

STORIES FROM THE FIELD



A WORD FROM JOEL C. ROSENBERG



GOOD NEWS FOR EASTER: JEWS & MUSLIMS TURNING TO CHRIST IN RECORD NUMBERS

As we celebrate the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ this year, let's rejoice that more Jews and former Muslims are celebrating with us than ever before.

To be sure, Christianity has been under attack in the Middle East. Many born again believers have been martyred. Yet, amidst such darkness, the Holy Spirit is on the move.

According to a 2015 study by two respected Christian scholars, some 10 million Muslims renounced Islam and came to faith in Christ between 1960 and 2010. Many more Muslims have converted to Christ since then. Indeed, the evidence indicates we are in the early stages of an historic spiritual awakening in the Muslim world.

In the Jewish world, we are also witnessing a spiritual earthquake of historic proportions. In 1967, there were fewer than 2,000 Jewish believers in Jesus worldwide. Today, according to a new study by LifeWay Research and the Alliance for the Peace of Jerusalem, there are some 871,000 Jewish believers in Jesus in the U.S. alone.

In Israel, the number of Jewish believers has soared from 23 in 1948 to some 30,000 today. The veil that has covered the eyes of my people for nearly 2,000 years and obscured our understanding of Jesus' true identity is lifting.

This is deeply encouraging. It reaffirms that the Gospel message works – transforming and improving the lives of all people when they receive it, including Muslim and Jews.

First, however, Jews and Muslims must hear the Gospel message. That's why The Joshua Fund is so passionate about investing in Israeli, Palestinian and other Arab nationals who are boldly and creatively communicating the Gospel to their people, using the Internet, radio and

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GOOD NEWS FOR EASTER

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TV broadcasts, Bible distribution, and their own personal witness to reach more people than ever before.

It's also why The Joshua Fund invests so heavily in Jewish and Arab ministries that are making disciples, training disciple-makers, equipping and refreshing pastors and ministry leaders, and planting church congregations.

At a moment when Jews and Muslims are more open to the Gospel than ever in history, we want to help national believers give everyone in the Epicenter the opportunity to hear the Gospel message in their own heart language and have a chance to make a decision for themselves – to receive Christ by faith or reject Him.

We don't want to pressure or force anyone.

To the contrary, we want to love people enough to make sure they get the chance to hear God's free offer of salvation, get their questions answered, and make their own decision – *yes or no? In or out?*

This is the heart of The Joshua Fund. Because it is the heart of God. And I suspect it's your heart, too, and this is why you pray and financially invest in us.

Thank you. Your efforts are paying off in a big way. During this Easter season, let us rejoice that Jesus is building His Church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18).

GIVE

HOLIDAY OUTREACH

Giving hope and help to those in need

Each year since 2010, The Joshua Fund partners with Food Distribution Centers to bless poor families during special holidays with gift packages. As you celebrate the Easter season, please pray for God to use these special packages as an opportunity to encourage believers and share with Jews and Arabs about the One who came, who died for them, and who has risen!

GIFT PACKAGES BY THE NUMBERS

1,980

The estimated number of **Passover packages** to be distributed this year

584

The estimated number of **Easter packages** to be distributed this year

16

The number of Food **Distribution Centers** that distribute the packages representing 15-20 towns

65,000

An estimate of the number of **holiday packages** distributed in the last nine years



WHAT'S INSIDE A PACKAGE?

- A mix of healthy snacks and holiday-themed treats
- Essentials like toothbrushes and toothpaste
- A special greeting card
- Matzot or high quality jam
- Chocolate spread



REVIVING HEARTS, RENEWING MINDS



📍 | ISRAEL

Preaching and Teaching

We are excited to provide an update on the recent expositional teaching seminar that The Joshua Fund was privileged to host! Resources for solid exposition of Scripture, as well as models for exposition in the congregational setting, are very scarce in the Epicenter. We were blessed to be able to engage about 40 ministry leaders and workers with a one-and-a-half-day seminar on inductive study, crafting an expositional sermon, and drawing application for an audience.

