



Retirement and yet...

by **Bob Mendelsohn**, Australian Director

When Lance “Buddy” Franklin retired as July ended, not only did Sydney Swans fans wish him well, but AFL fans and sports fans seemingly everywhere gave him a cheer. A mammoth figure in Hawthorn and then up in Sydney, Buddy finished a 19-year career with 1066 goals in 354 senior games. Well beyond his stats, however, was the quiet, humble superstar and champion who led from the front.

Stuart Broad was an archnemesis to the Australian cricket side and to so many other teams around the globe. The British bowler played over 330 matches worldwide including one day and T-20s in India and back in his homeland. When he announced he would retire after the recent Ashes in England, the world gave both a sigh of relief and a hearty ‘well done’ to the right-armed bowler who batted lefty.

25 years ago I moved to Sydney to launch Jews for Jesus Australia. My wife and three kids were up for the adventure, and we found grace to help from God and from many in the church community. Our goal was clear: make the messiahship of Jesus an unavoidable issue to our Jewish people in the region. And in less than 2 months, Geraldine Doogue featured our work and an interview with me on her ABC-TV show Compass.

Several Jewish people gave their lives to the Lord and we baptised them in Bronte Beach. Churches opened their arms to us. Volunteers came along and brought their skills and energy to the work. We published newsletters and met with Jewish contacts. Singapore and New Zealand became

new foci along with Sydney, and I travelled there, meeting more Jewish people and creating new organizations in those countries. We recruited and evangelised; we taught, and we gained footing.

I won’t chronicle every year and every milestone. At least not in this letter, but like Buddy and Stuart, there comes a time when a man should hang up his boots. That time for me has come. I will continue in ministry, even in the global organization of Jews for Jesus, but the day-to-day leading of the ministry here in this region is ending for me on 29 September.

This coincides with a major event we are hosting on Wednesday 27 September at the Pennant Hills Golf Club. That event, the Jubilee Celebration Dinner, is a celebration of 50 years of Jews for Jesus global. The mission began in September, 1973, and grew to work in major cities worldwide since then. The Jubilee Dinner will feature great food, beautiful music, short speeches, videos of our history, and you! Registration is open now and there is room for the first 210 guests. An offering for the mission will be received on the night and we expect a great gathering of saints. Will you consider joining us then?

Over the next few weeks, feel free to write me, to remind me of a story or two from your personal connection with Jews for Jesus or with a Jewish person you know. Give us reason to keep rejoicing, won’t you? I will be back in Sydney, Lord willing, after the new year.



Justice and the Jubilee

by **David Brickner**, Executive Director

“**Y**ou shall not oppress one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 25:17). This verse was essential to Israel’s celebration of the Jubilee. At the heart of the Jubilee was the promise of freedom—and justice played an essential part in that promise. All wrongs were to be made right. All debts were to be forgiven. All slaves were to be freed. Land that had been sold reverted to its original owner. All who were downtrodden would experience freedom far beyond mere words or political promises.

Yet the Jubilee was never fully or consistently observed in Israel—nor does any other nation practice anything remotely like it today.

Why the Jubilee Failed to Deliver Justice The Jubilee was based on the premise that all good things come from God and, ultimately, still belong to God. That premise lays claim to every aspect of our lives, and it goes against human nature to embrace it. In short, the Jubilee failed to deliver justice because we never fully bought into it. We all long to have justice for ourselves, but how many are willing to sacrifice personal comfort or security so that others can enjoy it? Israel never found the courage to observe the Jubilee completely or consistently, and every other nation’s efforts

to achieve a just society have run up against the same fatal human flaws and failings. No government can set people free from the attitudes that create injustice in the first place—and so it continues.

What Frustration Over Injustice Can Do The longing for justice is a heartfelt hunger for a future reality, and it’s part of our spiritual DNA. God has put eternity in our hearts (Ecclesiastes 3:11). It follows that frustration over injustice is, at its core, a spiritual sense that something is very wrong and ought to be fixed. When we see people frustrated over injustice, we can invite them to explore where their concept of right and wrong is rooted. Clearly our hunger for justice does not come from the relativism that permeates our culture. God is the source of true justice and true freedom, which together make for true peace. All these things remain illusive apart from Him. The Jubilee pointed to the hope of an eternity where our longing for these things will ultimately be fulfilled in His presence.

A dear friend who serves on our Jews for Jesus board of directors has often reminded me that God doesn’t always settle scores this side of heaven. His 31-year-old daughter has suffered from severe seizures much of her life, causing great pain and leaving her unable to speak or care for herself. This

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has been heartbreaking for my friend and his wife, but rather than become bitter, they have trusted God, and worked tirelessly on behalf of other families who suffer similarly.

Jubilee was an earthly hint of heaven—we must look beyond this life for ultimate satisfaction. And yet God never excuses His people from the pursuit of justice in our lifetime. Moses wrote, “Justice, and only justice, you shall follow, that you may live and inherit the land that the Lord your God is giving you” (Deuteronomy 16:20 ESV).

God Gives Our Efforts Eternal Value At times it feels like our best efforts are meager given the overwhelming problems in this world. Have you ever felt that way? I remind myself that Yeshua said, “Whoever gives one of the little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward” (Matthew 10:42).

Everything we do for Jesus matters. As Jews for Jesus celebrates our Jubilee, we are in an intense time of proclaiming liberty to specific Jewish audiences. That includes distributing 1,000 care packages to some of the most disadvantaged people in Tel Aviv. The volunteers we have recruited know that we are doing this because of our faith in Jesus, as do those receiving the packages.

Thank you for partnering with us in these outreaches.

Let's take joy in knowing that they are significant in God's eyes. He sees how our actions in this world have future consequences. Please join us in praying that those we reach out to will receive that hint of heaven and be drawn to Jesus, because it is only in Him that God will restore all things and bring about true justice and true peace forever.

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ALSO WORKING IN: **CANADA, FRANCE, GERMANY, HUNGARY, ISRAEL, RUSSIA, SOUTH AFRICA, UKRAINE, the UNITED KINGDOM, and the UNITED STATES**
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We also receive donations from believers via PayPal, Credit cards, and TT.



You are invited!

Jubilee Banquets

Wednesday, 27 September

JFJ Jubilee Celebration and Mendelsohn Farewell Dinner

A buffet dinner and presentation of the best of 50 years of continuing ministry among our Jewish people. We'd love to include you.

For 50 years, Jews for Jesus worldwide has been sharing the Good News of Yeshua as Messiah and the forgiveness of our sins. 25 of those here in Sydney and we are inviting you to join us in that milestone celebration. The beautiful scenery surrounding Pennant Hills Golf Club will add to the event as well as the exceptional staff who will cater to our needs.

Meet the Jews for Jesus staff and join with other believers in the festivities. Video highlights of historic Jews for Jesus outreaches from the 1970s to today will add to the joy. Also, plan to hear a special message from Bob Mendelsohn, national director, who will hand the baton to others as he moves into another position in Jews for Jesus. Not exactly retirement, but we will also spend some time at the Jubilee celebration to commemorate Bob's work in Australia.

A free-will offering will be received for the ongoing work of the mission. And as you would expect a professional musical trio will entertain us. Great joy!

when and where



Date and time

Wed, 27 Sep 2023
6:30 PM - 9:30 PM AEST

Location

Pennant Hills Golf Club
Copeland Street Beecroft, NSW
2119 Australia

<https://bit.ly/SydneyJubilee>



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