

THE JOSHUA FUND®

## report

## You Shall be My Witnesses

Over the last several years, there has been an increase in the number of indigenous evangelistic efforts using the internet. Perhaps more importantly, by God's grace, the effectiveness and fruitfulness of these ministries have grown tremendously. From beginnings that were faithful, but admittedly fairly basic attempts, these ministries now utilize the internet with extreme creativity in seeking to reach all segments of the Israeli population with the Gospel of Jesus, their long promised Messiah.

Thankfully, some of the same aspects that have often made the internet a useful tool of the enemy of our souls, are now making it effective for those advancing the Gospel.

*"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive." Genesis 50:20*

The secure and private nature of internet access works powerfully in helping to deliver the unobstructed truth of the Gospel, especially among Israelis who live in very privatized, intellectually isolated communities, among the very religious, and especially among women. Here, at ministry partner internet websites, these people are now able to find answers to their heart's cry for fulfillment, purpose and true 'shalom' - peace and wholeness in life. So many still have honest, unanswered questions - questions which sadly don't typically receive thorough, truthful and, more importantly, scriptural answers from those holding positions of religious leadership and authority. In many ways, not much has changed on this front since Jesus walked these streets.

Having observed and partnered with internet ministry efforts over several years, we are rejoicing as we witness an increase in the number of testimonies from those who have had honest questions about the Messiah, and who have now found the truth of Jesus and are able to examine the scriptures for themselves. We are grateful for the answers being put forth by these internet ministries in refuting some of the traditional rabbinic arguments against Jesus as Messiah -

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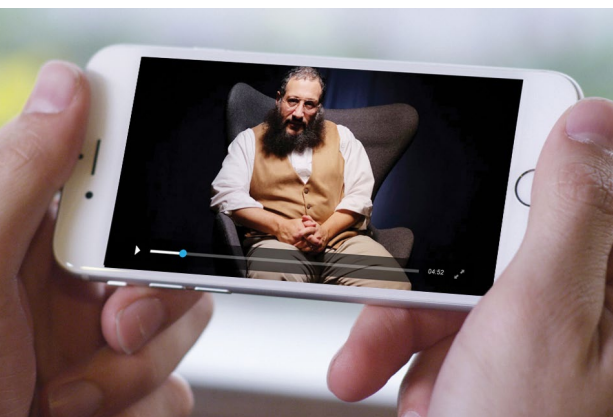
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# REFLECTIONS

OUR FIRST YEAR LIVING IN ISRAEL



BY JOEL C. ROSENBERG

EARLIER THIS SUMMER, THE JOSHUA FUND'S LEADERSHIP TEAM ASKED LYNN AND I TO SHARE SOME OF OUR OBSERVATIONS OVER THE PAST YEAR, INCLUDING SOME OF THE MINISTRY TRENDS THAT WE HAVE FOUND PARTICULARLY ENCOURAGING SINCE WE MOVED TO ISRAEL.

## IT'S ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

Among the greatest joys Lynn and I have experienced in moving to Israel with our sons in August 2014 has been the opportunity to spend much more personal time with Israelis of all backgrounds, and especially with Israeli pastors and ministry leaders and their families. After all, it's all about relationships in this country.

So amidst studying Hebrew, trying to obtain drivers licenses (a 9-month process!), paying \$5 a gallon for gasoline and the many other challenges of adjusting to a new country and a new culture, we have been so blessed by going to weddings and baby showers and even funerals with our new Israeli friends. Allies of The Joshua Fund have invited us over for meals and to celebrate Jewish and Arab holidays. Others have invited us to various outreaches and events hosted by their ministries. And we've had the joy of hosting some of them at our little apartment by the sea for coffee or a meal.

Along the way, we have gleaned deeper insights into day-to-day life for Israeli followers of Yeshua (the Hebrew name for Jesus). We knew before we moved, of course, that many challenges confront those who love the Lord in the Land of the Bible. But now we're seeing it up close and personal.

“ But in our first year living as citizens here, Lynn and I are deeply encouraged by what the Lord is doing in and through His people, both to care for the vulnerable and needy and to proclaim the Word of God in the Land of the Bible. ”

It wasn't easy for the disciples in the days when Yeshua ministered here, and it's not easy today. The spiritual warfare here is as intense as anywhere I've ever been. Believers face stiff opposition from the ultra-Orthodox. In addition to the ever-present geopolitical tensions, there remain simmering tensions between Jewish and Arab believers who struggle to be reconciled with one another because of political, theological and ministry philosophy differences.

Please join us in praying that the Lord continues to bring healing and unity to the Body here, just as he speaks of in John 17.

## **BROTHERS STUDYING TOGETHER IN UNITY**

In that context, Lynn and I have been particularly thrilled to hear about a new Master's Program at a bible college in Israel designed not for young people who want to become pastors, but for currently-serving senior pastors who want more training in the practical aspects of ministry (teaching verse-by-verse through the Bible, marriage counseling, complying with Israel's complex laws and regulations, etc.).

