

JEW^S F^{OR} JESUS

established 32 A.D., give or take a year

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How Best To Help Israel by David Brickner, Executive Director

Ever since I can remember there has been a *pushke* in the office of the executive director of Jews for Jesus. This particular *pushke* is for the JNF. If you've never heard of a *pushke* and you don't know what the JNF is, the former is like a piggy bank, except instead of a pig, it's a rectangular box with a slot for coins. The latter, JNF, stands for the "Jewish National Fund."

Many Jewish homes have a *pushke* for one charity or another. The JNF distributes their small blue metal boxes to collect money for planting trees in Israel.* Since its establishment in 1901, the Jewish National Fund has planted more than 240 million trees in Israel, thanks to donations from around the world. At first the contributors were mainly Jewish, but now Israel can point to sections of forested land in Israel that were made possible by donations from Christians – individuals, as well as groups.

I'm always amazed and blessed to see how many Christians love the Jewish people and the land of Israel in such tangible ways. Some give to plant trees while others help provide a variety of material aid, from food and clothing for the poor, to building schools, to funds for bomb shelters. Some churches "adopt" cities in Israel. Others give to overt political activities such as lobbying on behalf of Israel in Washington, D.C.



Indeed, many in Israel see American evangelical Christians as their very best friends.

Then again, some people are uncomfortable about helping Israel, because doing so may seem to reflect views that they don't hold. But guess what? Ultimately, none of the things we've mentioned thus far is the very

best way to help Israel. That is not to say that such help goes unappreciated. But you can offer the very best help, the ultimate help, regardless of your political and theological views.

Stop and think: What can meet Israel's most desperate need? The psalmist speaks for the entire nation of Israel, asking "From whence comes my help? My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:1-2). God has promised Israel: "For I, the LORD your God, will hold your right hand, Saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you'" (Isaiah 41:13).

It is easy enough for secular Israelis to forget this deeper spiritual reality, to believe that strength lies in military might or clever diplomacy, or even in strategic alliances with the United States of America. But as followers of Jesus, we should know better; we must not only remember these spiritual realities, we must also seek to speak to the people of Israel about them.

Right now we see a great spiritual hunger among Israeli Jews. But the voice of the prophets is not often heard in the land of Israel today. Nor does the fervent faith of the psalmists soothe many troubled hearts there. But Jesus offers hope to calm the fearful soul. The gospel is the good news that ultimately overcomes uncertainty and the conflict that

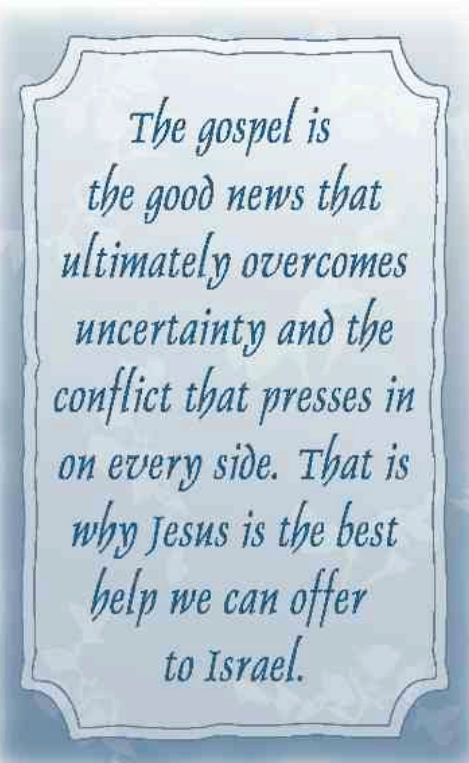
presses in on every side. That is why Jesus is the best help we can offer to Israel. The need is urgent and He is the only solution.

There is nothing political about sharing the gospel with Israel, yet the task is explosively controversial and all too often dismissed or even discouraged by some of the very people who most wish to help. I would never discourage those who wish to plant trees or give other kinds of help if they wish. Nor is it my place to persuade Christians who disagree with Israel politically to change their views. I only want followers of Jesus to really and truly understand and be motivated by the reality that He is the only lasting source of help for the inhabitants of this deeply troubled part of the world.

