priest, Yeshua, who bled and died for them, would bring them into His Kingdom. We asked Him to water, nurture and protect the Seed that had just been planted in their souls and to give them *eternal Life*.

As our Lord leads, please lift Asher and Gidon up, that they would come to know their High Priest! Thank you!

## ALEX AND THE GLASS OF WINE

On Tuesday, May 9th, 2000 Ruti and I visited Alex and Aela and their four children—Eena 16, Anya 14, Genya 6 and 10 month old Sopha. They had moved from where we first met Genya and her two cousins, across the street from Avraham and Varda, and now lived about a hundred yards up the street from us in Tiberias. It was *Yom HaZikaron* (the Day of Remembrance for Israel's fallen soldiers in all their wars, and also, the many Israelis who have been murdered in Palestinian terrorist attacks).

Most places were closed or worked only half a day. Ruti and I thought it would be a good time to visit with them and talk about Messiah Yeshua. We'd already given them a full Bible in Russian, them being Jews from Ukraine who were now Israeli citizens. The last time that we were with them Aela seemed very open to our sharing about Messiah. (Aela was the mother who appreciated our giving the cupcakes to her young daughter Genya, and Genya's two cousins, Dalia and Diana.)

I took my Hebrew Bible and Ruti took her English one. My thoughts were to see if we could all sit down and read from the Gospel of John. They could read out loud in Russian, with Ruti and I following along in English and Hebrew. It never got to that, but we got to know them much better, eating a very special meal with them. Unknown to me, but obviously to our Lord, whose leading I believe we were following, May 9th was also the anniversary of Russia's defeat of Nazi Germany in World War Two. It's a massive celebration in Russia, and Alex, born a Russian and a Jew, had double cause 'to celebrate,' as Ruti and I would find out.

When we came to their door they were glad to see us, wondering why we had 'stayed away so long.' Everything stopped for us as Alex ushered us into the living room for conversation, but I felt that we had interrupted what they were doing. I told Alex to please continue and that I would be with him. I rolled up my sleeves and we went outside to start the grill for a barbecue. It took us over an hour to do it, not finding the charcoal immediately, and then when it was lit, it didn't last long. So Alex took a small hatchet and cut up some old branches. In no time he had quite a fire going. I helped by watching. Alex was a strong man, six feet tall, two hundred and twenty pounds, broad shouldered, blond hair, with a good looking face and disposition to match. He worked two jobs to support his family.

Ruti was in the kitchen helping Aela and getting to know her better. Before

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the night was over Ruti would learn how to recognize the Russian alphabet and speak a little Russian. Aela was teaching her and Ruti loved it, and so did Aela and the children.

Alex barbecued some chicken pieces and the table was set up outside. Everyone took their place. Alex was at the head, Aela to his left, holding little Sopha, then 16 year old Eena, 14 year old Anya, with her friend Yirena, and 6 year old Genya rounding it out, with Ruti sitting next to Genya and me, and me sitting on Alex's right.

There was soda to drink and vodka, wine and beer. There were two different kinds of salad, bread, chicken and *shwarma* (turkey spiced up to taste like lamb, which had also been barbecued). When we were full we were given more! Alex filled my glass with wine and made a toast 'to life.' I drank half the glass and Alex told me that I needed to drink it all. After his explanation I understood the meaning of the day for both Alex and Aela, and why I needed to drink all the wine in the glass.

Alex told us the Nazis tied his grandfather to a wooden column of a porch and burned him to death. Other members of his immediate family suffered greatly, too. He related to me that a number of them had been sent off to Auschwitz and murdered. A few years ago he had gone to Auschwitz. Now, he left the table and got down on the ground, on his fists and knees and showed us what he had done at Auschwitz, overcome with grief and anger. He was pounding his fists on the cement patio, wanting to *know* his murdered Jewish family and relatives.

He got back up on his chair and told us that witnesses had relayed the information about his relatives, and that he had gotten it from *Misrad HaPanim* in Israel (the Office of the Interior, which deals with immigration and citizenship). He turned away from me and began to weep. I reached over and placed my hand on his right shoulder.

After a while he spoke of Stalin, spitting on the ground after he mentioned his name. As he ended, he told me that was why I needed to drink the whole glass of wine—out of respect and honor for those of the Jewish people who had died— and for us who were alive.

I told him that I was sorry for not realizing the importance of the glass of wine and thanked him for explaining it to me. I took the glass and drank the rest of the wine. Alex appreciated that. Only the Lord knew the day would mean so much to Alex and Aela, and that we would be there to share in it with them.

Alex also said that Aela's grandfather was taken and no one knew what hap-

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pened to him. During this time tears came to my eyes. Ruti and I felt their pain. It was our pain, too, for all our Jewish people; men, women and children who were murdered by the Nazis, just because they were Jews.

We spoke some more and relaxed, the older girls clearing the table. Then, somehow, we got on the subject of God. Alex commented that all the gods were the same. If we had grown up in Saudi Arabia we'd call God, Allah; if in India, Buddha, and if in the United States, Jesus.

I listened to what he said and I told him that he had a good point, but it wasn't the whole Truth. It was a half truth, which is a full lie. I said that if I printed money in my house and I came to him and asked him for change of a counterfeit 200 shekel note (\$50), if he didn't realize it was a counterfeit he would give me the change, and he would be out 200 shekels when he would go to the bank and try to deposit it.

I said there are many 'gods' in the world, but only the God of Israel is the True One,

'All the others are counterfeits from Satan. In the Hebrew Scriptures the God of Israel tells us that we are to worship only Him, and no other gods.'

'We can know that the God of Israel is the One True God because He did something that none of the other gods ever did. He delivered all our Fathers from Egyptian slavery when Egypt was at the height of its glory and power. No other nation was as powerful as Egypt then, and therefore, all the gods of Egypt were venerated by the Egyptians, and other peoples, as the greatest and most powerful, but when the God of the Hebrew slaves arose, all the gods of the Egyptians bowed down to Him.'

Both Alex and Aela nodded their understanding and appreciation. They liked the illustration. Then I began to speak about Yeshua:

'The promised Messiah not only has forgiven me of all my sins, but He has given me of His Holy Spirit and *Life eternal*.'

I told them that only Yeshua can heal the pain and the hurt of what others have done to our families and to us. Only He gives us *Life* and leads us to the Father. I shared with them that I had been walking,

'with Yeshua for 24 years and in all that time I saw that He was *real*. If I had found out that I had been deceived, I would

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have left Yeshua a long time ago, but on the contrary, the more I walk with Yeshua and learn of Him, the more I love Him, and I *know* that He is our Messiah. My desire to know Him continues to grow greater and greater because *He is eternal Life.*'

It was a good time of sharing about the Lord and I sensed that it was enough for that day. The sun had set and darkness was coming upon us so we went back into the house. Six year old Genya took a bath and got ready for bed and the older girls were getting ready to go out.

Ruti was in Genya's bedroom, being asked, begged and pleaded with by Genya, if she could sleep overnight with her. Aela came in and Ruti, Genya and Aela would start the 'Russian class.' They taught Ruti the Russian alphabet. Sopha the baby was asleep now and Aela could relax.

I was in the living room with Alex, watching on TV, celebrations from Moscow for Victory Over Germany Day. There were fireworks, people parading in the streets and old men with war medals on worn out suit jackets. It meant a lot to them, and rightfully so.

After that, Alex turned on an incredibly old World War Two movie. Of course it was in Russian, which only added to the archaic quality of the film. Indiana Jones it wasn't. Ruti was done with her Russian class and Genya was tucked into bed. Ruti came into the living room and rescued me. It was time to go home.

We parted company as good friends and would return soon to that Bible study in John chapter one. Please pray for Alex, Aela and their family. Jews from Russia who are carrying such a heavy burden—Holocaust memories of pain and suffering for their families, and of them having escaped from the prison that Russia was, only to come home to a strange land called Israel.

## KARMIT AND THE WORMS

On Monday, May 29th, 2000 Ruti and I rented a car to go to Eilat. It's a city 250 miles south of where we lived in Tiberias. Eilat is the southern most city in Israel and sits on one of the two 'fingers' (inlets) of the Red Sea. When I got to the car rental agency, an Israeli woman named Karmit took my information down. When I gave her my Visa debit card it wouldn't clear their \$400 deposit amount that she put in. It didn't clear a \$300 amount, nor a \$200 amount, either. I told Karmit that this Visa was directly attached to my US checking account, which only had \$76 in it. (Israelis aren't familiar with debit cards.)

Karmit turned to her boss Yakov and told him what was going on. He said that in order to rent the car I needed to give him a deposit of 2,500 shekels (\$625) cash. This would cover our planned time of having the car for three or four days and also the insurance deductible. He also told me to get another credit card. (We didn't have credit cards because the Lord has shown us to trust Him and to live on what we have. The debit card allows us to buy or rent things with a 'credit card' as long as we have the money in the bank. Once activated, the money is immediately taken out of our account and transferred to the company requesting it.)

I had only 700 shekels (\$175) on me. Yakov said it wasn't enough. I told them I had the rest at home (which was our rent money, but not due for a couple of weeks, so I thought that I could use it as a deposit). Yakov said that Karmit could take the car and drive me home, get the money and bring me back and then fill out the forms. I had wanted to get an early start, as it's a five hour drive, but this was going to delay it. If Ruti was ready to go when we got to the house, we could pack everything in the car and return with Karmit. Ruti wasn't ready.

We got to the house and I told Ruti what was going on. She needed to do some dishes, etc., and so I got the money and left. Karmit drove me back to the office. As we rode back I asked her what she thought about the Israeli Army leaving Lebanon the week before, when Prime Minister Ehud Barak pulled all the troops out. She said that it was 'good and bad.' The good was that the Israeli soldiers won't die, but the bad is that the Israelis that live along, or near the border, are afraid. They have no security. They don't know when a Katyusha rocket will come flying in and kill them. I told her it was a mess and it would only get worse.

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Karmit was very thin, about 24 years old with black hair and black framed glasses. On our way back to the office Karmit asked me if I was religious. I told her that I was a Jew who believed that Yeshua was the Messiah. ‘Oh,’ she said, ‘Yeshua...that’s not Jesus is it?’ I told her it was and she questioned me again, if I was a Jew. I told her that I was a Jew. She said that Jesus was ‘for the Christians.’ I said there were many Gentiles that have come to the Messiah of Israel, but Yeshua was a Jew, still is a Jew, and that He is our Messiah. A Jewish person who believes in the Jewish Messiah doesn’t stop being Jewish, unless he’s deceived.

She told me that she didn’t believe in Yeshua. I asked her if she believed in what Moses wrote, because Moses wrote about the Messiah. She said that she was religious, but ‘not very strong.’ She also told me that she didn’t believe in Torah. Then I asked her if she was Jewish! I told her that the word ‘Jew’ means ‘one who praises the God of Judah,’ with the implication that she would obey what He commands her in Torah.

I waited upon the Lord for what to say next. I sensed that I was to ask her about death. Where would she go if she were to die? She told me the worms would eat her and that would be it. I said that even the Rabbis say there will be a resurrection of the righteous and the wicked—the one going to Heaven and the other going to Hell. The Prophets spoke of the Day of Judgment and King David spoke of the Lord one day raising him from the dead. Of course, this didn’t mean too much to her because it came from the Scriptures, which this Jewish woman ‘didn’t believe in’ (or know), or the God who inspired them.

I began to speak to her about my own experience when I gave my life to Yeshua. When faced with Jews (or Gentiles) that don’t believe in the Bible I usually turn to my experiences with the Holy Spirit. It’s very hard to argue with someone’s experience and they usually listen.

I told her that I had come to realize that,

‘Yeshua was everything that I had always been looking for, but could never quite put my finger on. When I asked Him to come into my heart I felt the true *shalom* of the Spirit of the *living* God for the first time in my life. I knew that Yeshua was our Messiah and that He had been raised from the dead, just as the New Covenant says.’

‘God, the God of Israel, had made Himself known to me. This is the way that trust is established and grows, whether with

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God or anyone. We all ‘trust’ people to a certain extent. When we get to know a person we trust them according to how trustworthy they have shown themselves to be, and God knows that we need to come to know Him before we can really trust Him with our lives.’

She parked the car and we entered the office. As we came in Karmit turned to me and said half-kidding, ‘Maybe you’re the Messiah?’ I told her that I wasn’t, but that I knew who was. I gave the money to Yakov who handed it to Karmit to count. She counted it and gave it back to Yakov. He counted it, too. Then Karmit made a receipt for me. I mentioned something about the brakes and Karmit told Yakov about them.

On our way back, whenever Karmit would apply the brakes, the steering wheel would shake pretty hard. Yakov said they would have to be checked out before I could have the car. I told him that I had wanted to leave by 9:30 AM and here it was already 10:30, and now the brakes had to be checked. I asked them if they had any other car that I might take. They said that this one was the last one. I said, ‘*Mitz’su’yahn!*’ (Great!)

Yakov told me the brakes would take only 15 or 20 minutes. I told him that if I was still there by noon he’d have to take Ruti and me for lunch at El Gaucho. (It’s a steak restaurant in town.) He smiled that kind of half-smile that said he understood what I meant, didn’t know what to say, and wasn’t going to agree to it. Yakov was about 45 years old, dark hair on the sides of his balding head, about five foot seven inches tall, with a belly—just a typical Israeli businessman without God. He seemed always on the verge of being stressed out.

He asked me if I wanted to go with Karmit to get the brakes checked. At first I told him no, because if Ruti isn’t with me, I don’t like to place myself in a position of being alone with a woman. The Lord has shown me that it isn’t proper. It was hard for me to go with Karmit to get the money and return, so I thought I’d stay with Yakov. Then I realized that we had just begun to talk about Messiah Yeshua, and that quite possibly, this might be an opportunity to continue. I told Yakov that I would go with Karmit as, ‘We might talk about Messiah some more.’

I asked Yakov if he would call Ruti and tell her about the brakes. After he dialed the number he gave the phone to me and I told Ruti.

Karmit beeped the horn a number of times on our way to the place; once at a man crossing the road that she knew and another two times at cars with people in them that she also knew. Tiberias is a small town with about 40,000 people.

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I told her that she knew ‘everyone’ in Tiveria. She said she knew many people through the business.

We got to the place and drove into one of the stalls. It looked like we just might be there for only a few minutes, as we didn’t have to wait for a stall. We got out and headed for the lounge. It’s not what they are in the States. Even though it was a Ford place, there were only four seats and they were already occupied. The ‘lounge’ was right next to the place where the cars were being worked on and there was no door to separate us from the cars, the fumes and the great outdoors. No air conditioning, just the outside of the building with a roof for shade. The mechanics worked ‘right there,’ using the roof for shade, also. I was grateful for the shade.

We stood by a ledge and leaned on it for support. I continued ‘to look’ for a way to speak of Messiah. In most every conversation that I have with my Jewish people, or any other people for that matter, I am always ‘looking’ for what to say, to bring Messiah into it. He’s my *Life* and I share Him with others so they might come to know the Lord of *Life*, too.

I told Karmit that because I had come to know the Messiah I could discern many perversions in Judaism. The *kippa* (the religious head covering for men) was one of them. I said to her that I didn’t wear one because it was pagan, coming from Babylon. There are many things in Judaism that have come from Babylon. For instance, the names of the Jewish months. I said,

‘*Nisan* and *Tishri* (the first and seventh months of modern Judaism) are the names we picked up from the Babylonians when we were in captivity there, 2,600 years ago. But in the *Tanach* they are called *Aviv* and *Aetanim*. *Tammuz*, the fourth month in Judaism, is the name of the chief god of Babylon!’

She was surprised. She hadn’t realized that. I asked her if she knew the reason why Jewish men wore the *kippa*. She told me that it was out of reverence for God. Then I asked her where in Torah or the Prophets did God ever say that he wanted us to wear it? She couldn’t tell me.

I told her it was an invention of the Rabbis and that it, too, had come from Babylon. I put my two hands together, forefinger touching forefinger and thumb touching thumb, to make a circle and I asked her, ‘What in the heavens does this remind you of?’

She told me, ‘The sun.’ I said that in the time of Moses, God gave us a commandment *not* to shave our heads or to cut our hair in the form of a circle

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(Lev. 21:5) because,

‘The shaving or the cutting of the hair in a circle was used by the ancient priests of Baal to signify they were the priests of the sun god, the ‘gold disk’ or great circle in the sky. Depending on what pagan land one was in, the name of the god would change, but the circle would remain the same. It’s called the ‘clerical tonsure’ by the Roman Catholic Church, which used to have all their Popes, Cardinals and monks shave the inner part of the head to form a large bald circle. Now they use what resembles the *kippa* of the Jews. Their use of the shaving of the head, or the *kippa*, is not biblical, but very pagan.’

I went on to ask her if she remembered the Pope as having a ‘kippa’? She said she did. I told her the Pope and the Cardinals have the ‘kippa’ today, but this was only recent. Up until the late 19th century, they too, along with other priests and monks, shaved their heads, symbolizing they were priests of the sun god (whether they understood that or not). ‘So, what were Jews doing, wearing this pagan thing?’

Karmit was listening and I could tell that she was interested and appreciated what I was saying. I asked her if she kept ‘kosher.’ This means, to a religious Jew, that they don’t eat meat and dairy at the same meal, along of course, with not eating ham and catfish, etc. (Lev. 11). The first is a rabbinic tradition, the latter is biblical. She said that she kept kosher. I asked her where in Torah did God ever say we couldn’t eat meat and dairy together? She brought up the passage the Rabbis use to base their teaching on. The same verse is repeated three times in the Law of Moses:

Don’t ‘boil a kid (young goat) in its mother’s milk.’ (Ex. 23:19; 34:26; Dt. 14:21)

I told her that the rabbinic interpretation of the passage is not right. Nowhere in Scripture does God say that meat and dairy couldn’t be eaten together. Nowhere does God say that it’s sin to do so. She said it was a good health practice. I agreed with her, but I said the Rabbis have made it *sin* for any Jew to eat meat and dairy together, but God never said it was sin.

‘This is not a minor issue. Who determines what sin is? God or the Rabbis?’

I said that it didn’t stop there, but that,

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‘religious Jews needed to have two separate sets of plates and silverware; one to eat meat on and the other for dairy. Why? So that the two different foods never ‘touch,’ but it’s not that any of what is eaten is unclean or forbidden by God (of the meat and the dairy that a Jew would eat). Also, it’s not only separate plates and silverware, but separate sinks, pots, pans and refrigerators! Where does the nonsense end?!’

I said it was incredible and she agreed with me. I explained to her that in the three passages of Torah where God speaks of not boiling a kid in its mother’s milk, two follow right after the Feast of Tabernacles and the other one, a little before it. Boiling a kid in its mother’s milk was an ancient pagan practice for both the Syrians and Canaanites. I told Karmit,

‘They used that boiled milk to sprinkle it upon their harvested fields in autumn so that the following year their harvest would be plentiful and fruitful. It’s a pagan fertility rite, with the milk of the mother boiling the fruit of her womb. The God of Israel prohibited it because He wanted His people to rely on Him for their abundant harvest next year, not magic or sorcery.’<sup>41</sup>

She had never heard that before, but it made sense to her. By this time the four people that had been sitting down had left, their cars being taken care of. Meanwhile, we were told there would be a delay because the brakes needed to be replaced and they had to get new pads. *Mitz’su’yahn!* I could almost taste

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<sup>41</sup> James M. Freeman, *Manners and Customs of the Bible* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1972; originally written about 1874), p. 73, note 133 says: this “‘injunction is put in connection with sacrifices and festivals.’ The seething of a kid in his mother’s milk was an idolatrous practice done ‘for the purpose of making trees and fields more fruitful the following year.’” This is seen ‘on the authority of an ancient Karaite comment on the Pentateuch.’ The “‘trees, fields, gardens and orchards’ would be sprinkled with that milk, asking the god for a great harvest the following year.”

Harrison, *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, p. 73 states, ‘in the Ugarit literature discovered in 1930, it was learned that boiling a kid in its mother’s milk was a Canaanite practice used in connection with fertility rites (*Birth of the Gods* 1:14).’

R. Harris, G. Archer, Jr. and B. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. I, p. 285. “Since a Ugaritic text (UT 16: Text no. 52:14) specifies, ‘They cook a kid in milk...the biblical injunction may have been directed against a Canaanite fertility rite.’”

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that steak!

Karmit and I sat down. It felt good to sit. We had been standing for about 25 minutes. I asked Karmit if she knew why the ultra Orthodox and *Hasidic* wear ‘*payos*’? (The long hair on the side of the head that is uncut, hanging or dangling down by the ears. Sometimes they are two feet long.) She didn’t know why they wore them.

I held up one of my *tzit’zit* (singular for *tzit’ziot*, tassel) and said they say the *payos* are ‘the mystical *tzit’ziot* of the head.’ I said it made them look like women. Karmit smiled in acknowledgment. Satan had deceived them, and everyone in the world could see their foolishness, but they thought they were being very spiritual. Because they really didn’t know the God of Israel, by His Spirit, they were being led astray by other spirits and their vain imaginations.

Karmit then began to open up to me and shared that God did things for her. She said that on many occasions she would think about a person whom she had not seen in a long time and within a few hours she would see that person. Having heard things like this many times before I told her that this was not uncommon. It might be of God, and then again, it might not be of God.

I said the Rabbis rightly say that when God brought Israel to Mt. Sinai, to see and to hear Him and to receive the Ten Commandments, that God was arranging a marriage. God was marrying Israel (cf. Is. 50:1; Jer. 3:8). This is what covenant really means (union) and why Messiah Yeshua is so important to us. God wants to marry us—to be one with us. This is what an earthly marriage should be all about—a picture of the heavenly marriage. The terms of the marriage were that Israel would be faithful to obey Yahveh. God would dwell in the midst of Israel and always be there for her. She only had to cling to Him and obey Him, but our hearts lusted for other gods and their form of ‘worship’ (unrestrained *sexual* idolatry).

God didn’t call Israel to trust Him until *after* He had revealed His love for her by freeing Israel from Egyptian slavery. Israel, during that time, had come to know Yahveh and His power. It was upon these events that the marriage proposal went forth, with stipulations or rules for walking in the covenant (don’t worship other gods, etc.).

Karmit understood what I said. I said that as she sought the truth about Yeshua, He would impress upon her heart His love for her. I told her that Yeshua said that only He, the Son, fully knew the Father, and that He would reveal the Father to whomever He chose. I told her to ask God and to keep on asking Him until He gave her an answer.

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Then I continued to teach her some of our history. I asked,

‘Why did God have Israel sacrifice a lamb for Passover, whose blood spared our firstborn from death?’

She didn’t know. I said,

‘It was a picture of the final Judgment Day. It was a mini-judgment day in Egypt (Ex. 12:12). God could have destroyed all the Egyptians, but He left many of them so they could proclaim His greatness.’ (Ex. 9:13-16)

The blood of the lamb served as a sign to God, that His people were in the house. God caused His Wrath/death to ‘pass-over’ the houses where Israel dwelt. On the Day of Judgment, those who have the Blood of Messiah, the Lamb of God, over their hearts, by faith in Him, will have the Wrath of God pass-over them, too. They will also be instantly transformed into being like the Messiah, glorified, and live forever in God’s presence.

Then I asked her, ‘Why did God tell Abraham to sacrifice his son?’ She had no idea. I told her,

‘The Rabbis say that God wanted us to know that we, as Jews, shouldn’t sacrifice our sons like the pagans did. Interestingly enough though, nowhere in Scripture does God give that as the reason.’

‘Abraham and Isaac are a picture of our Father, Papa God, offering up His Son, Yeshua the Messiah, so that we could know Their love for us and be spared on Judgment Day. Yeshua was a substitute sacrifice for us, just as the Mosaic sacrifices were substitute sacrifices for the Israeli who sinned. The ancient Israeli brought a sacrifice, but didn’t die, even though the penalty for breaking the covenant is death. So, too, in our case, with our Messiah. Yeshua died in our place. He took our punishment for sinning against God, as Isaiah prophesied:’

‘Surely our griefs He Himself bore and our sorrows He carried. Yet, we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted, but He was pierced through, for our defiant rebellions. He was crushed, for our perverse hearts. The chastening for our peace with God fell upon Him and by His scourging we are healed.

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All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way, but Yahveh has caused our guilt to fall upon Him.' (Is. 53:4-6 my translation)

Then, as so often happens, the subject was changed. Karmit wanted me to know of a Jewish woman who hadn't been 'religious,' but had a 'spiritual' experience, and now was 'very strong' in religion. She claimed to have seen King Saul's general—Abner, his face, along with a candle, in her window one night. That's what got the woman on the road of being 'strong in religion.'

I shared with Karmit that only people who really know God and His Messiah can discern between God and what is not God. I spoke of how,

'The Rabbis took Babylonian witchcraft, put 'Jewish clothes' on it and call it Kabbalah. It's demonic. The face the woman saw, and the candle, were not from the God of Israel, but from Satan. He loves to deceive our people.'

Now Karmit began to share something with me that told me that she was beginning to trust me. She said that she couldn't stand being at her job anymore because her boss, Yakov, was constantly berating her and he was always angry. Any time that she made a mistake he jumped on her for it.

She related how the boss that she had previously worked for, in another job, was so nice. If she made a mistake he would gently correct her for 'the next time.' Now though, it was to the point with Yakov that she had already begun looking for another job. She said that she had found one at another car rental agency, but she needed Yakov to fire her so that she could collect her severance pay for the last year. If she quit she wouldn't get anything.

She said that she was going to have to be sneaky and make Yakov fire her. She put her hand into the air and imitated the motion of a snake. I told her that I understood her plight, but I also needed to share that any time we lie, or do something that we know is wrong, we destroy a piece of our soul. I explained how leprosy, in the Bible, is related to sin, in that a person who has leprosy is still alive, but their skin is rotting away and falling off. It's a living death. This is how sin effects our soul. One is still alive, but the soul is rotting away and disintegrating.

I told her that she needed to trust God with this job situation now. I also said that it would be hard for her because she really didn't know God, yet. She was just like Moses before he saw the burning bush. Before that he knew *about* God, but hadn't met Him. After his meeting with God he would begin to know God. I told her to pray and to ask the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob if

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what I was saying about Yeshua being the Messiah was true or not, and not to stop asking Him until He gave her an answer.

She questioned me about the *Shoah* (Holocaust). I said that personally, it's very hard for me, as I lost relatives in the Nazi inferno, and being Jewish, the pain of six million Jewish men, women and children murdered is part of my soul. I also said that God allows evil to sometimes run unchecked for His eternal purpose.

Then I asked her about all those Hebrew babies who were thrown into the Nile River by Pharaoh's order (Ex. 1:22), and what of Job's sons and daughters? Why did they die? I also told her of the Covenant that we Jews have repeatedly broken, and that God expressly states in Lev. 26 and Deut. 28 that if we continued to break it, He would cast us out to the four winds, which He did. He told us that when we would be in the nations it wouldn't be good for us and we'd always be afraid:

‘Look around you, Karmit. In all the cities of Israel, who is really seeking to know God, follow His ways and love their neighbors as themselves?’

She understood. I spoke of Isaiah, when he actually saw the Holy One of Israel high and lifted up (Is. 6:1-9). He said that *he* was a man of unclean lips, who dwelt in a land of uncleanness, for his eyes had seen the Holy One of Israel—Yahveh.

Once we see the Lord we realize how different we really are from Him and we are humbled. God's solution to our dilemma, of being unclean in His and our eyes, is Messiah Yeshua.

Karmit said that she wasn't a bad person. She hadn't murdered anyone. I told her that wasn't the criteria for eternal *Life*:

‘The criteria is to be like God, to be one with Him, to be in union with Him, to be holy like Him because He is *Life eternal, holy Life*. Anything less than that won't make it. Love for Him is the Standard and this is reflected in how we treat one another.’

‘His great love for us is seen in His giving up His unique Son, Yeshua, so our failures, guilt and sin can be dealt with according to His way. How great is His love for us!’

‘All He requires is that we believe what He has done, and to walk with Him. By accepting Yeshua as our Messiah, with all

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our heart, and asking to be forgiven of our sins, we are Born Again and lifted up out of the depths of sin and given forgiveness, a clean heart and the Holy Spirit now, and eternal *Life*, married to Yeshua, on the Day of Judgment.'

Our divine time was over. Someone came to us and said the car was ready. I silently thanked Yeshua for the brakes being as bad as they were. Karmit had come to hear about her God and Messiah for the first time in her life.

On the way back she asked how long I had been in Tiberias. I told her about a year and two months. As we weaved in and out of traffic I said that she was a good driver and could drive in New York City. She liked that. We got back to the place in one piece and I took the car, said goodbye to Karmit and Yakov, and prayed for her as I drove up the mountain to pick up Ruti.

Please lift up a prayer for Karmit, that the Lord would draw her to Himself and that she would come to know the One who loves her. Also, please pray for her boss, Yakov. Two Jews who very much need to know their Messiah. Thank you!

## *The Way Of Love*

It was an afternoon in June 1985 only a day or two after the Lord had told me to go out to the churches in Tulsa, Oklahoma with the teachings on the holiness of Yeshua from the Torah. I was alone, sitting at my desk in our new 'learn to trust in the Lord' two bedroom apartment, when suddenly I sensed another presence in the room. It startled me. The room seemed to have a slight mist in it. I felt that this presence desired me, as a man desires his wife. I was shocked!

Instantly though, I realized the presence was Yeshua, and so I yielded myself up to Him. With a heart full of devotion and submission, and my arms raised high in the air, I said, 'I am Yours, Lord.' As soon as I said it His presence enveloped me with a most precious peace. Then, as suddenly as it happened, He was gone, but what lingered in my soul was His Love for me. He was revealing to me that He had not abandoned me in this new situation that I faced.

We hadn't paid our rent yet, although we had moved in ten days earlier. I wouldn't start going out to churches for another two months, but now we were running up late charges at our new place, after the fifth of the month. On top of that, our furniture payment had come to its 'end,' with the standard, last 'balloon payment.' Between rent and furniture we owed about \$550. If we didn't pay the furniture fee that day, about \$150, they would come and take it away the next day, not that we had that much to take away.

A friend of mine had set up a speaking engagement that evening for me with a small group of Christians. It was out of town and on our way out I wrote a check for the furniture and gave it to them. I thought that if we didn't get the money to cover it they could come and take the furniture when the check bounced, but at least this would give me until tomorrow to deposit any money that I might get for speaking.

I got to the speaking engagement and shared my testimony. I included Ms. Pac-Man and how the Lord had delivered me when forgiveness and deliverance were the last thing on my mind. After I finished speaking I asked if anyone wanted me to pray for them. A few people came up. There were only four couples and a few singles in the meeting. (It was a Full Gospel Businessmen's meeting in a small town.)

I had determined within my heart that I wouldn't 'push' for my needs (rent and furniture), but if I got a chance I would share it with the people. As I was praying for the last person, the man in charge came up and stood next to him. After I was done praying for that person I turned to the man in charge and

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asked if he wanted prayer, also, or if he had come to end the service. He told me that he didn't want prayer, but that if I had anything else that I wanted to do, to feel free to do it. I told him that I had some needs and asked him if it'd be alright to share them. He emphatically said, 'Yes, go ahead!' The Lord made a way for me to tell the people of our needs without me pressing for it.

He placed a small basket in the back so that those who wanted to give on their way out could drop something in it. The people gave over \$600. On the way back to Tulsa I just melted. The Lord was truly providing and showing Himself to be faithful. This was the second time that Yeshua was parting the Red Sea for us (the first having been the apartment He brought us into when we had no money, bad credit and were being evicted). I would come to see that when one is fully trusting in Yeshua He is so faithful, but may not part the Red Sea until our backs are up against it. Why? So that there can be no doubt in our minds as to Who has helped us, and this truly increases our faith in Him 'for the next time.'

We had the congregation then, too, but it was very small and most of the people who made it up were not much better off financially than we were. We told no one in the congregation about our needs. We just turned them over to Yeshua. Praise His holy Name! He never fails!

We paid our rent and late charges for June, and the check for the furniture was also covered. We sailed into July and now we didn't have any money for rent again! The Lord is a good trainer!

It was about 8:00 AM on a Sunday morning when I took my eight month old son Zavdi in my arms for a walk around the apartment complex. My wife Robin, who had taken the Hebrew name Rivka (Rebekka), about the same time I began using my Hebrew name, was tired and so I had told her to stay in bed and rest and I would take Zavdi for a walk. The apartment complex was quiet as I walked its parking lot pavement to the complex's office building. It was a small, one story log cabin structure. They had a swinging bench on the front porch. I sat down and swung on the bench, with Zavdi in my arms. He fell asleep on my shoulder.

I stopped swinging and as I sat there I noticed a tree about 25 yards in front of me. There wasn't a single leaf stirring. There was no breeze. Everything was calm. Then I noticed the leaves began to move ever so slightly. A breeze had come up. It got stronger and the leaves began to dance. Then Messiah Yeshua spoke to me and said,

'Just as you didn't know when the wind would come upon the

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tree, so you don't know when My Spirit will move upon someone's heart to help you—but the testing of your faith is more precious than gold.'

I was excited. It was about 8:30 in the morning. I went back to the apartment and said to Rivka, 'I'm not 100% sure, but it's possible that Yeshua will bring in the money we need for rent today!' It was Sunday, so the mailman 'couldn't help us' (no possibility of a check coming in the mail). Our congregation had met the day before for worship, and so, we weren't getting any tithe money from them today, either.

About 4:00 PM a man whom we had known for about a year came to our apartment. We talked about the Lord and the ministry for about two hours. As he was getting ready to leave he reached into his shirt pocket and handed me a check. It was for \$700. Incredible? Of course! Yeshua was displaying His love and faithfulness to me again! We can truly trust Yeshua for eternal *Life and* temporal needs—food, clothes and shelter. He is the *living* God! God the Son!

Now though, I wanted to know. I asked Bill Keusel *why* he was doing this. He told me that in prayer that morning, *about 8:30 AM!*, he felt the Lord impressing it upon his heart to help me.

Yeshua was training me in His ways. The Scripture that spoke to me, and has become one of my favorites, is this one:

'Trust in Yahveh with all your heart and lean *not* unto your own understanding. In *all* your ways acknowledge Him (realize He is there with you) and He will make all your rocky paths smooth.' (Prov. 3:5-6, my interpretation)

The best though, was yet to come. It would be a couple of weeks later, still in July. I was again holding Zavdi and he fell asleep on my shoulder. He was nine months old now. Rivka was out and it was time for him to go to bed, so I placed him in our bed. He slept with us. I thought that it would be a good time to pray and so I knelt down by the bed and began to speak to the Lord Yeshua. Almost immediately He said to me,

'I want you to look at the boy.'

Zavdi was on his belly in the middle of the bed with his face turned toward me. His head was to my right and his feet were to my left. As I began to gaze upon his face a powerful feeling began to well up inside of me. As it literally rose up from my belly to my throat I gave verbal expression to it and exclaimed with all my heart,

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‘Oh God! He’s so precious to me!’

Yeshua spoke to me again and said, ‘That’s exactly how I feel about you.’

I was stunned and overwhelmed. I knew that the Lord loved me, from Scripture and the time in my study just a few weeks earlier when His presence came upon me, being the highlight of that love, but now, I had just felt for my son the most intense, powerful and tremendous love that I had ever experienced in my life, and Yeshua was telling me that *He loved me like that?! He feels for me like I had just felt for my son?! Then, still in awe as to what had just transpired, I said to the Lord,*

‘There isn’t anything I wouldn’t do for Zavdi. If it meant me going to Hell in order for him to be with You in Heaven, I wouldn’t think twice about it! I love him so!’

That’s when Yeshua lowered the divine boom on me and said,

‘That’s exactly how I feel about every person you’ll ever meet.’

If my jaw wasn’t attached to my face it would have fallen to the floor. ‘Oh...’ I said,

‘That’s how You could allow Yourself to be pierced to the tree and die for everyone’s sin. You love us *that* much.’

A little while after that the Lord gave me this:

Our sins nailed Him to the Tree, but  
what kept Him there was His love for you and me.

The Lord was opening up His heart to me. He was continuing to prepare me for loving my own Jewish people and everyone else.

My second son Yoel (pronounced Yo’el) was born on the 17th of Kislev 5747 (18 December 1986) in Tulsa, OK, two years and two months after Zavdi was born. Yoel took a place in my heart right next to Zavdi’s. I would never have thought that possible, that anyone could ever come even close to the depth of love that I felt for my Zavdi, but Yoel did. He was so precious to me. Thank You, Yeshua!

Yoel was circumcised on the first day of Hanuka. God was overwhelming me with His blessings.<sup>42</sup> *Yoel* is Hebrew and means, ‘Yahveh is God!’ Yoel’s name

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<sup>42</sup> Zavdi and Yoel were both born on the 17th day of their respective Hebrew months. Zavdi was born in the 7th Hebrew month of *Tishri*. Yoel was born in the 9th He-

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is a declaration of strong faith in Yahveh, that even and *especially* in the midst of adverse and diabolical circumstances *the God of Israel is still God!* He will never leave us nor forsake us and He will work *all things out for our good*, no matter what they may seem like.

When Yoel was born it took Rivka and me by surprise—that he was a boy. She had thought the Lord had told her it was going to be a girl, so we didn't have a name for a boy! After praying a few days about it, Rivka sensed the Lord wanting to name him Yoel, and when she told me, the name seemed right to me. That's how he came to have his (God given) name. The meaning of his name would be very appropriate for his life and mine.

In suffering, our trust in Yeshua is tested, refined and strengthened. This would be painfully branded into my soul in the years ahead. I gave my life to Jesus because I wanted 'to be like Him.' Pain and suffering are the tools He uses to mold His character into us, that we might be conformed to His Image here on Earth, with the process finalized in eternal glorification in the New Jerusalem.

My heart revolved around 'my two boys.' There was such joy and love between us. Even though we had little money to speak of, life couldn't have been better. As soon as they were able to understand they were taught Hebrew, Torah and the Living Torah (Yeshua). I longed for them to follow me as I followed Yeshua. I wanted them to join me in the Work that Yeshua had given me to do.

One Sabbath day on our way to the park, when Zavdi was three years old, we saw some men working on a construction site. As we passed by, Zavdi said, 'They're not Jews, Abba!' 'Why not, Zavdi?' I asked him. 'They're working on *Shabat*' (the 7th day Sabbath). It was a profound reply (Ex. 20:8-11). There was a very pleasant smile on his father's face and heart when he heard that. I was very proud of him.

A few days later the Lord took me into another area of my life, one He had begun to deal with some time before. He had already led me to use my Hebrew first name, Avram, and now He would complete it by giving me a new last name. I don't recall how it got started, but for the last three years the name Yehoshua (Hebrew for Joshua) kept coming to me. It culminated on June 3rd, 1987 when Yeshua had me sit down and read Deuteronomy 5 through 6 in Hebrew and English.

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brew month of *Kislev*.

## *The Way of Love*

The word ‘to possess’ stands out three times in four verses (Dt. 5:31–6:1) and it impacted me. It speaks of the one who would cause the Sons of Israel *to possess* (inherit) the Land that Yahveh had promised to Fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I sensed the Lord wanted me to take the name, Yehoshua, for myself. A few days later on *Shavu’ot* (Pentecost) I declared to my congregation my new name. Some time later I had our last names legally changed.

The name Avram means ‘exalted father.’ The name Yehoshua means ‘Yahveh saves.’ The meaning of the name that God has given me is that I will be ‘the father of a people whom Yahveh saves.’ *Avram Yehoshua* symbolizes the transformation of André Michel Sestac, who was Jewish by race and culture only, into a Jew who totally identifies with his Jewish people and who wants to bring them into the Promised Messiah. God was giving me His heart for my own people. Because of the Lord I am a Jew who loves his Jewish people, Moses and Messiah Yeshua. This is all His doing and isn’t it a most wonderful thing?! (Psalm 118:23)

May the day soon come when God will cause me to lead many Jewish people to possess the Promised One, Yeshua our Messiah, just as my namesake Yehoshua, led the Sons of Israel to possess the Promised Land.

Now, another lesson on trusting Him and His provision. It was the beginning of winter and we didn’t have money again, but this time it was for food, not rent. We were literally down to our last meal of potatoes and beans, but very content that we were learning how to trust our Lord.

We were in the middle of eating the meal when there was a knock on the door. A woman, who had heard me speak in her church about three weeks earlier, was standing at the door. She was a little embarrassed, but told us that she had been shopping and had felt impressed by the Lord to buy a few groceries for us. Rivka and I were grateful, in that we would have some food, and also delightfully dumbfounded in that the Lord was revealing Himself to us again in a very dramatic way that said, ‘You can trust Me with all your needs.’

We went to the car with the woman and the ‘few groceries’ turned out to be seven full bags of groceries in her trunk. We were overwhelmed with His Love and faithful care, and so grateful to Him. Yeshua *is* the Good Shepherd (John 10:7-18). When we put our whole life into His hands He never fails to take care of us. If we don’t give Him our entire being and submit to Him and His ways, we’ll never know ‘for sure’ that it’s Him who’s providing for us. Why not? Less than full commitment short circuits what He wants to do for us. We stretch out our own hand before He’s able to stretch out His.

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If you haven't fully submitted your entire life to Yeshua, now would be a great time to do it. It's not hard—just tell Him that you're surrendering all of you to Him. Ask Yeshua to immerse you in His Spirit, and if He hasn't already, keep on asking Him until He does and then the journey of a lifetime will begin for you.

## MATAN GETS A HAIRCUT!

On Tuesday, May 30th, 2000 with the car we had rented the day before from Karmit in Tiberias, Ruti and I were in Eilat. We ate lunch at a restaurant that boasted of its great fried chicken. The Colonel has nothing to worry about.

On the wall at the table where we sat there was a large picture of Moses receiving the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai. God's *Light* was all around him and all Israel was watching. Ruti began to weep. The Holy Spirit was moving upon her. We asked the owner, Mosheh (Moses) where we might be able to purchase another print like that. He told us that he got it from a friend of his that had a Judaica shop in Eilat. He gave us his friend's card and after lunch we went to the shop.

It was a very small store, not unusual in Israel. Perhaps only eight paces long and five paces wide. It had a few books on some shelves for sale, one print and one photograph. The print was of the scene we wanted. The large photograph was of the late Lubavitch Rabbi Schneerson, who had died a few years earlier. His followers love to proclaim him the Messiah, displaying his picture on billboards, walls and anywhere else they can find to put it up.

We saw the price tag of the print we had been hoping to buy. It went for 180 shekels (\$45). I thought that was a little too much for a print, even though it had a nice wooden frame. I asked him if he would come down on it and he said that he couldn't.

Ruti and I talked about it and I decided against getting it. We returned to our place and took a rest. We got up about four in the afternoon and I began to work on an article. About 7:00 PM Ruti asked me about the picture. I could see that she wanted it so I told her that we'd go back into the city and pick it up.

We came back to Matan's store and purchased the print in the frame. It was about 7:30 PM. Izhar, a friend of Matan's, was sitting on a ledge inside the store with his wife. Izhar mentioned how nice the picture was, in that it represented the giving of the Law to Israel (Ex. 19:16–20:21ff.). I said that it was God revealing and giving His Heart to us—His Word for our understanding of what is right and what is wrong (Dt. 4:6-8), that we might not sin against Him, each other and ourselves.

Matan said that it was God marrying Himself to Israel. I agreed with him. The giving of the Law by God, and its acceptance by Israel, is a marriage covenant. In Judaism the certificate of marriage is called a *Ketuba*. God's laws

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are the stipulations of the relationship of that *Ketuba* or Covenant Marriage. It shows how the Wife (Israel) was to obey her Husband (Yahveh), and it reveals what the Husband would do for His Wife (love, provide and protect her). The formal ratification of the Covenant at Mt. Sinai came a little later, with the sacrifices acting to sanctify the words of the union (Ex. 24). I said,

‘This is a picture of what Messiah does for us. Messiah allows us to marry God in a way that Mt. Sinai was only a pale picture of.’

That got their attention and this was the reason why Ruti wanted to have the picture—for a time of witnessing to Matan and Izhar. I told them that in order for us to be in the presence of God, to be one with God (to marry Him), our perverse heart and begin would have to be changed. That is the work of Messiah.

Matan asked me if I knew when the Messiah would come. I told him that Messiah had already come. He asked me if I thought Messiah was the late Rabbi Schneerson. I told him no. Rabbi Schneerson had never set foot in *Eretz* Israel (the Land of Israel). How could he possibly be the Messiah? The prophet Micah says the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem:

‘But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrata, little among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.’ (Micah 5:2)

Rabbi Schneerson couldn’t have been the Messiah. (Many of the Rabbi’s followers continue to believe that he was, and still is, the Messiah. They say that he is in Heaven now, praying for all Israel. There is no end to the total disregard for the Scriptures that some Jewish minds can display. Notice though, how this parallels what our High Priest, Yeshua, is doing for us now; Heb. 7:25.)

Matan asked me if I knew the name of Messiah. I told him that I did. Now he wanted me to give him His name. I asked Matan if he knew anything about Messiah. He told me that he did, so I asked him to share with us what he knew. He said that Messiah will come when all the people of Israel were righteous or wicked, for one day.<sup>43</sup> I laughed! I said to him,

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<sup>43</sup> This is a rabbinic concept. Another rabbinic thought states, ‘Israel could be redeemed by keeping two Sabbaths’ (in a row) ‘properly (*Sab.* 118b);’ C. G. Montefiore and H. Loewe, *A Rabbinic Anthology* (New York: Schocken Books, 1974; ori-

### *Matan Gets a Haircut!*

‘When did God save us from Egyptian slavery?! Were we all righteous for one day? Did we all keep His Torah?! Of course not! It hadn’t even been given, yet!’

The Rabbis say the spiritual condition of the Hebrew slaves in Egypt was on the second to the lowest rung of the spiritual ladder. Israel was down to the 49th rung of the rabbinic ladder when there were only 50! The Rabbis say that if Israel had slipped to the 50th, not even God Himself could save us! What *hutzpah!* So our righteousness didn’t save us, although one could try and make the point that we were all wicked, but Scripture does not say that. It states that it was *God’s compassion*—He saw and felt our sufferings (Ex. 3:7-10). I asked, ‘What delivered us out of the hands of mighty Pharaoh?’

Matan didn’t quite know where I was going with that. He said something about the miracles of Moses. I told him it was with the blood sacrifice of the lamb:

“As we obeyed God and put our faith in Him *and His sent one*, Moses, we put the blood on the doorposts and lintel of our homes. When the Lord saw the blood He ‘passed over’ the homes of Israel, but struck the homes of the Egyptians. *The blood of the lamb* saved our firstborn sons and Pharaoh couldn’t get rid of us fast enough!”

Passover is a picture of Judgment Day (Ex. 12:12). God could have destroyed all of Egypt that day. Instead, He only required the life of the firstborn son who didn’t have the blood of the lamb. He let the rest of the Egyptians live so that He would receive glory from them because they would tell other peoples what had happened to them. Yahveh spoke of this when He said to Pharaoh through Moses:

‘For if by now I had put forth My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, you would then have been cut off from the Earth, but indeed, for this reason I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power and in order to proclaim My Name throughout all the Earth.’ (Ex. 9:15-16)

I then went on to say that Messiah died like the lamb so that His Blood would cleanse us of our sins and transform us into the Image of God. This was God’s predetermined plan so we could be betrothed to Messiah now, be transformed in His presence on Judgment Day and spend eternity with Him in the New

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ginally written in 1938), p. 665.

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Jerusalem. Because of the *Life*-transforming properties of Messiah's Blood, the Fire of Almighty God won't consume us.

About this time Izhar's wife got up and left the store. I didn't sense any hostility, just someone who wasn't interested in what was being said, but the men were very attentive. I asked them if they knew what thing in the natural was most like God. Matan said that God was Light and I said, 'Yes, but there's something closer.' They were puzzled and I said that Scripture says that our God is a consuming *Fire*:

'So watch yourselves, that you do not forget the Covenant of Yahveh your God which He made with you and make for yourselves a graven image in the form of anything against which Yahveh your God has commanded you. For Yahveh your God is a consuming *Fire*,<sup>44</sup> a jealous God.' (Dt. 4:23-24)

'In order for us to be able to stand in His presence, which is spiritual Fire, we must become like Him. This is why we need to believe and surrender our lives to Messiah. Only through Messiah will we be transformed to endure the Fire that is our God.'

'This Fire is seen in the Burning Bush and when Yahveh descends upon Mt. Sinai. Also, all Israel saw the Pillar of Fire every night in the Wilderness.'

In the prophets Zechariah (13:9) and Malachi (3:3), the Fire of God is seen as a refining or purifying agent for Israel:

'When Yahveh fully manifests, these Heavens and Earth will melt away.' (Mic. 1:4; Nah. 1:5; 2nd Pet. 3:10, 12)

'There won't be any place in this Universe where He isn't fully manifest. That means that Hell is nothing more than His fiery presence for those who aren't like Him, and who don't like Him.'

I then shifted to Messiah Himself. This is where it was good that we were in Matan's store because he had the Scriptures right there. I asked him if he would get one out. He was glad to do so. I directed him to Isaiah 53 and asked him to read the whole chapter out loud in Hebrew for us. He did, and as he did I would stop him and comment on things, like Messiah growing up in

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<sup>44</sup> This is reiterated in Heb. 12:28-29.

### *Matan Gets a Haircut!*

‘parched ground.’ I said that it meant that Israel would be in rebellion to God when Messiah came:

‘For He (Messiah) grew up before Him (God the Father) like a tender shoot and like a root out of *parched ground*. He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.’ (Is. 53:2)

A ground that is parched or arid is without water. This type of land is no good to anyone because it won’t yield food. It’s the opposite of the Land of Milk and Honey, a land that receives rain ‘in its season’ (Dt. 11:11-14). The Land of Milk and Honey pictures abundance from God’s blessings for an obedient people. On the other hand, God saw Israel as rebellious when Messiah would come. Very few were really looking for Messiah and that’s the way it is in Israel today. Matan agreed with me.

Many think that Isaiah’s statement about Messiah not having any ‘stately form or majesty’ means that Messiah was either ugly or plain looking. This isn’t what the verse means. Isaiah meant that Messiah wouldn’t have the Shekina Glory Cloud around Him for all to see (like a neon sign) proclaiming that He was the Messiah. The Glory Cloud was part of the Tabernacle in the days of Moses (Ex. 40:34-38), and was dwelling within Messiah when He came, but the human eye couldn’t see it. He looked like an average Jew, not the King of Glory, at least to the human eye. The demons though, had no problem seeing His glory.<sup>45</sup>

Isaiah wrote 700 years before Messiah came. I asked Matan to continue reading in Isaiah 53:

‘He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and well acquainted with grief. Like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised and *we did not esteem Him*. Surely our griefs He Himself bore and our sorrows He carried. Yet we ourselves thought Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.’

‘But He was pierced through for our defiant rebellion. He was crushed for our perverse heart. The punishment for our peace (with God) fell upon Him and by His scourging we are

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<sup>45</sup> See Mark 1:24; Lk. 4:34 for other references to ‘the Holy One’ of Israel; also Ps. 16:10; 78:41; Prov. 9:10; Is. 1:4; 29:19; 30:15; 41:14; Jer. 51:5; Hos. 11:12; John 6:69; Acts 2:27; 1st Pet. 1:15; 1st Jn. 2:20.

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healed.’

‘All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way, but Yahveh has caused the wickedness of us all to fall on Him. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth. Like a lamb that is led to slaughter and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth.’

‘By oppression and judgment He was taken away. As for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living for the sins of my people to whom the stroke was due? His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet He was with a rich man in His death because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth.’ (Is. 53:3-9)

This Messiah the Rabbis named after Joseph—Messiah the Son of Joseph. Not because Messiah would literally descend from Joseph, but because like Joseph, Messiah would be hated, rejected and betrayed by his brothers, the House of Israel. Yet, God would raise up the Messiah to be second in command to God the Father, just as God did with Joseph in relation to Pharaoh. I said that Israel would reject this Messiah, just like the Sons of Israel rejected Joseph, and also, Moses, when he first came to Pharaoh and afterward in the Wilderness (Ex. 5:19-21; Num. 14:1-12f., etc).

Like Joseph, when his brothers came because of the famine, they didn’t recognize their long lost brother (they thought he was dead and isn’t that what Israel thinks of Yeshua today?). Joseph recognized them, and he would provide food, shelter and safety for them and their families.

Today Israel doesn’t recognize her Messiah, but I told them that Messiah provides natural food and safety, along with the Food of Heaven (John 6:50-58), Clothes of Righteousness,<sup>46</sup> and the Shelter (Ps. 91:1) of Heaven for all who

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<sup>46</sup> Jer. 23:5-6; Mt. 22:12-13; Lk. 12:28; Rev. 16:15. The story of the man invited to the king’s wedding, who didn’t come with the right clothes on, is made understandable when we realize that in ancient weddings, kings would issue clothing for all the people invited. It was their gift to them in honor of the wedding, clothes being a very precious commodity.

In Matthew’s account, the man is thrown out of the wedding hall into outer darkness because he didn’t wear the clothes the king had provided (Ps. 109:18; Is. 61:10; Gal. 3:27; Rev. 3:5). We are to seek the Lord to clothe us in His Righteousness so that we needn’t be ashamed on Judgment Day, for that is the day our mar-

### *Matan Gets a Haircut!*

believe in Him:

‘This Messiah, who died for our sins, as we read of in Isaiah, God raised up from the dead, as it also says in Isaiah.’ (53:10-12)

This is how Messiah *ben Yosafe* (Son of Joseph) can also be Messiah the Son of David, who will reign for all eternity in the New Jerusalem:

‘Unable to reconcile the prophecies about a dead Messiah and one who would live forever and rule Israel (Ps. 2:1-7; 2nd Sam. 7:8-13) the Rabbis created two Messiahs.’

I told them,

‘God will send this same Messiah who died and was raised up, never to die again, back to Israel a second time. It says the Gentiles would have the Great News about the heavenly Marriage also told to them, and that many of them would believe in Him.’

I asked Matan to read about God’s love for the Gentiles in Isaiah 49:6:

“He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the Tribes of Jacob and to restore the remnant of Israel. I will also make You a *Light* to the nations so that My Salvation may reach to the ends of the Earth!’”

‘Is God the God of the Jews only? I asked. Did He not create the whole world for His glory? The Gentiles will share in the blessings of Father Abraham, as it is written,’

‘In your Seed all the nations (*goyim*; Gentile peoples) of the Earth shall be blessed because you have obeyed My Voice.’ (Gen. 22:18)

This was all very new to Matan, but much to my delight, he hadn’t been tainted against the Isaiah passage with the way the Rabbis ‘interpret’ it today. They refuse to believe that the passage speaks of the Messiah. They say it speaks of *Israel* and that Israel will die for the sins of the Gentiles! This interpretation began to flourish nine hundred years ago with *Rashi* (Rabbi Shlomo ben Itzhak; 1040-1105 AD), considered to be one of the greatest rabbis, but when it did, it was soundly renounced by the Rabbis of his time. A generation later,

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riage will be consummated to Yeshua, the King’s Son.

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the greatest Rabbi in Judaism, Rabbi Moses ben Maimon (1135-1204 AD), known by his acronym *Rambam* (and as Maimonides), also rejected Rashi's interpretation of Isaiah 53.

Eventually though, *Rashi's* interpretation would become the Jewish way 'to understand' Isaiah 53. With this 'understanding' the Rabbis closed the door on Isaiah 53 speaking about Yeshua, God's suffering Servant (Is. 52:13–53:12; cf. Mt. 23:13). The Rabbis bar the way of every Jew seeking to know what Isaiah is saying about Messiah, in this crystal clear passage about the Messiah of Israel dying for our sins. Before Rashi though, most every Jewish sage believed that Isaiah spoke of the Messiah, not Israel.

I explained that because this Messiah would take our sins and sickness upon Himself, and that the word 'to strike,' in both Isaiah 53:4 and 53:8, comes from the root word associated with leprosy, the ancient Rabbis also named Him the Leprous Messiah (*Sanhedrin* 98b). Those Rabbis understood that Messiah's death would be our ultimate atonement for sin. The reason why the biblical understanding could change had a lot to do with how the Church has treated the Jewish people over the last 1,900 years.<sup>47</sup>

I said that this is what the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16) points to. Only the blood of the goat could cleanse the Tabernacle, all the articles in it and all the sins of Israel. It was a picture of what Messiah's Blood would do to the heavenly Tabernacle, the dwelling place of God, and for us today, and again I referred to the blood of the lamb at Passover. It would allow God to save *and to dwell or tabernacle within His people* because His people would be clean and holy on the inside by Messiah's sacrificial Blood.

Unfortunately, contact with a few Christians had already raised serious concerns. Matan asked, 'Why don't Christians like the Jewish people?' 'How could they eat things that Moses said weren't clean?' And, 'How could they not keep the Sabbath day holy?'

The first question is so sad. Since 120 AD the Roman Catholic Church threw

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<sup>47</sup> Seeing the persecution of the Jews by the Church, *Rashi* twisted the ancient Jewish understanding of Is. 53 to alleviate Jewish sufferings. Christians would use Is. 53 'to prove' that Jesus was the Messiah and *Rashi* used an alternative interpretation against it, an interpretation that had been around for quite some time, but hadn't gained any scholarly adherents. *Rashi* was wrong for doing this, but I can understand his heart to try to protect his people. See *A Three Day Old Bagel* at <http://seedofabraham.net/A-Three-Day-Old-Bagel.pdf> for more on Isaiah 52:13–53:12, the golden chapter in all Scripture on the Suffering Servant of Yahveh.

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out Mosaic Law and called the Jews ‘Christ killers,’ and persecuted and murdered them because they were Jews. Saying the Church ‘has missed it,’ theologically, on Mosaic Law, is a pathetic understatement, which doesn’t have much of an affect against all the hatred that Christians have displayed toward the Jewish people over the last 1,900 years, officially ‘in the name of Jesus.’

The Roman Church condemned Jews forever for what the *Sanhedrin* (Jewish Senate) did that day to Jesus. Protestant churches followed suit. This is *not* how the Church was supposed to act toward the Jewish people, in light of professing belief in the Jewish Savior. This is not how the Apostle Paul felt toward his Jewish people. If he could have, Paul would have given up his eternal *Life* for his Jewish brethren so they could come to Messiah Yeshua. He wrote,

‘I am telling the truth in Messiah! I am not lying. My conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart! For I could wish that *I myself were accursed*, separated from Messiah *for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh!*’ (Romans 9:1-3)

*This* is the kind of love the Church should have had for the Jewish people over the last 1,900 years, but unfortunately, it acted as an agent of Satan in this area. I told Matan that not all Gentiles who said they believed in Jesus were really believers, just as not all of Israel, from the days of Moses until now, followed Moses and the commandments of Yahveh:

‘All the kings of the northern Kingdom of Israel were wicked and sacrifices to pagan idols abounded. They were not righteous Israelis and they gave the Lord a bad name. So it was,’ I told them, ‘with many Christians in the Church over the centuries.’

There are many Christians today that have a strong love for the Jewish people and Israel, but this has little emotional impact on the average Jewish or Israeli person, most of whom don’t know any Christians personally. One thousand nine hundred years of Christian anti-Semitism has left its mark on the psyche of the Jewish people. It’s not only the reality of Gentiles like the Nazis, who were obviously not true believers, but who celebrated Christmas and went to church, but also of the scholars and the pastors. For many centuries the people in the Church didn’t have a Bible in their own language,<sup>48</sup> having been forbid-

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<sup>48</sup> Even today the Catholic Church strictly forbids the reading of the Bible in the lan-

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den by the Catholic Church. In those centuries anti-Semitism, from the Catholic priests, found ample ground to grow in the hearts of the people. Today, with people reading the Scriptures, it has opened up God's understanding of the place of the Jewish people in His heart, and many believers are walking in that, but there is still much anti-Semitism in the churches today, especially against Israel.

I said that we are in a two part reality. One part is now, the time period of Messiah, where we have the promise of being made into the Image of Messiah. The other is the fulfillment of that promise on Judgement Day and of marrying Him for eternity. Before that takes place many will leave Messiah, not wanting to go on with Him, thinking that the cost of following Him is too great, or that He has taken too long and won't return, as we Jews thought of Moses when he stayed on the Mountain for forty days (Ex. 32:1f.). We didn't know what had become of Moses and we had no Torah then to tell us that he would return, so we started doing exactly what God had told us not to do, less than forty days earlier. We built an image of a calf and worshipped it as our God, calling the gold calf the God who delivered us from Egypt. Speaking of Aaron, Scripture says,

“He took this from their hand and fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf and they said, ‘This is your God, oh Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!’”  
(Ex. 32:4)

One day though, Moses came back!, and one day, Messiah will return and repay those Gentiles who said they were Christians, but hated His Jewish brethren, and therefore, hated Him who is still a Jew.<sup>49</sup>

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guage of the people of South America and Asia, thus keeping them in the dark. This restriction has changed for Catholics in the United States, where people are more educated. In the United States though, the phenomenon of Catholics reading the Bible in English is only recent, but with that, some are seeing and walking in the Word of God. Part of this godly knowledge has meant that Catholic anti-Semitism, propelled by the priests as divine, has been challenged as unbiblical and ungodly by some Catholics.

Unfortunately, the worship of Mary as co-Savior, nay, a greater Savior than her Son, along with other disturbing Catholic teachings about her (e.g. that she was/is the Holy Spirit incarnate and sinless), and that salvation is in the Church, not Jesus, make the Roman Catholic Church not a Christian church, but a cult. See *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Two-Babylons.pdf>.

<sup>49</sup> Yeshua was circumcised on the eighth day according to the Law (Lk. 2:21) and He

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I could see that this made some sense to them. As for why the Gentiles didn't celebrate the Feasts of Israel, etc., I directed Matan to read Daniel 7:23-27, which states that someone who hates God will change the Law and the Feasts:

'He (the Pope) will speak out against the Most High God and wear down the holy ones of the Most High God and he will intend to make alterations in (sacred) times and in (the) Law. And the holy ones will be given into his hand for a time, times and half a time.' (Dan. 7:25)

The Bishop of Rome (whose office would become that of the Pope in the sixth century), overturned Mosaic Law for Christians in 120 AD, but many Gentiles today were coming to see the beauty of Passover, etc., in being a picture of Messiah and His death, and that we were set free from the Kingdom of Satan in a similar way as we were set free from the Kingdom of Pharaoh. This coincided with a number of Jews, like my wife and me, who were coming to know Messiah. I told him there were over a hundred and fifty thousand Jews in the USA that believed in Messiah. That surprised them both. I said that wherever there were Jews, whether in Europe, South America, Australia, Asia or Africa, many of them were coming to know the forgiveness and *Life* that Messiah brings, and that here in Israel there were about 10,000 Israelis who believed in Messiah.<sup>50</sup>

I redirected us back to Messiah by asking Matan to turn to Zechariah, to reinforce that Messiah would die and that His death would open up the Fountain of *Living Waters* for Israel. This was done so that Israel might be cleansed of her sins and wickedness so God could dwell in His people:

'I will pour out on the House of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplication so that they will look upon Me whom they have pierced. They will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only son and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn son.' (Zechariah 12:10)

'In that day a *Fountain* will be opened for the House of David

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'came unto His own' people (Jn. 1:11). Rev. 22:16 has Yeshua saying that He is 'the Seed of David.' Does it get any more 'Jewish' than that? See also Lk. 1:30-33; Jn. 4:9, 20, 22; Rom. 1:3.

<sup>50</sup> The number of Israelis who believed in Yeshua had changed from 8,000 to 10,000 in the year and a half since I had spoken with Eli, Varda and Avraham.

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and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for impurity.’  
(Zech. 13:1; cf. Jeremiah 2:13; 17:13)

The Messiah died for our atonement with God. Then we went to Psalm 118:19-24, ‘the Stone the Builders rejected,’ to reinforce Isaiah and Zechariah, that Israel would reject Messiah, even though He would give us a salvation that was greater than what Moses had given us. The rejection of Messiah by Israel’s religious leaders didn’t take God by surprise.

It was wonderful that Matan was reading the Hebrew Scriptures. He was seeing a picture of his Messiah for the very first time:

‘Open to me the Gates of Righteousness! I shall enter through them! I shall give thanks to Yahveh! *This* is the *Gate* of Yahveh!’<sup>51</sup> The righteous will enter through it (Him!).<sup>52</sup> I will give thanks to You for You have answered me and You have become my Salvation! The Stone, which the Builders rejected, *has become the chief CornerStone!* This is Yahveh’s doing! It is marvelous in our eyes! *This* is the Day which Yahveh has made! Let us rejoice and be glad in it (Him)!’  
(Psalm 118:19-24)

The ‘Gate,’ I told them,

‘is Messiah crucified. Belief in this crucified Messiah is the way that all must enter into the Kingdom of God.’

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<sup>51</sup> Yeshua calls us to enter through the narrow Gate and refers to Himself as the Gate, in John, through whom we must go through. In Matthew He says, ‘Enter through the narrow Gate. For the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction and there are many who enter through it, but the Gate is narrow and the Way is difficult that leads to *Life* and there are few who find it’ (Mt. 7:13-14).

‘Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the Gate into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. So, Yeshua said to them again, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the Gate of the sheep.’ (John 10:1, 7) English translations with *door* should be translated as *gate*. There are no doors to sheepfolds. Wesley J. Perschbacher, editor, *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publications, 1990), p. 205. The concept of a door and a gate are identical. They are both used to enclose or secure a building, wall or fence, etc. When referring to sheep in Yeshua’s illustration, one would go through a gate, not a door.

<sup>52</sup> In Hebrew the word for ‘it’ and ‘him’ are the same and so it’s easy to see the real meaning referring to Yeshua Himself as the *Gate* of Righteousness that we must enter into in order to get into His Kingdom.

### *Matan Gets a Haircut!*

Please realize that in all this time I have not yet mentioned the name of *Yeshua* to Matan and Izhar. I wanted to lay a foundation for them from which *Yeshua* would naturally arise. Having spoken His name too early on other occasions, before laying a solid biblical foundation, I've come to see that it turns many Jews off. They don't want to hear anything more about Messiah from the *Tanach* if it has to do with Jesus.

Matan, wanting to impress me with his knowledge of Judaism, told me that he wasn't as well versed in things about Messiah, but that he studied a lot of Talmud and Kabbalah. He said that he could go 'very high' in this. I wasn't impressed. He said that he would get up in the middle of the night, two or three AM, and learn Talmud. This was a point of pride for him. This is not an uncommon, self-righteous practice among the religious.

I told him that Talmud wasn't the Word of God and that he needed to be *immersed* in God's Word so that he would be able to discern what was True from what was False. The Deceiver was very clever. I said that if I came to him with a counterfeit 200 shekel note, and it was a good counterfeit, he'd accept it as the real thing. If I asked him for change he would give me real money for false, not being able to discern the true from the false, but when he went to the bank to cash it he would be out 200 shekels because the clerk would tell him that it was worthless:

'Satan is like that. He's not going to come in and ask for change for a 300 shekel note because he knows that he couldn't deceive you that way.' (Israel doesn't have a 300 shekel note.)

I said to Matan that he should put away Talmud, and especially Kabbalah, because both were 'from Babylon and corrupt and defile the pure religion the God of Israel would have His people to walk in.'

It registered with Matan, that I didn't like Talmud or Kabbalah. Later on, when he'd bring things up from them, he'd respectfully acknowledge first that I didn't put much stock in them.

Matan then shared with us a little of who he was and how he grew up. He said that his mother and father were religious and that his father had served in the Israeli Army in all the wars. They lived in a village that was next to an Arab village and there was always trouble with the Arabs. One day an Israeli was murdered and Matan's father took his machine gun and murdered two Arabs.

I don't know what became of Matan's father, if the authorities picked him up

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or not, or even found out about it. It seemed like life just went on. He said that when he was small he was trained in religion, but when he was a teenager he left it and did whatever he wanted to do. He was 23 years old now, and already had seven businesses and five cars, or was it seven cars and five businesses? Matan was handsome and lean, with dark hair and about five foot six inches tall (1.7 meters).

He wanted to impress us with his 'get up and go' and he went on to say that just a few years ago he went to a religious seminar with some friends because he was beginning to see the futility of greed and sex. This seminar was sponsored by the Lubavitch sect of *Hasidic* Judaism and they had many rabbis there. Their purpose was to bring wandering Jews like Matan 'back into the Fold.'

One of the things that drew him and his friends to the seminar was that they were put up in a very nice hotel for a few days and well fed, and it only cost them 200 shekels (about \$65 back then). This was an incredible deal, as far as the room and the food were concerned. The seminar dealt with areas of Torah and Talmud, with the focus on bringing back 'the lost sheep.'

Matan's Jewishness began to get to him. His then current lifestyle clashed with how he knew a Jew should live, and in one class it climaxed. He told us how there were two types of rabbis there; some with a hard approach and some with a gentle approach, but there was also one who was known for cutting off long hair on new converts. Matan was afraid of him because Matan had very long hair then.

In that class the rabbi made a point about coming back to God and everybody agreed with him. Matan had taken a seat in the rear, so as not to be seen. After everyone, including Matan, agreed with him, the rabbi pointed his finger at Matan. He asked him if he would come up front and have his hair cut short! Matan countered that God looked on the heart, so why did he have to cut his hair? This was a great answer to the rabbi's question, but the rabbi had heard it before with other 'Matans.' The rabbi said that if Matan would have his hair cut short *it would be a sign to the others* that he had actually made a decision to turn back to God, and in doing that, he would bring many others to God. The rabbi said that this would be a great *mitzva* (colloquially, 'a good deed,' although biblically *mitzva* is a *commandment* of God). It would also be a sign of Matan's holiness and he'd be an example to others. How could Matan resist? He came forward and had his hair cut short. He also began wearing a *kippa* again. This told others that he had become religiously observant.<sup>53</sup>

Matan had a store at that time and a Corvette Sting Ray. He left the seminar

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and the first day that he came to his store he didn't wear his *kipa* because he thought the crowd he hung around with would mock him. Much to his surprise the first friend that saw him that day said that he knew what had happened to him...and where was his *kipa*?!

Matan, quick thinker that he is, told him that because he had a convertible he had taken it off so it wouldn't blow away. Then he took it out of his pocket and put it on like he had forgotten to do so before. Much to Matan's delight, none of his anticipated rejection materialized that day.

I could sense that Matan was hungry for God, but like most Jews, he did not have the proper avenue to satisfy his hunger. He had been given the glorified gobbledygook<sup>54</sup> and mystical mumbo jumbo<sup>55</sup> of the Rabbis instead of the *Bread of Life* and the *Living Waters* from *Above*.

I told Matan that if he would follow me, as I followed Messiah, that many would reject him, just as they had rejected Moses and Messiah. It wasn't a pleasant feeling, but 'this *is* the Way for the Righteous. God's true followers have always been rejected, as we saw in Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 about our Messiah.' I said that it happened to Joseph and King David, as well, when King Saul wanted to murder David. Our people also rejected Moses when he first came to Pharaoh (Ex. 5) and many times when he was in the Wilderness with them (Ex. 16:3; 17:3; Num. 11:5, 20; 14:2-4; 20:5; 21:5; Dt. 1:27).

Matan was listening to what I was saying. I hoped that this concept of rejec-

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<sup>53</sup> There are far more (secular) Jews who don't observe the commandments of the Lord than there are who do. This surprises many Christians who think that all Jews walk in Judaism and Jewish ways.

<sup>54</sup> J. M. Sinclair, General Consultant; Diana Treffry, Editorial Director, *Collins English Dictionary*, Fourth Edition (Glasgow, Scotland: HarperCollins Publishers, 1998), p. 657. Gobbledygook: 'pretentious or unintelligible jargon, such as that used by officials...whimsical formation from' gobble, 'the loud, rapid, gurgling sound made by male turkeys.'

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. p. 1022. Mumbo jumbo: 'foolish religious reverence, ritual or incantation...meaningless or unnecessarily complicated language...an object of superstitious awe or reverence.'

Not everything in Judaism is perverse. There is some godly understanding in it, but if a glass of pure water has just a little poison in it, none of the water can be drunk that isn't poisonous. To distinguish the clear water of God from the poison of Judaism takes God's discernment. See also Yeshua's scathing rebukes to the Pharisees and Scribes (religious lawyers) in Mt. 23. It hasn't gotten any better in Judaism since then.

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tion might be a rallying point for him. I wanted him to realize that a real commitment to Messiah would bring him much hardship and rejection. It was not a matter for a Jew to enter into lightly.

Matan went on to share that, initially, he studied very hard for five or six months, but since he had known what it was to have sex, and now he was abstaining, it was very difficult for him. After a few more months of walking 'the straight and narrow' he decided to take his girlfriend to Paris for two weeks and do 'everything' he wanted to do. Of course, when he came back he said that he felt very guilty for betraying God. So he immersed himself again into the Jewish books and got 'very high.'

I said this was exactly the reason why Messiah had come. No matter how hard we try, or how strong our will power is, we fall down and fail God time after time. That's the human condition since Adam and Eve. The Blood of Messiah would forgive us of our sins. The Mosaic sacrifices did this, too, but Messiah's Blood *also* gives us a new heart and God's Spirit so that we can *overcome* our temptations by the power of God, and on Judgment Day we will be made into His Image, that we might marry our Messiah for eternity. I asked him to turn to Ezekiel and read about God bringing us Jews back home to our Land, cleansing us from sin and filling us with His Spirit, so that we could walk in His Torah the way He wanted us to walk, with a new heart—His:

“I will vindicate the holiness of My great Name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am Yahveh,’ declares the Lord Yahveh, ‘when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight.’”

“For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own Land. Then I will sprinkle *clean water* upon you and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new Heart and put a new Spirit within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. *I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My Statutes* and you will be careful to observe My Ordinances. You will live in the Land that I gave to your Fathers. You will be My people and I will be your God.”  
(Ezk. 36:23-28)

By this time we had been talking for more than two hours and Izhar, who had interjected a comment here and there, began to speak of his knowing some

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friends of his, Christians, who believed the Messiah was Jesus. I said, 'Oh really? What do you think of that, Izhar?'

He said that he wasn't quite sure, but they had certainly showed him things that were beginning to persuade him. I thought to myself that here was an Israeli, born in Tel Aviv, 32 years old, who was close to coming to Messiah. Unfortunately, the hatred of many Christians toward the Jewish people left him with questions in his heart about Jesus. It's not easy for a non-Jew to understand all the centuries of evil, in Jesus' name, toward the Jewish people, but as you can see it effects many Jews. Many Christians are ignorant of this part of their Family (Church) history.

I wanted to know just what impressed Izhar about Jesus being Messiah and asked him, when all of a sudden his wife, who was pregnant and had been gone for over an hour, came back and told him that she wasn't feeling well. He apologized to us, saying that he wanted to stay longer and talk, but he couldn't. I felt that much of my talking there had really been for Izhar because I had sensed that he was more open than Matan. Many times I had felt Matan was 'sparring' with me, trying to impress us with his Judaism, but Izhar was listening with his heart.

I was concerned that Izhar was leaving at the wrong time, another ambush from Satan. As he left, I wanted to go after him and give him the Hebrew handout *A Picture Of Messiah*, but I didn't want to leave Ruti alone in the room with Matan. I didn't feel it would be proper. So, I asked Ruti to come outside with me, telling Matan that we would be right back. He understood what I was doing with Ruti. As we left the little Judaica shop I saw Izhar and his wife getting into a taxi.

I told Ruti to stay on the street while I approached the taxi from the front, holding my right hand up to summon the driver's attention so he wouldn't drive off. Izhar was just seating himself in the back seat next to his wife. I went to him. I gave him *A Picture of Messiah* and asked him to read it. He told me that he would. I said that if he had any questions to give me a call. He said he would. I also told him that he wasn't far from the Kingdom of the Messiah. He appreciated that.

Ruti and I returned to Matan's store, but before we did I asked her if it wasn't for Izhar that we were really there. She said that Izhar was certainly of a different attitude than Matan. I asked her if we should leave and she said that we should go back inside and see. When we went back inside, Matan was ready to continue and so we stayed and shared some more.

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Ruti had been praying all the while that the Lord would open Matan and Izhar's hearts to hear the Great News. Ruti is such a blessing.

I continued by asking Matan to turn to Daniel 9:24-26, which tells of Messiah the Prince coming at a certain period of time and being cut off (murdered) before the Second Temple would be destroyed. I reaffirmed the previous Scriptures by saying that Messiah had come, but that our people, just as Isaiah 53 and Psalm 118:22 had said, rejected Him, and most still reject Him to this day, but only in His Name can our sins be forgiven. Only in His Name can our nature be transformed, that we might be able to marry Him and live forever with God. Then Matan read Daniel:

'Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your Holy City to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to *make atonement for iniquity*, to bring in *everlasting righteousness*, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place.'

'So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, until Messiah the Prince, there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. It will be built again with plaza and moat even in times of distress.'

'Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off, but not for Himself, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the City and the Sanctuary. Its end will come with a flood, even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.' (Daniel 9:24-26)

This was all new to Matan. I said that it was fairly easy to see that the Messiah had to come before the Second Temple was destroyed. All our ancient Rabbis said that. I told him that Messiah had come.<sup>56</sup>

Only the prophet Daniel was given the *time* when Messiah would come. Without getting into mathematical calculations of the 'weeks,' we know that when Daniel heard Gabriel (about 520 BC) the Temple and the city of Jerusalem lay in ruins. The King of Babylon had destroyed it about 70 years earlier (586 BC). In the book of Daniel the angel Gabriel (9:21-26) foretells the rebuilding of both Jerusalem and the Temple. After that the Messiah would come, die for our sins and make atonement for us, and then another prince would come and

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<sup>56</sup> See *Has Messiah Come?* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Has-Messiah-Come.pdf> for more understanding of this passage.

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destroy Jerusalem and the Temple. Because of this understanding many Jews were looking for Messiah to appear around the time of Yeshua. The ancient Rabbis who lived before the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD, voiced in *Nazir* 32b that ‘Messiah *must* come during the time of the Second Temple.’ They based this upon the words of Daniel 9:24-26.

After the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD the Rabbis would bar Jews from studying the prophecy of Daniel because it was all too evident that it pointed to Yeshua as the Messiah. They didn’t want to believe it so they fabricated lies about Yeshua and put up false walls to keep Jews from seeing this reality. One such rabbinic wall is this talmudic account:

“Rabbi Samuel ben Nachmani said, in the name of Rabbi Yonatan: ‘Blasted be the bones of those who calculate the end!’”<sup>57</sup>

The ‘end’ refers to Daniel’s messianic time when Messiah would come. Of course, Jewish and Gentile believers in Yeshua see that Daniel spoke of Messiah Yeshua, even if they don’t agree on the exact understanding of the ‘weeks.’ Jerome, the translator of the Latin Vulgate, who lived in the fifth century, reports that Christian interpretations of Daniel 9:24-26, current in his time, were as various as they are today.

Getting back to Matan, I told him that Messiah’s death would be the fulfillment of the prophecy in v. 24 that spoke of sin being taken care of for good (‘to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity’). Messiah’s death would deal with our transgressions and make an end to sin in that it wouldn’t have mastery over us, and also, that we could stand before God as righteous. It was the ‘end,’ fulfillment or goal of what the Prophets, the Psalms and Moses had spoken of.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Sanford R. Howard, *L’Chayim: Finding The Light of Shalom* (Thorsby, AL: Sabbath House, Inc., 1999), p. 209. *Sanhedrin* 97b, Soncino Press, vol. 2, p. 659 in editorial footnote No. 6 says: ‘i.e., Messiah’s advent.’

<sup>58</sup> This also relates to the ‘fulfilling’ Yeshua speaks of in Mt. 5:17; cf. Lk. 24:25f. He didn’t come to do away with the Law, but to fulfill its picture of a sacrifice that would transform our nature. God spoke of this in Dt. 30:6 when He said He would circumcise the *hearts* of Israel, and the theme is found in the New Covenant (Col. 2:11) so Israel could walk in God’s Law (Jer. 31:31-34), and also, Ezekiel’s prophecy where God’s Spirit is placed in Israel to walk in His statutes (Ezk. 36:24-27). A central tenet of the Law is sacrifice. It allowed God to forgive, and dwell, among His chosen and sinful people. Without sacrifice the covenant relationship could not have continued. See *Seven Ways Yeshua Fulfilled the Law* under

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The prince who destroyed Jerusalem and the Second Temple was Titus, the Roman general who would later become Emperor of Rome (78 AD to 81 AD). Yeshua *had to be* the Messiah, but if not, where was Daniel's Messiah? There was no other possibility, but I still hadn't told Matan His Name, yet.

I asked Matan to read from Jeremiah 31:31-34 because I wanted 'to seal' our lesson with the prophet's words, which I knew would surprise Matan. As he read his voice changed to shock and disbelief when he read about the Lord giving Israel a *New Covenant*. I had been speaking of this all along, but now he saw it in the Word of God, through the ancient Jewish prophet Jeremiah, in 31:31-34:

“Behold! The days are coming,’ declares Yahveh, ‘when I will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah, not like the Covenant which I made with their Fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My Covenant which they broke, although I was a Husband to them,’ declares Yahveh.”

“But this is the Covenant which I will make with the House of Israel after those days’ declares Yahveh, ‘I will put *My Torah*’ (*Mosaic Law*) ‘*within them, and on their heart I will write it*. I will be their God and they shall be My people. They won't teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother saying, ‘Know Yahveh!’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them’ declares Yahveh, ‘for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more.’”

‘Isn't that beautiful?!’ I asked Matan. ‘God Himself says that the reason why Messiah would come was so that our sins would be forgiven in this New Covenant. We would walk in His Torah and all would come to know Him!’

Matan was seeing things in his own Scriptures that he had never seen before and hearing things that he had never heard before. I then felt I needed to make God the Father more personal to Matan. I told him the reason why God had Father Abraham offer up his son Isaac was so that *we* would have some idea of the pain that God felt when He offered up His Son, our Messiah. We can identify with a human being, in their pain, when they lose a child, especially

### *Matan Gets a Haircut!*

an only child, but it's very hard to understand what God and Messiah went through for us. That's one reason why God led Abraham to offer up Isaac.

The Rabbis have their own distorted understanding of why God told Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. They say that God was showing us that He didn't want the future nation of Israel to offer their sons in literal sacrifice to God as the pagans did to their gods. This is a nice concept, but it has absolutely nothing to do with Abraham offering up Isaac. Nowhere in Scripture does God say that this was the reason for him testing Abraham (Gen. 22:1-2). The test though, of a father offering up his son, is a divine parallel for what Papa God would do when He sacrificed His Son, our Messiah.<sup>59</sup>

The point that I was bringing to Matan was that we could imagine the tremendous pain that Father Abraham went through in order to keep God's commandment. This pain and suffering transfer to God, who loved His Son the Messiah, as much as Father Abraham loved his son Isaac. Because of this, God the Father allowing Himself to experience that pain, we can rest assured that He truly cares for us and feels our pain. The sacrifice of His Son shows us His tremendous love for us and how far He has gone in order to bring us back to Him.

