

THE JOSHUA FUND™ report

Lives changed as hundreds step into the work of The Joshua Fund

BY JOEL C. ROSENBERG

"At home I prayed for the people of Israel, but once I got here my prayers for the people are stronger and more passionate."

— note from 2011 Israel Tour participant

This is why our team loves to bring people to Israel! Because hosting tours to the Holy Land and Epicenter Conferences in Jerusalem provide a convergence of the educational and charitable aspects of our mission. And in this case it allowed nearly 300 people to "step into the story," see what we do and why we do it. And lives are changed.

Consider some notes we received from this year's tour participants:

"Overwhelming, educational, enlightening, humbling, and yet inspiring."

"Can't wait to get back home and sift through it all..."

"I had no idea of the scope of The Joshua Fund."

"Since first coming to Israel with TJF in 2009, I feel my Christian walk has grown exponentially."

"The conference was a great kickoff to get our hearts and minds ready for the tour. Looking forward to sharing the teaching with our friends and family back home."

We're thrilled to report that tens of thousands of people from over 113 countries have viewed the conference messages at www.epicenterconference.com.

Please pray the Lord continues to spread His Word through this conference. A few ideas: Watch the conference with your family and

discuss it. Lead your home fellowship group through a study of the Book of Joel - watch and discuss one message each week. Consider giving the conference DVD package to family, friends and ministry leaders as a gift.

Finally, my wife Lynn and I were touched by this note from one tour member who participated in TJF's humanitarian relief outreach in the Israeli town of Sderot near Gaza. "The [Israeli] people were so grateful - truly a humbling blessing to us and being able to love them, hug them, and help them. One woman showed me her Kassam rocket scars. To be able to help her and love on her will forever be burned into my memory. Another woman lost her three year old son to a rocket. I have a three year old grandson - I cannot imagine losing him to a rocket attack. It really brings home the challenges that all Israelis face, especially in Sderot. None of us will ever be the same after that."

This is why we founded The Joshua Fund - to mobilize Christians to "learn, pray, give and go." What a joy to see God answering prayer and changing lives.

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► Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon being interviewed by TJF president Joel C. Rosenberg at the Epicenter Conference



Serving Those Who Have Suffered Much

"And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them..."
Mark 6:34

Their faces told a thousand stories without uttering a word – their hearts torn by unspeakable sufferings and loss so many years ago. These precious individuals shared a common bond they did not choose willingly – they were all survivors of the Holocaust. After experiencing many atrocities early in their lives, approximately one-third of these elderly survivors now live below the poverty line in Israel.

And yet on this mild May morning, they came. Dressed in their best suits and tidy dresses, with pearls and hats neatly in place, it was apparent each person felt this was going to be a special event. Through the Lord's goodness, 50 members of our Israel tour had the incredible honor to serve 150 of these dear Holocaust survivors by touching them with a warm smile and providing for some of their physical needs. The Joshua Fund came alongside a local ministry partner in Tel Aviv to participate in setting up a "Suk" or marketplace. As they arrived from throughout the surrounding neighborhoods, our team put together brand new carts for each participant, who then moved through 15 different stations to receive all new goods including honey, olives, coffee and other food items, as well as new towels, pans and personal care products. These men and women were so grateful for the smiles, love and practical help they received that morning - things we tend to take for granted on a daily basis.

One of the women on our team described the joy of serving these individuals – "As we left Tiberius for Tel Aviv, I could not wait to do the outreach and as we approached the building where the outreach was to take place my heart was beating out of my chest. We took the stairs to the second level where tables or stations were set up for the Suk. A wonderful Canadian lady, named Hope, and I were responsible for table or station number five where we distributed buckwheat. Hope and I made a promise to encourage each other not to cry, but that did not last long. As the Holocaust survivors approached our table, one by one, and as we saw their faces and their gratitude we could not stop the tears from rolling down our faces. Personally, I felt like I was standing on Holy ground. I could feel the Lord's pleasure which filled my heart with joy even more. I could not stop hugging and kissing the women. There were times that I wished I could speak Hebrew so that I could tell the survivors how much we love them and how

much the Lord loves them, but I think our smiles could speak volumes. I could not stop smiling. It was the love of our Lord Jesus Christ that gave me such a love for the Israelis and especially for the Holocaust survivors. It was the love of Christ that took me there to be part of this amazing service project. I thank the Lord for blessing us so much."

Another member of our team summed it up for each of us, "I will never forget looking into their eyes that were brimming with tears, and wishing I could have done more for them."

... 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' – Matthew 25:40

Tour participants had the honor to serve hundreds of individuals and families at six different service projects throughout Israel.



Prayer & Vision Trip

IMPRESSIONS

From Jerusalem, we headed north to Mt. Carmel, Megiddo, Nazareth, Capernaum and other places featured in the Bible.



Normally, 6 a.m. wake-up calls, breakfast salads and pushy souvenir salesmen don't elicit such an enthusiastic response. However, these minor nuisances were indeed a small price to pay in exchange for 10 memorable days in Israel.

With seven busloads of people from across the globe, we began our time at The Joshua Fund's (TJF) Epicenter Conference in Jerusalem. We studied the book of Joel, heeding his call to "Blow the trumpet in Zion" (*Joel 2:1*). The pastor of a local thriving congregation literally blew the shofar (ram's horn), calling the conference to order.

