

I will never forget the first time I handed out gospel tracts on the streets of Tel Aviv some 28 years ago. I was more than a little nervous but gratified that most people were taking the tracts. Suddenly a religious man in typical Hasidic garb stopped, read the first few lines of the tract and began yelling, "Missonaire! Missionaire!" Soon I was surrounded, enclosed in a circle of religious men whose focus was to bring my opportunity to communicate the gospel to an abrupt end.

"Missonaire" is simply the word for missionary in Israel, but those men surrounding me that day might just as well have been yelling "child molester." To them, my sharing the gospel on the streets of Tel Aviv was



The Weight of the Mission



David Brickner
Executive Director,
San Francisco USA



a similarly despicable act.

Most, if not all, of our missionaries have had similar experiences. Of course it is not only segments of the Jewish community who regard "missionary" and "mission" as dirty words. Many other religions have likewise castigated Christian evangelism and in certain countries some converts to Christianity are still risking their very lives to stand for Jesus. But it goes beyond one religion trying to suppress another.

Many secular humanists and militant atheists also pour contempt on Christian efforts to share our faith openly. Some deride such efforts as attempts to manipulate or take advantage of others. Others seem to think that Christians who are outspoken about Jesus are out to

infect others with beliefs that are illogical, unscientific and anti-social.

No one wants to be misunderstood or falsely accused. It's easy to shrink back in the face of hostility and accusations, either redefining our mission or refusing to acknowledge that we actually have a God-given mission to proclaim the gospel. Sadly, this "mission controversy" has eroded some believers' willingness to take a public stand for Jesus, especially here in the West.

The calling God has placed on our lives subjects us to rejection. What can we do about it? We can remind ourselves that Jesus and His early followers were also misunderstood and falsely accused, yet were faithful to their mission. We can ask you to pray with us, that we also be faithful.



With the Lord's help we'll continue to withstand misunderstanding and accusations, knowing that the gospel is still the power of God unto salvation. It's the source of light and life in a dark and dying world.

The nation of Israel was called to be a "light to the nations." It's true that my people have made wonderful contributions and advances to benefit all kinds of people—yet for the most part we have missed the heart of that calling.

Here's an illustration of what I mean. A few months ago David Novak, professor of Jewish studies at the University of Toronto, published an article on "The Jewish Mission," in the periodical *First Things*. Novak argues that Jews should avoid any effort to "proselytize" Gentiles because they find similar efforts directed toward Jews to be totally unacceptable. Quoting a famous rabbi named Hillel, he argues, "What is hateful to you, do not do to anyone else." Novak also says any effort to proselytize Gentiles inevitably involves some sort of arrogant triumphalism, telling others that their religion is inadequate.

This kind of reasoning has found a welcome audience not only among Jewish people today but among some followers of Jesus as well. If "proselytizing" (a somewhat pejorative term for what we would call "evangelism") were just a matter of pushing one group's religion and/or culture over another, then I'd have to agree with Novak.

But God did not call Israel to convert anyone to a religion—He wanted His people to draw others to Himself. Aren't you thankful that God fulfilled that responsibility and calling through Israel's greater Son, Y'shua?

In a letter to the editor of *First Things*, I wrote: "Rather than denigrating Judaism or any other faith, isn't it possible that the act of 'proselytizing' is, in fact, not only one of obedience to God, but

a demonstration of supreme love for the individual who is the so-called target of proselytizing? If one genuinely believes as Jesus taught that He is the way, the truth and the life and that no one comes to the Father but by Him, then to leave off bringing the message to Jews is in fact a show of disdain, even of anti-Semitism. So when applying this logic to Gentiles, Christian or otherwise, Jews who truly believe in rabbinic Judaism should recognize their responsibility to do as Maimonides instructed, 'to proclaim the true religion' and not fear reprisal. In fact, this is the original meaning of the word proselyte, a convert to Judaism. The days of Christian reprisal against the Jewish people for proselytizing are long gone. Yet now it seems the shoe is on the other foot. Of course coercion and deception have no place in this process, but in the open market place of ideas, surely it is the poverty of one's own position that leads to the desire to stifle the debate."