What is particularly exciting is that the program, of which The Joshua Fund is a partner, isn't just for Jewish pastors. More than half of the two-dozen participating students were Israeli Arab pastors. And not only did Israeli Jewish professors teach the classes, they also had an Arab pastor from Ramallah teach.

Some of the Arab pastors said they had never met an Israeli Jewish pastor, even though they don't live far from each other. Some of the Jewish pastors told us they didn't fully appreciate the unique challenges facing the Israeli Arab pastors. But everyone we talked to told us that the friendships built and the trust and the encouragement that resulted from studying together was absolutely life-changing. A new group of Jewish and Arab pastors will start a new academic year this Fall. Please be praying that the Lord would do great and mighty things in and through them, as well.

## **THE POWER OF INTERNET EVANGELISM**

Over the past several years, Jewish believers from several different ministries have been working together to share the Gospel through the internet. In another article in this newsletter (page 1) you'll read more about why they are building a range of creative websites and videos.

The Lord is blessing their efforts beyond our wildest imaginations! The other day, I asked the director of this digital evangelism effort several questions. I think you'll be as fascinated as we were with his answers.

**Q/A:** How many total unique individuals so far have viewed all of the Hebrew testimony videos combined since you posted the first one? **About 500,000.**

**Q/A:** How many total unique individuals so far have viewed the recent 9-minute Gospel presentation video in Hebrew (with English subtitles) that you and your team produced? **About 800,000.**

**Q/A:** How many total unique individuals so far have watched all of the English testimony videos you produced since you posted the first one? **Almost 9 million. In fact, one of the English videos – the testimony of a man named Mottel Baleston – has almost 6 million views.**

Yes, there are dark storm clouds on the horizon – the spread of ISIS, religiously motivated terrorism, and persecution of the Church throughout the Epicenter. But in our first year living as citizens here, Lynn and I are deeply encouraged by what the Lord is doing in and through His people, both to care for the vulnerable and needy and to proclaim the Word of God in the Land of the Bible. So thank you so much for your faithful prayer for us and for your investment in The Joshua Fund. God is using you to make a real difference!





**It's our tremendous privilege to partner with this ministry and to share these four brief testimonies from some recent graduates of the program:**

# GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL THE NATIONS... MATTHEW 28:19

.....  
**EQUIPPED WITH THE WORD**  
.....

For over 5 years, The Joshua Fund has partnered with a fantastic team of Israelis whose mission and calling is to make disciples who, in turn, will make disciples. This team has been faithfully leading one of the most effective and fruitful ministries in Israel. They have been very successfully equipping young Israeli believers for life and ministry, teaching them to be fully grounded in the Word of God. These dear, committed brothers and sisters in the Lord seek to serve God in many areas of ministry by serving the entire body of Messiah, preserving the unity of the faith, while encouraging and supporting the youth from local Israeli congregations.

This team devotes themselves to a 3-month intensive discipleship program, twice each year for young people, most of whom are just coming out of their mandatory national army service. This special time away enables these young people to set aside time to intentionally seek the Lord and to grow in His Word, as they are very personally discipled. During these 3 months, they learn to fellowship meaningfully with other believers as well as to boldly reach out to the lost with the Gospel and to serve the local body of Messiah. Throughout the program, the Israeli team models a 'lifestyle' of discipleship, where participants are encouraged to set aside time for worship, prayer, systematic Bible reading, quiet time, evangelism, volunteer work and service, and simply seeking the Lord for daily guidance. Here they can develop and practice spiritual disciplines in their daily walk with the Lord, equipping them for future growth, service, and leadership.

*"I find that we are not the central focus of our story – our ultimate testimony is Yeshua. I've realized that God made no mistakes in how He created me. God decides to use these vessels for His service, not ours. We must trust His promises, and not our own desires. Even when we receive something we didn't want, and something we think is bad – God is still good. God never breaks His promise. God has promised to save us on that day; He never promised us an easy convenient life here on earth."*

*"I was a praying person, but I didn't like reading the Bible. Here I began reading the Bible, and suddenly I saw how one could go on reading for the entire hour of quiet time, so there was no time left for prayer... I started doubting the sincerity of my worship and thought that perhaps I was becoming too 'religious.' I prayed about it with one of the other participants. Eventually, I found the balance between the two things – both prayer and studying God's Word. The process I underwent during my time here removed doubts that I'm a believer just because my parents are; I found a personal intimate relationship with God."*

*"When I came here my heart was indifferent towards God, cold and distant. I felt I blamed Him, while also feeling internal guilt for many things. Prayer, God's Word – there was none of that. During the time here, I've felt Him break my heart and resurrect it. He's given me love for His Word; everything has changed. He has freed me of those things burdening my heart. There are others issues and a long road ahead, but thank God – He is at work."*

*"I suddenly knew that God exists and is real. Then I brought my weakness and my struggle before Him and asked that His overcoming strength be made perfect in me. Because it's something that I'd been carrying around for years and, enough, it is too heavy for me to bear any longer. And today, during worship, I felt God was saying to me, 'Let it go, let me carry it.' We have a living God and we've seen Him at work! Yeshua ascended into heaven and He's coming back for us – it's all true. He is alive!"*

# EGYPT

## DEATH, NEW LIFE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE HIGHWAY

*"In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will go to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria. The Egyptians and Assyrians will worship together. In that day Israel will be a third, along with Egypt and Assyria - a blessing on the earth." Isaiah 19:23-24*

The modern day location of ancient Assyria includes portions of Jordan, Syria and Iraq - several of the neighboring nations where The Joshua Fund (TJF) ministers. In this passage from Isaiah 19, the Lord states that Egypt will be the starting point for a highway that goes to the neighboring countries of the Middle East.

