



**BY DAVID BRICKNER**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**W**hether or not you enjoy Valentine's Day, there is a hidden benefit: it's a

great occasion to sift through true and false expectations about love.

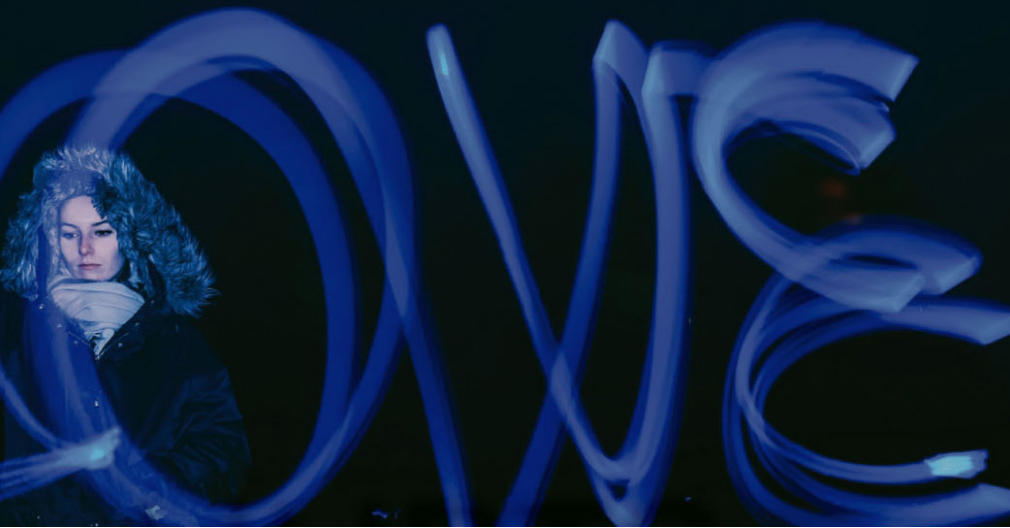
Yeshua (Jesus) invites us to remember how love works. He points out what cards, candy, flowers, or special dinners won't: there is no way to love without opening ourselves up to pain. When people you love suffer, you suffer. When people you love don't love you back, you suffer. And the list goes on.

Suffering is generally seen as a problem to be avoided—a healthy approach in many situations. But the temptation to avoid all suffering

at any cost is dangerous. Those who succumb eventually find their hearts bankrupt, unable or unwilling to risk personal comfort, and too frightened or too numb to love. Had that been the culture of the early church, I wonder how far the gospel would have gone.

**“The temptation to avoid all suffering at any cost is dangerous.”**

I am not suggesting some bizarre form of spiritual masochism. Suffering in itself is not good, and not



**“When sin ripped us apart, Jesus did not turn from our suffering; He took it upon Himself and transformed it into everlasting life and love.”**

what God intended for His creation. Yet God can, and often does, work good through suffering. Sometimes our suffering actually creates opportunities for love to flourish. We make sacrifices. Others make sacrifices on our behalf. People show up for one another. For that we can rejoice and be thankful. Maybe you are not suffering right now. In this, too, you can rejoice. But wait—it will happen.

We can thank God that we aren't suffering as much as we might, but suffering is part of everyone's reality. So why should you or I be exempt from something that everyone else must endure?

Job said, “People are born for trouble as readily as sparks fly up from a fire” (Job 5:7, New Living Translation).

When suffering strikes, it's natural to ask God, “Why?” Maybe a more helpful question is “What?” as in, “God, what do You want to do in and through me in this time of suffering? How can I experience and pass on Your great love?” It's right to ask for God to relieve suffering, and He often does. But let's not be too quick to fear suffering as the worst thing that can happen, or the first thing to avoid.

C. S. Lewis addresses human suffering in his book, *The Problem of Pain*. He writes, “Pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in

our consciences, but shouts in our pains. It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”

So we are meant to listen for God's voice when we suffer. But we need more than that. We need comfort.