The giving of Messiah as a sacrifice *establishes and guarantees* the Father's promise to us in the most powerful way possible. The Blood of His own Son *guarantees and seals* our marriage to Messiah on Judgment Day. If God allowed His Son to die as a sacrifice for us, and to die the torturous death that He did, God the Father is not going to go back on His Word to us. He's given His most precious possession to us so we can be totally assured of His intentions and His heart for us.

I told Matan the name of God's Son was Yeshua. He didn't seem upset by that. I imagine that he had put 'one and one and one together,' with Jeremiah speaking of the New Covenant, and Isaiah telling us of a Messiah who would die for our sins, and Daniel's time when Messiah would come.

I said, 'Remember how the ram-lamb was sacrificed instead of Isaac?' That ram was a picture of Messiah Yeshua dying for us. We, as sons of Abraham, should all die because of our sins, but Messiah took our place, just as the ram-

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<sup>59</sup> The reason why Abraham is called the Father of our Faith, for both Jew and Gentile (Rom. 4:16), is because his faith in Yahveh was such that he loved Yahveh more than his most precious possession, Isaac. This is why he has the title *Father Abraham*. When we live our lives like that, trusting Yeshua with our most precious possession, we are truly the Seed that Abraham was promised (Gen. 15:5).

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lamb took the place of Isaac. God loves us that much and only by Yeshua's Blood being upon us, by faith in Him, can we expect to be declared righteous before God, just as the blood of the lamb was upon the houses of Israel in Egypt on that mini-Judgment day. We escaped judgment in Egypt because we obeyed God. The Lord said,

'For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast, and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments! I am Yahveh!' (Ex. 12:12)

'Messiah Yeshua came, as Daniel the prophet said, before the destruction of the Second Temple. He is the only person who ever lived that could fit that prophecy. The time period is over. The Temple is gone. Messiah must have come or Gabriel lied to Daniel.'

'In Yeshua's sacrifice we have both the forgiveness of sin and the giving of the new Heart with the Spirit of the *living* God, as Isaiah, Ezekiel and Zechariah spoke of. Only in Messiah Yeshua's name could we expect to stand before our God who is *living Fire*,<sup>60</sup> have our nature transformed into His Nature,<sup>61</sup> and enter into the heavenly Jerusalem for eternity. This is what our God has done for us.'

'Matan, you must believe what I've said to you to be Truth from God because God Himself sent me to you today to declare Messiah Yeshua to you. Take it and ask the God of Israel if what I've shared with you is His Truth and if Yeshua is your Messiah.'

Matan was handling it fairly well or so it seemed. Then another man came into the store. He sat down and heard us talking and began to question what was going on. Ruti and I were getting very tired by now. We had been in the store for four and a half hours. It was almost twelve o'clock midnight and we had arrived there, to buy the picture of the giving of the Ten Commandments, at 7:30 PM. This is the most time that I ever shared Messiah with any Jewish person. We went over just about everything. It was a wonderful time, in that Matan and Izhar were open to hearing about their Messiah. Thank You,

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<sup>60</sup> Ex. 24:17; Dt. 4:24; 9:3; Is. 33:14; Heb. 12:29.

<sup>61</sup> Heb. 3:14; 2nd Pet. 1:4.

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Yeshua.

I asked Matan if he'd like a Hebrew Bible, with the New Covenant in it, so that he could read about Messiah Yeshua. Matan was thinking about it and the other man said that he would take the Hebrew Bible if I would study some book on Talmud. Tired and drained beyond belief, I turned to Ruti for help and she said to me that we weren't there to make any deals. Wisdom from Above! I shared that with the men.

I told Matan to relate to his friend that I knew some things about Talmud and that if he had been there for the previous four hours, he'd have understood that. His friend suggested the 'book swap,' thinking that I wasn't aware of the 'glory of Judaism.' Matan verified that I knew Talmud. I thought that, coming from Matan, his friend would believe him. I could see that Matan was 'in my corner' on this issue. I asked him again if he wanted the Bible. He stopped for a moment to think and said that he didn't. I could see that with his friend there, and Matan wanting 'to remain a Jew,' he was looking for a way out. As I've seen many times before, whether with a Jew or a Gentile, God always allows a person that door.

Here's where Christian antinomianism (anti-Mosaic Law) and carnal logic come to the forefront. Matan said he didn't believe that Yeshua was the Messiah because if He were there would be no need for anyone to teach them about God, going back to to the passage in Jeremiah 31, about the New Covenant, where it states that God Himself would teach us His ways. Since the Christians who believed in Jesus *didn't know His ways (Torah)*, Yeshua couldn't be the Messiah. Great logic, but a poor understanding of God and how He teaches us Who He is.

I told him that he didn't fully understand the verse. God *was* teaching His people about Himself, His Torah and His Messiah, and that many, including me, were living proof of that, but the *fulfillment* of it wouldn't come until we were transformed into the very Image of Messiah Yeshua on Judgment Day. Mosaic Law, the very words of God, is a written reflection of Yeshua, who is the Word of God (Gen. 1:3; Rev. 19:13).

Matan was set though. He didn't want to believe. Of course, what he also didn't realize is that in this age, God has allowed the Gentiles to be without Torah, just as Daniel 7:25 spoke of, for His purpose. Just as most Jews have been without Messiah for 1,900 years, so most Gentiles have been without Torah, but today those veils are beginning to be removed.

It's amazing how one can use a verse in Scripture to nullify the whole council

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of God. I've seen it with both Jews and Christians. I could see that Matan was very satisfied in his own pride and ignorance. He was closed to my suggestion that his interpretation of the verse wasn't accurate. As we left I told him that we would be praying for him and asking the God of Israel to open his eyes to Messiah Yeshua. As the Lord leads you, please lift up Matan and Izhar. Thank you.

## ITZIK THE MONEY CHANGER

On Monday, Sept. 11th, 2000 Ruti and I spoke with Itzik, a 25 year old money changer in Tiberias. When we came to see him he asked us how we were. Instead of answering that we were ‘alright,’ I told him that we were very sad. He asked why. I said that we would be happy when he came to know Messiah Yeshua. He smiled. I had been sharing Messiah Yeshua with him for more than a year.

He was quick to ask me what the questions were that his partner, Itamar, was to find out the answers to. Itamar wasn’t there now. I told Itzik that Itamar was supposed to tell me the answer to why *Nazir* 32b states that the Messiah *would come* before the destruction of the Second Temple (which was destroyed in 70 AD). *Nazir*, a book or tractate of the Talmud, is held as authoritative by religious Jews, which Itamar was. He was also to find out how to answer Daniel 9:24-26, which says the Messiah would come before the Second Temple was destroyed (which *Nazir* 32b is based on).

I then told Itzik that God spoke through the prophet Jeremiah, about giving Israel a ‘New Covenant.’ He didn’t believe me. I took out my *Tanach* and went to Jeremiah 31:31-34 and let him read it in Hebrew. After he was done, he said,

‘You need to see it in the whole setting. It doesn’t mean a New Covenant like the Christians think.’

‘Oh really?’ I replied, smiling. ‘Then what does it mean?’

He then asked me,

‘Where in the *Tanach* does it say that Yeshua is going to be the Messiah?’

I told him that if he were around in the days when God sent Moses to the Sons of Israel in Egypt, he would have wanted to know,

‘Where in Genesis does it say that God will send a savior named Moses to deliver us from Egypt?!’

Moses’ name is not in Genesis, and of course, Moses hasn’t written Genesis when He was sent by God to Egypt. In other words, the Hebrews in Egypt had no idea they were going to be delivered from Egyptian slavery by a man named Moses, yet here was Itzik wanting to know if the name *Yeshua* was written in the *Tanach* as the name of the Messiah. I asked him to tell me what

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name the *Tanach* gives for the Messiah. He didn't have an answer for that.

I then took him to Isaiah 53:5, which speaks of the Messiah dying for our rebellion and our sins. He read it and said, 'You think it means Jesus?!'

I responded with, 'Who else?!'

He told Ruti and me that he would ask a 'big rabbi' what all that meant. I said, 'That would be great!'

I asked him the name of the rabbi and he told me it was a rabbi that I had seen in their place on a number of occasions, sitting there and talking with Itamar. His name is Rabbi Auerbach. He's a man in his late 60s, white beard, small of stature and not open to me or to Messiah Yeshua.

I told Itzik that I would be waiting to find out what the 'big rabbi' had to say about *Nazir* 32b, Daniel 9:24-26, Isaiah 53:5 and Jeremiah 31:31-34.

## *The Way of Rejection*

With a heart to reach out to my Jewish people in Tulsa, OK in 1985, I prayed that the Tulsa Jewish Community directory would come into my hands. It listed every Jewish person who associated with the Jewish community *and* their address. Of course, the Jewish community wouldn't give me one. They only gave them to their members, but one day, while speaking with a believing Jewish woman in her home, I mentioned my desire for it and she gave me hers. It was the Lord. I didn't know she had it.

With the directory I was able to send out the Jewish Newsletters to all the Jewish people in the greater Tulsa metropolitan area and I was also able to knock on every Jewish door. I brought Messiah Yeshua to my Jewish people by mail and in person.

Once a week I'd go out, usually on a Sunday afternoon. One day, after doing it for a season, I came home and I *felt* the *weight* of rejection—my own Jewish people were rejecting me. It was too heavy a weight for me. Yes, I 'knew' that the Jewish leadership had rejected Jesus, and that the Lord was with me, but I felt like I was being crushed. As I sat down in a chair, not knowing what to do, Yeshua led me to open the Scriptures to Luke 6:22-23. There He says,

'Blessed are you when men hate you and ostracize you and insult you and scorn your name as evil for the sake of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For behold! Your reward is great in Heaven! For in the same manner their Fathers used to treat the Prophets.'

I closed the Book and said to Yeshua, 'Lord, I don't feel like rejoicing,' and *immediately* the Holy Spirit came upon me, the heaviness of rejection disappeared and I was filled with the *joy* of the Lord! It was incredible. He is incredible! Yeshua had turned my mourning into *joy* (Is. 61:1-11; Jer. 31:13).

I realized then that only with Yeshua could I walk in something as spiritually dark and foreboding as continually going out into the Jewish community without becoming totally depressed and running away from it. The Lord Yeshua was training me and giving me *Life* in the midst of tremendous rejection, to continue planting Seeds.

To give you an idea of how tough knocking on Jewish doors for Yeshua was, one Sunday I went out with Mike Zittenfield. He was a friend of mine, ten years my senior and had been an evangelist for more than twenty years. He too, went out door to door, but in the general sense of going from house to house on the same block in the city, not targeting any specific group like I was

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doing with my Jewish people.

After a few hours out with me, knocking on just Jewish doors, we came back to my study. He had heard things that day that he'd never heard before. Mike said to me, half in astonishment and half seriously, 'Avram, what have you done to these people?! They hate you!'

Then he said,

'In all my years of going door to door I've never seen so much hostility. They're a tough bunch.'

Mike was right. Over the years though, ninety percent of the time when I would go out, I'd be able to enter into *one* Jewish person's home to speak to them about Messiah Yeshua. I learned that I had to go through all the flack and abuse to be able to plant a Seed. God was teaching me to persevere, even when it didn't look good. The Lord was preparing me for Israel. In Israel it's conceptually the same, only here *everyone* is Jewish, so I don't have to go searching for them throughout the city at 'this house' or 'that house.' I only have to walk outside my front door, and sometimes they even knock on my door!

## MUNDTHAR AND THE JACKET

On Monday, December 4th, 2000 Ruti and I went into the downtown area of Tiberias to purchase a gift for Mundthar. He had turned 40. He was an Arab man who worked in a small *falafel* and *shwarma*<sup>62</sup> open-air eating place that had six tables on the street. Some people might call it a ‘hole in the wall’ with some tables on the sidewalk.

We had known Mundthar and his Israeli boss, Yakov, for a year and a half. Their *falafel*, *shwarma* and salad were very tasty and fresh and the ability to sit down and eat it made it great. About 70% of the *falafel* stands in Israel don’t have a place to sit down and sometimes their food isn’t that fresh.

Mundthar was about 5’ 7” tall (1.7 m), slender of build, black hair, darker complexion, missing some teeth, but pleasant to look at. He smoked and usually wore jeans and a T-shirt. He was quick to smile and always joking. One day, we came to him and he said that Yakov was in jail for beating up a customer who had given him too much grief. I bought it. Then he broke out into a wide smile and I knew he was kidding. He jokes to cover himself up. As an Arab he does it to ‘blend in’ with the Israelis, and of course, it’s part of who he is. I would come to see there was another part though, deeper and hungry for the one true God.

Ruti had thought to get Mundthar some kind of light jacket with a zipper for his birthday. We headed first to a place where items like that were sold on the street. We picked out a nice blue one for about \$16 and went to see Mundthar.

We weren’t hungry. We only intended to give him the gift and wish him ‘a Happy Birthday’ and take off for home. We gave him the gift and Mundthar was really touched. We were about to leave when Yakov, who was sitting with a friend at the table nearest the counter, asked me how I was. I had shared many times with Yakov about Messiah the Son of Joseph, but had never sensed that Yakov was really looking for God, so I hadn’t yet told him or

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<sup>62</sup> *Falafel* is spiced ground chickpeas made into little balls and deep-fried. It’s served in pita bread with salad and other Israeli condiments like *humous* and *tahina* sauce. *Humous* is a creamy paste made from pureed chickpeas, *tahina* and spices. *Tahina* is a creamy sauce made from sesame seeds. *Shwarma* used to be lamb roasted on an upright spit, and then became lamb and turkey, but now it’s just turkey. It’s carved off and placed in pita bread. One can add tomatoes, onions, *humous* and *tahina*, etc., to it. *Falafel* and *shwarma* are as popular in Israel as a cheeseburger and French fries are in the States.

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Mundthar about Yeshua.

Yakov asked me about a religious group called *Shas*, which is also a political party in Israel. They're seen by Israeli society as thieves and scoundrels, and there's some justification for it. Yakov wanted me to put my 'two cents' in and say they weren't any good, but I told him that *many* Israelis were bandits. The man at the table with Yakov, an Arab, smiled approvingly. Not in a mean way, but acknowledging the honesty of what I said.

Yakov asked me who I would vote for in the upcoming elections. I told him I wasn't voting because it didn't matter who got in. It didn't matter if Ehud Barak or Benjamin Netanyahu or 'whomever' was the next Prime Minister, they were all godless men.

I said they all needed Messiah—Jew, Gentile and Arab. Yakov said, '*Where is Messiah?!*' He had done this a number of times before. It's not that he's really asking, but just voicing his disbelief about a Messiah and God (even though I'm sure that he would tell us that he believed in God). I told him that Messiah had already come. His name was called Messiah the Son of Joseph, and our Prophets prophesied that He would come and give His *Life* as a ransom for us that we might be forgiven of sin and cleansed to be able to stand before our holy God. I told him that,

'no one can stand before the God of Israel and expect to win God over with his good deeds. Isaiah the prophet said that all our *righteousness* was as filthy rags before the Holy One of Israel' (Is. 64:6).

I shared from Isaiah 53 and Zechariah 12:10f., about His death and atonement for us and said that the only thing that God demanded for the sins of man was a blood sacrifice. I went on to say, especially with the Arab man at the table, that the God of Israel has done this for the entire world because He is the God who created everything.

I was standing next to their table as I was speaking. An Orthodox man with a cellphone came and stood about seven feet from the table, opposite me, talking into his cellphone and glancing over at me every so often. Then he came to the table, bent down to speak with Yakov, and 'warned' him about me. I caught the word 'missionary.' Fear came upon me as I thought that he might have been calling for 'reinforcements.'<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> We had an experience in Jerusalem where I was sharing with some Orthodox Jews on the street and one man got on the phone to call 'the Jewish Mafia.' An Ortho-

### *Mundthar and the Jacket*

I confronted the fear and asked the Lord what I should do. Should I remain there or not? I realized that 'fear' wanted me to go, so I thought it best to stay. When the Orthodox man finished speaking with Yakov, I wanted to ask him who the Messiah was, but he wouldn't even look at me. He walked off, still holding the cellphone to his ear and talking into it. He never came back.

I told Yakov and the Arab man that the angel Gabriel had spoken to Daniel the prophet about the Messiah. Gabriel said the Messiah would come *before* the destruction of the Second Temple (Dan. 9:24-26). I said that He had come:

'Two thousand years ago God sent Messiah, the Son of Joseph, to die in Jerusalem for us. His name is Yeshua of Nazareth.'

By this time Ruti and I were sitting down at the table with Yakov and his Arab friend. Mundthar, at the counter, was only a few feet away from us, listening.

The news that it was Yeshua didn't faze Yakov. I couldn't tell if it was because he had been warned by the Orthodox man or if he had realized this before. The Arab man seemed a little interested and so I continued, saying that only the Blood sacrifice of the Messiah would cleanse our sins in God's sight:

'It's not our prayers or our good deeds. It's only a heart belief in Messiah Yeshua.'

'In the days of King Solomon, on the Day of Atonement, the blood of the goat was required by God for the forgiveness of all of Israel's sins. All those sacrifices pointed to what God would do in sending His Son to die for us. This revealed the heart of God for all the peoples of the Earth. He is the God of the Jews, Arabs and Gentiles.'

Yakov got up and began looking for something to do. The Arab man asked me a question and as I was answering it, a man whom I had seen just 30 minutes earlier, came to a table where two Orthodox Jewish women were eating and he began talking with them. The man was an Orthodox Jew. Earlier, he had come up to me in the street as Ruti and I were walking out of a grocery store and had taken my hand, shook it and then kissed his hand that shook mine,<sup>64</sup>

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dox man next to him told me they would take care of me. Another Orthodox Jew, in a caring way, warned me to leave. After sensing from the Lord that there wasn't anything more that we could do for Him with those men, we walked on, but not before a few stones were thrown our way, one hitting me in the chest and another narrowly missing Ruti's face that should have hit her.

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saying that he wanted ‘Messiah today!’ He was fairly congenial, but what he said and did took me by surprise. I just stood there for a moment to size up the situation. He said something else and before I could ask him if he really wanted to know who the Messiah was, he went on his way down the street.

I felt that I had missed an opportunity to share Messiah Yeshua. I said to the Lord that if He wanted me to share Him with that man, that He would cause the man to come across my path again. Now, there he was, standing at the table no more than 10 feet away from where I sat. The Arab man had politely excused himself and now I waved to the Orthodox man to get his attention. He came over. I asked him if he wanted to know who the Messiah was. He told me, ‘Menachem Schneerson’ (the rabbi of the Lubavitch movement of *Hasidic* Judaism who had died a few years earlier). I said that he wasn’t the Messiah.

The man then told me that what he had said, ‘Messiah today!’<sup>65</sup> was just a slogan (of the Lubavitch). He was picking up on it in the same spirit that one picks up on a high school football chant for the home team. Before I could have a serious conversation with him he left.

The women he had spoken to at the table were done and now they came over to me. It was the man’s wife and daughter. He was out of sight and I think he must have gone into the supermarket, which was close to where we were, to get some food. The women didn’t seem to be in a hurry.

They asked me what I had been talking about and I began to share that I knew who the Messiah was. I told them many of the things that I had told Yakov ‘and then some.’ They were interested. The mother asked me if I believed in Yeshua and I told her that I did. She was an Israeli Jewess from India. Her husband seemed to be an Israeli Jew from Europe. Their daughter was about 17 years old. As I shared about Yeshua they sat down across from Ruti and me, where Yakov and his Arab friend had been minutes earlier.

As I told them of their need for Messiah Yeshua I pointed to Mundthar behind the counter and said that he needed Yeshua, too:

‘This world is going to be destroyed, with all its money, gold

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<sup>64</sup> It’s not uncommon for a religious Jew to come to another religious Jew, and after shaking hands, place his hand to his lips and kiss it as a sign of respect. This man was older than me, but must have appreciated my full beard. I looked very ‘religious,’ meaning that one could mistake me for an Orthodox Jew.

<sup>65</sup> Actually, the slogan is, ‘We want *Mashiach* (Messiah) now!’

### *Mundthar and the Jacket*

and pleasures, and we will all have to stand before the living God and give account of who we were and why He shouldn't cast us into Hell.'

Mundthar was really listening. We talked for a few more minutes and then the husband was sighted and they had to go. Before they left though, I gave the mother the Hebrew handout *A Picture of Messiah*, but only the first page. It deals with Messianic prophecy from the *Tanach*. The second page, which I had in my hand, contained New Testament fulfillments of those prophecies, of the first page, that Messiah Yeshua had walked in.

I wrote our telephone number and names down on the first page and told them that if they had any questions about it, to give us a call. The New Testament had been brought up earlier, and so I wasn't sure if they would be open to reading anything from it, but then I held out the second page in my hand and said that this paper contained things from the New Testament. I asked the mother if she would like to read it. Much to my delight she took it. The both of them were open to reading it.<sup>66</sup> The mother's name was Devorah and her daughter's name was Rivka.<sup>67</sup>

The best was yet to come though, and I was so glad that I hadn't given in to fear and left earlier when there was a sign of trouble. The women left, thanking us, and Mundthar sat down. He had been listening to everything. I spoke of his need to know Yeshua and that only in His Name would forgiveness of sins be given to us, along with real Peace from the Holy Spirit, to prove that Yeshua is the Savior of the whole world.

I told him that he needed to seek the God of Israel and ask Him if Yeshua was the Savior, and to seek God like he really meant it. Mundthar agreed with me. I said,

'All of us fall far short of God's glory and Person, but we see His *love* for us with Yeshua dying on the tree for both Jew and Arab. *This* is the *love* of God.'

'No man can love his enemies, but while we were hating God and disobeying Him and rebelling against Him, He sent His

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<sup>66</sup> If I would have known that she was going to take the second page, I wouldn't have had to write out my phone number and name on the first page. It's already written on the second page at the bottom, with an offer for a free Hebrew Bible, both Old and New Testaments.

<sup>67</sup> Devorah is Debra and Rivka is Rebecca in English.

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Son to die for us to show us His great *love* and *forgiveness*.  
Yeshua really loves you, Mundthar.'

Earlier, Yakov had said that he lived by the commandment 'to love God with all your heart' (Deut. 6:5). I had told Yakov that he didn't know what God's love was and that he was just using himself as the standard for what it was to love another.

I had shared with Yakov about Messiah's death being the Standard of what God's love is and what He expects from us. It had not affected Yakov, but it had affected Mundthar. He asked me if I could get him a Bible. I told him that I would love to bring him one.

Two days later, on Wednesday, Dec. 6th, I brought Mundthar two Bibles: one in Hebrew and another in Arabic. He was very grateful. I told him to write down any questions he might have and suggested that he begin to read in Yohanan (John) first. Munthar's birthday had brought him both a jacket and the possibility of new *Life*.

I left to return home and as I did I saw him open it up and begin to read. I prayed to Yeshua that Mundthar's heart and eyes would see his Savior. There was more to Mundthar than had met my eye. I was very grateful.

Thank you for your prayers for Mundthar, Yakov, the Arab man at the table, the Orthodox Jewish man on his cellphone, Devorah, Rivka and their husband-father who wanted 'Messiah now!'

## GADI AND THE FIREBOMBS

On Monday, February 5th, 2001 Ruti and I were buying some nuts from a store that opens to the street, when we saw someone pass us by who we knew was a believer from Finland. We greeted Thomas, who had a ministry to his own people who were in the Land of Israel, and who also had a tender heart for the Jewish people. We asked him how his wife and new baby were. He pointed to a table on the street about 20 feet from us where his wife, her sister, Thomas' new born baby and three year old girl were sitting and eating *falafel*. The sister was visiting from Finland. Thomas left us to run a short errand. I suggested that Ruti go over there and talk with them while I bought the nuts, joining her when I was done.

I was almost finished ordering the nuts when I felt a tap on my left shoulder. I turned to see who it was and to my shock it was the leader of the Mob Squad. He was the one, more than a year ago, who had grabbed my wrist and threatened to murder me. Five months ago he had seen me in a supermarket and had shoved me into a shelf, but three weeks ago, on a *shayroot* (taxi van) with him, I spoke of Messiah as we rode to our destinations. At that time he looked like he would rather have been somewhere else. I'd been praying for him and so I felt Yeshua's *love* for him. I had an intense desire to see him come to Messiah. My eyes at that time didn't leave his and I believe he saw that I was 'for him.'

Today he told me that he wanted to talk with me about Messiah. Not to find out about Yeshua, but did I 'have to tell everyone I met' about Him?! Couldn't I just go about my business without doing that? I told him that 'Messiah' burned in my soul and because I knew Him and the *Life* He gave me, I wanted all my Jewish brethren to know Him, 'especially you.'

He said again that he would like to talk more with me and he asked me for my phone number. I gave it to him, realizing that as one of my chief antagonists in Tiberias, I was setting in motion things that might come back to Ruti and me for evil. I also knew that our Lord Yeshua is King and He watches over His Flock and many times He deflects evil from happening to His chosen ones, but if He doesn't He has another purpose.

We talked some more and were getting into Hebrew that I didn't know. He said that he would go and get someone to translate for us at a later date because he wanted to talk with me. I told him that I wanted to do that, too.

Before he left we exchanged names. I watched him walk away and I still

## SAM THE ROCK THROWER

hadn't paid for those nuts. That's alright as there were many helpers behind the counter and 'my helper' knew me and went to help another customer as Gadi and I spoke. I paid for the nuts and walked toward Ruti. Before I could get to her, Gadi had returned with an Israeli Orthodox woman who knew some English. That was quick! Gadi is an Orthodox Jew.

I welcomed the opportunity and he suggested that we three sit down at a table that was one table away from where Ruti, who had her back to me, was talking to our friends from Finland. She hadn't seen any of the first encounter with Gadi and was unaware of what was now transpiring. I called her and she immediately saw who was with me. She said, 'Shalom' to the women from Finland and then joined me at the table with Gadi and Segula. Segula means 'treasure' in Hebrew, and Yahveh used it when He spoke about His people Israel at Mt. Sinai:

'Now, therefore, if you will obey My Voice and keep My Covenant, then you shall be a *special treasure* to Me above all people. For all the Earth is mine.' (Ex. 19:5)

*Gadi* is an affectionate way of saying *Gad*, which means 'an army' (or good fortune) and was the seventh son of Jacob by Zilpah, Leah's maid (Gen. 30:9). My heart was racing. They checked us out—were we Jews, how long had we lived in the Land and how many others of us were there? We were more than willing to be willing. I asked him if he wanted to know Messiah. He said, 'Yes,' and I said, 'You want to know Messiah as long as it's not Yeshua.' He said the name of Yeshua was very painful to him. I said that Ruti and I understood. We knew that in His name more Jews had been humiliated, persecuted, robbed, beaten senseless and murdered than all other names combined.

To show them that I understood I told them that I had lost family in the Holocaust. (Germany was a Christian nation, as was Poland and Lithuania, where many of the Christian Poles and Lithuanians were all too willing to bring their Jewish neighbors to the Nazis, and many times, murder them for the Nazis.) I also said that I knew about the Church's theological position against our people for the last 19 centuries.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> I know there are many Christians today who aren't anti-Semitic, but the overall history of the Church toward the Jewish people has been very evil. This was theologically motivated ('the Jews killed Christ!', etc.) and found expression in the Nazi Holocaust and Russian 'pogroms' of just the last two centuries. The history of Europe, every nation of which was 'Christian,' has most of those nations, at some point over the centuries, forcing their Jewish citizens to leave, upon penalty of death, and those governments stole the property and possessions of their Jewish

### *Gadi and the Firebombs*

I told them that God knew that Israel would reject Messiah when He came 2,000 years ago because Isaiah spoke of it in the 53rd chapter. I gave them some Scripture from it, telling them that Israel would despise and reject Him, but that He would be our ultimate atonement, much like what the High Priest Aaron would do for Israel on the Day of Atonement. Everything within me was striving and pleading to reach out to him, to bring Messiah to him, and him to Messiah Yeshua.

Gadi seemed to understand what I was saying, and it looked like he had heard it before, but Segula hadn't. She was set in her way, as I would see when it ended, but she heard things that day that she had never heard before. I believe that Gadi *heard them in a way* that he had never heard them before, either.

I told them of my coming to Messiah Yeshua and how the Holy Spirit had come upon me when I gave my life to Yeshua and that I *knew* that my belief in Him was not a figment of my imagination. God had confirmed that Yeshua was our Messiah. I also said that I wanted Gadi to know Messiah Yeshua as I did because He gives us *joy* and *Life*. Gadi said that he was waiting for the Messiah to come.

I asked him if he had ever heard about Messiah the Son of Joseph? Much to my delight he said that he had. I asked him, Why does Messiah the Son of Joseph have to die, as reflected in Is. 53 and Ps. 22? I began to explain and he finished and said, 'for an atonement.' I said, 'Right!' He had heard this before.

Segula asked me if I would be open to speaking to a rabbi about this. I said that I would love to speak with a rabbi about it. 'When can we do it?!' They talked a little among themselves and said that we probably couldn't because no rabbi in Tiberias knew English, and my Hebrew wasn't fluent. I said that we could get a translator for us, but she said it wouldn't work. I let it go, although I said that I would love to sit down with a rabbi and some of his peo-

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citizenry. Of course, before that, many Jews would die, in priest or pastor led Christian 'processions' to vent their 'holy wrath' upon the Jews. Martin Luther, considered a saint among Lutherans, nonetheless wrote a pamphlet in 1543 called *The Jews and their Lies* in which he spoke of dismembering rabbis, robbing Jews and burning their homes and synagogues. There also have been wonderful exceptions to this, most notably the countries of the Netherlands and Denmark during the Second World War. These are the rare, but precious asterisks in a history of satanic darkness and cruelty 'in the name of Jesus.' May God bless all those, over the centuries, who have helped the Jewish people escape persecution and death at the hand of 'Christians.'

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ple and show them Messiah Yeshua in *the Tanach*, stressing *the Tanach*.

Segula said that if a rabbi could show me where I was wrong in believing in Yeshua as Messiah, would I have the strength to give him up? I told her to 'be careful' because I would turn what she was saying around to her. If I could show her that Yeshua was her Messiah, would she have the strength to believe? I also said that I knew that Yeshua was the Messiah and that she had never seen this, so how could she know for certain that Yeshua wasn't? I had at one time not believed, but now I did, whereas she had never been 'on my side of the believing fence.' She acknowledged that what I had said was appropriate.

I also told her that what she had heard before about Yeshua were all lies. They were designed to keep her and Gadi from coming to Yeshua the Messiah. I didn't go any further with it, but there is a medieval tractate called *Toldot Yeshu* (the generations of *Yeshu*) that is filled with slanderous lies about Yeshua. The Rabbis gave Yeshua the name *Yeshu*. It's not that they forgot to add an 'a' to the end of His Name. '*Yeshu*' is an acronym in Hebrew that means, 'May his name and memory be blotted out' (of the Book of *Life*). Most Israelis know *Yeshua* by the name *Yeshu*.

I took out my Hebrew *Picture of Messiah*, the two sheets, and presented them to Gadi. I told him the first sheet dealt with Scripture from the *Tanach* that concerned the Messiah, the Son of Joseph, and the second sheet was from the New Covenant, where Messiah Yeshua fulfilled those things spoken about Israel's Messiah in the *Tanach*. He looked at it and accepted it. I showed him my phone number at the bottom of the second sheet, both to confirm the phone number I had given him 40 minutes earlier, and that if he wanted a gift of a *Tanach* with a *Brit Hadasha* (New Covenant), to call me and I'd give him one (as it's written by my phone number).

Gadi had heard enough for now and said that it was time to go. I looked him in the eyes and told him that I wanted him to come to know our Messiah. He accepted my words, but from the look on his face I saw,

'I hear what you're saying, but there's a great gulf between us.'

I understood and it pained me. Make no mistake about it. Gadi didn't want to talk with me to find out 'how to come to Jesus,' but how to neutralize me. I've heard of some believers, over the years, having had firebombs thrown into their homes at three in the morning. I've thought many times that Gadi may well have been in charge of those incidents, but Gadi also has the potential to

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be like the Apostle Paul. Saul, too, was at war against the Jewish believers at first, and did much to destroy them (Acts 7:1-8:3), until he met the risen Savior on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-31; 13:9). May Gadi, too, come to meet the risen Savior and bring many Israelis into His Kingdom! Thank you for your prayers for Gadi and Segula; Thomas, his wife and children.

## INBAL THE SCHOOL TEACHER

On Monday, March 12th, 2001 I went into Tiberias to cash a check. Both Itamar and Itzik were there, and as Itamar gave me the money in shekels I told him that I'd like to talk with Rabbi Auerbach about Messiah Yeshua. Rabbi Auerbach had just left and I could see that he didn't want to have anything to do with me. Itamar came out from behind the counter and we both sat down near the desk in the small waiting area. Itamar was supposed to have asked Rabbi Auerbach about the prophecy of Daniel, which spoke of Messiah coming before the Second Temple would be destroyed.

Itamar (named after one of the two surviving sons of Aaron the High Priest; Num. 26:60-61) told me that he wasn't 100% sure, but he didn't think that Rabbi Auerbach wanted to talk with me. I turned to Itzik and asked him in mock shock, 'What can I do?! I can't talk to you about the Messiah because you don't know the *Tanach* that well and you aren't,

'that concerned with 'religious matters,' but the ones that know the *Tanach* don't want to talk with me!'

Itamar began to question me about my Jewish identity. He had done this on three previous occasions. After he was sure, again, that I was a Jew, he told me that I was a Jew. I breathed a sigh of relief. It was good to know that I was a Jew. If a Jew is confronted by a Gentile about Jesus, that's one thing—'Jesus is for the Gentiles,' but if a Jew is confronted by another Jew about Yeshua, well, that's an entirely different matter. That's why he wanted to see if I was a Gentile. If I was a Gentile he could have easily brushed off the matter about Yeshua because, 'Gentiles don't really know Jewish things or know what it's like to be a Jew.'

Itamar wasn't able to brush Yeshua aside so easily with me. He went on to tell me though, that his father had come from Yemen (south of Saudi Arabia). Itamar told me the Jews first began to live in Yemen about 150 years after King Solomon (around 850 BC)<sup>69</sup> because of trade. I looked at him and listened. I love hearing about the Jews from Yemen (and other countries) because Jewish history is fascinating to me; it's part of who I am as a Jew. The Jews of Yemen didn't follow the traditional thinking and religious customs of the Rabbis of Europe (until recently), and remained pretty much isolated from the rest of the

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<sup>69</sup> That's traditional Yemeni thought. Others say it was around 100 BC to 70 AD that some Jews began to settle in Yemen. Perhaps both are right.

### *Inbal the School Teacher*

world, and Jewry, since the time of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 AD. Then, in 1949 to 1950, the Israeli government flew 98% of them into Israel in what was called Operation Magic Carpet—about 46,000 came. Today, about 60 years later, there are only 1,400 Jews living in Yemen. Life was very hard for them as Jews living among the Arab Moslems.

Itamar told me that, because I was a Jew he cared for me and wanted me to return to the ‘right’ way—his understanding of Judaism. Itamar is a religious Sefardic Jew. Itzik said they saw that I ‘loved God and His Word very much.’ I was pleasantly surprised to hear that from him.

Itamar had been telling me all about the Yemeni Jews so that I could see how strong or correct their understanding was concerning the truth of the Hebrew Bible. Of course, all this meant that Jesus wasn’t the Messiah. If Yeshua was the Messiah the Yemenite Jews would have proclaimed Him long ago. Before we could talk about that, a man came in and spoke with Itamar for a few minutes concerning some German money he wanted to cash. Itamar couldn’t help him. I think the man’s German bills were out of date (meaning, from a previous German government).

At this time Itzik’s wife Inbal came in. She’s also a niece of Itamar. She listened as I told Itamar that I understood what he said, but I didn’t agree with him. Just because some belief is old or ancient doesn’t mean it’s God’s Truth. I asked him how many prophets did the Yemenites have? Of course, they didn’t have any. Those that taught them, although they loved God and did the best they could, were not like Moses, Elijah or Isaiah in their understanding of God’s Word and how to walk it out, and to declare Yeshua as Messiah (as Jewish John the Immerser [Baptist] did). We talked some more and then Itamar had to go. Itzik went behind the counter to help some people and Inbal asked me if I believed in Yeshua. I told her that I did. She said that she didn’t believe in Yeshua. I asked,

‘What do you know about the Messiah of the *Tanach*?’

Inbal was 23 years old, five foot five inches tall (1.6 m) with light brown hair, thin and attractive, with an olive skin complexion from her Yemeni ancestors. She taught at a religious school for young children. She said, ‘Messiah will come some day.’

I asked her what else she knew about the Messiah, saying,

‘If he came today, how would you know it was Messiah and not some *mishuga*’ (crazy person)?

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She told me that she had been educated at a religious school, but they didn't teach her anything on that. I've heard this many times before. I told her that it was unfortunate. I said the secular don't know anything about the Messiah, and the religious only know that one day he will come and that Yeshua is not the Messiah.

I said that God placed within the *Tanach* a picture of Messiah, so that when He came we would be able to know it was Him. I began by quoting Micah 5:2, which states that Messiah would be born in Bethlehem of Judah:

‘But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, very little among the families of Judah, from you One shall come forth for Me, to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago—from the days of eternity.’

She was surprised at that, not knowing that something like that was in her Bible. She questioned me about my ‘Bible’ and her ‘*Tanach*’—were they the same? I said they were the same except that mine had the New Covenant attached to it. I told her that God spoke of a New Covenant to the prophet Jeremiah in the 31st chapter:

‘Behold! The days are coming,’ says Yahveh, ‘when I will make a *New Covenant* with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah.’ (Jer. 31:31)

Now she was shocked. I said that if she knew the verses of the Suffering Messiah she would see that they all point to Yeshua of Nazareth. He was born in Bethlehem, but raised in Nazareth (which was only about 12 miles (19 kilometers) west of us from where we sat in Tiberias).

She said, ‘When the Messiah comes there will be peace in the world.’ I told her the Rabbis state there would be two Messiahs.

She said, ‘Your Rabbis.’ I said,

‘No. Christianity has no Rabbis. I am speaking of ‘your’ Jewish Rabbis of long ago.’

‘They saw that the *Tanach* had many verses speaking of the Messiah, but they couldn't put them all together to form one picture. That's because there are two different streams of Scriptures for the Messiah.’

‘One has an eternal Messiah and the other speaks of a Messiah who would die for our sins. Therefore, the Rabbis thought

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there would be two Messiahs, but God sent the Suffering Messiah to die for our sins 2,000 years ago, and He will return soon, as the glorious Messiah, the Son of David. One Messiah who comes twice.'

This was all very new to her and went against a deep Jewish position on Yeshua. I began to speak of Messiah's reception by the Israeli leaders. I told her the prophet Isaiah, in the 53rd chapter, speaks of Israel despising and rejecting Messiah (v. 3). Also, because of Daniel 9:24-26, the ancient Rabbis stated the Messiah who was to die for our sins would also have to come *before* the destruction of the Second Temple:

"Even though the *weeks* in Daniel may seem hard to understand, what isn't hard to see is that the Messiah would die ('be cut off') and the sins of the people would be dealt with permanently *before* the Temple ('Sanctuary') was destroyed."

I related how some of the Rabbis, many years after the fall of the Second Temple, had come to the conclusion that Daniel was wrong,

'because to them the Messiah hadn't come before the Temple and Jerusalem were destroyed' in 70 AD.

'Can you imagine that? Daniel, wrong? Daniel was the man whom the angel Gabriel called *beloved* of God (Dan. 9:23; 10:11, 19), and *it was the angel Gabriel who gave the prophecy to Daniel*, about *when* the Messiah would come. Was it possible that the Rabbis were wrong?'

Inbal then said that she wanted me to write down those Scripture passages because she wanted to present them to her grandfather to check out. I took out some paper from my pocket and wrote down the cites to Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel, etc.

I then related how Hillel (a very famous Jewish sage who lived a generation before Yeshua) said that the prophecy of Daniel *had been* fulfilled 'in King Hezekiah.' He said that Hezekiah was the Messiah! She was taken aback by that, it sounding strange to her ears, too. I told her the sages of Hillel's day told him that he was wrong. They based their judgment on the prophet Zechariah, who spoke of Messiah riding into Jerusalem on a donkey:

'Rejoice greatly, Oh Daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, Oh Daughter of Jerusalem! Behold your King (Messiah) is coming to you! He is righteous and endowed with salvation; hum-

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ble and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’ (Zech. 9:9)

She asked me, ‘Why a donkey and not a horse?’ I told her because a horse represents *war*, but Messiah came to give us ‘peace with God,’ symbolized in His riding on a donkey, just as King Solomon, whose name means ‘the peace of God,’ rode on a mule at his coronation (1st Kings 1:33f.). Isaiah speaks of Messiah as the Prince of Peace (Is. 9:6).

I told her the sages of Hillel’s day used Zechariah’s prophecy to declare Hillel’s ‘messiah’ meaningless. King Hezekiah couldn’t have been the Messiah because Zechariah spoke of the Messiah *coming* about 200 years *after* Hezekiah had died.<sup>70</sup> I said, ‘Just before Messiah Yeshua’s death, He rode into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey.’ That surprised her, too.

I went on to share that the Pharisees saw the Jewish people praising God and saying, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the Name of Yahveh,’ and they rebuked Yeshua for not silencing them. Yeshua though, said that if they were to become quiet the very rocks would cry out praising God for having sent Messiah Yeshua! (Lk. 19:40)

By this time another man had come in whom I had shared Messiah with over the past year. His name was Yaniv. He asked me where the Messiah was. I told him the Messiah was ‘here with us now.’ He asked me where. I told him that Messiah is within me and also present with us, just like God.

I said the sacrifice of Messiah was like the sacrifice of the lamb in Egypt that got all Israel out of the Kingdom of Pharaoh. Passover was a picture of the Messiah’s Blood and what it would do for us. I told them,

‘There was nothing that we could do to escape from the slavery that Pharaoh had imposed upon us, and there’s nothing that we can do to escape from our sinful nature and a just condemnation to Hell. God though, in His love for us, sent another Lamb to die so that we could escape the Kingdom of Satan, and God also gives us a new nature so that we can live in His presence forever.’

‘The presence of God is like *living* Fire. Only those *like Him* will be able to live in His presence. With belief in Messiah Yeshua we are given that new nature and will be completely

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<sup>70</sup> King Hezekiah reigned for 28 years, from 720-692 BC. Zechariah prophesied for 40 years, from 520-480 BC.

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transformed on Judgment Day, to live forever with Him.'

Inbal said, 'No man can see God and live.' I asked her about Moses, the 70 Elders of Israel and Aaron and his sons. What did they *see*? In Exodus 24 it states they not only saw Him, but they also ate and drank in His presence:

'Then Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the Elders of Israel and they *saw* the God of Israel. Under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire as clear as the Heavens itself. Yet, He didn't stretch out His hand against the nobles of the Sons of Israel. They *saw* God and they ate and drank.' (Ex. 24:9-11; cf. Ex. 33:20)

I told Inbal that no one can see the *full* glory of God and live. That would kill us the same way that stepping into a blazing inferno would. When Yahveh manifests His full glory, the Heavens and the Earth will melt away and it'll be Judgment Day (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; Ps. 75:3; 2nd Peter 3:12), but people can, and have seen some of the glory of the Lord, as is evidenced in a number of places in the Bible. I told them that the fire in her cigarette lighter was just as much 'fire' as if the whole town of Tiveria was on fire. When God manifested in the Bible it was like the fire in her cigarette lighter, but on Judgment Day the whole universe will melt away at His appearing. It says that our God is a consuming Fire:

'For Yahveh your God is a consuming Fire, a passionate God!' (Dt. 4:24 my translation)

It's as if God allowed a little of Himself to be seen so the Elders could see Him and not 'melt' or die. I then said that King David spoke of us rejecting the Messiah, and the Rabbis have inadvertently validated it:

'The Stone the Builders rejected has become the chief CornerStone. This is Yahveh's doing and isn't it wonderful?!'  
(Psalm 118:22-23)

The Rabbis say that the 'Builders' are they themselves, as they are the teachers or 'Builders' of Israel. The Stone, of course, is the Messiah. Inbal was listening and responding to all of this. Yaniv, who had come in earlier and asked where Messiah was, had left a few minutes ago.

I went on to share how I came to know Yeshua as the Messiah and how I searched for 'God' for four years before the Lord revealed Himself to me. I told her that she should ask the God of Israel if Yeshua was the Messiah or not, and keep on asking until she found out. That was strange to her, but I

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said,

‘Our God is alive and if Yeshua isn’t the Messiah then God would tell you that, but if Yeshua is, then you will know from God that Yeshua is your Messiah and that He’s come to give you true *Life*.’

She heard me and then asked,

‘Why is there still evil in the world if Messiah has already come?’

I told her two things. First, Messiah came to give us who believe in Him a new heart and God’s Spirit, so that we could walk in His commandments, from the inside-out. God spoke of this through the prophet Ezekiel:

‘Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new Spirit within you. I will remove the heart of stone from you and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you *and cause you to walk in My statutes and you will keep My judgments and do them.*’ (Ezk. 36:26-27)

Second, I asked her,

‘Why did God create the world like this? He obviously knew that Adam and Eve would sin.’

She couldn’t answer me. I related a traditional Jewish prayer to her that begins like this:

‘May His Name be exalted and sanctified in the world that He created *as He willed*.’

God created the world exactly the way He wanted it, for His *eternal* purpose. If there is evil in the world, and there is, He’s the One ultimately responsible for it even though He did not cause Satan and Man to rebel and sin against Him and be wicked. He created them with free will. In one sense He’s as responsible for it as a man who gives another man a gift of \$1,000, who then goes out, buys a rifle and murders people. Is the man who gave the gift responsible for the murders? No. The murderer could have chosen to use it righteously, and even though God knew there would be evil and pain and death, He allows that to test and refine His chosen people.

Everyone is given the gift of life by God, but not all use it in a godly way. Evil is designed to show us our need for God and His new Heart for us, and to reveal our less than godly nature to us so that we could cry out to Him for that

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new heart. That's why we need the Messiah. He is God's answer to our sinful nature and this world's evil. The question is, 'Will we accept God's gift of Messiah Yeshua and be transformed and become part of His answer, or will we remain part of the problem?'

I spoke of the three great 'beliefs' that God has presented to us. The first was Father Abraham and his belief in God when God said that Abraham's descendants would be as many as the stars of the Heavens. The second was Israel in the Wilderness. We failed to believe that God would defeat the giants of Canaan, and so all the male adults over 20 years old, who had been set free from Egyptian slavery, would die in the Wilderness (except for Joshua, Caleb and the Levites), but their sons would inherit the Land (Num. 14:1-39; 26:63-65).

The third great belief that God has presented Israel with is Yeshua as our Messiah, as spoken of in the prophecies about Him in the *Tanach*. If we fail to believe in Yeshua we will die in our sins against God in the wilderness of this world, and be rejected by Him in the world to come.

Inbal needed to leave to go to work. She thanked me for the time we had spent talking of the Messiah. I sat back, exhausted, and I relaxed for a moment. I had been speaking for over two hours. Then I heard Itzik from behind the counter say, 'So, how was it talking with my wife, Avram?' I got up and told him, 'She wants to know God. This is very good.'

He said that she was very knowledgeable in religious things. I let it go. He had been busy with customers and hadn't heard his wife's ignorance in the things of Messiah. Knowledge, like most everything else, is a subjective thing. What seemed like a lot to Itzik, and I'm sure it was in terms of traditional Jewish things, was next to nothing concerning the most important Jewish thing, but now, her knowledge about her Messiah had greatly increased and a divine Seed had been planted in her heart that will hopefully grow one day and blossom into a tree bearing much fruit for her Messiah.

Itzik then related a little about himself to me, which I appreciated. He told me that when he was 11 years old he stole a Popsicle from a neighborhood grocery store. As he always went to the store for what he would take to school for lunch, it was strange to his father that he hadn't gone there in over a week.

Itzik said he felt very guilty. He confessed to his father. His father said, 'Really?!' Itzik (a popular off-shoot of Itzhak; Isaac) said, 'Yes.' His father marched him to the store and said to the owner, 'Miha'el (Michael), Itzik has something to tell you!' Itzik told him the story and Miha'el reached into the freezer

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and got another Popsicle out, just like the one he stole, and gave it to Itzik. Then he said, 'Now, don't do that again!'

That wasn't the most godly way to deal with a little boy's theft, but Itzik related to me that he never stole again. He went on to tell me,

'First, one has to be a good person, honest with himself. Then he can choose what he wants to believe.'

I listened, not thinking it appropriate at the time to say, that's exactly why we need Yeshua. No one is good compared to God, but with Yeshua we can have our nature transformed and become holy, like He is.

We spoke some more and then I said, 'Shalom, Itzik!' and went back home to Ruti and shared with her what had happened.

Inbal, Itzik and Itamar need your prayers. As our Lord Yeshua leads you, please lift them up. Thank you!

## *The Way of Life—Pain and Death*

By 1989 things had begun to come together for me in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Our congregation was entering its sixth year of existence and growing; I had spoken in about 100 churches on the holiness of Yeshua from a Hebraic perspective, and we were reaching out to the Tulsa Jewish community with both the Jewish Newsletters mailed to their homes, and also, knocking on Jewish doors to bring Messiah to my Jewish people.

Then the ground opened up and swallowed me. My wife, Rivka, fell in love with Karlman, a Jew from Hungary, who was a deacon in our assembly and a good friend of ours. He came and ate dinner at our table two or three times a week and was like an uncle to our sons, Zavdi and Yoel.

I knew nothing about Rivka's desire for Karlman until a couple of weeks after she had taken off. On Monday, February 27th, 1989 she took Zavdi and Yoel and secretly flew out from Oklahoma City to her parents' home in Pennsylvania. She didn't fly out of Tulsa because she thought that if I had found out about it, I would have taken the boys away from her. Zavdi and Yoel were only four and two years old. Rivka would live with her parents until she got a job and enough money to get a place of her own. I wouldn't see my sons again for almost nine years, and then it would only be for a few moments in a Pennsylvania courtroom.

I began to learn about the pain of trusting the Lord at the deepest possible level that any human being can trust God—with one's own children. I would come to know how Father Abraham felt when God told him to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac (Gen. 22:1-19).

Once in Pennsylvania, Rivka immediately began divorce proceedings against me. In order to cover up her sin and immorality she accused me of abusing her and Zavdi. She told the authorities that she was 'afraid for her life,' meaning that I had beaten her up on numerous occasions, and that I had molested Zavdi. There was no truth in these accusations, but in the court system in 1989 just the mention of it was enough to get her what she wanted—temporary custody of our sons. I wasn't questioned by any authority (court or police) to see if her accusations were true, but the court granted her lawyer's request without me even knowing about it.

In court I represented myself. I could have made Rivka out to be the liar that she was, but the Lord stopped me. He didn't want me to come against her, for she, like King Saul, was anointed of the Lord (1st Sam. 24:6, 10; 26:9, 11). This meant that I would have to give up the sons whom I loved. God would

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use this situation to crucify me. If I strove to get my sons back, by showing the court that my wife was using the court for her own immoral and illegal purpose,<sup>71</sup> I would be disobeying God. If I laid my life down, I would be obeying God, but I would lose the sons that I loved. My soul was being torn apart. How desperately I wanted my sons. I was also tormented with *their* pain and confusion at not being able to be with their Abba, whom they loved. I had never known such terrifying pain and complete helplessness.

By the Lord's real grace working within me, I was able to obey my God and Savior. I placed Zavdi and Yoel on His Altar. I was trusting Yeshua with something much more precious than my own life. I've also come to see that Yeshua was taking me at my word. I had said that I would go through Hell in order for Zavdi to be in Heaven, and here I was, in Hell, so both Zavdi and Yoel could be with Him in eternity.

Everyone in the congregation felt the shock. Most of the sheep scattered. The shepherd had been struck (Zech. 13:7). I would go through almost three years of death to self. The ministry would go on, and God would minister through me, but my soul was quasi-existing.

I did not actively seek to go out to the churches anymore. With no money coming from my speaking engagements, and our congregation down to literally a handful of people, funds dried up. About \$5,000 would come in for the entire year, hardly enough for rent, let alone food and bills and ministry needs, but that was not my concern. I was engulfed in feelings of extreme loss, pain and helplessness. They were my daily companions. I had never known this kind of torment before.

Scripture relates that God tested Father Abraham one day and said,

‘I want you to take your son, your unique one, Isaac, whom you love, *and go sacrifice him.*’ (Gen. 22:2)

*God made* Abraham choose between Himself and Isaac—Abraham's most precious earthly possession. It would have been ‘easier for Abraham’ to have tried and rip out his own heart than for him to sacrifice the son whom he loved. I now *knew* that.

I felt my life-blood slowly trickling out from me, as if I were pierced to a tree.

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<sup>71</sup> Taking a child across a state line, in an attempt to deprive the other parent of the child, is a Federal offense in the USA. That's why Rivka said in court that she took the boys to Pennsylvania for a vacation to visit her parents, *and while there* thought about and initiated the legal action for a divorce.

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I saw how powerless I was to change my stubborn, rebellious and vengeful Jewish heart, for I wanted to hurt Rivka as she had hurt me.

With this loss God would begin to carve into my soul the character of my Messiah. In the painful agony of suffering I also came to know a greater depth of the broken and longing heart of God for His firstborn Son, Israel.

Friends didn't understand what the Lord was doing with me and many rejected me, believing the lies about me abusing Rivka and Zavdi. More pain. I saw that maturity in the Lord is not determined by one's will or how 'on fire' one seems to be. Wisdom and understanding come from Above and are a rare and precious commodity in the Body of Messiah.

God wanted me isolated so He could bury me in the Tomb. He wanted me to become well acquainted with death. I would die a thousand times a day during this period as I struggled with all of this. It was overwhelming.

Rivka maliciously tore Zavdi and Yoel away from their father. She knew that my life revolved around them, and theirs around me. For the first couple months after she took them I would say to myself, 'She wanted to destroy me.' Then it finally dawned on me—she had destroyed me. Every day I felt as though a Grizzly bear was clawing my heart out. It wasn't a neat, surgical operation. There was no anesthetic—just unbearable pain and that's exactly what she wanted, but God would use it for His glory.

Why did Rivka do this? Why the false accusations? Why the need to sever her sons from their father? She could have told me that she wanted a divorce because she had fallen in love with Karlman. The court would have given it to her and I would have had some visitation, and Zavdi and Yoel would have grown up knowing their father—but she didn't want that.

One reason why she chose to slander me in court was because she wasn't emotionally stable. Rivka had grown up as an only child in the vice grip of a very domineering mother who was relentless toward her. This caused Rivka to try to commit suicide a couple of times before she knew me. Another reason for slandering me was to justify herself in the eyes of her friends. She needed a 'good' reason.

The spiritual aspect though, took primacy over her natural emotions and the circumstances because she had truly known and walked with the Lord. In choosing this path she rejected Yeshua before she rejected me.

Rivka had come to a place in her own personal growth where she could make an adult decision for herself, without the fear of her mother crushing her. She

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had chosen to leave me for another man and was coming against me with false accusations and withholding the boys from me. In taking all her things (clothes, etc.) when she had left Tulsa that day, she had inadvertently left behind her diary. In it she had written the proverb about drinking water from one's own cistern (Prov. 5:15), which warns a married man about being enticed by a harlot (Prov. 5:1-23). She had struggled with the spiritual-moral issue and had chosen to let the temptation turn her away from following Yeshua and being my wife.

It seems that all her pent up rage and fury against her mother, from all those years of emotional abuse, spewed out toward me. In leaving Yeshua and His way of life she was destroying herself and wanting to do the same to me. Satan was torpedoing me through her. What God's purpose was for my life, to bring my Jewish people to Messiah and to teach the Body of Messiah about The Hebraic Perspective, was hanging in the balance. It was darkness *exploding* against Light. Not long after she had left, the Lord spoke the word *apostasy* to me about her. She was willingly working for Lucifer. Rivka wasn't just a captive of Satan; she wasn't a POW—she had left Yeshua and joined forces with Satan.

A few years later I would find out that she had opened a New Age occult business, complete with beads, books on yoga, crystals and pyramids, etc., and yet she still presented herself as a Christian. *Deception* is one of Satan's most powerful tools.

My sons were without their father and they were being told that he was 'no good.' There was no hope in my life in those days, only dark despair. Rivka would even change their names, to totally disassociate them from me, their Jewish heritage and the *Life* they had known in Messiah Yeshua. I came to be on very intimate terms with hatred, evil, stubbornness and rebellion—my own. I came face to face with my own wicked heart.

Yeshua says to love our enemies and to forgive those who spitefully used us (Mt. 5:44), but it was *impossible* for me to do this with Robin (she had also gone back to using her maiden name, which she would place upon the boys, stripping them of both their first and their last names). In struggling with feelings of revenge I saw that I was no better than her. I wanted to hurt her as much as she had hurt me. I was on a sinking ship. Only by Yeshua's grace would I not give way to those powerful feelings of revenge. I would submit to my God. I believed that what she meant for evil, God would use for His glory in my life and in the lives of my sons.

It was during this time that the Lord, in His mercy, sent a woman into my life

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whom He had chosen for me from before the foundation of the world. God knew that Robin and I would end like this, but in the fullness of time He sent me Ruti (an affectionate way of saying Ruth in Hebrew). ‘A perfect wife, who can find one?’ Yeshua was giving me one. Far beyond the price of pearls is she to me—a comfort, a strength, an inspiration, a traveling companion on the Road of *Life*—one to love and to be loved by. Yeshua would teach me a deeper sensitivity and a greater love for people through Ruti. She, too, was on intimate terms with pain. A year after this she would have her seven year old son taken from her by a former spouse, because of her walk with the Lord.

Ruti has also experienced the healing power of Yeshua. Once, before we knew each other, she had Grave’s Disease. The so-called medical treatment destroyed her thyroid. One day Yeshua instantly healed her and gave her a new thyroid—no need for medication! Another time she had a ganglion cyst tumor that was causing a lot of pain in her arm. The doctor said that she had to have an operation. One touch from Dr. Yeshua and the tumor was gone, but His fingerprint remained for a few seconds for Ruti to see it. She hadn’t been praying or even thinking about it at the time.

A couple of times during the season of my court ordeals with Robin, Ruti would come to me and gently tell me that what I was about to do in court concerning Robin might not be what the Lord wanted. After I heard her out I would agree and I would thank the Lord for giving me such a wise, sensitive and compassionate wife, a wife who loves Yeshua, and everyone else, with all her heart. Yeshua would bless me, in the midst of my sorrow and suffering, with Ruti.

Robin would cut off all contact with my sons about a year after the divorce, even though the court had ordered her to come back to Tulsa so it could deal with visitation. One day, while still in Pennsylvania, Robin said through her lawyer that she couldn’t come to the court for the determination of visitation, and then, in a tactical move, she fired her lawyer, which severed the court’s ability to reach her in Pennsylvania. I would have to go to Pennsylvania to begin litigation there if I was to have visitation, but the Lord told me not to pursue it, which became the final facet of my burial. As her need to make me out to be ‘the bad guy’ grew, I knew that every court appearance would be emotionally devastating for our sons, even though they wouldn’t be present, due to the stress upon Robin. When I would have obtained visitation, the character assassination of me would have continued, and what would that have done to their souls? In obedience to my Lord, and for the sake of my sons, I didn’t pursue it.

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During the Tulsa court appearances the judge had awarded me phone and mail access to the boys. On the last phone contact I had with Zavdi and Yoel, after talking with them, and them telling me what toys they wanted me to send them, Robin got on the phone and said,

‘The boys and I have talked it over and we don’t think you’re a good father! They don’t want to speak with you anymore and don’t send those cheap toys here, either!’

Zavdi and Yoel were five and three years old now. *Helpless* was a feeling that I had walked in for over a year. As I realized that I could do nothing, the thought came to me from Jude 1:9, where Satan is vying with Michael the angel for the body of Moses. I said to Robin, ‘The Lord rebuke you, Robin.’ She immediately hung up and I would never speak with her again. I placed my sons in His hands and the Lord placed me in the Tomb for what would be another year and a half.

In one sense, Robin had put me out of my misery. To speak with my sons over the phone was painful enough, that is, when I finally got to talk with them. The court had scheduled two times a week, but most of the time I heard, ‘They’re not here!’, even though the court had set aside a specific time for me to call, and had directed Robin to have them ready for me to speak to. Always it was the same attitude on her part, ‘Why are you bothering us?!’ I had never known that kind of venomous evil before. She had taken her own sons from their father, denigrated him in their eyes, slandered him in court and was now accusing him of bothering her and them.

I doubt whether there is any greater torture than to speak with one’s sons and not be a part of their lives. They were so small, so tender, so innocent, so trusting, so much in need of the love of their father. Their father though, was being crushed out of their lives, and I knew how it hurt them.

A few weeks before Robin cut me off, I had been speaking with Yoel. He was all of three and a half years old. He said to me, in that little, tiny voice of his, that was now pleading with me, ‘Abba, I want to come to your house.’ My heart! I was drowning in pain, tears and helplessness. I managed to say,

‘I would love for you to come to Abba’s house, Yoel, but only Mommy is able to allow it.’

I didn’t realize how that would affect him. As soon as he heard it he put the phone down and I could hear him calling out to his mother. I cried out to him over the phone, ‘Yoel! Yoel!’, trying to get him back, but he didn’t hear me. I

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heard him ask Robin, ‘Mommy, can I go to Abba’s house?’

The coldest, cruelest, ‘No!’ I ever heard came out of her mouth and Yoel was crying. I died. I was being torn apart. There was nothing I could do to comfort my son.

It was very painful for me to speak with my sons over the phone and not be a part of their lives. When Robin put an end to phone contact she ‘put me out of my misery.’

The Lord never left me though. Every time I turned to Him He comforted me. One day He assured me that I would see my sons ‘in the Land of the Living.’ He spoke much to me through the prophet Isaiah. When He would speak or when I would sense His presence I would find relief, but a minute after He left I felt lifeless, although not many would see that inner part of me.

Our prison ministry began a little after that. A man on Death Row in McAlester, OK, who would become a spiritual son to Ruti and me, would later tell me that during the first year and a half when we got to know one another, he never realized the depth of what I was going through. He said that all he ever saw was *Life* in me. Outside of Ruti, there was no one closer to me than Sean Sellers. The State of Oklahoma executed him on February 4th, 1999 at the age of 29, for murders he committed when he was 16 years old. He was executed, but God had forgiven him. Sean was loved by many people. His walk with the Lord, whom he found in prison, and his love of *Life*, were an inspiration to Ruti, me and many others. Ruti and I were both a father and a mother to him, and a brother and a sister.

It was in November 1991 two years and eight months after Robin had taken Zavdi and Yoel, that I felt the Spirit of the Holy One blowing upon me. The Lord used, of all things, a paperback book about a concentration camp to resurrect me from the dead. I had been reading *Treblinka*, an incredibly powerful account of brutal evil in Nazi Germany against the Jewish people, and how in the midst of something worse than Hell, starving beaten and weak Jews banded together and plotted a massive escape, defying the mighty Nazi beast.<sup>72</sup>

The name of the concentration camp was Treblinka. As I got to the end of the book the Lord used it to bring me up out of the grave that I had been in for

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<sup>72</sup> *Treblinka* is an incredible account of the resiliency of the Jewish people in a fiendish concentration camp. It was written by Jean-Francois Steiner. One reviewer noted that it’s ‘the most important piece of Holocaust literature ever written.’

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more than two years.

I knew it was the Lord because I was well acquainted with death—and this was *Life*. I knew it was the Holy Spirit because I had come to know what was not His Holy Spirit.

I could sense the Spirit breathing *Life* into me that day, and the next day, and the one after that, too, and I began to rise from the dead by the power, love and forgiveness that is Messiah Yeshua. I had passed through death into *Life*.

Yeshua's love is great enough to separate a father from the two sons that he loves. There is nothing like Yeshua in this world. As God gave Isaac back to Abraham, so too, I believe He will give Zavdi and Yoel back to me. I trust Him because I know Him. He is faithful and true, pure and holy. He is the *living* God, the Son of the Father, and one day I will know the *joy* that Father Abraham knew when God gave Isaac back to him.<sup>73</sup>

About a year before this I had come to the place where I was able to forgive Robin for what she had done to the boys and to me. I didn't wish evil for her or want to take revenge. I prayed that God would bless her. God had forgiven me for my evil heart, and I was able to turn around and forgive Robin for hers.

My brother, my sister—I am as one raised from the dead to tell you of the great love and forgiveness that *is* Messiah Yeshua—of His deep, unfailing and passionate love for you. In all my pain and death Yeshua never left me, and because I went through the pain I know Yeshua in a greater way, and He's made me more like Him than ever before. I'm able to identify, in a much greater way, with what He went through, and is going through, with Israel far from Him, and to share in His *risen Life*. *This* is the Promise of the Father; that He would make us like Yeshua and give us a new Heart and His Spirit (Ezk. 36:24-27). In this new Heart is forgiveness for everyone who has ever hurt us. With *His* Heart we can forgive and love even our worst enemies, and be His Light in this world of darkness:

“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the Glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from *Glory* to *Glory*, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” (2nd Corinthians 3:18)

As God raised me from the grave and gave me His Heart for a sick and dying

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<sup>73</sup> See *The Angel of the Lord* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Angel-of-the-Lord.pdf>. It reveals that the 'Angel of the LORD' who stopped the sacrifice that day is none other than Messiah Yeshua.

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world, the congregation began to grow once more. I began to actively seek to go out to the churches again, and we were able to send out the Jewish Newsletters to the Jewish people. I also began knocking on their doors once more, to bring the *Life* that is Messiah Yeshua to my Jewish people.

By 1994 five years after I lost my sons, finances had picked up to the point where I was able to pay off the rent debt that I had incurred from 1989 to 1992. Very little money had come in during that period, but God was faithful to provide food, shelter and clothing for Ruti and me. We were able to stay at a house, even though the rent I owed would accumulate to ten months. It's not that I didn't pay something every month, but I wasn't able to pay the full rent for each month, and so after three years I owed a full ten months back rent. By 1994 however, with the Lord's help, I was able to completely pay that off. Our believing landlord, Darryl Simmons, had been very gracious to us. Please bless him, Yeshua.

“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the Image of His Son, that He might be the first-born *among many brethren.*” (Romans 8:29)

## TARZAN

Ruti and I moved from Tiberias to Eilat on Aug. 26th, 2001. We had lived in Tiberias for two and half years. We both had been sensing over the previous few months that Yeshua was getting us ready to move again. Eilat is the southernmost city in Israel—250 miles (400 k) south of Tiberias and 150 miles south of Jerusalem. I had gone down there about a month before the move to check out some apartments. In prayer, ‘John’ came to me. He was a Jew, formerly from Connecticut, who owned a store in Eilat. I thought I was to ask him if he knew of any available apartments.

The night before I would ask him, while lying in bed, I had a thought about what my father once told me when I was a boy. He was drawn to stories of people who were ‘everyday people,’ but who had made something of themselves. Edgar Rice Burroughs, the author of *Tarzan*, was one such person. Edgar was a clerk in Chicago, my father said, who wrote *Tarzan* in his spare time. Of course, it was a great success, even though the mention of tigers in an African jungle didn’t upset many readers. My father said that tigers were only found in India, Tibet and China. In other words, even though Burroughs made a mistake, it didn’t take anything away from the popularity of his book.

I got up the next morning and made my way into Eilat. I had slept at a kibbutz about 18 miles (30 k) north of the city. When I got to John’s store, neither John, nor his store was anymore! I thought to myself, ‘Well, I guess I missed it on John.’ The last time Ruti and I had been there he had told us that he was getting ready to fold it up, as he had been tied to the business most of his life. He was 68 years old. We had presented Messiah Yeshua to him, but John ‘just knew’ there was no such thing as ‘God.’ When he was 12 years old he stepped outside in a thunderstorm and cried out to God to reveal Himself. When all he got back were lightning and thunder booms, he didn’t think God answered him.

Across from John’s store was Shalom and Juliette’s store, another tourist gift shop. Ruti and I had also visited and shared Messiah with them before. I was thinking, ‘Well, perhaps I should go to Shalom and ask him?’ I immediately thought, ‘That wasn’t what the Lord directed me to do.’ I was deliberating about if I should go or not, and as I turned toward Shalom’s place I saw it. Just outside his door he had a circular rack with T-shirts on it. There was one opening in the rack and I could see a picture on a T-shirt that convinced me that I was to speak with Shalom about an apartment. On the only T-shirt that I

## *Tarzan*

could see was a picture of Tarzan.

Shalom's 38 year old son just happened to have his apartment for rent. I went to see *Shalom's* apartment because his son Ronen was in Tel Aviv that day. He said his son's apartment, which was next door to his, was the 'mirror opposite' of his own. It was small, but clean. Shalom said his son was looking to leave at the end of July or mid-August. I told them that I'd like to see it and they told me that I could call their son the next day.

That day I continued looking at apartments, all of which cost a lot more money to rent, and Shalom's was the only one that was clean! I called Ruti and told her. In our conversation I misunderstood something she said. I thought she said she had gotten 'a check' from the Lord about Ronen's place, meaning that we shouldn't consider it. I told her that I would not consider it and she must have misunderstood that, too.

The following day I looked at a number of other places and by evening I was exhausted. I called Ruti and we spoke of the day and she asked how it went. 'Nothing,' I said. I had been lent a car from a believing Jewish friend in Tiberias and he wanted it back by 2 PM the next day. I told Ruti that if he would let me bring it back in the evening, I would look around some more for an apartment, in the morning to early afternoon, and then make the five hour drive back. If he wanted the car by 2 PM then I'd take it as a sign from the Lord that nothing came up for us in terms of an apartment. I called Asaf and asked him if I could bring the car back later, saying that whatever he wanted I would be glad to do. He said that I could bring it back in the evening.

On Wednesday I continued to look for apartments in the morning, but with no success. I ate a *falafel* sandwich for lunch and called Ruti to tell her that I would be leaving for Tiberias after I hung up the phone, as I hadn't found anything. While speaking with her, Ruti asked me if I had seen Ronen's apartment. I was surprised, thinking that she had 'a check' on it. She said, 'Oh no, that wasn't what I meant.' After we realized the misunderstanding she asked me if I could call him to see the place. I said I'd try. Ronen was there and receptive to my coming. I saw the apartment, liked it, agreed on a price, and when he would leave so we could come in. I called Ruti and told her, thanked Yeshua and drove back to Tiberias.

That's how Yeshua used my father and Tarzan to get us an apartment in Eilat, and more importantly, a confirmation that He wanted us in Eilat. Both Ruti and I had a peace about it and she hadn't even seen the apartment. When we did move in Ruti liked it. It was small and cozy, easier to clean than Avraham and Varda's place, and the kitchen was compact, which meant that Ruti didn't

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have to go from one corner of the kitchen to the other, as in Varda's place, to get from the refrigerator to the counter to cook things. It was also less expensive. We would live in Eilat for a little over three years, from August 2001 until November 2004.

## DIDIER AND ORANGE MAN

On Sunday, December 16th, 2001 after having eaten a delicious grilled chicken breast smothered in onions, with some French fries and salad on the side, I got up from the table and went to the counter to pay Didier, the owner. (Didier is French for Judah and Judah means 'one who praises Yahveh.') It was the first time that I had eaten there. He asked me if I had liked it. I told him it was '*Ha'ah'he tov!*' (The best!) He smiled, took my money and asked me what I did. I told him I taught Torah and showed people who Messiah was. This answer allows me to gauge where a person is at on those issues.

I didn't get much of a response so I asked, 'What do you know about Messiah?' He told me, 'Only that he will come.' Then I said, 'Do you know anything else about Messiah?' He said that he hadn't been raised religious. He was beginning to come into it in the last few years, but he had not heard anything taught on Messiah. I said that it was a problem among us Jews and that it was hard for me to teach someone who knew nothing. When I said it I didn't mean to say it quite that way, but Didier understood. (I didn't want to hurt his feelings.)

I was silent for a while, thinking and praying, asking Yeshua what I could say. Didier asked me what I was doing and I told him that I didn't know where to begin, so I was waiting until the Lord gave me something.

Then Didier spoke about the certificate on the wall. In Israel, restaurants that are *kosher* are required by the Rabbis to get a certificate declaring that 'the Rabbis say' they are *kosher*. He told me his certificate costs him 7,000 shekels a year (about \$1,700). He said that a man comes in once a year, looks around and gives him another certificate.

I told him he was being robbed. He said he was going to go to the Rabbis and tell them that he would only give 3,000 shekels (about \$700). I said that if you go by yourself the rabbi won't care what you say. He won't budge from the 7,000 shekels because he takes his orders from the Rabbis above him and he knows you can't go anywhere to get another one, but if you take three or five or ten of your friends who also own restaurants and all of you say, 'We'll only pay you 500 shekels (\$120) for the certificate,' you might get somewhere.

He liked the idea of 'strength in numbers,' but didn't think the Rabbis would go for that low of a price. I told him they won't go for the 3,000 shekels either because it's not just in this city, but it's all over Israel that they rob the people. If they are seen doing it for you and your friends, they know they'll have to do

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it for everyone. Five hundred shekels for a man to come in once a year and look around for a few minutes is more than they should get anyway. He looked at his wife Galit and nodded his approval. Then I knew what the Lord wanted me to say to him:

‘If a man comes in here and says, ‘I’m the Messiah!,’ what would you say to him to see if He really was the Messiah or not? How would you test him?’

Neither Didier or Galit knew. I said that you might want to ask him where he was born. If he says, ‘Jerusalem!,’ you could tell him,

‘You’re not Messiah! You’re *mishuga!*’ (crazy!)

‘Why? Because the prophet Micah (5:2) tells us that the Messiah would be born in *Bethlehem*, the city of David.’

They liked that. They had never heard it. I went on:

‘It’s very important to know what God says in His Word because He always brings His Word to pass (Is. 55:11; Ezk. 12:25). He is faithful and true. When Father Abraham made the Covenant with God, the Lord said to him that Abraham’s descendents would be slaves for many years in another land, but that He would come and deliver them and bring them to this Land. God did it. That’s our history and how this Land became ours.’

‘God never lies. That’s why it’s so important to know His Word. If we don’t, then someone can come in and tell us that he’s the Messiah and we just might believe him in our ignorance.’

Didier was about 35 years old, dark hair, husky and about five foot six inches tall (1.7 m). He came to Israel from Paris, France, with his parents, when he was five years old. His wife Galit was about the same height, heavy set with black hair. They had two young girls.

Didier and Galit both listened and took in what I was saying. I prayed that the Holy Spirit would plant the Word that I had spoken, deep into their hearts and nurture and water it to fruition.

Then *Orange Man* walked into the restaurant. I had never seen him before, but seeing him once you’d never forget him. He was about 65 years old, five foot nine inches tall (1.75 m), with some whiskers that hadn’t been shaved in three or four days, and thinning white hair around his head. He had on a

### *Didier and Orange Man*

*bright* orange sweatshirt, *bright* orange shorts, *bright* orange sneakers and a *bright* orange derby, but that wasn't the half of it.

On all his fingers and his thumbs he had rings, and I mean rings! They were huge, some of them about the size of a half dollar, and one with a face on it that looked like a baby's face. I think it was ceramic. My eyes didn't stay there long though, as both his wrists, about five inches deep (13 cm) were covered with bracelets—big bracelets, silver bracelets, and turquoise bracelets, etc. That, too, wasn't all of it. Hanging down from his neck, upon his chest, were what most likely amounted to about fifteen pounds (7 kg) of necklaces—some hanging down as far as his belly. Silver necklaces and turquoise necklaces, etc. One of them was a silver or chrome 'sun' with rays coming from it, about the size of a small wall clock. Just when you thought you had seen everything...

As you might imagine, I didn't quite know what to make of this character. Although even that's an understatement. As he came in, I looked him straight in the eyes. I was sitting directly in his field of vision, about eight feet (2.4 m) from him, and I wanted to see if there was 'anything there.' I didn't sense anything demonic, which was a relief. He ordered some food from the counter where I was, standing about two feet away from where I was sitting on a stool. I asked him,

'What are you? Why do you dress like this?'

He said,

'Why do I dress like this?! That's a good question!'

I waited for him to continue. He said,

'I do it because I like to be different and it doesn't hurt anyone. I do it because something inside me just has to come out.'

Hmm...maybe I was wrong about the demonic...

He asked me, 'And what do you do?!'

I told him that I taught Torah and who the Messiah is. He turned away in disbelief, shouting,

'What about the Holocaust?! Why did God allow that?!'

I said,

'Haven't you heard? Death is not the end. There's a Day of Judgment for everyone, both the murdered and the murderers.'

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God is *righteous* and His Judgment is righteous. Do you remember when Moses was a baby and how many Hebrew infants were being thrown into the Nile River? Do you think God did that or Satan?

He said,

‘Satan?! There’s no one like that!’

I told him that he didn’t know the difference between God and Satan, putting onto God things that Satan had done. He said,

‘Isn’t God greater than Satan?’

I said,

‘When Adam and Eve disobeyed God they let Satan into their lives and the lives of their children. That’s why we need Messiah.’

Sitting at a table about ten feet (3 m) away, a man with his friend said something that I didn’t make out, and Orange Man replied, ‘That’s right Shmulik!’<sup>74</sup> I asked him what Shmulik said and Orange Man told me,

‘God’s not real. He’s a figment of men’s imagination.’

Directing my words to Shmulik, I said to everyone there,

‘You deny your very existence when you say that! Without God, no Jew would be in the Land of Israel today. Shmulik! 1,800 years! *No* nation, *no* people has ever done anything like this! We’ve come back to the Land that God promised to our Fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God said that He would bring us back! That alone proves that God is real! We would not be here today if God were a figment of our imagination.’

‘The prophet Ezekiel, in 36:22-28, spoke of God bringing us Jews back from the four corners of the Earth where He had scattered us for our sins of idolatry and *unbelief*! It’s the same unbelief that you display today, but God says in His Word that He will sprinkle clean Water upon us, and take away our filthiness and sins, and give us His Holy Spirit and a new Heart so that we can be like Him. After all, we’re His sons, and sons

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<sup>74</sup> *Shmulik* is an affectionate way of saying *Shmuel*, which is Samuel in English. It means ‘God hears.’ May *Shmulik* realize that!

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should behave like their father. It won't be very long before this happens!

Orange man became silent and continued eating, while Shmulik and his friend looked off elsewhere. I waited to see if there was anything else I could say, looking for what Yeshua would have me to do. The commandment came to me, about loving one's neighbor as one's self (Lev. 19:18b) and I wondered how I could put that into word and deed. Their silence spoke to me that they didn't want to deal with the issues I had raised. Didier approached and I felt that it was time to go. I told him that I'd teach him 'lesson number two' when I came back. I told him that what I had said about the birthplace of Messiah, and what I had just shared with the men, had been 'lesson number one.'

He asked if there were any books I could give him. I asked if he had a *Tanach*. He said at home he did. I told him that I would bring one with me the next time and that I would leave it in the restaurant with him so that we could study from it when I came in. I said,

'Then we can see if the things that Avram (me) was saying about the Messiah were really in the Scriptures.'

He liked that. Depending on how the next lesson would go, I thought of giving him the first part of the Hebrew handout, *A Picture of the Messiah*, which lists from Scripture some of the prophecies about the Messiah, the Son of Joseph. We could go over it point by point. The second sheet lines up New Testament Scripture with those prophecies, but I didn't think Didier would be ready for that, yet.

I shook his hand to leave and turned to Orange Man and said, '*Beh'tay ah'vone, haver!*,' which is Hebrew for '*Bon appetite*, my friend!' This is something that is said all the time in Israel when someone sees another eating, but it's not said with *haver*—(my) friend. I wanted to extend the *love* of Messiah. I sensed that my closure was also noted by Shmulik and his friends, whom I nodded to.

There's a real war going on in Israel, and not just with the Palestinians, but among the secular and the religious Jews. Since I look like a religious Jew, many of the secular see me as 'the enemy' and someone to vent their anger toward. (Of course, many of the religious vent their dislike toward the secular.) The men that I had spoken to at Didier's place were secular. I wanted them to know that I loved them and was extending 'my hand' to them. I sensed that they realized that.

On Friday, Dec. 21st, 2001 Ruti and I ate some grilled chicken and onions,

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fries and salad at Didier's. It was busy. We didn't want to be inconsiderate of Didier's responsibilities to the people, as sometimes he cooked and sometimes he also waited on tables. So, instead of speaking with him about the verses I had in mind, I gave him the *Tanach* and handed him the verses so he could read them later. He asked me how much the Bible was going to cost him and I told him it was a gift. He *really* appreciated that and shook my hand. In Israel the Orthodox always sell their books, and if it's a 'gift' they let you know they want money for it.

The Scriptures I gave him centered on Messiah being the Seed of Adam and Eve, who would crush Satan's head (Gen. 3:15). I also gave him Scripture that Messiah would descend from Fathers Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Judah (Gen. 12:3; 17:19; 28:14; 49:10) and from King David (2nd Sam. 7:12-13). Of course, I had to give him where Messiah would be born, in the city of David (Micah 5:2) because I had spoken of that to him the Sunday before, as a way to filter out any would-be Messianic pretenders, like the dead Lubavitch rabbi, Manachem Schneerson, who was born in Russia and died in New York City.

I also listed the place where Messiah is likened to Moses (Deut. 18:15-19) because it speaks of our need to listen to the words that Messiah would speak in God's authority. God says that He would raise up a prophet *like* Moses, and anyone who didn't listen to the words that He, God, put into the prophet's (Messiah's) mouth to speak, God Himself would require it of him (on Judgment Day).

The Apostle John records Yeshua saying that He had been *sent* from the Father, 39 times.<sup>75</sup> Yeshua was lining Himself up with Moses, who was the first *sent one* by God, to Egypt to deliver Israel (Ex. 3:10-15; 7:2, 16, etc.), and also, the Prophets (2nd Chron. 24:19; Jer. 7:25; 25:4; Zech. 7:12, etc.). Yeshua spoke of His words not being His own, but His Father's. These directly line up with the passage in Deuteronomy, when Yeshua says that His Father *sent* Him and had given to Him what to say.

Then I gave Didier one of the golden chapters of Scripture to read, Gen. 22, the Binding of Isaac (as it's known in Judaism). I thought that it would be a great place to springboard off of after we discussed the Scriptures I had given him. This way he could see why Abraham was called the Father of our people,

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<sup>75</sup> John 3:34; 4:34; 5:23-24, 30, 36, 37, 38; 6:29, 38-39, 44, 57; 7:16 (17), 28-29, 33; 8:16, 18, 26, 29, 42; 9:4; 10:36; 11:42; 12:44-45, 49; 13:20; 14:24; 15:21; 16:5; 17:3, 8, 18, 21, 23, 25; 20:21; and also, Heb 3:1, where Yeshua is called 'the Apostle,' which in Greek means the Sent One (i.e. the Messenger).

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and how God the Father, 2,000 years later, would parallel the event by sacrificing His own Son for us.