Bible teachers Anne Graham Lotz, Ray Bentley, Skip Heitzig, and Joel Rosenberg took us through the short book of Joel, highlighting its many themes, including:

- The Day of the Lord is coming; surely it is near. (*Joel 1:15*)
- Return to me (God) with all your heart, and with fasting, weeping and mourning. (*Joel 2:12*)
- Those who divide the land of Israel will be judged. (*Joel 3:2*)

The second day of the conference focused on practical ways to pray more effectively for Israel and her neighbors. We were reminded of the daily security threats facing Israeli citizens during a briefing by Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon.

From Jerusalem, we headed north to Mt. Carmel, Megiddo, Nazareth, Capernaum and other places featured in the Bible. At each stop, our guides provided the historical and Biblical context. In a moment we'll never forget, four wooden boats connected midway across the Sea of Galilee, allowing roughly 270 of us to worship together. Later that evening, we celebrated with 20 people who publicly shared their commitment to Jesus Christ in a baptism ceremony.

We were frequently treated to Bible teaching from Israeli pastors (Arab and Jewish believers). These heroes of the faith often encounter persecution from their own families and communities. We were honored to pray for them and thank them for their courage and passion in proclaiming God's truth.

TJF regularly distributes food and supplies to many of Israel's most needy citizens. We were privileged to participate in an outreach to Russian-born Israelis living below the poverty line in Tel Aviv. We distributed soap, towels, coffee, rice, hot pots, toothpaste and more. Recipients showed their appreciation through tears, hugs, and smiles. We will long remember their faces, and were grateful to show Christ's love in a practical way.

We returned to Jerusalem to visit many of the places where Jesus spent his final days on earth, from the Mount of Olives to the Upper Room. Sharing communion at the Garden Tomb was especially meaningful.

Our bodies may have returned to the States, but our hearts remain in Israel.

5 REASONS WHY THIS WAS THE MOST EXCITING 10 DAYS OF MY LIFE...

1. *Interacting with Israeli pastors and other believers*
2. *Serving the poor during our day of outreach*
3. *Worshipping and hearing God's Word preached in places where Jesus taught*
4. *Receiving security briefings that helped us better understand the challenges facing those living in the Middle East*
5. *Spending time with fellow believers who share our desire—and the desire of TJF—to bless Israel and her neighbors in the name of Jesus.*

Tour Visits Our Warehouse



As a part of the May 2011 “Prayer and Vision” tour of Israel, The Joshua Fund was privileged to host over 250 tour participants at its warehouse in Israel. It was a joyous time as visitors were able to see the food and aid that is flowing through the warehouse, bound for needy families and individuals throughout the Land. The Joshua Fund’s Director of Humanitarian Aid shared an update on the work the Lord is doing through The Joshua Fund in Israel. Although the situation is sobering, as 25 percent of Israelis live under the poverty level (which is less than \$900 for a family of four per month), there is also much cause for rejoicing as the tour participants heard about some of the many ways the Lord is moving to meet the needs of His people. They learned that the food and aid stacked throughout the warehouse blesses 2,800 families each month and provisions are also stock-piled for distribution during future wars or disasters.

Additionally, the tour participants learned about many of the other Humanitarian Aid projects being carried out in 2011 with the help of The Joshua Fund, including assistance to those who are making aliyah, two soup kitchens serving about 400 people each week, life-saving heart surgeries for children, pregnancy support and infant care for new mothers, as well as projects to bless Holocaust survivors, orphans, and the elderly. The visit was a time of fellowship as the Director of Humanitarian Aid introduced the warehouse staff members, who work tirelessly to serve with excellence.

Finally, there was a time of prayer as the staff members and tour participants joined together in thanking the Lord for His wonderful provision, as well as asking Him to use every item in the warehouse for His purposes. The tour participants were deeply impacted by the visit and shared that seeing the Lord’s provision in person was a great encouragement. Many also communicated that they have a new desire to return home to their congregations and share the mission to Learn, Pray, Give, and Go.

*For the Lord has chosen Zion... I will abundantly bless her provision;
I will satisfy her poor with bread. (Psalm 132:13a, 15)*

2011 Epicenter Conference Resources



On Demand Videos

Now available are on demand viewing of the conference speakers and panel discussions. Here are the various ways you can watch:

- www.epicenterconference.com
- www.joshuafund.net
- Mobile App for iPhone, iPad and Android

New Mobile App

Download it now at the App Store or Android Market and join us in building a global movement to bless Israel and her neighbors. Our app features on demand videos, audio, updates and can all be shared with others using Facebook, Twitter and email.

DVD Set

We will be offering the entire conference on DVD for purchase in the near future. **Pre-order yours today by visiting www.epicenterconference.com.**

Presentation DVD

A 90 minute video presentation will provide a fast-paced summary of the entire Epicenter Conference that can be shown to congregations and home fellowships. To request your copy of this special DVD, please contact us today for more information.



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DESIGNATED GIVING

All contributions are tax deductible in the USA. If The Joshua Fund is successful in raising our financial goal for a specific project for which you have designated your donations, all excess funds for that project will be applied to related projects or to the general fund of TJF.

We are a member of the ECFA (Evangelical Council on Financial Accountability) which was founded in 1979. The ECFA provides accreditation to Christian non-profit organizations that faithfully demonstrate compliance with the ECFA Standards pertaining to financial accountability, fund-raising and board governance.

