

**H**as your heart ever been broken over a young person who wandered away from the faith and is now living as though God does not exist? Maybe it's a family member, perhaps even your own child. I've had many close friends, and even Jews for Jesus colleagues weep with me over prodigal sons and daughters.

way to becoming a success in music, but I was miserable. I guess I knew in the back of my mind that my deep unhappiness had something to do with my relationship with God or lack of it, but I had become quite adept at burying those thoughts.

Then one day as I was walking past the student union, there, standing right

and his wife invited me to a Bible study in their home which was also the Jews for Jesus office.

As I entered their home and sat down in the small circle of people who had gathered in the living room, many uncomfortable feelings melted away. I realized that in a sense, I was coming home. That night I spoke to God for the first time in a long time and told him how sorry I was for the way I had been living. I asked Him to forgive and cleanse me and I returned to the road of following the Messiah.

My story is like that of many others, but sadly, many have yet to

# Prodigals Do Come Home

I'm sure my parents wept over me as well; I was a prodigal who came home. Raised in a Messianic Jewish home, I was taught that Jesus is our Messiah. When I was eight years old, my faith became personal and yet, in my teen years I turned my back on Jesus. Throughout high school and into college I threw myself into a lifestyle of parties, friends, drinking and drugs.

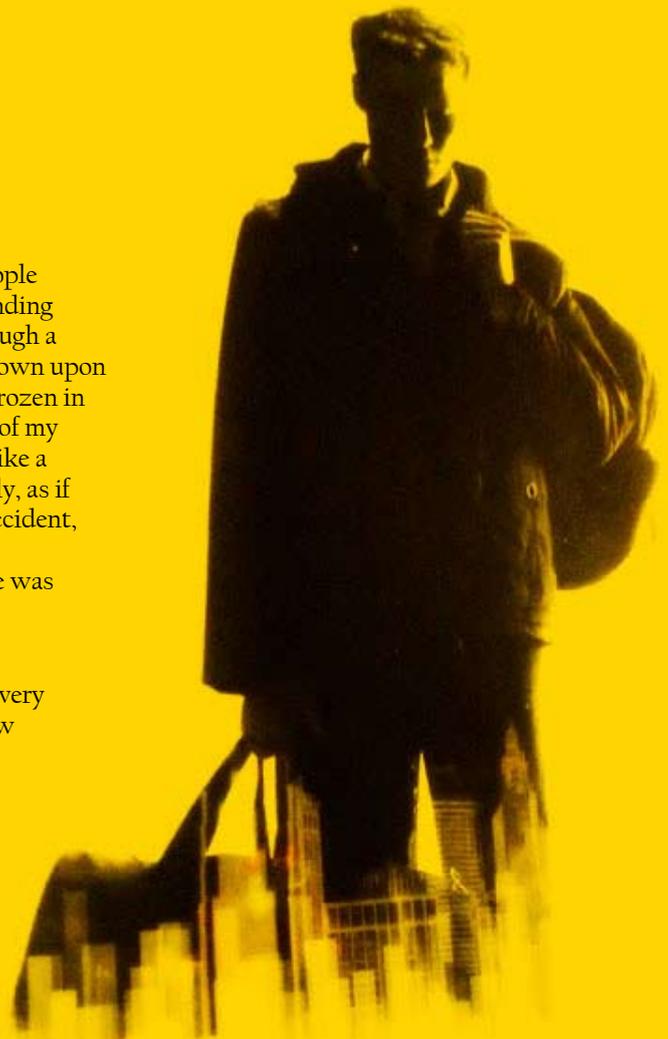
I eventually found myself enrolled in a music performance program at Boston University. I was on my

in front of me, were two people in Jews for Jesus jackets handing out literature. It was as though a heavenly spotlight shined down upon me. I stood still, as though frozen in time, while all of the pieces of my life began twisting around like a Rubik's Cube, until suddenly, as if by accident, yet it was no accident, everything pulled together, matched up...and the puzzle was solved.

