

# LCJE Bulletin

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Networking Jewish Evangelism



Lausanne Consultation  
on Jewish Evangelism



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# From the Coordinator

## "Born is the King of Israel"

We are thankful for the recent cessation of hostilities between Israel and Gaza, but there is yet, of course, no real peace. As we celebrate our Messiah's Advent, we know that only the Prince of Peace can bring about true peace and real reconciliation.

But while we await that Day, there are glimmers of that peace and reconciliation yet to come. We present in this issue the background of the newly released Rami/Ami booklet in Hebrew and Arabic - a cooperative project of the Israel and Palestinian Bible Societies. Ami Ortiz's amazing story of survival from a terrorist bomb is well-known to most members of LCJE; Rami's story as a young Christian leader in Gaza martyred for his faith is perhaps less-known to our readers. Let us pray that it touches many lives.

On this same theme of reconciliation, Leigh Telli shares a story about the main speaker at the LCJE South Africa conference in August 2012, Pastor Umar Mulinde of Uganda, and how he, as a former Muslim, went from being an 'enemy of Israel' to becoming a 'friend of Israel' because of the Messiah. Leigh is a painter whose heart is burdened for reconciliation between Messianic Jews and Arab Christians.

In this issue we pay tribute to the memory of two giants of the faith who have gone Home to the Lord. We were deeply shocked and saddened at the sudden and unexpected death of our brother Jhan Moskowitz in September. Jhan was one of the founders of Jews for Jesus as well as of our own LCJE. Jhan was a great encouragement to me in the early days of our Russian Jewish ministry in Chicago in the late 1970s. A riveting quote from Jhan expresses his passion for souls that strikes at our very core: "The greatest form of anti-Semitism is to withhold the Gospel from the Jewish people."

One of the greatest scholars of our movement, Risto Santala, has also passed into eternity. Juha-Pekka Rissanen recounts Risto's enormous contributions over a lifetime of service. Many of his works are still available online on his website: [www.ristosantala.com](http://www.ristosantala.com) as well as from: [www.israelunique.com/authors/risto-santala.htm](http://www.israelunique.com/authors/risto-santala.htm).

Finally, I tell the moving story of the life and death of young Yossi Bikas, a beloved young fighter for Yeshua and only child of Dov and Olga Bikas, long-time friends in Israel.

We also look at three conferences that each held their third meetings together and each of which also touched upon some unique aspects of Jewish evangelism in our world today: the Third AustralAsia conference in Sydney, the Third International Russian Messianic Leaders' Conference in Kiev, and the Third Borough Park Symposium in New York City.

For the Glory of Him Who reconciled God to Man - Emmanuel, 'God with us.'

In our sure hope for the future salvation of Israel. *Jim Melnick*

Visit the LCJE website: [www.lcje.net](http://www.lcje.net)

# Renewed Strength

By Cecilia Burger, Area Coordinator, LCJE South Africa

**"Those who wait on the Lord will renew their strength, They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not faint."**

**Isaiah 40 v. 31**

## Waiting on the Lord

The prophet Isaiah encourages the people of Israel to renew their strength by waiting on and trusting in the Lord, who gives strength to the weary and increases the strength of the weak. (Isaiah 40 v.29)

## The Renewal of the Eagle

In a recent bulletin of Beit Ariel Messianic Congregation, Eva Rausch shared some interesting facts about the eagle. The eagle has a lifespan of approximately seventy years. When it reaches the age of 35, it undergoes a process of renewal in order to avoid premature death. This means that it finds a secret place high up in the mountains and begins to pluck out all its feathers. It then proceeds to break its calcium-encrusted beak and dashes its talons against the mountain until they are all broken off. What a painful and time-consuming renewal process!

One can hardly imagine how vulnerable and defenceless



*Cecilia Burger*

the eagle is until this process is completed and the renewed eagle emerges.

According to the New Bible Commentary Revised, the phrase 'renew their strength' (Isaiah 40 v.31) literally means to "change strength" - as one might change into new clothes or exchange an old thing for something new.

## Shedding the "Old Feathers"

The reason for the eagle's new feathers is to ensure that when it hunts for prey, it retains an element of surprise. The old feathers cause a whistling noise when diving through the air, thus allowing the prey to escape.

The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews writes: "...let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us

run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith..." (Hebrews 12, v. 1-2)

Are you exhausted? Over-committed? Messiah Jesus invites us, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11 v.28)

Perhaps we also need to renew our strength by shedding the "old feathers" and "everything that hinders us" and re-committing ourselves to His call upon our lives.

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**Visit the Lausanne Movement website -  
[www.lausanne.org](http://www.lausanne.org)**

# Jhan Moskowitz - A Tribute

## By Rachel Friedlander, Jews for Jesus



*Jhan Moskowitz*

### **A Rainy Tuesday in New York City**

It was raining on Tuesday, September 4th. The sidewalks and stairways were slick, the sky sullen and looming, and the streets and subways of New York City overflowed with hurried people. It felt like any other weekday—that is, until Melissa Moskowitz received the news that would change her life and the lives of countless others.

Jhan Moskowitz was born and raised as a true Big City resident: in the neighborhoods of the Bronx. Both his parents were Holocaust survivors committed to instilling the Jewish experience in their son's life. As Jhan would one day put it, "I grew up with a keen understanding of the fact that I was Jewish. There was never a time in my life when I did not recognize the great price our people paid for our existence."

But as adolescence pro-

gressed, Jhan began to think outside the walls of his cultural experience. He began to read Ayn Rand and Marx, listened to Bob Dylan and the Beatles. He soon saw Judaism as his connection simply to the Land of Israel, not the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

His curiosity not only fueled his mind, but his feet as well. With nothing but a knapsack and an extended thumb, Jhan hitchhiked his way across America and flew around the world to Israel and Jamaica. Each location simply brought a greater hunger for the truth. When he finally returned to his home of New York City, he threw himself into the study of philosophy at Long Island University. On the reading list: the Tibetan Book of the Dead, writings on Kabbalah, and the New Testament.