This May marks the 60th anniversary of the modern state of Israel, a nation born in adversity, at enmity with her neighbors and dogged by war and strife to this very day. Our only hope for peace, Israel's only hope for peace, was born in the Middle East some 2,000 years ago. Y'shua brings peace and reconciliation between Arab and Jewish individuals who trust in His name. One day He will establish a lasting peace that will echo around the world and reach into the hearts and lives of all who hear His voice. In the meantime, together we can be a part of bringing this hope to the hearts of those living in Israel right now.

Please note the Behold Your God Israel brochure enclosed with this newsletter. As we've previously

announced, Jews for Jesus is launching a series of intensive evangelistic campaigns throughout the land of Israel. During the next several years we will be handing out gospel tracts on street corners and college campuses. God willing, we will be placing gospel statements with newspapers, billboards and various other advertising vehicles. We will be




phoning, going door-to-door and conducting personal visitation to reach thousands of people to tell them about the real life-changing help and healing Jesus can bring. And we need your help.

We need your help, first of all, as intercessors. The Bible instructs us to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (Psalm 122:6). Since true peace comes only through the Prince of Peace, Jesus the Messiah, we fulfill

this instruction of the Scriptures when we pray for the gospel message to penetrate the hearts and minds of Arabs and Jews who live in that city, indeed in that land. We will provide timely prayer requests through a special prayer bulletin that you can receive via e-mail. You can go to <http://www.jewsforjesus.org/contact?formid=300d> to sign up to receive that prayer bulletin and be part of the crucial team of intercessors who will undergird this effort.

Second, you might want to support this effort with your finances. Third (and get ready – this is huge), we are building a special, strategic "shadow" team that will go out anonymously with our campaigners to cover them in prayer and help with a variety of strategic tasks. You don't have to be Jewish and you don't have to be trained in evangelism to be part of that team! You do need a cool head, a calm heart, and a strong prayer life. More about this next month, but if you are interested, please use the enclosed brochure to let us know.

These are some of the most tangible ways that we can invite you to join us in offering lasting hope and help to Israel. If you believe the gospel, believe with us and stand with us as we proclaim Jesus, the ultimate hope of Israel. He is the help that comes from the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth. 

*It has become traditional for Jewish people to give donations to "plant trees" on "Tu B'Shevat," which is kind of like a Jewish Arbor Day for the nation of Israel and was recently observed on January 22.

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WE EXIST TO MAKE THE MESSIAHSHIP OF JESUS AN UNAVOIDABLE ISSUE TO OUR JEWISH PEOPLE WORLDWIDE



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Lifting Up Y'shua (Jesus) in ISRAEL

Our work in Israel began with a family of four in 1994 and has grown to be the largest branch of Jews for Jesus!

Our branch leader, **Dan**, is married to **Dinah** and they have three children, Yael, Eitan and Yoav. We asked Dan to introduce this feature, and here is what he wants you to know about the work in Israel:

"Our Jews for Jesus Israel work is blessed with great staff. All of us are Israeli citizens who, more than anything, want to bring to our nation the message of Jesus. As we stand for the Lord in the Land, we face many challenges. Many oppose the gospel and would love for us to disappear. Yet at this time we are choosing to launch BYG Israel and to be more available, audible and visible than ever before. Why? Because the people of Israel need to hear the gospel!

"Most of the nation is still unreached with the message of Y'shua, the message of salvation. Our people do not know and, most tragically, they do not even have the opportunity to know. Let me give you an example.

"In Israel, one cannot go to a bookstore and purchase a Hebrew copy of the New Testament. Israelis do not even know that Y'shua is the true Hebrew name of Jesus.

(See page 5) A big part of our campaign will revolve around His name, which speaks of the salvation He brings. Even if most will reject Him, by the grace of God, over the next few years, we hope most Israelis will at least know enough to truly consider Him. We know that He will draw some of them to Himself. We hope that you will partner with us to bring the gospel to the nation of Israel. That is the most important blessing that Israel truly needs." Dan and the rest of our Israel missionaries and outreach workers have been introduced

in previous newsletters, which are archived on our website. You can go to www.jewsforjesus.org and type in any of their names under "search." Meanwhile, here is a brief description of the rest of the team:

Efraim, who with his wife, **Jeannie** pioneered our Israel work, now serves as associate director for training and development in Israel. Jeannie works with children and youth. Both their sons, **Daniel** and **Gabi**, are grown and both worked as interns with Jews for Jesus around the world following their army service.