I gave him all these Scriptures on a piece of paper and asked him to read them so we could talk about them when I came back. He had told me before that he hadn't had any religious training, but when he said that he had *never opened a Tanach*, I was shocked. I hope I hadn't shown it, but I probably did. To my knowledge I had never met a Jew like that before.

I asked him for the *Tanach*, that I had just given him, and I opened it up and showed him how it was divided into three main sections: Torah, Prophets and Writings. Then I took him to the first book of the Torah, Genesis, and showed him how to use it, taking the first Scripture that I had given him, Gen. 3:15, and showing him where it was. Then I said that most of the Scriptures that I had given him (on the paper) were in the book of Genesis. Then I leafed through it until we found Micah, and I showed him the other passages as well, until I thought he had the hang of it.

He told me before that I needed to go slow with him because if he got too much, too fast, it would be no good. I assured him that we would go slow. Now I was beginning to understand just how slow we needed to go, but *slow* is good, too!

I thought that if he hadn't been able to read anything by the next time we returned, if the Lord would give us some time, from Didier having to serve people, we could sit down for a few minutes and I would go over those Scriptures with him. If not, then perhaps I'd give the theme of what those Scripture verses meant—that Messiah would come from the Jewish people, and then perhaps, go on to share about *Suka* 52a (a tractate of the Talmud) in which the ancient Rabbis speak of Messiah the Son of Joseph, the one who would be *pierced through* and die for Israel, which was taken from Zechariah 12:10. Then I would explain more.

On Tuesday, Dec. 25th, Ruti and I ate lunch at Didier's place again. After we were done eating I went to pay the bill. It had been busy and even though it had died down some, I thought that it might not be appropriate to begin any discussion on the Bible and Messiah. After I got my change back I asked Didier if he'd been able to read the Scriptures that I had left with him. He told me that he hadn't, but would I be willing to take five minutes and talk with him about the first one? Would I?!

He brought the *Tanach* over to our table where Ruti and I were and I explained to him that the first five books of the *Tanach* were *B'rasheet* (Gene-

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sis), *Shmoat* (Exodus), *Vy'ikra* (Leviticus), *B'midbar* (Numbers) and *D'varim* (Deuteronomy), and that Moses had written them. The five together were called Torah, which means 'instruction' or 'teaching,' which God's commandments and rules, etc., are for Israel. He didn't know the names of the books. I had never met any Jew like this before, but praise Yeshua, here was one willing to learn!

Before we went to Genesis 3:15, I related the story of Adam and Eve and how they came to be thrown out of the Garden of Eden. Didier told us that God had said that no one was to touch the apple tree. I told him that it doesn't say *what* fruit it was, just that it was a fruit tree, and that it was called the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Also, God didn't say not to touch it, but that I would explain where he got the thought that no one was to touch it.

I related how the Snake, Satan, had deceived Eve and asked her if God had said that they weren't to eat from the Tree. Eve told the Snake that she wasn't to eat of the Tree and then she added that she wasn't even to touch it, something God never said. The Snake lied, saying that she wouldn't die if she ate the fruit, but that she would become like God. The temptation was more than Eve could bear and she took from the Tree and ate. Adam seems to have heard the whole conversation, but unfortunately, he didn't intervene. It states that after she ate of the fruit that she handed it to Adam and he ate of it, too (Genesis 3:6). He must have been standing next to her.

Didier was telling us now that he wasn't too good at remembering things that he read, but if someone spoke it to him, he never forgot it. He said it was hard for him to read because he had dyslexia. I told him I understood and I liked speaking to him the words and stories of God. I silently hoped that one day I'd be able to pray for him, in the name of Yeshua, and see him healed. I continued with the lesson saying,

'After they ate from the forbidden tree, Adam and Eve realized that something was wrong because they both now knew they were naked. They made themselves a covering out of fig leaves because they were ashamed of their nakedness.'

'God called to Adam and asked him if he had eaten from the Tree, and Adam, not wanting to take responsibility, even though he was the authority and was actually the one God had told not to eat from it, accused Eve. She turned around and fingered the Snake.'

'God pronounced judgment on the Snake by saying that all

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the days of his life he would eat the dust of the ground and slither along. Then he turned to Eve and told her that her pregnancies or births would be very hard. Then God said to Adam that the land would be cursed, and that he would earn his living by the sweat of his brow, which was a blessing in disguise. When things are hard for us we turn to God.'

Didier asked if Satan could be within. I told him that he could, in the sense that our nature is aligned with his—exaltation of self (pride) and rebellion against God, and also, that demons can inhabit people. Didier said that many times he wanted to do something good and he had to argue with himself. He would finally just say, 'Get out of here!' and did what he thought was best. Didier was a good man who struggled with his Adamic nature. I said,

'That's why Messiah needed to come. Most of us struggle to do the good and sometimes we don't do what we know we should. With faith in Messiah, He gives us His Spirit that we might be like Him and be able to do that which is pleasing to our Father in Heaven, by His Spirit.'

We then read from Genesis 3:15. It speaks of there being hatred between the Seed of the woman and the Seed of the Serpent, and that the Seed of the woman, Messiah, would crush the head of the Serpent, but the Seed of the Serpent would strike (crush) the heel of Messiah. I said the ancient Rabbis saw this passage as relating to our Messiah.<sup>76</sup>

Some rabbi had told Didier that Didier was pure—that he had a pure heart. I told him that God said there were none righteous, not one (1st Kings 8:46; Is. 64:6). I asked him if he knew about the Ark of the Covenant. He didn't. Another surprise for me. I told him about it and that only on one day, the Day of Atonement, only one person, Aaron the High Priest, could come into the presence of God, with blood from a sacrifice, for the entire nation of Israel so that Israel could be forgiven of her sins. He couldn't come without the blood of the sacrifice. This was what God commanded for Israel's sins to be forgiven, and that it was written in Leviticus 16.

I told him about Aaron being the representative of our people, with all of Israel being symbolized on his breastplate and his shoulders. The names of the

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<sup>76</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2000), p. 981. This passage is seen as relating to 'Messiah in Targum *Pseudo-Yonatan* and the so-called Jerusalem Targum,' ancient Aramaic paraphrases of the Word of God.

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Tribes were engraved next to the precious stones of the breastplate, and were engraved on the shoulder stones (Ex. 28:9-12, 15-30).

‘Aaron the High Priest had to sacrifice a bull for sin for himself before he could come into the presence of God for Israel’s sins. Then he brought a goat for Israel’s sins. This was the way that God forgave our sins. No one except Aaron could approach God’s presence where the Ark of the Covenant was, or God would kill him. God is holy and we must do things His way.’

‘The average Israeli could pray to God, but only Aaron the High Priest could approach the very presence of Yahveh on our behalf, for our sins. After Aaron died, Eleazar, one of his sons, took his place. This is what God established for the forgiveness of our sins.’

‘The work that Messiah would do would be to forgive our sins and to cleans us so that He could give us a new nature that would be like His, so that we could live with Him and act like Him. Ironically, what Satan tempted Eve with, to be like God, God would give us through Messiah. Why did we need this? Because to live with God forever in the New Jerusalem would take a ‘new us.’ Our God is heavenly Fire.’

I asked him what would happen if he went into a natural fire. He said that he would burn. I told him that was what would happen to us on Judgment Day if we didn’t accept and walk in what Messiah has done for us. We must be pure the way God is pure and the only way to get that would be to believe what God has done in sacrificing His Messiah for us. I said to Didier the reason Messiah came was because of our sins. Messiah would deal with our sins by His sacrifice and give us God’s righteousness, as the prophet Jeremiah spoke of (23:6; 33:16).

I felt that we had covered enough for one session, even though we hadn’t gotten to the second Scripture about God calling Abram to leave his family and home (Gen. 12:1-3). One Scripture was enough. We had discussed many other things that led us to other Scriptures and Didier was getting Yahveh’s precious Word, for the first time in his life.

On Monday, Dec. 31st, 2001 six days after we had last been there, Ruti and I went to Didier’s place to eat lunch and continue with him in his lessons about Messiah. After we were done eating there was a God-given lull in the business

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(which we had prayed for) and Didier came over to us and sat down. He told us that as long as it wasn't busy he would be able to be at the table and learn about Messiah. Thank You, Lord!

Didier showed me three books that a *Bratslav* man had sold him. *Bratslav* is a sect of *Hasidic* Jews that follow the teachings of Rabbi Nachman (1772-1810), who was a Kabbalist. I looked the books over and told Didier they weren't for him. The one that Didier thought was the best I said was the worst. It dealt with astrology. I had seen it before from another man who also had bought the book, most likely from the same *Bratslaver*. Somehow the Rabbis have decreed that horoscopes and astrological signs are 'kosher.' They teach as Light the things of darkness (Is. 5:20).

I told Didier the *Tanach* was the only book that he needed. I compared it to the foundation that a house must have in order for it to be strong. Didier said that it was hard to understand the *Tanach*. I said that he had only just begun and that it was like riding a bicycle. At first you might fall down, but you'll get up and try it again and soon you're riding with no hands! He liked that. I said,

'The thing that makes the *Tanach* more understandable is the Holy Spirit. When you have that then your eyes will be opened to the deeper things of what God means in His Word. Ask God to give you understanding. He will. He's a good Abba.'

Didier appreciated that. We proceeded on with the lesson by going over what we learned the last time:

'Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God and because of that, no one was clean before God since we all descended from them. The High Priest of Israel had to bring a blood sacrifice to God in order to be forgiven of his sins, and then another sacrifice in order for Israel to be forgiven. Messiah would come from the Seed of Adam and Eve, as it was written in Genesis 3:15, where it said that her Seed would crush the head of the Seed of the Serpent and the Serpent's Seed would crush the heel of Messiah.' (The same Hebrew word is used in both places for *crush*.)

Then I told him that we were going 'to fast forward' 20 generations to Father Abraham. In Gen. 12:1-3, God calls Abram (his name wouldn't be changed to Abraham until 24 years later in Gen. 17) out of his country and to a land he

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didn't know. At that time it was called the land of Canaan.

I directed Didier's attention to Gen. 12:3 because I wanted to show him that God was going to bless the Gentiles with the Seed (Messiah) that would come from the loins of Father Abraham. Then we went to Isaiah 49:5-6, where it specifically speaks of Messiah bringing back to God both Judah and Israel, and that also, Messiah would be a Light to the Gentiles. To confirm that we turned to Is. 42:6, where it says basically the same thing, that the Gentiles would come to the Light of the Messiah of Israel.

Much to my surprise Didier got a little impatient. Not because of business, but because of being shown twice that Messiah would be a Light to the Gentiles. He wasn't against this. It was all new to him. It's just that after he had heard it once he was ready for something else!

That threw me off a little. So much for, 'Go slow with me.' As I got my bearings, I went back to Abraham. I said that a son was promised to Abraham and Sarah (Gen. 17:19), even though Sarah was very old and had never conceived. Then I showed God confirming that the *peoples* would be blessed through that promised son, Isaac, and his Seed (Genesis 21:12).

We went to the promise and read it, and also, that God Himself named Abraham's son Isaac. I asked Didier if he knew what Isaac meant. He told me, 'Isaac.' I said, 'No, the name 'Isaac' has a meaning.' From the next table a woman in her late 30s said, 'Laughter!' I said, 'Exactly!' She and her husband had come in a few minutes earlier.

I went on to say to Didier, realizing they were within earshot, that the reason why God gave them a son called 'laughter' was because it was impossible for Sarah to have a child at 90 years old, but she and Abraham would laugh a *wonderful* laugh at what God had done for them in their old age. This was how we Jewish people *miraculously* got our start.

Just then a believer by the name of John Pex came in and stopped by the counter to get an order to go. Ruti and I were glad we saw him. I excused myself from Didier for a moment and went over and spoke briefly with him. Then I sat down and continued with Didier.

I said that Isaac was called *the son of promise* because of his miraculous birth. Messiah would also be called *The Son of Promise* because of His miraculous birth, and He would be the Israeli par excellence. He was promised by God through Adam and Abraham, and He would obey God completely, from his heart, in all that He would do. He would never sin and become a perfect sacri-

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fice, so our sins could be forgiven.

Just then the husband of the woman shouted to Didier saying that I was a missionary! Didiya didn't believe him and said, 'No way!' I didn't say anything. The man said to me that I was a friend of John, not that he knew John, but he knew that John was obviously a Christian. John has the heart of an evangelist. He had come in wearing a shirt that read, 'Yeshua: He is Messiah,' written on the back in big Hebrew letters. The husband put that, and my speaking of Messiah as a sacrifice, together and got 'missionary!' Just at that time, Didier excused himself because the restaurant was getting busy.<sup>77</sup>

The husband then accused me, saying, 'You believe in *Yeshu!*' I said,

'I don't believe in *Yeshu*, but in Yeshua being the Messiah of Israel.' (I was intentionally making a distinction.)

He began to berate me for deceiving people by the way I looked. Because of my full beard I 'look' like a rabbi. I guess only traditional rabbis can have a full beard (and interestingly enough, many don't!). I told him that this was how God had made me. Then he told me that what I was doing was against

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<sup>77</sup> I don't call myself a missionary because the term is extremely offensive to my Jewish people. It brings to mind the Inquisition in Spain when Jews were put to death for just being Jews, and Jewish infants were literally ripped out of the arms of their screaming mothers, separated from them forever and made to convert to Catholicism so they wouldn't go to Hell.

Also, in the Crusades, the 'Christian Armies' in Europe, on their way to liberate Jerusalem from the infidels (Arabs), murdered many Jews as they traveled throughout Europe. When they got to Jerusalem they murdered the Jews living there, too. These things, and others like them, are associated with the word 'missionary' (i.e. 'Christian').

In Hebrew, the term I use is *shili'ach* (a *sent one*). Even though conceptually it's similar in meaning, it brings to mind something very different to a Jew. Israel has many 'sent ones' all over the world who are official representatives of the Israeli government. They act as 'points of contact' within the Jewish communities where they have been sent, offering information and connections to Israel for all Jews who want it.

In Hebrew the word for 'apostle' is *shili'ach* because the word apostle (Greek *apostolos*) means 'sent one.' Thirty-nine times in the Gospel of John, as seen above on p. 182, and note 75. Messiah Yeshua said that He was sent by His Father. Also, a missionary is usually associated with a specific denomination or mission group that literally sends him to a country, usually not of his own race, and supports him financially. I'm not part of any such organization, but have been sent by Messiah Yeshua to my own people, both in Tulsa, OK and now here in Israel.

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the (secular) law. I asked him which law he was referring to. He couldn't answer me. There is no law in Israel that says one can't speak of Yeshua.<sup>78</sup>

He said that Israel was a law abiding country and that I should respect the laws of the land. I laughed! I said that he,

‘must not be familiar with the Knesset (the Congress or Parliament of Israel). They're the biggest law breakers in the land and every Israeli knows it! Many of them are worse thieves and scoundrels than those in prison!’

He knew that what I was saying was true and so he took a different tact. By this time he and his wife had gotten up from their table and were standing in front of our table. We welcomed it. We remained seated.

He asked if I was a Jew. (Where have I heard this before?) I told him that I was. Then I asked him if he had done any studies on Messiah from the *Tanach*. He said that he didn't believe in the *Tanach*. Anybody can 'believe what they want,' he said. Now it was my turn to reprove him:

‘That's not what God says in the *Tanach*. We must believe what God says or we walk in a crooked manner.’

His wife said, ‘We don't believe in that! We believe in God.’ I said,

‘You can't separate God from His Words in the *Tanach*! That's the **only** way we can know Him and His Will, by His Words.’

He then asked me if I thought that we should stone the people that the *Tanach* says that we should stone. I told him, ‘Yes.’ Now he was surprised. He said that even the Rabbis didn't do that anymore. I said they are wrong. I told him that ‘*Mishna* and *Talmud*’<sup>79</sup> (where the rulings *not* to stone are found) were not from God, but from man, and that,

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<sup>78</sup> Israeli law prohibits one to speak to a minor about Yeshua, unless they have the permission from the parents. It also prohibits the sending of unsolicited mail about Yeshua, and the bribing of an Israeli ‘to believe in Yeshua.’ There is no law that states that a believer can't have a full beard or talk about Yeshua to adults or give adults literature on Messiah Yeshua.

<sup>79</sup> *Mishna* forms the core of what is called *Talmud* and is authoritative for how Orthodox Jews walk out their religion. It was written down about 1,800 years ago. Before that it was called the Oral Law, as it was transmitted *orally*, in counter-distinction to God's *written* Law. It deals with just about everything a Jew could encounter in this world.

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‘*Tanach* is the authoritative Word of the God of Israel, not *Talmud* or *Mishnah*.’

Then the stoning got specific, centering on prostitution. He asked me if I thought they should stone the prostitutes. I told them,

‘If Israel stoned the prostitutes, as Torah speaks of, Eilat, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem wouldn’t be overrun with them! Israel needs to be walking in Covenant with God and then no one would want to prostitute herself.’

Then his wife said something about Torah treating ancient women like trash. Ruti turned to her and said,

‘That isn’t how God wants us to be treated. Following Torah makes life better for us.’

I said to the woman,

‘For you to be saying something like that tells me that you don’t know God. Only through Messiah Yeshua can you come to really know God. He speaks through the prophets Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Ezekiel 36:24-27, how He will give us His Spirit so that we can come to know Him and to walk in His ways, which are a blessing for us.’

Pointing from my head to my heart, I said that I didn’t just *think* I knew God, but that I really *know* Him. I told them that God wanted to come to them and to love them by His Spirit and that this happens in the Name of Messiah Yeshua, in the most wonderful way.

The man said that if he didn’t believe like me, I would turn and become his enemy. I told him, ‘No. You are my friend and I love you very much.’ After I said that I saw a mist forming in his eyes. I realized it was the Holy Spirit impacting him with ‘love from Above,’ using the words I had spoken. I saw his face soften toward me. Oh Lord, save him!

The wife though, was still very hard. I could see him changing toward me, so I physically drew closer to him. I stood up and I said to him,

‘Only in Messiah Yeshua can we find true peace. It’s His Blood that has been shed as our atonement for sin. God says in Lev. 17:11 that He has given us the blood sacrifice that we might make atonement for ourselves. The prophet Isaiah, in the 53rd chapter, says that Messiah would take upon Himself

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all our sicknesses, pain and sins. The ancient Rabbis called Him the Suffering and Leprous Messiah. Another name for him is Messiah, the Son of Joseph, because like Joseph, Isaiah says that we Jews would reject Him, but like Joseph, God would raise Messiah Yeshua up to Second in Command next to God Himself.’

My tone now, still intense, was pleading with him, loving him. His wife, not liking this sudden turn of events, interjected that he was ‘a musical genius,’ and that they knew the Spirit of God because many times they would experience God when they played music. I said it wasn’t God’s Spirit they were experiencing because only in the name of Yeshua can the Holy Spirit come.<sup>80</sup> We said one or two more things and then they left.

All this was happening in the midst of a small restaurant that was by now congested with about 20 Israelis eating their lunch and listening to us going at it. Our ‘conversations’ were not done in a whisper.

When they left, Didier apologized for the assault. I told him that I was delighted that it had occurred, although I didn’t think Didier heard that I believed in Messiah Yeshua. He was too busy serving customers. It must have been the Finger of God that closed his ears to it. Didier told me he was looking forward to the next lesson.

After we left I asked Ruti what she had sensed. She said there were a number of Israelis who were paying attention. The man to my right, she said, ‘at one point didn’t agree with me, but on another point he did.’ We smiled. We got back home and prayed that Yeshua would reveal Himself to the couple that night and that He would show them their need for Him. We also prayed for Didier and his wife Galit and their young children to be protected by the Hand of God so that we could return and lead them into His Kingdom.

Please remember the couple in your prayers. The Lord had given me such a

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<sup>80</sup> I was hasty in saying that. I remember reading an account of an American Jewish woman, Esther Dorflinger, whom the Spirit of Jesus ministered to in wonderful ways before she ever came to realize that it was Jesus. When Jesus revealed Himself to her she couldn’t believe it, the stigma on Jesus being so great in the Jewish community. Jesus wooed her by relating to her that all the times in the past when she had felt His love and had come to trust Him, when she hadn’t known His Name. With that, she began to walk with her Messiah and the Lord would move mightily through her. I should have asked the woman why she thought it was the Spirit of God and not come against her as I did. Please forgive me, Yeshua, and redeem it.

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love for the man (and the woman). They're in desperate need of Yeshua. Also, pray for Didier and his family and those in the restaurant that day, that God's Seed would be implanted in their souls. Thank you!

Two days later, on Wednesday, January 2nd, 2002 Ruti and I went back to Didier's to eat and to see what fallout there might have been from the previous time. Much to our surprise Didier hadn't heard anything about our conversation with the couple and they hadn't returned to tell him.

After we were done eating, Didier sat down with us and wanted to continue his lessons on learning about Messiah from the *Tanach*. As I was about to begin he asked me, 'What did those people want?' I told him that he would have to ask them. He then asked, 'Why did they get so upset?' He went on to explain that it made him feel really bad on the inside, how they were talking to Ruti and me. I understood because they were in 'attack mode.' I told him that I was glad they had done what they did and said they were upset because they thought that I was a missionary.

I then went over what we had done the previous times and began to teach on Genesis 17. I told Didier that God had promised the Land of Canaan to the Jewish people (v. 8) and that circumcision was more than just a good medical practice. It,

'was the sign of the Covenant that God made with Father Abraham (vv. 10-11). It was a mark in our flesh that meant that the God of Abraham was not only our God and King, but also the symbolic owner of the greatest thing that we could do—father children.'

'So important was this *sign* for every male descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that those who weren't circumcised would be cut off from the people (v. 14). Being cut off from one's people may not seem like much today, but to an ancient people it was tantamount to losing one's identity and being totally annihilated.'

In Genesis 17:15 we read that Sarai (which means 'contentious') also had her name changed, to Sarah (princess or 'one who strives with God and is blessed'). In vv. 16-17 God said that she was to have a son, even though she was already 89 years old and had never had a child. This son would be called the miraculous son of promise because God promised him to Abraham and Sarah (Gen. 17:16-21; 18:9-14). I told Didier that this is directly related to Messiah because He is promised to Israel in the *Tanach*, and He would be the

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miraculous born Son of the Promise, too, similar to Isaac.

In Genesis 17:19 God names Abraham's son Itzhak (Isaac) because Sarah and Abraham would laugh a laugh of joy in their old age. (And we'll laugh in our old age because of God's promised and miraculous Son and what He means to us—eternity with Him.) God tells Abraham that through Isaac the Covenant would continue (Gen. 17:19). He reaffirms this two verses later, in v. 21, and Isaac was circumcised when he was eight days old (Gen. 21:4).

In Gen. 17:23-24 Abraham was obedient and circumcised himself even though he was 99 years old at the time. Ishmael was 13 years old (Gen. 17:25) and that's why Arabs are circumcised when they're 13, even though God commanded it to be done on the eighth day of life (v. 12). It was about this time that it began to get busy and I could sense Didier's need to attend to business. I told him that we would continue another time and I could see the relief on his face. He was grateful that I understood his responsibility.

After saying *Shalom* to Didier, Ruti and I left and began walking to the downtown area. On the way there I was struggling with whether I had done the right thing or not. I felt uncomfortable in not telling Didier that the couple was upset because of my belief in Yeshua. I didn't think the foundation had been properly laid for Didier to hear the name of Yeshua, but I didn't want the couple to return and tell Didier that I believed in Yeshua. I would rather him hear it from me first.

I shared this with Ruti and she agreed. I purposed that after we were done downtown that we would go back and tell Didier the name of his Messiah. As it turned out we were able to share in the downtown area for about an hour and a half with a woman whom we had previously witnessed to about Messiah. When she had to leave, another co-worker came on at the store and we continued to share about Messiah with her.

It was about 5:30 PM and dark when we walked into Didier's little restaurant. Much to our delight there was only one person eating there. This would give Didier some time to be with us. We sat at the counter and told him that we had something important to speak with him about. He came to us and I told him the couple had been upset because we believe that Yeshua is the Messiah of Israel. That didn't seem to faze Didier. He asked, 'You mean Jesus?' I told him yes and that I wanted to show him from the *Tanach* that Yeshua was indeed our Messiah. He asked me, 'Wasn't he from Nazareth?' and I could hear him wondering, 'but the Messiah should be born in Bethlehem,' as I had taught him. He remembered well. I told him that Yeshua was born in Bethlehem, but He grew up in Nazareth and came to be known as Yeshua from

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Nazareth.

Didier listened to me while I began to open up the Scriptures concerning the Suffering Servant of Yahveh, from Isaiah 53 and other passages. We read about His death being for our sins, that we could be forgiven, and that *this* was God's way to make us pure and holy in His sight. I related that this was what *Yom HaKipurim* (the Day of Atonement) pictured when Aaron the High Priest offered up the goat once a year for the forgiveness of sins for all of Israel. Messiah Yeshua was offered up once so that both Jew and Gentile could be forgiven of sins and live with God for eternity.

I shared with Didier about Leviticus 17:11, that the *life* of the flesh was in the blood and that the Blood of Messiah Yeshua contains His *Life*, which is divine. Therefore, it's able to forgive our sins *and* to transform us into His Image (Rom. 8:29) that we might be righteous before God on *Yom HaDin* (the Day of Judgment), and live forever with Him.

I spoke of a number of other passages concerning the new heart Yeshua gives us (Ezk. 36:22-26) and that the Spirit of God comes to dwell within us when we believe in Yeshua. About this time I could see that I had reached Didier's saturation point, so I backed off. Ruti spoke of this to me when Didier went to clean off a table, so it was a confirmation that he had as much as he could handle at that point.

I told him that we needed to leave and that we would be back to show him more about Messiah Yeshua. I could see that, although he wasn't against it, he wasn't 'chomping at the bit' to know more. When we got outside we prayed that Yeshua would reveal Himself to Didier and that anything that was keeping him from coming into the Kingdom would be taken out of the way.

We returned on two other occasions, but neither one offered any time to sit down with Didier because he was busy, although I thought that he was emotionally distancing himself from us. I hoped that I was wrong. We had prayed and prayed that Yeshua would draw Didier to Himself, and so it was disappointing to sense that he wasn't wanting to go on. It would be almost two months before we would see Didier again. Not because we didn't want to go back, but because the Lord had us ministering in other directions and we just didn't have the time or the finances to eat there.

On Wednesday, Feb. 27th, the Lord led me back to see Didier. I say the Lord because I wasn't thinking of seeing him when I went to sleep the night before. In prayer the next morning the Lord placed him on my heart and during the early morning hours I continued to sense that I needed to see Didier. I wasn't

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'looking forward' to it because of the last two times when I had sensed that he 'wasn't looking' anymore.

I asked Didier about the readings that I had left with him. He hadn't yet read the one page Hebrew handout on the first chapter of John that I had made up on my computer and had given to him. He told me that he didn't have time. I had trouble believing that, as I thought he had plenty of time to read it since I had given it to him, but he said he worked many hours a day and when he got home he was with his kids and his wife and he was very tired. With that out of the way we began to talk again about Messiah.

Didier told me about a friend of his named Eddie who went up to a mountain every night to pray. Eddie was a traditional Jew and wanted Didier to go with him, but Didier said that it wasn't for him. He had tried 'laying *tefillin*,' but he had gotten 'nothing out of it.' I was glad.

Didier asked what I thought of the current war (the Palestinian Intifada of 2001–2003) that Israel was in. I said that I didn't like Arafat, but the Lord was using him to squeeze Israel. I shared that in all the years of Israel, from the days of Moses, whenever Israel would follow and obey the Lord He would take care of our enemies. When we forsook the Lord He would use our enemies to prod us back toward Himself.

The war would not get better, and one day, God would use the conflict to bring all the nations against Israel. Then, as we cry out to Him, the Messiah would be revealed to us. When Israel sees her Messiah and realizes that it's Yeshua, she'll cry as one who cries for her firstborn and only son who has just died, because she had rejected Yeshua, but He was there all along and had died for her sins (Zech. 12:10; 13:1; Is. 53:4-5).

Didier told me that he was a good person, clean and straight. He said that he could charge me 30 shekels (\$6.70) for the meal I had eaten, even though it was 28 shekels (\$6.20), but if he did that he wouldn't feel right inside. He liked his life, he gave some money sometimes to help people, and sometimes food, and that was enough.

Oh, to deal with those who are 'good.' You know, if you take one 'o' out of good you have 'god.' I asked him, 'Who determines that you are good? God or Didier?'

He told me that he could tell in his heart. I could have told him what God had said through the prophet Jeremiah (17:9), that our hearts are wicked and deceptive, and who can know it, but I didn't think it was appropriate toward his salvation. I didn't want to fence with him, so I dropped it and I spoke of how

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the Lord wanted us to know Him *through* Messiah Yeshua because we all sin and fall far short of the glory that is God.

He asked, ‘Who is greater, God or Jesus?’ I told him that I would answer his question with a question. ‘Who is more human—you or your wife, Galit?’ He told me they were both the same. I told him he had answered his own question. God and Yeshua are both deity.<sup>81</sup> Then he said, ‘But no one has seen God. People saw Jesus.’ I replied,

‘No one has seen God fully manifest. When that happens the universe will melt, but no one has fully seen the glory of Messiah Yeshua, either. For Yeshua and His Father are one (Jn. 14:7, 9), just as God speaks of a husband and his wife being one, in Genesis 2:24.’

Didier said that he was only going to be alive for a certain amount of time and he wanted to have a good life because after that it was ‘only to the ground.’ I was a little surprised at his being unaware of life after death. I probably shouldn’t have been.

I said that belief in God has to rest on what God says. He tells us that after death we will stand before Him on Judgment Day. I explained that in the book of Daniel, the angel Gabriel tells Daniel that he would sleep with his fathers and then be raised in the resurrection of the dead. The Rabbis have believed this since before the time of Messiah Yeshua (Dan. 12:2-3, 13; Psalm 16:7-11; Job 19:25, etc.).

We spoke some more and then the Lord, after I asked Him, led me to tell Didier that God wanted to love him through Messiah Yeshua in a way that Didier had never known before. After that Didier would know what real *love* and *Life* were.

As we parted he said that he was looking forward to the next time that we could talk. He said that he liked talking with me.

I was glad that Didier was still open to hearing about his Messiah. Thank you for your prayers for Didier!

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<sup>81</sup> God the Father is greater than His Son Yeshua in the sense that a father is greater than any of his sons, but I sensed what Didier was asking was if God (the Father) was God, how could Jesus be God or deity, too? See *Yeshua—God the Son* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Yeshua-God-the-Son.pdf> for the scripturally Hebraic understanding of the enigma—how both the Father and the Son are God.

## ZAP!

On January 6th, 2002 three years to the day when we had left the USA in 1999 and about four months after we had come to Eilat, Ruti and I met and befriended two Gentile men from Hungary and an Israeli woman (a girlfriend of one of the men). They were in their mid-twenties. It was beautiful to see their hearts eventually open up to us as they heard and felt Messiah's love for them. Their names are Zoli, Austi and Penina (Israeli). I call them ZAP!, like in 'Zap'm Lord!' Ruti and I believe they were to be His lambs.

I had just come back from a walk and was doing some stretching exercises for my legs and the three of them were in the small park next to where I lived. The men were using the children's straight 'monkey bars' to do pull ups.<sup>82</sup> That was what I was supposed to do next, before I returned home to the apartment.

I walked over to them and said, 'Shalom!' Penina was sitting on a swing a few feet away. They greeted me back and I watched as Zoli did 20 pull ups and then Austi did some. Then I did a few and Zoli asked me, 'What do you do?' I said, 'I teach people about God.' I saw the smirk on their faces as Zoli translated it into Hungarian for Austi.

We all did some more pull ups and then Zoli and Austi left to get something to drink. Penina and I began to talk. We spoke for about half an hour and then I asked her if she would like to come up and meet my wife, Ruti. I thought Ruti would be concerned about me being gone longer than usual and I knew that she would also want to meet Penina.

Penina came up and we spoke for a few hours, prayed for her and found out their desperate need for food, so we took Penina to get about \$200 worth of groceries. We brought it back to their apartment, but the boys weren't there. When they returned home and saw all the food we had gotten them, Penina would later tell us they broke down and wept. They had never had anyone do anything like that for them.

When Penina was with us that first day we prayed for her ankles. They were swollen and there was a poison in them that had caused her to lose her previous job (she could hardly walk on them). Ruti and I prayed for her in the name of Yeshua and we both sensed that Yeshua would heal her ankles as she

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<sup>82</sup> Straight monkey bars are the horizontal-like ladder that one holds onto and then swings to the next bar, etc., like a monkey. It's great for pull ups and chin ups.

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slept that night, and we told her that. The next day she came back to us, and much to her amazement and our delight, said that she had no problem with them and that she had gotten the best sleep in years! Not only were her ankles healed and the poison gone, but her left arm, which had been shattered at the elbow many years before, and could only move or rotate to a certain degree, was made supple enough for her to be totally surprised! She was able to stretch it out and into positions that she had not been able to for many years. Thank You, Yeshua!!!

Our time was filled to the full with Austi, Penina and Zoli. The boys were hungry for Yeshua and His Word. Surprisingly enough, Penina was just the opposite, causing much strife because of her rocky relationship with Zoli. You would think that after Yeshua had healed her it would have been different, but she had a lot of anger and rage within her, and justifiably so, since she had been abused physically and emotionally by her mother, and sexually abused by an older brother while growing up. Her childhood stories made Ruti and me weep.

None of them were able to find jobs. It was winter in Eilat and jobs were very difficult to come by. Eilat is a tourist city, but with the Palestinian terrorist Intifada going on, tourists had virtually stopped coming, which meant fewer jobs.

On the Sabbath of February 9th the three of them were at our place from 1:00 to 8:30 PM. We fed them, loved them and opened up the Word, but Penina derailed us. I prayed for her the following morning and continued to pray for her and the boys. Penina was 24 years old.

We had the three of them over on Thursday, Feb. 14th for spaghetti and meatballs and they loved it. It was Zoli's 27th birthday (actually a day early). We didn't have money to take them out to eat or to buy him a present, but Ruti came up with the idea on Wednesday to have a special lunch for them here on the 14th. She also made a lemon flavored tapioca pudding for dessert. It was all very tasty and they loved it!

Penina left to run some errands and I thought it would be a perfect time for a Bible study. We had started in the book of John and you should have seen Austi. I could tell the Spirit was dealing with him and Zoli. It was so good to see, but just a few minutes after she left, Zoli got a call to do a massage. He's very good at it and has made his living from it. So I guess that just wasn't the time because Zoli translated for Austi.

On Sabbath, February 23rd, we had them over again. From 1:00 to 5:30 PM

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we sat at the table, eating first and then sharing the Lord's love with them and then praying for them. I asked Zoli if I could pray for him, by placing my hand on his forehead. He said yes. I asked because this was the second time he began to have tears in his eyes when I had spoken of being hurt and Yeshua being able to heal us. My heart just melted for him because of what he went through in his childhood. I began to pray and asked Yeshua to minister to Him and lead him into His Kingdom. I prayed for a few minutes, with Ruti also praying at the table, and Austi had his head bowed. Penina was in the bathroom at the time. Halfway through the prayer she came out and was very noisy and distracting, not intentionally, but I asked her if she would be arranging her glass and silverware at the table if she was in the midst of an Orthodox rabbi praying. She sat back and was quiet and I continued to pray for Zoli.

When I sensed a release from the Spirit over Zoli I was led to lay my hands on Austi's head. I prayed for him for a while and then I sensed that we needed to pray for Penina. Just at that time Ruti asked if she could pray for Penina and I told her that I had just sensed that, which confirmed that it was the Lord's will. Ruti prayed for Penina and as she did, Ruti began to weep and cry. Penina asked why she was doing that and Ruti told her that many times when she prays for a person, the Lord allows her to feel the pain of the person that she is praying for. This didn't affect Penina at all. She was very hard, even though she had a tender heart.

After we were done I asked Zoli if he had felt anything while I prayed for him. He said that for the first two minutes that my hand was on his forehead, it was just my hand. After that he felt as if Someone took him by both wrists in a firm way, not hard and not soft, and that from the top of his head something began to flow down to his body. I was overjoyed that Yeshua had touched him in such a powerful way and told him that it was Yeshua doing it by His Spirit. There was such a peace on his face. This was the first time that we had prayed for Zoli. Then Ruti said that when I was praying for Zoli she could 'see' the Lord Yeshua taking hold of Zoli's wrists. Wow! Thank You, Yeshua!

Then I asked if Austi had sensed anything when I had prayed for him and Zoli, interpreting for Austi, who only spoke Hungarian, said that he had felt something, too, but not as strong. Again I was delighted.

Before we could ask Penina she entered into strife with Zoli. She eventually left a half hour before the boys and none of us knew if we would see her again. She was very angry and in 'attack mode' with Zoli. I intervened and told her that it wasn't right to threaten Zoli. She had mentioned that if he continued to argue with her that she would be 'forced' to tell everyone (Ruti and

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me), something that she knew would embarrass him. So, she ‘egged him on’ with it. There was pride and anger, masking rejection and pain. I was able to stop it, but not change it.

Later that night Ruti felt very impressed to call Penina. She had gone back to their place, which she shared with Austi and Zoli and had taken all her things and was looking to return home to Afula, her city in the north. She had begun walking away from the apartment and it hit her—she had hurt Zoli and Austi (and us) by her words. This was something that she was slowly coming to see—how abusive she could be. She began to cry very hard. She had asked God for a sign, if she should go home, stay or what? At that *exact* moment Ruti called. Ruti’s first words were, ‘Penina, I love you.’ They talked and Penina was very repentant. Ruti comforted her and told her to call Zoli and talk to him and tell him what she had told her. Penina did and they were back together again.

We had ordered some Hungarian Bibles for Zoli and Austi and they came on Feb. 25th, and so we were looking to give them to the boys. Actually, they would get two each. One was a Hungarian Bible, Old and New Testaments and the other was a New Testament in Hungarian and Hebrew, to help them with their Hebrew. They each got a set. I placed a 200 shekel note (about \$45) in each of their (whole) Bibles, a late birthday present in honor of Zoli’s birthday. Ruti and I continued to help them with food until they got on their feet. I was also helping Austi with English.

That night Penina came over and we listened to her anger against Austi. She believed that because of him, her and Zoli were ‘on the rocks.’ Ruti read a testimony of Rose Price that moved both Ruti and me to tears. Rose had gone through the Holocaust and she hated the Nazis for murdering her family and relatives. Penina was untouched. A moment afterward, Penina mentioned something about *hate* being Rose’s theme. Interestingly enough, Penina had used the word *hate* many times (about hating Austi) before Ruti read Rose’s testimony. Her testimony ended by saying that only Yeshua could help us to forgive those whom we hate, but Penina was deaf to dealing with her own hate. Immediately after the reading of the testimony she got back on her subject again—thrashing Austi.

The Lord led me to just listen and empathize with her, which was not hard to do, as much of the time she was crying. She related how her dreams with Zoli had crashed because of Austi. This wasn’t the first time that Zoli and Penina were ‘on the outs,’ but this was the first time that she blamed Austi for her problems. It would be rare that she would see herself as part of the problem,

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although Ruti and I had previously spoken to her about her living with a man and not being married to him, and about her own anger, rage and emotional abuse of Zoli. As we would come to see, she wasn't at the point of perceiving and accepting her part in the failure, even though at times she said, 'Perhaps I'm stupid,' or 'This might be happening to me because I hurt other people.'

There also seemed to be some criminal activity with Austi and Zoli; like stealing things to sell in order to have money for food. Penina shared with us there was thievery involved as well as occasionally working for those who dealt with pimps. Austi's arms, chest and back were covered with skulls and other demonic tattoos. As Ruti said, he didn't get them for no reason. Austi was about six foot three (1.95 m) and strong. He was a likable guy, good looking with blond hair. I could see that he was capable of much love as well as much evil. Penina's anger toward him wasn't without some justification.

Ruti and I were more determined than ever to pray and believe for their salvation. We wanted these three dear souls and were looking to storm the gates of Hell to get them. We wanted to bring them to the Rock:

'and upon *this* Rock I will build My Church and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it' (Mt. 16:18b. The word for church means an assembly of people 'called out;' conceptually of darkness, as 1st Peter 2:9 states).<sup>83</sup>

Yeshua, God the Son, is that Rock—Deity manifest in Flesh. We are to storm those gates with Him, to release those who are enslaved to Satan in his Kingdom of Darkness.

On Thursday, February 28th, Ruti and I gave the Hungarian Bibles and the Hungarian-Hebrew New Testaments to Austi and Zoli. Ruti said, 'Happy Birthday!' to Zoli (even though it was a little late) and told Austi that we wanted him to have a gift for Zoli's birthday, too. Austi figured out what they were because the wrapping paper we had put them in was thin. He said they were Bibles before he unwrapped his.

Austi was also the first to see the 200 shekel note that I had placed in his Hungarian Bible. The look on his face was one of surprise and genuine gratefulness. I was very touched. He got up and came over to me and gave me a big

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<sup>83</sup> The Greek word for church (assembly) is *ekklaysia* and was first used of Israel at Mt. Sinai in the Greek translation of the Old Testament (the Septuagint), which was made about 280 BC. In other words, when Jesus and Paul, etc., speak of the *Church*, it's not a new word or concept, but something that began in the days of Moses and was now continuing with Jesus of Nazareth.

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hug and thanked me, and I was touched, again.

Penina and Zoli were sitting on the couch, but Zoli hadn't noticed the money. He was busy unwrapping his gifts. When he got to his Bible he only checked out the first few pages, so I leaned over and said, 'You need to look through the Bible,' and I flipped a couple of pages for him. He continued and came upon the 200 shekel note. He was also very appreciative. He got up and hugged me, too. Oh, I wish you could have seen their expressions—so tender and loving toward Ruti and me. Little children in adult bodies *who never had a loving father nor a caring mother.*

When we had given Penina her Hebrew Bible (Old and New Testaments) a few days before, we hadn't had the money to place anything in it, but now we gave her a 200 shekel note, too. She was so excited and thankful, saying that now she could get some clothes that she needed. She had just started working the night before as a bartender on a casino boat that stayed in the Gulf of Eilat. She was telling us that the owners weren't bad men, but that early in their lives they had gotten in trouble with the law, and so, had criminal records. 'They were alright now,' she said.

She also told us of a lawyer who, the night before, had gambled away \$100,000 cash. After it was over he told his friend he was tired and that he was going to bed. Penina had been appalled that someone could lose that much money. She said he could have given it to the poor. I told her that he did what his heart led him to do. He was trapped in gambling and greed.

Austi had also started a job the night before, working for a disco as a bouncer. He was up until 6 AM and when all of us went shopping for food for them, he looked very tired.

When we gave them the Bibles they opened up the gifts and both Austi and Zoli began reading their New Testaments. Ruti and I were so glad. Penina, on the other hand, was going back and forth (between Ruti in the kitchen and Zoli on the couch), asking Zoli about keys to the apartment. She wanted to go back to their apartment and make some food for Ruti and me called *kubah*. It's a dumpling with meat and spices in it that's fried and is a favorite dish of Jews from North Africa (Morocco, etc.). It's very tasty. Penina's parents came from Morocco.

Austi asked me his first question from the New Covenant. It had to do with Yeshua. They both had begun to read in the first chapter of Matthew and Austi was wondering if Yeshua had any sons. The wording in the first verse threw him off:

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‘The book of the generation of Jesus the Messiah, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.’ (Mt. 1:1)

He wasn’t quite sure what to make of it because Yeshua was also listed at the end of the genealogy:

‘And Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called the Messiah.’ (Mt. 1:16)

I explained to him that the first verse was like a chapter heading, explaining what was to follow. The really interesting thing is that even before he asked me that question, he said in English that Yeshua had ‘a big family tree.’ I was very pleasantly surprised, not only that he could say that in English, but that he could understand that, it being the first time that he had ever read the New Testament. I told them that as they read on their own, if they had any questions, to write them down and when we got together we would discuss them.

On March 2nd we invited Austi, Zoli and Penina over for Ruti’s home cooking—brown rice, chicken and sweet potatoes, salad, and bread with *humorous*. It was quite a Sabbath treat. They just loved it and we loved feeding them and loving them. That day, only Austi and Zoli were able to come, as Penina was working on the casino boat. The table was so peaceful. I thought of making a comment about it, but I didn’t want anything to get back to Penina that was negative, so I held my thought. I enjoyed the atmosphere as we spoke of Yeshua, and how He is so real, or *Yea’zoush*, as He is known in Hungarian.

When we were done eating we sat in the living room and opened an English Bible for Zoli, and I gave my Hungarian-Hebrew New Testament to Austi. When I bought the Bibles I got an extra one for me so that if they came without their Bibles there would be one that had Hungarian in it (at least for the New Testament). It worked out well, even though I read first about how Adam and Eve were created (Gen. 2) and how they sinned (Gen. 3), and then we went to Luke 4 and read of Yeshua being tempted by Satan, but not giving in to sin like Adam and Eve.

My conversation then turned to the Holy Spirit. We read from Acts 2 to show them how real the Holy Spirit was. We shared that belief in Yeshua wasn’t just a mental thing ‘to believe in,’ but that God gives us His Spirit so we can really know Him. Then we read John 14–17. It was all so very good. Thank You, Lord!

We could have gone on, but Austi had worked until 6 AM again and had only

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gotten two hours sleep. He was very tired. So we concluded for the day and they went home to get some sleep. Austi was going to work in the evening and Zoli hadn't gotten much sleep the night before, either. It was good to open the Word and for them to be able to read it in their language. The only drawback was that the translation was in 'old' Hungarian. They were able to make it out for the most part, but there were times when they had to laugh at the archaic Hungarian words that were used. (Much like the archaic English KJV, that was the only Hungarian Bibles available.)

It was also good that Zoli had the English NKJV (from our place) and that he knew English fairly well and could translate for Austi at those places where the Hungarian was hard to understand. We also gave Zoli a NKJV Bible that he would have at his place to read, not only for the Scripture content, but also for the English. He had learned some English before, when he was in Britain, and now he was growing in it. If he lived in the States for six months his English would be fluent.

On Tuesday, March 5th our phone rang. It was Zoli. He asked how we were and then told us that he had been reading the New Testament for the last three days and had finished it. I was delighted to hear that. Thank You, Yeshua! Zoli was impressed with how much physical pain Yeshua had gone through for him. Zoli had been physically abused as a boy.

On Wednesday, Ruti and I were able to do something that we had wanted to do for some time. ZAP rented an old 'furnished' apartment. With the apartment had come some forks, knives and dishes that one could say, with some imagination, were usable. Ruti and I bought a set of plates, bowls, spoons and forks and brought them over to the apartment. They were so grateful. Later that night, as Ruti and I went to bed, she reminded me of what Penina had told her when we had bought the first of many groceries for them—the boys had wept. They were so overwhelmed that someone would do something like that for them. Their hearts were so precious and in need of Yeshua's healing love.

On Thursday Ruti and I went back to the store where we had gotten the dishes. I had forgotten the knives! So we picked up the mates to the forks and spoons and we saw some glasses and we got them, too. When we came to the apartment Zoli and Penina were there. Austi was working both night and day now. He had taken a day job washing cars and at night he worked in the disco. They were glad for the glasses and the knives.

We sat down and talked for awhile and then we could see that Zoli was in some kind of back pain. He had taken a bath towel and wrapped it around his waist to relieve some pressure. I asked him if Ruti and I could pray for his

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back, in the name of Yeshua. He said that he would like that. We prayed and much of the pain left. We thanked Yeshua. Ruti got a word that part of the pain was from the stress that he was carrying. Zoli is very sensitive and is in the middle of this triangle. Austi is Zoli's friend from school days in Hungary and Penina is Zoli's Israeli girlfriend. As one could expect with three non-believers living together, there's going to be some tension as to who does what and who should do the dishes and, 'Who left the towel on the floor?!', etc. Zoli is a natural peacemaker, which only adds to his being 'in the middle' of the conflict. Ruti prayed for the peace of Yeshua to come upon Zoli and I prayed for healing. Zoli experienced relief in both areas.

Something happened a month previous to this that will help you to know a little more about where their hearts were at, especially toward us. Some might say that we are being 'taken by them,' or that we're doing too much for them, helping them with rent, food and dishes, etc., but I don't think so. I've been 'taken for a ride' a number of times in my life, and because of that, I've come to have a sensitivity to when something like that is happening. I also continually 'check in' with Yeshua and Ruti. As Ruti and I understand it, we're extending Yeshua's Love to them in a very real and tangible way, along with giving them the Word of *Life*, in word *and* deed. Now for their hearts concerning us.

Last month we reached a place where Ruti and I didn't have any money for food. That wasn't a big deal for us because we had food in the house; we just couldn't go and get some additional food that we could have used. Usually something will come in so that we can get the groceries that we might need. It didn't. For a couple of days we waited, but still nothing. Then, a day or two after that—nothing. One day, with the three of them, it came up that we didn't have any money for food and hadn't had any for a few days. Zoli whispered something to Penina and Penina told us that she had to go back to the house to get something and would be back soon.

She returned and gave something to Zoli. Zoli extended his hand to me and said they wanted to give us something. Into my hand came the only money they had—a 200 shekel note (about \$45).<sup>84</sup> The Lord had allowed us to go without food money so that we could see their hearts toward us. We were so grateful for their real love for us. We weren't 'being taken.'

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<sup>84</sup> Even though Austi and Penina had been working, they hadn't gotten paid. In Israel one gets paid once a month, on the tenth of the month, for working the previous month. It's a terrible system for those who live from day to day.

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On March 10th the tension between Austi and Penina reached a high point. Penina came over and told us that she couldn't take it any longer. Austi was jealous of the relationship between her and Zoli and he was causing some problems. Zoli, at this point, was leaning toward Austi, and so Penina felt betrayed. We shared with Penina that the situation she was in was not godly. She was living with a man outside of marriage and God calls that sin, and whenever we sin we hurt ourselves and others. We told her that it wasn't the way God wanted her to live. We didn't condemn her. She felt our love and concern for her. We shared that with her so she would see that she wasn't as 'good' as she might have thought she was, and that before God, there was a need for forgiveness of sin, which is why Yeshua died. We spoke to her about this so that she might change her living arrangements. She listened and it affected her.

On Wednesday, March 13th, Ruti and I took Zoli, Austi and Penina out for lunch. Zoli needed to leave after that. He had a number of massages to do. We then took Austi and Penina to the Mall to get Penina some glasses. She hadn't had a new pair in seven years. She needed them. Her left eye had changed so much that she was bumping into table legs and walls. She was so excited and grateful that we would do that for her.

Then we went upstairs in the mall and all of us got some frozen yogurt and went back downstairs and got Penina a new pair of shoes. She didn't have a good pair. Austi wanted to go see Zoli, who did his massage right on the beach, which is next to the mall, and so it left just Penina and us. We bought some cashews and macadamia nuts and went outside to sit down on a bench in the shade and to look out over the Gulf of Eilat.

Penina thanked us again and told us, with tears in her eyes, that no one had ever done anything like that for her. She said that as much as the gifts meant to her, what really meant the most was our love for her. We told her that we loved her very much, and said it was all because of Messiah Yeshua—Him loving us and our wanting to share His love with her.

The next day Penina told Ruti that the night before, she took her shoes out and put them on the table and just looked at them for an hour. She was so overwhelmed with them (and her glasses) that she said she was going to sleep in them (the shoes)! Excitement like that is very special and showed us not only how much it meant to Penina, but also how young she was emotionally and how abused she had been growing up. We thanked Yeshua for leading us to get the glasses and the shoes for her (and for all those who helped to make it possible for us to do it).

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We spent three hours with Penina. I wept as I related how I lost my sons when they were only four and two years old, to their mother who had taken off with them 13 years earlier, in February 1989. Penina and Ruti also wept. I told Penina that it was part of the price that Ruti and I had paid for loving Yeshua with all our heart, so that He could send us to Israel for Zoli, Austi and Penina, and others. Zoli, who had found out about it before, had told Penina that it wasn't easy for us to be here with our children in the States. We spoke of how much Yeshua loved her, for Him to send us here so that we could be their 'parents' and love them. Zoli had actually spoken something like that to Penina before she had met with us that day. He said, 'God sent them to Israel for us.' I thought that was so precious. Zoli was speaking and reading more and more about God and *Yeazoush*.

On *Shabat*, March 16th, Zoli and Penina had made up and had come over to be with us. We fed them and spoke more about Messiah. On Sunday a catastrophe happened that Yeshua would turn around for His glory. Zoli and Penina were now working together on the beach, Zoli having trained Penina in massage for women. Zoli had set up a massage table in the shade of a bar on the beach, and actually had began doing massage there the previous year.

At this particular time, he had left Penina to attend to something. Some city officials came to Penina and asked about her license to work there, which of course, she didn't have. They said that she would either have to get a license or shut it down. They asked about Zoli. Penina said something about him being her boyfriend and that he helped her sometimes, which made it seem like she was the boss and Zoli was just helping her out.

Zoli (and Austi) hadn't been able to renew their visas because Israel had taken a tougher stance on foreigners working here, so their visas were 'not in order.' If the men had come when Zoli had been there they would have taken him to jail and deported him. Penina was very distressed. When Zoli returned she told him and he called Austi immediately and told him what happened. After talking it over with Zoli, Penina went to the city and asked for a license. She was told to wait, the boss was out and couldn't be reached by his cellphone. As she waited she prayed out loud to God, asking Him to do this for her, if Yeshua was the Messiah. Finally, the man came in and told her, 'No.' He wasn't going to give her a license to work on the beach. Penina was devastated.

They came over and Zoli wept. I got up, approached him and motioned for him to rise from the couch. I held him for a while and comforted him as a father would hold and comfort a son. He had been waiting all winter to begin

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massage on the beach again. He had his hopes set on making money so they could move out of their apartment into something nicer. Eventually, he wanted to go to New Zealand.

I asked him if we could pray. He and Penina were open to that. We told them that Yeshua was bringing them into a time of testing, to see what path they would follow when their 'backs were up against the wall.' We prayed that the Lord would strengthen them and take them by the hand and lead them into His Kingdom. We also told them that we had begun to fast and pray that day, and that we would continue until Monday, lifting up their need for work, etc.

On Monday morning Penina felt she needed to go back and talk to the manager. At first he was adamant against giving her a license, as he had been the day before, but as she spoke of it being a source of income for her, and that she didn't want to work on the casino boat, he began to soften. By the time she left he told her that she would have the license in a week or two. A few hours later he called her and told her to come in. He would give her a temporary certificate until the new one came.

Zoli and Penina were elated! This way they could work on the beach, that day. As Penina shared the story with us over the phone in the afternoon, she was well aware of what she had asked God the day before. With the door very much closed to her, the Lord had swung it wide open the next day, to answer her prayer about whether Yeshua was the Messiah or not. Ruti and I were overjoyed! Thank You, Lord Yeshua, for working in their lives!!!

On Wednesday we were told that Austi had been let go of his job at the car wash. It's not that he hadn't been working hard, but they had too many men for it. Austi liked working there because it was outside and it brought in money daily with tips. In Israel one gets paid only once a month, and as Zoli had shared with me, many times the Israeli bosses hadn't paid them because they knew they didn't have the right visa papers. When pay time would come the boss would say, 'Who are you?! I don't know you! Get out of here!' At other times, with different bosses on other jobs, they might get paid half of what they had been promised. Can you imagine working for a month and not getting anything for it, or only half of what you expected? It was very evil and revealed the wicked hearts of many Israelis, who also needed Yeshua.

Penina wouldn't get paid from her casino job until April 10th, for the hours she worked in March. It's awful to have to wait so long for one's justly earned money. Penina would buy some needed grocery items with money she would make on tips, but it wasn't much money. She said,

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‘How can a man lose \$10,000 in one night and not give her anything for a tip for all the drinks she had brought him?’

She said the ‘small people,’ the ones without money, who came on the boat just to try the ‘one armed bandits,’ would leave ten shekels (about \$2.12). Now though, with Penina working massage with Zoli, she had quit the casino job. Good for her! They worked her seven days a week—and these were the good guys! We were glad she was out of that environment.

I phoned Zoli and asked him how his food situation was. Zoli doesn’t like to speak about his needs. He asked if I would talk to Penina. She got on the phone and said they didn’t have much. I told her to come over with Zoli and that we would all go shopping as a family. At the store I told them that funds were tight for us, but that we could get about \$50 worth of food for them. They were grateful.

At the checkout counter the bill came to \$94 (in shekels). Penina wanted to put some things back, but I said that it was alright. What they had gotten, they really needed. In paying the bill it left Ruti and me with about \$10. We had some cash in the bank in the States, but we were looking to save that toward our rent, which would be due in a few days, on April 1st.

At the checkout counters in Israel the clerk becomes a salesman and asks if you want to buy a number of things that happen to be on sale that they just happen to have at the counter. Most of the time it’s a waste of time and it holds up the line of people, looking to pay for their things and go. If someone wanted something else they would have gotten it before, but the stores want you to buy more, even if everyone else is inconvenienced. Well, the day before I had gotten some groceries and noticed that if one bought 100 shekels (\$21.25) worth of groceries, some toilet paper was on sale for eleven shekels (\$2.60), which was much less than the regular high price of 30 shekels (\$6.40). At the counter the girl spoke of it and I told her that we wanted it. Penina looked astonished. She said,

‘How did you know that we needed toilet paper?! I forgot to pick it up. We haven’t had any for three days.’

That was an indication of their financial situation and food in the house. I shared with Penina about knowing that the toilet paper had been on sale and that I remembered how long it had been since we had gotten some for them before. I told her that I had thought they could use some about now. Ruti shared with Penina that she needed to let us know when things like that were needed, and I thanked the Lord for the Israeli practice of ‘holding people up in

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the line.’

As we got into the cab to take them and the groceries home, Penina said that it felt like ‘the first time’ for her again, when we had gotten them groceries and the deep feeling of thankfulness that she and the boys had felt. She said (again) that no one had ever done anything like this for them, not even their parents. She related how she had asked her mother for ten shekels a few years earlier (\$3.30 then) so that she could get to work by bus. Her mother berated her saying, ‘What?! All the time you want money from me! Go away from me!’

When she would ask her father, who was divorced by her mother when Penina was four years old, he might help her once, and then the next time he’d say, ‘You’ve got to learn to get money for yourself!’

Penina said that here we were, Ruti and I, ‘strangers,’ and we were helping them and *we were asking them* if they needed help! She wanted to take all the things that we had gotten for her, and all the receipts, and show them to her mother and her father so they would feel ashamed. How much she needed their love, which they didn’t have to give to her.

I told Penina that if they didn’t want to help in the first place, they probably wouldn’t feel ashamed. They would most likely scream at her to leave them alone. Penina, like most children, just wanted some loving parental care and attention. I thanked the Lord that He had sent us into their lives.

On Thursday night, March 21st, Zoli and Penina came over and told us that in the morning, water had come through the ceiling of their apartment and that when they turned the water on in the shower it didn’t smell good. They had also been battling with ants and cockroaches, even though they kept the place very clean. Now they wanted Ruti and me to go looking with them for an apartment. I asked them if they had enough money to put down on an apartment, if they liked one. They didn’t. I said that unless they had money it was futile to see one they liked, only to be told they would need a deposit. Also, just looking for apartments costs money, to get there by taxi. We didn’t have funds for that, either.

I shared with them that as much as we would have loved to have helped them financially, we didn’t have any money for that right now. We needed to pay about \$850 for two months rent on April 1st ourselves (as we paid every two months at this apartment) and we only had \$250 of it. So we were praying for that, and for money to help them as well. We wanted to see them get another apartment, but we weren’t in a position to help them.

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They explained that Austi didn't come with them because he was working on the beach selling something. They had wanted him to come along 'as a family,' so that we all could look for a place. Zoli told us there was some tension now between him and Austi because Austi wasn't as 'clean' as Zoli and Penina. Austi would leave food and clothes out and wouldn't wash his dishes after he ate. Things like that put an added strain on them. Zoli said that Austi was now getting defensive, thinking they were coming against him.

They spoke of their options, of going on with Austi, or of finding a place without him. Austi had said that he could live alone, and also, that any place they found would be good for him. I said that if Austi would chip in and do his share, the three of them could get along, but if Austi wasn't going to do that, then the tension would get worse. Zoli, as much as he loved Austi, said that he didn't think that Austi would change. That's just the way Austi was. He just wasn't that concerned that everything was clean and in its place.

Zoli and Penina were with us for four hours. After the initial time with the 'apartment,' we began to speak of Yeshua. We were being drawn closer and closer together, and they, closer to Yeshua. It was an emotional, divinely intense time. Penina shared how her mother had told her that she had wanted to kill her while she was still in the womb, by soaking in a hot tub filled with alcohol and some kind of herbs. We saw how the mark of her mother's continual violent rejection of her had affected her soul. Penina took her mother's Valium pills one day, trying to commit suicide. Her mother found her and began to beat her and scream how worthless Penina was. Penina was in no condition to do anything, but because of her mother's screams, some neighbors came over and took Penina away to the hospital, her mother spitting on Penina as she left. We told Penina how sorry we were for that, and spoke of Satan and his demons being the ones who were animating her mother with all her rejection and vileness, and how Penina's mother was 'bound' by them. Penina spoke of hearing voices that would encourage her to go into the sea and drown herself, or to walk off the edge of a building. We also saw she had a spirit of fear.

We told her of the demonic powers that sought to destroy Yeshua's lambs and that we believed she was one of those lambs, and how Yeshua was stronger than all the demons in Hell. At the end we prayed specifically for Yeshua to bind those demons that were tormenting her and to protect and heal Penina. We also prayed for the mending of her soul.

Zoli had a mother who also left a lot to be desired, and a father who was a fitting counterpart to his wife. It broke Ruti's and my heart. These kind of 'par-

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ents' are so devastating to children. We prayed for both of them before they left. Penina was more open to Yeshua than ever before and she could see her need for Him, in the healing of her broken and torn heart. She said, 'I really need Him.'

This is part of the divine work that Ruti and I have been called to do. Even in the States, when we had a congregation, we referred to it more as a 'field hospital' than a typical congregation. There are so many hurting people in need of His Loving care and healing.

It was 10:30 PM when Ruti hugged Penina and I hugged Zoli. We said our goodnights. It had been another blessed evening.

The next day Ruti took the last of three loads of wash, that ZAP had brought over the day before, and hung them out to dry. After washing and drying them on the lines, she folded them. Our clothes line was attached to the outside of the building. We lived on the third floor, with a partial view of the mountains of Jordan and the Jordanian city of Aqaba to the east. We also had a small glimpse of the Red Sea, the apartment building next to us cutting it off from a full view. It was nice, but it was just another place to live, in order to serve Him who loves us so.

On March 23rd, Zoli and Penina came at 1:00 PM for the weekly Sabbath meal. We spoke of Messiah and after eating, opened the Bibles to look at Revelation and the end of time. I wanted to show them Yeshua in His glorified form. From there we went to Ezekiel and the Gospels and we had a wonderfully divine time. Penina, very tired, fell asleep, which wasn't the first time that happened when talking about Yeshua, but we were able to concentrate on Zoli.

Ruti asked Zoli where he was at with Yeshua. He told us that when he gets up in the morning, he thanks God for another day, and when he sees a flower or a pretty scene, he thanks God for that, too. He told us that in his country everyone 'believed' in *Yeazoush* and went to church, but after church they were fighting and arguing.

We told him that many people 'believed,' but they hadn't been Born Again (John 3:3, 5), forgiven of their sins *and* delivered from them, so they could come to know Him and become like Him and walk in God's love. He said that he was learning more and more about *Yeazoush*, but that he was scared about giving *Yeazoush* his future. He wanted to do certain things and go certain places. He thought that if he gave his life to Yeshua that he wouldn't be able to do them.

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We thanked him for his honesty and shared that we understood. I told him that it comes down to trusting someone we know. When we really know Yeshua's love for us we can fully surrender our lives to Him and trust Him with our future.

Austi came at 5:00 PM and we all sat down with him to eat our second meal. He was hungry and very tired. After dinner I asked him if he would like to lie down on our bed. He appreciated that. He laid down about 6:15 PM and needed to get up at 8:15 PM to go back to work at 9:00 PM, and then he would work until 6:00 AM. When Austi got up to go back to work, Zoli and Penina left for home. All in all, it was quite a Sabbath.

Passover came! Ruti and I sat down to the Passover ceremony at 6:45 PM on Friday night, March 29th.<sup>85</sup> We were about an hour into the ceremony when there was a knock on the door. It was Austi! He hadn't realized that it was Passover and that we couldn't celebrate it with him because he didn't believe in Yeshua. We had told Zoli and Penina to relay to Austi that we wouldn't be able to do our Friday night get together because of Passover, but it didn't seem that Austi had gotten the message. It was just another Friday night to him and he had come to eat, in-between work.

We pulled out a fold-up table and set it up very nicely a few feet away from our table in our small kitchen-living room. Austi ate some lamb and other assorted things from our Passover table. We sat with him and 'conversed' as best we could. He spoke Hungarian with just a little English. It went really well. He was with us for an hour and then just before he had to leave to go back to work, Penina called. She only wanted to know how we were doing and if they might be able to come up, her and Zoli.

Austi left and about five minutes later, Penina and Zoli came in and sat at the same table that Austi had sat at. Now there were two place settings instead of one. They hadn't eaten all day and were very appreciative of the food. We talked with them until 12:30 AM and then Penina realized they had 'interrupted' our Passover ceremony and that we hadn't even eaten, yet. We told her

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<sup>85</sup> Interestingly enough, this would be the first Passover we would observe according to the Karaite Abib concept. The Lord allowed me to do it that year to show me they were wrong. We had always gone by the new moon sighting *on* or *after* the vernal equinox to establish the first month of the biblical year, and would return to that in 2003. The Karaites, not farmers, don't follow the commandment for the barley to be harvested *before* Passover (Lev. 23:10), and hence, their Passover dating was a month early that year.

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that it was alright because we loved them so much that we didn't want them to leave!

About 1:00 AM we continued with our Passover ceremony, Penina and Zoli having left, with much love and many hugs. By 3:00 AM, or thereabouts, we ended our Passover ceremony. It had been divine. Not because of the ceremony so much, but because we had laid aside our God given agenda (Ex. 12; Matt. 26; 1st Cor. 5:6-8) to do His agenda for us—to feed and meet the needs of His 'lambs in the making.' We were overjoyed and also totally worn out. By 3:30 AM I told Ruti we had to go to bed, and so even though we didn't stay up all night, it was a beautiful Passover. As we sank, and I do mean *sank* into bed, I asked Yeshua to forgive us for being more like the Apostles that last night than like Him. He stayed up all Passover night, but they were too tired (Ex. 12:40-42; Mt. 26:36-75).<sup>86</sup>

Two weeks later, on Sunday, April 14th, Penina was contemplating suicide. She was very angry, speaking of revenge against Zoli and Austi. Zoli had broken up with her. Ruti and I prayed on Sunday for the spirits of revenge, suicide and self-pity to be bound in the name of Yeshua and for Yeshua to release the Holy Spirit to minister to Penina.

Penina was with us the *next* night, from 6 to 9 PM. We fed her and she shared what had happened to her the day before when she had gone back to the apartment. She said after we had prayed for her, 'something came over' her, and her desire for revenge gave way to wanting to do something nice for Zoli and Austi. She began to clean the apartment, starting first with Austi's messy room and was almost done with the whole apartment when the boys came home. Thank You, Yeshua, for protecting Penina!

Austi was very touched by what Penina had done and this opened up a time of communication between them, Zoli acting as translator. Penina spoke English and Hebrew, with a pinch of Hungarian. Zoli spoke Hungarian and English with a tablespoon of Hebrew; and Austi spoke Hungarian with a teaspoon of English. Penina shared that she didn't hate Austi, but she couldn't live with him because of his sloppiness. It went well, except that Zoli, who had been deeply hurt, was trying to distance himself from Penina. Zoli said it didn't change anything between the two of them. Penina responded kindly and said, 'OK.' It's been overwhelming for Zoli, being caught in the middle of the trian-

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<sup>86</sup> See *Passover* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Passover.pdf> for why the Lord commands us to stay awake all night for Passover.

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gle, but what Penina did was nothing less than divine.

Penina came over on Tuesday and shared what had happened. She stayed with us for awhile and was already out of our apartment, halfway down the stairs, when she looked up and asked if it was alright if we could pray for her. She came back into our apartment and we prayed for her.

Ruti sensed some demonic oppression around her (Ruti's) chest. She gets that many times in cases where the Holy Spirit is alerting her to the demonic presence oppressing the other person, with a tightening of her own chest (like there were bands around her chest, constricting it). We prayed and the demonic presence left. I asked Yeshua to reveal Himself to Penina, and that she, like Father Abraham, would become a friend of God (Is. 41:8). Thank you for your prayers for ZAP! —Zoli, Austi and Penina!

Wednesday morning, just as Penina awoke, she said she felt as if there was this Hand on her head, stroking it gently. She said that it made her feel very good and that when she got up, she did so with 'a smile.' Penina said she never gets up with a smile on her face. Thank You, Yeshua!

On Tuesday, April 30th, after we had gone shopping with them for food, they went to their apartment with the food, and we went to ours and got their wash for them. Penina got into an argument with Zoli. She later told us that she couldn't contain the anger any longer. It brought a major rift between them, with Penina (again) packing her things and saying that after the birthday party she was going to go home. We were going to give Penina a birthday party on May 2nd. It would be her 25th birthday.

Their relationship was like a metal known as mercury. Or, using an Oklahoma metaphor, 'It's like the weather—don't like it? Stick around for 15 minutes—it'll change!'

It might be that enough of it would be thrashed out between Zoli and Penina so that Zoli would be able to attend the party. Austi wasn't involved in the rift and he was excited about the party for Penina. He had already bought some gifts for her. Austi liked Penina.

We also thought that Zoli might come, whether it was worked out between them or not, in deference to Ruti and me. We had seen him swallow his pride before and be here with Ruti and me (and Penina) because of his love for us. Or it could be the last straw and he wouldn't show up. We prayed that Yeshua's hand of love and protection would be upon all of them.

Penina had developed a sort of soft boiled egg-like material on her left eye in

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the lower left hand corner, about a quarter of an inch (0.6 cm) in size. We took her to an optician after the blow-up, the one who had fit her for her glasses. She said that Penina needed to go to a specialist. The optician thought that something had gotten into her eye causing an ulceration and that it needed to be taken out.

Penina would have it checked out in Afula, the city where she was from, and where she was registered with the medical profession (Israeli health care). That would be another reason for her to return home as soon as possible. Afula was about a seven hour bus ride from Eilat. As the crow flies it's only 220 miles (350 k), but one needed to transfer along the way and it was Israeli highways, which many times were only one lane each way.

Ruti and I both sensed, independently from each other, that we shouldn't ask Penina if we could pray for her eye. Penina never asked us, either. Ruti felt that the Holy Spirit was telling her that Penina didn't believe and that it would be a fruitless endeavor. With something like this I wait until the person has exhausted all medical treatment and then they may be open to asking Yeshua to heal them. Before that they generally look to the medical profession 'as God,' and so, they're not really looking to Yeshua.

By the time her birthday came around, Penina and Zoli had patched things up. Somehow it didn't surprise Ruti and me. We were getting used to the roller coaster. For the birthday party lunch we had bought some sliced turkey and (kosher) salami meat, cheese and bread, and Ruti had made some potato salad. We had some cake and ice cream and it was all delicious. Austi had bought Penina a big stuffed doggy and she liked it. It was soft and cuddly. He also bought her a type of purse-gym bag. It was very nice and the love he expressed for her was genuine.

Zoli had gotten Penina a 'special' necklace made of rawhide, with a kind of medallion on it that I think had once been part of the bark of a tree. There was a pink color to the middle of it and it had been glazed over. It was pretty, and I'm sure it was meaningful to Zoli, but inexpensive.

When Zoli gave it to her he began to weep. Later, Penina asked him why, and he said that it was at times like this that we took on the aura of a loving family, and his heart was touched. Zoli was very sensitive and sweet. Even though they all had parents growing up, they were like orphans, looking for a family and love they never had. It seemed like the Lord was giving them that, in Ruti and me.

We told them that at family birthdays we like to give gifts to everyone, as we

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had done with Zoli's birthday, so that everyone felt the birthday joy.<sup>87</sup> We were able to say that we were giving each of them 500 shekels for clothing. That was about \$102 each (with the shekel where it was that day). They couldn't believe it. (It's almost like getting paid for a week's work here.) They were so grateful. It turned out that Austi and Zoli didn't need or want any clothes, and so they asked, 'Would it be alright to spend it on, or toward, a disk player?'

We thought it would be alright for them, but not for Penina, who also wanted what the boys wanted. We said that she really needed to use it for clothes. She didn't have much, and what she had, well, she could use new clothes. I said that we were all going to go to the mall, like a family, and each one was going to get what they wanted, with all the others being with them. It turned out to be just wonderful, going from one place to another with all of them. Austi and Zoli 'went first,' getting their disk players, and then the birthday girl, Penina. It was our way of saying that we loved them all equally and that we wanted to see all of them blessed on Penina's birthday.

Halfway into getting Penina some pants and shirts, Austi had to leave to go to work. We hugged him, he not wanting to go, but having to, and then there were only four of us. We were able to get Penina three pair of pants and four shirts, going slightly over the 500 shekel mark, but realizing that she needed it, and that Yeshua had provided. We spent 818 shekels (\$167) on clothes for Penina that night and were overjoyed to do it.

Penina was so grateful! No one had ever done anything like that for her—the birthday party, the gifts and the love! Thank You, Yeshua!!!

Two days later, on Saturday night, May 4th, about 8:30 PM we went to the mall to buy a few more clothes for Penina. In one of the stores we came upon a woman sales clerk named Esther, who was about 55 years old. She was very quick to point out to me that the tassels I wore on my belt were not biblical tassels or *tzit'ziot*. Why not? Because they needed to be on a part of my clothing attached to a four cornered garment. I've had this conversation before...

I could see that explaining to Esther that the *tzit'ziot* were the part of the commandment that God was concerned about (Num. 15:37-41), and not so much the four cornered material (Deut. 22:12), would prove fruitless. I said that 'for me' they were *tzit'ziot*. That satisfied her, and so I asked her a question: 'What

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<sup>87</sup> I started this practice with my sons, Zavdi and Yoel. Whenever Zavdi's or Yoel's birthday came around they would both get gifts. This way everyone was happy for the 'birthday boy.'

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will you say to the Lord on Judgment Day so that He would allow you into Heaven?’

She replied that she had been good and had followed the commandments. I asked her if she read the *Tanach*. She told me that she did, saying that she followed the weekly Torah portions and the commentaries on it. I said, ‘Good...’

‘Now tell me where God says that because you are good and you follow His commandments that you will have eternal *Life*.’

She said there wasn’t any place like that. I was pleasantly surprised to hear her say that. Most Jews don’t realize this. I told her that what the Bible declares is that we must have a blood sacrifice to be forgiven of our sins. How can we enter His presence under our ‘goodness’ if we haven’t received forgiveness for all our sins? She replied there wasn’t ‘any Temple or sacrifice, so how could that be?’ ‘Good question,’ I told her.

I said that God had already given us a sacrifice. I asked her if she had ‘ever heard that Messiah had come?’ She knew immediately where I was going with that and said that some people believe that Messiah had come before, but she was still waiting for the Messiah. This was a typical Jewish answer to get around dealing with Yeshua as the Messiah.

I asked her if she had ‘ever heard that there were two Messiahs?’ Again, much to my surprise and delight, she not only told me that she had, but reeled off the names of them: Messiah the Son of David and Messiah the Son of Joseph. I told her that, perhaps one in a hundred Jews knows this. She was pleased with that. Then holding up two fingers, I said, ‘The two are one,’ and put my fingers together to emphasize their oneness.

‘God has sent His Son, our Messiah, to die for us, that by His Blood sacrifice we might be forgiven now, and also, be seen as righteous and worthy of eternal life on Judgment Day. With belief in Messiah Yeshua we come to know our God by His Spirit. God, through the prophet Ezekiel, in 36:22-27, tells us that He would bring us Jews back from all the lands where He had scattered us. Then He would sprinkle us with clean water, taking away all our filthiness and sin. He would take out our heart of stone and give us a heart of flesh and fill us with His holy Spirit so that we could know Him and walk in His ways. Only through Messiah Yeshua can this happen to you.’

She was fighting this, but had nothing tangible to say. She grimaced when I

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told her about Yeshua being God's Son because I also said that He was God in the Flesh. I didn't get into it, but I could have told her of Genesis 2:24, where it says that a man and his wife are 'one flesh.' Why can't the Messiah, and the God of Israel, be *one* in that sense? Both have the *nature* of deity, just as the union of a man and his wife, having the same *human* nature, are one, even though they are two distinct individuals.<sup>88</sup>

We spoke for about 25 minutes. As a sales clerk she was interrupted about six times, and at any one of those times she could have turned to me and said, 'I've got to go, goodbye,' but she didn't. She hung in there with me and that was to her credit. Soon she really did have to go, but she had listened and interacted with me all that time about Messiah Yeshua.

Later, I thought to go back to the store and offer her a few chapters of John in Hebrew. I had written out in Hebrew (on my computer), the first seven chapters of John so I could print them out to give to Israelis, who might normally not want to accept a Hebrew New Covenant. If she took the papers, read them and was interested, I would give her a Hebrew New Testament, but when we returned, she wasn't there.

Thank you for praying for Esther. She was very knowledgeable about her Judaism and Bible. She was a rare find, not only among Jewish women, but also among Jewish men! I thanked Yeshua that we had felt led to buy Penina some more clothes. He came to heal the broken-hearted and Penina, Zoli and Austi were so in need of His Love, tenderness, healing and *Life*. These three are our children, bonded by His Love.

On the evening of May 15th, Zoli told us that he was reading the Bible that we had given him and that he was very impressed with the crucifixion and the pain that Yeshua had gone through for him. He couldn't get it out of his mind. Many times he had told us that he would go to sleep reading the Scriptures and he would get up in the morning with the Bible still in the bed with him. Also, two days before, he had told Ruti and me that the Bible was 'so heavy.' He said he couldn't read it like it was just another book. He could only read a page or so, and then he had to stop and think for 15 to 30 minutes upon what he had just read. Talk about convicting me, and Zoli didn't believe in Messiah Yeshua, yet!

A few days before this he had said that he didn't know what it was, but 'some-

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<sup>88</sup> For more on why the nature of Yeshua is deity, see, *Yeshua—God the Son* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Yeshua-God-the-Son.pdf> and also *Yeshua—His Deity and Sonship* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Yeshua-His-Deity-and-Sonship.pdf>.

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thing' was 'in front of him' and he couldn't make out what it was. I wondered Who that might be? Zoli was so close to entering the Kingdom.

Penina loved us so much, and was amazed that we loved her and loved her and loved her. She knew that fear made her feel the need to be 'in control' of her life. She also realized that it brought her the very things she feared. She wanted to be healed. She had told me the night before that she knew that Ruti and I were 'good,' but sometimes she was very afraid because of her mother's image and anger always 'before her.' I asked her if Ruti or I were causing that. In other words, if Ruti or I acted like her mother to make Penina feel uncomfortable. She told me that it wasn't us, but her. She was feeling anxiety, not because it was a relational problem between the three of us, but because of her own heart. She had expressed her fear before, that she would do something to turn us away from her. It was a fear, from her mother, that said to her that she didn't deserve us and that she wasn't worth our attention and love, and that soon, it would all be over and she would be rejected again.

I told her that I understood and that we would always love her, and that with Ruti and me, she had an opportunity to walk out of those fears and be healed. She wanted to. Thank you again for your prayers for Penina.

Penina was accepting correction from me and she was changing, 'slowly, slowly,' as they say here in Israel. I told Ruti that it would take Penina her whole life 'to change,' but in moving toward that goal her life would continually get better. Of course the *Changer* of our lives is Yeshua. Only He could bind up and heal the crushed and broken heart.

Ruti and I thanked Yeshua for His strength and His love, to give of ourselves to Zoli, Austi and Penina, and 'to be there' for them. This was our heart, and we believed, His heart, too.

Penina came to say 'Good-bye' to Ruti and me before she left for Afula to have her eye checked. Of course, we didn't hesitate to welcome her in, but even in this there was much anxiety because Zoli and she were 'on the rocks' again. Zoli followed her and there was much tension. Penina defended her position of being right and that Zoli confused her, with him saying one moment that he loved her and the next, telling her that he needed some space. Penina didn't see that she was very much a part of the reason for the strife, but what can carnality accept? It's not that Zoli was pristine and innocent, but this was part of living together when they weren't married, and the 'not knowing' of one's place in the heart of the other.

Penina left for Afula, and I spoke to her on Tuesday night, calling her at her

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father and stepmother's home. She wanted to come back to Eilat until Saturday night, because her stepmother hated her and made life miserable for her. I asked her where she would stay and she said with Zoli. She had some friends here who didn't like that she had left without saying goodbye, and her mother wouldn't be home in Afula until Sunday. Penina was afraid to be alone in any house, and so she didn't want to go back to Afula because her mother and her stepfather were going away from Thursday until Sunday. That's why she wanted to come to Eilat until Saturday night (and travel all night to get home to Afula by Sunday morning—her mother would be there for her in the evening). She was also most likely missing Zoli and thinking that maybe they could get back together again. I asked her why she had left in the first place, and she caught on that it might be a lot of stress and confusion for her now, too.

On Thursday, May 30th, 2002 Penina called from Afula and told us that she had taken a pregnancy test and tested positive. (She had gone to Afula anyway, to get away from her stepmother.) The week before she had told Ruti of tenderness in her breasts, and that on the bus out of Eilat she had felt something in her belly and involuntarily placed her hand on her belly. She was deathly afraid to tell her mother because her mother had beaten her almost to death for much less.

On Monday, June 3rd, Penina called and confirmed that she was pregnant, having taken a blood test in a clinic. She wanted to leave Israel and go to the States (where a former Israeli boyfriend lived illegally in Chicago, his visa having run out), or go to India (her stepfather planning to go there before the crises between India and Pakistan broke out, and he was now looking to take Penina with him to live with his family there for a month or so). Of course, she would have loved if Zoli wanted to marry her, but she knew they had just parted ways and that his marrying her would only be under (baby) pressure. She also spoke of not telling him so that he wouldn't feel that pressure, but Ruti and I told her that it wouldn't be right. The baby was just as much his child as it was hers. It would be sin for her not to tell the father of the child about the child.

We gave her another option—we would be willing to help her live in Eilat if she wanted to rent a place here. We would help her in 'any and every way' that we could.

In the afternoon Zoli ate supper with us and we discussed the situation. He was suspicious. He wanted to make sure there was a baby, by having Penina send him some official clinic paper stating such. He said that other women

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had used 'being pregnant' on him, and so, he just wanted to make sure. Zoli was in the midst of moving to another place and was also working on passing an exam on Thursday for a license to drive speedboats in the waters of Eilat. If he passed he would be able to work because he knew a man who would hire him.