It was in Sausalito that Jhan Moskowitz settled down, building a ramshackle boat house with some friends. Together,

they questioned the acquisition of true peace, tried LSD, and relocated to a commune in San Francisco. Then a friend arrived with news that would disband their group of friends: She had discovered that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah. This startling announcement brought several to faith, but sent Jhan on further exploration, this time totally solo.

### **Filled with Forgiveness**

But God inevitably had a plan. Crosses suddenly seemed omnipresent, Christians were suddenly all he met, and strange "coincidences" began to occur. Jhan couldn't ignore it. He found his newly-believing friends, and, after some discussion, fell to his knees. He was speechless, aside from one thing: an apology. That night in 1971, Jhan Moskowitz was filled with forgiveness. So began a journey that would affect people around the

world.

### **Our Great Loss**

When the New York City Police Department called that Tuesday, it was to say that Jhan had fallen down the stairs in the subway at Grand Central Station and was being transported to the nearest hospital.

The accident, which had caused cranial trauma, ultimately proved fatal. Jhan went home to his Maker the following day. The unexpected shock sent the Moskowitz family, Jews for Jesus, and the extended Messianic community reeling. The New York City bustle faded into the background, the sky felt heavy, the air burdensome to breathe. The world had just lost the North American Director of Jews for Jesus, a loving husband, a father, a superb communicator, a highly effective evangelist, a colorful bible teacher and the mentor of countless others.

### **A Charter Member of LCJE**

Jhan wore many hats. He was one of the charter members of the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism (LCJE). A special tribute to Jhan from Kai Kjaer-Hansen and Bodil F. Skhott appears as a sidebar to this article. One of the founding members of Jews for Jesus, he led branches around the United States, eventually directing the entire North American sector of the ministry. As a person, Jhan's role was even larger: the devoted husband of Melissa, the loving father of Kayla and Jesse, and friend and mentor to seekers and believers, Jews and Gentiles, old and young alike.

In the midst of our grief, many found consolation in writing their thoughts, memories, and condolences on an online

tribute page created by Jews for Jesus ([blog.jforj.com/jhan-moskowitz](http://blog.jforj.com/jhan-moskowitz)). There, hundreds from around the globe told of the many ways Jhan touched their lives.

"There is a Jewish joke which speaks of someone with so bad a personality that when he leaves the party, you feel like someone came in. When Jhan leaves, there just is no more party," Stuart Dauermann wrote. "No words that I record here can capture the love, the intelligence, the humor, the spirituality, the caliber of the man. All people are irreplaceable, but Jhan is conspicuously so."

Theresa Newell, former North American Coordinator for LCJE remembers, "One of my most memorable moments with Jhan was at the 1995 LCJE International meeting in Jerusalem. Jhan and I were sitting by the pool one afternoon at the Ramat Rachel Hotel between sessions. I shared with him my burden for the salvation of the 50,000-plus Jewish people in Pittsburgh. I asked about the possibility of having a Jews for Jesus missionary come to the city. He told me that Jews for Jesus set up mission stations where there were over 100,000 Jewish people in a city or area 'So what's to happen to the 50,000 Jews in Pittsburgh?' I asked."

When Jews for Jesus later launched its 'Behold Your God' campaigns, which included Pittsburgh, Theresa reminisced, "I wondered if my concern played a part in their bigger strategy. Even if it didn't, Jhan's concern meant a whole lot to me."

### **Personal Impact**

But Jhan's effect was felt just as powerfully on a personal

level: "I'm one of those whom Jhan confronted with the Gospel," wrote Biola professor and LCJE member, Judith Mendelsohn Rood. Jhan had preached at an Intervarsity service near the University of Chicago, where she was a doctoral student. "The Lord used Jhan's message on t'shuvah to turn my sinner's heart back to God, to repent of my rebellious ways, and to reconcile with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...God used Jhan in a mighty way in my life that day. I thank God for his life of service. His memory is a blessing to my people. He is one of the heroes of our faith."

### **Noted Bible Teacher, Great Encourager**

In addition to his one-on-one ministry with Jewish people, Jhan was a noted Bible teacher, a major speaker with Promise Keepers, and an encourager of young people to whom he told life stories and offered a wealth of wisdom from the porch of his Brooklyn home.

Jhan once commented on his father's outlook after surviving the Nazi death camps: "I found it remarkable that he had learned to love and to laugh again. He was an amazing testimony to the strength of the human spirit."

As we continue to grieve, we can simply pray for such a human spirit, knowing it comes from non-human hands. As Philippians 4:13 says, "I can do all things through him who gives me strength." After all, we don't mourn as those who have no hope. We know that through faith in Y'shua, we'll see Jhan Moskowitz again.

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# Jhan Moskowitz - a bridge builder between Jesus-believing Jews and Christians involved in Jewish Evangelism

By Bodil F. Skjøtt and Kai Kjær-Hansen

## One of Our Founders

Jhan was one of the Founders of Jews for Jesus. He was also one of the Founders of the Lausanne Consultation of Jewish Evangelism (LCJE).

Jhan's sudden death fills us with sorrow and sadness. For us, he was first and foremost a much appreciated bridge builder between Jesus-believing Jews and Christians like us involved in Jewish evangelism. We are grateful to God that we got to know Jhan and had him as a friend and supporter within the LCJE.

## The Beginning of LCJE

Together with Moishe Rosen and Susan Perlman, Jhan represented Jews for Jesus at the "Mini-Consultation on Reaching the Jews" at the Lausanne Movement's Consultation on World Evangelization (COWE) in Pattaya, Thailand in June 1980. In this group on "Reaching the Jewish People" there were only 18 participants, and Jhan was one of the youngest. One of the results of this mini-consultation was that the "Lausanne Committee Task Force on Jewish Evangelism" (LCTJE) was established; soon after, the name was changed to Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism.

Already before the meeting in Thailand in 1980 the young Jhan was involved in what became LCJE. For example, on November 27, 1979, he chaired the meeting of the pre-COWE study groups on the Jewish people held in San Francisco,

and it was Jhan who later submitted the final Group Report.