I find comfort in serving a God who suffered. As famous Lutheran pastor and martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, “Only a suffering God can help.” Jesus knows our pain. For love's sake, He has already entered into our suffering, and helps us to bear it. But there's more. If we belong to Him, we have entered into His suffering and death. And we will share in His resurrection and glory.

Paul wrote, “I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am participating in the sufferings of Christ that continue for His body, the church” (Colossians 1:24, New Living Translation). When we bring our suffering to a suffering God, it will always have meaning. Paul probably would not have had to endure such pain had he not loved Jesus, yet that very love helped him endure the pain.

During the Nazi Holocaust, a Lutheran pastor named Ernst Lohmeyer was arrested and condemned for opposing the regime. He was miraculously freed, only to be rearrested and executed by the Russians. Yet he wrote, “If God were to snatch us out of trials we would then be tried in ways that

would be endlessly deeper and greater than all the trials that we must endure in human circumstances. But, dear friends, even in the deepest trials the sound of his voice is perceptible, blowing over us like incense” (Ernst Lohmeyer, *Between the Swastika and the Sickle*).

When sin ripped us apart, Jesus did not turn from our suffering; He took it upon Himself and transformed it into everlasting life and love.

Because we love God, we love what He loves. We sometimes suffer for the sake of that love.

In a world that is desperate for love and full of suffering, let's listen to the voice of God and feel it blowing over us like precious, sweet-smelling incense in the midst of each and every circumstance. Let's love God and love others . . .

# Questions and Answers

**Dear Bob,  
Jewish people have suffered so much from Christians over the centuries with the Holocaust and the Inquisition and so many other failings in the church. Shouldn't we spend our time with Jewish people apologizing for the many sins of the church rather than trying to win them to Christ?**

It is true that a humble attitude is right for the believer to maintain when sharing what you believe, and that a dismissive disregard of the facts of history won't help in effective communication with Jewish people. It's true that some people involved in the Crusades or pogroms and the horrible anti-Semitic events of history were Christians. We cannot be so flippant when we say that those events were not Christian. Certainly the spirit of anti-Semitism is evil. Certainly when a real Christian considers racism in any form, including anti-Semitism, it should be rejected out-of-hand. And it's true that Jewish people will often point to these "Christian" events as reason to reject Jesus as Messiah. Many Jewish people will try to keep the believer on the back foot, so to speak, and keep you 'apologetic.' That said, what is our responsibility as believers in regards to those outside the church?

Avi Snyder writes in his book, **Jews Don't Need Jesus (and other misconceptions)** about this issue among many others. "While it is right to ask forgiveness for the crimes of the church, it is not right to apologize on Yeshua's behalf. Jesus has done no wrong. Yeshua is not guilty of the crimes that evil men and women committed in his name any more than modern medicine is guilty of the crimes that Dr Mengele, the monster of Auschwitz, committed against the Jewish people in the name of medical science." (page 99)

Yes, apologize for your sins. Acknowledge your own wrongs. Then make sure you get on with it. Tell of the greatness of God who forgives your sins and has given you eternal life. And he wants to give your Jewish mate eternal life, too, right? Remember when King David understood forgiveness about his own fairly substantial sins (adultery and murder among them), he cried, "Create in me a clean heart, and renew my spirit in me...cleanse me Lord from my iniquity... then I will teach transgressors your ways, and many will be converted to you!" (Psalm 51)

## ADDRESS INFORMATION

### JEWS FOR JESUS AUSTRALIA

E-MAIL: [mail@jewsforjesus.org.au](mailto:mail@jewsforjesus.org.au)  
WEB: [jewsforjesus.org.au](http://jewsforjesus.org.au)  
Phone in Australia: +61.2.9388.0559  
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# SYDNEY UPDATE

**O**ur Shabbat gatherings have re-commenced and we are delighted with the fun, the fellowship, and the mix of Jews and Gentiles who relate well over a shared meal, with some prayers and even some singing and dancing of late. Please keep praying for those who don't yet believe to 'get it' and to give their lives to the Lord. Pray for wisdom for us as we are considering moving these events into a larger space to accommodate more folks. Our team and many of our constituency were involved in January in the "Walk for Those who Cannot." That was a fundraiser for Jewish Care. This has turned out to be the Inaugural Walk, as we raised over \$1,600 and both that helps agency and we were delighted with the results. Thus we are planning for Walk II in 2022, if Yeshua tarries.