I walked up to the man and introduced myself. He was very warm and friendly. He knew of my family and had been hoping to meet me. He



**David Brickner**  
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I know God is sovereign and He can bring back those who stray, as He did with me. But I am grateful for those who helped me return to the faith.

come home. A recent Barna research poll found that of those raised in Christian homes, 43% end up walking away from their faith in high school or college, melting into the growing number of people who declare no faith at all. I don't know how those raised in Messianic Jewish homes fit into these statistics, but I do know that no one is immune. I know God is sovereign and He can bring back those who stray, as He did with me. But I am grateful for those who helped me return to the faith. I feel strongly that our ministry should do all we can to reach out to strengthen children of Jewish believers when they are young, and continue reaching out to them when they are most prone to wander.

Jews for Jesus currently has eighteen missionaries deployed in ministry to children and youth, as well to young adults around the world, from the U.S. to Israel. They are ministering each week to hundreds of Jewish children and young adults, from believing and unbelieving families.\*

Many of these kids face unique challenges that our workers are especially trained and equipped to help them handle. With the advent of chat and social media, our workers can "meet" with them each week for chats and Bible studies, no matter where they may be living. But the highlights of their ongoing ministry are the in-person times together. That includes our summer camps, called Camp Gilgal in the US and Germany, where our ministry to many young people begins. Bob Mendelsohn, our Australian Director, created our first Camp Gilgal in 1991 and oversaw the work on the East Coast (US) until 1996 when he was redeployed.

Our program for older teens, Halutzim, usually includes many we've met

through camp, and so does Massah, a discipleship/short-term mission program for college-aged young adults.

The care that hundreds of children and young adults receive through these programs each year is life changing. I've seen it in my own children's lives. All credit goes to the Lord for the fact that they are walking closely with Him today, but I know He used the Camp Gilgal ministry they attended from ages eight to eighteen to help grow the love they still have for Christ today. Their further participation in Massah has led both of them to involvement in full-time ministry as young adults. Yes, I hope and believe their upbringing at home played a significant role, but I cannot overstate the impact this specialized ministry has had in the lives of my children and those of countless other Jewish children around the globe.

Let me tell you about Ben. Ben has been involved with Jews for Jesus his entire life. Ben wanted to go to camp long before he was old enough, and attended camp every year from ages eight to eighteen. When his grandmother, who was his hero, was killed in a car accident, he experienced some difficult times. In 2013, he recommitted his life to the Lord, and over the course of the next year began seriously examining

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his life and faith. At his final camp last summer, he decided that he wanted to be baptized before he left for college across the country. Ben recently came back to one of our winter weekend camps to minister to other children like himself.

This month our team of children and youth missionaries are working hard to make the final preparations for our busiest season of camp ministry all year. Our Halutzim and Massah team leaders are also busily preparing for northern summer ministry. We expect to see many young people put their trust in Jesus in the next few months, and many others are likely to begin a deeper walk with Him. And yes, among our older campers there may well be some prodigals who come because of the friendships they've made over the years. Your prayers are very important in this process.

We need to do all we can to help demonstrate the kind of faith and provide the kind of nurture that gives kids a fighting chance in this culture so often toxic to trust in Him. My prayer is that by the grace of God we will see many prodigals come home and many children's faith in Yeshua strengthened and confirmed. May the voices of many parents echo the words of the Father found in the parable, "for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found" (Luke 15:24).

\* Jews for Jesus does not minister to minors without parental consent.

## Donating

If you want to donate to Jews for Jesus, we would really appreciate it now as the fiscal year ends. You can give online via PayPal or ring our office to donate with credit card. You can send a cheque or money order and we will be very grateful. You can also direct deposit into your own nation's bank. Please let us know that the donation was yours via email or on the notes on your banking memo. If you want to include us in your will, we can also help you with the wording or check our website for such. God bless you!