I told him that whether or not he married Penina, the child was his and the child needed a father, as well as a mother, even if the two of them weren't together. I didn't think Penina was lying. I said that he had both a financial responsibility to Penina and the child, and a relational responsibility to his child. I also told him that if it didn't work out between him and Penina before the child, having the child wouldn't make their relationship any better. It would only add stress to an already stressful relationship. Zoli agreed, and said he couldn't take people shouting at him, and Penina was a classic volcano when she was angry. It was understandable. There was a lot of rage in her from being abused and not loved when she was younger.

At first, Penina was against having an abortion, but now on the phone she was telling me that some people (the medical staff at the clinic) had said her life would be ruined if she had the child. Of course, her life had been one giant disaster without the baby, but in her situation, all she could see was what she wanted for herself in the future, and the child would restrict her selfish, destructive lifestyle.

We told her that abortion was murder. There was a life within her and if left on its own, in nine months she would give birth to a beautiful baby who would give her much joy. She was emotionally distraught though, and not wanting to accept the responsibility of a pregnancy and a child, especially without a husband. Oh, how sin begets more sin and pain.

Penina felt very alone and trapped. Ruti told her the people who suggested to her to have an abortion didn't have to live with the guilt of it for the rest of their lives. To them, her child was disposable.

Penina had been walking the streets all day and hadn't had much sleep the night before, and hadn't eaten or drunk anything. I told Ruti, who was speaking to Penina at the time, to say to her that I didn't want Penina to do to her baby, by not eating and drinking, whether intentionally or unintentionally, what her mother had tried to do to her (abort Penina in a very hot bath filled with herbs).

Ruti then told me that Penina said,

'I don't want to hear that! Nobody cares about me! I have to

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make all the decisions myself!’

I asked Ruti for the phone and spoke with Penina:

‘Penina, when you were here sitting on our couch we would talk about God and sin and your sleeping with Zoli and how it was wrong. You began to move away from that, wanting to please God, and not sin against Him. Isn’t that right?’

She said ‘Yes.’ I said,

‘Abortion is a very heinous sin in God’s eyes. Now you are dealing with a matter of life and death. The life and death of a child, your child, Penina. Please let the child live.’

‘Avram,’ she said, ‘I’ll call you back in five minutes, I want to get some water.’

‘Good, Penina.’

Although she didn’t directly respond to my words about abortion, it was a good sign that she wanted something to drink. We talked again a few minutes later, me telling her that right now she needed to get some food and sleep. I offered to help her again. An apartment was opening up right next to us in just two weeks. She could live there. She had some back pay coming from her Army service on June 11th,<sup>89</sup> and with that she could move in and begin to buy a bed and table for herself. When we spoke the next time, she asked,

‘Who will want to employ a woman who’s pregnant? How will I get money?’

I told her that someone might employ her and then I asked,

‘How have you gotten money to live for the last five months?’

She said that we had given it to her and asked, ‘But how long will you be there to help me?’ I told her there were a number of doors before her. If she took the one that Messiah Yeshua was offering her through us, we would help

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<sup>89</sup> Most Israeli men and women do Army service after high school. Many of the religious don’t. Most secular Israelis don’t like that the religious get out of defending the country by studying at their religious schools. This was something that David ben Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel, used to entice the religious political ‘block’ to join him in his government when the State first began. It has been a serious offense in the heart of every Israeli who has lost a son or daughter, father or mother, in the many wars that Israel has fought since 1948.

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her as best we could and for as long as we could. I said,

‘I can’t guarantee that I’ll put the child through university, but we’ll look to Yeshua. He is Faithful and He will provide.’

We ended the conversation and I told her we would talk the next day. We called Penina on Tuesday night, June 4th, to see how she was doing. It seemed that she was more determined than ever to abort the baby. Ruti spoke with her for about 40 minutes. It went back and forth between Penina’s anger over Zoli (not conforming to her wishes; that he would comfort her and tell her he was with her in this, for he had called her after we had told him); to not wanting to take us up on our offer to help her here in Eilat; and maybe to go to Chicago.

She also told us that she spoke to her mother about it. Her mother didn’t beat her or scream at her, as Penina had feared, but had *suggested* to her that she abort the baby because it would make Penina’s life miserable. She also said that her life (Penina’s mother’s life) would be destroyed, too. Then Penina’s mother left it with Penina as to what to do.

How pathetic and demonic that no thought was given to the child. How thick the darkness and deep the sin that covers my people.

Just before Ruti ended her conversation I asked to speak with Penina. I could hear Ruti struggling to bring Penina to a sense of reality, something Penina didn’t want to think about.

I told Ruti that the Lord had given me something to say to Penina. I spoke to Penina and said,

‘Penina, I know that you would like to put all this behind you, and that aborting the baby seems to be the way to do it, but I want to tell you that if you think you’re in agony and confusion now, after murdering the child you’ll find yourself in a place of torment that you have never known before. You will not be able to live with the guilt of what you have done to your own baby.’

Penina had been thinking about this very thing and had her answer for it. She said that after aborting the baby she would commit suicide because she knew that she would not be able to take it. I said,

‘Penina, I have a question for you. Who would want you to murder your baby and you? God or Satan?’

‘No one can tell me what to do!!!’ she screamed.

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‘Penina, you’re either listening to God or to Satan. There is no in-between in this case. Penina, you’re very perceptive. I want you to try and step back, if you can, and think about my question.’

‘Avram, the doctor told me that it wasn’t a baby and it wouldn’t be murder!’

‘Penina, the doctor lied to you. It is murder. I’m telling you that and you know that, too. You would be taking a life. I think that deep in your heart you know that you have a baby in your womb. You have sensed the new life, even if the child isn’t ready to be born, yet.’

She said that she had to go to the bathroom, and so we ended the conversation. During the time that Ruti had been speaking to Penina, many times I wanted to say, ‘We’ll take the baby,’ but I held off, wanting to speak to Ruti about it. I shared that with Ruti, and the next day, in the morning after prayer, Ruti came to me and said that she thought we should offer that option to Penina.

Ruti called her and said that if she would carry the baby to full term, we would take the child and raise it. We also said that whenever she wanted to be the child’s mother, it would be alright with us. She could see the child daily, weekly, or whenever, and she could take the child when she felt she wanted to, if she wanted to. She could see the child as often as she wanted, or she could leave the child with us and never see it. We wanted to give her as wide a range of options as possible.

Penina didn’t want that. She didn’t like the idea of going nine months and then giving the baby away. We pleaded with her, but to no avail.

I called Penina on Thursday, June 6th. Ruti and I thought it was necessary for Penina to know more fully the consequences of her actions, in relation to us. As much as we loved her, if she chose abortion, we couldn’t continue to be involved in her life. We wanted to present a barrier to her that showed her just how serious this matter was to us. She knew our deep love for her, and that we considered it murder, and that this would be one of the consequences of her action. We hoped it would be an incentive to her to back off from aborting the child.

I called on Friday, but Penina refused to speak with me. There wasn’t much else we could do. Ruti and I were praying that Yeshua would intervene and

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cause her to go full term with the baby. It seemed that Penina's fear, that she would do something to sever our relationship, was coming to pass.

In the midst of this disaster with Penina, Zoli accepted Yeshua as his Messiah. It was bitter-sweet for Ruti and me. On Friday night after dinner Zoli told us that he loved Yeshua and had accepted Him. We counseled him to make it very personal by asking Yeshua to forgive him for all the sins that he could think of, when he went to bed later that night, and to ask Yeshua to come into his heart. We shared the need to be Born Again, and to read the Scriptures and pray on a daily basis, seeking to find out who Yeshua really is, and to seek Him for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Austi, too, was coming along, desiring to hear the Word whenever we were together.

Zoli needed much prayer. Even though he was 27 years old he was still very much a young and tender boy inside, trying to make sense of the dark world around him that was so harsh. Shortly after Penina left, the time at their apartment expired and he needed to leave. Austi had already moved out into another place. We wanted to help Zoli get into the apartment next door to us, but the money that we prayed to Yeshua for, never came in, so that option could not be taken. Instead, Zoli accepted an offer from a woman who wanted him. At first they weren't sleeping together, but it wasn't long before they were.

I counseled Zoli like a father, telling him that as one who loved *Yeazoush*, he didn't want to do that. It was sin against God, the woman and him. I said he needed to sever his relationship with her and find another place. We would pray together for Yeshua to open something up to him—both a place to stay and to work. I had thought about him staying at our place, but it didn't seem to be what Yeshua wanted.

More would later come to the surface. In a conversation, a couple of weeks later, with his new girl friend, Divera, she related how 'God' used her to heal people and that she knew that in her former lives she was once a Pharaoh, and you won't believe this, an (American) Indian princess. This is an Israeli Jew-ess, with lineage from Europe through South Africa, who has never been to the United States. Why is it that everyone who believes in New Age 'former lives' is always someone of importance, like a king or a princess? Why don't we ever hear that they were just ordinary people, like a janitor or a slave? Satan knows how to entice and deceive people and fill up their ego.

We said to Divera that it wasn't the God of Israel who was doing this for her, and gave her a paper on Yeshua being the Messiah. We had spoken of her need for Yeshua before, when Zoli first introduced us to her, but now we could see a more specific reason for her to come to Him. We told her that we had to

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separate from her because the way in which she was walking was not something that we could walk with. She thought that we did not know what we were talking about. We told her that we understood and said that if she ever wanted to have *Life* from the God of Israel, we would be there for her.

Then we spoke to Zoli. Unfortunately, he didn't want to understand. He still needed to fully give himself to Yeshua, not just 'believe' and 'accept' who Yeshua was, but to fully surrender his life to the King of Israel and be Born Again.

Ruti and I didn't know how far we could continue to walk with Zoli, if he didn't sever himself from Divera. We shared that with him on *Shabat* (Aug. 17th) when he and Austi came over to eat with us. Austi left before Zoli did and that's when we brought the subject up. I said to him,

'If *Ima* (Mama) and I thought we *couldn't* have a relationship with Divera, because of her spiritual dealings, how much more for you?'

He was deceived. He thought we didn't know Divera as he did. He told us that she was really a good person. We told him that we loved her and that we were believing and praying that she would give her life to Yeshua, but until then we couldn't socialize with her because she was openly walking in the ways of Darkness.

Austi returned to Hungary in December 2002 and Zoli married Divera. A little more than a year later they would have a baby boy on Jan. 6th, 2004.

The day before the child was born the Lord brought us back into Zoli and Divera's life. We hadn't seen Zoli since that last *Shabat* with Austi.

Zoli phoned us on their way to the hospital. He said they had taken a cab to the hospital because Divera was going to have the baby, but he didn't have any money to pay the taxi that took them to the hospital.

Divera had the baby. We came to the hospital with some food and money for them. They were both very appreciative. We sought the Lord about our relationship with them and began to help them financially. They had their second son on June 11th, 2007. We continued to help them financially, with rent and food money, as a sign of His love for them. The Lord had brought us into a situation which we would just as much have left alone, but we desired to be obedient to Him, even and above our own understanding.

Zoli would 'grow in the Lord' because of the great tension in the marriage. He

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had left one volcano for another. Because of our entering back into Zoli's life he would come to genuinely give himself to Yeshua and be filled with the Holy Spirit. He was reading the Word and praying every day, and he would come to have 'a strength from Above,' develop in his soul. It has been a real spiritual battle for him, but he has struggled with the Lord and he has learned more about His Messiah and himself.

Divera would become semi-open to the Good News. We pray that one day Divera will give her heart to Yeshua.

Thank you for your prayers for Zoli, Austi, Penina and Divera. They truly need them.

## *The Way to Israel*

One day in March 1995 there was a knock on our door in Tulsa, Oklahoma. John, a man who had been coming to our congregation for a few months, came in and told me that he was ready to send me to Israel. This was very interesting, but not the first time that someone had said something like that to me. Being a shepherd who loved Yeshua and Torah was not the most lucrative job around, and so, we had no money for flights to Israel, but we believed that one day the Lord would send us. In fact, about four months before John had come to the door, Ruti had gotten in prayer that the Lord would send us to Israel in the spring of 1995.

John sat down on our couch and I asked him,

‘What makes you think that the Lord wants you to do this?’

John just laughed. He said,

‘For the past three months, three words kept coming to me over and over again. At first I thought it was just a nice idea, but then I realized that it was the Lord.’

I asked him what the three words were and he said, ‘Avram to Israel.’

Ruti was in the next room and she heard what John said. She fell on her knees, weeping in thankfulness, remembering what the Lord had said to her.

When I mentioned that ‘I never leave home without Ruti,’ John told me that he had only gotten ‘Avram.’ He was open to lifting it up to the Lord though, and after a day of prayer he said that he would send the both of us. Bless him, Lord!

Ruti and I prayed about it, and the Lord confirmed our going to Israel, a number of times during the following week. We gave John our answer and then he asked me if we wanted to go to Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. There was never any hesitation or question on my part—Jerusalem.

It was May 31st, 1995 that we left the States, exactly 12 years to the day that I had begun The Seed of Abraham, the first congregation in Tulsa that believed in Yeshua and His Torah. May 31st is in the spring—the Lord had kept His word to Ruti. She and I boarded the plane that would take us to the Land that God had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob’s Seed, but we didn’t know if it was going to be a seven day vacation, with John paying for the flight and the hotel, or if we were to stay there.

The only place that our hearts were drawn to, in all of Jerusalem, was the Wailing Wall (the southwestern section of the retaining wall for the Temple

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Mount platform). Going there, the morning after we had arrived in Jerusalem, I picked up a Jewish prayer book from the many tables that have them there and I approached the Wall. I asked the Lord, 'Is this a vacation or are we to stay here?' I turned the book over and over again in my hands, until I didn't know the front from the back of the book or whether it was upside down or right side up. I opened it at random and began to read in Hebrew, the 'second blessing after meals.' I read,

'We thank You, Yahveh our God, for giving to our Fathers, as an inheritance, a desirable Land, good and spacious! You have delivered us, Yahveh our God, from the land of Egypt, redeeming us from the House of Slavery!'

As my eyes fell upon those words the Holy Spirit began to well up inside my belly and what passionately came out of my mouth was, 'I want to stay! I don't want to go back!—and I knew the Lord had answered my prayer about whether this was a vacation or not. Ruti, on the women's side of the Wall, would also sense that we were to stay.

Looking back over the previous two years in Oklahoma (1993-1995) we could see Yeshua severing us from our lives in the States. He had been preparing us in many ways for life in Israel, even before that. It's not easy here, and unless He prepares the person, they'll most likely find it too difficult and go back. The most difficult part of it is the spiritual aspect, with ancient demonic principalities warring against any and all believers in the Land. If one is not fully grounded in Messiah Yeshua and prepared to give Him *everything*, he won't last long in Israel. Yes, he might still live here, but he'll be as dry, brittle and useless to God as a leaf that has fallen from a tree and has been baking for days in the hot summer sun.

We began to look for a place to live in Jerusalem and everyone told us that we would never find an apartment to rent in the *summer* of June 1995 because of the tourists. What did we know? We didn't know anyone in the city except Yeshua : ) He opened up a place to live, in the middle of Jerusalem, with only one night left on our hotel room. The area we came to live in is known as the Heart of Jerusalem (*Lev Yerushalaim*). It's a heart in need of a transplant (Ezk. 36:26).

Ruti and I saw the hardness of Israeli hearts, the 'me first and only' attitude. There's much perversion and sin in Jerusalem, and in all of Israel for that matter. To walk down the street is to see the lifelessness in the eyes of the Israelis. They have been brought back from all the nations, and they're 'standing,' but they haven't yet been sprinkled with the Water that will cleanse them from all

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their filthiness, nor given the Spirit of *Life* (Ezk. 36:22-27; 37:1-14), not yet, but it's coming, as sure as the rising of the sun in the east tomorrow. That's why we're here, and by no means are we the only ones, nor the only ones praying for Israel to come to her Messiah.

With only one night remaining of our time at the hotel in Jerusalem, and having seen a number of worthless, but very expensive 'apartments' over the last two days, we watched as our cab driver, Ariel (Lion of God), who had befriended us, battled an Israeli landlord for us, to give us the apartment he had for rent. It was a classic case of ping-pong. Ariel, in having taken us to several places with no success, had gotten to know us. He was sitting to our left on a sofa chair. Meir Dror, our potential landlord, was to our right, sitting on another chair. Ruti and I were sitting on a couch to their sides, able to see the both of them at the same time. We had a fine front row seat as we watched them banter back and forth in Hebrew.

At first it looked good for us, but then Meir found out that, because we had just come to Jerusalem, that we weren't Israeli citizens. He called his lawyer, who immediately told him not to rent the apartment to us. If we didn't pay Meir for rent, there would be no way that he could bring us to court to get it, but Ariel went to bat for us and told Meir that if he didn't rent the apartment to us, he would kill Meir! We would later find out that what Ariel had said was a way of telling Meir that he loved us, and that Meir could trust us. Ariel was vouching for our character and basically saying that Ruti and I were family to him, and that he was willing 'to fight' for us. Meir understood.

It was still very intense though, and so I stepped outside the front door for a moment, which had been left open, and was close to where Ruti was sitting. I sat on the steps just outside the door, listening to Ariel and Meir going at it. I lifted it all up to Yeshua and I told Him that it was all His. If He wanted us there, good, but if not, that was alright, too. I walked back inside and sat down next to Ruti. It didn't look good for us. I told Ariel,

'If he doesn't want us to be here then just let it go, Ariel. I don't want to force him to do something he doesn't want to do.'

With that, Meir said we could stay. I hadn't realized that he could understand English, but he did, and what I said must have tipped the scales in our favor, Meir sensing that he could trust me. We gave him most of the money that we had, which would cover two months rent and a deposit, and took Ariel out to eat supper with us. We slept at the hotel that night and the next morning Ariel

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picked us up and drove us to our new two room apartment.

True to his word, Meir had told us the previous evening that he would get us a refrigerator, and there it was—a classic, most likely made about 40 years earlier in the 1950s, complete with a large ‘Lucky Strike’ logo adhesive sticker, which decorated much of the door. The logo was about two feet (.7 m) in diameter. The refrigerator didn’t seem much bigger than it. The fridge was *maybe* five feet tall (1.5 m) with a capacity to hold about three shoeboxes worth of food, but we were just glad that it worked and that we were in Jerusalem! It didn’t take long to unpack our two suitcases (each) and our carry-on bags. That was all we had taken with us, even though we had thought we might be living in Jerusalem, and not just going on a vacation to the Promised Land.

A few hours later someone knocked on our door. It was our neighbor. Introducing himself he said that if we needed anything, to please let him know. We had only a small kitchen table and one chair, but Daniel and his wife Sarah, gave us one of their chairs. Now Ruti and I would be able to sit down at the table and eat at the same time.

Daniel and Sarah Moses lived on the same floor with us. Actually, we were in a house with three floors—a basement partitioned off into two ‘apartments’ as living quarters, with a room or two for each partition, our floor, at just above ground level, with two small apartments, and the next floor, where Meir and his wife Dalia lived with their one year old daughter, Didi.

Our first Sabbath in our own apartment in Jerusalem was so peaceful and quiet. It was wonderful to be living in the City of the Great King (Psalm 48:2; Mt. 5:35).

Every Thursday, Sarah, who was 72 years old, would begin to prepare food for *Shabat*. On Friday afternoon she would send Daniel, who was 75 years old, over with some food for us. It was such a sweet and loving gesture from their hearts to us.

Ruti would send back with Daniel some salad and other things that she had made for us. This would continue until we would leave the apartment, a year and eight months later, when Meir would ask all the tenants to leave, so that he could renovate the building. That’s how we came to live in Mevaseret Zion, for four months, and meet Sam the **rock** thrower.

## LOST SHEEP

On Feb. 18th, 2003 Ruti and I witnessed to an Israeli couple who had been born in Europe. Hanz was from the Netherlands and Devorah from Belgium. They were very interested in Yeshua. Hanz had grown up thinking that he was a Gentile. He found out, when he was 20 years old, that he was Jewish. His Jewish parents had given him to friends of theirs, a Gentile couple, during the Nazi onslaught. Devorah (Deborah) came from a French-Jewish background. Hans was 63 years old and Devorah was 40, and they had a 15 year old daughter named Sharone. They had never heard of any Jews believing in Yeshua.

On Monday night, March 10th, Ruti and I took Hanz and Devorah out to eat. It would be our last time together, as they were moving to Ashdod on Thursday, March 13th. Ashdod, on the Mediterranean Sea south of Tel Aviv, is about a three hour drive from Eilat. It was one of five ancient strongholds of the Philistines, and the first city where the captured Ark of the Covenant was taken (1st Sam. 5:1f.).

Ruti and I were able to give our testimony, and we also prayed for Devorah at the dinner table. She had been under a lot of stress with the move, and Hanz had just been in an auto accident the week before. The car was wrecked, but Hanz had come out of it alright. It impacted him though, concerning the frailty of his own life.

When Ruti prayed for Devorah, Devorah began to weep. After prayer Devorah said she felt relieved from much of the stress. Thank You, Yeshua! About halfway through our two and a half hour dinner, I brought out a Dutch New Testament for each of them. Devorah said that she was just about to ask for something they could take along and read. The timing of the Lord is *always* perfect.

We explained that it was written by Jews who either walked with Yeshua, and saw Him risen; or the Jewish man Saul or Paul, who would see Him a few years after the resurrection; or by Luke, the Gentile believer, who traveled with Paul. I told them to begin at the book of Matthew and ask the God of Israel to reveal Himself to them, and that they should,

‘seek Him with all their heart to find out if Yeshua is the Messiah. If He is, then all that the Prophets wrote about the Messiah is true—only He can give us New *Life*, forgiveness of sin and a new heart like His, now, and for eternity on the Day of

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Judgment.’

They both expressed interest and Ruti and I were pleased. Hanz had been into Freemasonry and mediums. He hadn’t realized that it was against God’s Word (Lev. 19:26, 31; 20:27; Dt. 18:9-11) until I brought it up. I told him the reason why they can be so ‘accurate’ is because they are known as ‘familiar spirits.’ They are spirits that have been around since Creation, know what our fathers and grandfathers, etc., were like, and are able to impersonate them, luring people further into Satan’s Camp.

Devorah, too, had times where she thought her father was the one who was ‘looking out’ for her. He had died when she was only nine years old. At forty, Devorah was still hurting over the loss. Both of them had been open to demonic influence and they didn’t know the Word of God. This made it easy for Satan to deceive them, but that was changing.

Devorah called us on Monday night, March 17th. Their move to Ashdod on Thursday had gone well and they were settling in. *She had to call us.* There was a connection here for her to us in terms of our walk and trust in Messiah. She needed that. She worries a lot. She needs His peace.

Devorah told me that Hanz and she had read up to Luke 2, and said, ‘It’s like a story. I like that.’ She told Ruti, ‘As I read it I felt so peaceful. It made me really feel good.’ That’s why she called us. Thank You, Yeshua!

She also said that she felt less nervous and thanked us for that. When we gave her the Dutch New Testaments that night in the restaurant, one for Hanz and one for her, she told Ruti over the phone that she had thought, ‘One would have been enough.’ Now though, they were reading it together, each one having their own to look at and she was grateful for that.

She also said something else that was very powerful in relation to the Jewish people and the Land of Israel. Devorah spoke of Yeshua and all He did, and said,

‘The reality about the Land of Israel is that it really is a holy land that we live in.’

Yes! He never takes His eyes off of this Land:

‘For the Land that you are about to enter to possess is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sow your seed and irrigate by foot, like a vegetable garden, but the Land that you are crossing over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, watered by rain from the heavens—a land

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that Yahveh your God looks after. The eyes of Yahveh your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.' (Dt. 11:10-12)

Thank you for your prayers for Devorah and Hanz—two lost Jewish sheep in need of the Good Shepherd.

## SHULI—THE FIRST MOROCCAN

One of our neighbors in Eilat was Shuli (from Shulameet; an affectionate feminine way of saying Shalom), a Jewess from Morocco who had come to Israel with her family in 1960 when she was seven years old. She had married and divorced twice, and had four grown children. On Sunday, May 11th, 2003 Shuli told Yeshua that she wanted Him to forgive her of her sins and come into her life. Ruti wept as she heard it. We had been loving and financially helping Shuli for more than a year. She was most likely the first Moroccan Jewess to come to Messiah Yeshua since *Shavu'ot* (Pentecost) in Acts 2.

We had just seen the film 'Jesus' (in Hebrew). Her two daughters, Ofira (27) and Sagit (19), were also there. I had ordered some pizza and we watched the movie. At the end, the narrator led anyone who wanted to give their life to Yeshua, in a simple prayer. Shuli repeated after him *out loud*. It was incredible. She would tell us afterward that she had intentionally done it in front of the girls, and her 17 year old son, Ae'yal. He had come in about 30 minutes before the movie was over. Shuli did it so they would all hear her and know that it was a *good thing*. She didn't want them to be afraid.<sup>90</sup>

Shuli said that when she was a little girl she had visited a church in Jerusalem, as part of a school trip, and she was curious about Jesus. Of course, she had kept it to herself. Now, she said, after she had come to know us and how open we were about sharing Yeshua, she didn't have to be afraid anymore. Thank You, Yeshua!

The next day we called her to check in. Shuli told us that she was very happy. Her outlook on life had changed for the better. That was saying a lot because she had been very depressed.

We began Bible studies with Shuli in her home. This way the girls and Ae'yal could join us if they wanted to. There was so much to teach her and so much that she needed to 'unlearn' about Judaism and Jewish superstition. By the way, Ofira was married to Amos (the one whom Yahveh supports; Ami for short) and they had a two year old son named Ma'or (to enlighten). They lived in Netanya, which is a six hour bus drive north of Eilat. Ofira had been down

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<sup>90</sup> Many Israeli believers are afraid to tell their neighbors, or anyone else, that they believe in Yeshua. They could lose their jobs; their kids could be beaten up; rocks thrown through their windows and homes set on fire, etc. Believers who don't tell others about the *Light* within, find that *Light* getting dimmer and dimmer over the years. We are made to be rivers, not stagnant ponds.

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to visit. Sagit was married to Ilan and they lived in Eilat.

Shuli turned out to be a real evangelist. She told just about everyone of her new found faith in Yeshua. She had already tasted rejection and anger from Jews who didn't believe, which is common for Jewish believers, but we comforted her and showed her how to respond to those attacks, and to those who were open.

Shuli devoured the Hebrew Bible that we gave her. She had read all the *Tanach* (Old Testament) and was into Luke in *two weeks*. On Tuesday, May 27th, we went to her place and the Lord led me to Psalm 23, because Shuli was speaking about how poor she was. As we read it, the Psalmist says that because Yahveh was his Shepherd, he lacked no good thing.<sup>91</sup> It's not that perhaps he didn't have all that he thought he needed, but with Yahveh he had everything.

That didn't affect Shuli. She spoke of how hard her life was. I spoke of how lonely and hunted David was, by King Saul, but that it was part of God's training ground for the young shepherd so that one day he could shepherd the House of Israel. Shuli appreciated that, but she said, the wicked have cars and money, and so we went to Psalm 73. Asaf, who was the chief musician of King David and also a prophet, had similar thoughts until he went to the House of Yahveh. Then he realized what the 'end' of the wicked would be.

From there it evolved into a time of sharing our testimony, and about the Holy Spirit, and how we need Yeshua's Spirit to walk uprightly in this world of Darkness. It was very powerful, reinforcing to Shuli the need to reach out to Yeshua for His Love for her. We were there about three hours and it was a divine time. The Lord was using us to help Shuli along the *Path of Life*.

Shuli was just a babe in the Lord and needed much prayer and nurturing in the Word, but she had just stepped over a tremendous barrier into the Kingdom of her Messiah. We were also looking for the rest of her family to come, as they saw Shuli's life change from one of despair to *joy*.

On Thursday, Sept. 23rd, Shuli told us that Yeshua had appeared to her early that morning. She sat in our apartment that evening and related how it happened. At about 4:00 AM someone tapped her on her left shoulder. She had gone to bed late and was very tired. At first she thought it was Sagit, who had slept over. Shuli said, 'I'm tired. Go away.' The gentle tap came again and then a voice, 'Shuli, wake up...wake up.'

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<sup>91</sup> 'Yahveh is my Shepherd. I lack no (good) thing' (my translation of Ps. 23:1).

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Shuli told us that usually, if something like that happened to her, she would fight the person waking her up, but this time she didn't. She opened her eyes and there He was. She said to us, 'His face! His face was so full of *Light* and so bright, and His hair' as she parted the middle of her hair at her forehead to show us what she had seen. Yeshua said to her, 'Don't be afraid.'

Shuli said that His voice was so peaceful and it made her feel that way. She had been extremely tired when He had tapped her on the shoulder, but now the tiredness had left her. He said,

'You were crying out to Me for many years. I sent Avram and Ruti to help you. They are very close to Me. I have tested them many times. They have given up much for My Name.'

'Avram and Ruti have been helping you with money. At first their help was a little, and now, it's much larger. Be careful. This money that they give you, you must use it on what it's meant for. Avram and Ruti are sacrificing so they can give you this money. Never use them.'

Shuli said, 'I understand.' Shuli would ask us if we thought that she was using the money for things other than what they were meant to be used for. Ruti told her that, most likely, the reason why Yeshua said this was not because she had done wrong, but that He wanted to warn and instruct her—to reinforce to her not only that the money was to be used for the things that it was designated for (e.g. food, electric and past debts), but that it was money that fell into the 'sacrificial and holy' category and wasn't to be taken lightly. (Addiction to gambling had been a big problem for Shuli, as well as for some of her brothers.) Shuli said that Yeshua told her,

“‘I know you have faith in God,’ and then He laughed! ‘But your faith in Me is not strong. I will show you, and in time, your faith in Me will grow. Wait. You will see. I’m working in you now.’”

I had been praying for months that Yeshua would literally reveal Himself to Shuli and I was just amazed that He had done so! We could see that Shuli's faith in Him wasn't strong, and we believed that if He did reveal Himself to her that it would grow. When Shuli sat on the couch and told us about it, her eyes got real big and she said,

'In truth, Avram and Ruti! Yeshua came to me! I swear to you! I'm not lying! Look! I'm still trembling,' as she showed

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us her shaking hands.

I think she said that because it was so unusual, and Shuli didn't want us to think that she was lying or crazy. We told her that we believed her, and that we were overjoyed, and had been praying for that.

Yeshua also told Shuli to tell Ruti not to be afraid about any health problems. (Ruti's been going through some health problems over the past few years, trusting Yeshua to heal her.) Then He blessed Shuli and told her not to worry, but to believe in Him. He said there were,

'many people crying out for help, but there weren't many people to send.'

This reminded me of His Words about the Harvest being plentiful, but the laborers being few (Mt. 9:36-38). Oh, how that has become a greater reality in our lives, as we pray to Him for laborers to help us in this Work!

Shuli told us that she wasn't surprised when Yeshua said that Ruti and I were 'special' to Him. She went on to say that it was 'very hard work' that we did, in reaching out to our Jewish people:

'Nobody wants to hear! Nobody believes! Yet, here you are in Israel. It's like you are fighting with the people to believe. This is why He sent you. It's very hard to stay.'

There is much truth in what Shuli said. Only because Yeshua lives in us and trained us in the States and gives us His joy in the midst of Darkness are we able to persevere.

Ruti told Shuli that she had a special calling from the Lord, and as she walked with Him, she would grow stronger in it and be used much by Him. I told her that I was very pleased with the way Shuli had spoken to many Jews about Messiah Yeshua, even though most of them told her she was crazy. Some had even questioned if she really was a Jew! Jews can accept a Gentile believing in Jesus, but not a Jew!

I said their insults were part of the tests the Lord had designed to strengthen her. Many believers wouldn't continue to speak of Messiah after continual rejection, but Shuli not only continued to share Him, she also grew in knowledge, biblical knowledge of Him, so that she could point out to them the prophecies of Messiah from the *Tanach*. She was a good student, learning a lot from our Bible studies and applying it.

Ruti told Shuli that as more and more people spoke of Messiah Yeshua it wouldn't be so foreign to Israelis. They would become more open to Him.

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Many have not even heard of Him. Ruti said that at times, Israelis would tell us, in a good way, that they had never seen people like us (i.e. Jews believing in Messiah Yeshua *and* walking in Torah).

When the visitation from Yeshua was over, Shuli told us that she felt so alive. She had only slept a few hours before that, but she wasn't tired at all. When Sagit woke up, Shuli tried to relate it to her, but Sagit was afraid and asked her mother to stop. Of course, Sagit didn't believe in Yeshua, but we're praying about that. Shuli is very special to us. Leading someone to Yeshua creates a bond between them. It's part of the joyful fruit of sharing the Lord of Joy.

On Wednesday, Oct. 21st Shuli came over to our place. It was such a blessing for all of us. She came at 11 AM and stayed until 6:30 PM. When she first got to our apartment we could see that she was tired. Her children made many demands upon her and she hadn't learned that they were old enough to cook their own meals and clean up after themselves, especially Ae'yal. They were using her and wearing her out. Now, with her belief in Yeshua, they were also mocking her. That was hard for Shuli.

She had come with her Hebrew Bible and I told her that I wanted to put her on a Bible reading plan. I showed her where John, Acts, Romans, Hebrews and Revelation were, and asked her to read them. She had already read Matthew and Deuteronomy with Ruti in their time together, but I felt that she needed to get an overall picture of who Yeshua is and what He did for her. Ruti wasn't able to be with her immediately because she was preparing lunch, and so Shuli began to read the assignment on our couch.

At first, when she saw how long John was, she asked me, a little concerned, if I wanted her to read it all that day! I told her that I didn't expect her to read it all in one day, but that this was what she could be reading when she went to the Bible, and that she should be finished with John in a few days.

I had been working on a letter on my computer and so I got back to that. A little while later Shuli asked me a question from John Six. It took us to other parts of the New Covenant, and we, by this time Ruti was with us, were off and teaching more about Messiah Yeshua. She saw that Yeshua was the *Bread of Life* that had come down from Heaven—what the Manna had pictured in Moses' day, and Yeshua was the One who we had to come to in order to have *Life*. We also saw how He will be the Judge on Judgment Day, and that we are to honor Him as we would honor the Father (Jn. 5:21-24). We had a blessed time in the Word, thanks to the Holy Spirit.

The *Shema* (Dt. 6:4-5), with its, 'Yahveh is one,' is part of our Jewish con-

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sciousness. Yeshua, being equal with God, was a problem for Shuli, as it is for most Jews, and some Christians. As she read I explained Yeshua's Sonship, one-ship and deity to her, and she began to understand it better.<sup>92</sup>

Then it was time to eat lunch. Ruti had made some brown rice, eggs and fresh salad and we ate it with some bread and butter. We talked about Yeshua at the table. After the meal we could see that Shuli was tired and we urged her to lie down on our bed. At first she didn't want to do that, thinking she was putting us out, but Ruti insisted and Shuli laid down at 2 PM. When she got up at 5 PM she looked much better and told us that when she had gone to lie down she didn't think she would even fall asleep, but she felt so peaceful that she just went off to sleep. We had just set the table, smiled and said she was just in time for dinner.

What a time we had! Shuli blessed us with memories of when she was growing up in Israel. She was the oldest of ten children. Her father and mother had come from Morocco with her and a few siblings in 1960 when she was seven, and more would be born in Israel. She told us of the very, very small house they lived in, half of which was shared by a Jewish family from Argentina! It was hard times and they had little money and almost no food, but this was the situation for just about everyone in Israel at that time. Shuli's mother, Rosa, made sandwiches for them to take to school, of bread, olive oil and a *little* sugar sprinkled on it. Shuli was embarrassed at lunch because the olive oil would invariably run through the bread into all that was around it.

There weren't many paved roads then. Shuli walked in the dirt to get to school, with two brothers on her left hand and two on her right. Many times they didn't get to school on time because of all the children to get ready and she would get a slap on her hand from the teacher who wanted her to be there on time.

In all this Shuli looked back with fond memories as she remembered how close she was, not only to her younger brothers and sisters, but also to the family that 'lived next door.' They only spoke Spanish. Shuli, coming from Morocco, only spoke Arabic and French, but eventually she would learn Spanish, and they would learn some Arabic and French (and they would all learn Hebrew, of course). To this day they are still very close.

Shuli needed to leave us at 6:30 PM and we invited her back again the next day. She wasn't able to come over the next day, but a few days later she came.

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<sup>92</sup> See *Yeshua—God the Son* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Yeshua-God-the-Son.pdf> for a biblical understanding of how the Father and the Son are one and are both deity.

### *Shuli—the First Moroccan*

We wanted to teach her as much as we could in the time that God had for all of us. We didn't know how long the Lord would have Ruti and me to stay in Eilat and there wasn't any other place there for her to learn the things about Yeshua that we were teaching her.

When Shuli came to our apartment we would teach her about Yeshua through the Word and we would also praise Him and pray. We would also eat lunch and/or supper. One time at the lunch table Shuli expressed wonder and gratitude at how much Ruti and I had been helping her financially. 'You suffer with us,' she said. She meant that she had seen times when we had given her money for food and we didn't have money for food ourselves. That meant a lot to her. Not that we didn't have any food, but if we had wanted to go shopping we wouldn't have been able to.

After lunch we read from the New Covenant. Shuli said that I knew a lot about the Scriptures because I explained things to her as we read. I told her that I was thankful to Yeshua because He had taught me, *and* for Him opening *her* eyes because once I would explain a passage to Shuli, even if she had thought differently about the passage before, she was now able to see how it was meant to be understood. That, I said, was the Work of the Holy Spirit within her.

We prayed, asking Yeshua to grow inside of her and lead her deeper in the *Path of Life*. Shuli is simple and childlike in her faith, but also weathered in this life. She's 49 years old, a mother of four and grandmother of one, with another one on the way. She was abandoned by her first husband, when she had two young children, and she had two more children with her second husband, but divorced him because he was abusive and violent.

Shuli loves us very much and really likes to read the Scriptures and pray, and that just thrills Ruti and me. She had so much to learn and so much to unlearn, but as impossible as that seemed to me at times, the Holy Spirit was working within her. I would hear her say something divine about the Lord or the Bible and my hope for her would be rekindled. I also realized that 28 years ago, when I first gave my life to Jesus, I had a long way to go and didn't realize it! The Lord was giving Ruti and me a lot of His grace for Shuli and we were very grateful. Glory to Yeshua!

We were walking 'with her,' and she was part of our family. If we have we share, even to the point where we might not have for ourselves for tomorrow. A small price to pay for our sister to know the love of Messiah Yeshua.

At supper she spoke, saying, 'Who needs my problems?!' She went on to ex-

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plain that we had helped her in such a special way for over a year, not only with food, but starting the previous September, helped her to organize and begin to pay off her debts. She had many debts and wasn't able to pay any of them, as what little money she would get from the government barely fed her and kept her in the apartment. We sat down one day and listed all the debts and then Ruti and I said that we would help her pay them off, giving something to each of them every month. With Yeshua's help we began. Shuli wasn't able to work full time because of her health. Sometimes she would pick up house cleaning jobs, and other times she would rent out a bedroom in her apartment for a few days to help get extra funds. (Eilat is a tourist town for many Israelis.)

Shuli's face was so full of gladness and joy as she sat at our table. She told us that she used to be afraid to look in her mailbox because there would only be letters demanding money for unpaid debts. She had also been afraid to walk on the street because she had borrowed money from friends and acquaintances, and of course, when they would see her they wanted their money back. Now she wasn't afraid. She had paid most of the people back and was in process of settling all the other debts.

We helped her with her debts on the condition that she *wouldn't* borrow any more money. We were teaching her to trust in Yeshua for her food and everything else. She was learning to live on what God was giving her. It wasn't easy for her, or for us, but it was a joy to see how she progressed and changed to accommodate this new financial lifestyle. She wasn't used to 'not having any money' for days. Before this, she would always borrow, but the offset was that she was breathing a deep sigh of relief. The 'demanding mail' had stopped and she could walk down the street and not be afraid of seeing friends and neighbors. Also, she always had food now, whereas before she hadn't. She compared us to the Orthodox Jews, who she said had helped her—once. After that they didn't come around anymore. Shuli couldn't believe how much we were helping her, which was all praise and glory to Yeshua.

Later, Shuli and Ruti sat and held hands to pray, and I stood and placed my hands on Shuli's forehead. We prayed for perhaps ten minutes, asking the Lord Yeshua to continue to heal the small mass in her neck (from a thyroid condition, which He had already begun to heal, it growing smaller and smaller as we continued to pray for it). We also asked the Holy Spirit to give her wisdom and understanding of God's Word, and for her to grow more and more into who Yeshua really is, and we prayed for her children to come to Yeshua.

After prayer Shuli got up to leave and I could see the effect of the Holy Spirit

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upon her. She said she felt ‘woozy’ and so restful. I said it was the Shalom of the Holy Spirit. I told her that the more time we devoted to praying, the more powerful the presence of His Spirit would become. Shuli liked that.

On Sunday, Dec. 28th, Ruti and I were able to buy Shuli a closet. She hadn’t had one for many months and she wasn’t able to put her clothes in any kind of order. You can imagine living without a closet or a chest of drawers.

In Israel all the apartments are bare. No oven, no closets and no refrigerator; nothing but the walls, which are all cement (no insulation), the floors, the ceiling and the electrical outlets. The closets (wardrobes) are bought in furniture stores and are made of wood or plastic. They’re assembled and stand against the wall. It’s like it was in the States a hundred years ago before someone came up with the idea to design a space for a closet in a ‘wall.’

We also got her a heater. She didn’t have any, and yes, it gets cold in Eilat in December, January and February. The only central heat and air are in hotels, or new and expensive homes and apartments. Other than that, most use plug-in electrical floor heaters. We were also looking to get a window replaced for Shuli. She didn’t have a window in her bedroom, and so she couldn’t sleep there at night, but slept on the couch in the living room, but she wanted the closet first. I had thought the window first, but she insisted. Her window, as well as the entire frame, needed to be replaced.

She was baffled when the man knocked on her door. He brought a wooden closet and would assemble it for her, but Shuli didn’t know anything about it. We hadn’t told her. We wanted it to be a surprise:

Dema (short for Dimetrius, a Jew born in Russia and now an Israeli) knocks on Shuli’s door on the second floor: ‘Here’s your new closet!’

Shuli: ‘I didn’t order any closet...I wish it was mine.’

Dema: ‘Is this apartment 9?’

Shuli: ‘Yes.’

Dema: ‘Well, this is the address the Americans gave me.’

Shuli: ‘That must be Avram and Ruti!!!’

Shuli called us and asked us about it. She was so excited, realizing that it was hers. We had wanted to be there when it came, but the Lord had other plans for us. We were just glad to be a part of His helping hands.

On Monday night, Jan. 12th, 2004, Yafa, a ‘friend’ of Shuli’s, told her of a

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'big rabbi' from Tel Aviv, who was giving a lecture in Eilat. She wanted Shuli to attend. Yafa knew that Shuli believed in Yeshua because Shuli had told her about Yeshua more than a year before. Yafa told Shuli the teaching would be for half an hour. Four hours later Shuli staggered home.

It seems the rabbi gave a teaching to a number of people, perhaps for three hours, and after that, for about an hour, he privately lambasted Shuli for her belief in Yeshua. Yafa had told the rabbi about Shuli. She was sick. Her eyes were swollen from tears. She had been brow beaten by Rabbi Amnon. When she got home that night her 17 year old son Ae'yal asked her why was she so depressed.

The big rabbi from Tel Aviv, thinking that he was doing righteousness, did much evil (John 16:2). The recurring theme of the rabbi was,

'What?! Are you crazy?! You're a *Jewish* woman! You're *leaving* your family, your Jewish people, your children!!!'

Shuli said the rabbi made her feel very guilty for believing in Yeshua. When Shuli tried to tell him about Isaiah 53 (the death of Messiah and forgiveness of sin), or Jeremiah 31:31 (the New Covenant), the big rabbi would go berserk, screaming and shouting and not wanting to hear anything from her, even putting his fingers in his ears. He wasn't about to discuss Messiah with Shuli in a biblical and honest manner. He wasn't new to confronting believing Jews. It was all designed to oppress and humiliate Shuli. She hadn't experienced anything like that before, nor did she realize that she could have gotten up and left the rabbi when the abuse began.

Shuli felt real 'icky' after it, and when we spoke the next morning on the phone, her calling to tell us what had happened, I sensed that we needed to pray. We did and I asked Yeshua to cleanse Shuli with His Blood and His Spirit. I spoke of the demons around the rabbi, and Shuli said that in his anger the 'Big Rabbi from Tel Aviv' even looked like a demon.

A month later, on Tuesday night, Feb. 3rd, I saw holiness and shalom (the peace of God) on Shuli's face and demeanor. It was in her words and in her walk. She was at peace with herself for the first time in her life. All her life she had been her own god, but the night before she began to trust in Another in a very special and deep way.

A few days later Ruti and I told Shuli that we couldn't, in good conscience, continue to support her if she had cable TV put back into her home. She had it for years. When we began helping her to pay all her bills, and to feed her and her family, and to buy household items that she needed, and to fix her apart-

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ment up, she had cable TV, but now it was being cut off because she couldn't pay the bill.

At that time we told her that we wouldn't pay for her to continue to have it. We would pay off the cable bill, but we didn't want her to have any more cable. We couldn't see paying for food and bills, etc. and also paying for cable TV. Aside from it costing about \$60 a month, money that could be used for food, it brought violence and pornography into the home in the form of 'entertainment.'

The cable people hadn't turned it completely off. As good salesmanship they tantalized Shuli by leaving a channel or two on. It was a 'gift' to Shuli. About a month and a half previous to this the gift had ended. Now all Shuli had was Israeli TV, which was mostly (bad) news of terror attacks, talk shows about the terror attacks, endless wranglings of the Israeli government and the so-called Peace Process. Suddenly, there was 'nothing' to watch and her grown children were complaining. Shuli was distraught. They would say things to her like, 'You've *always* had cable TV! Who are Avram and Ruti to tell you that you can't have it?!

Of course, we weren't telling Shuli that she couldn't have it, but that we weren't going to pay for it. A few weeks went by and Shuli was feeling the pressure. She came to us and began 'to deal.' She said, 'What if my son Ae'yal paid for the cable? He's missing it so.' We told her that even if a relative or a friend paid for the cable we couldn't continue to help her financially. It would not only break our agreement about 'no cable,' but it would also be using money for an item that wasn't a necessity and only impoverished the home financially and spiritually.

Shuli, true to her fiery Moroccan ancestry, told us in no uncertain terms that what we were asking was *too much for her!* The 'next thing' she said, was that we would be asking her to get rid of her TV! (We don't have a TV, by choice.) I said,

'Where is *your* sacrifice in all this Shuli? Here we are, not getting things that we need, so you and your family can eat and you can have your bills paid off, and you think that we're asking too much for you to give up cable TV? It costs 270 shekels a month, and only brings in sex, violence and things that are not of the God of Israel.'

She again said that it was 'too much.' On top of that, just a few days before this, we conditioned the amount of our 'food money giving' (which was about

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\$100 a week) upon how many cigarettes she smoked in a day. Shuli was coming to a crossroads with her Lord through us.

Shuli had been smoking about two packs of cigarettes a day for 15 years. After having prayed ‘over her’ many times and asking Yeshua to take away her desire for cigarettes, she had begun to consume less—about a pack a day. She was thrilled. We then thought the time had come ‘to help her’ to descend. I asked her to smoke only a pack a day for the next week, and for the week after that only a maximum of 15 cigarettes a day (as there is 20 in a pack). Then the week after that 12 cigarettes a day. Then only ten a day. I left it at that figure. Shuli said, ‘alright,’ but balked at the ten cigarettes a day. I said, ‘Let’s walk it out and see what happens when we get there.’

We saw two things in this. One, with less smoking it meant there would be more money for food. A ‘cheap’ pack of 20 cigarettes cost about 22 shekels (\$5), and number two, it meant a healthier Shuli. She saw this, too, and wanted it, but was afraid of going too fast. We were aware of that and willing to be flexible, but now with the both of them together, the cigarettes and the cable TV, it was too much for her that day and she broke off from us.

She told us that she couldn’t lie to us and that what we were asking was ‘too much.’ She wasn’t about to change that much for the Lord or for us. She wasn’t about to lie to us for the money, either, which tells us a lot about Shuli. She would rather have a possibility of cable ‘someday’ than to have money for food and cigarettes today. That was Thursday. We didn’t see her again until Tuesday, when she came to us and said that she was ready to continue. We had been praying for her. We knew it was a tough two steps, but we thought they needed to be taken. It’s one thing ‘to follow the Lord’ when one is being fed all the good things and nothing is being required of them. It’s quite another to follow Him when asked to give up things one thinks she needs. Doesn’t our Lord do this with all of us? (Matthew 7:13-14)

Even her son Ae’yal, looking at the practical side of the situation, when he heard what Shuli had done on Thursday, said to her, ‘We don’t have the money for cable anyway! What are you doing?!’

In her four day struggle she thought that we wouldn’t want to ever see her again. She thought that if she came to our door ‘to make peace’ with us that we would tell her ‘to get lost.’ The Lord Yeshua spoke to her and said, ‘They would never do that to you.’

She was a little afraid when she stood at our door and told us that she wasn’t coming to continue with the weekly allotment (money), but only to make

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peace and still be. We rejoiced to see her. She said that even if we didn't give her any more money she still valued our friendship. We told her that we wanted very much to continue to help her because we loved her and her family very much. She was resigned to walk with Yeshua and us. *Resigned*. It was an obedience born of necessity, but a heart that didn't really want to follow, at least not at this point, but even that was a giant step in the right direction for Shuli.

We walked with her for two and a half weeks and then she came one night and we all sat down to dinner together, as we had been doing about four times a week. She liked eating the healthy way we ate. After eating we would have our Bible study, praise and prayer time. Ruti served lentil soup, which was Shuli's favorite and also mine. Ruti has a special way of making lentil soup, blending it with both green and red lentils, which gives it a full body and a richer flavor than just green lentils. We would have it just about every day—it was that good. Many times we would eat brown rice with *humous* beans on top, and steamed broccoli on the side, substituting salad instead of the broccoli when not in season.

Shuli loved it. At the table she began to speak of what life was all about. She had come to see that all her running after money was for naught. Yeshua was the important thing, she said, and the way she said it, we could tell it came from her heart. Something was changing. Shuli was changing. Shuli said that she was looking to feed Sagit, her pregnant daughter, good food for her and her baby. We discussed a number of good foods to eat and we spoke of the *Life* that Yeshua gives us.

After dinner we gave thanksgiving to the Lord for satisfying us with good food and the Land of Israel (Dt. 8:10), got up from the table and sat in the living room and read from the first chapter in the Book of Hebrews. It speaks of Yeshua being God the Son, and that even the angels worship Him. We traced the quotes in it to their sources in the *Tanach* (even though most of the quotes were from the Septuagint and differed slightly from the Hebrew *Tanach*). Shuli was excited! It was 'all there' in the New Covenant, she said, how Yeshua was our Messiah and how much of it came from our *Tanach*. She asked, '*Why don't the Rabbis see this?!*'

I said, 'They don't read it, and they've been lied to about Yeshua. What rabbi would even take a second glance at a Messiah who did away with the Law of Moses, and came into being when his mother was raped, and who was crucified as a blasphemer (as the Rabbis believe)?'

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As our time together was ending Shuli said to me,

‘Avram, *ani yaldah tovah. B’emet.*’ (‘Avram, I am a good girl. Truly.’)

I was 52 years old and Shuli was going to be 50 in a couple of weeks (in April), but she had come to see me as a father figure, and Ruti, who was already 50, as a mother figure (as well as friends). We had fed and nurtured her and her family, and had clothed her, etc., and were showing her *the Way of God’s Life and Love*, as godly parents would.

I asked her what she meant and she said that it wasn’t too long ago that the cable and smoking incident happened and she wasn’t about to go along with those conditions. Now though, here she was and there was no cable TV in her home and she was down to smoking *only three cigarettes a day on her own* (when she could have been smoking ten) and even those three she was only half smoking and throwing away. She was pleased with herself, and rightfully so, and she thanked us for all that we had done to help her to get there, and for setting boundaries for her and asking her to walk in them. She was at peace with herself and her Messiah.

I could feel the shalom, holiness and contentedness of our Lord in Shuli’s words. It was all over her face. There was ‘rest’ for her. She was learning again to trust in Yeshua and not in herself. She had crossed the bridge of self-will and fear and was dying to self and finding *Life* in Him.

I have seen many ‘wonders’ of our Lord among His people, but nothing compared with that night. I knew where Shuli ‘came from,’ and I witnessed the glory, shalom and holiness of our Lord resting upon this Jewish woman, giving her a peace that only Yeshua can give. Her countenance had changed. There was a gentleness in her voice and face that had never been there before. As the Apostle Paul might have said, ‘The Messiah was being formed in Shuli’ (Gal. 4:19).

She was truly walking with Yeshua and no one, not even Satan, could take her away from Him. She was beginning to grow as a daughter of God. There was much ahead for us to tackle and defeat, but a great major victory had been recorded. Thank You, Yeshua!

After she left I began to think of how the Lord had used Shuli in my life to teach me more of His Love, Gentleness, Patience and Long Suffering. He was deepening my training me as a shepherd to be more like Him.

There’s a song that came to me just before I began writing this. I think it epit-

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omizes Ruti's and my heart, not only for Shuli, but for all our Jewish people. I hope it also touches you. This is by Joel Chernoff:

**COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE**

No more will you turn to another for help,  
Nor will you turn to yourself, to yourself.  
Nor will you say, 'Our God' to some other,  
For in Me you'll find mercy.

I will heal your wrong ways, I will love you so freely,  
You will dwell beneath My Shadow.  
I will be as the dew to My people,  
And they will blossom as the lily.

Your beauty will be like the olive tree,  
Your fragrance as Lebanon, Lebanon.  
You will live as a well-watered garden,  
And you will flourish like the vine.

I will heal your wrong ways, I will love you so freely,  
You will dwell beneath My Shadow.  
I will be as the dew to My people,  
And they will blossom as the lily.

Comfort ye My people...  
Comfort ye My people...  
Comfort ye My people...  
Comfort ye My people...<sup>93</sup>

Joel Chernoff took those words from the prophets Hosea and Isaiah who said:

'Assyria will not save us! We will not ride on horses, nor will we say again, 'Our God,' to the work of our hands! For in You the orphan finds compassion. I will heal their apostasy. I will love them freely. For My anger has turned away from them. I will be like the dew to Israel. He will blossom like the lily and he will take root like the cedars of Lebanon. His shoots will sprout and his beauty will be like the olive tree, and his fragrance like the cedars of Lebanon. Those who live

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<sup>93</sup> Joel Chernoff and Rick Coghill made up the Messianic singing group, *LAMB*. Their anointed song is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wZvpbBD75M>.

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in His Shadow shall be revived like grain and they will blossom like the vine. His renown will be like the wine of Lebanon.’ (Hosea 14:3-7)

‘Comfort ye, Oh comfort ye My people!,’ says your God. ‘Speak kindly to Jerusalem and call out to her that her warfare has ended—that her sin has been removed—that she has received double for all her sins from the hand of Yahveh.’ (Isai-ah 40:1-2)

On Tuesday night, March 23rd, Shuli came for our eating time and Bible study. It was on Tuesday nights that I gave Shuli her food money for the week, about a hundred dollars, but this night I wasn’t able to give her all of it. Ruti and I had helped Zoli and Divera and their two month old newborn son. They didn’t have anything in their home to eat. They were very grateful for the food that we bought them, but that left us short for Shuli. As our bank was on-line, with our supporters sending donations there, I looked to see if anything had come in after our Bible time with Shuli. Nothing. I told her that as soon as it came I would give it to her. She was alright with that. I was able to give her \$25 in shekels, which was all the money we had.

The next day, much to my surprise, nothing had come in. Then I began to sense the Lord was withholding funds to test Shuli. She was still alright. When nothing posted on Thursday morning I told Shuli, and I said that we had some food that we could share with her. I also said I would go to the store and get two dozen eggs and some pita bread (which Shuli liked) for her and Sagit (who was with her).

I had \$5 in our bank account, and with a debit card (we didn’t have any credit cards) I would be able to buy those things for her. I walked to the store and on the way there Shuli called me and said, ‘If this is Yeshua, I don’t want Him! He’s not feeding us! I don’t want this anymore!’

She hadn’t been able to hold out for two days, even with the money we had given her on Tuesday night. I didn’t know what to do. Should I get the things anyway or should I just let it go. I stopped for a moment to pray and I sensed the Lord wanted me to get the things. Ruti and I took them over to Shuli, along with some food from our dwindling supply.

She was glad to see us and told us that she was sorry for the explosion. We told her that it would be alright. We would help her as best we could and the Lord would help all of us. She said that she had just ‘gone crazy.’ She had over-extended herself physically, three to four days before this, cleaning and

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painting the stairway in her apartment building (the same one we lived in but at a different entrance) and she was worn out and was starting to get sick. Shuli had sabotaged herself. We had seen this before.

Her four children continued to mock and ridicule her about Yeshua. We saw the pressure she was under and prayed for her, telling her they didn't know what they were saying. God was not speaking to her through them, but we could see it was very troubling for her.

Someone might ask, with four children that age, why didn't they help their mother? Well, the oldest daughter Ofira (28) was married, and there was no money in their home. *Ofira would ask her mother for money.* The oldest son Alon (26) was on drugs and alcohol, part thief and part Don Juan, and he lived far away in Netanya. The next daughter, Sagit (20), was married *and she came over to eat at her mother's place.* At times, after we had told Shuli that Sagit should at least bring something for herself to eat, Sagit would bring some food, once in a while. Shuli's youngest son Ae'yal (18) was in the Army now, and the Israeli Army paid people in his position 300 shekels *a month* (\$70). He would be home at night as the Israeli Army did that to conserve money and food supplies. So, he was there to eat, and gave as he could, but it didn't amount to much.

After the blowup with Shuli and her calming down, everything seemed fine, until Sunday night, April 4th, 2004 (about 12 days from that Tuesday night of just giving her \$25). The Lord was really testing her. We still hadn't been able to give her a full weekly stipend, although we had been giving her food. We would get \$20 or \$30 every few days and we would buy some food and give some to Shuli. I was looking for \$50 or \$70 to come in to give to her, but it didn't, so I used what little that did come in to help us both. No one was going hungry, but Shuli wasn't able to live at that kind of faith level with us, and taunting from her children.

Shuli called one day and said to Ruti that she was going to go back to her old way of life. She didn't want to live without cable TV and she didn't want to discipline her children. We had counseled her to discipline her adult children when they would be abusive to her, or when they would not obey her if she asked them to do something, like put their food plate in the sink after they had eaten, or to pick up their dirty socks from the floor. This was mostly Ae'yal, but Sagit could be like that, too.

Shuli told Ruti that she would send someone over with the Bibles we had given her. She wanted to completely break from us and Yeshua and see how it

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would be. She said,

‘If this is the way it is, I don’t want Yeshua! It’s too hard! I’m throwing Yeshua!’

Shades of Israel in the Wilderness! Ruti tried to encourage her not to get rid of the Bibles. She told Shuli that Yeshua loved her and that walking with Yeshua did involve change through obedience and times of testing. Shuli wasn’t open to hearing that. She had come to a fork in the Road of Life, and because of external pressure from her children and friends, and internal pressure from her carnal nature (pride and stubbornness), she chose to reject Yeshua and us.

Interestingly enough, about three months before this, the Lord had shown Ruti, while in prayer, that Shuli would eject. The Scripture He brought to her was the parable of the Sower of the Seed. He had shown Ruti that Shuli was like the ‘second hearer’ (Mt. 13:3-23). The Seed had fallen on hard ground and the root could not get enough moisture to keep it alive. In His explanation Yeshua said it was because of persecution and tribulation for His Name, although at first there had been great joy.

Ruti hoped this would not be so, but it seemed it this was coming to pass. The Seed was being choked. Shuli had not gone to the Sower for the Seed to be nurtured and strengthened. Ruti and I wept and prayed before Yeshua for Shuli.

After a couple of months Ruti went over one day and seemed to be able to reconcile with Shuli, and her with Yeshua, but it was never the same. Shuli hardly came over to our place for Bible studies and we couldn’t do much at her place because there was chaos there with her ‘children.’

In November 2004 about six months after Shuli ejected, the Lord moved Ruti and me to Ramat Gan, Israel. (It’s next to Tel Aviv.) Shortly after we got there Shuli called us. She was sorry that we had left Eilat. She missed us. She had always thought that ‘Avram and Ruti would always be there’ for her, and even if she wasn’t seeing us, it was good to know that we were ‘right there.’ Now we were five and a half hours away by bus.

Over the next year we would begin again to help her financially, believing we were following the leading of the Holy Spirit. We questioned where she was really at with the Lord, but we only sought to do His will, as He alone knows the beginning from the end and what the ramifications would be (e.g. for Shuli’s children). We spoke with her over the phone, once or twice a week, encouraging her in the Lord, reading and teaching her the Word and praying with her, but we heard a very carnal Shuli. ‘Belief’ was there, but the *Life* of

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Yeshua was missing.

By April 2006 we stopped sending Shuli funds, due to disobedience on her part—a stony heart that wouldn't repent of sin, but we continued to pray for her. We would again feel led by the Lord, a few months later, to help Shuli with funds for food and other things (like a new bed and a pair of shoes). Every once in a while we would catch a glimmer of His Light in her and we would sense the Lord was still trying to draw her to Himself.

Interestingly enough, in 2011 we began to financially help Sagit, and her husband Ilan, and their two young daughters, on a regular basis. They had fallen on hard times, and because of our help, Sagit was being taught, and drawn to Messiah Yeshua. Sagit and Ruti would speak on the phone about four times a week, for an hour or more, and Ruti shared the *Love* and *Life* of Yeshua with her, along with the Scriptures. Sagit really loves Ruti because of Ruti's gentle love, patience and godly wisdom, and Sagit has changed her attitude toward Yeshua. She is close to the Kingdom.

Thank you for your prayers for Sagit and her family, as Ilan, too, is being drawn to Messiah. He is overwhelmed by our love, expressed through the financial help, when even his father and mother don't help him like we have. Also, please pray for Shuli, Ofira, Alon and Ae'yal.

## OREN THE PIZZA MAN

On Thursday night, August 14th, 2003 Ruti and I went to visit Oren. He's part owner of a pizza place in Eilat. He was 28 years old, five-six (1.6 m), and slender with dark hair, which he had just cut close to the scalp, a not uncommon Israeli practice. A number of months ago, when Ruti and I came for the first time, Oren had gotten very excited. He told me that I looked like Messiah (or at least how he thought Messiah should look with my full beard). Naturally I was pleasantly stunned and I knew this was an opening for our Lord Yeshua. I didn't sense, however, that the time to proclaim His Name to Oren, was just then. This was because of how I assessed him. He didn't know anything about the *Tanach*, and of course, only cliches about Messiah.

In the course of time we would go there and I would teach him what the *Tanach* says about the Messiah of Israel. It was all new to him. He had never heard of Messiah dying for our sins or being born in Bethlehem. One day though, I told him of Messiah Yeshua, and like a million pieces from a seemingly unrelated puzzle, he wasn't able to put them together. Now he was stunned.

He spoke of the Orthodox 'going crazy' at the mention of *that* Name. I told him I realized that and as much as I could sympathize with them, the Orthodox were wrong. I could see he was reeling from the fact that here I was, someone whom he looked up to, and someone who looked and walked as a Jew, but coming out of my mouth was something that to him, was totally against the Jews. He was struggling with it.

The place was fairly busy that Thursday night, which didn't allow us to have an on-going conversation. Also, the place is very small. It has just a counter with some pizza ovens behind it, a section toward the back where the pizza was made, and in front of the counter were five very small tables against the wall with two chairs on each side. From the counter to the wall was only five feet (1.5 m). In this space were the tables with their chairs and all the people coming in to the counter to order their individual slices or pizzas to go. They also had an area outside the shop, with a number of tables there, and more room, but it was 110 degrees (43° C) outside, in the shade. There weren't many people sitting at those tables. They had an air conditioner inside, but it wasn't quite adequate to keep up with the heat, the pizza ovens, the people coming and going, and the fact that the door was always open, but it was cooler inside than outside.

### *Oren the Pizza Man*

Oleg was there that day, along with Oren's older partner Iran, and another worker who worked out of the supply room (in the back) and who also helped to make pizzas. Both Oleg and Iran had heard our teaching lessons to Oren before. Oleg was a teenager, 18 years old. His parents and he had emigrated from Russia. He was fluent in both Russian and Hebrew, stood six-one (1.85 m), with a lean build, pleasant face and disposition. Iran was 45, stocky, five-six (1.65 m) with white hair and a slight growth of a white beard. He was in the process of being divorced by his wife. He could pass for the younger brother of Richard Dreyfus. In the times that we had spoken with him he had expressed skepticism about the Hebrew Bible, God, and of course, Yeshua.

While Oren was making pizza and taking orders over the phone, I spoke with Oleg. I told him I wanted to give him a book about Messiah Yeshua. I asked him if he would read it. He told me that he would. Then I asked him if Hebrew or Russian would be better for him. He said that either one would be fine, but I sensed that Russian would be better. Asking him that, he smiled and said yes. I handed him a Bible in Russian and told him that as he read the New Covenant, the Messiah of Israel would come alive to him. He smiled again and thanked me.

While I had been speaking with Oren, Iran had been present and said they were both secular Jews and they believed everything, and if Jesus was the Messiah, they would believe that, too. In the next breath he said, 'What difference does it make anyway?'

I told Iran that biblical belief in Messiah Yeshua brings the Holy Spirit of God, as the prophet Ezekiel spoke of, and that he would know *God's Life* because God would come to dwell in him, and He is *Life*. Also, only with Messiah Yeshua was there forgiveness of sins and the creation of a new nature like God's so that we could dwell with God in eternity.

We digressed for a few moments about 'belief,' and the popular notion of a Messiah who would bring world peace. I realized it wasn't going anywhere so I brought us back to Yeshua. I said that Yeshua was the One our Prophets spoke of, who would come and die for us, that we might be forgiven for our sins and given the Holy Spirit. I told him and Oren about Ezekiel 36:22-27, where God said that He would bring us back to our Land and cleanse us with clean Water, from all our filthiness, which we had picked up in the lands of the Gentiles, and He would give us His Spirit so we could really *know* God:

'This is what Messiah Yeshua has done in dying for us and

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giving us His *Life* giving Blood.’<sup>94</sup>

I shared Daniel’s prophecy of Messiah (9:24-26) and said that even with no understanding of what the ‘weeks’ in Daniel meant, it spoke of Jerusalem and the Temple being rebuilt after the Babylonian captivity. Then the Prince, Messiah, would come, put an ‘end’ to sin, make atonement for us and be ‘cut off’ (die). After that another prince would come and destroy both the city and the Temple. It was really very simple. The Roman general Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 AD:

‘The Messiah had to come *before* the Second Temple was destroyed. Where is the Messiah that the angel Gabriel spoke of if it’s not Yeshua? Forty years before the Temple was destroyed, Yeshua was crucified and rose from the dead.’

Iran was listening and taking it all in. I think that when I get to the New Jerusalem, all the Scriptures I have shared with my Jewish people over the years will adorn my doorposts (Dt. 6:9; 11:20).

I had placed a Hebrew New Covenant on the counter for Oren, but I had not offered it to him, yet. After sharing with Iran what Daniel had written about Messiah, the question of Messiah dying came up and I turned to Ruti and asked her for a Hebrew pamphlet that we had on Isaiah 53. It explains much of what the ancient Jewish Sages thought about the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. Iran looked at it for a moment and put it on the counter, so the two things were on the counter and we spoke some more about Messiah Yeshua. Then it got busy again, so I sat down at a table with Ruti.

We had ordered some pizza slices and drinks. I could see that if anyone wanted to make money, the pizza business was the one to get into. Even though the economy was slow, after three years of Palestinian terrorism and phony ‘cease-fires,’ I couldn’t tell it in this place. Business was booming. The man who delivered pizzas on his scooter seemed to never be able to catch his breath. He would come back from delivering one and be given two more to

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<sup>94</sup> Seeing them over the months I had shared many of the same Scriptures with them. This is important for at least two reasons: one, they didn’t have ‘a Scripture tree’ to hang these things on, so, hearing them only once or twice will ‘go in one ear and out the other.’ Repeating it reinforces it for them, and two, much of what I shared from the *Tanach* went against their own ignorant understanding of ‘Messiah.’ Therefore, it too, needed to be addressed more than once as most people refuse to reassess their thoughts in light of Scripture, especially if I’m bringing a Messiah whom the Rabbis despise. It’s ‘the Jesus who murdered their grandfathers and grandmothers in the Holocaust,’ etc.

### *Oren the Pizza Man*

go. This would go on all the time that we were there.

An Israeli with a *kipa* came in. He had long side-curls on his head (a mark of a more 'observant' religious Jew). The side-curls are a perverse teaching; a 'mystical understanding' of the commandment for wearing *tzitzit* (tassels) found in Num. 15:37-41. The side-curls are supposed to be 'the tassels of the head.' *Oye Vay'iz'mir!* (That's Yiddish for, 'Oh my God!')

I had seen this man before in the pizza place. He went to the back table and sat down (which meant that we were separated by one table). He was 35 years old, six feet tall (1.8 m) with a hard, nasty face and a lean body. His 'look' is very common among the 'more religious.' They are beset by the fact that most of their Israeli brethren aren't observant like them, and by Christians whom they perceive as trying to get them to deny their God-given religion and worship a man (Jesus) instead of God. These, along with the fact that they follow the Rabbis who are anti-Messiah Yeshua and teach Kabbalah, explains the spiritual dryness within them and the darkness around them. It's reflected in their teachings and on their faces.

The man sat down with his back to us and was speaking to Iran, who had sat down there a few minutes earlier. A woman came in who knew the religious Jew and the two of them spoke. Actually, she must have known him fairly well because she was plainly irritated with him. She gave him 'a piece of her mind' and he did the same to her. She was five foot four inches tall (1.6 m) with dark hair and an anxiety about her. Both her and the religious Jew were smoking, as well as Iran. There's a law in Israel that smoking in restaurants isn't allowed, but most Israelis who smoke don't obey the law, or maybe they didn't consider this a restaurant?

After a while the woman drifted over to the counter and began to look at the book and the pamphlet that were still on the counter. I had turned the back of my chair to the wall so that I could face the counter and see what was going on. Ruti had a full view as she was sitting opposite me to my left, now. The woman took the top pamphlet on Isaiah 53 off and showed it to the man. Then she turned around and saw the Hebrew New Covenant. She was upset! What were these doing here?! She gave it to the man and he began to rant and rave, 'This is forbidden! We have to get rid of it!'

Iran calmly reached over the table and took both of them from him, saying that he would take care of it. That ended 'the discussion.' During this time I'm realizing that an explosion could happen, and Ruti and I could be caught up in it. My emotions began to kick in. I was waiting to see what the outcome of this would be and I was afraid. At that point I should have offered up a prayer

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to the Lord, asking Him to give me His love for the man and the woman because I have come to realize that ‘perfect love casts out fear’ (1st Jn. 4:18). When I do this an amazing transformation happens to me. The fear is replaced with His love for that person and I’m not afraid of what might happen to me or Ruti. We’re in His hands. I’m learning this and the Lord gives me many opportunities to put this into practice : )

With Iran doing that, he defused the situation and they went on to speak of other things. After awhile the man and woman left. Iran went back behind the counter and I thanked him for saving the book and pamphlet. He smiled and I could see that he appreciated it. I asked him, ‘If I give these books to you, will you read them?’ He said, ‘I’ll read both of them, but I don’t know if it’ll change anything.’ I said that we would be praying that the Messiah of Israel would become real to him as he read the New Covenant. I told him to pray to the God of Israel and ask Him to show Iran if Yeshua was the Messiah or not, and said, ‘God is real and He will answer your prayers. He is Faithful.’

All this time I could see that Oren had purposely kept himself busy so as not to have to talk to me. He liked me a lot because over the previous months I had taught him much about the Messiah from the *Tanach* and he appreciated that. On more than one occasion, before I had told him that Messiah’s name was Yeshua, he told us of his desire to find Messiah and that if he did he would *immediately* leave everything to follow him. I would tell him that we knew Messiah, and one day, we would share His name with him. He was very happy—then. Now though, it was difficult for him to reconcile what seemed irreconcilable.

Ruti and I stayed a little longer, sitting back down, not knowing how to speak to Oren. Should I remind him of what he had previously spoken to me, of wanting to know Messiah, and then go from there, or just say goodbye and leave, thinking that was all we could do there that night?

As I waited upon the Lord for direction, Ruti asked what we should do and I told her that I thought we should leave. As we did though, I called Oren to the counter. I told him that I wanted to leave a Hebrew New Covenant for him, and that if he would read it, he would meet Messiah. Much to my delight, he said, ‘Because it’s you, I’ll read it.’ I loved him and told him that as he read it we would be praying that Messiah would become real to him. Ruti, who was standing to my left, said,

‘Oren, for the last three days, as I’ve been praying, you’ve come to mind and I’ve prayed for you. I really felt that we were supposed to come here and talk to you about Messiah

### *Oren the Pizza Man*

Yeshua. Twenty years ago I met Yeshua and He totally changed my life. He's drawn me closer to Papa God. Closer and closer and closer, and I know that I know that I know that Yeshua is our Messiah and the Son of God.'

As she spoke she looked straight into Oren's eyes. Oren smiled and I could see that he was now more open to us and Yeshua. Thank You, Lord!

On Wednesday, Sept. 24th, we went back to the pizza place and Oren wasn't there. Iran told us that Oren had gone to Russia to pray at the grave of Rabbi Nachman. He was a *Hasidic* rabbi who died in 1760 and his sect never chose another rabbi to take his place, so he's 'still in charge,' so to speak. They're called *Bretzlav*, after the name of the Russian city where the rabbi lived and was buried. Every year thousands of Jews, at the time of *Rosh HaShanah* (the Feast of Trumpets) in Sept/Oct, go to his grave *to pray to him*, that he might intercede for them and that they might receive blessings from him for the coming year. That's right—they're praying to a dead rabbi.

When I heard Iran say that Oren had gone there I said, '*Ah'sur!*' (Forbidden!) I told him that Torah strictly condemns praying to the dead (Lev. 19:26-28; Dt. 18:9-14). A man who also worked there, whom we had just met the day before, said, 'Well, how come so many (Jewish) people do it if it's wrong?'

There are many graves of 'great' rabbis in Israel where people go to pray and get blessings from them, on a yearly basis. It's very pagan and sinful (and similar to Catholics praying to Mary and other dead 'saints'). I said,

'Just because many people do it, it doesn't mean it's right. If God says one thing in Torah, and the Rabbis say another, we must follow God, not the Rabbis. If not, then we're sinning against God. We must do what is right in God's eyes. Moses said to us,'

'Be careful to listen to all these words which I command you so that it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the eyes of Yahveh your God.' (Dt. 12:28)

I asked him if he remembered the Gold Calf fiasco, and how many Israelis did that? (Just about everyone in the Camp went crazy.) He said that was before Torah. I told him that it wasn't before Torah. The Gold Calf is in Ex. 32, and the giving of the Ten Commandments, which symbolizes all of Torah and forms the basis for the Covenant at Mt. Sinai, is in Ex. 20, and there are other statutes concerning idolatry between Ex. 20 and Ex. 32 (e.g. Ex. 22:20. God

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had *specifically* told Israel in the Ten about graven images:

‘All Israel heard the Ten Commandments from Mt. Sinai, one of which was not to make a graven image of God and worship it. When, Moses ascended the Mountain to receive the Stone Tablets (Ex. 32), but before He came down, Israel worshipped the Gold Calf as the God who delivered them from Egyptian slavery. Most of the Hebrews worshipped the Gold Calf, but that didn’t make it right in the eyes of God. Praying to a dead rabbi is also sin, even if many Israelis do it.’

We spoke of some other things, but before I could steer us around to Messiah Yeshua, he was called to deliver a pizza. I told him the next time we would talk more. His name was Oded.

A Seed here, a Seed there. Just think, I could be selling ice to the Eskimos in Alaska—I think that I would have more success at it. Of course, success as the world understands it is not the point. Obedience to Yeshua is true success and that is what delights our King.

On Sunday night, March 14th, 2003 I went into the pizza place again to see if Oren had read any of the New Covenant that I had left with him previously. As usual he was very glad to see me. Within a few minutes though, and before I could ask him about the New Covenant, he had left and was replaced by his partner, Iran.

I ate some pizza and was about to leave when a delivery man, whose name I would later find out was Yogev, asked me if I was Orthodox. I told him I believed in Messiah Yeshua. Yogev was 21 years old and didn’t know his *Tanach*. This is a common problem with many Israelis and why they’re so easily led astray by the Rabbis concerning Yeshua and other matters. How can I fault them, when the Rabbis, wanting to hold onto their power over the people, say that unless you’re a rabbi, the *Tanach* is too hard for anyone to understand. Strange how God never says that. He says just the opposite (Deut. 4:5-10; 30:11-16).

I gave Yogev my Prophecy Card<sup>95</sup> and also the Gospel of Luke. I told him that

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<sup>95</sup> I made up a ‘business card’ that I called The Prophecy Card. It has a number of Scripture cites on the front and the back, from the *Tanach*, that speak of Messiah. There’s the prophecy of when He would come (Dan. 9:24-26), where He would be born (Micah 5:2), how Israel would reject Him (Psalm 118:22), and the giving of the New Covenant to Israel by God (Jer. 31:31-34), etc. It’s in Hebrew and English so I can give it to an English or Hebrew speaker, and it has my name and

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if he would read it, he would see for himself who Yeshua was and what He did. Then he could decide if Yeshua was the Messiah or not.

While I was ‘ with Yogev, Iran came over and spoke with him about what I believed, and much to my surprise, Iran spoke well of me. Yogev was called away to deliver some pizza, and Kobi (short for Yakov or Jacob) came back from delivering a pizza. He was 23 and he ‘took Yogev’s place’ so to speak, and I spoke with him about Yeshua. Again, Iran joined us and told Kobi much of what he told Yogev about my beliefs and me. I didn’t have to do much talking about Messiah. It was great. It was very pleasant to see what Iran remembered of Messiah. There’s ‘something’ there and I pray that Yeshua will draw him into the Kingdom.

I prayed to Yeshua to show me how to present Him to Kobi, and a spirit of deep compassion and love for Kobi came over my soul. I desired with a great desire to point him to Messiah Yeshua. I felt Yeshua was making me a servant for Him, that I might be a servant to Kobi.

Kobi was more adamant in his disbelief of Yeshua than Yogev. Kobi’s mother was Orthodox and he was *sure* that Yeshua was not the Messiah. I gave him The Prophecy Card and told him that if he would read the prophecies, that he would be very shocked to see a picture of Messiah Yeshua in them.

I was with them, the four of them, for over an hour, witnessing and listening to them. Just before I left, Iran said to me that he didn’t know anyone who knew chapter and verse in the *Tanach* like I did. He asked me how I did it. I told him, ‘I love our God and His Word very much and I read His words everyday.’

I could see that what I said, and the way that I said it had an impact on Iran. As you are led to pray, please lift up Iran, Oleg, Kobi and Yogi (his nickname, which is pronounced like Yogi Bear) to our High Priest, who is able to save to the utmost, and please remember Oren, too.

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phone number on it so the person can call me if they want to know more about Messiah.

The cards are easier to carry and pass out than the prophecy sheets, and more effective because they’re smaller and less awkward when I use it to call attention to a Scripture cite on it. *The Prophecy Card*, as well as other Jewish witnessing tools, are at [The Prophecy Card](#). Also, go to Articles/Miscellaneous A-I, 07. Handouts at The [SeedofAbraham.net](#) where you’ll see single sheet papers to hand out to both Jews and Gentiles.

## *The Way of Judgment*

On Sunday, September 15th, 1996 my ex-wife Robin (aka Rivka) was murdered near Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, where she lived. It had been about seven and a half years since she had secretly taken Zavdi and Yoel, who were only four and two years old, respectively, on Monday, February 27th, 1989. Ruti and I were in Jerusalem for about a year and three months (since June 1995). I found out about Robin's death about a week after it happened.

She had left her second husband, Ron Golder, ten months earlier for his now former best friend, and had been living and sleeping with Dominic Giorgi, Jr.<sup>96</sup> She had begun divorce proceedings against Ron and it seems that Robin was doing to Golder what she had done to me—(falsely?) accusing Ron to gain legal custody of their five year old son, Elliot. Golder 'took it' for a number of months, hiring a lawyer, but it was too much for him to endure. He lost all his money to the lawyer, he lost a lot of weight, he lost his job, and Satan came in and he lost his soul. Golder murdered Robin and his former best friend Dominic Giorgi, and then shot himself, committing suicide.

Zavdi was eleven years old and Yoel was nine. Elliot was born to Robin and Ron in June 1991 and was five years old. According to the newspaper account, Golder had the three boys for visitation for the weekend.<sup>97</sup> They were staying in the home of Golder's sister. Robin and Dominic came by car to pick up the boys. Ron came to them in the driveway and murdered them both with a shotgun while they were in the car.

Then Ron dragged Dominic's body out of the driver's seat onto the driveway, but before he could drive off, the boys and their aunt came running to the porch, having heard the shotgun blasts. Zavdi, the first to the porch, saw his mother and Dominic dead. Ron screamed at him to, 'Get back in the house!' and he drove off with Robin's body in the passenger seat, with Zavdi running after him.

Ron parked by the office of Robin's divorce lawyer, Graham Showalter of Lewisburg, and then murdered himself. The police found the two of them the next day—Robin in the car and Ron lying on the ground a few feet away.

With *everything* inside me I wanted to go back to the States and get Zavdi and

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<sup>96</sup> Robin and Karlman Kinces (the deacon in our congregation that Robin had initially left me for in 1989), didn't last but a few months. Once in Pennsylvania, Robin and Ron were attracted to each other and married after Robin became pregnant with Elliot.

<sup>97</sup> *The Lewisburg Daily Item*, Sept. 18th, 1996.

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Yoel and bring them to Israel, but we had no money. I prayed for money to come in—oh how I prayed! It never did though, and so I knew the Lord wanted us to remain in Jerusalem. Yes, I most likely could have borrowed the money, but I knew that wasn't the way of our Lord.

Our ways are not His ways (Is. 55:8-9). One of the most powerful passages in the Bible is when God reveals Himself to Job. Job wanted to meet his Maker and Judge to justify himself and to declare that all those bad things that had happened to him, he didn't deserve, but God said to him,

‘Who are *you* to throw a monkey-wrench into *My plans for you?! (My interpretation of Job 38:2)*

When God revealed Himself to Job, Job realized the utterly awesome transcendent glory and greatness of Who he had been seeking to plead his case against, and he said,

‘Behold! I am vile! What can I answer You?! I lay my hand over my mouth!’ (Job 40:4)

When we come to really know Yeshua, we don't bolt at His ways, even if we don't like them or understand them. We accept them, knowing that He not only loves us, but that His wisdom is truly unfathomable. He knows what is best for us, and if we walk in His ways it will be for our eternal good.