There were also question and answer periods and time set aside for dialogue on specific issues and for fellowship. Attendees appreciated the opportunity for conversations and encouragement around the Word and in ministry. Even though the Epicenter is the land of the Bible, in many ways Messianic believers are pioneers, bringing the Scripture back to the center of their lives and proclaiming it again to their people.

As Easter approaches and we think of the Lord's promise to make all things new, it is encouraging to us to see His plan to bring His Word to life through His people. God's desire is that all Israel be saved, and He has made clear that the primary way that His Kingdom moves forward is the clear teaching and loving application of His Word. We continue to marvel as He renews and rejuvenates the preaching of the Gospel in the Epicenter!

PRAY

Please pray that God will continue to open doors for ministry training to equip and encourage the Body of Believers throughout the Epicenter.

📍 | NEIGHBORS

Welcoming the Hungry

We continue to praise God for the work He did at the first ever Joshua Fund hosted Middle Eastern Ladies Conference. With almost 70 women representing five different countries, stories of His faithfulness to those coming out of a Muslim background continue to overwhelm our hearts. Below is a report displaying how God responds to those who (with determination!) seek Him.

The women arrived in waves. Each weary group traveling in from a different location in Syria, Lebanon, Turkey and Egypt. Many from Muslim areas and families, their hearts were anxious, they had long awaited a special gathering like this one. Just for women. For the next few days they would meet together with other followers of Christ to study the Word of God.

The conversations were joyful as the women filled the small meeting room to capacity. They greeted each other with hugs and laughter, anticipating what the next few days would hold. However, one group of ladies had been delayed at the border and hadn't arrived yet. Since they didn't want to start without everyone present, an extended time of prayer and worship began.

"Your name's not on the hotel reservation list with the others," the border guard informed the woman before him.

But she was not dissuaded. "I don't care," she flatly replied. "That means, I can't let you in," the guard insisted. The woman dug in her heels. "I'm not going back!"

The frustrated man simply walked away, leaving the group of hopeless women there to wonder what would happen. Finally, without explanation, he waved them through. All of them. Including the one whose name was not on the list.

When they finally walked into the meeting room, everyone inside rejoiced. Thankful that God had brought every woman here. Then when the salvation message was given, two women gave their hearts to Christ, including the one who almost didn't make it in.

Even though this woman didn't know why she had to be there, God did. He had a plan to transform hearts that day – whether they were on a hotel list or not didn't matter. Their names were now written in the Book of Life.

PRAY

Please ask God for future opportunities to gather and study the Word with these women.

THE HARVEST IS RIPE

Reflections from a Field Volunteer

The Joshua Fund is grateful for faithful workers who use the gifts God has given them to join us in the work of the harvest (see page 1 for more). Get a peek into one volunteer's experience with the recent women's conference (as mentioned on page 3). Esther* has a great love for both the Word and the women of the Epicenter. She faithfully teaches the Bible both at home in the U.S. and abroad.

What really touched me was how hungry the ladies were for the Word, and how willing they were to participate and devote so much time to studying it. Many had to take time away from their families back home (others brought their children with them). Not only did they sit through back-to-back sessions all day long, they listened intently and didn't grow tired of it.

These women have a deep desire to be together — to study, worship and pray together. And the opportunity to share openly with one another. The Joshua Fund is meeting that need by supplying a conference, just for women — to let them know that they are chosen, created and cherished by their Heavenly Father.

“THESE WOMEN HAVE A DEEP DESIRE TO BE TOGETHER — TO STUDY, WORSHIP AND PRAY TOGETHER.”

My favorite thing about the conference was how the Spirit led. It was a moment by moment thing, yet we were at peace with the unknown. We may not have known what God was going to have us say specifically but we knew He was going to lead, and this was HIS conference. It was a very powerful time and exciting to see how God is moving among these ladies.

One thing that was clear during the conference — each of us ladies were from different backgrounds and cultures, but we all experienced similar feelings, fears and dreams yet God united us as one because He never changes. His Word never changes. He is all we need.

Please praise God with us for the laborers he has sent into the field, and pray for more to join in continuing the work of the harvest.

And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” ~ Luke 10:2 (ESV)

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GIVE

Partner with us in the work the Lord is doing through The Joshua Fund to bless the 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



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