We are still hoping for more younger Jewish believers to join us around the office, the shop, or at Shabbat gatherings. Do you know anyone who might want to be involved with us in this way? Yes, we are in 'recruitment' mode as we continue to grow the ministry. We need folks who want to help us reach out among the Jewish people, and who would be more suited for such than a well trained Jewish believer?

## Are you keen to learn Bible from a Jewish point of view?

During lockdown, we began a series of Bible lessons on Zoom. The popularity from various countries, and even on our staff, caused us to continue. All those lessons are on our Jews for Jesus YouTube channel. [Studies verse-by-verse in Romans](#) were followed by [studies in the book of Hebrews](#). Then we concluded with [the book of Numbers](#). These are useful lessons to share with your Sunday school or Bible home group. How about sharing these with a Jewish colleague or family member? If you have interest, you both could join our study sessions live on Friday mornings. (Sydney 10 a.m.) Write to us to register your interest and we will include you in the invitation list. Bob will be teaching the book of Joshua next.



**Richard Harvey, interim leader of our UK work,** reports from London, "I was in Berlin for our most recent meeting of the Jews for Jesus European board of directors when I had quite an encounter in a taxi. As I was chatting with the driver, who was from Turkey, I meant to say, 'Danke Schön' ('thank you' in German), but instead I said it in Hebrew—'Todah rabbah.' The taxi driver, whom I had assumed was a Muslim, immediately responded, 'Why did you speak to me in Hebrew? How did you know I am Jewish?' He pulled out his wallet and

showed me a card depicting the Israeli flag. "I would never have expected to meet a Turkish Jewish taxi driver in Berlin, but there he was! We chatted about his family background, his preparation for his son's upcoming bar mitzvah, and what it was like to be Turkish and Jewish in Berlin. We also talked about a famous false messiah, Shabbetai Zvi, who ended up in Turkey, and how we could know if Yeshua is the true Messiah. "He asked me many questions about Yeshua and His first Jewish disciples, and we exchanged contact details. Do pray for my new friend Osment—that he will come to know the Messiah of Israel."



Jeff and Yael Morgan, and two of their three sons.

# Meet the Morgans

**W**e want to introduce you to the Morgan family—Jeff, Yael, and their three sons. (Third is brand new!).

Jeff is from California but moved to Israel in 2003. He and Yael, a sabra (native Israeli), married in 2007. They had two kids and moved back to California in 2015.

It was a turbulent time for the family. Jeff says, “Yael and I always had a strong and respectful relationship, but the New Age spirituality that I practiced for 20 years had turned me into an isolated, depressed loner. I was anxious and hopeless and couldn’t figure out why. I was at the peak of physical health, having created my own health and fitness YouTube channel in 2014, which drew over 70,000 subscribers. But spiritually I was a mess.

“Eventually, I hit bottom and pronounced myself a complete failure. Yael was seriously concerned for my wellbeing—until the miraculous happened. Jesus started revealing Himself to me, Yael, and our 10-year-old son Dylan all at the same time, yet separately! We each had amazing, multiple gospel encounters through people, as well as through online articles, videos, books—even TV. Everywhere we turned, Jesus was there, pouring out His love and drawing us closer to Himself.”

Despite their attraction to Jesus, Jeff and Yael wondered how their family could still be Jewish if they believed in Jesus. When they landed on the Jews for Jesus website, they found story after story about Jewish people who had come to faith in Yeshua.

