

# JEW<sup>S</sup> F<sup>OR</sup> JESUS

Looking back, Reflections on Yom Kippur,

by Rich Robinson:

## “Crucified Chicken?”

Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year, fell on September 28, this year. On this day many Jews whether religious or secular, were in the synagogue praying to God to forgive their sins. They listened to the chanting of the cantor and participated in the responsive readings. Many fasted; some walked to the synagogue rather than driving; some would not wear leather shoes. A very few did something many Jews are unfamiliar with: *shlogn kapores*.

The Yiddish phrase *shlogn kapores* translates roughly as, “swinging the atoning sacrifice.” A man takes a rooster, a woman takes a hen, and during the ceremony, swings the fowl around the head reciting, “This is my exchange, this is my substitute, this is my atonement. This rooster (or, hen) will go to its death, while I will enter and proceed to a good long life and to peace.” It is, perhaps, one of the last remaining reminders of the ancient sacrificial system, though no one really knows its origin.



In a recent edition of the Jewish arts magazine *Zeek*, songwriter Basya Schechter speaks of her upbringing in Boro Park, New York, home to a community of ultra-Orthodox Jews or Haredim.<sup>1</sup> She remarks that she lived in two worlds, that of the Haredim and that of the more non-religious/secular. During a period of inner conflict, she mentions writing a song in which “I compared the chicken of *shlogn kapores* (the ritual of waving a chicken around one’s head on Erev Yom Kippur) to Jesus

Christ.” The melody, she tells us, was “in the harmonic minor scale, and sounded very much like the *zemiros* [Sabbath and holiday songs] I grew up with.”<sup>2</sup>

A fuller version can be found online. The song lyrics are at once surreal, slightly disturbing, thought-provoking, and dissonance-causing, because they venture into territory normally avoided by the Orthodox. Here are two of the stanzas that make a jarring comparison

between the Yom Kippur ceremony and the crucified Jesus:

*Chicken chicken on the cross  
I have sins if you have sauce  
be my gravy, be my wings,  
relieve me of my earthly things.*

*Chicken chicken crucified  
Do you have nails banged in your mind,  
feel my rhythm sting my brain,  
relieve me of my aches and pains.*

*Continued on page 2: “Crucified Chicken?”*

Continued from page 1: "Crucified Chicken?"

Schechter is not a believer in Y'shua and to be honest, I am not sure what to make of her poetic comparison. In her Zeek article, she appears to have made peace with her inner conflicts and has embraced a kind of Judaism in which she has the freedom and comfort to create and express herself, and now leads a band called Pharaoh's Daughter ([www.pharaohsdaughter.com](http://www.pharaohsdaughter.com)). The astute reader might even detect a similarity to the Suffering Servant of Isaiah in the last line quoted

*(Isaiah 53:4 "Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows...")*

Probably the song was a way of expressing her discordant identity struggle.

And the imagery is discordant. Jews do not often think about Jesus. Christians speak of Jesus as the "Lamb of God" (another sacrificial metaphor), but certainly not as the "chicken of God." It is highly dissonant to both Jewish and Christian ways of thinking.

But dissonance can be a good thing, if it makes us think in new directions. In fact, the Bible is full of this kind of dissonance. There are stories of God fulfilling his promises through highly failure-prone, sin-laden people (think of David's adultery with Bathsheba

and his murder-by-proxy of her husband Uriah – yet elsewhere David is called a "man after God's own heart"!) There are statements and

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sayings every bit as jarring to hearers as Schechter's song:


*"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood," says Y'shua in John's Gospel (John 6:54), "has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."*

The effect is to get us to say: what is really going on here?

Years ago missionary Don Richardson wrote of his time among the Sawi tribe of what at that time was Dutch New Guinea. The Sawis valued treachery above all else. They could not get their minds around the message of Jesus, because to them Judas the betrayer was the hero. Eventually Richardson discovered a tribal ceremony whereby peace could be procured with an enemy by giving over one's son to that enemy. This was the "peace child" who, as long as he remained alive in the custody of the enemy group, ensured peace between the two. From then on, Richardson was able to convey to the Sawi tribe that Jesus was the peace child sent to make peace between mankind and God. And for the first time, the Sawis understood.