Thanks  
a million



# PRAYER PROMPTERS

Please pray for:

- ★ **Sons and daughters** of believers who are struggling or have wandered from the faith
- ★ This year's **Camp Gilgal**, as well as **our entire ministry to children, youth and young adults**, especially as two of our long time camp directors are turning over their roles to those they've mentored
- ★ Grace and strength for **three Russian-speaking Holocaust survivors** who recently came to faith in Israel
- ★ Continued growth for **Rotem and Efraim** as they witness to family and friends and prepare for baptism
- ★ Meaningful interactions with Israeli trekkers in India through our **Massah program**
- ★ God's blessing on **our donors** who keep us in the bookshop, out on the streets, in Jewish peoples' homes, and throughout the region, proclaiming Yeshua as Messiah

**S**havuot, the Feast of Weeks, is a great day of anticipation on the Hebrew calendar. (This year it correlates with May 24 on your calendar). This is one of the three great pilgrimage festivals God gave to the children in Israel in the book of Leviticus. Biblically it is a first fruits harvest festival and it has a strong emphasis on the giving of the law, per Jewish tradition. It's no coincidence that God chose this holiday to pour out His Spirit as the fulfillment of Jeremiah 31:33ff "And I will put my law in their inward parts and write it on their hearts, . . ." (KJV). The disciples were all gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem on Shavuot, awaiting God's promised power. That power came down on what is now known on the church calendar as Pentecost Sunday. Through the mighty moving of the Holy Spirit there was a harvest of many souls, and the community of believers in Yeshua (Jesus) was launched.

**A Jewish holiday (also) on the church calendar**



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





**Bob Mendelsohn**  
Regional Director - JFJ AustralAsia

# Patience means Salvation

**T**he apostle Peter wrote this odd phrase in his second letter, patience equals salvation. (I used to be a maths teacher in the US). "Be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, and regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation." (3:15)

God waiting on us, it's almost comic to imagine-- God in the heavens considering our plight, our situations, our lives, and He waits. I tried to understand this many times, but recently this made sense.

Melvin\* is a Jewish doctor from the Northeast in the US. His wife and he have been married for over 40 years and they have lived in the Houston area almost that entire time. She was a Christian in her youth, but when they married, she officially converted to Judaism. After a few years of missing so much of what she knew about God, she started attending a Lutheran church. The pastor came by to visit her and to thank her for attending the previous Sunday. That's when he first met Melvin. A very personable but hard man, Melvin made it clear that he didn't want Pastor Ken to visit him or to involve him in the life of the church.

But of late, Melvin has been attending a nearby Baptist church, playing brass in their orchestra, although still a staunch unbeliever. When I spoke at the Lutheran church on my recent two-week speaking tour in Texas, Melvin was invited. He attended, and long story short, he decided to commit his life to Jesus, which he did publicly on the subsequent Sunday, walking the aisle with his mother (in her 80s), sister and daughter in attendance at his request. What a way to announce your new faith! How good is God to be patient in waiting for Melvin to be 'ready.'

Years ago in the Hunter Valley, Nadine\* moved nearby the local church and was befriended by the pastor and some of the members of the church. Years went by and the friendship deepened, but Nadine would always knock back the idea of attending church. Finally one of our missionaries was invited to speak at the local church, and the pastor invited Nadine to come along. She did to hear a Jew speak about Messiah. That encounter helped her enough that she has now given her life to Yeshua, has been baptized and is attending the fellowship regularly. God's patience is her salvation!

Our missionary, Rahel Landrum, tells about her father, Sami Hirshenson, who also was born in Romania. He endured a labor camp in Moldova during World War II. One of the other men in the camp was a Jewish believer in Jesus and witnessed to him. Rahel remembers, "I often think about the first Jewish person who told my dad about the love of the Messiah in the middle of the terrible conditions of the labor camp. I remember my dad's peaceful face as he was lying in the hospital bed, having finally responded to that love forty years later." 40 years of God's patience. Sami's salvation!