## Met Us as Equal Partners

Jhan always met us with understanding, respect and encouragement when we got together at different LCJE conferences – he as a Jewish believer in Jesus; we as non-Jewish believers in the same Jesus.

We met as equal partners with the same passion and as people who needed each other in our common desire to make Jesus known among the Jewish people. Jhan took upon himself the role as our supporter and bridge-builder when we as non-Jews were criticized for the views and positions we expressed. He was a great listener and also took great interest in our lives. At international conferences it was often Jhan who opened up good discussions with stimulating and engaging questions for the speaker. In that way he set the standard for those who were next in line with their questions.

## Grateful to Jhan

Many of the young people from the Danish Israel Mission who have served as stewards at the Jews for Jesus summer campaigns in New York have come back grateful to Jhan and his family for opening up their home to them and taking time to engage with them and show an interest also in their lives.

They remember him as a Jew for Jesus on outreach, but it was an outreach that also included volunteers coming from

a small country serving in a big city. Jhan demonstrated that Jews and Christians need each other in Jewish evangelism. This has been a trademark for the LCJE, the network he helped establish 32 years ago when he himself was only 32.

## We Wanted Him a Little Longer

We wanted to keep Jhan a little longer. God wanted it differently. With sorrow and sadness - and in faith we say: The worst thing is not to die; the worst thing is to miss life.

We thank God for the good memories we have of our friend and bridge-builder Jhan, and we want to end with thanksgiving and praise to the God of Israel. He gave us Jhan, the Jew, who made his life a service to the Jew Jesus in order that more Jews - like himself - would have a living hope of the resurrection from the dead: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By His great mercy He has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Peter 1:3)."

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# A Eulogy in Memory of Risto Santala, z"l

By Juha-Pekka Rissanen

Rev., in Israel 1990-2002 (NCMI 1990-91, FELM 1992-2002)

## "Rabbi of the Church of Finland"

Reverend Risto Santala, born 18.05.1929 in Finland, was taken from us to eternity on 26.09.2012, which was Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. The basic theme in the life's work of Risto Santala was to convey the message of the atonement of Jesus the Messiah to His people, the Jews.

Risto's ministry in Israel can be divided into three periods: a) 1954-55: pastor of the Nordic Seamen's Mission in Haifa; b) 1957-1968: teacher and pastor in Shalhevetyah, the Centre of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM) in Jerusalem, which had a Hebrew primary school and children's home; and c) 1976-1985: several periods of a few months in Jerusalem, where he wrote his books "The Messiah in the Old Testament in the Light of Rabbinical Writings" and "The Messiah in the New Testament in the Light of Rabbinical Writings," both written in modern Hebrew. Later on those books were translated into several languages. It has been said that they were the first studies written in modern Hebrew by a Gentile scholar. Additionally, the book, "Paul, the Man and the Teacher in the Light of Jewish Sources" was printed in about ten languages. Risto's doctoral thesis was published with the title, "The Midrash of the Messiah" (2002). His books can be ordered at the website: <http://www.israelunique.com/authors/risto-santala.htm>.

Rev. Santala represented the



*Risto Santala*

FELM on the Executive Committee of the United Christian Council in Israel. At a certain stage in the 1950s there was a tendency not to support missions among the Jews. At that time Risto strongly and skillfully defended the right of believers to witness freely to the Jews. He was specially supported in this by Rev. Magne Solheim of the Norske Israelsmisjon (NIM, today NCMI, Norwegian Church Ministry to Israel) and by the American Baptist pastor, Robert Lindsey.

In his home country, Finland, Risto Santala was opposed by liberal theology; the mission among the Jews was not accepted at large, but Santala found clear justification for it in the Bible, the Word of God. He wrote over 20 books during his lifetime, and in many of them the main idea was to defend his view on the Bible.

## Impact of Risto Santala's Teaching in Israel

Risto didn't work behind closed doors in study chambers but within congregations and Bible

study groups. He established, together with teacher Victor Smadja, a country-wide youth activity in Israel in the 1960s, and an essential part of it was Bible teaching. The fruit of his teaching impacted many congregational Messianic Jewish leaders in Israel. He was also one of very few foreign teachers who was invited to teach in Hebrew-speaking congregations. Risto also functioned as a principal of the Bible School of Helsinki in years 1968-75.

Risto Santala has been described by many Finnish people as "the Rabbi of the Church of Finland" - he helped us to see the Jewish roots of Christianity and caused many young theologians to be excited about relations between the Church and Judaism. From 1987, Santala worked as a vicar of Joutjärvi parish in Lahti, Finland, until 1992 when he retired on an active pension, continuing his literary and teaching work.

Risto Santala drew a red line from the atoning sacrifice of the Tanach to the atoning sacrifice of Jesus the Messiah on the cross. There was a heavy burden of the cross on his own shoulders when Risto's and Kerttu's son Ismo, who suffered leukemia, died in Jerusalem in 1959.

We've lost a great man of God and an outstanding scholar who dedicated his life's work to promoting our understanding of the atoning power of Messiah Jesus among the Jewish people. Let his memory be blessed. Yehi zichrono baruch!

*Juha-Pekka Rissanen  
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# Pastor Mulinde Visits Cape Town

By Cecilia Burger, Area Coordinator, LCJE South Africa

## He is our Peace

The South African Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism (LCJE-SA) conference theme was taken from Ephesians 2:14, "For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility..."

To me, our second LCJE-SA Conference in Cape Town was a unique conference bringing believers in Messiah Jesus from diverse backgrounds together. Amongst the 200 people who attended the two-day conference there were Messianic Jews, Christians from a Muslim background and other Christians. The unity amongst us was also emphasised when a Jewish believer and an ex-Muslim told their stories of how each came to faith in Messiah Jesus. There were also prayers for the salvation of both Jewish and Muslim people.