Zavdi and Yoel, along with their half-brother Elliot, would go to live with Robin's parents in the next town. They were the very people who despised me and everything else Jewish, including the Lord. They said they were Methodists, but they never went to church. Many times, while I was married to Robin, I tried to reconcile with them, but they knew nothing of God's love and forgiveness because they didn't know Jesus. My unforgivable sin was that I married their daughter.

Now, in Jerusalem, as I began to pray for money to return for my sons, I realized that I harbored bitterness toward them, especially the mother of Robin. When Robin and I were married (1983-1989), her mother continually told her to divorce me and come back to them in Pennsylvania. She was very controlling and very cold. Robin was their only child. My 'crime' in their eyes, when I asked for Robin's hand in marriage, was threefold—I was in my last year of seminary at ORU and Robin's mother told me that ministers 'don't make any money;' I was 'ten years older than Robin,' and I was Jewish.

Life was not good for Robin growing up with her mother. I single out her mother because she dominated Robin's father, even though, ironically enough,

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she was ten years younger than him. Robin told me of times when her mother would scream at her for hours. Not the loud kind of scream, but the low, intense, angry type. Robin would sit in a chair, and after a while, recede into another place in her soul.

Robin told me that she longed for her father to rescue her, but he never did, even though he witnessed it on a number of occasions. Robin tried to commit suicide a couple times when she lived with them. Robin was a 'straight A' student academically, but emotionally she was devastated.

The Lord used me to lead Robin back to Him at our first encounter at ORU in August 1982. Robin would later tell me that in Christian summer camps she would rededicate her life to Jesus, but when she came home her mother would make sure the dedication didn't last long.

After I had led Robin to the Lord I became a strength to her and she wanted me for her husband. I wanted to see her grow in the Lord, but I didn't think she was to be my wife. I didn't have the wisdom though, to politely tell her, 'No, thank you,' *repeatedly*. Within a couple of weeks we were going steady, but two days before our planned marriage on December 24th, 1982, I ejected. I didn't feel that I loved her enough to marry her.

Two weeks later though, in January 1983, Robin came to class and told me that the Lord had said for her to put on her wedding dress because she would be married that day, and then she asked me to marry her. (She was now enrolled in the Master of Divinity program, as I was, having earned a scholarship to the Law school, but switching in her second semester because of her new dedication to the Lord.) I thought it over during the next class and told her that I would. We were married that night.

Why did I do it? The Holy Spirit had been moving mightily through Robin and I thought that if Jesus had told her that she would be married that day, I should give in and marry her. I thought it was the Lord and I didn't want to be disobedient. I look back now and realize that I should have fasted and prayed and waited on the Lord for confirmation.

In the six years that we were married I had come to love her more and more, and I saw the Lord using me to help her grow emotionally to where she could stand on her own two feet, especially in relation to her mother. Many times during those early years, after she had spoken to her mother on the phone, she would come to me crying, such was the trauma that speaking with her mother brought upon her. I told Robin not to continue to speak with her mother, but Robin was too emotionally entangled with her victimizer.

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I remember a time, a few months before she left me in February 1989, when Robin finished talking with her mother on the phone. Robin wasn't upset now, she was just speaking to me and she said,

‘My mother tells me things about you that I know aren't true,  
but I have this strong pull to believe her.’

Robin's voice was stable. She wasn't being emotionally towed under by what her mother could do to her. Perhaps part of that 'strong pull' was influenced by her desire for Karlman? She would later tell a friend of ours that for a year before she left me, she had been 'dressing for Karlman.'

Well, now (Jerusalem 1996), I was 'face to face' with Robin's parents, Patricia and Don Meredith. I saw the problem in my own heart. I asked the Lord to take the idol out of my heart, the idol of bitterness, that I might be able to love them. I don't know why I labeled it an idol. The word just came to me in prayer and to my utter amazement He took it out! Immediately! I couldn't believe it! I had gone into my bedroom to pray and within a few moments I came out and told Ruti that I actually had a love for the Merediths and could pray for them, especially Pat Meredith. It was truly Yeshua's love and forgiveness that had set me free from what they had done to Robin, and to me. He was giving me His heart, even for my worst enemy (Mt. 5:38-48). Yeshua delights in setting His people free and making us like Himself!

On numerous occasions during the next few months I reached out to the Merediths. One time I sent a dozen roses, from Jerusalem, to Mrs. Meredith with a note expressing my love for her. I also wrote several letters to them, asking them to return my sons to me, but the roses, as well as every letter, met with silence.

I had initially called the Merediths when I had found out about the death of their daughter, to speak with my sons, but Mrs. Meredith told me in that low, intense anger, 'Never call here again!' In a letter I told Mrs. Meredith that I would respect her demand and not call.

A little more than six months after Robin's death I received a notice from the court. *Since, I hadn't shown any interest* in the boys for those six months the Merediths had initiated a court action to strip me of my parental rights so that they could adopt my sons as their own.

Sometimes it seems like there's no end to injustice, but I know Him who is the End and He is Just. I trust Him, for I, like Job, have come to know Him and I don't want to put any monkey wrenches into His divine plans for my sons or

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me.

I wrote to the court stating that I wanted my sons and that I had tried, on numerous occasions, to contact my boys (through one phone call and six letters to the Merediths), but to no avail. My sons most likely never got to see the letters that I sent to the Merediths, asking for them. I told the court that the basis for the Merediths' petition was false and without merit, and I asked the court to deny their petition. I also wrote to the court stating that I wasn't sure if the Lord would have me to come to Pennsylvania in June 1997 for the hearing.<sup>98</sup> I left it all in His hands.

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<sup>98</sup> In the letter-petition that I wrote to the judge I also asked him for Elliot, the half-brother of Zavdi and Yoel. Ruti and I wanted to adopt and raise him so that he would remain with his brothers.

## KENTON & JOAN'S 30TH

By February 2005, three months after we had moved to Ramat Gan, a city next to Tel Aviv, we were making regular hour and a half bus trips into Jerusalem. This was not of our own choosing. In January, an electronic thief had breached our bank account in the States and wrote out an electronic check for \$5,000. It bounced. I think we had less than \$100 in the account, but because the account had been compromised, bank etiquette required that it be shut down and a new account opened. For some reason that was never made clear to me, the headquarters of the bank wouldn't allow me to open another account, even though I had been banking with them for nine years. The manager of the local branch, who knew me personally, didn't like it nor understand it, either.

I took this as 'of the Lord,' who is over everything, and asked the people that supported us to send their checks directly to us here in Israel. There's a place in Jerusalem that cashes checks and money orders and that's why we began to make trips into Jerusalem. Before that we could go to any ATM in Israel and withdraw money from our bank in the States, as people sent their checks directly to the bank. Now, with the need to go into Jerusalem, the Lord would use our trips to witness to many Israelis whom we never would have met if it hadn't been for the electronic thief and the bank not giving me another checking account. We've prayed for the thief's salvation, and we thank Yeshua for all the times of witnessing that came about because of it!

*Kenton & Joan's 30th* wasn't one of those trips into Jerusalem, but it'll give you an idea of how our witnessing takes place on the buses and by-ways of Israel. *What a Day!*, the next story after this one, happened because of a trip into Jerusalem to cash some checks.

Ruti and I had some dear friends from the United States, Kenton and Joan Miller of Colorado, come to Israel for a week and a half in March 2005. It was in honor of their 30th wedding anniversary. Ruti and I wanted to minister, love and serve them.

They stayed with us for eight days. We were blessed, as we gave them lodging, fed them and renewed old acquaintances. I took them to Jaffa, Jerusalem, Eilat and En Gedi. It was Wonderful, the Lord allowing many divine meetings and times of witnessing for me. Ruti was unable to go with us, but this worked out as it was very exhausting and we saw the hand of the Lord in that matter, too. Ruti was able to stay in the apartment as the three of us toured the

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Land of Israel, and when we were in the apartment, Ruti was fed us, washed our clothes and was with us.

On Sunday, March 27th, 2005, the three of us took a bus to Tel Aviv and got off at the last stop, Carmelite, where we were to catch a bus into Jaffa. At the last stop I noticed a woman tourist speaking with the driver about what to do next. I offered my help to Isabel from Britain because the driver didn't speak much English. The driver eventually left and the four of us got to know one another.

I asked Isabel a few questions and found out that she was a Christian and had come to Israel with some friends for about two weeks. Joan and I then shared about Torah and the Sabbath for about 15 minutes, with Kenton resting on the guardrail. I saw that Isabel was reaching her saturation point and so I directed the conversation to our Messiah, and Isabel, a black woman, began 'to have church' with us for another 15 minutes.

Then Isabel turned to Kenton and said, 'You're awfully quiet.' Kenton got up, and motioning with his hands toward his two ears, said,

'They're doing enough talking, and besides, you've only got two ears to hear each of them with.'

We all laughed and began to say our goodbyes as I continued to look at a Jewish man who had stopped to listen to us for the last few minutes. I went to offer him my Prophecy Card, but he said,

'Oh no! I know who you are now and what your *tzit'ziot* mean! No thank you!'

He had been listening long enough to know that I believed in Yeshua as the Messiah. I was saddened that he felt that way and that he didn't want to talk about it. As he went off into the field I called to him and said, 'Yeshua really is the Messiah!' I turned to Isabel and the Millers and expressed my sadness that he didn't want to know Messiah Yeshua. Isabel though, would have none of it! She said,

"It's only God who can save. All we can do is offer Him.  
We'll just pray that the Holy Spirit gets him!"

We began to pray for him and I felt better. Then we parted from Isabel. We went about 50 feet and another Jewish man, whose name we would come to find out was Yakov, motioned for me to come over, calling me 'Rabbi.' He had been sitting down under a tree, waiting for his bus and had seen much of our time with Isabel and the other man. He was too far away from us to have

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heard anything. He was very open and friendly toward us. He said that he had been to New York and had seen the late Lubavitch Rabbi. I told him that I wasn't Lubavitch or a rabbi and that the dead rabbi of the Lubavitchers wasn't the Messiah. I also told him that we knew who the Messiah of Israel was. I gave him The Prophecy Card, asking him to read the Scripture cites when he got home. Before we left I asked him if we could pray for him. He was open to that. We asked Yeshua to reveal Himself to him. Then we went to the bus stop for Jaffa, about 50 yards away.

We got the bus and traveled further south than we needed to, and got off at the wrong stop, but it was again the hand of the Lord. We needed a bathroom and that's not easy to find sometimes in Israel. As we waited for another bus that would take us to the Mediterranean Sea by Jaffa, I saw a *falafel* and *shwarma* place. It was packed and so I knew it had good food, and most likely, it had a bathroom, as the place was bigger than a closet. Many *falafel* places aren't.

We crossed the street and used their facilities, and being hungry, I ordered a *falafel*, with Kenton and Joan following. It was their *first falafel*. Oh, it was delicious! They liked it so much, having split one between them, they also ordered a *shwarma* in pita bread after it. We dug into the fresh salads on the counter by a column, and having eaten, we set out to go to the sea.

We got on the #25 bus and got off at the right street this time and headed east to the sea. We strolled through the Jaffa Shuk, a marketplace for buying everything from pictures and ovens to carpets and food, and then onto the sea. We walked out and up onto the natural jetty and then north along the beach. Joan took her socks and shoes off to feel the warm waters of the Mediterranean.

We stayed a while and then caught the bus at the Carmelite bus center and headed back to Ramat Gan. We had done some serious walking. Three women from the Philippines came on board and two were sitting in back of me, while one stood. I wanted to show them some kindness because I knew they were here in Israel working for elderly Israelis, helping them to live daily, so I offered my seat to the one standing. She declined, but she and the others appreciated it. Most Israelis don't consider foreigners and treat them as less than Israelis, when God says to be kind to them (Deuteronomy 10:19).

A moment later another seat opened up near us and she sat down. I began to speak to them saying that I was a Jew who believed in Yeshua. Much to my delight, all three of them (an aunt, niece and her cousin) told me they believed in Jesus and were part of a group known as 'Jesus is Lord.' I had never heard of the group, but was glad because I thought that only Catholics were in the

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Philippines. I could see they loved the Lord. I spoke to them of Torah and Messiah loud enough for others to hear. They got off at their stop and then I noticed an Israeli woman, who had been looking at me as I had spoken with them. I had seen her listening to what I had said to the women from the Philippines, and I had determined to give her a Card, too, when she got up to leave for her stop. I didn't know if she had been *looking* 'for good' or 'for evil.' I've seen things like this explode in the opposite direction of what I had expected, but I thought to myself, 'I'll risk it for her sake' and I was glad that I did. She had heard what I had said to the Philippine women and was receptive. I told her,

'Yeshua really is our Messiah, and if you have any questions, please give me a call.'

After getting off the bus, the next stop was the health food store, close to where Ruti and I lived. Joan was having trouble explaining to Ruvane (Ruben the owner), the man behind the counter, what she wanted. Ruvane didn't speak much English, and so Pinhas, a customer, acted as a translator for Joan.

Kenton and I were elsewhere in the store. When we came upon the scene everything was working out. I asked Pinhas his name and proceeded to tell him about our beliefs. He told us that he had a neighbor who also believed in Yeshua. I gave him two of my Cards and told him that I would like for him to share one of them with his neighbor, and for her to give me a call. I said that he should look at the Tanach cites because they would tell him that Yeshua was his Messiah.

We went home and Ruti had made some food for us to eat, and we had some wonderful things to tell her about our day. Later, our neighbor, Ronen stopped over. We had been witnessing to Ronen for the few months, and after I introduced him to Kenton and Joan, and we had some light conversation, I asked him if he had read the pamphlet on Luke that I had given to him. He was sitting on our couch and told us that he hadn't. I launched into our need for Yeshua for a few minutes and shared some places where Messiah was found in the *Tanach*. Ronen left shortly after that...

The next day we rose early to catch the bus into Jerusalem. It was the first time for Kenton and Joan to be in the City of the Great King (Ps. 48:2; Mt. 5:35). Ruti had made us some luncheon goodies and we took along plenty of water. Kenton and Joan had been commandeered by many of their friends to get them 'this and that' in Israel and they were very gracious to do so. It took up much of their precious time and energy in looking for all the requests. We went to *ben Yehuda* Street, an open air mall in the center of Jerusalem, with

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many shops for such purposes. We met David from Paris, who owns a shop on *ben Yehuda*. Kenton and Joan had shopped around and left to go to another store and I had stayed behind, looking at some things for gifts for their children in the States. I bought some things and at the counter David asked me, 'Are you a rabbi?' I told him I wasn't, but that I taught people about God, Torah and Messiah. He said, 'There's so much Light in your face.' I could tell it was the Holy Spirit drawing him and so I offered him my Card. I said that if he would look up the Tanach cites, that he would know who our Messiah was, and that I would return soon and we would speak more about Him.

While waiting for Kenton and Joan outside another shop they had gone into, I saw Zahava. Just a week earlier, Ruti and I had been walking on Jabotinsky Street, a major thorough-fare in Ramat Gan, and we had stopped and talked with her and her boyfriend Zev about Messiah Yeshua. We knew we were deep in New Age-demonic muck when I asked Zev how long he had been in the Land of Israel. He told us, 'About 1,700 years.' Zahava wasn't thrilled with us bringing Messiah Yeshua to them. Her eyes, when she took off her sunglasses, revealed arrows of fire, but Ruti and I lifted them both up to the Master when we left them that day.

Now, Zahava, whose name means 'gold,' was coming down the hill in my direction. I called out to her as she passed a few feet away from me, 'Zahava?' She turned and immediately recognized me. I asked her what she was doing in Jerusalem and she told me that she lived there now. She also said, in a nice way, that she was in a hurry, and I told her, as she was walking away, 'Remember Yeshua!' I hoped 'our meeting' would later have an impact on her as it was totally out of the realm of coincidence.<sup>99</sup>

Kenton and Joan came out of the store. They had bought many gifts that others had asked them for. We then walked to the Old City and through it to the *Kotel* (the Western or Wailing Wall of the Temple Mount platform, the southwestern part of the retaining wall that was still intact from the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem in 70 AD). It was getting late as we made our way back to the Central Bus Station, and we were all tired from trying to look for a hostel in the Old City that was clean, for their three day stay in Jerusalem. Instead of walking we took a taxi and the driver's name was Elisha. I spoke to

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<sup>99</sup> A few months later, Ruti and I would again meet Zahava on the streets of Jerusalem, talk with her about Messiah Yeshua for 20 minutes and then pray with her to receive Yeshua, right there on the street opposite the Jerusalem city hall complex.

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him about Messiah and gave him my Prophecy Card.

It was on the bus to Ramat Gan though, that the Lord had saved the best for last. I struck up a conversation with Ohad, who sat across the aisle from me, in front of Kenton and Joan. He was a secular Israeli and manager of an advertising department for a pharmacy firm. I had shared Messiah with him, not saying the name of Yeshua yet, when an Orthodox couple, a few rows behind us, began telling Ohad not to listen to me. They knew who I was speaking about! They were from the States. I could tell by their Hebrew accent. I imagined they now lived in B'nai Barak (a city on the bus's route to Ramat Gan), the second most Orthodox Jewish community in Israel.

The Orthodox women said to me, 'We know who you are! You're a missionary!' I told them I wasn't, 'a missionary. No church or organization had sent me here.'

She asked who sent me and I told them the God of Israel had sent me to speak to them about Messiah Yeshua. By the look of scorn on their faces I could see they didn't believe it.

Then the woman said, 'Tell us the truth!' I said that it was the truth that I had told her. Then she told me not to lie to her! I said that I wasn't a liar and that I was telling her the truth, but obviously she didn't want to hear the truth. It went back and forth for quite a while and I know the Lord was speaking to them, and many others, through me. As it says of Stephen when he spoke to some unbelieving Jews that day,

'they were not able to contradict the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.' (Acts 6:10)

I felt the same way. The praise and glory are truly Yeshua's. He has trained me for this and He was actively involved in the bus!

We were sitting in the middle of the bus, and by now, most everyone on the bus was hearing me speak of Yeshua being the Messiah. It was wonderful! We spoke some more, or as Kenton would later say, we debated, and then I turned to Ohad, when the Orthodox woman didn't have anything more to say. I continued to speak with Ohad and gave him a Card. I told him to see for himself what the Hebrew Bible says about Messiah, and if it doesn't line up with Yeshua.

An Orthodox man sitting in front of me was listening intently. I don't think my talk was as much for Ohad as he was content with where he was at in his life and that he was 'a good person.' I think it was for the Orthodox man in

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front of me. The Orthodox couple's stop came and they got up to leave. I asked the husband if he wanted a Card. At first he declined, but while my hand with the Card was still outstretched, his wife said, 'Take it!' with the attitude that she would pass it on to those who dealt with 'missionaries.' I didn't care because only my name, my phone number and Tanach cites for Messiah are on it, not my physical address. I prayed that the man would look up the cites. I sensed that he might do that in spite of his wife. I think he heard the Lord speaking through me to him. Thank You, Yeshua!

On Tuesday—we rested : ) On Wednesday, March 30th, 2005 we were up at 5:00 AM and on our way by bus to Eilat. We were going to see Shuli and stay overnight with her, and then go to Timna Park, where a life-size replica of the Tabernacle of Moses was, complete with a guide who knew Messiah Yeshua. We would also go to the Gulf of Eilat and to 'New Moon Mountain.' When Ruti and I had lived in Eilat we would go there for the sighting and celebration of the new moons.

On the bus to Eilat I witnessed to Yosi and Nicole, who were sitting in front of me. Rivka, across from them, heard as well. Yosi told us that he was 58 and would be going to the States in May for the first time. Toward the end they showed me, and Kenton and Joan who were to my left across the aisle, pictures of their sons and grandchildren. Kenton and Joan returned the honors and shared pictures of their children and grandchildren.

There was much time spent on Messiah and finding out what they believed about Him (e.g. "common nonsense—He's only an idea and we should be good," etc.). Then I shared what God said in the *Tanach*. It was another powerful time of witnessing.

As we passed by the nuclear power plant in Dimona, Joan took some pictures, but a soldier who worked there, who was about to get off the bus, told her that it was forbidden. That's just part of being in Israel. Everyone knows they make nuclear bombs there, but Israel hadn't officially said so yet. It's known as the 'cat and mouse diplomacy' of the Middle East:

Israel: 'We don't have any nuclear bombs, but if you attack us, we will defend ourselves with a weapon that you won't like.'

In Eilat I re-met Ofer, a taxi driver. I knew him from when I had lived in Eilat. Now I shared Messiah and gave him The Prophecy Card. He took us to the Tabernacle, 18 miles (29 km) north of Eilat. The presence of the Lord was strong by the Tabernacle. After that, Bentzi, a friend of Ofer's, picked us up

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and took us to one of the two ‘fingers’ of the Red Sea (the Gulf of Eilat), where Joan took off her shoes and socks again and walked along the water’s edge.

On the way to the Red Sea I engaged Bentzi in conversation about Yeshua and I could see the Holy Spirit was ministering to him about his Messiah. It was a 25 minute ride. He was listening and interacting with me. It was truly divine. As we left I gave him my Card and told him to look up the Scripture cites to find that Yeshua is his Messiah.

After seeing the Red Sea we got another cab and went into the city center to get some film developed. This time it was Avraham the taxi driver who picked us up. I had shared Messiah Yeshua with him a number of times before. Avraham thought that just ‘helping people was good enough’ to get into Heaven, but I told him it wasn’t. I said a few other things to him, and as we got out, I told him I loved him. I could tell he appreciated that. I imagine he didn’t hear that too often from his Orthodox and secular riders. The three cabbies are ‘good people,’ but they need to know Messiah Yeshua, be forgiven for their sins and filled with the Holy Spirit.

Then we went up to New Moon Mountain, where Ruti and I, and sometimes Shuli and her daughters and little grandson Ma’or, would go to see the new moon crescent that begins every biblical month. Many times we would take food and have a picnic celebration. When we would see the new moon we would blow the shofar, sing, dance and praise Yeshua for His wonderful salvation and creation. He’s quite an Artist! New Moon Mountain, as we called it, is a perfect site at the southwestern end of the city. It overlooks the whole city of Eilat, the Red Sea and Akaba (the Jordanian city a couple of miles across from Eilat), the Jordanian mountains in back of Akaba, as well as the northwestern tip of Saudi Arabia to the south. Kenton took lots of pictures and then it was on to Shuli’s apartment. At Shuli’s we ate a delicious meal of fish, salads, pita, *humous*, etc. etc. etc., and after we were stuffed she asked us if we wanted her to cook some meat dishes!

Shuli had broken her glasses recently, and so I gave her money for the food, a new pair of glasses and some extra to live on. After dinner we had a great Bible study. Then we prayed for Shuli’s health. She still had the thyroid problem, with a small growth on her neck. That’s why she didn’t work at a full time job, but collected some money from the government, even though she was only 51 years old. She also had some back problems.

Then it was off to bed and up at 5:00 AM in order to catch the 7:00 AM bus to En Gedi, which is next to the Dead Sea, or as the Israelis more accurately call

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it, *Yam HaMelach* (the Salt Sea). En Gedi is one of the places where David fled from King Saul (1st Sam. 23:29). One can easily see why David hid there. The way into the waterfall is a narrow ravine-like path that ascends with high and steep hills on each side, and I imagine those steps weren't there in David's day. Once inside, and high up, one could see an enemy coming, and because of the narrowness of it in many places, one could easily repel a force many times their size.

We must have climbed a thousand man-made steps into the ravine as we proceeded up the mountain pass to the waterfall of En Gedi. Kenton said that it was a natural place for a small army like David's to hide out:

'The way in can only be accessed by a handful of people at a time, not a whole army, and so it would be very easy to defend, and with the water supply one could stay there a long time.'

Even though it was arid and hot that day, it was cool and refreshing by the waterfall. It wasn't Niagara Falls by any stretch of the imagination, just a small waterfall. It was narrow, perhaps 12 feet wide (3.6 m), coming down initially from a height of about sixty feet (18 m), and it was beautiful. It was 600 feet (183 m) above the Salt Sea, and it took us half an hour to climb to it.

There are two waterfall spots, one slightly above the other. We were at the higher one when we met Anat and her boyfriend, Dr. Oren, an MD with a general practice. They were in their 30s. When I found out that Oren was a doctor I told him he would want to talk with Kenton and Joan because they were experts in the field of nutrition. He didn't understand the concept of nutrition, which unfortunately is a common problem with doctors on both sides of the Atlantic. So Kenton and Joan spoke with him at a very basic level.

While they were doing that I spoke with Anat about Yeshua, or at least I attempted to. She said, 'I don't want to get into that.' She then went 'into' the three way conversation, and the two of them left soon afterward.

After that we went to the lower falls. We stayed there awhile, being refreshed by the falling water. As we went to go I lagged behind and struck up a conversation with a man sitting on a rock, surrounded by some boys. I don't remember how I began, but I shared some of my testimony and belief in Yeshua and Torah with Tal, a teacher with his whole class of 14 year old boys, as well as two other teachers from Nahariya, a city on the northern coast of Israel, 22 miles (35 k) north of Haifa. We talked a little more, and then as I began to leave he said that I had a 'unique belief.'

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I thought it was possible that he just might check out the Scripture cites on The Card I had given to him. The two other teachers also asked for Cards, as well as a boy sitting next to Tal.

We got back to the entrance where there's a gift shop and Joan bought some more gifts. Then we walked half a mile to the bus stop at En Gedi, right on the highway, and waited for the bus to take us to Jerusalem. Well, at least I waited, with their luggage. Kenton and Joan took off for half an hour to see another gift shop four hundred yards (365 m) down the road.

When we got to the bus stop, a Gentile woman from Germany named Phoebe was also waiting there with her four year old daughter Ruby. Within a few minutes I was witnessing to her about Messiah Yeshua. Phoebe had come to Israel for the first time, just a couple of weeks earlier. She was heavily involved in yoga.

I shared with her about *Life* and *true* Peace from Heaven that I had found in Messiah Yeshua. I also answered a number of questions about Yeshua, assuring her that the account of Him going to India to learn from the gurus was a lie. I said He was God the Son. He needed no man to teach Him about wisdom and reality. She was very open to hearing about Messiah, although her experiences with 'the Church' in Germany were less than divine. She had been turned off to Jesus because of that, not an uncommon problem with children growing up in dead churches.

The bus to Jerusalem was running late, which was good, because Kenton and Joan were running late, too! A taxi pulled up to the bus stop, and I paid no attention to it until I saw Kenton and Joan come out of it! They had wisely decided to take it from the place where they had been in order to catch the bus. As it was, they had several minutes to spare because the bus was running later than them. I introduced them to Phoebe and Ruby.

We all got on the crowded bus and the Lord arranged that I would sit across the aisle from Phoebe and Ruby. When we got seated I continued to share about Messiah Yeshua. Phoebe was looking for the true God.

We got into Jerusalem and Kenton and Joan took a cab to stay at a nearby friend's home for a few days. I took another bus to Ramat Gan, totally drained, but very happy to have witnessed for our Lord on the bus from En Gedi to not only Phoebe, but to a number of others sitting within ear shot. It was Thursday night when I got back to Ramat Gan.

On Friday, Pinhas, the man who had helped Joan in the health food store a

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few days earlier, called me. I had given him The Prophecy Card. He asked me if it was alright if he came over on *Shabat* for a little while to talk about Messiah. Was it alright? It was *more* than alright!

For two hours on *Shabat* I spoke of Messiah Yeshua to Pinhas. He, too, was looking. He said to us that the Light in our faces and our behavior had impressed him. He contrasted us with the Orthodox gloom that he knew all too well.

We told him that it was the King of Israel who glowed through us, drawing him to Himself. Before he left, Ruti and I asked him if we could pray for him. He liked that. We did, asking the Lord Yeshua to minister to him and to reveal Himself to Pinhas.<sup>100</sup>

Because of Kenton and Joan's 30th wedding anniversary many Israelis heard about their Messiah, some for the very first time. What a wonderful anniversary gift to them, that God would bring them here and that they would be indirectly used in the lives of many Jewish people. Thank You, Yeshua, and thank you for your prayers for Israel!

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<sup>100</sup> Pinhas is Hebrew for Phineas, the zealous grandson of Aaron the High Priest who delighted God with his passion for Him and His Way of living (Numbers 25:1-18).

## WHAT A DAY!

On Tuesday, Sept. 13th, 2005 Ruti and I journeyed into Jerusalem to cash some checks. We both were in need of shoes so we thought it might be good to look for some. We stopped in a small shoe store on *ben Yehuda* Street (Son of Judah Street; i.e. Messiah Street; Genesis 46:12; 49:10; Ruth 4:12, 17-22), having seen a pair of brown shoes in the window that might be nice for me. After trying them on and walking in the store I felt the left shoe pinching the front of my big toe, even though I had room at both ends. I gave them back to the saleswoman and told her the problem.

She asked me about my *tzit'ziot*; if the Rabbis had authorized them. I told her they hadn't, but that my wife Ruti made them for me. She liked that and then asked me why I didn't wear a *kippa*. I told her that it wasn't a commandment written in the *Tanach*. Then she asked me if I was a Lubavitch Jew. I told her I wasn't, but that I believe Yeshua from Nazareth was the Messiah. She said, 'Yeshu?' I said,

'His name is really Yeshua. The Rabbis gave Him the name *Yeshu* because they hate Him. It's an acronym for, 'May His name be blotted out!' (from the Book of *Life*) 'I don't call Him that.'

I also shared with her how Yeshua was what the Mosaic sacrifices pictured, especially the sacrifice on the Day of Atonement. This was God's way to give us His heart and Spirit (Ezk. 36:24-27) as well as to transform us into the Image of His Son (Psalm 2) so we could live with Him forever.

Then a Gentile woman came in. Ruti and I knew from just looking at her that she was a believer. As she came to the counter, the female owner Ya'el ('mountain goat') began to help her, while Miri (short for Miryam/Mary; bitter waters) and I continued to speak about Yeshua.

The woman, in her early 50s, was from Holland (the Netherlands). She had come to exchange a pair of shoes she had bought the day before. As Ya'el and Miri began to search for a possible exchange, Ruti and I introduced ourselves to her. Ruti asked her if she was a believer and she said that she was, having served the Lord a few years ago in Yemen as a midwife. She went on to say that some Muslims murdered seven of her colleagues, but she was able to escape. She had been in Israel now for two years, returning to Holland every three months, when her visa expired, only to return again and volunteer to help Israel.

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Ti'yah (the Hebrew name the woman from Holland had taken for herself) realized what she had walked into, and had been praying for Ya'el, Miri, Ruti and me. After they found a good exchange for her shoes I spoke to Ya'el. I told her that Ti'yah, a Gentile, *loved* the Jewish people *because* of Messiah Yeshua. Ya'el honestly asked, 'Really?' I had sensed that Ti'yah did, so I was able to speak about it even before I asked her. So I asked Ti'yah if she loved the Jewish people and why? Ti'yah said,

'Yeshua gave me a heart for the Jewish people and I love them dearly.'

Ya'el said, '*Kol haKavod!*' a common Israeli expression meaning 'Good for you!' but literally, 'All the glory' (to you). It's a more fitting expression to use for God, for Him to receive the glory, so I directed it to Yeshua. 'It's because of Messiah Yeshua that Ti'yah's heart has been changed.' Ti'yah nodded in agreement and said,

'Before I came to believe in Yeshua I loved all people, but after I came to know Him, I loved the Jewish people more than my own people.'

Here was another Ruth (Ruth 1:16-17). I told Ya'el that this was the work of Messiah Yeshua in the hearts of many Gentiles today. I also spoke of how God had placed some 'pictures of Messiah' in the *Tanach*, and when we gather them up they all point to Yeshua. Ya'el didn't understand about 'pictures' in the Hebrew Bible, so I said,

'If I told you that I had one son and he was 1.7 meters tall (5.6 feet), 21 years old, black hair, brown eyes and that he was studying to be a lawyer, you would have a certain 'picture' of him *from my words*. Then, if someone came in and told you he was my son, and he fit the description, you would know that he was my son. If he didn't fit the description you would know he was not my son.'

She understood. I went on and before long an Orthodox Jewish man with a *kipa* came in, and Ya'el and Miri pounced on him about the things in the *Tanach* that I had been sharing from the Prophets. He didn't quite know what to do. I told them that most religious Jewish men only know the prayers of the synagogue, some Torah and a little of the Prophets. I told the man about Messiah and gave him my Card, and after ten minutes he had to go, but in parting he shook my hand.

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We must have been in that shoe store an hour and a half, sharing Messiah Yeshua with those women and with the Orthodox man, Shimon (Simon in English, which means 'to hear'). We parted from the women, having given them some powerful words from God about seeking Him to know if Yeshua was their Messiah or not. We also gave them the thirty page pamphlet on Isaiah 53. It was very special.

After we thanked the Lord for the opportunity that we had with Ti'yah, Shimon, Ya'el and Miri, we wondered where to go next. We were beginning to feel a little tired. It was 4:00 PM and we still hadn't found any shoes (although we had already cashed our checks). I felt that if we were going to eat and have *shwarma* in pita bread at Moshiko's (a very small and 'famous' *falafel* and *shwarma* place on *ben Yehudah*) we had better have it now because we would have to head away from it in order to see some other shoe stores.

We turned around and walked about thirty feet and a tall young man, whom we would later find out would turn 24 in three days, stopped me and asked about my *tzit'ziot*. He was wearing a *kippa* and was a Jewish man from England, studying in one of the many Jewish *yeshivas* (religious schools) in Jerusalem.

I told him that my wife made them for me and that they didn't follow the pattern of the Rabbis, which I told him was connected to magic. He told me that the number of stands and knots was from *Gematria* and that it wasn't magic, but just the putting of numbers with letters to give them a meaning. I said that *Gematria* is intertwined with Kabbalah, which is Jewish witchcraft. I could see that he understood what I meant when he responded about the different levels of Heaven and the 'angelic beings' in Kabbalah.

I asked him if he knew anything about Messiah, and a beggar came up to us and put out his hand for money. Mosheh (Moses), as we would later find out his name, was overweight and about 40 years old. He was an Arab man and should have said that his name was Musa because that is *Moses* in Arabic, but I imagine that using Mosheh in Jewish Jerusalem would get him more money, especially if his real name was Mohammed. The Jewish man from England began to search in his little coin purse. After finding nothing, Rafael showed Mosheh he didn't have any money.

I asked Mosheh if he was hungry. He said that he was. I told him that I would buy him a *shwarma* in a few moments if he liked. He liked the idea. Then I continued to talk with Rafael, knowing that 'Mosheh' was listening, too. Rafael was very intelligent and he spoke of philosophy and Torah, and how

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Rambam didn't think sacrifice was right, etc. I answered his questions and positions, but only as a good fighter, waiting out the punches of his opponent, so he can get a few good shots in. Perhaps that's not the best illustration, but I think you'll understand what I have been led to do with people like Rafael. They love to display their intelligence and speak endlessly about things they think they know and lead people down paths of spiritual nonsense.

After a few moments we went to the *shwarma* place and I got Mosheh his meal and drink. He was hungry and appreciative. I asked Rafael if he would like one and he told us that he had just had a big yogurt. 'A big yogurt?', I questioned. How could that fill anyone up? He assured us that he wasn't hungry as he had also had muesli on top of it. (As an Orthodox Jew he would have had to wait at least 18 minutes after his yogurt to have any meat. I had forgotten about that in asking him how it could fill him up. Orthodox Jews don't eat dairy and meat together and they have to wait at least four hours after eating meat in order to eat any dairy products. He could have had a *falafel* though, or a *shwarma* later, because we would speak for more than an hour.)

The Arab man took off to eat his meal. Moshiko's, an affectionate way of saying Mosheh, had three bar type stools to the right as you walk in, with a narrow counter to eat at, and outside on the pedestrian walkway, some tables and chairs, but Mosheh the Arab didn't sit in any of them. Rafael, Ruti and I stepped outside the opening that serves as the entrance to Moshiko's and we continued our conversation.

We must have been standing there about 20 minutes when a slender man about 25 came over to me and asked me for a shekel. Yuliel wore a black hat that was sort of a cross between a rock star and a cowboy hat. He was thin and handsome. I told him I couldn't give him a shekel (about 22 cents) because I didn't know him and if he would use it for drugs or drinking alcohol, 'How could I stand before God, if that was the case? Are you hungry?' He said yes and he looked it. 'Do you like *shwarma*?' We stepped over the threshold back into Moshiko's again.

By this time the owner was telling me, '*Kol haKavod!*' appreciating what Ruti and I were doing in feeding the men. I told him that God wanted us to be compassionate and merciful to our brothers. He liked that, as well as the Israeli who was eating a *shwarma* on a stool to my right. The man eating mentioned that all Israel needed to be loving and kind. I agreed.

Yuliel got his meal and drink and sat down on a cement ledge about eight feet away from Rafael, Ruti and me. We continued to talk about Jewish things and Messiah (whenever I could get Him in) just outside Moshiko's on Messiah

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Street (*ben Yehuda*). I looked at Yuliel and I saw he was listening. My heart went out to him. There was just something about him...

I could see that not only had he, like Mosheh the beggar before him, appreciated what Ruti and I had done, but living on the streets seemed to have humbled him. He wasn't out to take my money and he wasn't in a hurry to go off somewhere and eat his meal, like Mosheh. He was just 'there.'

I wanted to go over and get to know him better and share Messiah with him. If there was anything that I 'would have done over,' I would have cut the 'conversation' short with Rafael, excusing myself, and sat down on the concrete ledge next to Yuliel (getting a chair for Ruti) and seen what our Lord would have had for us. Instead, I duked it out with Rafael.

After a while Yuliel left and we were still talking with Rafael. Then another young man, Alex, came up to us and asked for money, not an uncommon thing on Messiah Street. We got him a *shwarma* and a drink, too. Ruti leaned over to me and suggested that I give my Cards to both the owner and the man who was still sitting on the stool. I handed my Card to the owner, telling him that he would find out who the Messiah was if he would read the Scripture cites. I turned to the man on the stool and gave him one, also, saying that,

'it was because of Messiah that my heart has been opened to help my brethren.'

It was probably about an hour and a half in all and we finally parted from Rafael. As we did, I told him,

'Rafael, please don't let your intelligence get in the way of hearing what the God of Israel is saying to you today through me. Check out the Scripture cites that are listed on the Card and even more importantly, ask Him tonight if Yeshua is the Messiah and keep on asking Him until you get an answer. God is real. He's here and He'll tell you one way or the other. What I'm bringing you from Him is nothing less than *Living Waters*.' (Jer. 2:13; 17:13)

He assured us that he would 'look into' all this, as one might do with anything new that came across his path. Then we parted.

Well, now I was more tired and hungrier than before, but so grateful to Yeshua for all the opportunities He had given us to share Him with others in different ways. I said to Ruti, 'Let's get some *shwarma* for ourselves now.' It was about 5:30 in the afternoon and the sun was getting lower in the autumn sky. When

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we came out of Moshiko's with our food, the few tables outside were taken, but having lived in Jerusalem from 1995 to 1997 we knew of another spot just around the corner.

We turned right, just after Moshiko's, onto another huge pedestrian walkway and about 50 yards away (45 meters) sat down on a circular concrete ledge that had dirt in the center of it. I imagine a tree was supposed to be where the dirt was, but it wasn't there. There were four circular ledges, with people already using them as chairs, and one left for us. Perfect! We sat down and prayed, thanking the Lord for all the people we had shared Him with, asking Him to minister to them and bring them into His Kingdom, and also, for the food He had just provided for us.

Two minutes later a dog, a small, cute rat terrier, white with light brown markings, came around us. I'm not one to give food to dogs or cats while I'm eating so I told her that I was sorry. As the Lord would have it though, as I lifted up my *shwarma* into my mouth, a small piece of meat fell out onto the ground under me. I said, 'Well, it looks like the Lord is providing for you today, too,' and I bent over, picked the piece up and tossed it close to her. Provide He did, even more than I initially realized. There was some grizzle in both Ruti's and my *shwarma*. This was something that we had hardly ever found in Moshiko's *shwarma* before, but things change over time. They used to load it up with *shwarma* or falafel, but now they hardly put anything in. Anyway, we gave the pieces to her. She was happy and so were we.

I wasn't halfway through my *shwarma* when a young man, about 19, approached us and asked me for four shekels so he could buy a *falafel*. I said, 'Sure,' and handing my *shwarma* to Ruti, I told her I would be back in a few minutes. On the way to Moshiko's he confessed that he didn't have any money at all and that he always said that so he could get some money to eat. I told him it didn't matter. I'd buy him a *falafel* or *shwarma*, whatever he wanted.

Ruti and I don't like to give *money* to people on the street who beg for it, as there are many professional beggars in Israel and they make a lot of money from tourists. We stop and ask the Lord whether we should give or not, and how much, and many times we'll ask if they need food or are hungry. This way it gives us an opportunity to share Yeshua with them, something we couldn't do if we just handed them some money. If we sense from the Lord that they really need money, we'll take them to a grocery store and let them pick out food for their family.

The owner of Moshiko's, and one of his assistants, smiled at me as we came in. After we had ordered Erin a *falafel* and a drink, and they were in the

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process of making the *falafel*, I asked Erin where he came from. 'Los Angeles,' he said, 'but I live in Tsafat now' (a city north of Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee, noted as a Kabbalistic center). He told me that 'just yesterday' he had shaved off his *payos* (long hair hanging from the side of the head around the ears that *Hasidic* Jews believe are the mystical parallel to the *tzit'zot*). I asked him why he had done that. He said that it just didn't feel right. I told him he was right to do that, saying that I thought the *payos* made a man look like a woman, and that wasn't good. Erin had been learning about Kabbalah and other mystical things in Tsafat. I gave him my Prophecy Card and told him that this would show him who the true Messiah was.

Erin was hungry and grateful. After thanking me we parted and I went back to Ruti and our little friend. The Lord was making this a very special day for us. We finished eating and walked to another shoe store. It was after 6:00 PM now. We both saw some shoes we thought might be good for us, but they didn't have my size. The closest they had was one size too big. I tried it on, but not only did my feet slip in them, the heel not 'catching,' but my right foot felt like there were 'pinchers,' like a vice, gripping my foot about mid sole. The young salesman insisted that I try on a bigger size to get away from the vice grip, but I told him that if my feet were slipping in these, bigger ones wouldn't be better. He still insisted though, and I declined.

Meanwhile, Ruti had been waiting to get the 'left foot' of a display model from the girl who worked there, but every time the girl came out of the stock room it was with a pair of shoes for someone else. We waited and we waited. Ruti said that we should leave. I said, 'Let's wait a little longer.' Finally, the young woman came out with the box for the shoe, but the left shoe was nowhere to be found! We thanked them both and left.

Walking some more we came to another shoe store. As we entered the store a black Jew from Ethiopia came up to us and asked if he could help us. I told him we were looking for some walking shoes. He directed us over to some that looked like the kind that one would climb Mt. Everest with. I told him we were looking for something a little simpler.

He showed me another display on the wall, and as it had a flat, straight sole to it, something I need with my flat feet, I tried one on, not thinking much about it. When I began to walk in them they were very comfortable.

We bought the shoes and as we left the store we thanked Shlomi (an affectionate way of saying Shlomo or Solomon in English: peace) for all his help and wished him a good evening. He liked that. We crossed King George Street and

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headed for some more shoe stores.

Ruti put on a pair of shoes at the next store, which the son of the owner had offered to her. As she walked in them she said that she couldn't believe how soft and comfortable they felt, and the tan color with the light pink stripe went well with her dress. I paid for the shoes and thanked them for their help. On the train back to Tel Aviv we thanked Yeshua for blessing us with folks to share Him with, food to eat and shoes to wear.

It was 9:40 PM when we got off the train and looked for a bus to take us back to Ramat Gan. We must have looked unsure about where to go, which we were, when a Jewish man by the name of Ariel (Lion of God, another name for the Messiah) passed by and asked us if he could help us. I explained that we weren't sure where the bus stop to Ramat Gan was, and after giving him the numbers (of different buses to Ramat Gan) he told us it would be a blessing for him to show us. We crossed the street and after a number of bus stops (on the same street) we found the one for us. Ariel had been telling us that he had been to the United States and had traveled all over it for \$300. He had bought an Amtrak ticket, good for a month anywhere in the U.S., and had visited one city after another. Then he asked me if I knew Rabbi 'so and so' in Miami Beach. 'No,' I said. How about Rabbi 'so and so' in Brooklyn? Again, no.

He told us of a time when his visa stamp had run out and he had gone to Montreal, Canada, to stay with a 'great rabbi.' Why was he great? He said,

“Anything the rabbi said happened! After a week in Montreal I wanted to go back to the United States. I gave my passport to the immigration man and then he asked if he could see what was in my backpack. I said, 'Sure.' He found a prescription with my address from Brooklyn on it and said he wasn't going to let me back in. I told him that I was sick there and I had given the address where I was staying at the time. 'What if you came to Israel,' Ariel said to the immigration officer, 'and you got sick and needed a prescription. Wouldn't you give your Israeli address to the doctor?'”

The immigration man responded, 'You're very smart, but I'm not going to let you in,' and he didn't. He was probably anti-Semitic. Ariel went back to the rabbi and told him his problem. The rabbi said, 'Go back to the same place tomorrow and they'll let you in,' and indeed, Ariel went back and a different immigration man asked, 'How long do you want to stay in the United States?' Ariel told him, 'Just one week.' The man said, 'You look like a fine fellow,'

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and stamped his passport for six months!

I was impressed, but I wasn't going to dwell on that, as immigration officers are rotated daily. I asked Ariel if he knew anything about Messiah. He said he didn't know much. I said that with Messiah we could come to know God, not just know 'about' God. I began to speak of what was written in the *Tanach* about Messiah, and it wasn't long before Ariel said goodbye. Ruti said that when I had begun to speak of Messiah, Ariel sort of changed mode to 'wanting to go as soon as possible.'

Please take a moment to lift up to our Messiah—Ya'el, Miri, Shimon, Ti'yah, Rafael, Musa, Yuliel, Erin and Ariel. Thank you!

## Zoli

Zoli (of ZAP!) came up from Eilat, a five hour bus drive and stayed with us from Dec. 1st to Dec 9th, 2005. We were living in Ramat Gan now. He was 30 years old and still living with his wife Divera and their two year old son Ocean, but their marriage was failing miserably. Three years before he had come close to Yeshua, through our love for him, and had acknowledged Yeshua as Savior, but there was never that full heart surrender that is so necessary. The Lord was using his bad marriage though, to bring Zoli closer to Him. Zoli was seeking Yeshua through prayer and reading of His Word. We had been in phone contact with him since we left Eilat, the year before in November.

Zoli came with Ruti and me wherever we went during those ten days. We took the train to Jerusalem, and also to Haifa, in outreach, and we also searched for an apartment in the Ramat Gan area because Ruti and I had to move. All these times resulted in many opportunities for me to witness for Yeshua. I was pleasantly surprised to see Zoli also speaking for the Lord, but I'm getting ahead of myself.

The Lord used Zoli's time with us to bring him into the Kingdom. The second day he was with us we had a powerful time of prayer with him, where much of his pain, which he had carried from emotional abuse; people from his parents and his wife, to Israelis here, was released and given to Yeshua.

Then, on Dec. 7th, Zoli met Yeshua in a truly divine way. The Holy Spirit moved through his body and soul. He described it as 'hot and cold' at the same time and strong electricity that didn't hurt, but felt very good. The Holy Spirit went from his head to his feet and back to his head twice. He was changed. He had *experienced* His Savior and a Seed was planted for that new heart-nature (Ezk. 36:24-27). Now Zoli had a divine hunger for the Word of God and prayer. Praise You, Yeshua!!!

From Wednesday, Dec. 7th on, when I would witness to people, Zoli would respectfully wait until I finished and then would ask me if he could say something to them. I saw an evangelist being born. Before that day he would just let me speak, but now he was saying to Israelis that he, too, knew that Yeshua was real and that only in Yeshua they would find divine *Life*.

What a *Joy* for Ruti and me. All those years of sowing Seed, praying and loving him, and now we had begun to see some sweet heavenly Fruit in Zoli. There was something wonderfully different about his smile. Love was over-

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flowing between the three of us. Thank You, Yeshua!

On Thursday, Zoli told me many things he had done in his life, which he was ashamed of. He was confessing his sins to God through me. This was a work of the Holy Spirit. I'm 23 years older than Zoli, old enough to be his father. In our relationship, Zoli had wanted to only show me his 'good side.' When he had finished sharing his shame, I said,

‘Yeshua wants me to tell you that all your sins, every single one of them, have been forgiven. Yeshua has forgiven you, Zoli. He paid the penalty and took your punishment for them.’

With that, Zoli began to weep. I hugged him and held him. Zoli told us that he wanted to be pure. He was an expert in martial arts and taught it, but he would give that up for the Lord. He intuitively understood that it wasn't the Way of Yeshua. He was very open to being taught by me, and actually, wanted to be a shepherd-evangelist-teacher like his Abba (me). He's called me 'Abba' (Papa), and Ruti 'Ima' (Mama), for years. He's truly our son now.

When I spoke to him in Eilat, the day after he left us to return home, he said that he felt so light and *clean* because of Yeshua, and he had already witnessed to three Israelis on the bus about the new *Life* they could have in Messiah Yeshua. Zoli had only been working part time since the summer, and Divera had lost her job about two months earlier, in September. In a few weeks, on Jan. 6th, 2006 their son Ocean would be two years old, and they were in need of funds for food, rent, electric and a new pair of glasses for Divera. Her glasses were so scratched that she couldn't see out of them. Before Zoli left on Dec. 9th we gave him \$1,000.

It had been money we had been saving up for our move to another apartment, but we felt that the Lord wanted Zoli to have it. We love to share what we have with those who need it. Our Father always provides for our needs. He's like that. He's a Good Abba.

The battle had only begun though. Zoli was in a *perfect* situation for growth in Yeshua because Divera has her own history of being abused, and had become very abusive, but she can also be very sweet and loving. It seems they are a perfect match. The Lord can use the fiery furnace to mold Zoli into His Image (Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:3), and hopefully, for Divera to come to know the One who heals all our wounds.

Please pray for Zoli, Divera and for us, as we reach out to Israelis with God's answer to this world of death, hatred, abuse and uncleanness.

## *The Way of God*

Five weeks before the court hearing in Pennsylvania in June 1996 we were living in Mevaseret Zion, just outside Jerusalem. This was the town of ‘Sam the ~~rock~~ thrower,’ which had happened only three weeks earlier. We had moved there Jan. 28th, 1997 after having lived at Meir’s for 20 months.

We were supposed to pay our three months Israeli rent on May first, but we only had money for two months, and so, I gave Meir, the landlord, two months rent and told him that as soon as we got the third month I’d give it to him. Two weeks went by and we still didn’t have the third month. It was as though the well had gone dry. This was not Meir, our first landlord in Jerusalem (June 1995-January 1997), Meir in Mevaseret Zion.

We had only been living in our new place for three and a half months when our young landlord told us *to leave by the end of the month* (May)! I had already paid him for two months in advance (which would cover both May and June), but we had caused quite a controversy in the neighborhood for Yeshua, and I don’t think he wanted us there any longer. He gave us two weeks to move out and he was going to keep the extra month’s rent ‘for utilities.’ Of course, utilities would be nowhere near a month’s rent, but this is what he said.

We had two weeks to find a new place and no money to do it with. One week went by and as we prayed about a place, where to go, we didn’t get anything, and since we didn’t have any money to look, it didn’t matter. Then an extraordinary donation came to us of \$2,000. We thanked the man who sent it, breathed a sigh of relief and praised Yeshua. With this we could rent an apartment. We sought the Lord for where He wanted us to move. With rents running around \$600 a month for small apartments in Jerusalem, \$2,000 would be just enough for two months rent, a deposit, and the movers, but the answer we got in prayer, as to where in Jerusalem we should move to surprised me. Ruti and I both sensed, independently in prayer, that the Lord wanted us to return to the States.

I didn’t think that we were ever going back to the States, but Ruti said she hadn’t been sure of that. We purchased our flight tickets, and sensing from Yeshua that we would be returning to Israel, we put our belongings in storage, except for a couple of suitcases for clothes and a few books that we took with us. At 4:00 AM, on June 3rd, 1997 we arrived in New York City with a \$20 bill and 12 shekels (\$3.40) to our name. We had been in Israel exactly two years and two days. (That was our first time in Israel.)

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We stayed at my mother's apartment in Queens, New York City. She graciously opened up her apartment to us and gave us her own bedroom to sleep in. She slept on the couch. Three days later we found ourselves in a Pennsylvania court, in time for the hearing for my sons. The look on the face of the Meredith's lawyer was one of shock mingled with panic. He couldn't believe we were there. I couldn't believe we were there, either. The lawyer wasn't prepared for us to be there, and in court he acted like he wasn't prepared. I thought, 'How strange.' I knew the Merediths liked to have 'the best,' but this man seemed to be far from that.

I didn't have a lawyer. All I wanted to do was lay my life down for the Merediths. I was not there to win the court case, but to display the Lord's love and forgiveness toward the Merediths. Court began and I told the judge that I would be representing myself. I knew I was there to extend to the Merediths what I would want if I were in their spiritual condition. I would want someone to show me the love and forgiveness of Messiah Yeshua.

In cross examining Mr. Meredith, the only thing I said was that I knew he had gone through tremendous grief, with the death of his daughter (ten months earlier), and that I didn't want to add to that grief. I told the judge that I had 'no further questions.' I did the same thing with Mrs. Meredith, even though my flesh cried out for justice.

As it turned out, the 'court appointed child advocate' was found to be *tainted* with information about my sons, and so the judge closed the proceedings that day. He said it would continue sometime in the fall, after a new child advocate could be found and a new date set. It was at this proceeding in June that I found out that because I was representing myself I would get to see my sons at the next court date. I would have seen them that day if the court had continued.

If I had hired a lawyer, the lawyer would have gone into the judge's chambers, with the Merediths' lawyer, and my sons would have been brought in and questioned by both lawyers, but I would never have seen them. When I found out that I would see them (in the fall), my heart couldn't believe what my ears had heard. I was going to see my sons?!

To see my sons, in more than eight years, was impossible for me to comprehend. They were 'frozen in time' in my heart. To me they were still only four and two years old. Of course, I knew they weren't, but these were the 'emotional pictures' I carried in my soul. It was overwhelming for me. I wanted so much to be their father and to love them, and to know their love for me.

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If the Israeli landlord hadn't sinned against us, we would have still been in that apartment in Israel. It's *amazing* how the Father works in the midst of the sins of others, that we might become like His Son (Rom. 8:28), especially if we don't throw a monkey wrench into His plans for us.

## THE EILAT TRIP

On Sunday, March 19th, 2006 three months after Zoli had stayed with Ruti and me in Ramat Gan, the Lord sent us to Eilat. We were there for nine days and ministered to Zoli and Shuli, and their families, and also helped other believers, and had a number of opportunities for 'first time' witnessing to Israelis about Yeshua. The main reason we went was because we had sensed the Lord wanting to strengthen Zoli through us.

Zoli had grown since December, reading the Word and praying every day, but not without setbacks. After a month or so with Divera, the enemy attacking him continually through her, we could sense Zoli was slipping and needed our support. We prayed and waited upon the Lord as to when He might send us and we left on March 19th.

When we met Zoli, Divera and Ocean, there were tears in Zoli's eyes. He was weeping. He had been through a lot and he was so glad to see us. Even though we had been keeping in almost daily phone contact he could not believe, for joy, that we had actually come to Eilat.

Divera, a Jewess of South African and European extraction, was raised with a condemning mother and a father who was weak and 'on the side-lines.' Not surprisingly, Divera had become like her mother, only more so. She was the boss and was 'in control,' and would use condemnation laced with anger to maintain it.

Over the years that we had been helping them financially she had softened towards us. On a number of occasions, Divera, in astonishment, said she had never known anyone like us (who would give and give and give to help those in need, Zoli and her especially). She was more open to Yeshua now than ever before and we were grateful for that.

We were with them a number of times in March, feeding them both natural and spiritual food (the Word). Unfortunately, we didn't pray enough, but when we did, Satan was there with his distractions.

We were able to help them financially, paying for their rent and electric, some clothes and dentistry needs, etc., which was all of Yeshua. Zoli had only been able to work part time those last few months and Divera hadn't worked full time in a while. Now though, Zoli was looking to work full time in about a week and Divera was looking at starting a job in May.<sup>101</sup>

We were able to do some biblical counseling with them, but could only

### *The Eilat Trip*

scratch the surface. We praised Yeshua that Divera was open to this. Ruti and I believed that Divera needed to come to her Messiah, and in that, she would find healing and their marriage would be blessed.

Zoli was under a lot of pressure and would have loved to just walk out of the marriage. Ruti and I understood, and biblically he had a right to do it because Divera wasn't a believer and was abusive (1st Cor. 7:12-16). We counseled him to stay as long as he could, praying to Yeshua for the strength and wisdom he needed. Divera was 34 and Zoli was 31.

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<sup>101</sup> By May 2006 Zoli had gotten a job as a life guard working for a hotel. He worked hard and long hours. Sadly though, it didn't pay much more than minimum wage, but with our help they were eating and slowly paying off their bills. Divera would work part time as well.

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### **Shuli and Sagit**

We were also able to spend time with Shuli, in prayer, Bible study and fellowship. She lived in government subsidized housing (a small three room apartment). Shuli was torn between the world and the Lord. She needed the Infilling of the Holy Spirit, but with a divided heart, that hadn't happened. She had believed in Yeshua for three years, but her walk had been mostly carnal. She needed to be totally and unreservedly consecrated to her Messiah. The Seed was being choked by her love for the world (Mt. 13:3-7, 18-22).

One of Shuli's two daughters was Sagit. She was 23 years old now and had a two year old daughter named Oriyan. Sagit really loved Ruti and because of that she was open to Yeshua. When we were there Sagit allowed Ruti to pray for her in the name of Yeshua. That was quite a change for a Jewess who didn't believe in Him and knew that 'the Jewish people didn't believe in Yeshua,' and hadn't wanted to even hear 'that name,' a few years earlier.

Sagit was married to Ilan (26 years old) who was working and going to university to become an engineer. It would take him another five years, but he would leave before he got the degree, to support his family. They didn't have much money, either, and so, when we saw Sagit's shoes worn out and separating we gave her money to buy a new pair that she had wanted for her birthday, about a month earlier (Feb. 25th), but hadn't been able to get. She really appreciated that. We also helped Shuli with food, rent, electric and dentistry money. She was living on \$235 a month that the government gave her (due to her physical condition). We also gave Ilan some money for their food needs.

### ***Rahel and Her Family***

Rahel (Rachel; 67 years old) was a nominal Gentile believer from India who had come to Israel 20 years ago. She had a Catholic upbringing, but married a Jewish man in India and was separated from him all the time that she had lived in Israel. She lived in Eilat with one of her daughters, Esther (33 years old) and Esther's son, Itzak Hai (Isaac lives!, five years old). Esther was a believer and recently had divorced her Israeli husband. He didn't work nor provide for his family. He only took money from Esther, who worked in the hot back room of a laundry, doing the clothes and bed sheets from the hotels. When we had lived in Eilat we saw both Shuli and Esther come closer to the Lord than they had ever been before. We had weekly times of Bible study,

### *The Eilat Trip*

praise and prayer. The three of them lived in a little two room apartment.

Rahel's son Mosheh had died a year earlier, in April 2005. He had been a 40 year old alcoholic. He was drunk one night, slipped and fell from a staircase and died. Rahel and Esther grieved much over him. We were able to bring the Lord's comfort in the midst of their tremendous grief and how He was wanting to bring a new bitter-sweet song to Rahel, one that she had never known before. I told her that if she would continue to seek the Lord Yeshua, that He would cause her to sing that song to Him. I could tell by the way she was looking at me that she heard what I was saying. Rahel also spoke of financial needs they had. Ruti and I were able to help them in that area, too.

Rahel shared that there was a big rift between her and Sarah, another daughter of Rahel's that lived in Eilat. Sarah (35 years old) had two children, David, 13 and Jasmine, 10. Sarah had been divorced a few years ago and now worked as a cook to support her family.

Ruti and I were able to see Sarah and also minister to her. One of the things that was on her heart was that some Jehovah's Witnesses had come to her apartment and had confused her about Jesus. We took an evening, and opening the Bible, showed her and the children, along with Soni, her live-in boyfriend, that the Jehovah's Witnesses were wolves in sheep's clothing.

Jehovah's Witnesses present themselves as Christians, but the *Jesus* whom they teach is not the Jesus of the New Testament. Their *Jesus* is not God the Son, which is the central tenet of who Yeshua is. Did the God of Israel save us or did He send a created being to die for us, as Jehovah's Witnesses teach? They believe that Jesus is the angel Michael.<sup>102</sup>

Sarah was relieved and appreciative, but we could see that because she didn't know her Bible she would still be open to influence of the Jehovah's Witnesses. Soni, a Christian man from India, had been living with Sarah for the past year. We spoke to the both of them about needing to repent of their sin. They listened, but we didn't think they would change. Nominal Christians know nothing of total consecration and obedience to the Savior.

We weren't able to bring up the subject of the rift between Sarah and her mother (and her sister Esther). It seemed that Sarah held her mother accountable, and condemned her, for the death of Mosheh (her brother). Sarah said

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<sup>102</sup> See *Yeshua—God the Son* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Yeshua-God-the-Son.pdf> for how the Three are One God, from The Hebraic Perspective (Is. 43:11; 45:21; 49:26; John 1:1-2; Col. 1:15; Hebrews 1:1-6; 2:10; 5:9; 1st Jn. 5:11, 20).

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that her mother should have been staying with Mosheh, not with Esther. (Mosheh lived in Dimona, a city about 120 miles or 200 kilometers north of Eilat.) Sarah thought that if her mother had been there with Mosheh, he wouldn't have slipped or been drinking. Rahel though, felt that her place was to help her daughter Esther, with her little boy. So, on top of the grief over the loss of her only son, Rahel was being condemned for his death by her daughter Sarah. Sin is so very destructive.

### *First Timers*

On another note, some of the 'first time' people that we were able to witness to, began on the five hour bus trip from Tel Aviv to Eilat. We prayed for Sally, and influenced her Israeli boyfriend. She was a Gentile from the Philippines and was going to Eilat for a few days to be with 62 year old Amichai ('my people live!'). Sally was 50. Amichai said that he had worked for forty years in New York City for an Israeli shipping firm.

Halfway through the trip though, Sally got sick to her stomach, and Ruti and I prayed for her. They were sitting in back of us. Sally took Ruti's hand and we prayed for her. Sally really appreciated it, kissing Ruti's hand at the end of the prayer time. We were able to share Messiah Yeshua with both of them. When we parted in Eilat I gave them some articles on Yeshua.

In Eilat we also spoke to Adriene about the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. He was a 23 year old Jewish-Arab Israeli. That's right. His father was an Arab and his mother was a Jewess. His father was actually a Christian Arab, so Adriene 'believed' in Jesus, but he didn't know anything about the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. He was very interested.

Ruti and I sensed that Adriene was truly searching for the meaning of life. We spoke to him for about 30 minutes and gave him some literature. We would have prayed for him, but he was working and he didn't want any trouble with his boss.

Another time of sharing came when I got into a lively discussion about Yeshua with two families who had just gotten done eating in the hotel's dining room. Giora (57) had read the New Testament, but he wasn't convinced that Yeshua was the Messiah due to what he saw as discrepancies in the Gospels. Before I could find out any specifics, Na'amah, whose name means beautiful or lovely, said that if there was a god or goddess, it didn't matter—all we needed to do was to be good. She was sitting next to her husband, who was a

### *The Eilat Trip*

friend of Giora's. I told her that she needed,

‘to meet God, like Moses had at the Burning Bush. The God of Israel is real. We all have concepts of God, but when we meet Him, they begin to change and line up with who He really is.’

Then Giora's wife, Elinoah, chimed in and said there ‘couldn't be a God! How could God allow the Holocaust?!’

I shared a simple, short testimony about my search for God more than thirty years earlier, wanting to know if He was real. After I had given my life to Jesus, the Holy Spirit came upon me and I *knew*, I didn't just ‘believe,’ I knew that God and Messiah were real and that by the sacrifice of Jesus my sins had been forgiven because of the shalom that flooded my soul.

I spoke some more, and I could see that both Giora and his wife were interested, but they had just finished their meal and their friends wanted to leave. I gave them my Prophecy Card and told Giora that all of the prophecies on the Card were from the *Tanach*, and they all pointed to Yeshua, and that if he would look them up, he would see that, too. He thanked me for it and they left.

How had I come to speak with them? They had called me over to their table as I had walked past them. I had been eating with Ruti, Zoli, Divera, Ocean and Shuli, but had gotten up to see something in the lobby. As I was returning to the dining room they motioned to me. They said there was this *peace* on my face that had intrigued them. We know Who that was. Thank You, Yeshua!

When we came back to Ramat Gan we were a little lighter than when we had left. No, not in actual physical weight, but financially. We had given out more than \$2,500 to believers and their families in Eilat.

Our hearts continue to be burdened for Zoli and his family, and for Shuli and her children, and for Rahel and her children. They're like sheep without a shepherd to guide them. Ruti and I look forward to the time, if it is His will, when the Lord will lead us back to Eilat, to comfort, encourage and strengthen them in their walk with the Master.

Zoli's ‘heart on-fire for the Lord’ had been doused with dirty water many times in the three month interval since we had seen him in December. He needs your prayers for strength and joy and to grow mightily in Yeshua. The other believers all need to be filled with His Spirit and to consecrate themselves totally to Yeshua.

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I ask for your prayers for all those we witnessed to, that their eyes would be opened to their Savior and King, and that they would give themselves to Yeshua with all their heart.

Thank you, also, for your prayers for Ruti and me, that we would give ourselves unreservedly to the One who unreservedly gave Himself for us:

“And Yeshua was going about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the Great News of the Kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness; and seeing the multitude, He felt compassion for them because they were distressed and downcast, like sheep without a shepherd.”

“Then He said to His followers, ‘The Harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the Harvest to send out workers into His Harvest.’” (Mt. 9:35-38)

## KATYUSHAS IN HAIFA

Our hearts were heavy. The Tel Aviv train platform was filled to overflowing with Israeli soldiers, men and women, going to war, going to places from which they might never return. It was 8:00 AM Sunday morning, July 23rd, 2006 eleven days after Israel had begun defending itself against Hezbollah on her northern border. Ruti sensed the Lord leading us to go to Jerusalem an hour earlier than normal. She was right. Yeshua wanted us to see this scene. It reminded me of train stations in war movies of World War Two, with Israeli soldiers milling around, many just sitting on the platform itself because there wasn't any room to sit elsewhere. Most everyone was waiting for trains to take them north.

Our train was 25 minutes late. I asked a soldier why. He told me, 'Because of the situation,' a phrase used by Israelis to describe the never ending conflicts with the Arabs. There were more trains than usual going north, all filled with soldiers and a few civilians. Our train to Jerusalem came and we left, heading south-east.

One of our stops in Jerusalem was at a music store. Danny, a 21 year old Jew born in Estonia and raised in Israel, helped us. I told him that my grandfather was born in Lithuania. Those two countries, and Latvia, form three countries on the Baltic Sea, northeast of Poland. They were taken over by the Soviets in 1940, but regained their independence in March 1990. That's how Danny and his parents were able to immigrate to Israel.

After Danny helped us with our music needs he began to share about the Israeli school system and how poor it was in Hebrew literature, compared with the European nations. He said he didn't really learn anything in literature and math in the first eight grades, but in the next two grades they tried to cram him with what he should have learned in those first eight grades, along with what those two grades had for him. It was brutal and many couldn't take it.

One thing led to another and for forty minutes I spoke with Danny about his Messiah, from Isaiah, Zechariah and Daniel. It started with the book of Daniel. I said that I had found the Messiah that Daniel prophesied of. His name is Yeshua. He asked, 'Jesus?' 'Yes.'

I told him that his namesake, the prophet Daniel, was the only place in the *Tanach* where God tells us *when* the Messiah would come. I related the passage to him of how Messiah would make an 'end' to sin, and then showed him the verse in a small Bible that Ruti always carries with her. I said that in *Nazir*

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32b (Talmud) the ancient Sages declared that the Messiah *had to come* during the Second Temple period, and they based their teaching on Daniel 9:24-26. Danny had never heard that before. There were two other workers there who also heard what I was saying. I spoke of the *Life* that I had found in Messiah Yeshua and why He came as a sacrifice, found in Isaiah (53) and confirmed by Zechariah (12:10; 13:1). We were to be forgiven of our sins and made like Him.

The Lord was with us and Danny was open. I gave him my Card, a single sheet of Acts 2 in Hebrew and a pamphlet of John in Hebrew. As we left he said he was going to read them.

Ruti and I had a salad and some sweet potatoes for lunch and then it was time to return home. We had already cashed our checks. We got to the Jerusalem train station—just in time to see our train pulling out. We missed it by one minute and now we had to wait an hour for the next one. I know the Lord uses things like this ‘for good,’ but my feelings struggle with it sometimes. This was one of those times.

We sat down and I began to go over a ministry article I had brought with me. Before long we were speaking with David, his sisters and his mother about Messiah. They were a family from Haifa, one of the most heavily rocketed cities in northern Israel, about 28 miles (45 K) south of the Lebanese border and 60 miles (100 K) north of Tel Aviv. Haifa is home to 270,000 Israelis. This family, like many others, had fled their home because of the Katyusha rockets and had stayed with a family in Jerusalem. It still wasn’t safe to return, but they were returning anyway.

David was very interested in Messiah. At three months short of joining the Israeli Army (almost 18 years old) he told us of some friends in his high school who also believed in Yeshua, but he could see their belief wasn’t ‘strong’ or with all their heart. I gave David my Prophecy Card.

The train came and we sat in one car and they sat in another. Across the aisle from us was Shoshana, an older Israeli woman. She had lived in Beit Shemesh for more than 20 years, having lost her husband seven years ago. We spoke of Messiah to her for the whole 40 minute ride to Beit Shemesh. When she left I gave her Acts 2 and my Card. She gave us her phone number and invited us to come visit her.

The next day Ruti and I were walking on Allenby Street in Tel Aviv. It’s named for the British general who liberated Palestine from the Ottoman Empire during World War One. The Ottomans controlled this land for exactly

### *Katyushas in Haifa*

four hundred years, from 1517 to 1917.

We passed by the Carmel shuk, a very large open-air shopping market, and a man by the name of Ishai (Jesse) came up to us. He wanted to extol the virtues of Greenpeace (an organization that uses the issue of environment to implement its New Age agenda). I told him we didn't have much time, but I would give him three minutes if he gave me three minutes. He accepted that and launched into what Greenpeace had accomplished in Israel—the cleaning up of the Yarkon River and the stopping of raw waste being dumped into the Mediterranean Sea, both of which were very good. He ended by saying that we could be 'silent members,' which meant that we didn't have to demonstrate or sign anyone up for membership, but *just donate some money each year*. Or, we could be like him, actively recruiting people and funds into the organization.

I asked him what he wanted to be doing five years from now. Ishai was in college and wanted to become a journalist and work for an Israeli (liberal) newspaper. I thanked him for sharing with us and told him that I wasn't able to become a silent member because all my time and funds were given to the poor and needy. I told him that I had met God through the Messiah and that I wanted Ishai to also meet Him. Talk about recruiting : )

For the next 20 minutes I told him that God wanted to love him with a love that was so divine, that once he felt it he would know God and he would give up everything and follow Messiah. I loved Ishai, the Lord loving him through me. I told him of my search for God, thirty years ago, to know if God was real, and how the Lord Yeshua had proven Himself to me over and over again. We parted with me giving him Acts 2 and my Prophecy Card. Would you pray for Danny, David (and his family), Shoshana and Ishai? They are all candles that need to be lit by the Holy Spirit.

Turning to that current 'situation,' as of Aug. 2nd, 2006 Israel had just finished the third full week of the war (having begun on July 12th). More than one hundred Katyushas *a day* had fallen on the northern part of Israel. By 7:10 PM today more than 200 Katyushas had fallen. One fifth of the Israeli population live in that area. Many Israelis had fled from their homes to go south to be with family, like David and his family. Fifty-four Israelis had died since the fighting had begun three weeks ago.

Hezbollah threatened to extend the rockets further south, to Tel Aviv. Between the Haifa and the Tel Aviv area live 60% of Israel's population. Some more 'advanced rockets' fell on Beit Sha'an, which was the furthest that rockets have penetrated into Israel. It's 42 miles from the Lebanese border. Beit

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Sha'an is an Israeli city along the Jordan River, Israel's eastern border. Israel is a very small country—280 miles (450 k) long by about 60 miles (100 k) at its widest. It's home to more than six million Jews, one million Arabs, 200,000 Druse and 150,000 Christians of various persuasions (Catholic, Baptist, Pentecostal and Messianic, etc.).

When I would read the Israeli news I found myself 'telling' the IDF and the Israeli government how they should deal with Hezbollah (in Lebanon), Damascus (Syria) and Teheran (Iran). I also found that I lost my peace when I dwelt on those things. I prayed that God would deal with the enemies of Israel. My peace was restored as I got my eyes back on Yeshua and what I have been called to do among my people Israel.

In the midst of this war there were many opportunities to witness for our Messiah. When people are brought to the point of basic reality, facing possible death, many of the illusions of life are swept away and God is able to enter into their lives. One of Satan's chief weapons is fear. If we're afraid or 'live in fear' we are actually worshipping Satan, giving way to him instead of trusting, resting and being at peace with God. When we live in fear we are 'honoring' Satan. Messiah Yeshua tells us,

'But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore! You are of more value than many sparrows!' (Luke 12:7)

It seemed that this next passage was also appropriate for the *situation*:

“And say unto him, ‘Take heed and be quiet, fear not! Neither be fainthearted for the two stubs of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria and of the son of Remaliah.’ Because they have planned evil against you, saying, ‘Let us go up against Judah and terrorize her and make for ourselves a breach in her walls...’ Thus says the Lord Yahveh, ‘It shall not stand, nor shall it come to pass!’” (Isaiah 7:4-7)

Israel, those of the Jewish people who are His lambs, will find Him and be with Him forever. No one, not even Satan, can stop that, but the point is this—even as Ruti and I missed our train that day by a minute, with all its accompanying emotional struggles, the Lord used it to further His divine agenda and that's exactly what He's doing with 'the situation' with Hezbollah, Hamas and all the enemies of Israel. Our heavenly Father controls the universe despite circumstances might look like to the contrary:

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and sup-

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plication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Messiah Yeshua.” (Philippians 4:6-7)

Thank you for your prayers for Israel. Let us rejoice in our Messiah, ‘for these Egyptians that you see today you’ll never see again!’ (Ex. 14:13b) Don’t you just love God and His Word?!

## TZION'S BAPTISM

On Sunday, August 20th, 2006 Tzion (Zion; symbolizes Jerusalem and Israel) came from Beer Sheba, where he had been staying with a friend, to be baptized in water. Ruti and I had known Tzion for four years and if anyone didn't seem like they would ever come to the Lord, it was Tzion.

Understandably, Tzion had serious problems with Yeshua being God the Son, and being a religious Jew from France he was learned in the ways of the Rabbis, which only served to keep him in bondage. In March 2002 we met Tzion in Eilat and ministered to him many times. In 2005 he came to Ramat Gan and we talked in our apartment. After he left I shared with Ruti that I didn't think he was ever going to come to Messiah Yeshua. It seemed that he was farther away from the Lord than ever before.

We wouldn't see him for over a year, but in July 2006 we saw him as we were walking in Jerusalem on Yafo (Jaffa; 'beautiful') Street. We talked for a few minutes and before we left we prayed for him, right there on the street as Jews passed by us. He had reconciled Yeshua being deity and had come to faith in Him. We were delighted. He mentioned that he wanted to be baptized, a significant event for anyone, but especially a religious Jew because the Jewish community sees a baptized Jew as leaving his Jewish people and joining themselves to the Gentiles. This is how baptism is seen in Judaism, and unfortunately, in Christianity, also.

Tzion told us he was living near Hebron in a small Jewish community called Kiryat Arba, but that he wanted to come to us in Ramat Gan for me to officiate his immersion. On Sunday, August 20th, Tzion came to our apartment at two in the afternoon and we spoke about the spiritual significance of baptism—death to self, forgiveness of sins and new *Life* in Messiah Yeshua, with the infilling or Baptism in the Holy Spirit. We also prayed and about five o'clock we headed for the Mediterranean Sea between Tel Aviv and the city of Yafo (Jaffa; 'the beautiful city').

We left our sixth floor apartment and got into the elevator. Between the third and fourth floors the elevator came to a stop with a thunk! We pressed all the buttons to go to another floor or to open the doors, but to no avail. Then I pressed the buzzer alarm and a woman on the floor above us, who had wanted to take the elevator herself, asked if we were OK.

Stuck in an elevator on the way to Tzion's baptism! Talk about the forces of darkness not wanting a Jew to be baptized. We told the woman that we were

### *Tzion's Baptism*

alright. I sensed that this wasn't going to be a problem, but that the Lord would use it. I remembered that I had the phone number of our landlord in my cellphone. I called Hezi and told him where we were and asked him to call the elevator people. Hezi panicked. Five times I had to tell him the service phone number for the elevator (it was written in the elevator) before he actually was able to write it down. He finally got it and called them and they called us. (I wanted Hezi to know about it first hand because I had spoken to him three weeks earlier about the elevator making strange sounds as it would pass the fourth floor.)

The elevator man told us that he couldn't send anyone to help us because they had all gone home. They would come and fix it tomorrow. I began to wonder if we had to stay there until the next morning, when he told me that we could pry the door open by forcing it to go to the left. I did that and faced the shaft wall and most of the closed elevator door to floor three below us. He told me to lift the black latch on the top of the closed metal doors and it would open the door to the third floor. Ruti was the first one out, carefully stepping from the elevator, two to three feet (0.8 m) above the third floor. We walked down the steps and we were out on the street, saying that we would not soon forget the day of Tzion's baptism!

The experience had taken a good 25 minutes. We had wanted to take a bus to the Sea, but after the time used up by our stay in the elevator I thought it wise to catch a cab. We had intentionally waited until five in the afternoon so the sun and humidity would begin to ease off. It didn't seem like it had, even with our extended stay between floors. It's a sauna in August with temps in the mid 90s and humidity at 80%.

We wanted to get to the Sea before sundown. We got a cab and Ruti and I sat in the back and Tzion was in the front. We were traveling to the Sea and I'm thinking that if we hadn't spent 25 minutes in the elevator we would have most likely gotten a bus and would have never seen this cab driver. Suddenly, I knew this was very special and I thought, I'm going to ask him his name and share the Word of *Life* with him. As I thought that, the name Eli (short for Elijah) came to me. I asked him his name and the Lord confirmed that he was very special. The driver said his name was Eli.

I told him the Lord had already given me his name and that He wanted me to tell him that He loved Eli very much, and that He knew that Eli loved Him. That impacted Eli, and the rest of the way to the Sea, about 20 minutes, I spoke of Messiah Yeshua with him. Tzion, much to his credit, also spoke of Yeshua. The Lord was making Tzion's baptism very memorable indeed, and

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we hadn't even gotten to the Sea!

As we left Eli I gave him the Hebrew handout of Acts 2. It's the best thing to hand out to Israelis because many know the *name* of Jesus/Yeshu and that He died, but in Acts 2 there's a *Jewish man* proclaiming His *resurrection*, forgiveness in His Name, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and eternal *Life*. Peter springboards off the Jewish prophet Joel, saying that in the name of Yeshua the promised Holy Spirit was being poured out upon Israel, and of how King David wrote of 'the Holy One' (the Messiah) not seeing corruption (in the grave). This gives Israelis something to think about because many only know the cliches that 'Jews don't believe in Jesus,' but here was a Jewish man in Jerusalem, 2,000 years ago, declaring what the God of Israel had done for Israel through Messiah Yeshua.

As we left, Eli thanked me and we walked about 70 yards (64 m) and sat down on a bench, just before a sandy beach. Some Arabs and Jews were swimming 'here and there,' but I had chosen this particular location because I knew it wouldn't be as crowded as the main beaches.

We sat on the bench and Ruti took out her 3/4 guitar that we travel with (sometimes) and she began to sing some songs to the Lord to lead us into His presence. Some Orthodox Jewish children came close to us and listened to her. They liked it and a few minutes later, scurried off to their parents. When we sensed it was time to go, Tzion asked me again what he should say before completely immersing himself. I told him to ask God the Father to forgive him for all his sins, in the name of Yeshua, to transform him into the image of Yeshua, and to fill him with the Holy Spirit.

We left the bench and entered the sandy beach and put a bag of Tzion's clothes, drinking water and the guitar case on some rocks in the middle of the beach not far from the sea. We approached the water and Tzion had the look of determination and belief on his face. It was a big step for him.

Tzion entered the water with his clothes on (for modesty) and got about waist to chest deep. After a few moments he spoke to God and then fully immersed himself. Ruti and I waited on the beach, acting as witnesses.<sup>103</sup>

I gave Tzion a towel and he dried off some and put it around his shoulders.

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<sup>103</sup> In the days of the Apostles the ones being immersed entered the waters, usually the *mikvah*, the pool of water used by Jews to ritually cleanse themselves, and immersed themselves, with believers acting as witnesses on the side of the pool or body of water. The witnesses could also go into the water to make sure that the person was fully immersed, but the person did it himself.

### *Tzion's Baptism*

The sun was just beginning to enter some clouds on the horizon. Everything had worked out perfectly, according to God's timetable, including the elevator fiasco. I told Tzion that Ruti and I wanted to pray for him. I placed my right hand upon his head and lifted my left hand up to the Heavens and began to pray for Yeshua to immerse him in His Spirit and to lead him by the hand and to teach him Who He was. Ruti and I prayed for about five minutes, standing there on the beach where the water comes up the sand, eyes closed, looking to Messiah Yeshua. After we were done we opened our eyes to see two Jewish women standing about ten feet (3 m) away from us. They asked us if we were Lubavitch Jews. I told them we weren't. I said we were Jews who believed that Yeshua from Nazareth was the long awaited Messiah. That didn't upset them and we talked about Messiah Yeshua with them for the next 15 minutes. The women weren't together. They had just seen us praying for Tzion and approached. The older one, Yehudit, 50 years old, lived very close and pointed to some apartments just south of us in Yafo. The younger one, Mia, 24 years old, was a Jewess from Canada who was staying with some relatives in Yafo.

I gave Yehudit the Acts 2 sheet as she left. Mia stayed for a few more minutes and I was able to share some more about the Lord and a number of passages in the *Tanach* about Messiah. I gave her my Prophecy Card when she left (as the Acts 2 passage is only in Hebrew and Mia didn't know Hebrew that well).

Quite a day for Tzion's baptism! Thank You, Lord!, and may there be many more like them! After his immersion Tzion came to learn from me about once a week. Living now in Tsafat, in northern Israel, it was quite a feat for someone with no car. It's about five hours by bus, one way. He usually stayed about four hours or more. We gladly fed him, studied the Word, prayed and praised the Lord together.