Jesus the Chicken of God might not be an idea expressed in the Bible in those words. But for those performing shlogn kapores, and even for less religious Jews, it may be a dissonance that creates a fresh vantage point as well as a bridge that connects the dots. *"This is my exchange, this is my substitute, this is my atonement."* The chicken? The Messiah? Jesus?

#### END NOTES:

1. Hasidim is a more familiar term to some. The Hasidim or Hasidic Jews are one group among the Haredim.
2. See Schechter, Basya, "The Music of the Sacred and the Profane," Zeek (Fall 2007), 8–12. 

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# LOOKING AHEAD: Light of Life Outreach – Cape Town

December 14 – 24, 2009



## Dear Friends

It's hard to believe we're winding down the year already. At Jews for Jesus we are busy preparing to bring the good news of our Messiah Y'shua to my Jewish people in Cape Town this December. We will be telling people of God's love and salvation on the streets, the malls and the beaches as vacationers make their way down to the Cape for a break.

Jason Verreyne will be leading our *Light of Life* outreach which we named as a reminder of Jesus' promise that

*"...all who follow me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life."*

We will be encouraging the Jews and Gentiles we meet to choose the life that is only found in Y'shua - Saviour of the World! The outreach will take place from **December 14 – 24**.

Won't you pray and ask God if He would have you be involved as a:

- **Praying friend**, who cares with us and with our Saviour for the salvation of the lost sheep of the house of Israel and the nations – please see the prayer guide for this outreach.
- **Provider**, who will enable us, through your giving, to print the tracts, and

pay for the missionaries and volunteers to be fed, accommodated and transported for the outreach.

- **Partner**, who will be a willing, living witness unto our Lord this season.

*(We have included a December broadside - for you to duplicate and use in your own witnessing efforts if you so wish.)*

Thank you!

*Dr Michael Sischy*

# Evangelism Bits from the Branches

## Israel



Yarden, originally from Ukraine, was following up with Rosa, a Jewish Russian woman we met through phone calling during our “Behold Your God” Gush Dan campaign. Yarden reports, “Rosa was so happy to receive a New Testament in Russian. She is a highly educated biologist and believes in God with all her heart. For a long time, she has been curious about Jesus, wondering why He is called *Son of God* and why he was crucified.

“I answered some of her questions and encouraged her to read the Bible. Then we read Isaiah 53 together and I was amazed to hear her say, ‘So Jesus took away all our sins and he was raised from the dead so God proved that Jesus is his Son!’ Please pray for her that God completely will open her eyes and she will be saved.

“After that I needed to take a cab to my next visit but had a hard time finding one. It was so hot; I prayed that the Lord would send me help. Just then a cab stopped for me. I witnessed to him on the way to my visit and he gave me his contact information.

“My second visit was with Liora, another contact from the Gush Dan campaign.

Liora is about 60 years old. She was very open to the gospel and prayed with me to receive the Lord.

“I praise God for His faithfulness. Please pray for these people and praise the Lord with me, *‘For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost’* (Luke 19:10).”

## London



Yoel reports, “Last March, I was handing out our gospel broadsides in Golder’s Green, an area where many Orthodox Jews live. (Yoel is part of our Israel branch, but has had assignments in the UK and U.S.) I chatted with Asif, an Israeli who gave me his address and phone number so that we could continue the conversation.”

“Another Israeli, Amir, overheard me explaining the gospel in Hebrew and came over to tell me he had been reading the New Testament and was beginning to believe. Well, it isn’t every day that you hear that! He and I also exchanged phone numbers.”

“Asif did not return my calls, but Amir and I began to have regular visits. Much spiritual groundwork had been laid as a friend had been sharing the gospel with him and taking him to church.”

“Shortly after we met I had a three week speaking tour in the U.S. and Amir went on holiday with his parents. I thought it would be a daunting task for him to tell them that he had been attending a church and seeing a missionary. But Amir took it in stride and was very open about his investigation.”

“Once we were back in London, Amir told me that he understood why Jesus tells us that our love for Him should be even greater than love for one’s parents. Not only did Amir stand up for Jesus, but he gave his life to the Lord a week later at his church in London! We are now learning together what it means to be His disciple. I am reminded of the verse: *‘I sent you to reap that for which you did not labour. Others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour’* (John 4:38).”