Shlomy and **Miriam**, as mentioned in January, have expanded our work into Rishon L'Tzion. (More about the new work there follows.)

Yoel is married to **Adel** and they have three children, **Noa**, **Boaz** and **Natanel**. Prior to becoming believers in Jesus they lived for a time within a very Orthodox Jewish community, and Yoel was part of our ultra-Orthodox outreach during Behold Your God in New York.

Ze'ev is married to **Rachel**; they have two children, **Leyah** and...we don't yet know the name of their second child, who is due to be born this month! Ze'ev did some professional writing prior to coming on staff, and his skills in producing gospel literature in Hebrew will be a great contribution for Behold Your God Israel.

Ofer is married to **Surah**, and they have two children, **Ely** and **Matthew**. Ofer is a gifted musician and his talents with guitar and harmonica enable him to draw crowds of people on the streets and beaches.

Peter and **Yarden** are the newest members of our Israel staff, still trainees, and recently returned to Israel from New York. They have a powerful testimony as an Arab and a Jew united, not only in marriage, but also in Christ.

Dalia helps keep the administrative details of the branch running smoothly. We hope you will keep this vibrant branch of Jews for Jesus in your prayers. (See sidebar)

We also wanted to encourage you with some of the great things God has been doing in and through the Israel branch, so following are some "Bits from the Israel Branch."

Miriam reports, "While on a sortie, I met a young Ethiopian Jew named Zahaveet. I was able to explain the gospel to her as she waited for her bus. She listened intently as I shared and extended the invitation for her to be saved. She prayed to receive Y'shua just before the bus came. I am hoping Zahaveet will meet with me for discipleship and will attend a local congregation soon. I am also looking forward to discipleship with **Galeet**, who I met at a mall. She was curious about my Jews for Jesus T-shirt and believed the Scriptures I shared with her about salvation in Y'shua.

I invited her to receive Messiah just outside the mall. She agreed and bowed her head as we led her in the sinner's prayer. Please pray for her and all these precious ones in Rishon L'Tzion who are hearing and receiving faith in Messiah. Pray our work grows strong here and that we can get a Bible study going."

Ofer reports: "After witnessing to a taxi driver in Jerusalem, I set up a visit to speak to him again about Y'shua. We studied together as he drove and some of the passengers that came into his car wanted also to hear our discussion. I showed him (and the passengers) the connection between Genesis chapter 3 and the prophecy of the Messiah's coming in Isaiah 53. It was very encouraging because I was able to witness to an Orthodox lady whom we drove to the Wailing Wall.

"Another time I was handing out tracts and witnessing in Nahalat Binyamin. As I began to street preach and recite the Scripture to a young Jewish man, obviously Orthodox, approached me and wondered how a believer in Jesus could know the Scripture so well. He asked me to meet with him to explain why I believe that Jesus is the Messiah. I agreed and he gave me his contact information. I agreed to meet him in his *yeshiva* (rabbinical seminary). When I arrived, I laid the Scripture on the table and a man approached both of us saying it was time for afternoon prayers. I joined them in prayer (about five minutes) and then proceeded to visit with the young man. We sat for about 112 hours and discussed many subjects, including the coming of Messiah before the destruction of the second temple, as prophesied in Daniel 9. We shall be meeting again soon—please pray for his salvation."

Ze'ev reports: "We went on a sortie (tract-passing expedition) in an area we don't normally go to in south Tel Aviv. Within the first two minutes, God had already sent three people my way who gave their contact details so I can send them a New Testament and keep in touch. By the time we finished the sortie I had in my pocket not less than eight Jewish contacts who wanted to hear more about Jesus! Praise God!! I had never experienced this kind of response to the gospel on one sortie!

"One of the people I met that day was Shaul. He appeared to be religious because he wore a *kippah* (skullcap). When I told him the gospel he was very interested. I promised to send him a New Testament and then call him so we could meet and continue our conversation. And so I did. Shaul was very happy to hear from me and very thankful for the book. A few days later we met and I had the opportunity to get to know him. He is not

religious, but had been wearing a *kippah* out of respect for his father, who had recently died. Shaul was quite honest about his life and immediately told me that he had been addicted to drugs for many years. However, he has been out of prison and off drugs for five years now.