## 'I'm not a stranger. I'm only your brother from another mother.'

These were the words of Pastor Umar Mulinde from Uganda, keynote speaker at our conference. We are from different backgrounds, but we are one in our Messiah Jesus. Pastor Umar found peace in Jesus and is passionate about proclaiming the Good News wherever he goes. He grew up in a devout Muslim family and completed his studies as an imam. He is well-versed in the Koran and the Arabic language. After hearing the gospel from Pas-

tor Deogratias, he became convinced about the claims of Jesus as Messiah and Son of God. For some years he was outwardly a practising Muslim while inwardly a believer in Jesus - until he had a bad dream one night. He dreamed that his hands and legs were chained, and he found himself surrounded by fire. The heat of the flames burned him from all sides. When the pain was at its worst, a shining man appeared and told him that Islam was responsible for this torture. This man urged him to repent, to be born-again and that he would survive. He consulted several imams about the bad dream, but despite all his efforts the dream kept coming back every night.

Umar then remembered that Pastor Deogratias said that if you pray in the name of Jesus, God will answer your prayers. He prayed, "God if you are there and you are the one who wants me to be born again, I pray that this dream does not come back tonight." That night he slept like a baby. The next day, Easter Sunday 1993, he went to church and gave his life to Jesus Christ.

After his conversion he was excommunicated from his family. They drove him away with every conceivable weapon and he had to go into hiding. The church took care of him and taught him the Word of God. He completed a BA in Theology and became a pastor.

## Ten Attempts on His Life

Pastor Umar has led many Muslims to faith in the Lord

Jesus and survived at least ten murder attempts. One of these attempts was when someone jumped from the bushes and fired four bullets at him at close range. Before the bullets could hit him, it felt as if someone had grabbed him by the shoulder and pulled him down. The bullets missed him. He still gives thanks to the Lord today, as he knows He is the One who pulled him down that day and saved his life.

## Christmas Eve 2011

On Christmas Eve last year after a church service where many Muslims received Jesus as Lord and Saviour, Pastor Umar was on his way to his car when he heard someone pretending to be a congregant call, "Pastor, help me!" As he turned around, acid was thrown into his face. He ran back to the church and more acid was thrown onto his back. He suffered unbearable pain and was rushed to the hospital in Kampala. Due to inadequate medical facilities and more attempts to kill him, Pastor Mulinde was taken to India to receive medical treatment and from there to the Sheba Medical Centre in Israel.

Umar arrived in Israel on 5 January 2012. By the time he came to Cape Town he has already undergone five major operations. The acid badly burnt the right side of his face, and he lost his right eye. During one of the operations, the burnt skin had to be removed from the right side of



*Pastor Umar Mulinde today - after the attack*

his face. He has had to sleep with bandages on his face, and the doctors warned that if anyone touched his face there was a 99% chance that he could die. He said he would go for the 1% chance to live! Pastor Umar had his last operation ten days before he came to Cape Town and was not well at all but was convinced that the Lord wanted him to visit South Africa.

### **Forgiveness**

The people who attacked him with acid are Muslims. He forgave them and said that if their children would be hungry he would give them bread. His heart's desire for the Muslims is that they should hear the gospel and be saved. One day in Uganda while Pastor Umar was driving his car, he saw a man walking next to the road who had previously tried to harm him. It was raining and the man was getting wet. He stopped the car and offered the man a lift, which he gladly accepted. Once this man was in the car, Pastor Umar put a CD with the gospel message into the

CD-player!

### **A Spirit of Power**

Coming from a man who has been persecuted for his faith, we were encouraged with the words of Paul to Timothy in 2 Timothy 1:7: "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline." Believers keep quiet because of fear, whereas people whose plans are evil are bold. A silent believer is powerless. The Lord requires prayer and action. While the world is filled with hatred, we as believers must not keep quiet. The best way to fight terrorism is to give people the gospel.

After he was burnt with acid, Pastor Umar was still saying, "Jesus is Lord." He decided that he will continue to preach the gospel. Genesis 50:20 has become a key verse to him, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."

In the months since the attack he has now reached more people with the gospel than in all the years since he first started to preach! His testimony has spread to many countries all

over the world.

After arriving at the hospital in Israel, a rabbi was the first person to visit him. The rabbi called him "a champion of this generation" and put his testimony on his own website.

Pastor Umar encouraged us to persist with the gospel in spite of problems. He said trouble as a result of the gospel promotes us to higher levels. We were warned to be watchful and not to allow government systems that deny religious freedom and destroy relationships. We are to oppose the spirit of Islam but love Muslims. We also learned more about the persecuted Church and the suffering of Christians in Africa - in Mali, Kenya, the Ivory Coast, Egypt and Nigeria.

### **New-Found Love for Israel**

From the age of five, Umar Mulinde hated Israel and the Jewish people. He didn't even know where Israel was. When he became a believer in Jesus and started to read the Bible, he saw "the God of Israel" all the time and decided to love what God loves. He became a friend of Israel and the Jewish people and has taken many tours to Israel to introduce Christian leaders to the land and to the people of Israel.

Umar encouraged us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6), because God is commanding us to pray for Israel.

The Gospel came to the Gentiles, because He came to his own and they did not receive him. We must endeavour for Israel to know the Lord.

*Cecilia Burger  
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# From an 'Enemy of Israel' to a 'Friend of Israel'

By Leigh Telli, LCJE South Africa

## A Special Meeting

Apart from the LCJE-South Africa conference, Pastor Umar Mulinde's schedule was filled with many church meetings - all important and memorable, but the meeting which seemed to highlight his visit to Cape Town in August 2012, was the one held on a Tuesday afternoon in a spacious home situated in Vredehoek.

## An Unusual Introduction

Pastor Mulinde looked tired from a talk given to a group of pastors at a lunch time meeting earlier that day. Would he be able to handle the pace, considering his physical condition and would he be sensitive to the fact that his audience of over twenty people were mainly from a Jewish background? We weren't disappointed, as he animatedly greeted the group with the words, "Shalom, greetings from Israel". This was an unusual introduction indeed from a man brought up as a Muslim!