## South Africa



Teresa reports: “Sandra\* is a vibrant Jewish lady, married to a Christian. She and I met twice to discuss the Messiahship of Jesus and whether a Jewish person can believe in Him. I gave her the book *Betrayed*, which she read and enjoyed. Then there was a long silence; I left many messages for her and waited.”

“Recently I phoned Sandra—this time she answered.”

“She said ‘I can’t believe that you phoned me today, Teresa; Jesus is really out to get me.’ She proceeded to tell me that she’d attended her uncle’s funeral the previous day. While walking to the grave, her cousin shared with her that she is a Jewish believer in Jesus and that she would love to meet with Sandra to discuss Messiah.”

“I prayed that the Lord will use Sandra’s cousin in a mighty way. I am also pleased that Sandra has agreed to meet with me again. God, He just never gives up on reaching out to the lost.”

\*name changed to protect identities.



# Moishe's Musings

on Serving the Lord

by Moishe Rosen, Jews for Jesus founder

Serving the Lord is not "a job," yet some people seem to go about it as though they were wageworkers. They give as much of themselves as they believe the "job" requires and don't expect a whole lot in return – just enough to keep them going. Others enter the ministry with a far more zealous but equally bad attitude, which might be called "Kingdom Building."\*

These particular kingdom builders declare that it is the Kingdom of God for which they labour, but they behave as though they are in charge until He gets back. They want to rule the part of the kingdom they see as their own.

Kingdom Builders gather more power and authority to themselves than is necessary to serve God. They want power, respect and authority, and often use it to make others responsible for doing the work.

They love the small honours and approval bestowed by the world. They are happiest when they are well regarded. They carefully craft their public statements to be most acceptable to most people.

This kind of kingdom builder would never be satisfied if God called them to be shepherd of a small flock. They need to walk tall, talk big, and stand like Saul, head and shoulders above the crowd.

But a call to the ministry is not an invitation to have lamb chops for dinner. It is a call to gather and care for the lambs. It is a call to burden one's self with what might be perceived as smelly, stupid, sheep that would walk off a cliff because they are shortsighted.

It takes a bit of mature self-realisation to accept the fact that God didn't call you to the biggest, best and most beautiful of situations. It takes a lot of grace to love the little flock. It takes humility to remember that you are one of that flock.



Whoever would be a minister for Y'shua would do well to see that His ministry was focused on the cross. He preached many sermons, healed many sick people, encouraged the weak, empowered people by his presence, but his main ministry was centered at the cross.

He didn't come to claim a crown, not at that time; He came to carry the cross and to be executed. It was God's plan from the foundation of the earth that Y'shua would be classified by man as an evildoer and be crossified (*crucified*) despite the good words He spoke and the good works He did.

How then, do some of us who count ourselves as servants and disciples expect that we will be well regarded when our master – who spoke the truth best and did the best deeds and in whom there was no fault – was despised? We need to speak well and act well without expecting the world to appreciate us. We too soon forget His words:

*"Then He said to them all, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me'"*

(Luke 9:23).

Yet it was the same Saviour who also said,

*"My yoke is easy and My burden is light"*

(Matthew 11:30).

God told us what it means to serve Him, and He's given His promises to uphold our efforts to obey.