I share these stories so that you can have hope for your neighbor, for your son or father, for your doctor or pharmacist. Jewish people need the Gospel and they need our prayers. Let's be in prayer for the Nadines and the Melvins and Samis in our own sphere of influence, for God to open their eyes and to be patient until that glorious day when they finally say 'yes' to Yeshua. Amen?

\*not their real names



# The timing is the Lord's

by Joshua Turnil  
Leader of Jews for Jesus, Paris, France



A couple of years ago, Josette was looking for something more than what her Orthodox Jewish tradition had offered.

She began a search on the Internet, and many different options popped up, including “Jews for Jesus.” Fascinated, she actually picked up the phone to call us, but hung up when someone on the other end said, “Shalom, Jews for Jesus.”

Earlier this year, Josette’s daughter, H el ene was in the hospital, comatose and dying of cancer. Josette did not know where to turn, and she remembered Jews for Jesus. Again she picked up the phone but this time did not hang up. I received the call asking if I would visit H el ene. I asked my wife, Delphine, to pray that H el ene would be awake and open to my witness, and was on my way to the hospital within fifteen minutes. I arrived to find H el ene who sat up as I entered her room, and staring at me. I introduced myself and explained why I was there:

“In a few minutes, I will leave this room. Going out the door, I will turn left, take the elevator to the car park, get in my car and go home. Soon, you will also leave this room. Do you know where you are going? You CAN know.” Then I explained the gospel and invited her to repeat a prayer of repentance and salvation. She struggled to speak, but she clearly understood and made the effort to repeat the prayer. At the end, she mustered all her strength and gave a resounding “AMEN!” I added a prayer

and a blessing and as I prepared to leave, she again made another huge effort, and lifted her hand. As I gave her mine in return, she squeezed it hard.

The following week Josette attended our Hanukkah event. During the evening, she heard the gospel and asked several questions. That very night, she too prayed to receive Jesus as Lord of her life. But there is more....

Apart from the leading of God’s Spirit, I can’t explain what prompted me to bring Josette to a specific church that I’d barely known. When I called the pastor and explained Josette’s situation, he told me of a woman that he wanted Josette to meet. A retired teacher, Ir ene had known and loved many Jewish pupils and often prayed for their salvation.

When Josette and I arrived at the church, the pastor and his wife, along with an older woman, greeted us at the door.

Josette whispered, “I know that woman!” The two women fell into each other’s arms and cried. The pastor and I looked at each other, perplexed. We later learned that Irene had taught all of Josette’s children when they were young! In fact, Irene used to spend long times in prayer for each child in her class. Irene had prayed for H el ene years ago and God kept those prayers ‘in reserve’ until the appointed time. As soon as Irene saw Josette she realized that the little H el ene she cherished as a child was in the hospital, dying. After the worship service, she and Ir ene spent the day

together. Josette is in good hands with this congregation.

Meanwhile, as the family began preparing themselves for H el ene’s passing, Josette asked me to officiate at the funeral. Other family members were opposed, even though they’d seen a change in H el ene. In fact, her father said to Josette, “She is luminous! What happened?” What happened? God brought eternal life to a woman on her deathbed—praise God that He can bring life from the dead! But there’s more.

In February, I was flying to the U.S. for our Jews for Jesus leadership meetings when the call came that H el ene had passed peacefully into the Lord’s presence. I felt torn not being with the family, though I was sure I would not have been allowed to officiate at the funeral. However, the day I returned home, another message awaited me. The funeral had been postponed, and the rabbi had backed out of officiating. Perhaps he had even heard that H el ene had been associating with Jews for Jesus. Josette was not sure where to turn. I had just enough time to get home, shower and make it to the graveside, where I was allowed to conduct the service after all. I chanted the customary liturgy and prayers. Then, as I spoke about H el ene experiencing a dramatic change that brought her peace, heads nodded, and I was able to give a clear gospel presentation. Please keep this family in your prayers, that God will continue His work in their hearts.