## Love for God's Chosen People

Pastor Mulinde's deep love for God's Chosen People and his concern for the safety of the land of Israel from radical Islam became very apparent over the course of the afternoon. I was wondering if he was going to bring in his testimony, when one of the Jewish women, from a background in radio, asked the million-dollar question, "So what events led up to you becoming a Christian?" Pastor Mulinde then shared how he came to accept Yeshua as his Lord and Messiah. What was especially



*Leigh Telli*

striking to the people listening to his story, was that this man clearly bore the marks of one who had suffered greatly for his faith and for his stand for Israel and the Jewish people. This was verbalised by a man prominent in the Jewish community when he commended Umar for his courage and said that he, personally, would be willing to help him in any way possible.

## Praying in Jesus' Name

At the end of his message, one of the Christians, John, felt prompted to pray over Pastor Mulinde. Two things were touching about this. Firstly, that the prayer was concluded with the words, "...in the Name of Jesus the Messiah," and, secondly, that two Jewish men, at Pastor Mulinde's request, also prayed for him. John's prayer was also the catalyst for a conversation with a couple from a more Orthodox background. As I flopped into a nearby chair to relax after an intense afternoon, I was caught off guard when the wife of the couple looked at me and said, "I noticed that man prayed in

the Name of Jesus the Messiah. We Jewish people don't believe Jesus is the Messiah, you know. I once asked the rabbi why Jesus isn't the Messiah, and he said that when Messiah comes he will bring peace to the earth and that didn't happen with Jesus." I waited a couple of seconds and was given an invitation to reply when her husband looked at me and said, "How would you answer that, Leigh?" What a wonderful opportunity to share how Jesus came the first time as "Messiah ben Joseph," a suffering servant to reconcile us to God but that at His Second Coming He would bring world peace during His reign as "Messiah ben David". I encouraged them to read Isaiah 53 to see how Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Suffering Servant.

Please pray that the seeds that were sown that afternoon will be watered and bear fruit for eternity.

*Leigh Telli*

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**Note on Leigh:** Born and brought up in South Africa from the age of 6, Leigh Telli studied art at a number of different colleges and universities, including Epsom Art School in England; Michaelis in Cape Town and lastly Unisa. At the age of 26, she became a Christian and was also given a love and passion for the people of Israel and the Middle East. Her heart is for reconciliation between Messianic Jews and Arab Christians - this and other biblical subjects are reflected in her subject matter. Leigh's greatest desire is that her paintings would be used by the Lord Jesus to bring a message of salvation, healing and hope in the dark days in which we live.

# The Third LCJE AustralAsia Conference, Aug. 2012

By Natasha Michailidis, LCJE AustralAsia

## Coming to Collaroy

It had been eighteen months since we met last, and as we gathered from different parts of the region at the beautiful Collaroy Conference Centre in Collaroy Beach, Sydney, there was excited anticipation of what God would have for us in the next few days of fellowship, listening to good teaching, sharing, praying and just having good fun. There were plenty of joyful and delighted hugs all around, and animated chats in catching up with what had transpired since we had last met. The weather was sunny, and the surrounding ocean views from our rooms, the dining room and verandah were breathtaking!

## Opening Sessions

The first session started with the traditional greetings (by video) from LCJE's newly elected International Coordinator, Jim Melnick, and from Tuvya Zaretsky (by letter), LCJE President. This connected us into the wider circle of the LCJE community.

This was followed by a "Report from the Field" by my husband, Pastor Kon (Kostya) Michailidis of "Yeshua Tsidkenu," a Russian Jewish Messianic Congregation in Sydney.

The first talk of the conference, given by myself, was titled, "Healthy Relationships: Characteristics and Warnings". We were en-



*Natasha Michailidis*

couraged and warned through Biblical examples and life experiences to have right attitudes towards other ministries and our brothers and sisters; to rejoice in the success of others; and to be wary of jealousy of each other. The talk concluded with this passage from Scripture: "...neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labour." (I Cor 3:7-8, NIV)

Each morning began with prayer at 7.30 before breakfast and was very well attended in spite of some bleary eyes. David Brickner, Executive Director of Jews for Jesus, took the first devotional session each morning with a Bible study. He chose three psalms that were Messianic and were written by King David. The first one was Psalm 22, which is pertinent for anyone who at some stage has had difficulties in their life. This psalm prophetically expresses the sufferings of the Messiah, but King David also expresses his own suffering. He writes of his own experience of a faith in a God who

is, or at times seems to be, far off - the faith that sustains us in the midst of doubt. The second morning David spoke on Psalm 16 in which King David recognizes that he has no earthly security but that God alone is his inheritance.

This psalm is considered to be a resurrection psalm, bringing hope where none is present - as the Holy One conquering death. David Brickner also shared about the history of his own wonderful inheritance of five generations of Messianic Jews.

The third morning David spoke on Psalm 2 and reminded us that these psalms are in the context of what can be applied to Yeshua's teaching in Luke 24:44b, when He said: "... that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." The book of Acts and other NT writings view these psalms as Messianic and support the understanding that Psalm 22 speaks of crucifixion of the Messiah. Psalm 16 is considered to be a resurrection psalm and Psalm 2 as the ultimate glorious enthronement of King Messiah.

## First Full Day

The first full day offered a rich fare of short talks. These included reports from the fields by Paul Cohen (Ariel Ministries), Martin Weatherston (CMJ), Matthew Peet (HebeHop), Muchan update video by Lawrence Hirsch (Chief Executive, Celebrate Messiah), Deane Woods (Friends of Israel) and testimonies by Joan Kirsten and

June Volk. There was also a Practitioners Forum where a panel answered questions on: "What's working and what's not working?"

The morning's presentation was by Dr. Ashley Crane on "Ezekiel: Dry Bones and Rattling." It was a thought-provoking talk and was appropriate to its title – a "rattling" presentation, a different take on what most of the audience would have thought. Ashley's main claim was that Ezekiel's original organization of the text was different from the Masoretic text that we have. Ashley's thesis is that: in Ezekiel's original flow of text, the dry bones represented real resurrection of Israel's real dead after a real battle with Gog from Magog.

Ashley proposed that the chapter order originally would have been: Ezekiel 36:1-23, 38, 39, followed by the dry bones epic of Chapter 37, and that the examination of modern Israeli history reflects that order.