Tzion also stayed with us for several days and celebrated Passover 2007 with us. He was walking with Yeshua and wanting to get closer to Him. He was also witnessing to other Jews and had already been persecuted and physically threatened a number of times for the Name of Yeshua, but it hadn't dissuaded him. I was greatly impressed.

A couple of months later though, Tzion was stymied by his rabbinic learning and fell back into thinking that Yeshua wasn't deity, but after more study with him he came to see Yeshua as God the Son, even though he said he didn't understand it. Not many do because it's a Mystery,<sup>104</sup> but it's the most important

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<sup>104</sup> Since that time the Lord has helped me to unravel some of the Mystery. See *Yeshua—God the Son* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Yeshua-God-the-Son.pdf>.

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thing to believe about Yeshua—that He was deity in the flesh, a real human being, a Jewish man, God the Son who died to redeem us, not any created creature in Heaven or Earth. Making Jesus less than deity means that God sent someone else to save us and that Yeshua was less than what the New Testament says He is (cf. John 1:1). That's a satanic heresy. Only through Yeshua's divine Blood can our sins be forgiven *and* we made sharers in His sinless human and glorious divine Nature (2nd Peter 1:4). After a season Tzion was convinced that Yeshua *wasn't* deity.

Thank you for your prayers for Tzion, for Eli the cab driver, and Yehudit and Mia, that they come to know their Messiah and walk with him all their lives.

## *The Way of Rebellion*

After the Pennsylvania court date in early June 1997 we left my mother's apartment in New York City and went to Tulsa, Oklahoma where The Seed of Abraham congregation was. We missed our friends during the two years we were in Israel and wanted to see them and love them and rejoice with them in His presence. What we found waiting for us though, was treachery and rebellion. We were shocked.

I had ordained and left Yaakov ben Yosef (aka Terry Brown) in charge of the congregation just before we left for Jerusalem in May 1995. He was a very close friend and had been a member of the congregation since 1990. He, his wife Hava (aka Lita) and their children were like family to us, or so we thought.

As the Lord would have it, a day after we had set foot in New York City in June 1997 Yaakov had a bad car accident. He had been eating something while driving, choked on it and went into an asthmatic attack. He ran the car off the road. This occurred only a few hours after he and Daniel Sanders had conspired against me. Yaakov would be hospitalized for two and a half months.

Daniel and his wife met Ruti and me at the Tulsa bus depot, a few days after the accident. With Yaakov in the hospital, Ruti and I had taken a 36 hour bus trip from New York City to Tulsa because we wanted to get back as soon as possible to comfort Yaakov and assume the duties of a shepherd. We didn't have the money for plane fare. If I ever have to take a bus trip like that again it'll be too soon.

Daniel had come into the congregation a few months before Ruti and I left for Israel in 1995. A year later Yaakov ordained him, and now Daniel was telling me that I had no authority in the congregation. He said that I had come back 'to destroy the congregation.' I couldn't believe my ears. With Yaakov hospitalized, Daniel was 'in charge' until Yaakov got well. Daniel was acting with the full consent of Yaakov.

Three months before we returned to the States I had written a letter to Yaakov, informing him that the *kippa* was of pagan origin. Many of us had worn them. I told Yaakov that The Seed of Abraham was not to offer them to men before the service (as we had been doing). I also wanted to give Yaakov, and the other men who wore them, time to deal with removing it, and said that I *wouldn't* require that he, nor anyone else who wore it in the congregation take it off immediately, but I sent an article that I had written about the *kippa* being pagan

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for Yaakov to read and to distribute copies to the men.<sup>105</sup> This way they could see that it wasn't something Yeshua wanted them to do anymore and adjust their lives accordingly.

Yaakov and his wife Hava didn't like that idea. Hava wrote back to me in Israel and told me to mind my own business. She said, 'You take care of things in Israel and we'll take care of things here.'

I was shocked I wrote a letter to them explaining biblical authority. My tone was conciliatory and I was hoping that they would understand. I was reaching out to them and wanting to win them back, but it fell on hard hearts. Hava answered with another letter, telling me of their position, that I had 'given the congregation' to Yaakov and that it wasn't mine anymore.

Again I was shocked. My second letter was more authoritarian, speaking of the Apostle Paul being the chief authority in every congregation that he began, even if he wasn't at a particular congregation, but this only met with further stubbornness in Hava's reply to me. I told Ruti that since we were in Israel there was nothing that I could do except to pray and give it to Yeshua to deal with. That was about two weeks before the Lord would let us know, in prayer, that He wanted us to return to the States.

About three weeks later (a week before we came back to the States), I spoke with Yaakov on the phone and tried to make him understand that even though I was in Israel, I was still the chief earthly overseer of him and the congregation. I told him that he was the one in charge of the congregation and that I had given it to him, but not in the sense of severing my authority over him or it.

Yaakov had other ideas though. He said that if I came back he would leave the congregation because he thought somehow he had missed the Lord. I said that wasn't the way to handle it, but to stay and walk it out with me because I was only returning for a couple of months (or so I thought), but his mind was made up. After hearing that I said,

'Hang on to your hat, cowboy. You're going to be in for quite a ride.'

Yaakov had been a bronco buster in his early twenties, and so the cowboy hat and ride seemed an appropriate metaphor. I was making the point that rebellion is not a matter to be taken lightly and that Yeshua would deal with him in a way that Yaakov might not like. Little did I realize that Yeshua was

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<sup>105</sup> See *The Kipa* at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Kipa.pdf>.

## *The Way of Rebellion*

speaking prophetically through me. In Yaakov's accident the car rolled over—front end over back end. If it hadn't been for the safety belt he was wearing he would have been thrown from the car and most likely died. As it was he sustained a number of broken bones and would not regain the use of his right leg. 'Touch not Yahveh's anointed' came to me a number of times (Ps. 105:15).

We had come back to love and support them and hopefully, to straighten out the authority issue along with the *kippa*, and return to Israel as soon as we could. Now Daniel was telling me I had no authority in the congregation because I wanted to destroy it and also, because he thought that I had 'missed the Lord' when we *left* for Israel in June 1995 as well having 'missed Him' again when we had now returned in June 1997. In other words, Daniel thought that I had gone against the will of the Lord in leaving for Israel in 1995 and that I also hadn't obeyed the Lord in returning to the States in 1997. Therefore, my position of authority was null and void. This was the first time I had heard the accusations and the unbiblical position of theirs. For these reasons though, Daniel justified being in charge of the congregation and stiff-armed me. He told me that if I wanted to help, I could assist him.

When it rains it pours! I asked him how he (they) could take my authority away from me without notifying me or even giving me a chance to defend myself. This minor technicality didn't matter to Yaakov or Daniel. Yaakov and he were thoroughly convinced they were doing God's will and if they bypassed some biblical rules for removing an elder, God would understand.

Ruti and I stayed at John's home, the man who had financed the trip for us to go to Israel. At first we didn't want to go back to the congregation, but the pull to see the people was great, and so we came to a *Shabat* service about ten days later. I told Daniel that I would submit to his authority, in love, and that if I couldn't I would pray to Yeshua that I could. A few days later I also said that to Yaakov in our first visit with him in the hospital. We would have seen Yaakov immediately, when we came to Tulsa, but Hava had barred the way.

The reason I submitted to their authority was to show them, and others, what a godly authority should do in a case of rebellion. I didn't 'lift my hand' to dislodge them. I left it in Yeshua's hands.<sup>106</sup> We went to every service. It was very hard for Ruti and me. Daniel's wife Yochava, and Hava disdained us. We were shocked again and very hurt. These had been our friends. We had only

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<sup>106</sup> For biblical stories where the godly authority didn't lift their hand to stem a rebellion, see Moses with Korah (Num. 16) and King David with his son Absalom (2nd Sam. 15–18) and of course, Yeshua with Judas.

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been in Israel for two years. We had loved them and them us, or so we had thought, but now there was this wall of darkness between us.

It was hard for me to sit in the service, knowing that I should have been leading it. I watched Daniel do everything from leading praise and worship to giving the message and taking up the offering. We continued though, and finally, when Yaakov came out of the hospital in late August, he told Daniel and me that he was going to convene the congregation to discuss everyone's feelings and thoughts as to who should be in charge, etc., but more treachery was just around the corner.

Our congregation wasn't large when I had left, but it was tiny now. When we left in 1995 there were about 35 people. When we came back in 1997 there were literally only a handful of people. Some had left because of Yaakov and Daniel's 'leadership,' and some like John would leave when they found out what Yaakov and Daniel had done to me, in usurping my authority.

At the congregational meeting in August, which was supposed to be a meeting 'to air feelings and thoughts about who should be in charge,' Yaakov and Daniel 'resigned.' I pleaded with them to stay and not to rip apart what little was left of the congregation, but it fell upon deaf ears, yet the charge against *me* was that *I* was going to destroy the congregation. The Seed of Abraham, tattered and torn, was dumped into my lap.

Why did they leave? Why didn't they just keep the congregation and stiff-arm me until Ruti and I returned to Israel? The answer dawned on me a few days later. They could not afford to pay the rent for the place. It was a unit in a strip shopping mall and there wasn't enough money coming in from tithes and offerings to sustain the place where they were meeting in. Also, Yaakov had told me that if I came back, he would leave. He kept his word and that's why both Yaakov and Daniel resigned.

Yeshua had dealt with those in rebellion—His way. They had ample opportunity to repent and change their heart and attitude, but they refused to see the gross sin of their way.

Ruti and I had thought that when we came back to the States we would be there for only two or three months. Here it was three months, with no sign of returning to Israel. So we began to meet with our small group in our apartment. We didn't want the place where Yaakov and Daniel had been meeting. Aside from rent and electric to pay, the place was a mess.

We met in our apartment at first and then we moved to a larger apartment as the congregation began to grow. We offered Hebrew class one night a week, a

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class on the Tabernacle of Moses on another night, *Shabat* services and holy day celebrations. I began to go out to the churches again, with the message of Yeshua's holiness. Money would come in from love offerings and friendships would be made with many people whom I never would have met if Yaakov and Daniel hadn't been rebellious.

With the funds we received we were able to send out six Jewish Newsletters (#13-18) that year (1998). It was our most prolific year for Jewish Newsletters. A number of Jewish people in Tulsa, OK would give their lives to Yeshua because of them.

## BIBLICAL CLOTHES

Back in 1995 Ruti had an impression from Yeshua that she would one day be making priestly or biblical garments. She wondered what that meant until one day when she was sewing a garment for me, that I might wear the *tzit'ziot* in a more biblical manner, it dawned upon her. The pattern that Yeshua had given her was the priestly garment He had spoken of many years earlier. As she sat at the sewing machine Yeshua reminded her of His word. She laughed a wonderful laugh when she saw what His word had meant—*priestly* meaning for the priest of the house!

In spite of many years of thinking that I would never wear such a garment, on Oct. 9th, 2006 the first day of *Sukote* (the Feast of Tabernacles), I began wearing biblical garments as my everyday clothes. It's amazing what a wife's prayers and the leading of the Lord will do. It had been a long process, but it felt so right in doing it.

What kind of biblical clothes? If you look at most any 'Jesus' movie you'll have an idea. Wherever I went I attracted attention. I wasn't wearing the clothes to attract attention. It wasn't a gimmick to draw attention to me, but the fact was that it was an asset to evangelism, which I hadn't thought about. Enosh is a case in point.

On Thursday, Oct. 26th, Ruti and I were walking in the street. A man named Enosh walked by and asked why I wore the clothes. I told him it was so the *tzit'ziot* (tassels, Num. 15:37-41) could be part of the clothes, like the ancient Hebrews wore. It was also for modesty, as it wasn't tight fitting and revealing as most clothes today are, *and I was led of Messiah to dress this way* (shades of Hudson Taylor in China—glory to God!).

I shared that we were Jews who believed in Yeshua the Messiah. Enosh said he thought Yeshua was a prophet, but there were things that contradicted itself in the Bible. I told him I could probably explain some of the seemingly contradictory things to him and there were probably some I couldn't, but the reason for our meeting was so that he could come to hear about the Lord of *Life*. I told him that it was his day to hear from a Jew that Yeshua was our Messiah. Enosh was 28 years old and into humanism and New Age, not an uncommon thing for many Israelis.

I shared a little of my testimony and told him that Yeshua *is Life*. He doesn't just give *Life* to us, but He who is *Life* comes to dwell in us (1st Jn. 1:1-3). As I spoke I gently placed my hands on his front shoulders and ran them down

### *Biblical Clothes*

his arms to emphasize my point and to allow the Holy Spirit to touch him.

I told him of the sacrificial system and how it pointed to the Messiah as our sacrifice, as Isaiah 53 spoke of, and how Rashi interpreted Isaiah 53 to mean the Suffering Servant was Israel, but most of the ancient Jewish authorities spoke of the Servant being Messiah. I showed and gave him my Card with the Scripture cites and Jewish authorities backing it up so that he could look them up for himself.<sup>107</sup>

Enosh listened intently as I spoke of how the Messiah *had to come before* the Second Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. He was interested in that and in *Life*. He commented on my strong faith and I told him that it was due to knowing Messiah Yeshua, not just mentally believing in Him, and that he could also come to know Him. I continued to share about the *Life* that Yeshua wanted to bring him, telling him that Yeshua's death and resurrection meant *Life* for him now with the knowledge of God through the Holy Spirit and eternal *Life* after Judgment Day.

A beggar came up to us and asked for money—a professional beggar. I asked him, 'Do you want money or *Life*?' He said, '*Life*,' so I told him to listen to my words. He fidgeted for 30 seconds and left.

As we stood there on the sidewalk many Israelis passed us by, each looking to see who this man dressed as Moses or King David was, and what he was speaking about. There was no mistaking that it was something important. Some religious Jews quickly walked by, stopped and looked, and kept on walking across the street. Once across the street they stopped again, turned around and began to talk among themselves. Ruti would later recount to me that it reminded her of what the Pharisees must have done as Yeshua taught, taking up their place some distance from Him and eye-balling Him. I had momentarily seen them across the street, but paid them no attention as I was concentrating on Enosh.

We must have stood on the sidewalk for half an hour. It was the Lord. Enosh was looking for God in all the wrong places, but now he was hearing from a living Jewish witness about his Messiah. Immediately after we parted Ruti

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<sup>107</sup> On my card, under the cite of Is. 52:13-53:12, I list *Sanhedrin* 98a/b, which speaks of a Leprous Messiah, based on Isaiah 53. The ancient Jewish Sages named him this because the Hebrew word 'stricken' in 53:4 is associated with the word for a leper (Lev. 13:2-3, 9, 20, 25, etc.) and it speaks of Messiah carrying our diseases. The point is that the ancient Jewish Sages believed Isaiah was speaking about the Messiah, not Israel.

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and I prayed for him and against the spirits of darkness and deception that bound him. We also asked the Holy Spirit to minister to him and draw him to Yeshua.

On Wednesday, Oct. 25th, we spoke of Messiah Yeshua to Rotem. She was 20 years old and enslaved to the lusts of this world. Ruti and I told her about Messiah and her heart yearned for Him. She had never heard anything like that before and we could see the Holy Spirit was drawing her. We could also see that she was allowing her carnal nature to decide for her.

After sharing some of our testimony with her and some of the Scriptures in the *Tanach* relating to Messiah, Ruti sensed the Lord leading her to speak of death and how we don't know the day of our departure. Rotem told us she had a friend who was killed in a car accident a couple of years ago. Ruti shared about her sister Cheryl dying the same way in 1973 when a drunken driver caused her death at 17 years old. Ruti was 20 when it happened. Ruti spoke of how it led her to the brink of devastation, but that God in His mercy eventually brought her to His Son. She started to ask questions about life after death. In Yeshua Ruti found true *Life, joy, love* and eternity. God Himself had loved her and she wanted Rotem to know that love, too.

On Monday, Oct. 23rd, Shalom, a waiter in a restaurant, heard about his Messiah for 20 minutes. He was able to stand by our table as there wasn't anyone in the place except Ruti and me. He could have easily excused himself, but he stood there because he was interested. Shalom was 27 years old and heavily into New Age (Rainbow Connection and spirits, etc.). He had heard of Jesus before and had read the New Testament and told us that basically Jesus wasn't for him, but I told him that he had never heard about Yeshua from me. He realized the implication, that God might be doing something special for him *that day* and accepted it. I spoke of many biblical things to him and ended by saying that Yeshua wanted to give Shalom *true* shalom. He liked that. We gave him The Prophecy Card and also Acts 2-4. The biblical clothes were making an impact on people as it was what initially started our conversation, him asking me if we had gone to the Rainbow Connection festival in northern Israel. He said that with clothes like I wore I should have been there : )

The Acts 2 handout has expanded. Israelis need to see not only Acts 2, where forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit came to many Jews in the name of Yeshua, but also Acts 3 where Peter and John heal the man who was born lame, in the name of Yeshua and Acts 4, where the Jewish religious authorities told them never to speak 'in that Name' again. Peter though, told the Sanhedrin that they should decide if obeying the Sanhedrin was more impor-

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tant than obeying God. Peter was still going to proclaim *that* Name. Peter, who had been deathly afraid of this Sanhedrin on the night of Yeshua's betrayal, stood up to the highest authority in the Land that had condemned Yeshua to death and told them that they murdered the Messiah of Israel! (Acts 4:10-11) What a difference the Holy Spirit makes!

I formatted Acts 2–4 in Hebrew on my computer, copying it from a Hebrew New Covenant. I made it so it's on a single sheet of paper, front and back. It's very convenient to carry a number of them with me and give them out to Israelis so they can read about *what it means* for a *Jewish person* to believe in Yeshua. Israelis know the name, Jesus, but they really don't know much about Him except that 'Jews don't believe in Him.' Acts 2–4 gives them a great foundational understanding, in Yeshua rising from the dead, giving many Jews the promised Holy Spirit, etc., and seeing what those Jews not only did in His Name, but how the religious Jewish authorities came against them. This is a powerful tool for the Holy Spirit to use in any Jewish life.

On Sunday, Oct. 22nd, Avner (his name means (my) Father is Light), a 40 year old Tel Aviv taxi driver, listened and interacted with me for 20 minutes concerning Yeshua being the Messiah. He spoke of the Orthodox in Bnai Barak, a city next to Ramat Gan (where we lived) made up of very 'religious' Jews, who didn't believe in Yeshua. I told him they didn't know everything. He acknowledged that with a smile.

I said God knew we Jews would reject our Messiah as a nation. A thousand years before Messiah Yeshua came King David wrote that the Builders of Israel, which the Rabbis proudly claim they are, teaching Israel the laws of God, would *reject* the Stone (the Messiah), but God would make Him the Corner-Stone of our salvation (Ps. 118:22). Peter, quoting Psalm 118:22, also calls them the Builders of Israel (Acts 4:11).

I told Avner that Isaiah prophesied of Messiah dying for our sins (Is. 53:4-5) and that Yeshua actually did. As we parted I gave him the single sheet on Acts 2–4 (which also has my name and phone number on it) and The Prophecy Card.

Thank you for your prayers for Enosh, Rotem, Shalom and Avner. Please pray that Yeshua would take away all the obstacles that keep them away from Him and that He would draw them to Himself and fill them with *unspeakable joy*. Thank you!<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> I would wear the biblical clothes for more than five years. In November 2011 I felt

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“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him who brings Good News, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’” (Isaiah 52:7)

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the Lord leading me to lay them down for a season and return to ‘normal’ clothes and so today I wear regular clothing.

## OFIRA—THE SECOND MOROCCAN

On Monday night, Nov. 13th, 2006 Ofira (Shuli's pretty 30 year old firstborn daughter) had a dream in which Ruti, Ofira and I were singing, 'Jesus loves me this I know.' She called us said she liked it and so I walked into the opportunity and invited her to come the next day and see the movie *Jesus of Nazareth*. We had ministered to Ofira many times over the years and now we were beginning to see the Seed sprout.

On Tuesday afternoon Ofira came over to our apartment to watch the first half of the six and a half hour movie. She had been living in Givatayim for the last few months. It was only 15 minutes from us by taxi.

She saw the first half of the movie and the Holy Spirit impacted her, bringing her to tears in some parts. After watching it we had a late lunch in our place and spoke of the movie and about Yeshua being our long awaited Messiah. The Lord was drawing Ofira to Himself.

Ofira came back two days later on Thursday and saw the second half of the movie. She again cried in some parts and spoke of the things she saw Yeshua doing as 'true.' She also said that not much had changed over the years among the religious Jews in their desire to be seen as righteous when they weren't and in their vying for power.

We ate another late lunch and I related a scene which powerfully affected me. It was when Yeshua spoke of being 'one with the Father.' I realized in a very profound way, as only the Holy Spirit can impress, that because I have been Born from Above, the Creator of the Universe is my Father. I said to Ruti and Ofira,

'It's not a highly complicated theological insight, but a simple, deeply profound emotionally-spiritual reality that I walked into.'

I was awestruck. Could it really be? God the Father, the Creator, the Redeemer of Israel is *my* Father? Yes, I knew it was true theologically, but that day I felt it deep within me. Thank You, Yeshua for making that possible!

Ofira shared that she had come to realize that Yeshua was the Messiah. She thanked us for showing her the movie and all the times we had spoken to her about Him. We were still at our kitchen table and I said to Ofira that she needed to make it personal—to ask Yeshua into her heart to forgive her for her sins and to be filled with His Spirit. She had concerns that Yeshua would make her

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do things that she didn't want to do. She wasn't ready to give Him her life. It all came down to a divided heart that she had to wrestle with.

She left and we began to pray more earnestly for her. She had been involved in spiritism (and Kabbalah) a few years back. We asked Yeshua to bind those demons and close all the doors, covering her in His Blood. One of those demonic doors was opened by her grandmother who was noted for helping barren women conceive. Women would come to her and ask for her help and she would go into another room in her apartment and conjure up a dead rabbi 'friend' and ask him to make the woman conceive and presto—conception!

Ofira also believed that she had spoken with her dead grandfather on a number of occasions. We told her that it was a familiar spirit and that the Law of Moses forbids us to speak to the dead. Moses said:

‘When you come into the land that Yahveh your God is giving you, you must *not* learn to imitate the abhorrent practices of those nations. No one shall be found among you who makes a son or daughter pass through the fire, or *who practices divination*, or is a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, or one who casts spells or *who consults ghosts or spirits, or who seeks words from the dead!* For whoever does these things is abhorrent to Yahveh. It is because of such abhorrent practices that Yahveh your God is driving them out before you. You must remain faithful to Yahveh your God. Although these nations that you are about to dispossess give heed to soothsayers and diviners, as for you, Yahveh your God does not permit you to do so!’ (Dt. 18:9-14)

Not only was Ofira involved in these things, but as you might expect, her mother Shuli was also. We had to deal with both of them in this area. We had spoken to Ofira about this on a number of occasions, but we had seen that it was hard for her to reconcile this, especially as it was so real to her and it had been handed down to her by her grandmother, whom she loved dearly. Also, many religious Jews do these kinds of superstitious, occult practices here, with the Rabbis leading the way, but we're praying for Ofira. Yeshua said the very Gates of Hell wouldn't prevail against us (Mt. 16:18). We're storming those gates to retrieve some of those captive Jewish lambs.

On Saturday night, Nov. 18th, Ofira called and said she had a fearful dream the night before. I told her that it came from Satan. I said the devils didn't want her to leave their kingdom and they were trying all they could do to turn her away from Yeshua. She understood. She also told us that she had spoken

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with an Israeli man whom she respected and had asked him about Yeshua. She thought he was going to give her the traditional Jewish answer, ‘He’s not for us.’ Instead though, he told her that Yeshua was a good man. Ofira asked about Yeshua’s power, if it came from the Devil and he said,

‘No. Yeshua just did good and He forgave people and if His power was from Hell, He could have saved Himself from the crucifixion.’

That was such a powerful insight from a Jew who didn’t (yet) believe in Yeshua! It confirmed to Ofira that Yeshua was the Messiah. Praise God for that man. He isn’t far from the Kingdom!

Ofira asked for a Bible in Hebrew, like the one we had given to Shuli so that she could study and learn more about Yeshua. We gave it to her with much joy. She said her heart was leading her to accept Yeshua as her Messiah. I told her that was good and reminded her of a personal surrender as even the devils believe, but at least they tremble (James 2:19)—they know what awaits them after Judgment Day.

We told Ofira that she needed to be Born from Above (Born Again; John 3) and that’s what belief opens up to—an experiential encounter with the *living* God and His Messiah through the Holy Spirit. I explained that this comes from God and allows the Holy Spirit to transform us from within and that belief in Yeshua opened this divine conduit up. She was open to that more than ever before.

We began to get together on a regular basis, two and three times a week for a few hours at a time, to learn about Yeshua from the Scriptures. She was like a sponge, absorbing much about her Messiah. Sometimes she would come over to our apartment and sometimes we would go over to her’s. She’s a single Mom with a six year old boy named Ma’or (which means, a brightness that comes from light; to enlighten).

We had helped Ofira financially with money for rent and food needs over the years and continued to do so. On November 22nd, 2006 we were able to buy her a new refrigerator for \$500. She didn’t have one and sorely needed it.

When we first met Ofira in Eilat in 2001 she didn’t want to know anything about Yeshua. She had been fed all the lies about Him as a young girl in grade school. They told her that Jesus hated the Jews and that He had begun another religion for the Gentiles. This is typical of the teaching on *Jesus* that Israelis get in Israel. It’s truly what the Jewish people have seen Christianity. Chris-

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tians have hated and murdered Jews for 1,900 years—in the Name of Jesus.

One day, a couple of years earlier, after she had heard us speak about Yeshua, Ofira went to a rabbi and asked him about Yeshua. The rabbi told her the worst thing that he could ever have said to Ofira—‘It is forbidden to even discuss it!’ Well, that was enough to get Ofira’s curiosity up and she began searching for herself.

Thank you for your prayers for her, that she’ll choose to follow Yeshua with all her heart and be filled with His Spirit!

## SIR! SIR!

I was out running some errands on Tuesday, Jan. 23rd, 2007 when I heard a woman's voice calling, 'Adon! Adon!' (Sir! Sir!) I turned to my left and a woman about 5 feet 3 inches tall (1.6 m) was walking toward me. She wanted money. She was 63 years old and wore an old black sweater and a black dress. I asked her what she wanted the money for. She told me that she had some children at home and they didn't have food to eat. I looked into her eyes to try to determine if it was genuine or not. How many children could a 63 year old woman have at home that couldn't work?

I asked the Lord, 'What do I do?' I asked her where she lived and she told me in south Ramat Gan. Her name was Nicol Shafsa, which immediately reminded me of my late grandmother's (Nana's) Yiddish first name of Shasa, which is a sweet emotional memory for me. I gave her 20 shekels (about \$4.75). I began to leave and then I asked Nicol if she wanted to buy 100 shekels worth of food (about \$25) at the grocery. She said yes. I pointed to the supermarket just up the block. We went shopping. I drove the cart and she picked out some things: rice, red peppers, bread, eggs, laundry detergent, peach jam, pasta and tomato paste. It came to 105 shekels, about a dollar more than I had said, but it was more than OK.

As we walked out of the store she asked me if I could carry the two bags of groceries to the bus stop for her. Of course. We walked to the bus stop and I placed the bags on the narrow metal bench and asked Nicol if she wanted to sit down. She didn't want to sit, but asked me my name. I told her and she said, 'Avraham avinu!' (Abraham our Father) I smiled (as many Israelis mistake Avram for Avraham) and she blessed me with the traditional Jewish blessing for a long and healthy life. Then she asked for me to bless her. I placed my hand upon her forehead and asked *Abba El* (Papa God) to give her *shalom* and to reveal Yeshua to her. I had given her the Acts 2-4 sheet at the beginning, but she told me that she couldn't read. I suggested she give it to her sons and they would read it to her. The bus came and I gave her the bags and away she went, thanking me again for what I had done.

I came home and Ruti wanted a *falafel*. We went to a place close to us that we hadn't been to before. The *falafel* was just great and when I went to pay I began a conversation with the owner and his wife. For the next ten minutes I spoke of Messiah from the *Tanach*. I gave him my Card, told him to look up the cites and we would talk about it when I came back.

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In the evening when we went to bed I prayed for him and his wife to have their eyes opened to Messiah Yeshua and that the Holy Spirit would lead them into His Kingdom, along with Nicole and the rest of her family.

On Wednesday, Jan. 24th I was out and about and looked in on Esther. Ruti and I had shared the Acts 2–4 paper with her and The Prophecy Card about two months earlier, but every time I would go past her little deli she would be busy with customers. Now there wasn't anyone in there so I stepped inside and asked her about it. She was indifferent to it. After some conversation I began to share about the *Life* I had in Messiah Yeshua and that it wasn't just a 'belief' thing, but that with Yeshua came the Holy Spirit that God had promised to us in Ezk. 36:24-27. That began to get her interest and then a Jewish man came in and stood next to us, listening.

He asked me how Yeshua had been conceived. Was it with a mother and a father? I spoke of Isaiah 7:14 and the miracle occurring with an *almah* (a young woman who hadn't known a man). Some translate it as a young maiden, but the proper meaning is a virgin; young maiden who had never known a man. The Hebrew Old Testament and the Septuagint confirm this. The *miracle*, which is spoken of in the verse, is the Hebrew word signifying a 'wonder' done by God because it speaks of a *virgin* conceiving and giving birth to *Immanuel*—God with us (i.e. the Messiah). After all, it's no miracle for young maidens to conceive—that happens all the time!

He scoffed at that and I said that Sarah, Rebeka and Rachel couldn't bear children and that Sarah was way too old, but it states that God opened their wombs and they had children. That's *how* all of us Jews could be standing in the Jewish State, and how our three Mothers conceived pointed to the miracle of Messiah's conception that Isaiah spoke of. Esther was listening now.

The man, Nisim (whose name means miracle!) didn't believe in miracles, even the Red Sea parting. So he parted company from us and I turned to Esther and said that Jeremiah 31:31-34 speaks of a New Covenant that God would give us and that in this New Covenant He would forgive our sins and we would all come to know Him. She questioned whether this New Covenant written in Jeremiah was the New Covenant for Yeshua and I said,

'Yeshua came as a sacrifice for our sins so that we could be forgiven and in His Name comes the Holy Spirit that God promised us so we could all know God.'

She wasn't at the point of believing in Yeshua yet, but she had come a long way from when I had entered the store. I told her that God specifically speaks

*Sir! Sir!*

of the time when the Messiah would come in only one place of Scripture, Daniel 9:24-26. I began to share that and the phone rang. It was an order. I waited about five minutes, wondering if we would continue, but after she got off the phone she began to get things for the order and I asked if everything was alright. 'Yes,' she said, 'and we'll talk again.' God willing we'll talk again Esther.

Thank you for your prayers for Nicol, the *falafel* man and his wife, and for Esther.

## *The Way of God's Mercy*

Having returned from Israel in June 1997 to New York City and then Tulsa, Ruti and I had just enough money to drive to Pennsylvania for the rescheduled court hearing for my sons in October. We drove in a car that was given to us by the Lord through Adele Kraus. She was a former member of the congregation and a good friend. She was buying a new vehicle and knew we didn't have a car. She spoke to the Lord one night and said,

‘I feel kind of bad getting a new vehicle, and Avram and Ruti don't have any. Should I give them my old car?’

The Lord *audibly* spoke to her and said, ‘Yes.’ Adele was obedient to the Lord and that's how we had a car to go to Pennsylvania. Bless her and her sons, Yeshua!

The court picked up where it had left off in June. The Merediths' lawyer called a psychologist. He who swore that reuniting my sons with their father ‘would be more detrimental to them than the death of their mother.’ I could have dismantled their expert witness, as I had done before to another expert witness (psychiatrist) in my divorce case with Robin in Tulsa in 1989, but I wasn't in Pennsylvania to display my intelligence nor the lack of integrity of this witness. So much as my heart yearned for Zavdi and Yoel, I wasn't there to win the court case. I was there to be a lamb and die, that Yeshua might be seen in that courtroom. When we had been there in June, the policeman who was assigned to the courtroom to insure order, was leaving toward the back of the room when it was over that day, but he intentionally stopped by my table and waited until I turned around to see him. On his face was an expression of empathy and appreciation for me from what I can only guess was that I had not attacked the Merediths in my cross examination, but had loved them. I was very grateful for that ‘sign.’ We never know whom we might affect for our Lord as we walk in *His* ways.

Now, in October 1997, after I had been called to the stand by the Merediths' lawyer I told the Merediths that I loved them and that because Jesus had forgiven me for so much, that I was extending that forgiveness to them. Disgust and contempt can only begin to describe the look on their faces. I also told the court that I wouldn't fight or strive against the Merediths for my sons. If the Merediths wouldn't return my sons to me, whom I loved, I wouldn't try and take them away from the Merediths. Again, I was learning to trust Yeshua with my most precious earthly possessions.

I didn't know the emotional state of my sons, Zavdi and Yoel. Their father had

### *The Way of God's Mercy*

been ripped out of their lives when they were only four and two years old. I know they looked for me to come for them, to rescue them, but that was not to be. They felt confused and abandoned by me especially as they heard all kinds of malicious lies about me, so that their little hearts would be driven away from wanting to know me.

Now, just a year earlier, they had lost their mother, murdered by their stepfather when they were just eleven and nine years old. I wasn't about to try and bring my understanding of reality into their lives. Doing so could have meant harming them more than they already were. They wouldn't have been able to handle my calling their understanding of their mother or me into question. I would not do that to my sons whom I love.

When Zavdi, my firstborn, was about to come into the courtroom, I stood to my feet at the defendant's table. He entered through a door to the left of the judge's stand, about 20 feet (6 m) in front of me, slightly to my right. I hadn't seen him for almost nine years, which seemed like an eternity. When he came into the courtroom I lost my breath. I almost fainted. I had no strength left in me. I never imagined that I would have that strong of an emotional reaction from just seeing him.

Zavdi had just turned 13 years old the day before. *How could it be that he wasn't four anymore?!* That was a stark dose of reality for me. Was this boy really 'my Zavdi?' How is it that I hadn't seen him grow up to be what he was now? How is it that I wasn't there every day of his life to be his Abba? If it was this hard for me, just to see him, how much harder would it have been for him or his brother Yoel if I would have pressed them to see me, or their mother, from my perspective? I was not about to do that.

The lawyer questioned Zavdi about some things and Zavdi told the court that he just wanted 'to get on' with his life and that he wanted his grandparents to adopt him. He didn't want anything to do with me. Even though I knew where that was coming from it was very hard for me to hear it.

My turn came and I asked him if he knew that I loved him. He said he didn't. I was cross examining my son whom I haven't seen for an eternity. How could I reach him without hurting his imagine of his dead mother? It would have been good if I could have spent some time with him, getting to know him and him me, but that wasn't to be. The judge wanted to get this case finished before lunch. He had other cases to adjudicate.

I asked Zavdi what he thought of me. He told the court that I had pushed him around, was mean and selfish. I asked him if he could relate an incident for us.

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He said that he couldn't. He said that he didn't even remember me. So how did he come to have this understanding of me? He said that his mother and his grandparents had told him this.

I asked him again if he knew that I loved him and he told me 'No!' and he began to stare at me in hatred. My eyes began to fill with tears. I was about seven feet (2 m) away from him. I looked at him as tears rolled down my face. I turned to walk back to the defendant's table and chairs where Ruti was. I realized that I needed to say 'No further questions your honor,' but I couldn't get the words to come out. I was too choked up.

I sat down at my table and the judge asked me if I had any further questions. I shook my head and emotionally cried out 'No! I want my son to see me!', and I laid my head on my folded arms upon the table. The judge asked if I wanted a recess to regain my composure. I said, 'No thank you, your honor.' I should have taken it. I really could have used some time to sort out what had just transpired before me. I had been hoping for a miracle, that Zavdi would recognize me and that his love for me would be rekindled in his heart. I hadn't thought that Zavdi would hate me. If I would have had the presence of mind I might have said to Zavdi,

"That's not what you thought of me when you were four years old. Every day when I would return from the synagogue you would come running to me saying 'Abba! Abba! Abba!' as I entered the house, followed swiftly by your younger brother. You were both so glad to see me. I would swoop down and pick you both up, you in my right arm and Yoel in my left, hugging and twirling you both around and around. You liked that a lot. Then I would sit down in the big green rocking chair and place you on the padded right arm and Yoel on the left arm. I'd ask you what you had done during the day and you'd both excitedly tell me.'

"Then it would be time for supper and we would bless the Lord and eat. After supper it was time for a bath and then to bed. By then Zavdi, you slept in the upper bunk of two bunk beds and your brother Yoel was in the lower bunk bed. You and I would climb up to the upper bunk bed and your mother and Yoel would be in the lower bunk bed as we spent some time with you both before sleep. Yoel would *always* ask me to tell him *The Bear Story*:"

"One day Karlman came and asked if he could take you both

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fishing. I said 'Yes' and your mother made some tasty treats for you to take with you. Tuna fish sandwiches, spaghetti, ice cream, cake, soda and candy. You liked that. The three of you set out for the lake carrying your fishing poles and lunch baskets. At the lake you began fishing and you, Zavdi, caught a big fish! Then Yoel caught a big fish, too! Then you caught another one and then Yoel caught another one! On and on it went until lunchtime. Karlman didn't catch any fish." : (

"You had just begun to eat your lunch when Karlman spotted a Grizzly Bear coming toward you! 'Climb up to the top of the tree, boys!' he shouted and you both began climbing and the Grizzly came running! When the bear came to the tree he reared up on his hind legs and tried to get Karlman, who had climbed up the tree after you, but Karlman was just out of the Grizzly's reach. The Grizzly, not liking that he didn't get Karlman, let out a loud snort and tried again, but couldn't reach him. Everyone was so scared! What could you do?! You and Yoel began praying, 'Help us, Yeshua! Help us!' About that time I sensed from the Lord that something wasn't right at the lake. I quickly mounted my horse and rode out there with my rifle."

"The Grizzly, realizing that there was other food on the ground, satisfied himself for a while, eating all the fish and the rest of your lunch, but that was gone now and he was back at the tree! He was trying to climb it to get to you, Yoel and Karlman! I came riding around the bend and saw the Grizzly. Charging toward him at full speed I took out my rifle and shot! 'Pih-chu! Pih-chu! Pih-chu!' went the sound of the bullets as they screamed into the Grizzly bear. He dropped to the ground—dead."

"I was so grateful that you were alive! We thanked Yeshua! It didn't matter that the Grizzly had eaten your lunch and all the fish you two had caught. We tied the bear's hind legs with some rope, and using the saddle horn on the horse, dragged the big Grizzly back home."

"We thanked the Lord Yeshua again for letting me know there was trouble at the lake and for guiding the bullets into the bear. After that your mother made a wonderful supper of

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spaghetti and tuna fish sandwiches, soda, ice cream, cake and candy. In the evening we took the hide from the bear and made a great big bear rug for the living room floor and then we sang praises to Messiah Yeshua for saving your lives.”

“Then it was time for sleep and we prayed to Papa God, asking Him to watch over you and Yoel and to give you both sweet dreams of Messiah Yeshua.”

Yoel came into the courtroom next. He would be eleven years old in two months. To my question about what he thought of me *he said the exact same thing* that Zavdi had said (that I had pushed him around, was mean and selfish). He was so frightened that he couldn't even look at me. My heart was breaking. When questioned as to how he came to understand that, he said his mother and grandparents had told him. I asked him if he knew that I loved him, and after a couple times of asking that, at different intervals, he said that if I loved him I would have sent him a birthday card or a Christmas gift. How could I tell him that his mother had put a stop to that seven years earlier? I had been sending them toys, two and three times a week, 'cheap toys' as Robin spoke of them. I couldn't afford anything else, but the boys liked getting them just the same. I asked Yoel,

‘What if there was a big barrier in-between us and that I couldn't send you any gifts? It's not that I didn't want to. One day you'll know the reason why.’

It was over by noon. The judge took my parental rights away, which paved the way for the Merediths to adopt my sons. The judge, directing a comment to the Merediths said,

‘If you don't have anything good to say about someone then you shouldn't say anything.’

This verbal slap on their wrists didn't change their hearts nor did it outweigh what he had seen—both my sons didn't want me. The fact that they indirectly testified they had been brainwashed against me, by the very people who wanted to take them away from me, seemed to have no affect upon the judge and yet, Zavdi hated me and Yoel was afraid of me.

Perhaps a righteous judge would have given me some time with my sons for us to get to know each other again, but this wasn't a righteous judge. I have nothing against him personally. I have seen judges like him before. Thinking themselves as wise as King Solomon they give the baby to the wrong person.

## *The Way of God's Mercy*

We stood for the judge to leave. Then the Merediths, their lawyer and their psychologist began to leave. As Mrs. Meredith passed me she looked at me. She was gloating from ear to ear, mocking me, taunting me as if to say, 'Ha, Ha! You lost! I won!'

I just looked at her. I wanted to see all the evil that she had for me. I didn't react to her because I had come into the courtroom with forgiveness and love in my heart for her. I wasn't looking 'to win' or to hurt her, but to lay my life down for her and I thank Yeshua that I was able to do that. I also knew that on another day, another Judge would make a different ruling, one that she wouldn't be smiling about. Much of what Robin had done to me she had learned from her mother. In the end, Robin was drawn back to that very evil and it destroyed her.

To my sons whom I love—Zavdi and Yoel:

When you were young I loved you, but you don't remember that it was I who loved you. How can I give you up, my sons? I love you with all my heart and all my strength. Every day I pray for you to give yourselves to Yeshua. He will heal your broken hearts. He will love you and set you free to love others the way He does.

I also ask You, Yeshua, 'How long my Lord?! How long before You bring my sons back to me?!' One day we will walk together and know the joy of being father and sons.

Trust in Yeshua with all your heart, my sons. Surrender yourselves fully to Him. *Ask Him to love you* and to heal you of all the bitterness that Satan has given to you. Ask Yeshua to fill you with His Holy Spirit. Then you will be set free to know Him and to walk in His ways and be a *Light* to others.

Lean not upon your own understanding. Ask Yeshua to lead you. Realize that He is with you in every situation and time of pain and He will make all your rocky paths smooth. He will set you free from all your pain to love and forgive others. I look forward to the day when we can embrace, when the both of you can know my love for you and you can know your Abba.

I love you Zavdi! I love you Yoel!

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I always have and I always will,

*Abba*

In all the pain that I've gone through, in my heart being pierced and torn asunder, I praise, thank, exalt, magnify and worship You, Yeshua. Your wisdom is Wonder-Full. If my sons hadn't been torn away from me I would not have come to know the depth of hardness, pride and darkness in my own heart. I also would not have come to know the depth of Your love, compassion and forgiveness for me and everyone else. I know that You have borne all my grief and my sorrows (Is. 53:4) and are transforming me into Your Image. Thank You, Yeshua, and You, too, Abba El (Papa God).

In my suffering I have learned of my God and I, like Abraham before me, am learning obedience through something more precious than my own life (Gen. 22; see also Ps. 119:67-72; Heb. 5:8). Thank You, Yeshua, for laying down Your *Life* for me, that I might know Your *Life* and share You with others. Thank You Lord for helping Zavdi and Yoel to come to know You as the healer of their souls and the *Joy* of their salvation.

## GALI AND ORTAL

Can you imagine worrying if the sun is going to come up tomorrow? Why worry about things of much lesser importance, like if God is going to supply your needs or if something awful might happen *tomorrow*? If that sun doesn't come up we'd all be 'in a heap of trouble.' If God is faithful to keep that sun coming up (Jer. 31:35-36) He's also going to see that you have your needs met, if you'll learn to trust Him. *After* the synagogue official named Ya'ir (Jairus) was told that his daughter was dead Yeshua said, 'Don't be afraid—only believe!' (Mark 5:22-43) Yeshua is Faithful.

It was Tuesday, February 13th, 2007 and we had just boarded the train from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Ruti hadn't yet sat down in her seat when a young woman about 23 years old asked her 'What are you two?' It was the biblical clothes. I had just taken my seat in the next set of seats past the girl and I began to pray that the Lord would open her up to what Ruti was sharing. Ruti stood for a few minutes and told her about Messiah Yeshua and then she sat down across the aisle from Gali. I continued to pray for Gali. Her name means 'one who follows and obeys commands.' May it be so that she follows and obeys You and Your commands, Lord!

After five minutes I picked up our water bottle that we take with us when we go to Jerusalem and moved into the next set of seats. On the train there are four seats to one section (two seats facing two others) and across the aisle there's another four seats. Gali was sitting on a seat next to the aisle and Ruti was sitting parallel to her in her aisle seat. I sat down across from Ruti and I could see Gali to my right.

For the next 50 minutes Ruti shared about Messiah Yeshua and the *Life* that He gives us. She spoke of both personal experiences and from the *Tanach* about Yeshua being our Messiah. Gali was very interested and said she was searching. She absorbed everything that Ruti had to share and asked her questions like, why do Christians hate the Jews and why don't they keep the Sabbath?

When we parted at Beit Shemesh (her stop) we were told the train wasn't immediately going on to Jerusalem, like it had always done before. The schedules had been changed a month and a half ago, on January 1st, and we would have a two hour layover. A two hour layover?! We wanted to eat lunch in Jerusalem by noon and now we wouldn't even get there until 1:00 PM. After the initial shock I took it as 'from the Lord' and lifted it up to Him, asking

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Him that He would use us even though we hadn't planned on being in Beit Shemesh that day. He did! I just love that faithful witness in the sky. That sun just always comes up, no matter how much I might worry that it won't.

The mall was only a four minute walk from the train station so we walked there and looked in the stores as we passed by. It's an open air 'mall,' with each store having its own entrance from the street. We were walking slow because Ruti had called Ofira in Eilat, on my cellphone, and was speaking with her.

I was thinking that if I had taken the telephone number of Marc, a Jewish man from Canada who recently came to live in Beit Shemesh, that I would have given him a call. Nicole, a friend of ours in Canada, had given us his number, but I didn't have it on me. Nonetheless, I asked the Lord to have us 'bump into him' somewhere in the mall if that's what He wanted.

Ofira was going through a tough time. Nothing out of the ordinary for one who had recently come to the Lord. Just some physical and financial problems, but just the week previous she had blasted that ol' Devil by leading two Israeli Russian Jews to their Messiah!

She was quite adamant now about Yeshua being her Messiah, telling us how she stayed up until 3:00 AM with them and an Israeli Russian Jewish woman who already believed, showing them from the *Tanach* where it pointed to Yeshua. When she shared with us what she had said, both Ruti and I were very impressed and told her so. She said she had a good teacher. I think I'm beginning to glow a little like that sun now : ) The next day I sent her two Russian Bibles to give to those fellows.

After having walked the length of the mall (it's really just one long row of stores in a straight line) we settled on a store that had washing machines, refrigerators, televisions and digital cameras. I had been asked by a number of people to send them photos of me in my biblical clothes and so I thought it might be nice to look at some digital cameras.

Doron, a 26 year old Israeli man, helped us, showing us some digital cameras. We settled on one, but we didn't have the money for it with us, which was very good. The one we wanted didn't have a manual in English and with my expertise in digital cameras amounting to *zilch* we weren't in a hurry to buy it. He tried to get a manual and they told him they would mail it to us, but to this day we haven't received it. There's a saying in Missouri—"I'll believe it when I see it!" We would eventually buy a digital camera on another day in Tel Aviv.

## *Gali and Ortal*

While we were discussing all this a 60 year old man by the name of Avraham came up and I began to speak of Messiah. He was very closed about there ever being a Messiah. Doron the salesman heard the conversation. Avraham intentionally left The Prophecy Card I had given to him on Doron's desk when he walked away.

We finished with Doron, him saying the camera company he called would mail out a manual to us. I thanked him and I asked for his business card so I could call him back when I got the manual. He didn't have any cards of his own. This big store didn't supply their salespeople with cards. I was a little astonished because it was a huge electronic franchise in Israel. Doron made a comment that his salary barely helped to provide for his family.

I asked him how many children he had and he told us 'one with another on the way.' I reached into my wallet and gave him 100 shekels (about \$24) and told him that we appreciated his helping us. He was very grateful and said we were nice people. I tell ya, this love of God thing, once it gets a hold of ya it's incredible! You get to doing strange things. Don't have to be worrying about that ol' sun coming up, either!

It was about 11:45 AM and Ruti was getting hungry so we checked out the *falafel* stand, but decided against the fried *falafel* balls in favor of the supermarket next door. We bought some sliced turkey, cheese and bread and headed for the train, which was due to leave at 12:27 PM—in just ten minutes! We made it and sat down in some seats and proceeded to fix our sandwiches. They tasted real good! I'll tell ya, when you're hungry just about anything'll taste good! I know. I was hungry one time, didn't have any money and didn't have a thing in the house 'cept some peanut butter. I didn't like peanut butter, but that day it tasted real good!

By the time we finished eating our sandwiches we could see the beginning of Jerusalem. It was about half an hour from Beit Shemesh. We got in a cab and headed for the downtown area. As the Lord would have it, and because He had *rearranged* our day, we just happened to see Yehudit (Judith) a believing Jewish woman in her early 60s who grew up in Virginia and was a missionary with her husband (now with the Lord) and her three small children in Hong Kong 30 years ago.

Yehudit was lunching with her friend Natali, another Jewish believer, at an outdoor cafe. They were sharing a tuna fish sandwich and a smoked salmon sandwich with cream cheese. I think we Jews invented those sandwiches. That's the only way I can explain their prevalence among the Jewish people.

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We sat down with them and had a wonderful time of fellowship. Ruti and I needed that and our Lord provided it.

Yehudit told us that when she was first in Hong Kong the Chinese were overshadowing the place and Yehudit told the Lord that if they came to her and put a gun to her head and said, 'Christ or Communism!' she would say 'Christ!' But if they came to her and chopped off her finger, then asked her again, and chopped off another finger, etc., she didn't know how long she could take it or whether she would say 'Communism!'

She was out with some Christian workers one day proclaiming Christ in a soccer field when some Chinese youth began throwing sand at them. Yehudit said 'I just knew we were going to be stoned to death!' (There were stones all around the place.) One of the Christian workers said 'Let all these Chinese go to Hell! Let's get out of here!' As he said that the clouds parted and a shaft of light descended from the Heavens and encircled Yehudit. She said,

'I felt Hands around me, hugging me, holding me, protecting me and I just knew it was Jesus! I felt such peace. I looked for those Hands, but I couldn't see them with my eyes, but from that moment on I knew that if there ever came a terrible time of testing, He would be with me.'

Yehudit stayed there a while longer that day and continued to proclaim the Lord Jesus in the midst of the sandstorm. It never got to rock throwing, but with the temperature at 100 degrees and the humidity at 80% it sure wasn't a picnic. They left after that and climbed up a mountain to some village. The interpreter went in to an elderly woman's home and was there for a few minutes.

The rest of the party stayed outside in the heat, sweating and trying to take the sand off their sticky bodies, waiting and wondering when the shouting and the next sandstorm would come. To their amazement the interpreter came out with some chairs and fresh water and said the woman wanted to hear about Jesus, and that anytime they came they could find chairs and water for themselves at her place and could preach the Word from her home.

We must have been with Yehudit and Natali for an hour and a half and when we left we all thanked God in prayer, right at the table in the sight and hearing of a number of Israelis, for Yeshua ordering our day and bringing all of us together. If it wasn't for that train re-scheduling us, we never would have seen Yehudit and Natali. *The interruptions of Man are just opportunities for our Lord to order our steps.*

## *Gali and Ortal*

Ruti and I picked up some thread and things at a cloth store and headed for The Village Green restaurant where we got some hot soup and tea. It was getting cool and the sun was behind a lot of clouds. We could have eaten something with Yehudit and Natali earlier, but we hadn't been hungry then.

At the restaurant we met Daniella, a Jewish woman in her early twenties and offered her my Acts 2–4 sheet, but she took one look at it and told us she didn't want it. On our way out an elderly man motioned to us. He was 80 years old, six feet tall (1.8 m) and thin. He was a counselor for the city of Jerusalem, spoke seven languages fluently and was on the front lines in the Yom Kippor War of 1973, where Israel was almost annihilated. Israel, too proud to realize the depth of Arab hatred and deceit was attacked by a number of Arab nations on all three sides of her in that war which brought more Jewish deaths than all the previous ones combined.

We spoke with him for 30 minutes, showing him where Yeshua was Messiah from the *Tanach*, but there was no opening. His name was *Even* (pronounced *eh-ven*) which means *stone* and he lived up to the meaning of his name. On our way back to the train station we gave the cabbie The Prophecy Card. His name was Yakov (Jacob; conniver) and on the train we spoke of Messiah to the train conductor Itzhak (Isaac; laughter) and gave him a Card, too. He had been in Israel 15 years, having come out of Iraq.

I think it was about 9 PM when we finally got inside our apartment door. We were wiped out. I'll tell ya, this getting older is something else! Trekking all over Israel at our age?! I'm 55 and Ruti is 53 and it seemed like we had stayed up for two days in a row. I remember staying up all night in seminary 25 years ago working on a paper and going to classes all the next day and being less tired than I was now. We both sunk into bed and slept well, but were still tired the next day when we got up.

I went to check our mail box at the post office and on my way back, on the bus, I struck up a conversation with Yosi. He was 75 years old and liked my biblical clothes. I shared some of Messiah with him and gave him a Prophecy Card. He said he would like to have his rabbi look at it, too, and I told him that I would like to meet his rabbi and show him our Messiah in the *Tanach*.

I got off the bus, called Ruti and asked her if she wanted me to pick up a grilled chicken and bring it home for lunch, seeing how tired she still was. I said we could open a can of corn and there was some rye bread and that would be enough for lunch. As tired as she was she told me that all morning she had been getting from the Lord the restaurant Bruno's and thought that we should

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go there to eat.

We had been there once before and had gotten a decent hamburger. That's no small miracle in Israel. Most Israeli hamburgers taste like fried rubber. It was getting cold, windy and dark as the rain clouds moved in and I thought it would be better to get the chicken and go home and eat it and then we could watch the rain fall from our apartment instead falling on us if we went to Bruno's. I yielded to Ruti, sensing we should go to Bruno's because we had shared Messiah Yeshua with Rotem (an Israeli woman 20 years old) in a most powerful way when she had waited on us before.

As we left the apartment building it was beginning to drizzle. I just knew I should have gotten that chicken! It was too late now though. We headed toward the bus stop and I said that if the bus came first we would take it, but if a cab came first then we would take that. A few minutes later we got into a cab and it really began to rain. By the time we got there it was raining steadily, but Bruno's is inside a mall in Tel Aviv, which has entrances and parking underneath it. The cab let us out there and we didn't get wet and even though the clouds had darkened the sky and the rain was coming down we just knew that ol' sun was out there!

We sat down at the bar, as we had done before because that was the only place in the restaurant where you could order a hamburger. Rotem the bartender wasn't there. Replacing her was Ortal, which speaks of the sun's light reflecting off the morning dew. We ordered our burgers, fries and some mashed potatoes on the side and Ortal asked us how we came to live in Israel. I love opening like that! I told her 'It's because of Messiah Yeshua that we're both here.' Well, that got her attention and for the next hour and a half we shared the love of our *Life* with Ortal and watched as the Holy Spirit moved upon her. The last half hour she began to weep and she couldn't stop, a clear indication of the Spirit moving upon her heart. She was a little embarrassed by that. There was an Israeli couple next to us, as well as both female managers sitting close, with waiters and waitresses going back and forth who could see what was happening to Ortal. She excused herself and went to the bathroom where she remained for awhile trying to get her composure.

One of the things we shared with both Gali and Ortal was about forgiveness and Yeshua's very real love. I also spoke of the deity of Messiah Yeshua, which is always a big stumbling block for us Jews that worship the One True God. I explained that in Psalm Two, David the King, who was also a prophet, said that God would place His Messiah on Mount Zion and declared that *God* would *beget* the Messiah—His *Son*. To beget is *not* to create. Adam and Eve

### *Gali and Ortal*

were created, but Cain and Abel were *begotten* in the image and likeness of their parents and were just as human as them. Both the Father and the Son (and the Holy Spirit) are deity—God.<sup>109</sup>

I said in Micah 5:2 that the Lord speaks through the prophet and says that the Ruler of Israel (Messiah) would be born in Bethlehem, the city of King David's birth (for Messiah is the earthly Son of David; 2nd Samuel 7:5-17). The prophet also wrote that this Ruler-King was alive 'from ancient times, from before eternity.' How could this be if the Messiah was just a human being? The ancient Rabbis saw the Messiah in the very first words spoken by God recorded in Scripture: Be *Light!* ('Let there be Light!' as it's written in most English translations). What was that Light? It wasn't the sun, moon or the stars because they weren't created until day four, and this was the first day. The ancient Rabbis wisely understood it to be the *Light* of Messiah Himself, *coming forth*<sup>110</sup> from God (conceptually the same way as a child comes forth from its mother's womb). The Messiah is One with God the Father and also has a separate identity of His own as God the Son.

Ortal came back from the bathroom, her eyes still red, and shared with us that spiritual things mattered deeply to her, but lately she had found herself thinking too much about money and material things and how she looked. Ortal was 21 years old, pretty and had dark blonde hair. These are things that most young people, and most older people too, think about. We told her about the *Life* that Yeshua wanted to give her, sharing some personal things out of our lives as well as explaining how Yeshua was her Messiah. She, too, like Gali the day before, was extremely attentive to our words and we felt our hearts going out to her.

She began to weep again, not being able to stop. The managers and other staff were asking her if she was alright and she told them that she was, as she wiped away more tears. One of the managers, just before she left, said to Ortal, 'Tomorrow I want to know everything they said to you.' She remembered us from the time before with Rotem, who also was affected by our words of

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<sup>109</sup> See *Yeshua—God the Son* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Yeshua-God-the-Son.pdf> to understand how both the Son and His Father are deity.

<sup>110</sup> Yeshua, as well as the Scriptures, speaks of 'coming forth' a number of times, which means He was not created. Psalm 2:7; 89:26-37; Jn. 1:14, 18; 3:16; John 16:27-28 (30) and 17:8 have Yeshua saying He 'came forth' from the Father; Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5; 1st Jn. 4:9. John 8:42 has the identical concept that Yeshua 'proceeded forth' from the Father. In John 7:29 Yeshua says, 'But I know Him, for *I am from Him*, and He sent Me.'

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*Life.* Before we left, Ruti prayed with Ortal, taking her hand and asking the Lord to love Ortal and to reveal Himself to her. Ortal appreciated that. We had already given her the Card and Acts 2–4 and she was excited about reading them. I'll tell ya, this being tired has its opportunities and just before we finished our burgers, the rain, which had been coming down in buckets, stopped, and yep, that ol' sun just came a'shinin' through! Ruti and I looked at each other and smiled.

Ortal invited us to return and we thanked her. We told her that if she had any questions or just wanted to talk with Ruti or me, to give us a call. We left Bruno's and immediately began to pray for the Lord to protect the Seed that had been planted and to water it and give it plenty of Sonshine!

Next we headed for the Cell-Com place because we needed to get something for Ruti's cellphone. We had ministered to El'ad (God is forever; a young religious Jewish man) and Ronit ('dance with joy!' a pretty secular girl about 20 years old) some months back when we had picked up Ruti's cellphone. They were very glad to see us today, but there was no mention of The Prophecy Cards that we had left with them. We hadn't shared the Name of Messiah with them at that time, but both were affected by the words we had said. After we were done with business, El'ad asked about Messiah. I could tell he hadn't looked at the Card. I launched out into the deep and gave him Acts 2–4. He scanned it and said, 'Jesus?'

El'ad hadn't expected that. He told me he liked me, but how could Yeshua or *Yeshu*, as he called Him, be the Messiah?! All his life he had heard from everyone he knew that Yeshua wasn't the Messiah. I told him they were ignorant of the Truth and that he had believed a lie. I asked him why he thought Yeshua wasn't the Messiah and like most, he couldn't tell me anything definite. All he 'knew' was that Jesus *wasn't* the Messiah. We spoke some more and the Lord must have been working in his heart. He allowed me to give him another Prophecy Card, saying that he would look those cites up. 'Great!' I said. 'Then we can talk about Messiah from the *Tanach*.' He smiled and went off to do some work before his shift ended in a few minutes at five o'clock. Later, I would find out that Ruti had been intensely praying that God would lift the veil over his heart, mind and eyes, and that the Lord would remove any and all religious blockages and pierce his heart with my words.

Ronit was in another world—the world of a pretty girl being attractive. After we left, Ruti said that Ronit had gotten harder because of the sins she was in. Being about 5 PM it was time for a shift change and Ronit and El'ad gave way to Li'or (My Light). We spoke of Messiah Yeshua to him and at first he

### *Gali and Ortal*

wasn't receptive, but by the time we left he took both The Prophecy Card and Acts 2–4 and was grateful to get them.

Well, we got home and low and behold, we were still tired. So by 9 PM we were in bed, but I couldn't sleep. It was the burger. Oh, what a burger and this was a relatively good one! It was still with me, deep inside my belly, telling me that I had eaten it. I told the Lord,

‘Just look at what I do for You! I ate that burger! I should get a medal for going above and beyond the call of duty today!’  
Oh, I wish I had that grilled chicken : )

I tossed and turned and napped every once-in-a-while, the burger telling me ‘Hello, remember me?’, in my not infrequent burps. By three AM my stomach had dealt with it, but at 4:10 AM I awoke and knew I had to get up. My mouth was very dry (from all the salt and pepper the cook had placed on it. I had forgotten to tell them not to put anything on it) and so I got some mineral water and took about 20 gulps. Even then my throat still felt parched. I was tired, but I thought it was good to be up early, to pray and read the Word and to see that ol' sun come up.

Please pray for all of them, especially Gali in Beit Shemesh (which by the way, is the city near where David slew Goliath) and Ortal (the girl bartender at Bruno's). Pray that whatever would keep them from coming to Yeshua would be taken out of the way and that Yeshua would draw them to Himself by His Spirit and they would walk all the days of their lives with the King of Israel, in His Torah, and be great witnesses to other Israelis. Thank you!

## ZVIKA THE DEER

At 3:00 PM on Thursday, May 24th, 2007 Ruti and I stopped in to say ‘Shalom’ to Zvika, a 24 year old Israeli man who works in his father’s hardware store. We had known him for about two years. His name means ‘deer of affection,’ coming from *zvi* (deer), with an affectionate ending (*ka*). We had shared Yeshua with him on a number of occasions, but he had always been cool to it, but today was different.

For about an hour, in-between a few customers, Zvika would find out that the New Covenant was prophesied for the Jewish people in ‘his’ Bible (Jer. 31:31-34), something that he couldn’t quite grasp, and that the New Covenant was written by eight Jews and only one Gentile. I told him of the real *Life* that Yeshua had for him and how I came to give my life to Him 31 years ago after searching for God.

We gave Zvika The Prophecy Card and Acts 2–4 to show him that ‘it’s a Jewish thing’ to believe in Yeshua. He said he was going to check it out very soon. His grandfather was a very religious Jew and his father grew up that way, but they weren’t practicing it like his grandfather. We left the store and prayed that the Lord would bring Zvika into the Kingdom.

Then I thought it was time for some pizza. We went to a small pizza place on Jabotinsky Street, which is the main road through Ramat Gan. They had four little round tables with some chairs on the sidewalk. We ordered our pizza at the counter. Before it came, Yehoshua (Joshua) and his wife Raevayah (to have one’s thirst quenched with living waters from Yahveh) had come over to our table and were asking us who we were. They had been driving in their car on Jabotinsky, seen us walking, and Raevayah said,

‘Look at the clothes on those people! They have so much *Life* and *Light* about them!’

They turned their car around and parked a few feet in front of where we were sitting. The pizza came a few minutes later and we invited them to eat with us. They wanted to know all about us. We talked about Yeshua for 20 minutes and then they had to go. They were on their way to see some friends. They asked for my phone number and I gave them The Prophecy Card (which has my number on it). They said they would like to see us again. The biblical clothes were turning out to be quite a witnessing tool.

Three days before this, Ruti and I were in a mall and an American Jewish family came up to us and had to know who we were. They weren’t too thrilled

## *Tzvika*

when we spoke of Yeshua, but before they left I was able to give them Jewish Newsletter 33 (*Has Messiah Come?*), which the woman said she would read. Ruti sensed she was curious enough to read it. I didn't even get their names, but we're praying for them just the same. Then we went to a shoe store to buy a pair of sandals for Ruti.

The manager of the store, Rahel, and her assistant Rina, were also interested in who we were. Rahel though, wasn't at all interested in wanting to know God. She had a good life and that was enough. Rahel didn't want to live the rabbinic religious life, which is insane in the eyes of secular Jews. I told them that God wants us to know *Him* by His Spirit, which is like *living waters*, and that He had promised to give us this in Ezekiel 36:24-27, which comes through belief in Yeshua. Rina, an Ethiopian Jewess, was listening, as well as another worker there. I shared some more and by the time we left, Rahel said that I had spoken well. The words had found a place within her. Thank You, Yeshua! We gave them Acts 2-4 and Prophecy Cards and Ruti got her sandals!

On Friday, May 25th, Ruti and I went to buy some grilled chicken and while we were waiting for Yehuda (Judah; praise) to package it up, a man came up to us and began questioning who we were. Were we Samaritans? No, we were Jews who believed in Yeshua, that He is the Messiah. I spoke of King David's Son dying for us so that our sins could be forgiven; the Day of Atonement and the need of sacrificial blood for forgiveness, and not just prayer, as the Rabbis say today. I also told him of the giving of the Holy Spirit to those who believe (Joel 2:28-29; Ezk. 36:24-27). Before we knew it he was reading the Hebrew handout of Acts 2-4. He didn't finish it there, but took it and The Prophecy Card with him to his home. His name was Yosafe (Joseph). He was 63 years old.

We continued on our way, stopping at a bread store and when we came out, there was the woman whom we had given Acts 2-4 to the day before, when we had been speaking with Zvika. During the time we were talking with him there was a woman who was looking around for some things in his hardware store. When she came to the counter to pay, I knew that she had heard us and so I gave her the Acts 2-4 handout and told her that if she had any questions about Messiah, to call us. Now she was outside the bread store with her husband and a baby carriage with their 15 month old son in it. (She had been alone the day before.)

Her husband came up to us while we were just 'meeting one another again' and I asked him his name. Aharone (Aaron) was 30 years old. We shared our

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names with them. The woman's name was Tzipi, short for Tzipora ('bird,' the name of Moses' wife; Ex. 2:21). She hadn't read the handout yet...

Would you pray for Zvika, Yehoshua and his wife Raevayah, the family at the mall, Rahel and Rina, and Aharone and Tzipi? Thank you.

## NACHUM THE SONG WRITER

On June 3rd, 2007 Ruti and I ate lunch in a restaurant in Tel Aviv. We sat down at a table and after a few minutes a man about 65 years old, and a woman about 55, came over to us. The man excused himself for intruding, introduced himself, and said that he had to come over to meet us. He said that when we came into the restaurant he saw such *peace* and *light* about us that he wanted to know us.

Nachum (which means ‘compassionate’) said that it looked as if we had just stepped out of the Bible. The way that he said it we could see that it meant a lot to him. He told us that he read the Bible every day. I said,

‘the *peace* you felt was from the Holy Spirit drawing you to us so that we could share the Messiah with you. The Spirit of God wants to give you that same *peace* and *light* you saw in us.’

He couldn’t stay long because he had an appointment, but I gave him Acts 2–4 and said that if he would read it he would see who the Messiah was who would give him that peace. I told him that he could also call me if he had any questions.

The woman was a friend of his and they hadn’t seen each other in many years. They had met outside the restaurant that day and decided to have lunch there. They were done eating and were on their way out.

The woman was able to stay a little longer. Her name was Ruth and she had just come back from England where she had been working in banking for 27 years. She said that was ‘long enough’ and she was happy to be living in Israel again. With Ruth we were able to share much more about Messiah Yeshua, speaking of the *Life* that we had in Him, as well as forgiveness of sins. She ‘held us at a distance’ because of the Name, but we were able to plant a Seed in her about her Messiah.

Ruth also told us that Nachum was a very famous Israeli composer of pop music. I looked on the Internet and found this about him: Nachum,

‘is one of Israel’s most beloved composers of popular songs’ and ‘has received much recognition as a composer of music for films and received several nominations for Oscars this past year from the Israeli Film Academy.’

I hadn’t known that at the time. All I saw was a man who had a sweetness and

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gentleness to him. Nachum is at the top of his profession, but I could see he was looking for something that his profession couldn't give him. May he find the true Composer of Life in You, Yeshua!

Ruth needed to leave. We gave her Acts 2–4 and The Prophecy Card, explaining some of it before she left. We then began to eat, having stopped in order to speak with them.

Then Nurit the hostess came over. She was the one who made sure everyone had what they needed, sort of an overseer of the waiters and waitresses. We shared Yeshua with her and she really listened.

Ruti and I both told her a little of our testimony, as well as some of The Prophecy Card, and Nurit said she had never heard anything like that before. She knew of Jesus, at least the religion of Christianity, but didn't know anything about the Messiah from the Hebrew Bible and what it meant to know Him. She was very appreciative. We told her that if she wanted to know more, or just wanted to ask questions and talk, she could call us or she could come to our place and we would read the *Tanach* and explain more about Messiah from it.

After Nurit left, Michal our waitress came over and wanted to know what we had been speaking about with everyone. She was named after one of King Saul's daughters who would marry King David (1st Sam. 14:49; 18:27-28). We spoke of the *joy* and *Life* that *is* Yeshua and how God had promised us the Holy Spirit so that we could know Him. She, too, had never heard of this. She must have stood at our table for ten minutes as I spoke of Yeshua from the *Tanach*. When she finally left to attend to other tables, we gave her some literature on Messiah, also.

Israeli lives are being touched, many for the very first time, in the precious name of Yeshua. We covet your prayers for Nachum, Ruth, Nurit, Michal and the thousands of Israelis we've touched in His Name.

There are many hearts that are hard. That's nothing new in this world. Only the Holy Spirit of the *living* God can pierce them and that's why we ask for your prayers for them.

'The people who walked in darkness have seen a great *Light*.  
Those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them *Light*  
has shined.' (Isaiah 9:1-2)

## *The Way Back to Israel*

I think it was in the 15th month of our eventual 18 month stay in Tulsa (June 1997—Jan. 1999) that I began to feel ‘too comfortable.’ We had returned from Israel in 1997 with only \$20 and had lived in Jerusalem for two years previously on a day to day need for food and rent money, but now in Tulsa there was more than enough money for food and rent. As I began to minister, finances came in from speaking engagements and our congregation, and by September 1998 I was thinking how nice it was to be in the States. I also saw how much easier it was to live in the States and that concerned me because I knew Israel was where Yeshua wanted us. I began to wonder when and if the Lord was ever going to bring us ‘back home’ to Israel. After a Sabbath meeting ended in our apartment I came to Ruti and said,

‘We need to pray and seek Yeshua, if He is going to bring us back to the Land (of Israel) or not.’

We sat down and prayed. After about ten minutes we stopped and I asked Ruti if she had gotten anything. She said the Lord had spoken to her and, ‘Yes, we’re returning to Israel.’ Then she said, ‘The Lord even gave me a date for leaving—January 6th’ (1999). I said, ‘That’s great, but I didn’t get anything. If it’s the Lord then He will confirm it to me, too.’

The next day, Sunday, I prayed and sought the Lord again, but still didn’t get anything. By Monday morning I had forgotten about it. I came into my study and saw a pile of papers that I had wanted to go through for some time. When I spoke in churches, sometimes people would give me a paper to read, and not having much time for it I would put it in a pile on my desk to go through at a later time. As I went through it that morning I sorted those papers out, keeping the ones that I thought would be worth reading and discarding the rest.

I came to a paper about the Ark of the Covenant and I expected to toss it away as I began to read it. Many who write about the Ark don’t really know what they’re talking about. This one was different though. It caught my attention and I was pleasantly surprised. I found myself reading well into the article and then the Lord jolted me.

As Ron Wyatt placed his head into a small opening that he had made into a cave wall in Jerusalem that he believed housed the Ark of the Covenant, he looked at his watch. It was 2:30 PM—January 6th! Ruti’s words immediately came back to me. Interestingly enough, the article didn’t mention the year. I read on. Later in it he again spoke of the date and gave the year (1982). I finished reading it and gave it to Ruti to read, as calmly as I could. I didn’t men-

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tion the Jan. 6th date. As she read it I would peek out of my study every so often to see where she was in the article. I knew when she got to the January 6th date. She was impressed, too.

That seemed like enough for me to change our lives from one continent to another. We had some errands to run later that day and while making a deposit at our drive-in bank in the afternoon I turned to Ruti and said,

‘You know, a few hours ago when I read Wyatt’s account of finding the Ark of the Covenant on Jan. 6th, I had no doubt that the Lord was speaking to me through it. Now though, I’m not so sure.’ I then prayed to the Lord in the car and said, ‘Yeshua, if this is of You, would You please confirm it again for me?’

We drove from the bank to Kinko’s Kopiers to get a few papers copied. There weren’t many copies to make so I did it myself and as I approached the counter to pay, I noticed a notebook on it that read ‘Harvest Church.’ I said to myself, ‘Where do I know that name from?’ Then I remembered; ‘Jonathan Wakefield.’ Jonathan was a pastor friend of mine whose church I had spoken in a number of times over the years. I turned to the man who was at the counter, standing a little to the left of the notebook, and sure enough, it was Jonathan. I said,

‘Jonathan! How are you?’

‘Fine!’ he answered, surprised to see me. ‘What’s going on with you, Avram?’

I said, ‘I’m not certain yet, but I think the Lord is getting ready to send us back to Israel on January 6th.’

‘January 6th?!’ he exclaimed. ‘That’s my 23rd wedding anniversary!’

‘Hallelu-Yah!’ I shouted!

Everyone in the place turned around and looked. I was excited. That was my confirmation less than 20 minutes after I had asked the Lord for it. Ruti was waiting outside in the car. I told her what had taken place with Jonathan and we began ‘to mentally pack our bags’ and get ready. The 6th of January was a little more than three months away.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Ron Wyatt discovered the Ark of the Covenant on *Wednesday*, January 6th, 1982. After Ruti read the article I looked on the calendar. January 6th, 1999 was a

## *The Way Back to Israel*

Not surprisingly, it wasn't easy to get flight tickets for that day. Before or after that day would have been a cinch, the travel agent said, but the day we wanted was hard. Eventually though, we got some tickets and the Lord orchestrated our flight from Tulsa, OK USA on January 6th, 1999 back to Tel Aviv, Israel. We had been told to get to the Tulsa airport at least three hours before our flight time. When we got there the woman clerk asked us, 'Why are you here so early?'

Then she said that if we liked, because we were so early, we could take the flight *before* our scheduled flight. It would leave two hours sooner than ours, meaning that we only had about an hour to wait. We took it. We boarded the plane and took off for Chicago, and with the heavy snow storm hitting the mid-West *we were the last flight out of Tulsa that day!* Thank You, Yeshua!

As we approached Chicago the pilot wasn't sure that he would be able to land because of the snow, but about half an hour before our landing the sky opened up and that ol' sun came shining out! Our landing was fine. Thank You Yeshua! Yet, I need to tell you what happened on that flight.

From Tulsa to Chicago we sat in back of two Orthodox Jewish men and spoke of Yeshua and the *Life* He had for them. I shared out of Ezekiel 36:22-27, where God speaks of cleansing Israel with clean Waters and giving her a new Heart and His Spirit. At first they listened, but after awhile the one on the left became defensive. The other one though, remained open.

They said they hadn't heard of Yeshua. I said that this was the day the Lord had allowed us to meet and that I was sharing with them about the New *Life* that the Messiah of Israel had for them. (Talk about the Apostle Paul in the many synagogues he spoke of for the first time, bringing the Good News about Yeshua to them.) I told them that I was just a messenger and that they were to seek the God of Israel to find out if Yeshua of Nazareth was really their Messiah.

One of the objections to Yeshua was that his fathers hadn't believed in Him, so he shouldn't either. The Lord had me counter with,

'If the Messiah comes will you tell Him that you can't believe in Him because your fathers didn't? So, no Jew can ever believe in the Messiah because their fathers didn't?'

That made an impression on the one on the right, but the defensive one on the

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Wednesday for us, too, 17 years later.

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left asked me if I followed all the laws of Judaism. It was a diversion. I asked him if he followed all the laws. He told me that he did, but I didn't quite believe him. Then he assured me that he didn't do them perfectly, but that he tried to follow them.<sup>112</sup>

I spoke of eternal *Life* and how one attained it. In Judaism it's given if your good works outweigh your evil deeds, but I told them that our Scriptures never say that:

‘God is giving us eternal *Life* through Messiah's sacrificial death and by our belief in Him we are forgiven and made righteous before God. This is what Isaiah the prophet spoke of in chapter 53 and Jeremiah spoke of in 31:31-34.’

Would you pray for them? Their names are Barry and David. David was the one who sat on the right; the one that seemed more open. Thank you!

We came into London and had a 12 hour layover and I wanted to have some of their famous roast beef. It was terrible. It was also raining, nothing new for London, I understand, and our bags (and clothes) got soaked going from one plane to the next. We wouldn't know it until we opened them up in Israel.

On our flight from London to Tel Aviv the Lord placed us next to an Israeli man by the name of Hanan (his name means 'grace'). He was 28 years old and studying law in London. We talked to him about real *Life* in Messiah Yeshua. He lived just outside Tel Aviv and I gave him my phone number and told him to call me and we would take him out to eat lunch and continue to talk about the Lord. He never did.

We got to our apartment in Jerusalem—and no one had the key to get in! Where did that sun go?! The woman who owned the apartment had wanted her daughter to let us in, but the owner had inadvertently left the key *inside* the apartment before she left for *Canada*. We waited in the cold morning air until her 12 year old grandson came and climbed in through a window to let us in. Upset? No! In fact, we rejoiced and sang praises! We were grateful to be back home in the Land of our Fathers! A month and a half later we'd be talking to those teens from Australia about Messiah Yeshua (p. 11f.).

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<sup>112</sup> In Judaism there are different sets of laws for different groups of religious Jews. It depends on what kind of a religious Jew one is that determines how many, and what, laws, rules and traditions, etc., one follows. The two men, being Orthodox Jews, are required to follow not only the laws of Torah that pertain to them, but also the hundreds of rules from the Talmud and their own rabbis, etc.

## THE FORGOTTEN GUITAR

Fast forward eight years. Ruti and I are in Ramat Gan now. For a number of months Ruti and I had been praying about going back down to Eilat, the southernmost city in Israel, to immerse (baptize) in water Shuli, Zoli and Ofira, three believers we had led to the Lord. As important as it is to be immersed as soon as one professes Yeshua, we hadn't been able to do that until July 2007.

On July 13th the Lord gave us 'the green light' to go. Making arrangements to travel, we arrived in Eilat on Monday, July 16th and before we checked into the hotel I called Ofira and asked her to join us. We picked her up and headed for our hotel. I had a keen sense that we weren't to baptize all three of them together, but to spend time with each of them individually, teaching them what it meant to be baptized in His Name. Then they would immerse themselves in the bathtub of our hotel room, with us acting as witnesses. The beach was always crowded, there was no privacy, and it would be 120° F (49°C). That's Eilat in July, and oh yes, the humidity is around 85%.

We invited Ofira to join us for lunch, and after eating we headed to our room where we opened the Bible and taught her what it meant to go under the water in the name of Yeshua. She was ready. After she went under in old clothes, and dried off and changed into dry clothes, we prayed with her for the Infilling of the Holy Spirit. She told us that she felt so different, so much at peace and that she felt like she was a different person. She said that she didn't feel like 'making war' with people, but just wanted to be at peace with them. It was sweet, divine music to our ears. We praised the Lord and continued on into the night with Scripture and fellowship. In Eilat she had no congregation to go to.

On Tuesday we had Shuli over in the morning and did the same with her. After her immersion and change into dry clothes there were tears in her eyes as we prayed for her. The Spirit was moving upon her and us. It was Wonderful. Then in the afternoon, Ofira (Shuli's daughter) joined us again and we studied the Word together and what it meant to obey Yeshua, and not to follow the world. Shuli and Ofira both bolted when I spoke of dressing modestly. This wasn't a new issue, but something the Lord would have to deal with them on.

On Wednesday we went to see Divera and the new baby (born just a month earlier on June 11th). She had named him Sky. What other name 'would go with' her three year old son, whom she had named Ocean? The names of the

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children come from Divera's New Age background. Zoli, her husband, was working and we had to wait until Thursday for his immersion. We used this opportunity to be with Divera and the children. We're praying for her as we know that Satan has her deceived and bound up, but she thinks she's walking in the Light.

On Thursday Zoli had off from work and he was able to come to us at the hotel. We invited him for lunch and then headed back to our room where we taught the Word on baptism. Then Zoli 'went under' in the name of Yeshua. The word that came for him was that he was 'a chosen servant' and as he walked with Yeshua, more of the Lord would come to him and he would truly serve the living God.

The Lord had been right. Baptizing them one at a time helped us to concentrate on each one of them individually and truly 'be with them.' There was less of an opportunity for Satan to disrupt the atmosphere with strife and chaos, especially if mom and daughter were together. By Friday morning we had left Eilat, but not without sharing Yeshua with a number of the staff at the hotel and a contingent of Israeli Ethiopian busboys. We love Yeshua and just can't keep Him to ourselves!

Friday afternoon we got back home to Ramat Gan and Sunday morning we headed off to Jerusalem to see my brother and his wife. They were here in Israel with a group of believers and had been in Tiberias (next to the Sea of Galilee) when Ruti and I had been in Eilat. They had gotten into Jerusalem on Friday, the day that Ruti and I had returned to Ramat Gan.

I've only seen my brother Noel (Nachum) three times in the last 23 years. He has an incredible ministry in Florida, reaching out to the homeless and those on drugs and alcohol. Ruti and I had never met his wife, Roe. They had been married about 22 years.

It turned out to be a very special blessing for all of us. My brother and I just hugged on each other as much as we could and thanked the Lord from where He had brought us to where we were now. We also met some sweet believers in the group, and of course, witnessed to a number of Israelis about Yeshua. One was a cabbie by the name of Zvili. I gave him my Prophecy Card and we began to talk about Messiah (where He would be born, Micah 5:2; when He would come, Dan. 9:24-26, etc.). He was interested.

We also saw Sarah Moses. She and Daniel (who died in January 2005 at the age of 85) were our first neighbors when we came to Jerusalem in June 1995. We didn't know a soul then and they were so kind and helpful to us in many

### *The Forgotten Guitar*

ways. When Daniel suffered a stroke that left him paralyzed, unable to speak and move, or even to recognize his wife, we began helping Sarah financially every month. That was in the year 2000. We would also continue to help Sarah after Daniel's death.

On Monday, July 23rd, 2007 we gave Sarah 2,000 shekels (about \$450) to help her move. She had to leave her apartment. She was 84 years old. The person who owned the apartment wanted it back. Sarah moved out on July 31st. She was so grateful for the funds. Five months later, on Dec. 27th, 2007, Sarah Moses died. She had never come to her Messiah, even though we had shared from our hearts about Yeshua for many years. Perhaps the Lord will use it in the lives of her children (Rafi & Ora) and her grandchildren?