Jeff says, “On February 10, 2018 at 11:00 p.m., it all came together. I realized that Jesus is the one and only Saviour and Messiah of our peo-

ple. My depression, fear, anxiety, and hopelessness were wiped away in one moment—I was a free man! Yael and I dropped to our knees and surrendered our lives to Yeshua.”

Yael later learned that her grandmother Miriam had been cared for by a Christian family during the Holocaust. When her father was captured and sent to Auschwitz, this family told Miriam to ask Jesus every day to save her father. She did so, and eventually her father, barely alive, was rescued right out of a mass burial pit. Miriam later told her mother that Jesus had answered her prayers. This was kept as a family secret that Yael discovered when she told her family about her new faith.

About a year ago, the Morgans became friends with one of our former staff who told them how much she’d enjoyed serving with us. Thanks to that connection and lots of prayer, they are now on board!

Jeff works mainly with our Communications department, particularly on our digital team, and since end of 2020, he’s receiving missionary training in Tel Aviv where they have relocated. He helps us with our website, as well as with video production and YouTube channel management—so that others like him and Yael will be drawn to Jesus through the true-life stories of Messianic Jews.

Please keep the Morgans in prayer, for their three sons, and that God’s blessing will energize and sustain them and give them much joy in this new season of life and ministry.

# Messianic Resources

While supplies last, of course

FEATURES RESOURCES FOR YOUR LEARNING, CELEBRATING AND GROWTH

## Israel/Australia lapel pin

This pretty lapel pin features crossed Australia and Israel flag. It is made of nickel and plated with gold color and enamel with a push-on-back fastener.

**COST: \$22**



## Misha/ Marty Goetz Live in Jerusalem

Recorded live on their first tour together in 2018, featuring 20 of their best songs of this famous father and daughter duo. Not to be missed!

**COST: CD: \$28/ DVD \$33**



## Behold Your God CD

The music from the Liberated Wailing Wall, including Hava Nagila and Solomon's Prayer. All around easy to listen. Some acoustic, some traditional Hebraic sounds, some almost rock. Great variety and wonderful harmonies make this a 'must' for lovers of Messianic music.

**COST: \$21**



## God's word of encouragement

The God's Word translation Scripture passages in this 48-page booklet describe these present and eternal blessings. They're encouraging words, a reminder of the tremendous assurance which you and other believers have through faith.

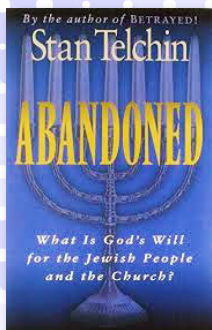
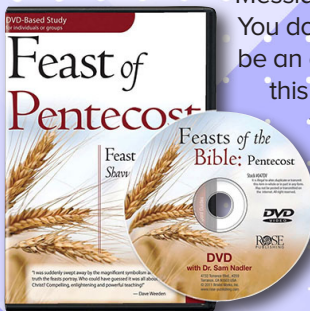
Cost: \$9



## Feast of Pentecost DVD

Dr. Sam Nadler is your guide through the feasts. Brought up in a traditional Jewish home, Sam came to believe in Jesus as Messiah. He served with Jews for Jesus, Chosen People Ministries, and is now president of Word of Messiah Ministries. You don't have to be an expert to lead this study. Perfect for small groups, Bible studies, or personal use.

**COST: \$32**



## Abandoned

By Stan Telchin author of Betrayed. Lessons for the Church about Israel. The role of jealousy in evangelism. Filled with good statistics and strategies.

**COST: \$35**

## Jews for Jesus keychain

Perfect gift to yourself or a mate. Both to testify and remind yourself! The Gospel is for Jews and for everyone. Unlock your doors and gates, and remember the King of Glory who will come through the gates.

**COST: \$5**



Coupon (PLEASE PRINT)

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