In the evening, Shelly Volk presented a paper titled, "Re-gathering our People". In it he read many scriptures about the Lord bringing Jewish people back to their land and about Israel being a nation that will be a blessing for all the nations. This is a repeated pattern woven through the whole of the Bible and an answer to Replacement Theology. Shelly challenged us not to be content in our comfort zones, going from one Sabbath to another with our man-made programmes but to hear what the Spirit is saying

to us.

### **Second Day**

The second day followed a similar format. There were reports from the fields: by Scott Brown (Celebrate Messiah New Zealand), Lawrence Hirsch (Chief Executive, Celebrate Messiah), Mark Landrum (Jews for Jesus), Des Rubie (Jews for Jesus NZ) and Rita Ivenskis (Celebrate Messiah - Dom Mesi'i).

A book report by Ashley Crane and Paul Cohen acquainted us with current trends. We also heard two moving testimonies, one by Rowan Marcus and the other by Jeff Cook.

### **Main Presentations**

Four major presentations followed:

1) Lawrence Hirsch presented a timely paper on the topic, "Anti-Israelism in the Church and its Effects on Jewish Evangelism." He showed a video in which an attempt was made to raise up a groundswell of anti-Israel sentiment in the world today in one-sided support for the plight of the Palestinian people. He expanded on how this same vehement anti-Israel propaganda is flooding into the church today.

The paper also briefly covered the main points of the conference that was held at the Bethlehem Bible College called "Christ at the Checkpoint" and also explained the theological underpinnings of Christian Anti-Israelism.

2) Rob Smith presented a paper titled, "A Study in Romans 11". Rob's thesis is that the fulfillment of the land promise given to Abraham

will be realized at the time of new earth and New Jerusalem, and he rejects any notion of bounded territorial fulfillment but believes that the promise is on a greater plane than that.

Rob used chapter 4 as a springboard to discuss the key word "promise"- the nature of that promise, the identity of the heirs of the promise, and the means by which the promise is to be received. He cited the text in Eph 2:15 of the barrier between Jew and Gentile being abolished, creating a new man, and also the text in Gal 3:27-29 where "there is neither Jew nor Greek."

Romans 4:11-12, 17 speaks of Abraham being the father of many nations- those who walk in faith - both circumcised and uncircumcised. This reality of an international family, says Rob, gives an expanded understanding of the land promise. The inheritance is large - embracing the whole world.

3) Bob Mendelsohn spoke on "Lessons from the Book of Jonah" and drew interesting conclusions from it. He reminded us of what an unlikely candidate Jonah was to be included in the Bible because of his disobedience, rebellion, selfishness and the fact of only doing God's will under great duress.

Bob proposed an interesting parallel to this story by linking it to the account in Matthew where Y'shua ordained Peter to preach the gospel, using his formal name Shimon Bar Yonah, son of Jonah. Bob said that, whether Jonah was Peter's father's name or not, Jonah's ministry was certainly given to him. Peter was sent to preach to his "Nineveh" - a group of Gentiles. Acts 9 ends with Jop-

## Third LCJE AustralAsia Conference -2012 (Cont'd)

pa, the very city from which Jonah did **not** go to Nineveh. From there, Peter, Jonah's greater 'son', now goes to his Nineveh in the form of the Roman Cornelius, and the beginnings of the group "Gentiles for Jesus" was born.

4) Finally, a Celebrate Messiah staff member spoke on "Money and Ministry: Is there enough for us all?"

### Conference - Last Day

On the third and final day of the conference, three more talks were squeezed in besides David Brickner's teaching on Psalm 2:

1) Lawrence Hirsch spoke on "Handling Jewish Objections" and raised several important observations. Jewish culture has an in-built defence mechanism against the gospel. Jewishness is defined in a negative way - "Being Jewish is not believing in Jesus." His advice was that we need to preach/teach the Gospel through a Jewish frame of reference. We need to teach the unknown or rejected through that which is known and accepted. In answering Jewish objections, we need to move people from what they know and accept to what is unknown and rejected.

2) Scott Brown talked about "Jewish Evangelism in the New Age: Perspectives and Response." Scott explained how God's unique relationship with the Jewish people seems to have planted in the Jewish soul a passion for things spiritual. But when this passion is misdirected - a "zeal for God, but not according to knowl-



*Third AustralAsian conference attendees - group photo*

edge" (Romans 10:2) - Jewish people are especially vulnerable to the old lies of the New Age. Scott encouraged us to kindly ignore apparent confidence (1 Corinthians 1:18-21). Despite their glowing reports of spiritual transformation and inner peace, the truth remains that their spirit yearns for the Life that only Y'shua can provide.

3) The final talk was by Bob Mendelsohn, titled, "When Dreams go thud: Handling failure in Ministry." This talk was a follow-up to the "If I had a dream" presentation given by Bob at the last LCJE Conference. He said that dreams don't just happen; they take work to accomplish.

Bob talked about handling disappointment and rejection. He concluded by asking the question: Dare we still dream? His answer was "yes." We are to dream and to work, even with the sound of our own thuds, our own personal failures and disappointments, and

even the rejection of others who don't get it.

(Editor's Note: for extended excerpts from these three presentations, see *LCJE Bulletin*, Issue 109, August 2012, Lawrence Hirsch article, pp. 8-9; Scott Brown, pp. 16-19; Bob Mendelsohn, pp. 14-15).

### A Rich Time of Fellowship

As all the faces in the photo show, we had a rich time together. We were reminded at times that we are not an organization, but a network. At times we disagree with each other theologically, but we all agree that God is moving among His chosen people at this end of the world, and we are glad to be a part of it all - together. A special thanks to Bob Mendelsohn for organizing it so brilliantly and to David Brickner and his sister Martha for making the big trip 'down under'.