Thank you for your prayers for Shuli, Zoli and Ofira. They're still 'in the Wilderness' and we want to see them enter the Promised Land of Messiah Yeshua where they will be fully surrendered to Him and be led by His Spirit. Please pray for Zvili and the others that we witnessed to. You may not know their names, but He does! Thank you!

Oh yes! The forgotten guitar! After Noel's group left to return to the States, Ruti and I headed back by bus to our place in Ramat Gan. All was fine until three minutes after we had gotten off the bus in Ramat Gan. Ruti cried out, 'Oh no! I left my guitar on the bus!'

Ruti plays the guitar, singing unto the Lord in her morning times of prayer, praise and reading of the Word. We had taken it to Jerusalem with us, and now, it, along with her music, was still on the overhead perch where she had sat. That's why neither of us had seen it (remembered it) to take it with us. At least that's what someone might think, but as it says in the Word, I think 'the Lord' was in back of it to help us to forget it (Judg. 14:1-4).

I quickly hailed a cab and told him to make a right turn. We were trying to catch a bus and I didn't know where it would stop. We had been 'the last stop' for the bus, but the bus would go on to a place where it would wait for a while and then make a return trip to Jerusalem. I didn't know where that place was. So we went right and right again and right again until we had come back to the street where we had gotten the cab. He must have thought we were a little crazy. Then the Lord reminded me of the bus returning to Jerusalem and making its first pick-up where it had picked us up on the previous Sunday (to go to Jerusalem). So the cabbie dropped us off there with our small suitcase and knapsack that we had our clothes in. We sat down at the bus stop and waited for the next bus to Jerusalem.

## SAM THE ROCK THROWER

A bus came, but it was a different driver. I got on it and saw the place where we had been sitting, but no guitar in the perch. The next bus came on schedule, 20 minutes later and the same thing—no guitar as it wasn't the bus, either. I was beginning to wonder if they might have taken it off the bus and put it in the lost and found, which we could have gone to, but we wanted to wait and see if we could get it this way. The third bus came and there was a different driver than the one we had taken from Jerusalem to Ramat Gan, but this was the bus! The guitar was still in the perch! I retrieved it. The bus driver had no problem with it as I explained that we had just come from Jerusalem and had left it there. Thank You, Lord!

Now, I didn't write all that so you could breathe a sigh of relief that we had gotten Ruti's guitar back, as good as that was. After we got it, we crossed the street and waited for a bus or a cab, whichever came first, to take us back home to our apartment. A car stopped a few feet in front of us as we stood on the curb with our things. The car began to back up to us, stopped, and a man in his early 60s came out and said, 'We'll take you wherever you want to go.' Praise Yeshua! Another opportunity to witness to two men that we never would have known about if not for that *forgotten* guitar.

Both men were named David, with David the driver being an Orthodox Jew born in Israel. The other David was born in the States and was involved with the hippie movement back in the 60s and was still connected with it, as he himself told us that he had a 'hippie spirit.' Yes, I thought, I could see that.

I shared my Cards with them and spoke of Messiah and knowing Him and when they got to our apartment we invited them up for something to eat. They didn't have time, but David the driver insisted they come up just for a glass of water. David the hippie didn't want to, but they did, and I spoke some more about Messiah, gave some of my testimony, but didn't mention the name of Yeshua as I sensed they weren't ready for it. They left and I told them that if they had any questions about Messiah to call me.

David the driver called a few days later and wanted to know more about this Messiah I knew. We made an appointment for Wednesday, August 1st, in the lobby of a nearby hotel to discuss it further. He didn't want 'to intrude' in my apartment, even though I told him it would have been alright. I think he felt that neutral territory would be better for him and that was fine with me. All because of that *forgotten* guitar. Praise Yeshua!

I met with David and taught him much about his Messiah for an hour and a half. I shared the Name with him toward the end and he wasn't surprised or

### *The Forgotten Guitar*

upset. He actually said he believed in Yeshua, but I could tell that it wasn't a genuine belief. Yet, that day he heard many wonderful things about his Messiah. He was open, and the next day, *because he had left his cell phone on the table where we had been*, he came to my apartment to get it. I asked the Lord what I could give him, if anything, and was impressed with 'the New Covenant.' I had given him the Acts 2-4 sheet at the table when we had spoken, and much to my delight, when I asked him if I could give him a New Covenant he said, 'Yes.'

Thank you for your prayers for all the Davids that we minister to, in His precious and holy Name, especially this last David!

## LITTLE SHANI

On Wednesday, Nov. 14th, 2007 little Shani came over. She came with her mother, her grandmother and her grandmother's sister Tali ('my morning dew') in tow. Shani was three years old and she just loved Ruti. On a number of occasions Shani would say to her mother and grandmother, 'Ruti, Ruti, Ruti!' and they knew she wanted to come to our apartment and see Ruti. Sarah (grandma) and her husband Ezra came to Israel from Iran more than 50 years ago when they were not much older than Shani.

We had shared Messiah Yeshua with all of them a couple of times previously and were able to do it again when they came that day. They didn't come to hear about Yeshua, but our heart's desire was for them to come to their Messiah and to know the *Life* He has for them. After some small talk I said that I had been reading in Exodus that morning about the Tabernacle of Moses and about the Ark of the Covenant.

I asked them if they knew what was in or around the Ark. None of them did, so I began by telling them that the Ten Commandments on two stone tablets were in it. They remembered that. I told them that the gold jar with Manna was placed in front of the Ark (Ex. 16:33-34) and they remembered that, too. Then I told them there was a branch placed in front of the Ark that had budded, blossomed and bore ripe almonds on it (Num. 17:8). They didn't remember that, nor why it was placed there.

I got out a Hebrew Bible and gave it to Tali and I opened it to Numbers 16—the rebellion of Korah. They didn't remember Korah, either. They weren't great Bible scholars, but there they were, listening to the Word of God as Tali read in Hebrew and translated it into Farsi for Sarah, an official language of Iran derived from the ancient Persian people. About 50 million of the 72 million people in Iran speak Farsi. Sarah spoke fluent Hebrew, but knew Farsi better and that's what they spoke at home.

Tali finished reading and I said the reason why the almond branch was there was because it would become a sign to Israel that Yahveh had *chosen* Aaron to be the High Priest. Korah had coveted his position and said that the only reason Aaron was the High Priest was because Moses (his brother) had given it to him! (Num. 16:8-11) After the ground opened up and swallowed Korah, and Fire came down from the Heavens and destroyed the other rebels who had been with him, the Sons of Israel, true to their carnal nature, 'turned' on Moses and said, 'Why did you destroy such a champion of our people as Ko-

### *Little Shani*

rah?!' Well, that was enough for God that day. He sent a plague among Israel killing many of them. Moses told Aaron to take his censer and make atonement for Israel. Aaron did, standing between the living and the dead. The plague stopped.

God called the leaders of the 12 Tribes and had them place their names on their staff, the symbol of their authority. Aaron's name was placed on the staff (rod/branch) of Levi, the staff that Moses used to shepherd the sheep of his father-in-law Jethro in Midian. It's the one that also became a snake before Pharaoh, and the one that Moses and Aaron had used for all the plagues (miracles) that came upon Egypt.<sup>113</sup>

The 12 Hebrew staves were placed before the Ark of the Covenant and the

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<sup>113</sup> With this staff or branch the Nile River was turned into blood, and Moses would strike the Rock and water would come out for Israel to drink in the Wilderness, etc. For more on this staff and how it 's linked to Messiah, see *The Branch* at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Branch.pdf>. Some places where this staff or branch is used are:

Exodus 4:2-5: God asks Moses, 'What is in your hand?' 'A staff,' he replies. It becomes a snake and then back to a staff so that Israel would believe that Moses was sent by Yahveh, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Ex. 4:17, 20-21, 30-31: Moses is told to take the staff in his hand and that God would perform all His miracles before Pharaoh, to do signs and wonders through it.

Ex. 7:9-12: The Staff of Yahveh becomes a snake before Pharaoh and gobbles up all the staff-snakes of the Egyptian magicians.

Ex. 7:15-20: The Staff is raised to strike the Nile River, which is turned into blood.

Ex. 8:5: The Staff is raised to bring the plague of frogs upon all Egypt.

Ex. 8:16-17: The Staff strikes the dust and it becomes gnats.

Ex. 9:23: The Staff is raised so that lightning, thunder and hail come down upon Egypt.

Ex. 10:13: The Staff is raised for the locusts to come upon Egypt.

Ex. 10:21-23: An allusion is made to the raising of the Staff ('stretch out your hand to the Heavens') for thick darkness to be over the land of Egypt for three days.

Ex. 17:5-6: The Staff is raised to strike the Rock for water to quench Israel's thirst.

Ex. 17:9: The Staff is raised to ensure victory over Amalek.

Num. 17:1-11: The Staff or Branch of Aaron comes alive for all Israel to know that Yahveh had chosen Aaron to be His High Priest, and will serve as a conceptual theme for the Messiah to be named 'the Branch' in a number of Old Testament passages, and set the stage for Yeshua to be crucified as the Branch (Yeshua

## SAM THE ROCK THROWER

next day the branch of Levi had come to life, sprouting ripe almonds. I said to Tali, Sarah and Ronit (Shani's mother) that it was a picture of Yeshua the Messiah as *God's* chosen High Priest. The *dead* staff of Aaron had come back to *life* to specifically declare to Israel that God, not Moses, had *chosen* Aaron as High Priest. It was a picture of Yeshua, crucified and *dead*, but raised up to glorious *Life*, never to die again, to prove to us that God had chosen Yeshua to be our eternal High Priest (Psalm 110:4; Acts 2:25-36; Heb. 5:1-10).

This staff or branch of Moses was a *salvation* staff—a symbol of Yeshua. It was not only used to perform many miracles, it also caused Israel to be set free from Egyptian slavery, and hence, it would come to serve as a sign or term (branch) to Israel of her Messianic High Priest–King (Zech. 6:12-13). Yeshua was raised in Nazareth. The name of the town means 'a sprout or branch.' That's why Matthew, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, spoke of the Prophets saying that the Messiah would be called a Nazarene (a man from the city of Nazareth, or the city whose name means branch; Mt. 2:23). He had just written that Yeshua had resided there. This dead Branch would come back to glorified *Life* to prove to all Israel that God had chosen Him to be the High Priest of eternal Israel.

Well, that was enough for Shani. She was ready to dance and jump up and down. I've learned to quietly pray at those times and to look for an opening to continue. One came when she got tired, neither Ronit, nor Sarah, knew how to biblically discipline her.

I continued to share how Messiah Yeshua was the sacrifice that we needed so that we could be forgiven by God on Judgment Day. All who believed in Him now would be given a new heart or nature, as Ezekiel had spoken of, with the promised Holy Spirit (Ezk. 36:24-27).

Ronit said, 'How is it that Jews don't believe in Yeshua?' I told her that Ruti and I were Jews and that there were about 15,000 Israeli Jews who believed in Yeshua, as well as about 150,000 American Jews, with Jews in Europe, South Africa and Australia, etc., believing, too. She didn't know what to do with that, but she had no other objection, either.

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the Nazarene; Yeshua the Branch—the King of the Jews; John 19:19).

Num. 20:7-9: The Staff should have been raised and Moses' voice invoked to bring water out of the rock this (second) time, but Moses in his anger disobeys Yahveh and *strikes* the rock with the staff.

See also Isaiah 11:1, 10; 53:2; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8; 6:12-13.

### *Little Shani*

We turned to Isaiah and I asked Ronit to read from chapter 53. I told them this was a picture of the Jewish Messiah from the *Tanach*, which confirmed that Messiah would die for our sins. Then we went to Psalm 118:22 because it also spoke of Messiah being the Rock, which the Builders would reject, but then God would use it as the CornerStone (of the heavenly Temple).

The Stone is Messiah and the Builders are the Rabbis. I said to them that when Yeshua came, the religious authorities of Israel were wicked and didn't want to give way to Messiah. They murdered Him so they could remain in power and they spoke lies about Him that are still believed today. I related it to the Knesset, where there is much bickering and back-biting and hatred of Israelis by Israelis because they don't share the same ideologies. Most, if not all, want to retain their seat in the Knesset 'above everything' because it's a lucrative and high profile job, but they don't do much for the people. They want to be rich and famous and lord it over the people of Israel.

With that, Ronit, Sarah and Tali realized how the religious leaders could crucify the Messiah, but then Ronit voiced that Yeshua hated the Jewish people, but before I could say that it wasn't true, Tali spoke up and said that Yeshua didn't hate the Jewish people and that she had not heard that before. This caused Ronit to wonder. Here was her aunt, not some 'foreigner Jew' (me) who didn't speak Farsi, speaking up for Yeshua. Praise God!

Ruti asked if anyone wanted lentil soup and they all sat down at the table as Ruti served it to them with some rye toast and humous, all of which they loved. After they were done we talked some more about Messiah and I offered Ronit and Tali a New Testament in Hebrew, if they wanted to read for themselves about Yeshua and all that He had done and what He had said. They both took it and Tali asked me if she needed to return it. I told her they were gifts for them to keep. If they had any questions they could ask us. I was surprised and delighted that Ronit took one, also.

We've been praying for them ever since and waiting for the next time that little Shani says, 'Ruti...Ruti ...Ruti!'

Thank You Yeshua for little Shani! May she and her family come to know You. That's our prayer and thank you for your prayers for them, too!

## ADAR THE WAITRESS

On March 9th, 2008 Ruti and I headed into Jerusalem for a luncheon with Hannah, a Jewish believer from the USA who lived in Jerusalem. At the Tel Aviv train station a security guard commented on my biblical clothes. He liked them. I knew this was an opportunity to speak about Messiah and I did. I also gave him my Prophecy Card.

As the train came into Lod a man got up to leave and stopped to speak with us because of the biblical clothes. We spoke for about five minutes. He was open to Yeshua. I gave him both The Prophecy Card and Acts 2–4. Heading toward Jerusalem we noted the beautiful countryside, some goats and horses, and a brook that runs along the track as you wind your way closer to Jerusalem.

We met our friend Hannah at *Kikar Tzion* (Zion Square, the ‘center’ of Jerusalem) and walked to a restaurant close by. The waitress who came to take our order didn’t leave our table for 20 minutes. At first she was enthralled by my biblical clothes, so I used that opportunity to speak of Yeshua. She was very attentive. Hannah would later comment she thought she was hungry for God’s Truth and wanted to know about Yeshua.

I told her that we were all Jews who believed in Messiah Yeshua and that because of Him we knew God by His Spirit, as the prophet Joel spoke of. I said Yeshua had paid the penalty for our sins and we were not only forgiven by His sacrificial death, but that we were looking forward to the New Jerusalem because we will live forever with our God there.

Her name was Adar and she was 23 years old. Her family was secular, but in the last couple of years she had begun to walk religiously. I shared Scriptures with her from the *Tanach* that spoke of Yeshua being sacrificed for us (Isaiah 53) and that God would give us a New Covenant and forgive our sins (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Before we left we told her of two Messianic congregations in the area that she could go to and check out for herself. Ruti also gave her testimony and told Adar how real Yeshua was. Please lift Adar up to Yeshua for her to come to know Him. With Passover coming up the Lord had impressed upon me that it would be a time of death to self on a deeper level:

‘Therefore, prepare your minds for action! Discipline yourselves and set all your hope on the grace that Yeshua the Messiah will bring you when He is revealed. Like obedient sons, do not be conformed to the desires that you formerly had in

### *Adar the Waitress*

ignorance. Instead, as He who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct.’ (1st Peter 1:13-15)

Passover is all about dying to self, that Yeshua might live more fully in and through us. As John the Immerser (Baptist) said, ‘I’m not worthy to loosen His sandals.’ Who are we that the Creator Son came and died for us? It’s truly about God’s love for us and our response to Him. In knowing *that* love there isn’t anything we wouldn’t do for our Lord. The only place on this planet to be—is lost in His love. Out of this comes the Fountain of Living Waters for us and for others.

The traditional Jewish community, as well as the so-called Messianic community, don’t keep Passover according to God’s Word, which entails the sighting of the new moon for the correct date for Passover (and all the other Feasts). For those of you who are struggling with whether to keep Passover according to the traditional Messianic community, or to keep it according to God’s Word, I want to say, ‘We’re not to bend God’s Word to our ways, but to bend our ways to God’s Word. We are called to follow the Master in all areas of our life. Dying to self is the core of it and as we do we are enabled to follow Yeshua who is God’s Truth. He would not have kept His Father’s Passover on the wrong date.’<sup>114</sup>

We are called to be examples of the Living Messiah, for ourselves, our family and for all those around us. It’s better to keep Passover on the right date with just Yeshua than to keep it with a thousand people on the wrong date. This Scripture from Jeremiah certainly speaks of this:

“Therefore, thus says Yahveh! ‘If you return, then I will bring you back. You will stand before Me. If you take out the precious from the vile, you shall speak for Me. Let them return to you, *but you must not return to them.*’” (Jeremiah 15:19)

In other words, we’re not to follow the Rabbis in their perversions,<sup>115</sup> nor the Church in hers. We’re to follow the Risen Lamb of God and His Word. Isn’t that what this is all about?

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<sup>114</sup> See the Holy Days Calendar at <http://seedofabraham.net/2016-Holy-Days-Calendar.pdf> for the biblical dates for the Feasts of Israel. Also, the Karaites are wrong in their use of the barley in the ‘abib’ stage to determine when the biblical year begins. See *Barley in Aviv and the Ten Plagues* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Barley-in-Aviv-and-the-Ten-Plagues.pdf>.

<sup>115</sup> See *Do as the Pharisees Say? Matthew 23:2-3* at <http://www.seedofabraham.net/Do-as-the-Pharisees-Say.pdf> for why we’re not to follow the Rabbis.

## DAVID AND BATYA

On Thursday, June 26th, 2008 Ruti and I went into Jerusalem to do a favor for a friend, and in the process we met David & Batya ('daughter of Yahveh') and were able to witness to them in their apartment. An older couple in their late 60s, they both had come to Israel from Iraq in 1950.

After speaking with them for a few minutes, Batya commented that she felt she could trust us. It was the Lord. We hadn't had the opportunity to speak of Messiah Yeshua yet, but were looking for an opening to do so. One came after David spoke about how the greatest commandment was to love your neighbor as yourself (Lev. 19:18). I agreed.

Spring-boarding off of what the Apostle John said (1st John 4:20), I told them that anyone can say, and many do, that they love God (*Shema Israel!* Dt. 6:4-5) whom they haven't seen, but the proof of that love for God was if they loved their neighbors whom they had seen. David and Batya liked that.

Batya had been trained in a religious school when she was a young girl and her grandfather knew Torah (the first five books of the Bible) extremely well. Batya said that she could remember everything and while we were there I could tell that she was knowledgeable in the Word. They both liked us, our demeanor, and the way we dressed.

I told them that what they liked about Ruti and me had to do with the Messiah changing us to be more like Him:

'We have come to believe and to know the Messiah of Israel.  
His name is Yeshua from Nazareth.'

Batya jumped right in and said that she had seen some television program with Christians on it and they had done a lot of things like the Jews (e.g. they prayed to God *from the Psalms and sang Psalms*).

I asked them if they had a *Tanach* and Batya got it. I asked her to read Isaiah 53. Then I spoke of how the Messiah was to be a sacrifice for our sins. After that she read Jeremiah 31:31-34, which speaks of the New Covenant for Israel, and that God would take away our sins and we would all come to know God. I told them that this only happens through Messiah Yeshua.

After a while we went to Ezekiel 36:24-27 so they could see that God was going to bring us Jews back to the Land that He had given to us and sprinkle us with clean Water to take away our sins:

## *David and Batya*

‘With belief in Yeshua as Messiah, our sins are taken away and we are given the Holy Spirit to be able to know God our Father and His Son, our Messiah.’

I directed them to Psalm 118:22 to show them that even though we Jews have rejected Messiah Yeshua, God knew 3,000 years ago that we would reject Messiah. The *Builders* that the Psalm speaks of were the Jewish leadership in the *Sanhedrin*, and the Stone they rejected was the Messiah, but Yeshua would become the CornerStone of God’s new Temple for Israel.

Then we referenced Zechariah 6:12-13. It speaks of the Branch (a name for the Messiah from the days of Aaron the High Priest) who would be the one to build God’s Temple, both here in Israel for His thousand year reign, and also, in the New Jerusalem where God will truly be one with His people. Of course, the new Temple is made up of all who believe in Him.

We spoke with them for more than an hour about Messiah, from our own experience and from Scripture. They were touched by the Lord. When we left I gave them the Acts 2–4 handout as well as The Prophecy Card. The Holy Spirit had opened their hearts to the Word of *Life*. They invited us for dinner after they would return from going abroad to Australia. They wanted to know more about Messiah Yeshua.

Heading into the center of Jerusalem we went to The Village Green, the buffet type restaurant where one can get salad, potatoes, soup, lasagna and good bread, etc. We got our trays and went outside to sit. It was a beautiful day in Jerusalem and it was good to be alive in Messiah Yeshua.

While we were eating, a young woman came up to our table and asked,

‘Do you mind if I ask you a question?’

‘Of course not,’ I said.

‘Your clothes are beautiful, but why do you wear them?’

I told her they were designed and made by my wife Ruti, and I introduced her to Ruti. I explained that I wore the clothes for modestly, and also, to be able to wear the *tzit’ziot* in a more biblical manner.

Alona was 21, pretty, with brown hair, and she told us that she was learning at a rabbinical school. I said it must be Reform, as the Orthodox don’t allow women to learn, but she said it was ‘new’ Orthodox. I asked her if they taught her anything about Messiah and she said, ‘No.’ I said, ‘We’re Jews who believe that Yeshua from Nazareth is the Messiah.’

## SAM THE ROCK THROWER

For the next several minutes I spoke of Yeshua from the *Tanach* and how Ruti and I had found *Life* in Him. Then her friend Ishka joined us. She was about Alona's age, pretty, with blond hair and she attended the same rabbinical school as Alona. Ishka was a little more aggressive, with questions like 'How could God have a Son?' I said,

“Haven't you read Psalm Two, where God says that He will place His Messiah on Mt. Zion (vv. 2, 6), and then Messiah says that God said to him, 'You are My Son. Today I have begotten you'? (v. 7) To beget someone is to have them made in the same image and nature as the one who begot them.”

I explained how Adam was created first and then from Adam came Eve. Adam and Eve had been 'one,' so to speak, and then God made them 'two.' When they would come together they had children in their own image and likeness. They *begot* those children who all shared the same human nature as they did. So it is with Messiah, the only begotten Son of God. He has the same nature as His Father (deity).

Yeshua is the *Light* that appeared on the first day of Creation. Ishka didn't understand that and so I said that even the Rabbis taught that Messiah existed before Creation. Then I asked her,

‘What *light* was made on the first day of Creation, Ishka? It can't be the light of the sun or the moon or the stars because they're not created until day four.’

She didn't know. I told her,

‘Ask your rabbi. He'll tell you that it was the *Light* of Messiah. If this is so, and it is, how can Messiah be the *Son* of David, if Messiah existed *before* David?’

Of course, she didn't know that, either, but it went far enough to show her that the Jewish Messiah had existed before the world was created and was God's Son. Then I continued with Psalm Two and Isaiah:

“God *begot* the Messiah, who is one with His Father and therefore, deity. This is what Isaiah 7:14 spoke of when he stated that an *almah*, a young woman who had never known a man, would conceive a son and His name would be *Immanuel*, 'God with us.'”<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Many people don't understand this name or designation for Messiah and say that

## *David and Batya*

I gave them both The Prophecy Card and Jewish Newsletter 33: *Has Messiah Come?* which speaks of when the Messiah would have to come to Israel (before the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD).<sup>117</sup>

They returned to their table and we continued to eat, but the Lord led me after a while to go over to their table and say to Alona,

‘Don’t be afraid, Alona. Yeshua really is our Messiah. Ask God about Him. He will show you.’

I had sensed that Alona was feeling the pull of what it would be like to consider Yeshua as the Messiah and how the traditional Jewish community would react against her. The Lord knew that and sent me over to her table to encourage her to find the Truth about her Lord and Savior.

Would you please pray for David and Batya, and Alona and Ishka? Pray that our Father would draw them into the Kingdom of His Son and fill them with His Spirit of *Life*. They are Jews who need the *Life* that only Messiah Yeshua can give them. Thanks!

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He was called Yeshua (Jesus), but not *Immanuel*. I refer them to Isaiah 9:6 where the same prophet says that Messiah’s name would also be Wonderful! Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace.

The *Tanach* speaks of the Messiah in many terms or ‘names’ such as ‘the Branch’ (Zech. 3:8; 6:12-13, etc.) and the ancient Rabbis found or gave more than 20 different names to the Messiah (e.g. the Breach Breaker from his lineage from Perez, Gen. 38:29, whose name means to make a breach). This breach breaking Messiah would make a breach for His Flock, Israel, into Heaven itself (Mic. 2:13). See *Kingdom Violence: Matthew 11:12* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Kingdom-Violence.pdf>.

After Yeshua had raised the widow of Nain’s son from the dead (Luke 7:11-16), the Jewish crowd marveled and said, “God has *visited* His people!” In other words, ***God is with us*** (in Yeshua of Nazareth), and hence, the designation or ‘name’ Immanuel for Yeshua.

<sup>117</sup> See *The Prophecy Card* at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Prophecy-Card.pdf>.

See *Has the Messiah Come?* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Has-Messiah-Come.pdf>.

## *The Way of Redemption*

On Thursday, Jan. 17th, 2008 in my morning prayer time in Ramat Gan, Israel, the Lord led me to see if I could find my second born son, Yoel (21 years old) on a Google search using the name that his mother had given him after she had taken him. A few years earlier I had tried to do that with my firstborn Zavdi, but I hadn't come up with anything because the name she had given him (Chris) was too common. With Yoel, which she changed to Joel though, I found the university he was attending and an email address for him. I emailed him saying that I was his father, that Yeshua had led me to search for him, that I loved him very much, and I hoped we could begin a relationship, if he was wanting to. Nothing came back to me for two days and I was disappointed. Another two days and still nothing. I thought that perhaps the Lord might use it as a seed in his life for the future.

Just before I went to bed on Tuesday night, Jan. 22nd, I checked my emails and his name was there. At first I didn't recognize it because generally emails to me are either from people I know, and so I quickly recognize the name, or from people who are writing to me for the first time, whose names I'm not familiar with. This name though, struck me as both familiar and yet unrecognizable—and then it came crashing down upon me—it was Yoel! Of course, he was using the name that his mother had changed it to. That's why I hadn't recognized it at first, but 'knew it.'

I immediately called to Ruti who was only a few feet away in the hall. She came and I told her it was from Yoel. The look of shock mingled with hope was on her face. I opened the email and as my eyes fell upon his greeting my heart melted. He began 'Dear Father' and I knew he wasn't going to reject me. I couldn't believe it for joy! I was stunned. Ruti began to weep as I read of his desire to get to know me through email, as he was entering the spring semester of his junior year at the university and he had 'a load of new responsibilities.' I got up, hugged and held Ruti and we both wept together and thanked God for being so good to us. Ruti was weeping for joy.

Yoel had written saying that he 'welcomed anything' I might want to tell him. I responded to his email by sharing a number of things with him, including my love for him and *The Bear Story*.<sup>118</sup> Yoel was an honor student and he was also in ROTC for the U.S. Army. Upon graduation in May 2009 he would become a second lieutenant. He was 'top cadet' in his school and also a great runner with times at 6:48 a mile for a ten mile run and 6:14 a mile for a five

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<sup>118</sup> *The Bear Story* is found on p. 330f.

## *The Way of Redemption*

mile run. He would serve a year in Afghanistan.

After the first two emails we hit a wall. Emails went out on my end, but many were never responded to. I had asked Yoel to forward my emails to Zavdi (23 years old), but I would later learn from Zavdi that he hadn't done that. In one email back to me, Yoel gave me Zavdi's phone number. I had asked for it long before. By now it was late March and I called Zavdi and spoke to him for the first time in about 18 years (outside of the one time in the courtroom in Pennsylvania 11 years earlier). I shared my love for him and what I was doing in Israel and he told me that he remembered me teaching him Hebrew in the congregation in Tulsa when he was four years old. I was so glad. I asked him if he remembered any Hebrew and to my amazement he was able to recite much of the *Shema* (*Hear! Oh Israel! Dt. 6:4-5*) and most of the Hebrew alphabet—two things which I had taught him.

Zavdi had been sent to military school a few months after that day in court in October 1997. His grandparents didn't know how to deal with him and that's how he grew up—alone. After military school he went to college, but left in his last year. He had been given some wrong information about transferring into another college and it left him in the lurch. He was out about a year now and was working odd jobs. Zavdi had been captain of most of the basketball teams that he had played on and loved to play sports. Both Zavdi and Yoel were five foot ten inches tall (1.8 m), three inches taller than me (7.5 cm), which was very interesting. I told them my brother and I were three inches taller than our father. I also said that I wanted to bring Yoel and him over to Israel in the summer so that we could get to know one another again. He liked that idea. I also asked him for his email address. It was a little strange and so I questioned him about it. He told me that he was into fantasy books and games and that part of his email address was the name of a famous fantasy character.

My idea of fantasy books was *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* by Jules Verne, but I would come to find out that I didn't know what 21st century 'fantasy' was all about. When I looked up Zavdi's 'famous fantasy character' on a Google search I came face to face with a picture and a character description that couldn't have reflected Satan any better. I was shocked. I shared my finding with Ruti and she said the Lord had been impressing her that we were in a battle for their souls.

I later came to find out their mother had given Zavdi *Dungeons and Dragons* when he was seven years old. Yoel was five. They grew up with that and branched out to other 'fantasy' games and books.<sup>119</sup> I later confronted Zavdi about these 'fantasy' things, telling him it was of Satan, and gave him articles

## SAM THE ROCK THROWER

from the Internet, via email, where former warlocks and witches, who now walked with Jesus, confirmed that these things were of Satan, but he was too enslaved to them to hear it. He defended his position by saying that they were just games where one met friends and had a good time and that he could distinguish between truth and fiction.

After that first phone conversation in March I wrote everyone on my email list, sharing my joy, that I had made contact with my sons and that I was looking to bring them over in the summer. I mentioned nothing about not having any money to do it with. I've learned to take all my financial needs to Yeshua. I was trusting in Him, who had orchestrated all of this so far, that He was also able to bring in the finances that I would need.

Much to my surprise, within half an hour of having sent out the email, a man in Indonesia who had come to know me through my web site about a year and a half earlier, and who had been calling me *Abba* for about a year, wrote back and said, 'Abba, I would like to pay for Zavdi and Yoel's plane tickets.' Of course I was overwhelmed and so very grateful. I emailed Hans back and told him so. It was such a divine gesture of love.

In our second phone conversation in late April, Zavdi may have read *Law 102* on my site (he couldn't remember which article it had been) and he told me that his faith in Jesus had come back to *Life*. Zavdi had an experience with the Lord at a summer camp when he was 12 years old and had come to believe in Jesus. The Lord, by His Spirit, had come to him and he felt such peace, and now, it had been rekindled.

He said for about three years in college he tried to follow Jesus with all his heart, but things began to go wrong. Now though, he said that his faith had come alive again. He also had seen a lot of the paganism in the Church and it turned him off. My hope, in him having a genuine walk with the Lord, was also rekindled.

In early April I shared with Zavdi and Yoel about Hans, their spiritual older brother in Indonesia, and what he was going to do for them in paying for their flight tickets. In May, wanting to nail down some dates for the flight tickets, I was speaking with Yoel over the phone and he told me that he was feeling uncomfortable with coming. He said,

'You're probably a very nice guy, but I've been told for years

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<sup>119</sup> *Dungeons and Dragons* is the 'Father' or Grandfather of all demonic fantasy games and books, and the precursor to *Harry Potter*.

### *The Way of Redemption*

that you weren't and I'm afraid that something might go wrong.'

I understood. I began to speak to Yoel of my love for him and of my deep loss, but before I could finish I broke down and began to cry and sob so hard that I couldn't continue speaking for a couple of moments. After I was able to talk I told Yoel I was sorry for crying like that. Yeshua used my tears though, to assure him that it would be safe for him to come. I wanted him to come over for at least a month, but due to his Army commitment he could only come for two weeks. He said,

'If it's alright with you that I come for only two weeks, I would like to do that.'

I told him, 'If I could see you for only two minutes it would be worth the price of the plane tickets. I'm very happy, Yoel. Happy, happy, happy!'

With all those 'happys' Yoel laughed. It was a good laugh. I also told him that I was really looking forward to hugging him.

Zavdi was another story. We locked horns over 'fantasy.' In the end, because Yoel wanted to come and didn't want to come alone, Zavdi agreed to my stipulation—he wouldn't bring any fantasy materials with him. His time that he could stay with Ruti and me was open-ended because he was only working odd jobs, and so, I wanted him to stay for the whole summer, but he said that he would stay for three weeks. They came to Israel on July 31st, 2008. They had been separated from their father for 19 years, five months and five days (about 7,100 days)—for me it was 7,100 eternities. Yoel left two weeks later on Aug. 14th and Zavdi left a week after that, on August 21st.

Ruti and I went to the airport to pick them up and when I saw them I hugged Yoel. Zavdi, who had been in back of Yoel, came alongside us and hugged the both of us. I introduced Ruti and we gave them each a rose and a little stuffed bear as welcoming gifts. We got into a taxi and headed back to Ramat Gan where Ruti had a special meal waiting for us.

We had paper posters up in many places of the apartment saying, 'Welcome Home Zavdi and Yoel!' We also had chocolates for them and their favorite ice cream. For the next few days I showed them pictures of when they were small and with me, shared my heart with them, gave them birth certificate documents, and also, a Bible and books that I had for them. When I had gone to court in 1997 I had a new Bible inscribed with their names on it and two books each for them. The books were *Hinds' Feet on High Places* by Hannah Hurnard and *A Tale of Three Kings* by Gene Edwards. Inside the books I had

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placed inscriptions for each of them and inside their Bibles I had placed a hundred dollar bill. At the court I was barred by the judge from giving them the books, but I gave them to the boys when they were here, eleven years later. I also gave each of them a large Israeli silver coin from the 1950s. They were commemorative coins and something I had gotten for them because of the redemptive significance it has for the son who finds the hidden *matza* at Passover.<sup>120</sup>

My deep longing to love them met with two young men who were guarded and indifferent to their father, whom they had been told all their lives was no good. This was brought home to me at the kitchen table on the second or third morning they were here. I was sharing my pain and loss of them over the years, saying it felt like a Grizzly bear was ripping my heart out each day. Yoel said that it sounded like Prometheus (the mythical figure who would have his liver taken out each day by an eagle). Zavdi quickly added that it wasn't Prometheus, but some other mythological character. I was shocked, hurt and saddened.

The next day, much to his credit, Yoel came up to me and said that he was sorry for mocking me. I told him that I loved him and that I would always love him and I gave him a hug. Yoel then said that because of all the things that had been said about me to him, he wasn't able to hug me back. I told him that I understood and would be praying that one day he would be able to hug me back.

Later that evening I wanted to have a Bible study with them and talk around that. I began, but it wasn't a few minutes later that Ruti noticed that Yoel was very tense, to the point of grinding his teeth. I stopped reading and asked Yoel about it and he told us that because he had been forced to go to church it was hard for him to deal with religion. One time, he told us, he had 'tried the Lord,' but he said that it just didn't come to him or work for him. He began to weep. We comforted him, and I didn't go back to the Bible reading.

Hans, the man who paid for their flights, would also send money to me so that I could do things with the boys while they were in Israel. I was grateful. Also, 'Bubbe,' a precious woman in Florida who had been praying for Zavdi and

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<sup>120</sup> *Matza* is unleavened bread that God commands Israel to eat for Passover and the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Ex. 12:1f.; etc.). A piece is hidden during the meal and the child who finds it is given a piece of silver because the 'hidden,' now found *matza* pictures the burial and resurrection of Yeshua, the *matza* or bread of Life. Silver is the biblical metal of redemption (Ex. 30:11-16).

### *The Way of Redemption*

Yoel for years, counting them along with hers, sent me \$1,000 so I could have funds for when they were here. Again, I was very grateful. God was meeting our needs.

With all those funds I rented a car and the four of us headed down to Eilat to see the Tabernacle of Moses in Timna Park, and also to meet Shuli, Ofira, Sagit and Zoli. We stayed at a kibbutz outside of Eilat, which was right next to where the Tabernacle was. We saw it first and the boys appreciated it. Then we went to Eilat and picked up Ofira and we went to the Oceanarium. Ofira had worked there previously and was able to get us some discounted tickets. After that we visited Shuli, with Ofira and Sagit and her husband Ilan. I ordered some pizzas for everyone and we got to know one another. The highlight of our time in Eilat though, was Zoli.

In the evening we took Zoli out to eat with us and he related to Zavdi and Yoel from his heart. He spoke of their need to put Yeshua first in their lives, and also, of how much I loved them and wanted to have a relationship with them. The boys were impressed with Zoli. He's not only an exceptional body builder, but also a world class martial artist, but he told the boys that because of Yeshua he had given up martial arts. He said that it wasn't the Way in Yeshua's Kingdom. They were very impressed and so was I.

Returning to the kibbutz that night I told Zavdi and Yoel that this was the kind of life that Ruti and I led. Because of Yeshua we invest our lives in the lives of other people. I said that I thought this was the most worthwhile thing that anyone could do with his life. I had already told them how Ruti and I had come to know Zoli, Shuli and Ofira. Zavdi told us that he had really been listening and thinking about what I had said. I think Yoel had really been listening, too.

One week was over and we were back home on Thursday for *Shabat*. On Sunday we would go into Jerusalem and meet Hans and his wife Happy at the hotel that Hans had paid for, for all of us to stay in for a few days. Hans and Happy had previously wanted to come to Israel in September or October, but when the boys came on the horizon, Hans (34 years old) wanted to come to Israel in August so he could meet his 'brothers.' He and Happy would stay for a week, with Yoel leaving in four days. Yoel would tell Ruti and me, two days before he left, that the time had flown by so quickly and that he wished he could have stayed longer. He did have commitments though and he needed to return.

On Monday we went into the Old City and then to the Wailing Wall at the Temple Mount. I took some pictures of the boys at the Wall. Then we went into the Archeological Park next to the Wall. It was a good 'tour day,' but not

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much transpired relationally.

Coming into the Old City that day via Jaffa Gate I witnessed to three Arab men about Yeshua. It was a powerful time that ended with me saying that I loved them, something that caught them off guard, but something that really affected one of them. We would take two of them up on their van service.

The next day we went to Ein Gedi and Masada by the Salt Sea (Dead Sea). On Wednesday we made the mistake of using them to go to the Sea of Galilee. Their van had broken down on Tuesday at Ein Gedi (overheated). I asked Ibrahim (Arab for Abraham) on Tuesday night to get us another van for Wednesday, but he showed up with the same one. He told me that it was fixed. I should have declined to go all the way up to the Sea of Galilee in it, but I didn't. The van broke down twice. We had wanted to ride in the Jesus Boat on the Sea of Galilee, but it was being repaired. By the time we got done with lunch it was 3:30 PM. It had taken us several hours to get to the Sea, which normally was a two hour drive. When we passed through an Israeli check point, because we had two Arab men in the front, they told us to park the van off the road and that everyone was to get out of the van. They checked everything in the van, using a dog that could detect bombs and they asked us to take everything out that was ours and they put it through an X-ray machine. This took about 40 minutes.

After lunch we headed toward the Golan Winery in the Golan Heights. This was something Zavdi and Yoel had wanted to do, having been told by some friends about it back in Pennsylvania. On the way to the winery the van broke down. It was August and it was hot and so were we. It had been a mistake trying to go to the Sea of Galilee from Jerusalem on a one day excursion because it's more than 100 miles (160 k) one way and we traveled all that time in an old, cramped van, with little to no air conditioning.

The next day, Thursday, we saw Yoel off at the airport. It was much too quick for me after 19 years without him, but I was grateful for the time. On Sunday Hans and Happy left and that left Zavdi with us for four days. Zavdi and I had some good conversations, but we didn't have a breakthrough toward a genuine relationship. One time though, I prayed for him and put my hand on his forehead, asking Yeshua to immerse him in His Spirit. Zavdi spoke of his hands becoming very hot, like fire. He couldn't believe how hot they were and prayer quickly ended. He was very excited though, and spoke about doing some religious things with his life, but I would find out the next day that those religious things would start when he was done doing what *he* wanted to do with his life.

## *The Way of Redemption*

When they were gone I was emotionally exhausted. My heart, with all my being, longed for a father-son relationship with them, but they weren't spiritually or emotionally ready. I had wanted so much for us to reunite and love one another, but I was blind to their deep need, and I sinned a number of times against them in my pride and ignorance. I wanted them to see me as someone to look up to, to help them, and I forced the issue. Sometimes my attitude, to my own shock, was 'Look at me and all that I've done with the Lord! Don't you value that?!' Of course, they couldn't, and not the least of which was because I was speaking out of my own carnal heart.

So I was dealing with all of that now, and them not being with me, after being with them for such a short time. I was hurting. It was hard for me not to think about how empty our relationships were, and in hindsight, what I might have done differently 'if I could have done it all over again.' This went around in endless circles for me and only made me yearn more for them. I struggled for five months with our lack of relationship. Oh yes, I was in contact with them now, sporadically through email, but there was no real relationship and it was painful for me.

Then, on *Shabat*, Jan. 24th, 2009 I was reading in 2nd Kings about Elijah being taken into Heaven and he said to Elisha, 'Ask! What may I do for you before I am taken away?!' (2nd Kgs. 2:9) Elisha asked for a double portion of Elijah's spirit and the rest is history. I love coming to places like that (e.g. 1st Kgs. 3:4-9; Luke 18:35-43). I stopped and asked myself, if the Lord were standing here in my room and asked me that, what would I answer? Invariably, I always say the same thing: I want to be like You, Yeshua, and so I said that, and when I did the Lord opened up His paradigm to me about the situation with my sons, and I had His shalom (His peace).

Yeshua showed me that like Jacob, who would *become* Israel through much suffering (the loss of his beloved wife Rachel and his son Joseph), that my character/nature would continue to be purged and refined in the *furnace of affliction* so that I could become more like Him. This was an internal paradigm, one that I was familiar with, but had forgotten. Yeshua helped me to cope with the reality of what had transpired with my sons and who I really am.

On the following *Shabat*, January 31st, 2009, while singing praises to Yeshua about His faithfulness, I began to cry. Many tears streamed down my cheeks. More pain was coming out of my heart, and in bitterness I cried out:

*'After 20 years—and this?! Has all my life been in vain?!  
Have all my pain and prayers been for naught?!'*

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In that moment though I saw *my own selfishness and unfaithfulness* to Yeshua in thinking and saying those things. Yes, they were real and that was who I was, but when I realized it I was saddened, and then Yeshua ‘came in to’ my belly, to my pain, and He took the pain away. His Presence was there with me and I had His peace as I continued to cry, but now, out of gratefulness to my Lord for His help in overcoming my grief and causing me to see my sin and ingratitude, and to know His great love and forgiveness. I felt so clean. I felt His comfort and strength ‘to go on,’ and to be able to deal with Zavdi and Yoel in a more godly way.

One day, I believe with all my heart, that Zavdi, Yoel, Ruti and I will have that relationship in Yeshua. This is not ‘the end;’ it’s a beginning. I believe they will fall in love with Yeshua, give their lives to Him and be healed by Him, and come to live and work with Ruti and me in Israel in the ministry of reaching out to our Jewish people with Messiah Yeshua.

Yoel means ‘Yahveh is God!,’ in any and *every* adverse situation that we might find ourselves in. Is there *anything* too hard for our God to do?! Nothing that I know of! (Jeremiah 32:1-44; Ezekiel 37:1-14)

Thank you for your prayers for my sons, Zavdi and Yoel, and for Ruti and me. May the Lord bless you, and draw you closer to Him than you’ve ever been. *He* is the Blessing!

“Though the fig tree may not blossom nor fruit be on the vines; though the labor of the olive may fail and the fields yield no food; though the flock may be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls—yet I will rejoice in Yahveh! I will rejoice in the God of my salvation!”  
(Habakkuk 3:17-18)

## SARAH'S DAUGHTER ORA

About a month after Zavdi and Yoel had left, on Sunday, Sept. 21st, 2008 Ruti and I headed into Jerusalem to see Ora (feminine for light). We had prayed that our time with her would be fruitful for the Kingdom and also that the Lord would use us before we would meet her at 7:00 PM. Ora was the 53 year old daughter of Sarah and Daniel Moses, our first neighbors in Jerusalem in June 1995. Ruti and I didn't know anyone nor anything about Israel then and they were always there to help us. Sarah would prepare food for her son Rafi (short for Raphael; God the healer) and his family, and Ora and her family, on Thursday and Friday for the Sabbath, and Sarah would always send a sampling over to her new neighbors from the United States, Avram and Ruti.

We left Israel in June 1997 after having been there for two years, and would return in January 1999 after spending a year and a half in the States. We miraculously hooked up with Daniel and Sarah when we came back. They had moved and we didn't know where, but one day, while in a cab in Jerusalem, we spotted Daniel on the street. I told the cabbie to stop. We got Daniel's phone number and address and went to see them a few days later. They had moved to north Jerusalem.

In the year 2000 Daniel suffered a massive stroke, which adversely affected his mind and left him bed ridden. He couldn't remember anything; his name, his wife or his children. Sarah didn't want to send him to a nursing home because she loved him, and so she took it upon herself to care for him, using someone from a nursing agency to care for Daniel's physical needs. Sarah was in her late 70s by then and Daniel was 80. Sarah was struggling financially with rent and basics, and now, with the extra care for Daniel, it made it extremely hard for her, even with her children helping as best they could. Ruti and I felt the Lord's leading to help her financially with \$500 or more every month.

Five years later Daniel died on January 12th, 2005. Ruti and I continued to help Sarah financially, sharing Yeshua and His Love with her on many occasions, but about two years later, on Dec. 27th, 2007 Sarah died, in her pride and stubbornness. Although very appreciative of our financial help, to our deep sorrow, she never asked Yeshua to be her Messiah.

In those years we met her two children and their spouses, and her four grandchildren, and we sensed that the love and money sown into Sarah and Daniel's life would effect their children and grandchildren for the Lord. We had been

## SAM THE ROCK THROWER

faithful every month for many years in helping Sarah. Now Ora, Sarah and Daniel's divorced daughter, wanted to meet with us in Jerusalem at Cafe Rimon at 7 PM. She wanted to get to know us better.

We got to *ben Yehuda* pedestrian mall in Jerusalem about 3 PM and headed over to a place that made fresh fruit and vegetable juices. Ruti got a fruit juice—orange, pineapple and pear juice. I got a carrot juice with two apples and some parsley. We sat down on one of the benches nearby, thanked Yeshua for the juice and the seats, began to drink and soaked up the September Jerusalem sun.

As we were sitting there *bat Sheva* (Bathsheba; daughter of the oath) sat down on a chair near us. She had made the juices for us and she was on a break. Her husband and she owned the juice bar. After some conversation about where we lived I told her that we were Jews who had come to believe in Yeshua and that we had found *Life* and forgiveness of sins in Him.

We spoke with her for 20 minutes and before she left we gave her the Hebrew handout of Acts 2–4. She began to read it and asked about the Holy Spirit. I said that God had promised us Jews His Spirit more than 2,500 years ago through Ezekiel (36:24-27) and that in the name of Messiah Yeshua we were given His Spirit. It was by the Holy Spirit, I told her, 'that we come to truly know our God and the *Life* that He gives us in Messiah Yeshua.'

Ruti and I continued to sit on the bench after *bat Sheva* left, praying that the Lord would open her eyes to Him. After a while the sun was beginning to get hot on our faces and so we got up and sat on a bench that was facing away from the sun. We were there for awhile when a woman came from my left and exclaimed with great joy, 'Yes! It's you!'

I didn't immediately recognize Esther. We had met her more than a year earlier on July 5th, 2007 at a mall in Tel Aviv. Originally from the States, her husband had left her and she was raising their five children. She was trying to care for them and was living in the house of another family that had six children, neither of which had much money.

Esther had been in the Tel Aviv mall in July 2007 asking for money. Her friend, who had dropped her off there that day, had told her there wasn't much money to be had in Jerusalem. I asked the Lord if, and how much, He might want us to give her. I sensed that her need was genuine and I got '200 shekels' (about \$50). Most of the time I confer with Ruti about these things, so after Esther had finished telling us her story, I asked Ruti. She had gotten 200 shekels also, so I took the note out of my wallet and gave it to Ruti to give to

## *Sarah's Daughter Ora*

Esther.

Esther was so grateful and under such a heavy burden that she broke down and cried, hugging Ruti and thanking us for the funds. She didn't have any money for food for her children. We asked her if she wanted something to eat, and that we would pay for it, but she said she was OK. She consented to a fruit juice though, as we were right next to the food court, and also got one for ourselves. We spoke to her about faith in God and that He would provide for her. She was refreshed. I gave her The Prophecy Card and we parted. Ruti and I had prayed for her ever since.

Now, Esther was standing in front of us in Jerusalem, beaming with joy for what we had done for her last year and thanking us for it. She told us that she had gone home and bought eggs and bread and other things for her children and that our talking to her about faith in God had really encouraged her.

She spoke of us being like angels sent from God to help her. I told her that it was only two or three days earlier that I had been praying for her. She was surprised and grateful. She told us that since that time she had found a part time job and was able to pick up bread at a certain location, once a week, which she stored in her freezer so that she would have bread to make sandwiches with for her children to take to school. Esther had also found a restaurant that, in the evening, gave away food they had prepared during the day that they couldn't keep for the next day, and so she was able to use that to feed her family, too.

She was still asking people for money, but she said that most didn't give her anything and that sometimes she would get the third degree from some of them to see if she was legitimately in need, but this embarrassed her. Ruti told her that we understood and that we were glad the Lord had been providing for her.

Esther said that she was in a much better place than last year and was so grateful for our financial help, as well as speaking with her about trusting God. She said that when we had met she was on the brink of not knowing what to do—it was truly a crises situation emotionally, but our speaking with her about faith in God had helped her tremendously.

I asked her if she had checked out the prophecies on Messiah that we had given her at the Tel Aviv mall, but she hadn't. She had given it to her children. I took out the Jewish Newsletter, *Has Messiah Come?*, and gave it to her, saying that we had found *Life* in Messiah and that she could read about Him in the paper.

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Esther thanked us again and I gave her 100 shekels, sensing the amount from the Lord, and also thinking that Ruti was getting the same thing. Esther was very grateful. She didn't want to take it because of the help that we had previously given her, but I said it was the *least* that we could do. I wish I could have given her much, much more.

Esther told us that Sundays were a hard day to beg for money as most people had spent a lot on the Sabbath and didn't have much left to give. She really had to be on the streets a long time just to get just a handful of change. I said that here it was, Sunday afternoon, and she had already gotten a nice little gift (from us) and 'may the Lord continue to bless you.' She smiled, Ruti and she hugged, and as she left she continued looking back every now and then to wave and smile at us.

Ruti and I were thankful to the Lord for being able to meet her again, to give her some funds and to witness to her. We're looking forward to her either calling us (as my number is on the handouts) or meeting up with her again...in His time.<sup>121</sup>

We sat on the bench for a while and then got up to go further down *ben Yehuda* Street to *Moshiko's* and get a *falafel*. We were a little hungry and still had more than two hours to meet Ora. We split a *falafel*, and sitting at a table outside we watched the people go up and down *ben Yehuda*, the street of the Messiah.

After a while we left *Moshiko's* to get a small plant of African violets for Ora, and also, a large piece of chocolate cake, as a gift. Over the years we had only met Ora a few times and this would be the first time since her mother Sarah had died in December 2007, nine months earlier.

We went into the flower shop next to *Moshiko's* and bought a nice plant. I had previously witnessed to both the owner and his female helper, a year before. Neither one of them were interested in finding out more about Yeshua then or now, especially the woman. She met me with a frown on her face. She wrapped the plant up with a pretty bow and we took it. We then went to a bakery and bought some chocolate cake and headed off to Cafe Rimon next to *ben Yehuda* Street to meet Ora.

Ora was glad to see us. She loved the plant, saying it was her favorite, and we

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<sup>121</sup> In August 2009 Ruti would meet Esther again in Jerusalem, with the outcome of their meeting being that Esther was now more determined than ever to read about Yeshua.

### *Sarah's Daughter Ora*

all agreed that the chocolate cake looked delicious. Ora had come with a gift for us, too. She gave us a *beautiful*, delicate, ceramic pomegranate, deep burgundy in color. It was a very special gift, and Ruti shared with Ora that many years ago she made ceramic pots and things.

Ora said that she, as well as all the family, were so very grateful for all the financial help that we had given to her parents. She said that we were 'family.' Ora told us that she missed her mother, especially at times like this, with the holy days coming up. She said that she would bake things in the kitchen with Sarah and they would prepare for all the family to come.

Ora then told us that about 40 years earlier, when she was 15, she would come to Cafe Rimon with her girl friends to drink some coffee and 'to hang out.' Where had the time gone? Now Ora had a grown daughter and a son who was married last year.

Ruti asked Ora if her mother had ever shared with her about our faith. Ora said that she hadn't. In all that time Sarah had never once mentioned to Ora that we believed in Yeshua. I had thought about that possibility.

Ora said that she loved to read through the Psalms and make a wish at the end. A wish?, I asked. 'Yes,' she said. The Rabbis tell the Jewish people that when they read through the entire book of Psalms that they are *entitled* to make a wish and God will hear it. Such rabbinic garbage!, but I didn't say anything to Ora, yet.

Ora told us that she had just recently finished reading the Psalms and she wished to God that her 32 year old daughter, who is a teacher in a public school in another city of Israel, would get married. I told her that I had been praying that for Dona, too. Ora appreciated that.

Ruti told Ora that we believed in Yeshua of Nazareth. Ruti began to explain who He was. I could see it was a little strange for Ora, so I asked her, 'What must we do to get to Heaven?'

Ora told us that she had studied Kabbalah for five years and one day she asked the Rabbi that question. I didn't say anything about Kabbalah being Jewish witchcraft because I was more intent on bringing Messiah to her than digressing into Kabbalah.

Ora said the Rabbi told her, 'We must prepare for the Messiah.'

Ora asked, 'What does that mean?'

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He said, 'We need to keep all the commandments of Moses.'

Ora said, 'What are you saying?! No one can do that! Are you saying that Messiah won't ever come?!'

He assured her that the Messiah would come and that we were to do all that we could, even if we couldn't keep them all. I told Ora,

'God never says that if we keep His commandments the Messiah will come or that God will give us eternal *Life*, and as you mentioned, it's impossible to keep them all. What most of the Rabbis say is that if our good deeds (seen as the doing of God's commandments and statutes, etc.) outweigh our bad deeds, even by just one, then God will let us into Heaven, but the problem with this is that God doesn't say this is the way to Heaven. Also, no one knows how many good deeds or evil deeds they have done. It's quite a vicious bondage the Rabbis place us under.'

Ora agreed. I asked her, 'Why did Father Abraham offer up his son Isaac?' Ora told us this was her favorite passage. I was glad the Lord had led me to ask her that. Surprisingly though, Ora emphasized that Isaac was the *only* son in God's eyes, as the word is usually translated like that even in English. That seemed to be the reason why she liked the passage so much because it negated Ishmael being a son of Abraham. The passage states that God said to Abraham,

'Take your son, your *only* son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah and sacrifice him there as a burnt sacrifice on one of the mountains that I will show you.' (Genesis 22:2)

The Hebrew text though, doesn't negate Ishmael as Abraham's son—it emphasizes the *uniqueness* of Isaac. A better translation of the text would be, 'Take your son, your *unique* one, Isaac.' Isaac was unique in that Sarah was far too old to have any children *and* she had been barren all her life. She had never given birth to any children, but God *miraculously* caused her to have Isaac. *That* was the *uniqueness* of Isaac, him also being called the son of promise, in that God had promised them a son a year before she would give birth to Isaac. Isaac was miraculously conceived in the womb of Sarah, having been promised to Abraham and Sarah beforehand (Gen. 17:15-22; 18:1-15). As such, he was the son of promise who prefigured the miraculous conception of Yeshua the Messiah, *the* uniquely begotten Son of Promise, in the virgin

## *Sarah's Daughter Ora*

womb of Mary.

We are all sons and daughters of God by the creation of Adam and Eve, who then *begot* all their children, down to and including us, but Yeshua is the *uniquely begotten* Son in that He was God the Son before time began (Psalm 110:1; Is. 7:14; 9:6; Micah 5:2).<sup>122</sup> In John 1:18 the Apostle spins off of Isaac's uniqueness and declares that Yeshua is the 'only *uniquely begotten* Son of God,' as a better translation would have it. Just as we share the same human nature as our First Parents, so Yeshua shares the same divine nature as His Father and the Holy Spirit.

Ruti picked up on my having said that nothing was impossible for God and she told Ora that Yeshua had healed her of a very destructive ganglion cyst 25 years earlier. The doctors had told her it had 'to be operated on.' One day though, before any operation, while Ruti was sitting at a table with her hands under it, there was a burning sensation on her right wrist. Immediately she lifted her hand up and saw a *fingerprint* where the cyst *had been*. The cyst was gone! A few seconds later the fingerprint disappeared. Yeshua had touched her and she was completely healed.

Ruti said to Ora that Yeshua was alive today and that even though we couldn't see Him, He still heals today. Ruti went on to share that when He was here in Israel He healed all our Jewish people that came to Him, even raising some from the dead.

I returned to Genesis 22 and said that Abraham and Isaac were a perfect picture of God our Father offering up His Son for our sins. Neither Abraham, nor Isaac, really wanted to do it, but Abraham, out of his great love for God, offered up Isaac, his uniquely begotten son whom he loved more than anything in this world.

Isaac, out of his great love for his father, allowed his father to bind him, and in that, he laid down his very life to the will of his father. God stopped the sacrifice at the last moment, but we can appreciate the sense of tremendous loss and pain that Abraham had felt, and also, the initial panic and fear that Isaac felt before he resolved to do the will of his father. I told Ora this was how God our Father felt in offering up His Son, our Messiah, and that He did it to show us how much He loves us and how far He and His unique Son were willing to

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<sup>122</sup> For Yeshua's miraculous conception see *Recognize This Man?* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Recognize-This-Man.pdf>. For the uniqueness of our Messiah see *Yeshua—God the Son* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Yeshua-God-the-Son.pdf>.

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go in order to bring us into an eternal relationship with them.

I shared more about how Ruti and I had both found forgiveness of sins and eternal *Life* in Messiah Yeshua and how the *Tanach* reveals a Messiah who would come and die for us so that we could be cleansed from our sins *and* filled with God's Holy Spirit (Is. 52:13–53:12; Ezk. 36:24-27; Zech. 12:10; 13:1). *This* was the Way that we could truly have a taste of eternal *Life* now, and be assured of eternal *Life* in the New Jerusalem because of what our Father and His Son have done for us.

I explained to Ora that we didn't have to work our way through the Psalms, nor do every commandment perfectly in order to be pleasing to God. We had to believe, like Father Abraham, in the impossible—Abraham, that God would give him a son through his 90 year old wife, and we, that Yeshua is our Messiah, God the Son, and that in His Name we have forgiveness of sin and eternal *Life*, and yes, we still keep all the commandments that apply to us, but not to gain eternal *Life*. We keep His commandments because we know God and love Him and want to please Him, and *this is the way that He has ordained* for us to walk out our faith in Messiah Yeshua.

We ate some food and talked more about Yeshua. Ruti had ordered some potatoes covered with melted cheese. I ordered a plate of spaghetti, which also came with some salad. I love spaghetti, even though I only have it about twice a year because the tomato sauce is caustic and the nutritional value is less than zero. Ora had ordered a ravioli dish with cheese inside the ravioli. It was all very tasty and the portions were quite large. Ruti said that if she had known there was going to be that many potatoes for her serving, she wouldn't have ordered it, even though she loved the way the potatoes, done with garlic, tasted. She had also ordered a salad, which was large, and that would have been enough for her.

'Messiah Yeshua' was all new to Ora and she was trying to digest Him, and us believing in Him, along with her food. When we parted I gave her the Acts 2–4 handout and The Prophecy Card. Ora suggested that we get together regularly, and Ruti and I were more than open to that.

Please keep Ora, Esther and *bat Sheva* in your prayers. One day, Ruti and I are wanting to pray with them to receive Yeshua as their Messiah, the *uniquely* begotten Son of God.

## DAVID AND HAIM

On Tuesday, Nov. 4th, 2008 Ruti and I took the bus into Jerusalem. It was a beautiful autumn day with the sun shining and temps in the low 70s (22 C). We were looking for some lost sheep. We were seeking to be about our Father's Business.

We called our friend Hannah and asked her if she wanted to meet us for lunch at The Village Green. As we waited for her at a table outside I spotted a little hole-in-the-wall eatery across the way that advertised 100% beef hamburgers. That was a rare find in Israel. Ruti and I got up and checked the place out. I had been looking to have some meat that day and it seemed like this might be the place. After we saw it Ruti agreed to try their burgers.

On our way back across the open space to The Village Green we saw a young man sitting on a low stone wall, eating what looked like an oversized bagel filled with some vegetables and cream cheese. As I passed by I said, '*Beh'tay ah'vone!*' (Good appetite!) and he looked up from his work and thanked me. I asked him if it was as good as it looked and he confirmed that it was. We asked him where he had gotten it from and he told us the name of the bakery and pointed to it across the street. It was 2 PM.

I asked him what he was doing in Israel. Was he was living here? He said that he was going to *yeshiva* in the Old City (a Jewish school of higher learning for indoctrination into Talmud) and that he didn't live in Israel, but in England. We talked some about Messiah and as we left I gave David (Hebrew for *beloved*) *Has Messiah Come?* (Jewish Newsletter 33). I told him that if he had any questions to give me a call.

As we left I thought how wonderful it might be if he brought the paper to class to discuss it with his teacher and classmates. May it be Your will Yeshua that he does that! May he be curious enough to want to find out what Judaism has to say about what's written concerning the time when Messiah would come. The angel Gabriel told Daniel that Messiah would come *before* the Temple was destroyed (Dan. 9:24-26). May the rabbinic answers that David gets from his teachers and friends only spur him on to seeking You, Yeshua.

We sat back down at the same table outside The Village Green. It was in the shade and it was a little cool, and as we waited for Hannah I thought of taking some pictures of Jaffa Road, the main east-west thoroughfare in Jerusalem. It was all ripped up and fenced off. A work crew was pouring liquid cement onto the torn-up road from a truck that was situated about 80 feet (25 m) up the

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road. The truck had a long funnel extension in the back of it that arched over the road to where some men, standing in fresh cement half-way up their boots, were holding onto the other end of the extension and pouring more cement. Jaffa Road was a mess. It's part of the construction for the new train system that the city said would be in operation for Jerusalem by the year 2010. It would become fully operational in December 2011.

I had taken my camera along with me that day because I 'wanted to play the tourist' and get some pictures. I took a number of them as they were pouring cement and then went a few paces over to the table where Ruti was sitting. The family next to us heard us talking in English and the father asked where we were from. I told him New York and Minnesota. In his British accent he asked me how long I was vacationing in Israel. He thought we were tourists : )

I told them we had been living in Israel for ten years, since January 1999 and that we had lived in Jerusalem for two years prior to that (1995-1997), but that now we were living in Ramat Gan. 'Oh...' he said.

The father and the mother lived in England, but their daughter Natalie was living in Jerusalem and going to *yeshiva*, but not the one that David had spoken of. We talked about Jewish names, as the name Natalie didn't sound very Jewish to me. It seems the father, (another) David, liked Natalie Wood (a famous Hollywood starlet; 1943-1981) and had named his daughter that, the mother said.

They asked what I did and I told them I taught people about God and Messiah. We spoke some more and when they left I gave them *Lion Hands* (Jewish Newsletter 25). It's about Psalm 22, the psalm that speaks of Someone being pierced in their hands and feet, which some Jewish scribe changed to read, 'Like a lion, my hands and my feet.'<sup>123</sup>

Still no Hannah, but a woman came over and stared at us and said, 'I know you two from somewhere.' Ruti and I knew immediately and said,

'Emunah! (Hebrew for faith) We lived for two years just across the way from you from 1995-1996. Your young children would come to our apartment and Ruti would read them stories from a Bible book and I would give them some 'banana nuts' to eat. They were *cashews*, but your little one, *Elimelech* (Hebrew for 'my God is King') called them banana

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<sup>123</sup> Read *Lion Hands* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Lion-Hands.pdf> to see how a scribe twisted the text to steer away from the picture of a crucified man.

## *David and Haim*

nuts because cashews are shaped like bananas!'

We all laughed and she remembered Avram and Ruti from 12 years before. Emunah was about our age, in her mid 50s. She had 14 children, with two sets of twins, lived in a hovel (a small, squalid and unpleasant dwelling) if ever there was one, and was married to a so-called rabbi of the Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach persuasion who, like his mentor, liked to kiss and embrace women upon greeting them, etc. (Touching members of the opposite sex is forbidden among Orthodox Jews, except for one's spouse, immediate family and grandparents.)

Emunah told us that her husband left her about seven years earlier and she had remarried, but was still living in the same place and the last set of twin girls (who were her last two children) were now almost 13 years old. We talked some more and I gave her 200 shekels (about \$52) for the twins, and also *Lion Hands*. We invited her to join us for lunch, but she had to go and prepare lunch for the twins and some other children. Ruti kissed her and from the joy that was all around us, Emunah went over to Hannah, and yes, Hannah had finally come in the middle of our time with Emunah and we had introduced them, and Emunah kissed Hannah and then left.

Now we were able to get out of the cool November air and go into The Village Green and have lunch. I didn't want to have anything, as we had planned on going to the burger place across the way and get some hamburgers after eating here. Ruti wanted some soup and a little salad. So Ruti and Hannah walked through the cafeteria line with their trays, taking as much or as little salad as they wanted on their plates, and Ruti got some split pea soup. I stayed at our table and watched their pocketbooks. Neither one had gotten a lot because we all wanted to try the new hamburger place. We sat and talked, renewing our friendship with Hannah, whom the Lord uses mightily in ministering to others, and Ruti gave me some of her split pea soup. It was tasty, but we both agreed that it was too thick, and I like it thick, but this was way too thick. It must have been on the stove for a long time. I had a few bits of salad and waited for the burger. We must have sat there and talked for an hour and a half. It was almost four o'clock when we left and moved across the way and met Haim (Hebrew for life), a 21 year old Jewish man from Canada who worked as the cook and cashier at the place that was smaller than most bathrooms in the States. We ordered 'the special' (burger, fries and a drink) and we saved a shekel. It was an Israeli special.

I noticed they had 'all beef franks,' another rarity in Israel, and so I got one, but wished I hadn't. Tasteless, it seemed like it was filled with mush, not meat.

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If it wasn't for the spicy mustard and the sauerkraut I wouldn't have finished it. Actually, if I had been wise, I wouldn't have finished it. The burgers and fries came and much to our delight, the burgers were pretty good, for Israel. The French fries were another story. Dripping and oozing with oil, the traditional Israeli way of serving what they call 'chips,' after the British term for French fries, we ate some until Ruti broke one in half and found the inside was black. Hannah and I did the same with ours, but they were alright. We called Haim, who had taken a seat outside so he could smoke, and showed him the prize fry. He made another fresh batch for Ruti, which weren't too bad, oil at no extra charge.

Haim, too, was also going to *yeshiva*. This was our third *yeshiva* student in three hours. After eating the burgers I spoke with Haim and asked him what he was learning at the *yeshiva*. *Smicha* (ordination to be a rabbi). 'Do you ever study about Messiah?' 'No,' he said. I told him,

'In the Name of the Messiah comes the promised Holy Spirit.  
Do you read the *Tanach*?

'Not much time for that,' was his reply.

'In the prophet Ezekiel, chapter 36, verses 24-27, God promises that He will give us His Holy Spirit, and in the Name of the Messiah, the Spirit comes to live in us and we have *Life* and joy from God.'

I spoke some more about Messiah, gave him *Lion Hands* and told him to call me if he had any questions. Then Hannah told him that God loved him, to which he said that he knew that, but she went on to say that she saw that he was both intelligent and sensitive, two qualities that one doesn't normally find together in the same person.

He liked that and asked her if she was a psychic. Hannah said that it was the Holy Spirit in her that was telling her about him. He asked for more and she asked if he wasn't having a problem with a girl? He said, 'I broke up with my girl friend yesterday.' Haim didn't have the money he needed to marry her, and as he had committed himself to his parents, that he would finish *yeshiva* before he got married, he broke up with her. We talked about that for a while and then Hannah shared more about how the Lord wanted to give him His Spirit. He was interested. As we left we could see that Haim had appreciated our conversation.

Ruti needed to pick up some cotton muslin (fabric) and Hannah knew a small place just up the road toward King George Street. We walked west on Jaffa

## *David and Haim*

Road and as we did we passed by The Village Green and the man who had cleaned our table off. He was sitting outside on a break. I went over to him and asked him if he was Spanish. Hannah, Ruti and I had thought that he was when we had been there. It turned out that he had been born in Israel, of Jews from Turkey, but had lived for many years in Miami where he said that you had to learn Spanish if you wanted to speak to the people. I also found out that this Haim was a believer (yes, two Davids and two Haims in one day).

As I began to speak with him about Yeshua he said not to speak too loudly because of the security guard who was only six feet (2 m) away. Haim didn't want him to know that he was a believer. Two minutes later Haim was gone and I began talking with Yosafe (Josef), the security guard, about Yeshua.

'*Ah'sore!*' (Forbidden!) Yosafe said. He didn't want to hear about Yeshua and had given me the rabbinic party line, but being a Jew myself, I continued to talk about the *Tanach* and how Yeshua is seen in a number of places, like Is. 53, where the prophet speaks of Messiah being a sacrifice for our sins, and Micah 5:2, which speaks of him being born in Bethlehem and having existed from eternity past, and then the clincher, Jer. 31:31-34, which speaks of God giving us Jews a New Covenant. Yosafe didn't buy any of it, but was alright with me speaking to him about it. We parted, him refusing to take any papers or The Prophecy Card from me, but as I told Hannah and Ruti, who had been talking to one another some twenty feet (6 m) away, waiting for me to return to them, the next time I went to The Village Green and Yosafe is the guard on duty there, I'll make sure 'to love on him' so the Holy Spirit can work on him. Who knows? He may be another Apostle Paul.

We moved up Jaffa Road, single file, because the sidewalk was only 'single file' wide with the construction going on, and eventually got to the fabric place. We purchased four meters (four yards) of cotton muslin and went around the corner to catch the city bus to get to the Central Bus Station where Ruti and I would get the bus back to Ramat Gan. We talked with Hannah at the bus stop and let a couple of 'sardine buses' go by (people stuffed into the buses like sardines in a can) and finally said our last 'Shaloms' to Hannah and got on a bus which had some seats.

At the Central Bus Station we went up to the level where all the buses leave from and I heard and smelled some fresh popcorn popping. I turned to Ruti and asked her if she wanted to get some. Ruti loves popcorn and so we got a bag and headed for our bus. We were the first to be on line for our bus, having just missed the last one to Ramat Gan by two minutes. It wasn't a big deal though, because they leave every twenty minutes. We sat down and munched

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on some popcorn. People started coming who also were going to get on the bus to Ramat Gan. We put the popcorn away for our time on the bus. One woman on crutches, about 75 years old with gray hair, sat down next to Ruti and we began to talk. She was originally a Jewess from Britain and said she had been injured (the crutches) fighting for Israel in the War of Independence (1948). We talked some more and she asked what I did. I told her I taught people about God and Messiah. Immediately she said that we shouldn't be in Israel because the Christians killed six million 'of us Jews' and we had no right to be in Israel. 'Go somewhere else!,' she angrily said to me.

I asked her for her name so I could call her that when I spoke with her, but she didn't want to give me it to me. I tried to talk to her about Yeshua really being our Messiah, bringing up Dt. 18:15-18, which speaks of God raising up a prophet like Moses, and Jer. 31:31-34, but she was very adamant in her 'strong belief,' as she called it. I asked her what she knew about Messiah and she said, 'that he will come.' I said, 'Is that all?,' and that was all. Not much different than millions of other Jews whose religion consists of a 'belief' in God without much, if any true knowledge about Him from the *Tanach*, but a strong stance against Jesus because of Christian anti-Semitism and persecution of the Jews for the last 1,900 years, which continues to this day. The bus came and we all got on. It was sad, but this is part of the reality we face. Thank You, Lord, that one day all Israel will believe in You, as the Apostle Paul wrote:

“For I do not want you brethren, to be uninformed of this *mystery*, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in, and then all Israel will be saved, as it is written, ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion. He will remove ungodliness from Jacob—and this is My covenant with them when I take away their sins.’ From the standpoint of the Good News they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God’s choice they are beloved for the sake of the Fathers, for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.” (Rom. 11:25-29)

Thank you for your prayers for both sets of Haims and Davids, Natalie and her mother, for Yosafe, and for that Jewish woman who refused to hear about her Messiah, and for Emunah! One day the Lord will pour out His Spirit upon all the Jewish people and they will come to Him in shock, sorrow and deep gratitude, not having realized that He was their Messiah.

## DIVINE BIRTHDAY PRESENTS

On Monday, May 11th, 2009 Ruti and I went to a mall in Tel Aviv to return a damaged product. It was about 5:00 PM and as we left their counter we walked slowly to the center of the mall and wondered what to do next. We could have gone back home, but we had just come to the mall and we didn't feel like immediately returning so we just stood by the railing in the center of the three story mall, talked and watched the people going up and down the escalators and walking past us.

Then we drifted over to a bench, sat for a while and talked some more. I got thirsty and asked Ruti if she wanted a fruit shake. She loves them, said yes and we walked to the food court where she got a banana, pineapple and strawberry fruit shake mixed with orange juice (no sugar added). I just wanted a bottle of mineral water. A pizza place was nearby and we walked down their buffet line and got a slice of pizza with corn niblets, green peppers, onions and black olives, along with a 'breaded something' that had dead spinach and mozzarella cheese inside it. I picked up a bottle of mineral water and we headed for a table.

We sat down in the food court, thanked the Lord for the little treat or 'nosh' as we Jews say and began to eat. We were about halfway done eating when two Israelis, about 25 years old, sat down at the table next to us. The taller one, Edan (*ee'dahn*), whose name means 'age' or 'era,' asked me about my biblical clothes : )

For the next three hours I spoke about Messiah Yeshua, and both Edan and Ya'ir (English; Jarius: 'he shall enlighten') listened and interacted with me. I shared with them things from The Prophecy Card like where the Messiah would be born and that got us into the Messiah being more than a man—God the Son (Micah 5:2; Ps. 110:1). Of course, Isaiah 53 came up and I told them that Messiah came to take our sins upon Himself so that we might be cleansed of them, giving us a new nature (Ezk. 36:24-27) and filling us with the Spirit of the Living God (Joel 2:28-29), which meant that we could really know our God. This in turn opened up the passage in Jer. 31:31-34 where God says that He would make a New Covenant with the House of Judah and the House of Israel, to take their sins away, which confirmed what Isaiah 53 had spoken of (the Suffering Servant dying in place of us; for our sins), as well as Zech. 12:10; 13:1, where it speaks of Israel looking upon the One whom *they pierced*, mourning for Him (the Messiah) as one mourns over the death of an only son, and then being cleansed from sin by a Fountain of Living Waters

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opened up for Judah.

From there we went to Isaac as the prototype for the Messiah, laying down his life willingly at his father's leading. I asked them how old Isaac was at that time and Ya'ir correctly said, 'Thirty-three.' Then I asked him how old would Abraham his father have been? That stumped the both of them. I said if Isaac was born when Abraham was one hundred years old (Gen. 17:1, 15-17, 19, 24; 21:1-5) then Abraham was 133 years old when he bound Isaac for sacrifice. I said it was a picture of what God our Father would do in sending His Son the Messiah to be a sacrifice for us so that our sins could be forgiven and we could be cleansed and given that new nature, filled with His Spirit and come to know Him. It was here, also, that I spoke of the love of God, in both sending His Son to die for us and the love of God we feel when the Holy Spirit comes into us.

We can begin to feel how Father Abraham felt when, for three days he believed he would have to sacrifice his beloved and uniquely begotten son (Gen. 22:4), and it wasn't until the knife was poised in his hand to kill Isaac that the Messenger of Yahveh stopped the sacrifice. For those three days Abraham didn't know if he was alive—he was in a daze—his understanding of God was shattered and his heart felt like it had been ripped out. Why did Abraham walk in this living death? Because Abraham knew God and loved Him more than his most precious possession, and this test would prove it—to Abraham. God knew what he was going to do. Abraham obeyed God when he had no idea what was going on. This is a faith that trusts God even and especially when it *doesn't* understand, which is the highest form of faith. As such he became the Father of all those who believe in God like he did—with all their heart, soul and strength unto a death that was worse than actually dying.

Isaac, at 33 years old, could easily have stopped his 133 year old father from binding him and making him the sacrifice, but he didn't. He *willingly* laid down his life because he loved his father more than he loved his own life, and his father was the authority in his life. As such, the two of them picture God the Father sending His beloved and uniquely begotten Son to die for us. Edan had a mist in his eyes.

Two more Israelis, about 35 years old, had sat down and begun eating in back of Edan and Ya'ir during this time. They heard a lot about Messiah Yeshua because as I spoke I made eye contact, a number of times, with the one who faced me.

I shared some of my testimony of how when I first came to Messiah, the Holy Spirit came upon me and the peace of God flowed all over me and I knew that

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God was real and that Yeshua was our Messiah. I told them that I had been looking for God 'in all the wrong places' until I met Him in Jesus. All my life, until then, I had been looking, without even realizing it, and He was what I had been looking for. When I found Yeshua I found the most precious thing that anyone could find and I gave myself over to Him fully.

That impressed Ya'ir. He told me that his father had been born in France in a town near Pau (where my grandfather, my father's father was born and went to school) and that Ya'ir's grandfather came from Morocco. We talked about that and I asked him if he had heard of Alexander Dumas, the author of *The Three Musketeers*, who was also born in Pau and he said yes. After that he told me that he 'laid tefillin' every morning.

I told Ya'ir that through Yeshua we have a living spiritual relationship with God our Father. A relationship that grows as we walk with our Messiah. I told them that the *Tanach* was filled with prototypes of the Messiah and then went on to explain that the Passover lamb, whose blood protected our firstborn from the wrath of God upon Egypt, was a picture of the blood of Messiah Yeshua protecting us from the wrath of God on Judgement Day, and that those who, by their faith in Yeshua, are covered by that precious blood, will enter into the New Jerusalem and live eternally in the presence of God.

Edan asked me, 'How can you know all the *Tanach* like that?' I had been quoting chapter and verse for all the things that I was sharing with them, and Edan, as with many Israelis before him, was appreciative of that. I told Edan,

"When I came to believe in Yeshua I fell in love with Him, God the Father and His Word. I read the Scriptures and pray everyday and God has been faithful to teach me much about His Word and about Himself. It was King David who said, 'Come! Taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!' (Ps. 34:8) and the only way we can do that is by being filled with the Holy Spirit in the Name of Yeshua."

Edan had a mist in his eyes again. The love of the Holy Spirit was touching him. Then I asked them about the three *matzot* (plural of *matza*—unleavened bread) at the Passover table. 'Why? Why three and why is the middle one broken in half?' They didn't know. I said the Rabbis say it could represent either Abraham, Isaac and Jacob or the Aaronic Priesthood, the Levitical Priesthood and (the rest of) Israel. They liked that, but when I asked them why the middle *matza*, representing Isaac or the Levitical Priesthood was broken, with half the *matza* placed in a (linen) napkin, hidden, and then found, with the child re-

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ceiving a piece of silver, they didn't know.

They understood though, when I told them that the three pieces of *matza* pictured the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and the middle one, which was broken pictured Messiah crucified, buried in linen and 'found' alive from the dead. The coin given to the child finding the hidden or 'buried' *matza* being silver pictured the redemption in the 'found' or resurrected Messiah of Israel. Silver is the metal biblically symbolic of redemption (Ex. 30:12-13f.; 38:25). What they and all Israel had been doing all their lives at Passover, without realizing it, was actually an ancient tradition from Jews who believed in Yeshua. The 'found' *matza* represented Yeshua's Body, along with red wine at the Passover Table, becomes the Body and Blood of Messiah Yeshua that is eaten at every believing (and unbelieving) Passover during the last part of the Passover meal (when Yeshua gave it to His Apostles; Mt. 26:26-29).

About this time an Orthodox man and his wife stopped and listened a few feet from where we were. I spoke louder as I shared Messiah Yeshua. After a while I looked at him and said, 'Come! Join us!' He smiled and began to go a few tables down so they could order some food at the eating place there, but he had heard a lot about his Messiah.

We went down some rabbit trails every once in a while with Edan, but the Lord has trained me so that it doesn't derail me. I let him speak for a moment or two, addressing his concerns and then we went right back to Messiah Yeshua.

Ya'ir said that he really wanted to stay longer, but that his brother, who had just called, was on his way to the mall to pick them up. We talked for another ten minutes and then they left. I gave them Acts 2-4 and told them that if they had any questions or wanted to talk more about Messiah, to give me a call and we would get together.

I was wiped out. It was wonderful. We had talked for more than three hours (from about 5:00-8:15 PM) about the most meaningful thing in life—Messiah Yeshua. When we began the sun was shining, but when they left it was dark, the sun having set more than an hour earlier. With *darkness* it became a new Jewish day (Gen. 1:3-5f.).<sup>124</sup>

At darkness my Jewish birthday came in. I was 58 years old for the first time

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<sup>124</sup> For why darkness, and not sunset, ends one biblical day and begins another, see *When Does the Sabbath Begin?* at <http://seedofabraham.net/When-Does-The-Sabbath-Begin.pdf>.

### *Divine Birthday Presents*

in my life. I was born on what is known as *Lag b'Omer*, the 33rd day of the Pharisaic–Orthodox counting of when the *omer* (aka first sheaf), an amount of dry weight of fine barley, about three quarts (liters), was given to the High Priest and some of it thrown upon the fire of the Altar (Lev. 23:5-14). It was a form of dedication and thanksgiving to God for the first grain to come in spring, symbolic of all food: fruits, grains and vegetables that would follow. The High Priest would keep and eat the rest for himself.