"I invited Shaul to come with me to congregation the following day and he did. At the end of the meeting the speaker gave an altar call and Shaul stood up and prayed to receive the Lord! Hallelujah! Please pray that Shaul will follow Jesus faithfully and walk in victory.

"On that same fruitful sortie, I met Menasher; a few weeks later, I was sitting with him in his backyard. When I opened the Bible, he decided to call his grandson, who was inside the house. So now I was preaching to two souls! After a few more minutes, another grandson (wearing a *kippah*) came to visit. Menasher told him to come and listen, too. So now I was preaching to three souls! The second grandson, Roman, was really interested. When I left the house, he followed and kept asking me questions. However, he is only 14!½ years old, so I had to tell him that I could not discuss this further with him unless he talked to his parents and got their approval. Since his family is religious, the chances of that are slim. I asked Ronen the date of his birthday, and promised to call him on his 18th birthday so we could talk freely. Ronen's eyes shone as he asked, 'Will you really do it?' 'Of course,' I said. And I surely will!"

ISRAEL PRAYER POINTS

Please pray:
 ✨ for Dan and Yoel as they lead the Gush Dan campaign, that they will have godly wisdom, strength and courage

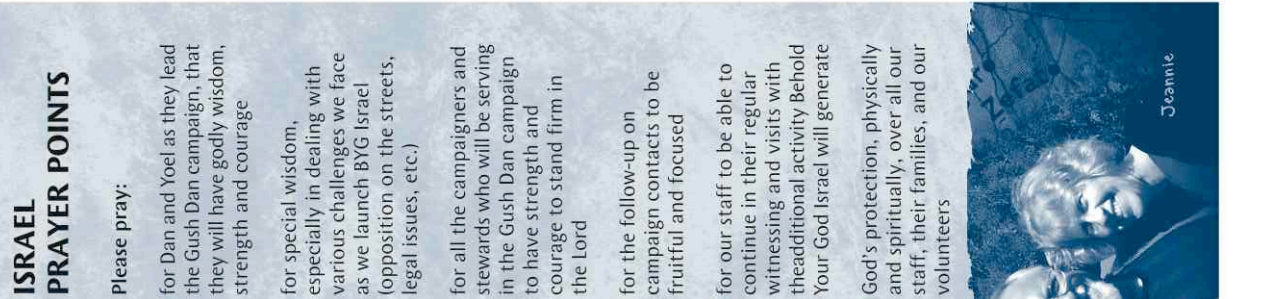
✨ for special wisdom, especially in dealing with various challenges we face as we launch BYG Israel (opposition on the streets, legal issues, etc.)

✨ for all the campaigners and stewards who will be serving in the Gush Dan campaign to have strength and courage to stand firm in the Lord

✨ for the follow-up on campaign contracts to be fruitful and focused

✨ for our staff to be able to continue in their regular witnessing and visits with the additional activity Behold Your God Israel will generate

✨ God's protection, physically and spiritually, over all our staff, their families, and our volunteers



Y'shua or Yeshu? by Rich Robinson

Ask any Israeli how to say “Jesus” in Hebrew, and you’ll invariably hear the response: Yeshu (pronounced Yayshoo). Yet according to scholars, His Hebrew name (depending on how you spell it) is Yeshua or Y’shua (pronounced Yehshoo wah). Why then, don’t Israeli Jews call Him by His correct name? Shouldn’t they be the first to know (and use) His Hebrew name? The answers to those questions take us back to a time prior to 1750 A.D.

Ever since the Enlightenment, Jesus has been viewed in an increasingly positive light by most Jews – not as the Messiah, it is true, but as a good teacher, a rabbi, “our brother,” perhaps a political martyr.¹ But long ago, Jesus was believed by most Jewish people to be a deceiver who led Israel astray, and some even regarded Him as a sorcerer. Consequently, centuries ago he was called by the name Yeshu, a “play” on His correct name that is actually an acronym standing for Yimmach Shemo Ve-zikro – May his name and memory be blotted out. He is still viewed that way by some, especially Ultra-Orthodox Jews; those, however, are the minority.