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# The Third International Russian Messianic Leaders Conference - Kiev, Ukraine (Sept. 2012)

By Jim Melnick, International Coordinator, LCJE



*Conference delegates visit the Menorah memorial at Babiy Yar in Kiev; numerous delegates had relatives who were murdered near here and are buried in the mass grave of the huge ravine of Babiy Yar; a German Christian joined the group to ask forgiveness for his nation*

## **Conference at Irpen**

The Third International Russian Messianic Leaders Conference was held at the Irpen Christian retreat center outside of Kiev, Ukraine, from 5-11 September 2012. The conference was conducted entirely in Russian and followed two earlier ones - the first being held in Berlin in 2006 and the second in Jerusalem in 2009. This year nearly a hundred delegates came from the following countries: Israel, the U.S., Australia, Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Uzbekistan, Finland, Germany, and Poland. Our gracious host was none other than Gregory Ivanovich Kommendant, a fa-

mous and steadfast evangelical leader under Communism during the time of the Soviet Union (there was a large picture, for example, tucked away in a corner of the conference center that showed him sitting down next to Billy Graham at an historic meeting between Dr. Graham and former Soviet Communist Party Chairman, Mikhail Gorbachev). He and the entire staff made us feel especially welcome during our stay at Irpen, and we as their guests felt their deep desire to be a blessing to us.

Conference leader Michael Zinn, who ably prepared most of the logistics for the conference, was also able to bring

in various Ukrainian political leaders - some of whom are believers - to meet and address the delegates, expressing their delight over what this group represented.

## **Vision Statement**

I delivered the following opening vision statement to the conference delegates: "Our vision is to see Russian-speaking Jews around the world come to faith in Yeshua as the Messiah, disciples and gathered into vibrant Messianic congregations that will be a witness to the Jewish people, a blessing to the Church and a light to the Nations."

Slightly adapted here, this statement was originally devel-

oped by another LCJE member who has a ministry in Israel and who attended the conference as a special observer.

Chosen People Ministries was the sponsor of the conference, underwriting the cost of the conference itself and making it possible for many delegates to come for whom it otherwise would not have been possible, given their very limited means.

### **Conference Sessions**

Conference sessions covered the following major themes: "Messianic Congregations: Planting, Growing, Discipleship"; "Messianic Evangelism: Public, Personal, Media"; "Messianic Worship: Liturgy and Contemporary, Personal and Joint"; "Teaching and Mentoring for Leaders, Individuals and Churches"; "Social Engagement in Ministry: Special Events, Holocaust Survivors, Benevolence"; "Ministry to Children, Youth and Addicts"; "Future of the Russian Messianic Movement: Unity, Goals, Possible Plans, Cooperation and Communication."

### **Remembering Jhan**

Early in the conference we received the sad news of our dear brother Jhan Moskowitz's death in New York. We shared thoughts and prayers about the impact of Jhan's life and ministry with the assembled delegates. I shared about how Jhan had been such an encouragement to me when my wife Karen and I began our Russian Jewish ministry in Chicago in the late 1970s and Jhan and Melissa were then based in Chicago with Jews for Jesus.

### **"KEMO"**

One of the key speakers at the conference was Boris Gritsenko, pastor-rabbi of KEMO (Russian acronym for "Kiev Jewish Mes-

sianic Congregation") in the city of Kiev itself. With 1,600 people, it is often considered to be the largest Messianic congregation in the world. KEMO, started in 1995, has 19 daughter congregations, located in cities such as Berdichev, Cherkassy, Smela, Vinitza, Kharkov and elsewhere. The ministry also runs a number of rehabilitation centers for drug and alcohol addicts.

KEMO has a publishing outreach and sponsors pastoral retreats. One 2010 KEMO publication is titled in Russian, "Practical Experience of Pastoral Work in Messianic Congregations."

Besides KEMO, other ministries represented at the conference had a variety of materials available for the delegates in the areas of Jewish evangelism, Messianic ministry, and related issues.

### **The "Stans"**

One of my great personal joys of the conference - besides visiting with many long-time friends from over the years and making new ones - was spending special time with the delegates from the "Stans" - in this case, several of the Central Asian countries carved out of the former Soviet Union: Kazakhstan, Kirghizia (Kyrgyzstan), and Uzbekistan - and hearing the stories and testimonies of their ministries in that part of the world. In Kazakhstan, for example, there is a tight-knit group of regional leaders in Messianic ministry who, though largely isolated from much of the rest of the Western world, look out for and encourage one another in their ministries.

### **Other Conference Highlights**

Other highlights from the conference included a special dedication service of a Torah brought to Ukraine as a gift from believers in the U.S., as well as our

Shabbat service. We were also blessed by deeply edifying worship times, including an international Klezmer band of sorts that played and sang Messianic praise songs and popular Jewish melodies.

As a group we also took a bus tour of "Jewish Kiev," including seeing the main Kiev synagogues and other sites related to Kievan Jewish history.

### **The Visit to Babiy Yar**

Probably the most moving experience of the conference was our visit to Babiy Yar, site of the terrible slaughter of tens of thousands of Jewish men, women and children by the Nazis and their henchmen in September 1941. A number of conference delegates had relatives who are buried at Babiy Yar. The photo shows the large menorah that is located just yards from the end of the huge ravine, or pit, that is Babiy Yar.

### **Theme of Reconciliation**

On the day of our visit to Babiy Yar, a German Christian with a broken heart of compassion joined with us and spoke and prayed at the site, asking forgiveness for what his nation had done to the Jewish people. It was a very touching moment. It exemplified the tenderness and spirit of unity that characterized so much of this extraordinary conference.

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# Borough Park Symposium Three:

## *How Jewish Should the Messianic Jewish Movement Be?*

### **Introduction**

The Third Borough Symposium took place in New York City, at the LaGuardia Hotel from Monday, October 22 until Wednesday, October 24, 2012. The event was attended by 115 Messianic Jewish leaders and Gentile-believing observers who traveled from various parts of the United States, Canada and from overseas, to be a part of this conference. The theme of the Third Symposium was: "How Jewish Should the Messianic Jewish Movement Be?" There were four major modules of papers, with opening messages by Chaim Urbach and a closing address by Jonathan Cahn. We also spent quite a bit of time in worship and prayer for one another, led by David Rosenberg and Ron Corbett.

