

JEW'S F[✶]OR JESUS™

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Dubbed Christianity Today magazine's 2014 "Book of the Year," God's Forever Family by Larry Eskridge is an historical look at the "Jesus People" movement (JPM) in America from the late 1960s through the mid 1970s. I enjoyed the book, and remembering those events made me long to see a fresh outpouring of God's Spirit today.

I was a bit young to participate in the JPM, but old enough to see the impact that the powerful work of the Holy Spirit had on our country in those times. Many of you will remember that the Jews for Jesus ministry was born at that time, and yes, we are mentioned several times throughout the book. I was especially encouraged to see this retrospective in this our Jews for Jesus 40th anniversary year. God moved uniquely and remarkably through some very unlikely people to bring about the salvation of literally tens of thousands of young people.

We are still enjoying the fruit of all that God accomplished in those few short years . . . but wouldn't

you love to see a similar movement in this decade? No doubt it would look very different today because so much has changed. But I would expect some similarities to the days of the JPM if we would be so blessed to experience another such visitation from God.

Although not the only characteristic of the JPM, what seemed to mark this movement above all else was the unbridled, enthusiastic commitment to evangelism and personal witness of young people whose lives had been radically changed. They just couldn't stop talking about Jesus, and their love for Him was contagious. If God were to bless us with a similar outpouring today I'm sure we would see a renewal of passionate commitment to tell others about Yeshua.

Personal witness seems to be so much more difficult for us today; our culture is characterized on the one hand by suspicion and cynicism, and on the other by an oddly illogical form of tolerance that insists we treat all beliefs as equally true and valid. But Christianity has always been countercultural, and, as in the days of the Jesus People movement, is often done best

by those who aren't restricted by the expectation of fitting in.

Even so, when it comes to outdoor evangelism, most people walking down the streets these days are either talking on their mobile handphones or plugged into their music. Does that mean we give up on street evangelism? No! We just need to work harder and look for ever more creative means to engage people with our message. (Pray for us as we endeavor to do that this month and July on our street witnessing campaigns in Russia, New York, Budapest, and Berlin.)

The Spirit of God is still moving on people's hearts and we need to stay in tune with what He is doing so that we might continue to fulfill the Great Commission in our day. Please pray for Jews for Jesus as we seek to continue on the cutting edge of creative evangelism. But wouldn't it be wonderful if a whole generation of new believers was once more on fire to share the gospel? Let's pray for that to happen, and also for the entire body of Christ to continue to renew our commitment to tell people about Jesus.

Another mark of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit is captured in the

God's Forever Family



David Brickner
Executive Director,
San Francisco USA

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book title, God's Forever Family. During the Jesus People movement many chose to live communally in an effort to recapture a sense of what was happening in the early church, as recorded in the book of Acts. "Brother" and "sister" truly described what people wanted to be to each other. This commitment to God's plan for sacred unity among His people was remarkable and contrasted so deeply with the profane unity illustrated in the book of Genesis. The story of the tower of Babel (Genesis 11) is evidence that not all unity is good or godly. When people unite in prideful power plays, this is evil and subject to God's judgment. But though God divided and scattered the peoples of the earth in judgment, He intended to regather them as a family one day, under His banner of love. He began to reveal this great redemptive project in the very next chapter when he called Abram and said: "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 12:3).

But the Jewish people were not only a family through whom blessing would come. They were representative of THE family into which others would be welcome, adopted sons and daughters of God. That Jews and Gentiles could become one in Messiah was a mystery that was finally revealed in the gospel, "one new man," God's forever family through faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:14-15).

The implications of this supernatural work of God were not lost on those in the JPM. It seems to me that we in the church today would do well to recover and rediscover the joys and blessings of being part of God's forever family.

It's easy to have consumerist attitudes toward the church. We shop for the church that best meets our personal needs. Is the music good? How is the children's program? Is the church convenient for us in terms of location,



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availability of parking, the times of the services? Is the preacher any good? Most of us don't have the opportunity to choose our physical family. Perhaps we should think more in terms of family when selecting our communities of faith and worship.

We Jews for Jesus are so grateful to God for the forever family we have in our Messiah. Even when some of our own Jewish families turned away from us because of our faith in Jesus, we were embraced and loved by a

much wider family of God. This unity, founded in Jesus, will never be broken. Because of Jesus, we can celebrate this supernatural reality and live our lives as part of God's Forever Family. Imagine a new wave of that kind of spiritual family commitment in our day—that would be a mark of genuine revival and a special work of grace by the Holy Spirit to be sure.

Recently I attended a meeting of ministry leaders who were seeking to work together toward greater unity. One participant was an old friend of mine, Pastor Don Finto. Now 84 years of age, Pastor Don had been a genuine participant and leader in the JPM. Together we were reflecting on the blessings of what God did in those days. He knew firsthand. But he told me, "David, I'm not looking for a return to those days, as wonderful as they may have been. I believe even better days are ahead of us, and I hope to live to see those days myself." I say Amen. So may it be for Jews for Jesus and for the entire forever family of God.