This barley offering spoke of Yeshua being the First Sheaf or Fruit to rise from the dead (1st Cor. 15:20-23f.), glorified, never to die again, and once He rose we were then able to ‘eat of Him,’ receive the Holy Spirit (John 16:7), be cleansed and given our new nature. This is what He meant when He said, ‘Except a grain of wheat dies,’ and ‘Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no (eternal) *Life*’ (John 12:24; 6:53), and also why Yeshua said, unless He went away (dies), the Holy Spirit wouldn’t come (to dwell in Israel; John 16:7; with the work of transformation),<sup>125</sup> for this only happens because of the sacrificial blood of Messiah. Yes, the Spirit dwelt in Moses and the Prophets, etc.,<sup>126</sup> but the Holy Spirit couldn’t begin the miraculous work of transformation of our nature into Messiah’s nature (fully human and fully divine) until *after* Yeshua’s death and resurrection. This transformation is one of the major aspects of the New Covenant that makes it a better covenant than the Old, as the author of Hebrews points out, *comparing* the two covenants—he does not negate the Mosaic Covenant.<sup>127</sup> Hebrews doesn’t do away with the Old, as Messiah Himself says (Mt. 5:17-19; 22:35-40; 24:20), but compares the two and reveals why the New is a better covenant.

The year in the Jewish calendar that I was born was 5711 and now it was 5769. This date in the calendar is 18 *Iyar* (*Iyar* being the second month in the Jewish calendar) and the date stays the same every year, but it changes every year in the Gregorian calendar (e.g. in 2009 18 *Iyar* was May 11th, but in 2010, 18 *Iyar* was May 2nd).

To speak of Messiah and to have someone really listening, actually two ‘someones,’ is one of the best birthday presents I’ve ever received. Thank

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<sup>125</sup> *Salvation—The Promise!* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Salvation-The-Promise.pdf>.

<sup>126</sup> Num. 27:18; Dt. 34:9; Is. 63:11; 1st Peter 1:10-11; etc.

<sup>127</sup> See *Hebrews and the Change of the Law* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Hebrews-and-the-Change-of-the-Law.pdf> for some ‘proof text’ passages that the Church points to in upholding its anti-Law theology, and how they are to be correctly understood, and how the writer of Hebrews is actually comparing the Mosaic Covenant and the New Covenant; not doing away with it.

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You, Yeshua! I was *so* grateful to Yeshua for the special birthday gifts, but it wasn't over. After Ya'ir and Edan left, Ruti and I sat there for about ten minutes so I could relax and 'catch my breath' and then we walked out of the food court into the mall to go home.

In the mall, as in all Israeli malls (and many American malls), there are stands in the center walking space that are taken up by people who are selling jewelry, candy, coffee, etc. As we approached a very small stand, which had some newspapers and magazines on it, a woman was holding out a newspaper to us and calling for us to come over to her. Of course, sensing this as another opportunity to speak about the Pearl of great price, Ruti and I went over to the stand. *Morahn*, a 25 year old Israeli woman was wanting us to accept a free month's subscription to a leading Israeli newspaper called *HaAretz* (The Land). Israeli newspapers are extremely pornographic. They're a Middle Eastern version of *The Daily News* (New York City), *Playboy* magazine and *The National Enquirer* all rolled into one newspaper.

We listened for a moment and then told her that we didn't read the Israeli newspapers because our Hebrew wasn't *that* good, but even if we could read Hebrew like a native Israeli we still wouldn't get the paper because it only had bad news and pornography in it. *Morahn* said that you have to keep up with what was going on in the world, but I told her that reading bad news and watching it on television wasn't good for our souls.

Then Ruti took out *Driven to Run* (Jewish Newsletter #24) from her purse and said to *Morahn*, 'How would you like to read some Good News?!' That's my Ruti!

*Morahn* took it and asked what it was about. Ruti began sharing the Love of her life and I stepped aside to listen and pray. Ruti had been praying all the time that I had been speaking with Edan and Ya'ir. Ruti would later tell me that two Orthodox Jews came and stood behind me and were looking at the extra Prophecy Cards I had put on the table while I spoke with Edan and Ya'ir, when I had given each of them one. I hadn't noticed the Orthodox men in back of me.

Well, in stepping aside, I came right into Yafit's view. She worked with *Morahn*, had been listening to us, and now she began to ask me questions about Messiah. Ruti would tell me later that *Morahn* had asked her, 'How can you really know that there is a God?' Ruti told her about Yeshua coming to reveal the Father to us and then she asked *Morahn* if she could pray for her so the Holy Spirit could touch her. *Morahn* liked that, even though she didn't

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seem serious about looking for Messiah.

Ruti began praying for her, and as she did, I stopped speaking with Yafit, and in the middle of the mall, with many Israelis walking by and looking, Ruti and I prayed for her. When we were done we could see that Morahn hadn't experienced anything, so Ruti said that God *always* hears our prayers, but sometimes He doesn't immediately respond.

Yafit wanted to be prayed for now and Ruti asked her, 'Do you really want to know Messiah and the God of Israel?' Yafit responded *emphatically*, 'Yes!'

Ruti took her hand and began praying and we prayed for a few minutes. When it was over Ruti went to hug Yafit and Yafit just hugged Ruti like she was a long lost dear friend. It was wonderful! Ruti went over to hug Morahn and as she did the Spirit leapt from her and touched Morahn. Morahn was very surprised!

We spoke some more, gave them both *Driven to Run* and Acts 2-4, and as we began walking away we thanked Yeshua for yet more Israeli birthday gifts. So very special!

As we walked away I looked to my right and there was Satan scowling at me through the eyes of a Jewish woman who was about 60 years old. I could tell she wasn't a native born Israeli, but someone, most likely, from the New York City area. I was born in Brooklyn, New York and raised in New Jersey so I know the type. I was smiling at the time, just having left the newspaper stand. I looked at her momentarily, long enough for her to see me smiling at her, and then I looked ahead, walking away with Ruti, hand in hand. It was a great way to start my 58th Jewish birthday!

## THIS LAND IS MINE

I woke up at 5:20 AM on Thursday, April 29th, 2010 with the theme song from the movie Exodus (1960) playing in my head. I prayed and read the Word for an hour each and during the morning the song would continually return. I questioned the Lord about it, asking why this song about the land of Israel was going through my head? After all, I told the Lord, I know that it's not about land, but about You, Yeshua, and bringing Israelis to You, but Yeshua had a very important lesson for me to learn that day.

Ruti and I were out the door a little after 10 AM on our way to Jerusalem. We thought we could get the #42 bus to take us to the north Tel Aviv bus station, but we were wrong. It left us about a five minute walk from the station and we thanked Yeshua for the beautiful day and the flowers in bloom as we walked along the way. He thinks of everything!

We got on the #480 bus heading for Jerusalem and sat in the back. On our right, a row in front of us, was a young mother with two infant boys, one about eight months old and the other almost two years old. The mother was holding the younger one and the older one sat on the seat to her right. When the younger one saw us he stopped and just looked at us. We smiled and then he did, too, and for the next 45 minutes Ruti and I were delightfully blessed by him. He was so precious! His smile was so pure and his demeanor so sweet. Sometimes he would reach out to me with his small left hand and I would extend my right hand to almost touch his before he would bring his hand back. Other times he would just be looking at us, taking us in as we smiled at him. We didn't see the other boy until they traded places and he laid across his mother's lap with his face toward us. He was also precious. It was a wonderful way to ride into Jerusalem.

Getting into the Central Bus Station in Jerusalem we got off the bus and headed to catch our third bus of the journey to go into the center of the city to cash two checks and some South African Rands that a friend named Daniel had sent us, and to meet with Hannah for lunch. When we got to the place where our bus stop should have been, it wasn't there! They were digging up the street and making it ready for the new train system. It was a mess so we walked up a little further and asked a man which bus to take to get into the center of the city. 'The #1.' I thanked him.

Then an Israeli man came up to me and asked why I dressed the way I did. I said that I was a sign to him that our Messiah had come. I began sharing a lit-

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tle and a couple of Orthodox Jewish men came alongside to hear and one said, 'You mean Yeshu?'

I said 'Yes, Yeshua from Nazareth is our Messiah' and the two Orthodox men immediately left. I tried to give Acts 2-4 to the original man, but he didn't want it after that. Our bus was already loading people, and so we got on board. A tourist, waiting for another bus, took a video of Ruti and me in our biblical looking clothes.

On the #1 bus we headed for what I thought was the center of the city. In helping some tourists from Poland who wanted to go to the Old City I asked the driver and found out that they were on the right bus, but we weren't.

Ruti would later tell me that from the time we had gotten on the bus, a young man in the IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) couldn't take his eyes off of us. When I had gone up to the driver he followed me and after I got the information for the Polish tourists and told them, he asked me where I was from. One thing led to another and I found out that Zack had been born near San Francisco, California and had volunteered to serve in the IDF seven months earlier. His parents weren't over here, but he felt that Israel was the place where all Jews should be. I agreed with him, but before I could speak of Messiah Yeshua the bus driver was telling me to 'get off here' and catch the #50 bus to take me to the main street in Jerusalem, which is Yafo (Jaffe in English; 'beautiful'). Great! I then called to Ruti, who wasn't too far away, and as I left I gave Zack (Jewish Newsletters 33), *Has Messiah Come?*

Ruti and I headed to the corner and a Jewish man who had been on the bus with us, who must have heard the driver speaking to me about catching another bus, asked where we wanted to go. I told him and he asked me if it was the *city* of Yafo (just south of Tel Aviv) or the *street* Yafo in Jerusalem! Telling him it was the street he pointed us around the corner, like the bus driver had done, to a bus stop where Ruti and I sat and waited for the #50. Israelis can be very helpful and considerate.

Some women soldiers came up and asked if the #50 stopped there and we told them that it did. Actually, we weren't too far from where we wanted to go, but it was a six minute walk up a hill that resembled Mt. Everest and then another ten minutes to our destination. I'm thinking the #50, which we had never been on before, would take us to our destination because I had told the driver of #1 that I had wanted to go to *Kikar Tzion* (the national landmark on Yafo in the center of the city), but as we sat there I began to realize the #50 would most likely enter Yafo Street by Davidka Square and head west, which was much further away west from our destination than where we were now, and it would

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travel on Yafo further and further away from where we wanted to go. I shared that with Ruti and we decided to tackle Everest.

Once we got to the top it was clear sailing. About two minutes before reaching our check cashing place Ruti spotted some artificial aquamarine colored plants outside a French deli that we had never noticed before, even though we had passed by it many times over the last eight months. We had always passed in a taxi, but walking this time, Ruti noticed it and we strolled over to the restaurant, which was about ten paces from us.

Going through the door we saw the deli meat counter on the right and a stand with menus on the left. It had many sausage meats on the menu and in the meat counter, as well as roast beef and corn beef, etc., but because of the sausages we saw at their deli counter I asked if they were kosher, even though I had seen a kosher certificate on the window. They were kosher. It was beef sausage. Ruti and I thought this might be a good place to bring Hannah for lunch. No one was in the restaurant, which had about 12 tables where four people could sit, and there wasn't any music playing, which meant that it would be quiet and we could fellowship with Hannah and 'have the place to ourselves.'

We went on and met Hannah near the check cashing place and I cashed the checks and South African Rands into Israeli shekels and we headed back to the deli. It's owned by a Jewish family that has had this business since 1795. Of course, their ancestors were in France, but they had recently come to live in the *Land* of Israel and continue in their family business. The interior had real tables, not plastic, with upholstered chairs that Ruti said were very pretty and comfortable to sit in.

Hannah ordered a pastrami sandwich with French dijon mustard. Ruti got a meatloaf sandwich and I got roast beef with French dijon mustard. We got them on Italian Ciabatta bread (a delicious rectangular crusty white bread). The sandwiches came with pickles and real cole slaw and I ordered some French fries for all of us to share, which were done the way French fries should be done, which is a rarity in Israel. We also got a side order of potato salad that was also tasty.

We began speaking about our day and sharing with one another and Ruti spoke of the infants on the bus, and how Yeshua had rerouted us so we could find the French deli restaurant. After that Ruti asked Hannah about her coming to live in Israel. Hannah said she had only been a believer for two years when Yeshua brought her to Jerusalem from the USA. She asked Yeshua why and He told her that it was all part of prophecy (God bringing us Jews back home

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to the *Land* He had given to Fathers' Abraham, Isaac and Moses and us; Ezk. 36:22f.).

Ruti shared that when we had first gone up to Galilee in 1999 she felt like she wanted to get out of our rented car and just sit in the soil and toss it up in the air (i.e. play in the dirt!)—she felt so alive and 'one' with the *Land*, and that it was the *Land* of her ancestors and she was returning to it. Two years before, the Lord had shown Ruti in a dream that her father's grandfather had been Jewish and that his lineage went all the way back to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob through the Tribe of Levi. Ruti hadn't grown up knowing her Jewish heritage, but here she was, living in Israel *because of the Lord*, who had given her that desire before we even met in 1989.

I shared with Hannah and Ruti how I woke up that morning—with the theme song from Exodus playing in my mind, and that I now knew why the Lord had given that to me—and here we were speaking about God bringing us and many other Jews, including the people who owned the restaurant we were sitting in, back to our *Land*. As I began to softly sing the song for Ruti and Hannah, I choked up when it came to speaking of the *Land* being a place 'where children can run free.' Through tears I said, 'They (the Nazis) murdered all the children.'<sup>128</sup>

We were all a little teary eyed after that, but realized the Lord was encouraging us about living in our *land*, the Land of Israel, and being part of what He was doing in bringing us Jews back to our *Land*. The *Land* and the people of Israel are *one*. It's about the people, we Jews, and the *Land* that God gave to us through Abraham, Moses and Joshua, and it's about God's faithfulness in bringing us back home—to a home that's in the heart of every Jew, no matter if they were born in Moscow, Paris or Brooklyn. Many Gentile believers also feel this strong connection to the *Land* and the Jewish people because they also have been given Yeshua's heart for the *Land* and His people. One day, I believe, they will be here, too:

Exodus 3:8: "So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up from that land to a good and large *land*, to a *land flowing with milk and honey*, to the place of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites."

Ezekiel 47:21-23: "Thus you shall divide this *Land* among

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<sup>128</sup> Of the six million Jewish people the Nazis brutally murdered, one and a half million were children twelve years old and under.

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yourselves according to the Tribes of Israel. It shall be that you will divide it by lot as an inheritance for yourselves *and for the stranger who dwells among you* and who has sons among you. They shall be to you as native-born Israelis among the Sons of Israel. They shall have an inheritance with you among the Tribes of Israel and it shall be that in whatever Tribe the stranger dwells, there you shall give him his inheritance,' says the Lord Yahveh."

Now, as I write this after our time with Hannah, I think of the two toddlers with their mother on the bus. Children *are* running free in their *Land* now, even with all the problems Israel has with the so-called Palestinians. The Lord had certainly orchestrated that part of our day with the two boys for us, too, in relation to being in our *Land*.

As we were eating and enjoying our time together, two Orthodox Jewish men came into the restaurant and sat in another section. They ordered some food and began to eat and then the waitress-owner, Dalia, came over to us with a question from them. We could see that she was a little uncomfortable about being the liaison, but we told her it was alright and she said, 'The men want to know why you wear white.' I told her it was a good question and to tell them that white symbolizes purity. She went over to the men and told them and they stopped eating, came over and stood by our table and began asking me questions about why I wore the biblical clothes. I told them I was a sign to them that our Messiah *had come*. One of them said Messiah *would come*, but I reiterated that He had already come and would come again.

I had gotten up so they could see my full outfit and said the material was 100% linen (although my white head covering and long sleeve T-shirt, worn underneath and on my arms, were 100% cotton). I showed them my *tzit'ziot* (tassels; Num. 15:37-41) and one of them asked about the material for it. I could see it wasn't going to be 'kosher' for him because the Orthodox have certain material they make it out of, and this wasn't it, and they make the tassels to have a certain number of strands and tie them in a set number of knots to symbolize the name of Yahveh, so I told them that I wanted to get back to the first point—who was our Messiah?

Shlomo (Solomon), whom we would later come to find out was a teacher of *Gematria* at a *yeshiva* in Jerusalem asked, 'So, what is his name?' I asked Shlomo if he had ever done any studies on the Messiah from the *Tanach* (Hebrew Bible). He hadn't and so I said,

"Daniel was told by the angel Gabriel, in 9:24-26, that the

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Messiah would come *before* the Temple was destroyed.’ I asked, ‘Where is our Messiah? The Temple was destroyed almost 2,000 years ago. The Talmud, *Nazir* 32b, echoing Gabriel, also states that the Messiah would come before the Temple was destroyed.’”

Shlomo was a heavy set man, while his friend, Yehezkel (Ezekiel) was of medium build, and even though they were in the middle of eating their lunch, they went back to their table, picked up their plates and came over to a table that was across from ours. They wanted to know about this Messiah. I was delighted.

To support that Messiah had come I began quoting Psalm 118:22 in Hebrew for them (‘The Stone the Builders rejected has become the CornerStone’) and Shlomo finished the passage for me. Every religious Jew knows this psalm because it’s part of the yearly Passover ceremony. I asked him who the Stone and the Builders were? He didn’t have any idea. I told him,

‘the Stone was our Messiah and the Builders were our religious leaders. Just as the Sons of Israel in the Wilderness rejected Moses, so it was with our Messiah, and King David (in the psalm) was telling us about it a thousand years before it happened.’

I said our God was bringing us Jews back to the *Land* of Israel just as He had promised us in Ezekiel, and I looked over to Yehezkel and nodded to him and said, ‘Your namesake.’ Yehezkel appreciated that. I told them God had,

“flung us Jews to the far corners of the Earth, just as He said He would if we didn’t obey Him (Dt. 26:1f.), but was now bringing us home and wanting to pour pure Water on us to take away all the filthiness and uncleanness that we had picked up in all the Gentile countries where we had lived. God wants to take out our hearts of stone and give us hearts of flesh and give us His Spirit so that we can know Him and walk in His ways. His Spirit and the cleansing of our souls only comes in the name of Messiah. This promise was made 2,600 years ago—where is our Messiah, Shlomo?”

Ezekiel 36:22-27: “Therefore, say to the House of Israel, ‘Thus says Yahveh God: ‘I do not do this for your sake, Oh House of Israel, but for My holy Name’s sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went, but I

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will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst, and the nations shall know that I am Yahveh,' says Yahveh God, '*when I am sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the nations and gather you out of all countries and bring you into your own Land. Then I will sprinkle clean Water on you and you shall be clean. I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new Spirit within you. I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes and you will keep My judgments and do them.*'"

Shlomo asked me if I had the Holy Spirit. I told him I did and that I had the Spirit for more than 34 years. I could see that he didn't quite believe that, but I told them both that I know God by His Spirit, not just by His Word in the Book:

"King David said, 'Taste and see that the Lord<sup>129</sup> is good!' (Ps. 34:8) How can we taste God?! By His Spirit, Shlomo, which is given to us in the Name of Messiah."

Shlomo asked again, 'What's Messiah's name?' I asked, 'You don't know?' He didn't, but I wouldn't tell him until I had laid a foundation for the Name so that if he bolted at the Name he would still have the scriptural foundation to think about.

I said that Messiah was a sacrifice for our sins (Is. 53) and quoted verse five:

'But He was wounded for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. On Him lies a punishment that brings us peace and by His stripes we are healed.'

I brought up the pictures of sacrifice on the Day of Atonement, and also Abraham binding Isaac, and also spoke of God sending His Son to die for us—for our sins, so we could be forgiven, cleansed and filled with the Holy Spirit.

'Yes, God has a Son, as it says in Psalm Two,' and I went on to share about it

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<sup>129</sup> Many times in speaking with my Jewish people I do not use the name Yahveh because they have been taught that it's not proper to say the name, and so I speak of 'the Lord,' which is still 'too close' to the Name, but usually alright for me. I intentionally do not use Yahveh at those times because I don't want to unnecessarily offend them and derail the discussion that we're having about the Messiah.

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revealing Messiah as God's Son. Yehezkel didn't think that was right, but Shlomo said it was there.

I said it wasn't King David that the Psalm was speaking of (as some Orthodox Jews teach) because David wasn't *begotten* by God, as the Psalm (v. 7) states, but was begotten by his father Jesse.

I spoke of more things about Messiah and then I said Messiah's Name. Shlomo said, 'I am not happy.' He didn't want to hear anymore. I said, 'Tell me, Shlomo, why can't Yeshua be our Messiah?'

He said again, 'I am not happy. The game is over,' and I repeated, 'Why can't Yeshua be our Messiah, Shlomo? The Talmud, in speaking of Yeshua, lies about Him.'

I could sense him thinking about what the Talmud says of Yeshua. With that it ended, but Shlomo and Yehezkel had Seeds planted in them that will sprout one day for our Messiah!

They left a little while after that, but just before we left, a young man, a son of the owner, came over and handed me a slip of paper and put his forefinger over his lips as if to say, 'Don't let anyone else know about this.' I looked at the paper and on it was written, 'The God of Israel Bless you!' I shared it with Ruti and Hannah and thanked the Lord for it and the man who gave it. He was a Jewish believer, but didn't want it to be known as it would adversely effect his father's business.

After paying our bill we thanked the Lord for the food, fellowship, the *Land* and the opportunity to be a witness for Him and prayed for Shlomo and Yehezkel. We wandered down the street to the bus stop that would take Ruti and me back to the Central Bus Station to catch our bus to Ramat Gan, and as we were strolling down Yafo, a young man came out from a store with a tray of fruit pieces; kiwi, orange and other fruit on toothpicks and offered each of us some. We were all full from lunch, so none of us accepted his offer, thanking him, but a few moments later we found ourselves inside a tiny cubical of a store that offered fruit shakes and carrot juice.

The man's name was Yochanan (John; grace of Yahveh) and there were two young women working behind the counter with him. Ruti and Hannah got some fruit shakes and I began to look for an opportunity to speak of Yeshua. Yochanan came from a Russian background so I said a couple of words in Russian to him. He liked that.

Then Ruti asked the name of a certain fruit they had among their selection.

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We had eaten it before, but had forgotten what it was called. He said it was *sheh'shek*, a fruit common to the Middle East. It's about the size of a plum, shaped like an egg, apricot in color, with large, smooth stones in it and incredibly delicious! It's hard to describe the taste, but luscious, sweet and satisfying come close, and once you've had one you want another : )

Before I could speak of Yeshua, Yochanan left with a friend, but two moments later, a friend of the women came in. I had begun to share about Messiah, and continued, saying that in Yeshua we have *Life*. I asked the new arrival what she thought of the Jewish Messiah and she told me that she didn't believe in Him because she was a Muslim and believed in her god.

I said that if she had been born in China she would believe in their gods, and so it was important to know the One true God, the God of the Jews because we can only know Him by His Spirit, which comes to us in the Name of Yeshua. She said she knew her god by his spirit and had peace when she prayed. I said that any spirit which doesn't lead one to Messiah Yeshua is a false spirit. She didn't like that. I didn't say it to be mean to her, but to show her that there were other spirits, and that it was important to follow the true God (and Allah is not the God of Israel).<sup>130</sup>

I said, 'What do you do for forgiveness of sin? Your god is holy, isn't he? How can you be with him if you sin?' She didn't know what to say. I said, 'Only in Messiah Yeshua is there forgiveness of our sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit by which we can truly know God.'

She had enough though, and walked to the counter to talk with her friends, whom I hadn't realized were also Muslims. It wasn't a long walk—only four feet away (1.2 meters). We said our goodbyes and continued to walk toward our bus stop, in front of city hall, and on the way we met Yochanan carrying stereo speakers back to his place, and his friend was with him. We stopped and talked for a few moments about his name and we found out that he believed in Yeshua! After we left them Ruti said she thought when she first met him that he might be a believer by the way he smiled and acted.

Standing in front of Jerusalem's City Hall we only had to wait a moment for a bus to come. Ruti and I thanked Hannah for the wonderful time of fellowship and sharing opportunities we had and off we went to the Central Bus Station where we met Haim (life!) at the Bagel counter in the food court. We were eyeing the bagels, not because we could eat another bite, but to see if they

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<sup>130</sup> Ask for the PDF, *Five Reasons why the Koran is False and why Allah is not the God of Israel*.

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looked like ‘real’ bagels. Most of the bagels in Israel are just regular white bread made into the shape of a bagel.

Haim came from New Jersey and I told him that I was born in Brooklyn. I said the bagels didn’t look like bagels that I could get in Brooklyn. He assured me of their quality and I asked Ruti if she wanted one. Yes, but we had better not, as the cream cheese and white flour weren’t good for us and we were still full from lunch and the fruit shake, which Ruti had shared with me. I told Haim about the white flour and he offered us some brown bagels, but I said they were just white flour colored brown. He agreed. Then I offered him the Jewish Newsletter *Has Messiah Come?*, and he took one look at it and gave it back to me saying that he was not able to accept things while he was working. Right!

We headed for the bus, one floor above the bagel stand, and as we were slowly moving on the bus’s line, waiting our turn to enter the bus, a French-Jewish woman rams into my arm that I had across Ruti’s shoulder. I said, ‘Excuse me?’ as she hadn’t backed off much and didn’t say anything about being sorry. She said she didn’t speak English. I asked her if she spoke Hebrew—no. A moment later she pushes past Ruti and me saying, ‘I pass’ in English and we let the tornado pass us in the line.

We were about ten people in back of the bus’s door and she just kept going right to the door of the bus, past all the other people in line. Her poor husband hadn’t joined her in her escapade, but when she got to the door she called out to him and motioned for him to come. He eventually made his way past the throng of people and she paid the driver for the both of them. As I was standing on the steps of the bus, waiting my turn to show the driver our tickets, which we had purchased on the bus that brought us to Jerusalem, I saw they were seated in the very first seats behind the driver. I took out *Has Messiah Come?* in French, and after I gave the driver our tickets I handed it to her husband who, looking at the French wording, thanked me for it and I continued back a few seats to where Ruti was waiting for me.

As I sat back I thought of how all day long the Lord had given me a feeling of peace and joy—a ‘resting in Him’ permeated my soul. I thought of the infant who had blessed Ruti and me coming into Jerusalem. The Lord was bringing to pass His words which He had spoken so long ago, and many Jews, including ‘Mrs. I pass’ were coming back to the *Land* in need of their Messiah:

Leviticus 20:24: “But I have said to you, ‘You shall inherit their *land* and I will give it to you to possess, a *Land* flowing with milk and honey.’ I am Yahveh your God who has sepa-

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rated you from all the peoples!”

Zechariah 12:10: “And I will pour out on the House of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication. Then *they will look on Me whom they pierced*. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn” (who has died).

Zechariah 13:1: “In that day a Fountain will be opened for the House of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.”

Hosea 2:18-19, 23: “In that day I will make a covenant for them—to make them lie down in safety. I will *betroth* you to Me *forever! Yes!* I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in My forgiving lovingkindness and compassion. I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness and *you shall know Yahveh!* Then I will sow her for Myself in the *Land* and I will have compassion on her who had not obtained compassion—and they shall say, ‘You are my God!’”<sup>131</sup>

Thirty-four years ago I read about Jesus and gave my life to Him because I ‘wanted to be like Him.’ He took me at my word and I look back and see that the evil things that have happened to me, because of my walk with Him, He has used to mold and shape me to be more like Him. I am not anywhere near finished, but He is the good and faithful Shepherd and will one day make me exactly like He is now. HalleluYah!

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<sup>131</sup> The theme song from the movie Exodus can be heard at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVcrC2gCBRQ&playnext\\_from=TL&videos=bOM9K9SfRs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVcrC2gCBRQ&playnext_from=TL&videos=bOM9K9SfRs). It’s very powerful. Pat Boone, who wrote the lyrics and who sings it in this version said the Lord gave him the words for the tune—I believe him.

## LAHAV AND THE MEZUZA

On Thursday night, January 6th, 2011 at 6:45 PM there was a knock on our apartment door. For the next hour and 45 minutes, until 8:30 PM, I witnessed to an Orthodox man while we stood in the doorway. He wouldn't come in because he didn't know if we were 'kosher,' which is not an unusual trait for many Orthodox Jews concerning the homes of others.

His name was Lahav, which means a flame. He was asking for money so that he could help some Jewish people in his community to buy food and keep the Sabbath 'with dignity.' Lahav wore a black kipa, was dressed in black pants and a black 'sport' coat with a white shirt. He had a full, untrimmed beard (Lev. 19:27) and wore *tzit'ziot*. He was 45 years old, 5' 7" (1.7 m) tall, with a medium build and black hair, and some white hair in his beard. He told me that a grandfather of his had been a rabbi and had come from Afghanistan to the Land of Israel a hundred years ago.

Lahav's voice and demeanor reminded me of the rabbi in *The Quarrel*, starring Saul Rubinek and R. H. Thompson. Lahav was much more reserved than the rabbi in the movie, but his accent and voice were almost identical. If you haven't seen that movie, it's about two Jewish men who were best friends as youths in pre-Holocaust Europe, but who had separated before it due to their diametrically opposed beliefs about God. One became a rabbi and the other became a secular writer who didn't believe in God, and each thought the other had died in the Holocaust.

They meet in a park in Montreal in 1948, three years after the Holocaust (and the year Israel became a state again, after not being one for more than 1,800 years) and thrash out their beliefs, anger and love for each other in light of the Holocaust. They represent the two strands of Jewish understanding about God, life, and the Holocaust, and their afternoon in the park is marked with humor as well as with deep sadness. The dialogue is exceptionally poignant and always with meaning. I cried for their pain and mine, and I hoped for their reconciliation.

If you haven't seen the movie, I *highly* recommend it. It has incredible insight into the Holocaust and 'how' God could allow six million Jews to die, and how ideology keeps friends separated, but love brings them together. The acting is superb. If you're Jewish, have a *box* of Kleenex on hand. This is one movie where you won't want to eat pizza and popcorn during it. It's only 85 minutes long, but it's one of the most powerful movies I've ever seen.

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Meanwhile, Lahav and I spoke of my *mezuzah* and my *tzit'ziot*, as well as my biblical clothes and how I keep *Shabat*. My *mezuzah* paper isn't a traditional one. The paper inside it is one I made from my computer. The traditional Jewish ones are handwritten on a thin tanned skin of a clean animal (cow). Also, my paper can be taken out of the *mezuzah* case and read, something that you can't do with a traditional *mezuzah* because the parchment is inserted into the back of the *mezuzah* and then the *mezuzah* is affixed to the doorpost.<sup>132</sup>

Much to Lahav's credit, even though he wouldn't put a *mezuzah* like mine upon his doorpost, nor wear *tzit'ziot* like mine, he said that it wasn't a sin to do either. During the conversation he said that he actually liked the way I dress and that 'it must be comfortable.' I told him it was and that Moses and King David would have dressed in a similar way. He agreed with me.

Lahav questioned my pedigree and found out that I was Jewish, and that I wasn't a Samaritan (like he had initially thought), nor a Gentile. During this time of questioning I was interspersing questions to him about the Messiah of Israel from the *Tanach*. The first question I asked was *when* he thought Messiah was going to come? He said that He wanted the Messiah to come today, and that when Messiah came there would be no more sin and no more wars and Messiah would rule the world. I saw in that a poke at Yeshua. I'm sure he gathered my belief in Yeshua from my appearance and my *mezuzah* paper with the name of *Yahveh* written out in Hebrew and English. Traditional Jews don't write out the Name, nor say it because 'it's too holy.' Of course, this goes directly against Scripture, but that's rabbinic Judaism.<sup>133</sup> He said he was

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<sup>132</sup> *Mezuzah* is the term for the parchment with Dt. 6:4-9; 11:13-21 on it. It's placed in a *mezuzah* case and attached to the doorpost of a Jewish home as a 'Jewish marker,' a sign of Jewish faith. It's done in obedience to God's commandment.

<sup>133</sup> There's not a single reference in Scripture that even hints that it's a sin to say the name *Yahveh*, or that we're not to say it. We are not to take His name in vain (Ex. 20:7; Lev. 19:12; Deut. 5:11), but this means that we should walk, behave and live in accordance with true belief in *Yahveh* by obeying His commandments and Messiah *Yeshua*. Living another way, as the Pharisees did, 'takes His name in vain.' His name is not forbidden or 'off limits' to His people, as the Rabbis teach. Here are a number of cites, where obviously, the people addressing *Yahveh* or speaking of Him use the name *Yahveh*, as well as *Yahveh* Himself speaking His name as He speaks with His people Israel (these cites in most English Bibles will have 'the Lord GOD' or 'the LORD;,' the small capital letters representing the Hebrew Name *Yahveh* in the Hebrew Scriptures (יהוה): Ex. 3:15-16, 18; 5:2; 6:2-3, 8; 12:12; 14:30; 15:1-3, 11-13, 18, 21, 26; 20:2; Lev. 18:2, 4, 5, 7, 21, 30; 19:2, 3, 4, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 25, 28, 30, 31, 34, 36, 37; 20:7, 8, 24, 26; 21:8; 22:33; 23:22; Num. 6:22-27; 12:2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 14; 13:1, 3; 14:8, 9, 11, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21, 35, 40,

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41, 42, 43; Dt. 32:3; 2nd Sam. 22:32; 1st Kings 8:33, 35, 43; 18:21-39; Psalm 22:22; 44:20; 102:12, 21; 103:1; 105:1, 3; 113:3; Isaiah 47:4; 48:1, 2, 16, 17; Jer. 7:4, 10, 12, 14; 12:14-17; 14:9; 16:14-15, 21; 33:11; 44:27; Ezk. 17:3, 9; 20:5, 7, 19, 30, 33, 42, 44; 25:3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17; 44:26; Micah 4:5; Zephaniah 3:9; Zech. 5:4; 13:9; Rev. 14:12.

Three places where Yahveh says that Israel will know *and use His name* are Isaiah 48:20 and Jeremiah 31:23, 34. Also, Micah 4:5 says, 'For all people walk in the *name* of their god, but we, we walk *in the name of Yahveh our God, always and forever.*' (cf. Jer. 23:26-27)

The use of the name Yahveh is also seen in Jeremiah 12:16 (swear by My name); 23:25-27 (and those who make My people forget My name!); and Jer. 31:23 (Yahveh bless you!).

In Ruth 2:4 the reapers greet Boaz by saying, 'Yahveh be with you!', and he says to them, 'Yahveh bless you!' The Rabbis say that the name of Yahveh is 'too holy' for an ordinary person to say, and that the people in the Bible were much holier than us, so they could say it, but reapers?! Also, God says in Jeremiah that the people say, 'As Yahveh lives!', but God reprimands them *for swearing falsely*, not because they said His name.

*Yah* is the shortened form of Yahveh, first found in the ancient Song of Moses at the Red Sea (Ex. 15:2, even though many English Bibles the LORD). It's used 50 times in Scripture:

Ex. 15:2; 17:16; Is. 12:2; 26:4; 38:11 (twice); Ps. 68:4, 18; 77:11; 89:8; 94:7, 12; 102:18; 104:35; 105:45; 106:1, 48; 111:1; 112:1; 113:1, 9; 115:17-18 (twice in v. 18); 116:19; 117:2; 118:5 (twice), 14, 17, 18, 19; 122:4; 130:3; 135:1, 3-4, 21; 146:1, 10; 147:1, 20; 148:14; 149:1, 9; 150:1, 6 (twice); Song of Solomon 8:6. *Accordance Bible Software* (Altamonte Springs, FL: OakTree Software, 2010). Song of Solomon (Canticles/Song of Songs) 8:6 has שֶׁלֶהַבְּתִיָּה (Flame of Yah). Dr. Francis Brown, Dr. S. R. Driver and Dr. Charles A. Briggs, based on the lexicon of Professor Wilhelm Gesenius; Edward Robinson, translator and E. Rodiger, editor, *The New Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Lafayette, IN: Associated Publishers and Authors, 1978), p. 219. (All the cites are listed in their English reckoning or numbering system, and so they may differ by one verse in a Hebrew Bible, especially in the Psalms. For instance, Ps. 68:4 in English is 68:5 in a Hebrew Bible.)

Hallelu-Yah (Praise Yah! הַלְלֵי-יָהּ) is seen and commanded to say 24 times in the Psalms: 102:18; 104:35; 105:45; 106:1, 48; 111:1; 112:1; 113:1, 9; 115:18; 116:19; 117:2; 135:1, 3, 21; 146:1, 10; 147:1, 20; 148:1, 14; 149:1; 150:1, 6. (All these cites are listed in the English numbering system, and so they differ by one verse in a Hebrew Bible. For instance, Ps. 102:18 in English is 102:19 in Hebrew.)

The name Yah is also seen where it is not part of HalleluYah, but standing alone as a shortened form of His name. This occurs 22 times in the Tanach (Old Testament), with 16 times being in the Psalms. In English Bibles it's usually written as the LORD or the LORD: Exodus 15:2; 17:16; Is. 12:2; 26:4; 38:11 twice; Psalm

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always praying for Messiah to come. I could hear his heart. He wasn't parroting it. I told him that he was speaking of Mashiach *ben* David (Messiah the Son of David), and I asked him if he had ever heard of Mashiach *ben Yosafe* (Messiah the Son of Joseph). He said the Messiah's father would be named *Yosafe*, and as 'right' as that is (with Joseph and Mary being Yeshua's earthly parents), I knew that wasn't what he was referring to, so I told him the ancient Rabbis had named the Messiah, the Messiah Son of Joseph, not because a Joseph would be his father, but because like Joseph, the son of Father Jacob, Messiah would also be rejected and *despised by his brothers, us Jews*:

'That's what Isaiah 53 is all about and why it's written in (Talmud) Sanhedrin 98 a/b, that Isaiah 53 is speaking about the Suffering *Messiah*, whom they named the Son of Joseph because Isaiah speaks of us *rejecting* the Messiah, just as Joseph's brothers rejected him.'

I said that Daniel 9:24-26 speaks of the Messiah coming *before* the destruction of Ezra and Nehemiah's Temple (515 BC to 70 AD). He was a bit perplexed, but I'm sure that it confirmed to him that I was speaking about Yeshua, even though I hadn't mentioned His name yet. He said something about there not being a Temple now, and I said the angel Gabriel, who spoke the prophecy to Daniel, said the Temple would be rebuilt, and it was in Ezra's day, and Messiah would come and put an end to sin, making atonement for us, and another prince would come and destroy both that Temple and Jerusalem. The prophecy didn't speak of a Temple. He may have been thinking about Ezekiel's Temple (Ezk. 40-48).

I said that God wanted to circumcise our hearts, as He spoke of in Dt. 30:6, and that in the name of the Messiah, the Holy Spirit is given to us to do just that, and to cause us to know God in an intimate spiritual way, by the Holy Spirit. I went back into my apartment and took a *Tanach* to him and asked him to read Ezekiel 36:24-27, where it speaks of God giving us His Spirit so that we can keep His Torah. Then I asked him to read Jer. 31:31-34, which is the only place in the *Tanach* where the Lord literally speaks of the New Covenant, forgiveness of sins and that we would all *intimately* know Him (from the Hebrew word to know יָדָה, *yadah*) and walk in His Torah, from the least of us to the greatest of us.

Lahav raised a superficial point about the New Covenant of Jeremiah and

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68:4, 18; 77:11; 89:8; 94:7; 102:18; 118:5, 14, 17, 18, 19; 122:4; 130:3; 135:4; 150:6.

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said there's no definite article (i.e. *the*) in the Hebrew to make it *the* New Covenant. He said it should read 'a New Covenant.' This was a very poor point because Hebrew grammar allows the use of 'the' even when it's not specifically there, but I asked him, 'Why the need for *a* New Covenant if the Mosaic Covenant was all we needed?' He didn't know what to say to that, so I went on and spoke of the Holy Spirit, forgiveness of sins, the new nature like Messiah's and eternal *Life* in the New Jerusalem. I should have also brought up Ps. 110:4, where God speaks of making the Messiah a (High) Priest like Melchizedek. Another Priesthood? Why, if Aaron's Priesthood was enough?

I took him to Zechariah 12:10, where it speaks of us (Jews) piercing the Messiah, and a few verses later, of God opening a Fountain of cleansing from sin and uncleanness for us. Then onto Isaiah 53 again, where it speaks of the Messiah dying for us as an atonement, and of us despising Him, which confirmed Zech. 12:10 and 13:1, Messiah taking our punishment upon Himself and being crucified and dying for us so that we could be forgiven and receive the Holy Spirit.

Lahav couldn't understand how we could despise our own Messiah, but I spoke of how we had wanted to murder Moses many times in the Wilderness and because of our *unbelief* in God, we wandered for 40 years until all of us men over the age of 20 died, except for Joshua and Caleb. Then I sealed our rejection of Messiah with Psalm 118:22, which states that 'the Stone the Builders rejected became the CornerStone.' The Stone is the Messiah, I told him, who was rejected by the 'Builders of Israel' (the High Priest and most of the Elders in the Sanhedrin). Then we went to Zechariah 6:12-13, which speaks of the Branch (a major Messianic title for the Messiah) building God's Temple and being *both* King and High Priest of Israel, something *that isn't possible under Torah* (the first five books of Moses) the way it's generally interpreted, because only a son of Aaron could be the High Priest of Israel (Exodus 28:1; Num. 20:25-28; 25:11-13). Then unto Psalm 110:4, which states that the Messiah would be a High Priest of Israel like Melchizedek, *not* Aaron. I asked Lahav,

'Doesn't this conflict with Torah, which states the High Priest of Israel must come from the lineage of Aaron, while the *Tanach* says the king must come from the line of David?'

Of course, this points to the New Covenant that God would make with Israel (Jer. 31:31), which would include Gentiles (Is. 49:6).

All during this time he is listening and interacting with me, sharing his own understanding of the verses that I bring out, but they're not anywhere at all as

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convincing as the true understanding. After a while Lahav said that he would love to continue, but he really needed to be knocking on doors to try and reach his financial goal for the people. I asked him what it was and he told me that he had already collected 200 shekels (\$56), but was looking for another 300 shekels (\$84). I told him that I would give him some funds and we began speaking about the Messiah of Israel again.

He asked me why it was so important to me that he know this, and I told him that I loved him and that I wanted him to know the Messiah because in the name of Yeshua there is *Life* from Above. He accepted that and didn't balk at the Name. I shared some of my story with him, about searching for God in my early twenties and finding Jesus when I was 24, and how the Holy Spirit came upon me when I asked Jesus to forgive me of my sins and come into my life. I told him that I didn't know what the Holy Spirit was at that time, but I had literally felt *Shalom from Heaven* and I knew that God was real and that Jesus was our Messiah. I told him that I was a living Jewish witness to him that Yeshua of Nazareth was our Messiah.

I excused myself for a moment and went back inside my apartment and took out a 200 shekel note from my wallet, putting it in my breast pocket to give to him later. Another of his superficial interpretations came when I showed him Psalm 110:1, where the heavens are opened for King David and he sees both the Father and the Son. It states,

“Yahveh spoke to My Lord (David's Lord, the Messiah), saying, ‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies Your footstool.’”

Lahav told me that because of a vertical line in the Hebrew text (that the Masoretes put into the text about the 9th century AD, which separates *Yahveh* from *my Lord*), his take on the interpretation was that God spoke the Psalm, and that ‘my Lord’ was David speaking to God. That totally distorts what the Hebrew is saying, and also, the specific problem is the term for *Lord* there (*Adoni*) is never used of Yahveh. *Adonai* is used for Yahveh in Jewish texts that avoid the use of the name Yahveh. Also, in all Scripture where it speaks of the *Lord* Yahveh, Lord is always *Adonai*, not *Adoni* (e.g. Is. 3:15; 7:7; Jer. 2:19; 7:20; Ezk. 13:8; 24:21, etc.). I don't think his interpretation made sense to him, either.

I gave him The Prophecy Card and showed him Micah 5:2, where it speaks of the Ruler of Israel (King Messiah) having existed before Creation (the days of eternity), and said that David's Son, the Messiah, was alive before David was born, both Ps. 110:1 and Micah 5:2 revealing that. ‘How is that possible for a

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natural man?’

He said that he wanted to study it further with some of his friends and then he asked me for my email address so that he could communicate with me about it. Then Lahav said, ‘What if on Judgement Day you find out you were wrong, and *that* man isn’t the Messiah?’ I told him,

“I will answer your question with a question, and then you’ll have your answer. What if someone said to you, ‘What if on Judgement Day you find out that the God of Israel didn’t create the universe?’”

Of course, that’s an impossibility for Lahav and he knew it. I said,

‘our *Tanach* shows us *who* the Messiah will be and *when* He will come and *what* He will do for us, *and* I have been given the *promised* Holy Spirit in His Name. I *know* that Yeshua is our Messiah—I don’t just think that He might be—I know that He is because the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures have continually confirmed it to me for the past 35 years.’

I had been thinking that I would get another 100 shekels from my wallet, so again, I excused myself for a moment and went back into the apartment and got the hundred shekels. Ruti, who was sitting on the couch, listening and praying all the time for Lahav and me, asked me in a low voice, ‘How much?’ Lahav couldn’t see me when I raised three fingers and she confirmed that 300 shekels (\$84) was exactly how much the Lord had put on her heart. It’s so special to have the Lord confirm things like that for me through Ruti.

I went out to Lahav and gave it to him and he said it was ‘too much,’ but I told him that Messiah Yeshua had put that amount on my heart and that my wife had confirmed it, and we were very glad to do it.

We spoke some more, me sharing how Yeshua was God the Son, from places like Gen. 1:3. I asked him what was the Light of the first day? He said the sun, but immediately realized the sun wasn’t created until the fourth day. I told him the ancient Jewish Sages said it was the Light of Messiah, which confirmed Micah 5:2, saying that Messiah was alive from the days of eternity. I supported that by asking him to read from Proverbs 30:4, which asks the reader what God’s name is *and* what the name of *His Son* is!

Then we went to Psalm 2:7, which speaks of God *begetting* His Son, the Messiah. Lahav just thought that God would beget the Messiah like He did all of us, but I told him that God had never begotten any human being. He *created*

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Adam and Eve and from them we have been begotten. Everyone is begotten in the image and likeness of their parents, whether human beings, horses or cats, etc., but here in Ps. 2:7 it speaks of *God* begetting the Messiah, who then would obviously be like His Father—deity, so Messiah would be God the Son, just as Mic. 5:2 and Prov. 30:4 spoke of.

We spoke some more and then he needed to leave. Again, he thanked me for the 300 shekels, and again I told him it was Messiah Yeshua who wanted him to have it.

Earlier that day (January 6th, 2011), we had given 1,800 shekels (\$504) to Ofira, the Israeli woman whom we led to Messiah Yeshua in 2006. Being a single Mom with a ten year old boy now, and even though she works, it's a struggle to just meet rent and put food on the table. She was very grateful for the gift—actually she was overwhelmed. She broke down and wept. It's been very hard for her. She was a month behind on her rent.

“‘Comfort ye, comfort ye my people!’ says your God. Speak comfort to Jerusalem and cry out to her that her warfare has ended and that her iniquity is pardoned, for she has received double for all her sins from the hand of Yahveh.” (Isaiah 40:1-2)

“Oh Zion! You who bring Good News—get up into the high mountain! Oh Jerusalem! You who bring Good News—lift up your voice with strength, lift it up! Be not afraid! Say to the cities of Judah, ‘Behold your God!’” (Isaiah 40:9)

## *The Way of the Lord*

On Wednesday, April 3rd, 2013 at 4:15 PM, Ruti and I were arrested by the Israeli Immigration Police. Twelve hours later, at 4:15 AM on Thursday morning, we were finally able to lie down in prison bunk beds, in different buildings, after having been awake for 24 hours, and we would be woken up by prison guards, along with everyone else, at 6:00 AM for 'roll call.' Being separated from Ruti was the hardest part of the 10 day ordeal, knowing that her prison conditions were the same as mine, but Yeshua used the both of us to minister to many illegal immigrants in prison, as well as to prison guards and officers. It was one of the most intensive times of ministry we've ever had, to the glory of Messiah Yeshua. Paraphrasing Paul (Acts 26:29); I wish that you could have been there to be part of the ministry, except for the locked prison doors and the three Bs (the beds, the bugs and the bathrooms). Truly though, it was a joy and a delight to be used by our Lord in that situation.

Ruti and I were sent by Yeshua to live in Israel in June 1995 and we applied for citizenship, but about two years later they denied us, telling us we had to leave because we believed in Yeshua. When the Lord led us back in January 1999, we applied for Israeli citizenship through my mother's Jewish lineage. (Ruti doesn't have documents to prove her Jewish lineage through documentation.) Nine years later, in 2008, after being stiff-armed by the Immigration/Citizenship Office (which is not unusual for Jews who believe in Yeshua) we were told that my application was denied and commanded to leave Israel. Sensing from Yeshua that we were to stay in the Land, though, and confirmed by advice from a lawyer, we remained in Israel. The Citizenship Office was legally at fault because they were supposed to tell me what was 'not enough' about my documents, but they never did, even after many attempts to find out.

Be that as it may, I continued to gather documents after 2008 to further establish my Jewishness through my mother. I also sought documents that would prove that my father was a Jew according to Jewish *halacha* (law). If one's mother isn't Jewish, which is what the Citizenship Office was telling me, one can still live in Israel through their father's Jewish lineage. Israel and Judaism wouldn't recognize me as a Jew through my father, but Israel would grant me citizenship if I could prove that my father was a Jew.

By 2011 I had a complete file on my father as well as my mother, but in seeking the Lord as to which one to apply through, neither Ruti nor I sensed anything. So we just kept praying and waiting upon our Lord for His direction. That's why we know our arrest wasn't a random accident. If I had gone

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through my mother it would have been an uphill battle, as Israel has already had several judicial precedents that Jews who believe in Jesus cannot make Aliyah/citizenship.

Yes, it's wrong for the democratic nation of Israel to bar a Jew due to their religious belief, but this is Israel and as you know, they have good 1,900 years of historical reasons. Yet, I would either have been 'in court' and still legal as far as the Citizenship Office was concerned, and still 'in process,' or I would have already been granted Israel citizenship if I had gone through my father in say, 2011.

In all that waiting upon the Lord, though, and not moving ahead of Him, I see His plan for us to be arrested and *used* in prison in terms of ministry to the men and women there, and also, for His work for us in the USA (as you'll read about in a few moments).

One person whom the Lord ministered to through me in prison was Musa, which is Arabic for Moses. His father was an *imam* in Africa (he's dead), and Musa was looking to follow in his father's footsteps. At 28 years old he counseled people in Islam, such is his knowledge of the Koran and how well he is respected. When I came into the 14 man prison cell there was a spiritual clash between us, as he heard and saw me witnessing and ministering for Messiah Yeshua from one moment to the next, from one man to another, with both a couple of believers and the non-believers. The day before I left the prison though, I had an opening and spoke with Musa about Yeshua for two hours; him sitting on his bunk bed and me sitting opposite him on another bunk. When it was over I was able to pray for him, him wanting it, in the name of Yeshua, laying my hands on him, to come to know the Truth and the One who is True. As he listened to the *Life* that Yeshua had for him, a bond of love developed between us. He was also challenged to the depths of his being by the Holy Spirit, and after the prayer I hugged him and told him that I loved him. He told me the same and that I was like his father to him. He will make a fine minister for our Lord one day! Please pray for Musa.

One of many women that Ruti ministered was Tamar, a Hindu from Nepal. When she was taken by the Immigration Police she called her employer, but he wouldn't answer her phone calls. She had saved about \$8,000 from her working in Israel and her employer kept it in his bank for her, under his name, but he would not give it back to her now. This is a common practice of some Israelis, taking the funds of their illegal immigrant workers because they can't open bank accounts, and when they are deported they keep the money.

Tamar was very adamant that she wasn't leaving Israel until she got her mon-

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ey, but the Israeli authorities didn't care about that. The \$8,000 would have made her a rich woman in Nepal. Ruti ministered God's love and His Words of *Life* to her and slowly, Tamar began to realize that her heart was bound up in money. With the Lord's help she began to let go of it and was ready to return to Nepal, with a divine Seed from Above planted in her soul by the Holy Spirit via Ruti. Tamar said she would buy a Bible to read about Messiah Yeshua. That's an incredible thing for a Hindu, but our Lord is incredible!

The arrest was a very 'random thing.' If we had been walking where we were five minutes earlier or later, they never would have seen us to question us about our citizenship, but again, it wasn't random in Yeshua's eyes—it was part of His eternal purpose for us and many others. Israel deported us, but they were only a pawn in God's sovereign hand to bring us to the USA for a season, for Yeshua's reasons, one of which we found out on our second day in New York City.

It was a Sabbath. During a time of praising Yeshua in song I sensed that He wanted us to travel through the USA, visiting and ministering to all the ordainees of The Seed of Abraham, as well as many others on my email list. We've been through about 40 States, ministering in congregations, home fellowships as well as to many people on my email list and people on the street, in grocery stores and restaurants, etc. After a year and a half of traveling by car the Lord gave us some much needed time to rest and be spiritually refreshed in a motel room in Pine Valley, California.

When we were in Cincinnati, Ohio in April 2013, a man on my email list sent us funds to buy a vehicle. We have a 2004 Acura MDX, which is large enough for our clothes and ministry items, etc., while we traveled through the USA. What Satan meant for evil, God has used for good for His purpose in our lives and the lives of many others. Glory to Messiah Yeshua!

After spending seven months in the motel room in Pine Valley, CA the Lord moved us to San Diego, CA in May 2015. We lived in a small apartment and ministered to many US Navy personnel as San Diego is a Navy city. We left San Diego in Sept. 2016 and came to Houston, TX in Dec. 2016. It looks like we'll be leaving in April 2018 for Flagstaff, Arizona.

The following are two times of ministry that took place while we were in Pine Valley. The first happened in October 2014 and the second in February 2015.

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### **A Bottle of Wild Turkey Whiskey**

Fadi is a 25 year old Chaldean-American man who works at the only gas station/grocery store in Pine Valley. He's not Arab or Muslim, but Chaldean and Christian. The first time I went into the store, Fadi and I struck up a conversation about Jesus and I began to share The Hebraic Perspective. I went back twice, for about an hour and a half each time. With him working at the counter, people who came in and bought things heard snippets of our conversation, but nothing developed with any of them except with a young man, about six foot two inches tall (1.88 meters), 21 years old. He came in and bought a bottle of Wild Turkey whiskey. I could see he was hurting. My heart went out to him and I asked Yeshua what I could say to him. After about a minute of waiting upon the Lord I sensed from the Holy Spirit to ask him: 'Have you ever considered giving your life to Jesus?'

I've never initially asked that of anyone before—it was our Lord reaching out to Him. 'No, I haven't, sir,' he replied, and as he began to leave I reached into my shirt pocket and pulled out *The Journey Begins*,<sup>134</sup> my one sheet handout of how I gave my life to Jesus in October 1975. He stopped, took it and said he'd read it, but that he probably wouldn't give his life to Jesus because his older brother had been killed in Afghanistan while serving in the U.S. Army. I told him I was very sorry about that:

“I have a son who was there for a year, too, and my wife, when she was 20 years old, lost her 17 year old sister in a car accident. They were best friends. It devastated my wife because her sister believed in Jesus, but my wife didn't and was living a life of drinking, drugging and sex. My wife got on her knees in her bedroom and cried out to God, 'Why did you take her?! I'm the bad one! You should have taken me!' Years later though, she realized that God had used her sister's death to bring her to Jesus.”

He was touched by the Holy Spirit and again said that he would read the sheet, but this time I saw that he really meant it. I put my left arm on his right shoulder and said that Jesus loved him very much, and I did too, and if he ever had any questions or just wanted to talk, my cellphone and email were on the paper and he could call or email me anytime. After he left I prayed for him

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<sup>134</sup> See *The Journey Begins* at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Journey-Begins.pdf>.

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and Fadi prayed with me, that the Father would draw him to Jesus and bring him into the Kingdom. Thank you for your prayers for him. I didn't get his name and Fadi didn't know it either, but Fadi told me that a year earlier everyone in town knew it because his brother's death was 'all over the media.'

## **The Last Supper?**

On Monday, February 9th, 2015 I took Ruti to the park. An older couple came strolling by as we sat on a bench. They were from San Diego and came up to get away from the chaos. Pine Valley is 50 miles (80 kilometers) from San Diego. They're Christians. Curtis is 68 and Dixie is 65. After asking them their favorite Bible verse and discussing it (Curtis: Prov. 3:5-6—Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean *not* unto your own understanding; and Dixie's was 'Be still and know that I am God; Ps. 46:10), I asked them if they knew the biblical name for the Last Supper (as the Roman Catholic Church calls it; stripping it of its Jewish foundation; it's never called the Last Supper in Scripture). They didn't know its biblical name, but when I said it was the Passover they realized it. Then I asked them *what kind of bread* did Jesus give His Apostles at His last Passover when He said, 'Take and eat, for this is my Body, which is broken for you'? (1st Cor. 11:24) They had no clue. I told them it wasn't Wonder Bread, nor French bread, *nor any other bread with yeast or leaven* in it because during Passover yeast symbolizes *sin*. It was *unleavened* bread, which *God commands for His Passover* (Ex. 12:8) and the ensuing seven days of The Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:4-6f.) because unleavened bread is the only bread that can picture our *sinless* Savior. That's why Yeshua could take it and say it was His (sinless) Body. It's obvious that the Holy Spirit wants us to keep Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread because the Apostle Paul encouraged the Gentile Corinthians to keep it:

“Your *glorying* is not good! Don't you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?! Therefore, *purge out the old leaven that you may be a new loaf of bread, since you truly are unleavened!* For indeed, Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us. Therefore, *let us keep the Feast*, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth!” (1st Corinthians 5:6-8)

The feast that Paul speaks of has to be the Feast of *Unleavened* Bread, which contains Passover in it because it's the only feast in the world that speaks of not eating leavened bread, but unleavened bread. The Corinthians were keep-

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ing Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread because Paul told them ‘to keep the feast.’ Church history records that *all* Christians, for at least 70 years *after* the Resurrection, kept the Passover, which means that all the other Feasts of Israel were also being celebrated. Unfortunately, when the Roman Catholic Church wanted Christians to stop keeping Passover and celebrate Easter, many Gentile Christians continued to keep the Feasts for *hundreds of years after* the Resurrection.

In 120 AD the Church of Rome severed Mosaic Law from its Christian moorings (Acts 21:20-24; 1st Cor. 7:17-20; Rev. 14:12, etc.), but many Gentile Christians continued to keep Passover and the 7th day Sabbath, as well as all the other laws of Moses that pertained to them, just as their Savior and His Apostles had done because Mosaic Law tells us what is right and what is sin—in God’s eyes (Mt. 22:35-40; Rom. 7:7, 12, 14).

Victor, Bishop of Rome (189-199 AD), whose office would later become that of the Pope, had grown strong by then and he *demand*ed, through threat of excommunication, that all Christians keep Easter instead of Passover. Polycrates (130-196), Bishop of Ephesus and representative of all the churches in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey), refused to be frightened into submission by the threats of Victor. Polycrates claimed that *the Apostles Philip and John, many years after the Resurrection, had taught the Asian churches to celebrate the Passover.*<sup>135</sup> Alexander Roberts, translating *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, writes that Polycrates,

‘belonged to a family in which he was the eighth Christian bishop; and he presided over the church of Ephesus in which the traditions of St. John were yet fresh in men’s minds at the date of his birth (130 AD). He had doubtless known Polycarp and Irenaeus...*It is surely noteworthy that nobody doubted that it (the Passover) was kept by a **Christian and Apostolic ordinance.***’<sup>136</sup>

Eusebius (260-340 AD), a Roman Catholic bishop and church historian, records that Polycrates wrote a letter to Victor (after Victor’s threat of excommunication if Polycrates didn’t comply with Victor’s Easter), and Polycrates

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<sup>135</sup> Samuele Bacchiocchi, *From Sabbath To Sunday* (Rome, Italy: The Pontifical Gregorian University Press, 1977), p. 119. It’s a Christian classic. It can be read at <http://seedofabraham.net/From-Sabbath-to-Sunday.pdf>.

<sup>136</sup> Translated by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 1885.

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spoke of what *all* the bishops of Asia, as well as he, thought about Passover, and also, their unwillingness to celebrate Easter (or Resurrection Sunday as it is now sometimes called):

“We observe the exact day; *neither adding nor taking away* (from Scripture). For in Asia...great lights have fallen asleep, which shall rise again on the day of the Lord’s coming, when he shall come with glory from Heaven and shall seek out all the saints. Among these are Philip, one of the twelve Apostles, who fell asleep in Hierapolis, and his two aged virgin daughters...and moreover, John, who was both a witness and a teacher, *who reclined upon the bosom of the Lord*...he fell asleep at Ephesus. And Polycarp in Smyrna, who was a bishop and martyr...All these observed *the fourteenth day of the Passover according to the Gospel, deviating in no respect, but following the rule of faith.*”

“And I also, Polycrates...according to the tradition of my relatives (before me)...For seven of my relatives were bishops and I am the eighth. And my relatives *always observed the day when the people put away the leaven*. I, therefore, brethren, who have lived sixty-five years *in the Lord*, and have met with the brethren throughout the world, *and have gone through every Holy Scripture*, am *not afraid by terrifying words*. For those greater than I have said, ‘We ought to obey God rather than man!’<sup>137</sup> I could mention the bishops who were present, whom I summoned at your desire; whose names, should I write them, *would constitute a great multitude*. And they...*gave their consent to this letter*, knowing that I...*have always governed my life by the Lord Jesus.*”<sup>138</sup>

Polycrates, in speaking of putting ‘away the leaven,’ is referring to God’s command that no leaven or yeast bread and products are to be found in the home of one celebrating Passover and the seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread (Ex. 12:14-15). This is symbolic of God getting rid of our sins *and* eating the Bread of Life for seven days and becoming *like* Yeshua—without sin. This is a wonderful Feast unto our Lord, commemorating what He has done for us in making us new creatures. The letter, written sometime after 190 AD, historically confirms that many Christians continued to keep the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, even though Rome was determined to snuff it

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<sup>137</sup> See Acts 4:19.

<sup>138</sup> Eusebius, *Church History*, Book V, Chapter 24.

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out. Church history records that the conflict was about Rome's desire to veer off from Scripture, strip Christians of their ancient Hebraic heritage (Mosaic Law, as specifically seen here in the biblical Passover, etc.), and institute the pagan day of Easter Sunday (and Sunday vs. the 7th day Sabbath). Now that's not how Roman Catholic Church history interprets it, but that's the correct understanding. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that the Jews rejected Jesus and therefore, God rejected the Jews *and* their 'legalistic' Mosaic Law, which passed away at the cross, but obviously, with the Apostle Paul speaking of Passover *after* the cross in First Corinthians 5:6-8, Passover, and by implication, all the Feasts of Israel and Mosaic Law, is for all Christians.<sup>139</sup>

It's not that we shouldn't celebrate the Resurrection, but not according to an Easter dating, which is done in the churches today. In other words, Easter and Resurrection Sunday are calculated the same way; according to the pagan day of Easter.<sup>140</sup> God though, already set up at Mt. Sinai a time when the Resurrection would be celebrated, providing the Sunday of the Feast of Unleavened Bread to observe it in. It's called First Sheaf (or First Fruits; and the Apostle Paul specifically refers to Yeshua as the First Fruits to *rise* from the dead in 1st Cor. 15:20, 23).<sup>141</sup> Be that as it may, Curtis and Dixie learned a lot of new things about how Jesus wants them to walk out their faith in Him. Dixie had been listening and Curtis promised me, as we parted, that he'd read the two articles that I gave him (*Law 102* and *Sam the Rock Thrower*).

We are all called to be faithful witnesses wherever God places us. 'Success' in God's eyes isn't measured by how many follow us, but by how faithfully we follow Messiah Yeshua. Ruti and I continue to financially support (feed, clothe and teach God's Word) to our 101 orphans and their six pastor/caretakers in Kenya, something the Lord led us to begin in July 2012. We also continue to support our beloved Israeli friends who are in need of both food and clothes, both physical and spiritual. Financially, we give to whomever we see has a need, as our Lord leads, and in the last four years we've also given to a number of Americans in need. There are people we help every month, some we help intermittently, and some we give to only one time. We desire to serve people in whatever way we can, and helping with money is one of those ways.

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<sup>139</sup> The Feasts of Israel and the Church <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Feasts-of-Israel-and-the-Church.pdf> and The Feasts of Israel as Time Markers *After* the Resurrection at <https://seedofabraham.net/The-Feasts-of-Israel-as-Time-Markers.pdf>.

<sup>140</sup> In 325 AD the Council of Nicaea established that Easter would be held on the first Sunday after the first full moon occurring on or after the vernal equinox.

<sup>141</sup> For more on this see First Sheaf at <http://seedofabraham.net/First-Sheaf.pdf>.

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The financial figures below represent all the money we received in the last 24 years (2000-2023) and what we have given to Jews and Gentiles in need and to our 100 Kenyan orphans:

<b>Year</b>	<b>\$ Received</b>	<b>\$ Given Out</b>	<b>% of Giving</b>
2000	\$41,326.34	\$4,011.30	9.7%
2001	\$38,434.22	\$5,784.67	15.1%
2002	\$41,132.22	\$11,981.81	29.1%
2003	\$39,218.27	\$13,866.14	35.3%
2004	\$43,876.94	\$14,630.48	33.3%
2005	\$52,491.30	\$12,992.68	24.8%
2006	\$50,560.19	\$17,478.23	34.6%
2007	\$70,591.59	\$29,407.80	41.7%
2008	\$53,795.41	\$13,419.80	25.0%
2009	\$65,633.56	\$15,730.26	24.0%
2010	\$42,635.01	\$6,455.97	15.1%
2011	\$54,463.01	\$12,240.41	22.5%
2012	\$51,190.17	\$16,037.94	31.3%
2013	\$68,607.67	\$20,978.86	30.6%
2014	\$41,642.87	\$13,267.91	31.9%
2015	\$44,720.07	\$11,099.25	24.8%
2016	\$44,401.67	\$13,806.19	31.1%
2017	\$61,114.68	\$23,950.26	39.2%
2018	\$40,004.88	\$9,747.00	24.4%
2019	\$53,883.20	\$13,573.82	25.2%
2020	\$67,916.62	\$24,871.89	36.6%
2021	\$117,302.64	\$75,538.87	64.4%
2022	\$60,672.34	\$15,268.55	27.2%
2023	\$47,057.70	\$14,123.92	30.0%
<b>Totals for 24 Years</b>	<b>\$1,292,672.46</b>	<b>\$410,264.01</b>	<b>31.7%</b>
<b>Yearly Average for 24 Years</b>	<b>\$53,861.35</b>	<b>\$17,094.33</b>	<b>31.7%</b>
<b>Monthly Average for 24 Years</b>	<b>\$4,488.45</b>	<b>\$1,424.53</b>	<b>31.7%</b>

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### The Fast

On February 21st, 2015 the Lord Yeshua led me to begin a 40 day fast. The first 18 days were only water, but on day 19 I began mixing 30-50% fresh squeezed organic orange juice with water, twice a day, for much needed rehydration and some energy. The rest of the day I drank only water. Nutritionists say that as long as the orange juice is 50% or less, the body remains in fasting mode. It was truly the Lord's leading for spiritual, physical (healing for people we know), and financial breakthroughs (for The Seed of Abraham and people I know). Also, prayer was ascending for the ministers of The Seed of Abraham and for our more than 100 orphans in Kenya and their six pastor/caretakers and helpers, and for the needy we personally know in Israel, etc. I've done many fasts before, but this was the first one where, for the first three days, I didn't have any desire for food. The first three days of a fast are usually the hardest—with the first day being the hardest, the second day being not much easier, in terms of desiring food, and the third day being a little easier than the second day, but not by much. By the fourth day, however, the appetite goes away because that's when the body fully clicks into fasting (survival) mode, but for all 40 days of this fast there was 'no appetite,' except for a ravenous desire, for more than a week, but the Lord dealt with it and me. Weak is a good term for how I felt, but that's normal for not eating food for awhile.

One fast I did about 28 years ago began the usual way for the first three days—hard, but by the fourth and fifth days it was just as hard. I was *always* thinking about cheeseburgers and French fries; and spaghetti, meatballs and baked garlic bread; and tuna fish sandwiches; and pizza, etc. On the fifth day I said to the Lord, 'Yeshua, I'm continually thinking about food! If it's going to be like this, I don't want to continue.' Yeshua clearly spoke to me, not in a condemning way, and said, 'You're always thinking about food, Avram.' Pierced to the heart, as only our Lord can do, I said, 'I'm sorry, Lord. If you'll help me with this I'll continue,' and from that moment on He took both the appetite *and* the desire to think about food away from me and away we went for 40 days. He is truly the God who provides for our every need and is molding us into His Image.

One of the things that our Lord has placed deep within my heart, other than Israel and my Jewish people, is to build Centers of Hope for the orphans in Kenya. We want to feed and clothe them, and to love them and raise up an Army of Orphans for Yeshua who will take His love and His Anointing and His Way of living out our faith in Him (The Hebraic Perspective) to all the

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other orphans and people in Kenya. I also think that the Lord will bring Ruti and me to live in Kenya, most likely for the rest of our lives, to raise up the first Center, and then the next one, etc.

There are about 2,600,000 orphans in Kenya. That's a staggering 58,800 orphans for every one million people in Kenya (about 6% of the population), and the Kenyan government doesn't do anything for them. Most of them roam the cities and eat out of garbage cans, and many are used and abused by the Mafia, and each other. Child prostitution is also rampant in Kenya, with the majority of prostitutes 9 to 18 years old. It's a jungle on the streets of the cities, especially if you have no where to go and no food to eat.

We want to love and provide for as many of these precious orphans as we can. God only knows how much the first Center of Hope will cost. We'll need to buy bunk beds and blankets, towels and toilet paper, clothes, pajamas and shoes; dressers, chairs and cafeteria tables—and hi-chairs and cribs for the infants, etc.

We'll also need to feed the orphans three times a day, healthy nutritious meals of fresh fruit, vegetables, fish, meat, brown rice, beans, lentils, whole grain breads and potatoes, etc., and we plan to have our own school, and caretakers for the children.

All the children are malnourished—most are just skin and bones. I believe Yeshua's heart is weeping for them. Mine certainly is and I believe this was the primary reason why Yeshua led me into the fast.

These Centers of Hope may have nothing to do with what Yeshua's Plan is. After all, He hasn't given me a live vision or directly spoken to me about it, but this is the desire of my heart, which I believe He has placed there, and until the Lord shows me otherwise, I am looking to Him to fulfill it. If the Lord wants Ruti and me to go over to Kenya and build the Center of Hope with our own hands, we will. As we walk it out one day at a time with Yeshua it will unfold before us.

We in the USA live in a land of affluence. Most everyone has a car, a home, and *plenty of food* on the table or at the restaurant. The six pastor/caretakers whom we support in Kenya, who live in six different villages around the Kenyan city of Kisii, have *sacrificed their lives* to raise these orphans who are not their own because the Lord Yeshua led them to do that and they have been obedient to His voice.

One of the pastors, Charles, wrote me on March 9th, 2015 and said that his orphans were only eating a small meal for supper—they hadn't eaten any

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breakfast or lunch for days, but they were thanking and praising Yeshua for their supper. On March 16th we sent funds to all the pastors, but obviously, we need to send more funds more often.

I covet your prayers for these men and women who are caring for these orphans, as well as their own children, and also for those who help the pastors and their wives with the orphans. Most of the orphans live in the same house as the pastor, his wife and their own children. That's their 'orphanage.' You can begin to imagine what these pastors and their wives are going through having 10 to 20 orphans living in their homes.

The Center of Hope will provide a shelter and a home atmosphere where the orphans will feel safe and secure and not have to worry about where their next meal is coming from, nor when it will be. They'll also be shown the love of Yeshua and taught His way to walk out their faith in Him. Truly, we can make a difference for them, and many other orphans, through our prayers because with God, *nothing* is impossible and it is His heart for the little children to come unto Him (Mt. 19:14). We want to see this Work of God done by His Spirit, for then it will flourish and have Messiah's Life and Blessings upon it, and the children will benefit physically, emotionally and spiritually:

“Not by might, nor by power, *but by My Spirit,* says Yahveh, the Commander of the Hosts of the Heavens!” (Zechariah 4:6b)

On Shabat, day eight of the fast (Feb. 28th), I decided to take a hot bath. It felt good, but by the end of it the little energy I had was sapped from my body struggling to keep me conscious in the hot water and humidity. I got up to towel dry myself off and after I dried my head and draped the towel around my shoulders I didn't have the strength to move the towel across my shoulders. I sat down on the edge of the tub and held onto a fixture. The next thing I knew I was struggling to pick myself up off the floor on the other side of the tub. I had fainted and fallen out of the tub, my right forehead and right arm taking the brunt of the fall.

Ruti came in when she heard the crash on the floor and I didn't answer her question, 'Avram, are you alright?!' She said I looked 'white as a sheet.' All the blood had drained from my face. I had quite a knot on my forehead and my right arm was bruised, along with my right thigh, but Yeshua had watched over me. I could have broken my nose or elbow or cracked my head open.

That'll be the last time I'll take a hot bath on a long fast.

## *The Way of the Lord*

### **Fasting Insights**

The Lord was gracious to me during the 40 fast in many ways, one of which was that He lead me into greater forgiveness for people who had hurt me over the years. I had forgiven them, but this time the forgiveness went deeper into *my* heart. Yeshua led me to ask Him to help me to forgive them ‘with all my heart,’ and to love them with His love—and He did. This Scripture also came home to me in a greater way:

“So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.” (Matthew 18:35 NKJV; see also Mt. 18:21-35)

I have come to see my own carnal nature and how far I am from being like Messiah Yeshua. Sometimes I get irritated, frustrated and upset (angry) with people and my wife Ruti, from my own expectations of them. The Lord is working on my nature and character to be able to love my neighbor as myself, and I am grateful to Him for that.

Food takes a powerful place in our lives and rightfully so, but Yeshua doesn’t want that to be a god or idol in my life. In speaking with His Apostles who had just gone into town to buy some food for themselves and Him, He said, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His Work.” (John 4:34)

To be able to choose Yeshua and His will during the fast, over *my need* to eat ‘now’ for physical survival, is truly to place Him at the center of my life. Oh yes, if I were eating and satisfied, and someone asked me, ‘Would you choose Yeshua’s will over your need to eat food,’ my first thought would be, ‘Of course!’ But that’s an answer from a full belly. There’s no real need or temptation to eat to survive. I have come to see that only with ‘Messiah in me’ am I able to choose Him and His will over my *need* to eat. Of course, that’s exactly why He came—so that we could be like Him who overcame temptation within and without. My carnal nature strongly fights it—it’s a struggle, but I have come to see that He is *very* Faithful:

“Looking unto Yeshua, the Author *and Finisher of our faith*, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the crucifixion, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the Throne of God.” (Hebrews 12:2)

For ten days, from day 13 to day 22 of the fast, I had *intense* cravings for

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food. If it was up to me I would have broken the fast, but what kept me going was the thought, no doubt inspired and sustained by Yeshua, that He was wanting to establish a spiritual foundation through this fast for the Work He has for Ruti and me in Kenya.

I had never had such intense cravings for food for such a long period of time, and it was continual during those ten days. From morning until night and it kept me from going to sleep at night for hours—thinking about the food I would love to eat when I broke the fast. The Lord was letting me see more of my own carnal heart or Adamic nature that rebels against what He wants for me when it really counts, in spite of my loving Him ‘with all my heart.’

On night 22 of the fast I was worn out struggling *to keep the foods in my mind*. I really wanted them, but I knew I shouldn’t be thinking about them all the time. It was a battle—my need to eat and thinking about those foods, and just being able to pray—and I was losing the battle. In bed that night I half-surrendered my desire for the food to Yeshua, saying that if He wanted to take those food cravings from me, He could, but even when I said it I was hoping He wouldn’t. I was completely stuck in my carnality and didn’t want to let go of it, but Yeshua took me at my feeble word—and I praise Him for it! He would become more important to me, in my desperate time of need to eat, than food to sustain my very life.

In the abstract, when swords weren’t threatening him, Peter had said to Yeshua and meant it, ‘I will go to prison for you and die for you!’ but when his life was actually threatened by the thought of being exposed as one of Yeshua’s disciples on that cold and bleak night He denied His Lord (Matthew 26:32f). Even before that he wasn’t able to stay awake for an hour and pray for Yeshua. Yeshua had told Him,

‘Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation! The spirit indeed is willing, *but the flesh is weak.*’ (Mt. 26:41)

How I had come to know just how weak my flesh is. In that, Messiah Yeshua showed me how strong my flesh was and brought me into those intense cravings to reveal to me His power to transform my nature into His—to overcome the talon claws of my own carnality.

The next morning my intense craving for food was gone. The Lord then brought to mind the Sons of Israel in the Wilderness, who had intense cravings for the food they had loved to eat in Egypt, but while the food He had given them was still in their mouths, He struck them! It all began with the non-Hebrews:

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“Now the mixed multitude among them *yielded* to intense craving—so the Sons of Israel *also* wept again and said, ‘Who will give us meat to eat?! We *remember* the fish, which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions and the garlic!’” (Numbers 11:4-5)

Sometimes it’s a word from another person that tempted me, and I follow it instead of Him, and other times it came from within me. I have come to see that I must take all my thoughts captive to Him (2nd Cor. 10:5) if I’m going to survive this Journey intact. Ancient Israel wanted what they wanted instead of what God wanted for them. This is a graphic picture of our Adamic nature. Israel despised the Manna and the One who had given it to them, saying:

“...our whole being is dried up! There is nothing at all except this Manna before our eyes!’ (Numbers 11:6)

God had given them divine food, but they wanted the food of their slavery. How I had identified with those Sons of Israel in their carnality without even realizing it, until after my ten days of intense craving was over. In all this my faith in our Father has increased, not in an abstract way for The Sweet By-and-By, but for today—now, when I actually need a God who will provide for me in my hour of temptation. He knows I need food, etc., but He also wants to teach me how *to have faith in Him for provision now*. It’s not an abstract thing for me to say that I am able to choose Him and His will for me over my need to eat and live, and it’s all because of Who He is and what He has done for me. That doesn’t mean I’ll always do it, but it certainly wasn’t available for me like it is now; it’s not my will power, nor my strength that finally overcame my Adamic nature, but His Spirit within me.

Our God is more than able to supply our needs, as He demonstrated to Israel in Numbers 11, but first He let them know their intense cravings *to see what they would do* (see Dt. 8:1f. where He speaks of this very thing). Would they turn to Him, or cry out against Him and His provision? They failed, and as such, are a perfect picture to all of us that our carnality will not serve Him at our point of need (or desire). We need to be transformed into His Image on the anvil of temptation. He has provided transformation for us, but it’s not magic.

Scripture states that after forty days of fasting Yeshua was hungry (Mt. 4:2), but He was able to rebuke Satan, who tempted Him to change the stones into bread, saying,

“It is written! ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but *by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*’” (Matthew 4:4;

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cf. Deuteronomy 8:1-3f.).

Yeshua, despite His hunger, didn't follow Satan's temptation to feed Himself outside the will of His Father, and Scripture records that once Yeshua was through with Satan, angels came to minister to Him, no doubt, bringing some heavenly Manna (Mt. 4:11).

On the other hand, I would have yielded to those intense cravings if not for the Spirit of Grace within me. I saw that only 'in Him' was I able to think and act like He did. Yeshua *delivered* me from that essential part of my carnality that chooses food over God when there really is a dire need, as it was for Israel that day, and for me for those ten days. Nothing must come between Him and us—not even the very food that keeps us alive, and especially our desire for it. For truly, our food is to do the will of our God, over and above our very existence, as Messiah Yeshua crucified for us graphically reveals.

God told Israel that He would give them what they craved for:

“You shall eat, not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days, but for a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you because you have *despised* Yahveh who is among you, and have wept before Him, saying, ‘Why did we ever come up out of Egypt?!’” (Numbers 11:19-20)

How ungrateful Israel was for what God had done for her in freeing her from Egyptian slavery, but they would rather have had the *certainly of slavery*, with its garlic, leeks and onions than the *uncertainty of freedom* with God—they didn't know from one day to the next where they would be bedding down for the night in the Wilderness and they knew that their next meal would be the same Manna as before.

The Lord wants to train us, as a father trains up his son, *if we will let Him*. We can be comfortable at the oasis in the Wilderness where we are at, or we can seek Him to move on to the next oasis to become more like Him.

We have all been born *bent* crooked in our carnality and we are so unlike Yeshua, but unless the Lord shows it to us we continue to think we're OK. As we continually surrender our lives and ways to Him He reveals more of who we really are and transforms us.

Even Moses though, whom God used to bring all the plagues upon Egypt, part the Red Sea and bring Manna to Israel in the Wilderness didn't believe that God was able to perform His word and bring meat to Israel:

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“And Moses said, ‘The people whom I am among are six hundred thousand men on foot, yet You have said, ‘I will give them meat that they may eat for a whole month.’ Shall flocks and herds be slaughtered for them to provide enough for them?! Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them to provide enough for them?!’ And Yahveh said to Moses, ‘Has Yahveh’s arm been shortened?! Now you shall see whether *what I say will happen to you or not!*’” (Numbers 11:21-23)

Most of the time God doesn’t move immediately, but waits so *we can see* what is in our carnal heart (Dt. 8:1-3f.). It’s only a test if it really matters. Our God is able to provide for all our needs, as Israel found out to her shame and punishment because she would not bow down and serve Him from the heart, nor cry out to Him for help in this area of obedience to His will:

“A wind went out from Yahveh and it brought quail from the Sea and left them fluttering near the Camp about a day’s journey on this side and about a day’s journey on the other side, all around the Camp, and about three feet (one meter) above the surface of the ground. The people stayed up all that day, all night, and all the next day, and gathered the quail—and they spread them out for themselves all around the Camp, *but while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of Yahveh was aroused against the people and Yahveh struck the people with a great plague.* So he called the name of that place *Kibroth Hattaavah* because there they *buried* the people *who had yielded to (their) craving.*” (Numbers 11:31-34)

When I saw that I imagined myself sitting down to one of my savory meals, when I would finally eat it, and choking on it. I knew I was wrong for thinking of food, but *I couldn’t change myself.* I praise and thank Yeshua for what He has done for us! It truly is finished! (John 19:30) Our redemption is already accomplished!

*Kibroth* is plural for graves (*Hattaavah* is the location).<sup>142</sup> It’s a stern Word to us because if the Lord demanded that kind of obedience from ancient Is-

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<sup>142</sup> These graves, and the other times when God kills many Israelis, are a picture to us of our Journey ‘along the Way,’ where we die, bit by bit to our self, so that His Seed within can grow.

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rael, *how much more us*, who know Him by His Word and His Spirit and whom He desires to *transform* into His Image? We are able to be like Him because it's not by our own strength that we transform ourselves nor overcome the temptations, but by His very Spirit and Blood within us:

“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the Glory of the Lord, are being transformed *into the same Image* from Glory to Glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”  
(2nd Corinthians 3:18)

Because of the fast and seeing the weakness of my flesh to obey Him, I am in a place with the Lord where I am more dependent upon Him than ever before in all my 40 years of walking with Him. This means that He is able to perform more of His will through me than ever before. Glory to Messiah Yeshua—the Lamb of God because of what He has done for us! *This* is what Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are all about!

Yeshua has brought us out of the Kingdom of Satan to bring us into His Kingdom, making us like Himself in the process. He is the One who gives us the desire and the power to overcome our desire for a cheeseburger instead of Him.

*In the Precious Name of Messiah Yeshua,*

*. Avram Yehoshua*

**A Sower went out to sow his Seed...**

(Luke 8:5)

## ***Contact Information***

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