So let's ask ourselves: do we truly believe what we say we believe? If we want to follow Jesus, how can we abandon the mission that He gave us?



I once visited a former missionary with Jews for Jesus, a friend I had served with for many years. She had wandered away from the Lord and was no longer professing faith in Him. She described what a great relief it was to meet new people and no longer feel a responsibility to tell them about Jesus.

That comment stuck with me. It saddened me, but it also illustrated a hard truth. It's so natural to want relief from the pressing obligation to say what most people do not want to hear about sin and salvation. Yet if we truly believe the gospel and we honestly care about people, we can never feel quite comfortable until we have done what we can to bring the two together.

The apostle Paul saw his responsibility to proclaim the gospel as a personal debt, an obligation he needed to fulfill (see Romans 1:14). Then again in 1 Corinthians 9:16 Paul declared; "For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!"

All followers of Jesus are obligated—both to Him and to those He brings across our path—to share the truth of God's love and forgiveness in Christ. This in itself is a joy. It becomes a burden only because the majority of people we reach out to will rebuff us. And even so, that burden can be light if we are in tune with God.

Love propels us to accept the weight of our mission and lift up the message of Jesus. I confess that when my love for God wanes, the burden I feel to tell people about Him grows cumbersome. That's when the mission to proclaim His love can become less and less joyful, even intolerable. But when the Lord renews my love for Him, my burden for the lost is renewed as well. May God deepen our love for Him so that with the apostle Paul we may welcome this glorious necessity that has been laid upon us.

BITS from the BRANCHES

HAIFA, ISRAEL

Peter Nasser reports:

“Meira,* is from a strict Orthodox Jewish community. She ordered some books about Y’shua (Jesus) through our website but her parents confiscated them—all except for one book. She read that book and became convinced that Jesus is the true Messiah of Israel. Her parents threatened to kick her out of the house and anti-missionaries told her lies about what Jews for Jesus would do to her. We asked for prayer that Meira would trust the Lord and obey His voice despite these hardships.

“Meira’s situation at home grew worse and she realized that if she wanted to grow in her faith she would have to

move elsewhere, which she did. She got a job and was baptized in December. My wife Yarden and I have an ongoing ministry to Meira. She still needs much prayer to trust the Lord and grow in Him, and her family needs much prayer for salvation.”

SYDNEY

Rahel Landrum reports:

“Toby,* a young Jewish man recently prayed to receive the Lord. He’s very creative; he paints. His previous paintings were dark and disturbing but since coming to faith, he is full of joy, and his paintings reflect that. Recently Toby sold one of his paintings at a good price for the first time. His mother, an Israeli believer in Jesus, is

thrilled that her son has come to a saving knowledge of the Lord. Toby was baptized and continues to attend our meetings and individually to meet with us.

Mark Landrum reports, “Sometimes we speak in churches a distance away from our Bondi branch about the Jewish roots of the faith and use the time away to visit Jewish enquirers in those areas.

On one occasion last year, I decided to visit a Jewish believer whose phone number we did not have. Looking back, it is a bit humorous that his wife mistook Rahel and me for JW’s or Mormons. Understandably, she was not interested. Fortunately her husband did find out we are Jews for Jesus and was very

happy to see us.

Paul has the same kind of cancer my father in the US has. It is one that people do not usually survive more than a year. Thank God, Paul has survived it for more than 14 years. He has also written a book about fighting this form of cancer, which my dad is reading, finding it very helpful.

Paul had brain surgery last month to remove a benign tumor. Please pray for no ill side affects and for him and my dad to continue to trust Jesus.