BITS from the BRANCHES

SAN FRANCISCO

Jeremiah Zaretsky reports, “Not too long ago, Rich Robinson (our scholar in residence) forwarded an email to me from a man whose daughter was about to be engaged to a Jewish man named Sam.* The soon-to-be father-in-law had witnessed to Sam over time, reading Isaiah 53 with him and taking him and his daughter to church. However, he knew that Jews for Jesus would be able to answer Sam’s questions in a way he could not.

“Sam had grown up in an Orthodox Jewish home, yet his fascination with Jesus started when he was sixteen. Sam had been exposed to Jesus as a ‘Higher Power’ through Alcoholics Anonymous, but it wasn’t until he served a prison sentence that he started reading the Bible. He realized his sinfulness and his need for a Savior. God was at work in Sam’s life!

“I had two in-depth conversations with Sam on the phone, as he lives in another state. After I clearly explained the gospel, faith and salvation, Sam was ready to put his trust in Yeshua. I shared from Luke 15:7 with Sam: ‘I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.’ Then I told him, ‘There’s a party in heaven for you, Sam.’ He was so excited after our conversation that he called his father-in-law and said, ‘Well, I guess the angels are rejoicing!’. Please pray for Sam’s spiritual growth and for the gospel seed to fall on good soil and bear much fruit!”



ESSEN, GERMANY

Dina Markova reports, “From time to time I call Jewish people who once gave us their phone numbers, but have seemingly lost interest in knowing more about Jesus. If they tell me, ‘Jesus is not for Jews, don’t call me again!’ I have other questions, like ‘What do you think about the Messiah of Israel?’ or ‘Would you like us to look at what Torah and the Prophets say about Yeshua?’ And sometimes a closed door begins to open.

That is what happened with Nelya, who responded over the phone that she didn’t want to hear about Jesus. But when I asked about her attitude to Torah, she showed interest. She was open to us reading some Bible passages together. We met to read and I suggested that we read the fulfilled prophecy about Yeshua, Nelya agreed. Her complete distrust to it has become a thing of the past.



MOSCOW, RUSSIA



Australian Branch leader Bob Mendelsohn will be in Moscow as this newsletter is produced and sent. He is the chaplain (and will also be out on the streets) of our XXI campaign in that Russian capital. **One of his workers is Larissa Savelieva who reports,** “We continue to visit people who gave us their details during the Moscow XX campaign last year. Right before a visit to a man named Adolf, he warned me, as if apologizing, that he had ‘a house full of people.’ His wife, who had passed away, was Tatar, and many Muslim relatives and acquaintances were visiting from her side of the family. When I arrived, we talked a little, but I noticed that Adolf was anxious,

couldn’t concentrate, and it seemed perhaps the visit would not happen after all. “I prayed, and Adolf suddenly suggested that we go to the building next to his and a Jewish woman whose late husband had been his friend. We went and Adolf introduced me to Sophia. I took out the Bible and shared my testimony a little. Sophia listened and nodded. And Adolf now relaxed and listened attentively so I had an opportunity to explain the gospel to both of them.

“It turned out that Sophia’s husband had been a Messianic Jew, though she herself had not been especially interested. She now gratefully took invitations to our Shabbat meeting for herself and her



DNEPROPETROVSK, UKRAINE

Victoria Negrimovskaya reports, “Don’t worry! I’m not going to hell! I help everyone, even homeless people! So I don’t need Jesus!” That’s how Sophia responded to the gospel when I first met her. She is typical of many people who are convinced that they can earn salvation through good deeds. Sophia’s main focus was on her business, and maximizing her profits. Despite her busy schedule and her belief that she didn’t need the gospel, Sophia never refused to meet with me. Years passed and gradually Sophia came to understand what I’d tried to tell her from the start. She turned to God absolutely deliberately, realizing her guilt before Him, and asked Yeshua to lead her life. Soon after this she told me, ‘I closed my business. And you know, I began to feel much more

relaxed.” She laughed rejoicing at the renewal she received in Jesus. “Soon after, Sophia told me about her beloved niece, Lera, who came from Israel to undergo treatment for alcoholism. She asked if I would talk to her. We had a nice conversation, during which Lera prayed to repent and receive Jesus. Sophia and I committed to upholding Lera in our prayers.

“After Sophia was immersed, she began to study the Holy Scriptures even more, and they became increasingly more authoritative for her. Our visits are so unlike the ones we had when we first met. Each time, I rejoice as she tells me of her life with Jesus. She is continually offering to pray with people she knows, and is unashamed to identify herself as a Jew for Jesus.”