### SERVING THROUGH SACRIFICE

As the world watched in shock, the nation of Egypt earlier this year grieved the loss of 21 of their sons whose lives were senselessly taken at the hands of extremists. The courage and testimony of these dear brothers, who were killed for their faith in Christ on the shores of Libya, will be captured for years to come in song and poetry and passed down to future generations of Christ followers. Much to the extremists' dismay, the sacrifice of these 21 brothers has caused Believers in the entire region to be strengthened in their own faith.

Thank you for joining The Joshua Fund in coming alongside the families of these martyrs with both prayer and financial support. Through a ministry partner working inside Egypt, we were able to bless each of the families to help bear the grief of their loss. But that pain was not without hope and the knowledge that the worldwide body of Christ stood with them and remembered them during this difficult time.

### MIDST OF THE LAND

Shortly after this horrific event, The Joshua Fund launched an already scheduled team into Egypt. The poem, *Two Rows by the Sea*, was distributed throughout the country by local Egyptian believers to encourage those who were shocked and terrified by this tragedy. Many followers of Jesus Christ in Egypt told our TJF team how the Christians killed in Libya inspired them to stand strong in their faith.

With prayer and the Word, our team was able to pour into a house church of 20 Egyptian believers, many who had just left the faith of their fathers. Standing on the shores of the Red Sea, we were honored to baptize two new followers of Jesus Christ from this group. This small body of believers, which has no formal meeting location and risks danger

from religious family members, still gathers to celebrate their faith and serve Christ.

The blood of Egyptian martyrs flowed this year into the Mediterranean Sea. One month later new believers in Jesus acknowledged their newfound faith in His blood by being baptized in the Red Sea.

Please continue to join us as we seek to bless Israel and her neighbors in the name of Jesus.

### TWO ROWS BY THE SEA

*Two rows of men walked the shore of the sea,  
On a day when the world's tears would run free,  
One a row of assassins, who thought they did right,  
The other of innocents, true sons of the light,  
One holding knives in hands held high,  
The other with hands empty, defenseless and tied,  
One row of slits to conceal glaring-dead eyes,  
The other with living eyes raised to the skies,  
One row stood steady, pall-bearers of death,  
The other knelt ready, welcoming heaven's breath,  
One row spewed wretched, contemptible threats,  
The other spread God-given peace and rest.  
The row in orange, watching paradise open?  
Or the row in black, with minds evil and broken?*

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CONTINUED FROM COVER

## You Shall be My Witnesses

arguments that are seen as weak and skewed treatments of the scriptures.

In addition, there are now a greater number of creatively filmed, poignant videos of Israeli testimonies of salvation being made widely available on the internet, both in Hebrew and in English. Some of the more noteworthy ones have already been seen by more than one million people! Nothing is as truly compelling and impactful as hearing the truth of a personal journey of another Israeli Jew who considered Jesus as Messiah and has now placed their full trust in Him for salvation.

*“...but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.” Acts 1:8*

The heart expressed in these video testimonies at [www.imetmessiah.com](http://www.imetmessiah.com) helps short circuit the mindset that has historically been cultivated among Israelis by the religious that “Jesus is simply not for the Jews”.

Please know that your continued prayer and financial support have been key factors in enabling advancement of some of these vital ministries’ work within Israel. We have been blessed to be used by the Lord in key moments to help advance and, in some cases, even to help shape the impact of this critical work. We’re so blessed to be able to share with you the progress of such fruitful, Kingdom work!

**Partner with us in the work the Lord is doing through The Joshua Fund to bless people in the Epicenter. Donate today online - it's easy, safe and secure.**

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 The Joshua Fund.

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



Join the conversations.



## THE JOSHUA FUND PRAYER & VISION TOUR OF THE HOLY LAND

Hosted by Joel C. Rosenberg  
October 14-25, 2015

Limited space is still available for the tour. Visit our website at [joshuafund.com/go/israel-tours](http://joshuafund.com/go/israel-tours) for additional information or sign up for the tour by contacting Inspiration Travel at [inspirationcruises.com/tjf](http://inspirationcruises.com/tjf) or by calling (855) 856-7482. If you can't travel with us in person, join us on the tour via Social Media by following us on Facebook at [facebook.com/thejoshuafund](http://facebook.com/thejoshuafund) and twitter at [twitter.com/@thejoshuafund](http://twitter.com/@thejoshuafund).



Scan the QR code to learn more about the tour at [joshuafund.com](http://joshuafund.com)



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