Editor: If you are interested in the Mind, Body, Spirit outreach ministry in Sydney, you might like this article: j4j.co/mbsoc

**not the real name*

ISRAEL TOUR



Host Dr Kameel Majdali has believed in Jesus for 40 years. He was the dean of Harvest Bible College in Melbourne, and since 2004 is the Bible teacher for Teach All Nations. Kameel has served as a valued member of the Jews for Jesus board of directors for over a decade. He leads inspirational tours to Israel every year. Jews for Jesus doesn’t conduct tours to Israel, otherwise we wouldn’t have the time to do what we are called to do, but we can heartily recommend this one.

Date: November, 2013. The extended tour, includes Turkey and Patmos. The cost includes all five-star deluxe hotels and two meals a day. In addition to the usual activities, you will hear from Israeli believers, meet some of our Jews for Je-

sus staff in Israel and hear devotions by Kameel at every site visited.

It is a ‘Book of Revelation Tour’ 7 Churches & Patmos, Turkey (7 nights) and Israel (9 nights). Departure date: October 21st. 17 days

Price: \$4,990

Optional 4-day extension: Beer-sheba, Maktesh Ramon, Tabernacle @ Timna, & Eilat.

For more information:
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Purim is early this year! This minor but very fun Jewish holiday begins at sundown on 23 February. Find out how much you know about Purim



Purim quiz

1. Hegai, a less known character of the story, was:

- a. a person of strong philosophical leanings; his descendants eventually produced a guy who greatly influenced Karl Marx.
- b. a person of interesting culinary taste; his descendants eventually produced Scotland's national dish of sheep heart, liver and lungs all stuffed into sausage casing with onions and spices.
- c. a eunuch who was in charge of beauty treatments for participants in Persia's royal pageant—

and gave his favorite candidate an edge with extra beauty preparations and advice.

2. Haman, a more prominent character of the story, hated Jews because:

- a. he was never invited to a bar mitzvah.
- b. his mother force-fed him chopped liver, which she learned to make from the Yiddishe mama (Jewish mother) down the street.
- c. a particular Jew named Mordechai refused to bow down to him (Haman) as doing so was "against his religion."

3. When Haman plotted to kill all the Jews in the kingdom, he did not know that the King owed Mordecai big time, since Mordecai had saved his:



- a. place in line, so that he didn't have to wait for hours to purchase the newest version of the iRunner

- b. money, by depositing it in the only bank in Persia that didn't go bust when the Persian economy plummeted.
- c. life, by exposing a plot to kill the king.

4. In contemporary times, many Jewish periodicals feature strange and unbelievable articles for Purim that treat the holiday as the Jewish equivalent of:

- a. Valentine's Day
- b. National Day
- c. April Fool's Day

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We also receive donations from believers via PayPal, Credit cards, and TT.



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Come volunteer with us!



Do you have a passion to see Jewish people know the Messiah? Do you love what we do and wish you could jump in to help? Maybe you can join our team by becoming a Co-Laborer in Messiah (CLIM). CLIMs represent Jews for Jesus in their own communities, often hosting our missionaries as they come through. Some CLIMs run our Prayer Umbrella network; others organize tours; still others run prayer meetings in their area. The list of possibilities is endless.

Listen to what some of our CLIMs say:
Des Rubie, Christchurch, New Zealand
We host Israeli tourists in our home and have for years. Forty-something years ago NZ Friends of Israel was started in Christchurch by orthodox Jews in conjunction with Gentiles, mostly Christians. Israelis doing sabbaticals at Canterbury University would go to these meetings and we would invite them to visit with us on weekends. Gradually a network was established which was called, "Stay in our homes." This eventually grew into more extensive organizations and now there are hosts in many countries.

Des and his wife Evelyn also are responsible for sending our newsletters from Rangiora to our NZ friends, and they do all the banking (BNZ) and updating of our mail list in the Kiwi world.

Kathy Perrich, Columbia South Carolina:
"I love my relationships with Jews for Jesus staff members. Melanie Rose (office admin in our Chicago branch) and I

work on shopping lists for the Chicago Campaign training several months in advance. Alan Bond (Chicago branch leader) and I make several trips hauling stuff up to the classroom and dorm. Andrew Barron (Toronto branch and campaign training leader) depends on my organizational skills and excellent restaurant choices!"