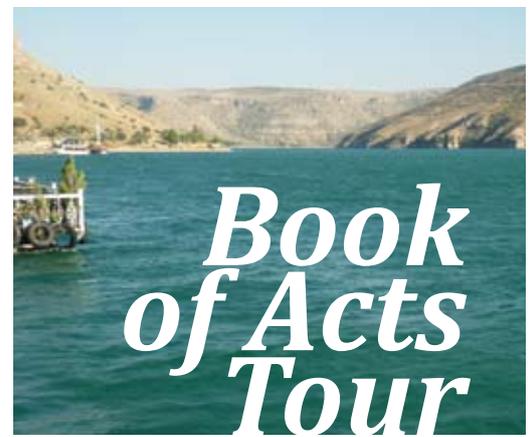
sister. I told Adolf, ‘You seem more free here than at home. What if we meet here for fellowship and Bible study?’ Adolf and Sophia were receptive to the idea.

“On the same street, but in another building, I visited another Jewish woman, Irina. It was a drop-in visit as she had given us her address but no phone number. When I rang the doorbell, Irina opened the door and said immediately, ‘If it’s about religion, I’m not going to talk.’ I replied, ‘It’s not about religion. It’s about relationships.’ When I introduced myself, Irina turned her back on me. I said, ‘Irina, it’s a pity that you turned your back on me. But it’s much more

important that we not turn our backs on the One who created us and died for us.’ When Irina heard that, she let me in. We went to the kitchen. I opened the Bible and shared the gospel and how it relates to Passover. Irina listened very attentively.

“I discovered that Irina’s first reaction was anger at God over the death of her son. That never-ending pain of loss, her loneliness and a feeling of vulnerability had hardened her heart. But now I hope that she might also get together with Adolf, Sophia and me to study the Bible together at Sophia’s home.”

*not his real name



Turkey & Israel
7-22 November 2014

Dr. Kameel Majdali, Director of Teach All Nations in Melbourne (www.tan.org.au), author of Melbourne to Jerusalem, radio host on the Vision Radio Network, and board member of Jews for Jesus Australia, is offering his 22nd holy land tour, entitled *The Book of Acts Tour through Turkey & Israel*. Dates: November 7-22, 2014 for 16 Spirit-filled nights. Travel in the footsteps of Paul the Apostle from Antioch westward to Ephesus (halfway across Turkey), then onto Israel and key places like Caesarea, Mount Carmel, Jaffa, Lydda, Sea of Galilee and Jerusalem. Optional 4 day, 3 night Cappadocian Adventure at the start of the tour. Price for the main tour starts at USD 2,595 (inclusive land) plus airfare to the Middle East. For further information, contact Leanne at leanne@tan.org.au or 03 9802 5040 or write PO Box 493, Mount Waverley VIC 3149. or Francois Lockwood of Escape Travel 03 8619 6255 or 1300 791 342 francois.lockwood@escapetravel.com.au



SHALOM dear friends around our REGION!



Bob Mendelsohn
Regional Director - JFJ AustralAsia



Thank you for all you do to help us. We asked and you answered and have sent us tens of thousands of dollars to get us started in our new book shop in Bondi Junction. Much of that has gone to the outfitting of the place, new flooring, new paint, new lighting, and so much more. Of course, much from our shop across the street conveyed including our staff, which is our most important resource. We still have 750 products including Judaica (prayer shawls, skull caps, mezuzahs...), CDs (Jonathan Settel, Paul Wilbur, Deborah Kline Iantorno, Karen Davis, ...) books by authors like Art Katz, David Brickner, Kameel Majdali, Philip Yancey, Arnold Fruchtenbaum..., and so much more. Already many Jewish people have come into the new location who had never even approached us before, although they've lived in the neighborhood for years. Why now? We think it's due to the prayers of you, our faithful newsletter readers, and God's mercy and wooing. Thus, thanks again. I promise you photos of the new shop when I return from Russia.

Before you think we only stay in the shop to welcome visitors, we also have spoken in many churches in the region, and visited with enquirers in their homes and offices. Several Jewish people have come to faith in the last few months, and it's a joy to midwife them, to watch as God brings forth new life where before was only rejection and hostility. Thanks be to God for His salvation reaching to the ends of the earth.

(Isa. 45.22)

As I write this note, I'm on an airplane flying to Moscow, Russia. The JFJ staff there invited me to be a chaplain to them during their 21st Summer Witnessing Campaign. What an honor! These Jewish believers from all around the Former Soviet Union will be on the streets evangelizing for 2 weeks beginning on 1 June. I will deliver daily chapel messages, share evangelistic messages at three public gatherings, take photos all over the city of the campaigners and do my share of street evangelism as well. This month some of your gifts to underwrite our work will help offset the costs for my travels, ground expenses, and work while there. I personally thank you for that and I know the Russian-speaking Jewish brethren there would thank you as well if they could do so.

Our monthly OneNewMan gatherings and weekly Jewish Bible classes in Sydney are effective in reaching and teaching about Jewish people and about the Gospel of Yeshua. If you live nearby, you could join us, but if not, do join us in prayer for many eyes to be open.

At the beginning of each day I ponder again God's marvelous love to us, His care for us, and friends like you who keep us keeping on for Him. How awesome is our God! Thanks for being part of our team.

Much love in Yeshua!

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