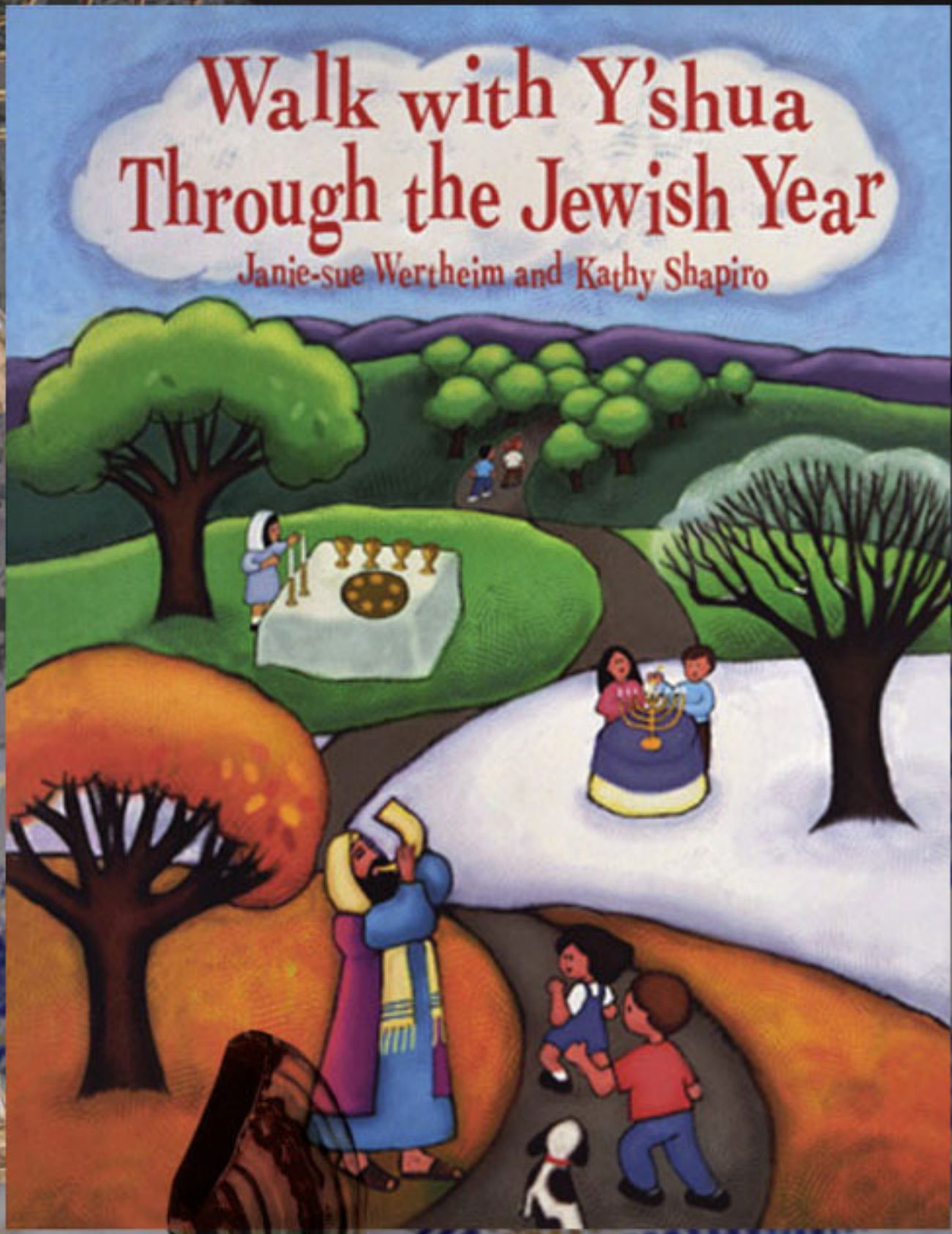
(\* Ed: we are aware that this phrase is often used in a positive and biblical way by various pastors and laypeople. This is not meant to disparage those who use the term to describe their genuine service to God, for His Kingdom.)

*Start the New Year off with this edifying book where the whole family can learn!*

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*by Janie-sue Wertheim and Kathy Shapiro*

We've never seen another children's book like this one!



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# Prayer Card:

Please would you pray for the following items for the

## *Light of Life* **OUTREACH**

this December:

- Wisdom for Jason who will be leading the outreach
- Unity for the team of campaigners
- Good weather, so as to be able to do the beach evangelism as planned!
- Favour with the authorities
- Open hearts of Jews and Gentiles to receive the

## *Word of Life - Jesus.*

- God's plan to be in the right place at the right time!
- Protection of soul, spirit and body of the campaigners and their families.

*Thank you!*

Yes Jason, I would like to stand with you as you take the

# Light of Jesus

to Cape Town, asking Jews and Gentiles to

## "Choose Life!"

this December.

I will stand with you in prayer

I would like to give a donation of R \_\_\_\_\_ towards the costs of the outreach

I will be using the broadside you have included for my own witnessing this December season!

*Should you wish to participate in any of the three categories displayed, please mark the appropriate category with a cross, complete the rest of the form, make a copy and fax to:*

011 880 7732 or e-mail your response to:  
[info@jewsforjesus.co.za](mailto:info@jewsforjesus.co.za)

Name : \_\_\_\_\_  
Surname : \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel : \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell : \_\_\_\_\_  
Address : \_\_\_\_\_  
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Email : \_\_\_\_\_