The name Yeshu has filtered down through history as the name of Jesus in Israel. Most Israelis (who are secular) have no idea that it originated as an acronym of contempt. How could they not know? Just think of our days of the week: Thursday was originally Thor’s Day, but what it originally meant has nothing to do with its current meaning. Ask an American what Thursday means, and the answer will probably be, the day of the week that comes after



The Hebrew letters on this T-shirt say "Y'shua lives," and we're showing our Israeli website beneath. The green letter (actually yellow in real life) emphasizes that His name is Y'shua; without that letter, the Hebrew would read "Yeshu."

Wednesday. Similarly, ask an Israeli who Yeshu is, and the answer will probably be, a man who lived in the first century, the Christians’ Messiah. Our staff in Israel have been working to make Jesus’ true Hebrew name a talking point, and this will continue throughout the next several years of Behold Your God Israel. Imagine the possibilities! We want to lift up the true name of Y’shua, which was given to indicate that He would save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21).

And outside of Israel, few Jews know him as either Y’shua or as Yeshu. Perhaps you can tell a Jewish friend that you have learned the name of Jesus in Hebrew, and it is Y’shua; and that his mother’s

name was originally not Mary but, in Hebrew, Miriam (a topic for another article). Then you can ask why, since Jesus is Jewish, most Jewish people don’t believe in Him – and see if God opens a conversation. For an in-depth look at the name of Jesus, see the article “An Introduction to the Names Yehoshua/Joshua, Yeshua, Jesus and Yeshu” by Kai Kjǿ r-Hansen at <http://www.jewsforjesus.org/answers/jesus/names>

1. In contrast, it is Paul, not Jesus, who is seen as the “bad guy” who invented a new religion and “turned” Jesus into a god. For more on this modern Jewish view of Paul, see <http://www.jewsforjesus.org/answers/paul>

Bits from Passover Tours

Michael's Passover bit



I was privileged this season to share the Christ in the Passover presentation throughout the Limpopo and Mphumalanga area. One of the highlights of my tour there was at a meeting in Polokwane. I noticed an elderly Jewish man sitting at the back of the crowded church. He was paying close attention and I could see that he was focused on what I was saying. After the service approached me and he was smiling from ear to ear. He told me that he had come to faith after he had asked Jesus to help him when he was critically ill.

He was supposed to have his leg amputated and when he woke up from surgery, his leg was still there and healed. The surgeon could not explain what had happened and just confirmed that it was diseased when he went into the operation, but when he was in the theatre it did not need to be removed. We praised God for His mercy and that He not only healed a leg but a heart separated from Him!

Teresa's Passover bit



I was at a church in East London presenting Christ in the Passover when a Jewish believer in Jesus approached me with an important question. He wanted to know why we needed to tell Jewish people about Jesus since many of them love God and have been preserved for centuries without believing in Jesus.

His question could provide hours of discussion but also the answer is simple. I pointed out the promise of the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31 and the fact that Jesus has been provided as the sacrificial atonement for everyone, both Jewish and Gentile. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life and no one comes to God except through him (John 14:6).

As we began our conversation, he got a phone call and had to leave but he gave me his number so we could continue to deal with this crucial issue. I rejoice that God chose him and gave him the gift of salvation so please pray with me that he will desire to share the gospel with our Jewish people. Sometimes we convince ourselves of something that sounds logical but is in direct opposition to God's Word. I think that if he looked more closely at this issue, he would find that it has been convenient for him to believe that Jews don't need Jesus because there would be no conflict or confrontation for him to handle. I thank God that he was open to hearing that he might need to tell others that they need faith in the Promised One of Israel too!

Christ in the Passover celebration



Jason's Passover bit

I was presenting Christ in the Passover to a group of 100 school children. I explained that Jesus came to forgive our sins and that anyone can believe in Him and be saved. After the meeting, a ten year-old girl approached me and said, "I know about Jesus and I want him in my life but I've been too shy to ask anyone to help me." I brought her to the Sunday School leaders and we prayed with her to ask Jesus into her life. This encounter has been a highlight of my ministry. I enjoy speaking with adults but it is a special blessing to see a young child put their faith in God.

But Jesus said, Allow the little children to come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of Heaven. (Mat 19:14)