Debbie Banhart, Kansas City (Bob Mendelsohn's hometown):

"We love the opportunities to use our gifts for the Lord and the support and encouragement we receive to do so. When in London last year during the Olympics campaign, we were able to assist the branch in a hundred little and big ways. We shared Christ openly on the streets, and it was a joy."

Ron Mcdevitt, Cape Canaveral, Florida: "I did an outreach with Larry, a relatively new Jewish believer whom I led to the Lord. A Gentile man came up to us and said he had seen the Jews for Jesus sign in front of my office and wanted to know more. We shared the gospel with him and he was born again!

Then I phoned Eli, a Jewish man I have known for two years. He'd had back surgery and I wanted to know how he was doing. He was in a lot of pain but said he'd welcome a visit. When I arrived, Eli's wife—who never comes out of the bedroom when I am there (because I believe in Jesus)—came out and was very friendly. I was able to share the gospel with them, and answer many questions. They seemed very open and said they would read the materials I left them as

well as Isaiah 53. Please pray for Eli and Miriam to be saved."

CLIMs volunteer for ten hours per month, and they choose from a variety of tasks tailored to suit their gifts and preferences. CLIMs do make an initial time investment of one week for training—a great time to get to know the other CLIMs and some of our experienced staff.

We need help in Sydney, in New Zealand, throughout our region, in so many ways. If you are interested in an applying for this program, please Email or write to:

Carolyne Rohrig, CLIM Coordinator
Email: carolyne.rohrig@jewsforjesus.org
<http://www.jewsforjesus.org/join/clim>



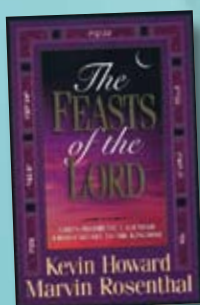
Messianic Resources

Featured resources for your learning, celebrating, and growth

Feasts of the Lord

book by Rosenthal

A fresh understanding is created when the traditions are cast in the light of God's Word to reveal the Messiah. Filled with beautiful photographs, paintings and colorful charts, our Jewish Christian perspective is richly told in a new and exciting way. Hardback. 228 pages. Cost includes shipping in Oz.



Price AUD48. To ship to NZ or Sg, add AUD22 (sorry, blame the post office)

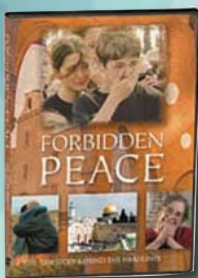
Revive the heart CD

by David Abramsky (Jewish believer) Instrumental music (cello and piano), 18 songs that transport you to the place of worship. Titles include: Awake O Israel, Rachel weeping for her children, The healing power of the Lord, The great I AM.

Cost includes shipping in Oz. AUD29. To ship to NZ or Sg, please add AUD8.



Forbidden Peace DVD



Forbidden Peace offers a powerful, poignant and positive perspective you are unlikely to find anywhere else straight from the hearts of Israelis and Palestinians who have put their

trust in Jesus and found true shalom. You are invited to join them as they share how, despite fierce opposition, they have chosen to follow Jesus **Cost includes shipping in Oz. AUD29. To ship to NZ or Sg, please add AUD10.**

Spanish book in Spanish!

Traicionado (Betrayed)

The testimony of Stan Telchin.

Cost is \$16 to ship in Oz. To ship to NZ or SG, please add \$8.



Messianic Family Haggadah

(arranged by Jewish believer Janie Wertheim)

Included is a special section of recipes for the season, traditional and Messianic songs and links to other resources. This beautifully illustrated book, with clear instructions will enable you to celebrate Passover like Jesus did.

Cost includes shipping in Oz AUD15. To ship to NZ or Sg, please add AUD9..



Shalom Jerusalem Key Chain

Cost in Oz is \$9 includes shipping. Cost overseas please add \$7.



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