### **History of the Borough Park Symposium**

The Borough Park Symposium began as a response to some of the growing concerns within the broader Messianic movement about one another's theological positions. Some of this was generated by Mark Kinzer's book *Post-Missionary Messianic Judaism* and later fueled by Richard Harvey's book, *Mapping Messianic Judaism*, which identified some of these trends and developing distinctives.

It was clear to many that a by-product of the growth within the modern Messianic movement was the development of greater theological conviction leading to deepening

### **By Mitch Glaser**



*Mitch Glaser*

ing differences on key and critical areas of faith and practice. Some of these issues were clearly dividing the movement, and it was felt that the best way to bring greater unity for our movement was to gather leaders representing various views into one place to openly discuss what we believed, but to do so in a respectful and gracious manner.

Those concerned with these issues included leaders from the UMJC, MJA, LCJE, the missions' movement and many theologians and Jewish believers who are part of local Evangelical churches. The symposium also included a number of leaders from Israel, the United Kingdom and other countries where the Messianic movement is growing.

### **First Meeting**

A first meeting was held at an ultra-Orthodox hotel in the Borough Park section of Brooklyn, attended by leaders from the various "streams" of the movement, including those who were part of churches. John Holbrook,

a Gentile believer who was active in the Messianic movement and chairman of the Board of Chosen People Ministries, led the meeting. The goal of the meeting was to determine whether or not a conference could be held, which would include a broad representation of the Messianic Jewish movement, including those who were not commonly understood as being a part of the movement.

### **No Similar Conference**

At that time, and perhaps even until this very day, there was no conference or gathering where Messianic Jewish leaders of every "stripe" could discuss their views with one another. Most of the conferences at that time included those who generally agreed with one another on most aspects of Scripture, the Messianic movement and Jewish identity.

In addition, there was no gathering at the time where Jewish believers could take the lead in what amounted to an internal conversation among Messianic Jewish participants, but one that also included Gentile guests with a deep commitment to Jewish ministry and the Messianic movement. Therefore, one of the foundational principles of the Symposia was to make sure that the participants and speakers were all Jewish believers – whether they attended a church or were part of one of the larger Messianic groups or Jewish

mission agency. Additionally, in order to keep the discussion balanced, the event was by invitation only.

### **The Purpose of the Borough Park Symposium**

About a dozen of us gathered together at this first meeting in Borough Park, Brooklyn, and decided to move forward with a symposium to discuss some of the hot button issues causing the conversation among us. It was our hope that the conversations would enlighten leaders of the Messianic movement with respect to the real issues that concerned us, and, again, to discuss them respectfully.

At this meeting we formed a program committee, representing the broader movement and also agreed on the following list of shared convictions, which would determine who would be invited to speak and participate at the Symposium:

- *We are Jews who believe in Yeshua and in God's covenant with Israel, and, as members of the Jewish community, are committed to the welfare of our people.*
- *We feel compelled by the Spirit of God to advance the good news of Yeshua among our people.*
- *We desire to preserve the unity and secure the future of the Messianic Jewish movement and our common mission through respectful dialogue, without acrimony, even in the face of critical disagreements.*
- *We believe in the authority of Scripture and the deity of Yeshua and that eternal life is the gift of God in Messiah Yeshua our Lord.*

### **The Program of the Recent Borough Park Symposium**

At our third meeting there were four modules addressing four topics, and after each set of presentations was given, the group divided up into more than an hour of table discussion. After the discussion, questions were addressed from the floor to the previous presenters and discussed openly with the entire group.

The committee tried to invite capable speakers representing different viewpoints on the same topic. This was not to encourage disagreement, but rather to make certain that the varying views on these critical issues within the Messianic movement were addressed.

The major topics of discussion and speakers were as follows:

**Topic 1.** What is the role of Torah and Jewish Tradition in the Messianic Jewish community?

Speakers: Baruch Maoz, Joshua Brumbach, Seth Klayman

**Topic 2.** What is our relationship with the wider Jewish community?

Speakers: Tuvya Zaretsky, Diane Cohen, Oded Shoshani

**Topic 3.** What is the role of Gentiles in the Messianic Jewish community?

Speakers: Jeff Adler, Jeff Seif via video, Rich Nichol

**Topic 4.** How Jewish will the Messianic Jewish community of the future be?

Speakers: Steven Ger, Mara Frisch, David Rudolph

These papers maybe be downloaded from the Borough Park Symposium website at: [www.boroughparksymposium.com](http://www.boroughparksymposium.com). The papers from the first two symposia are also available on this site. However, if you

would like to have hard copies of the papers, they may be ordered from Messianic Jewish Publications at [www.messianic-jewish.net](http://www.messianic-jewish.net).

### **Emphasis on A New Generation of Leaders**

One of the unique aspects of this third symposium was our effort as a committee to invite representatives of the "next-generation" of Messianic Jewish leaders into the conversation. The Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations provided a generous gift enabling many of these young leaders to come. They were invited along the same criteria as the more senior leaders and represented various aspects of the movement - including the UMJC, MJA and the Jewish missions community. Of the 115 participants, 20 were under 35 years of age and were regarded as full participants in the discussion and a few of these younger leaders presented papers as well.

### **The Future of the Borough Park Symposia**

As our Messianic Jewish movement grows, the issues that concern us will proliferate as well. This is one of the reasons our committee and many who attended the recent Symposium believe these events should continue. The committee will be discussing the possibility of a fourth symposium and will keep the wider Messianic movement, and of course the LCJE, informed as to upcoming conferences.

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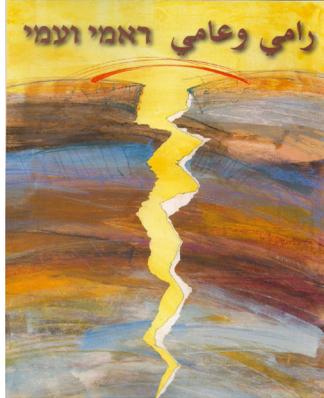
# The Rami-Ami Booklet

By Jim Melnick, International Coordinator, LCJE

## Terrorist Bombing in Ariel - The Ami Ortiz Story

Most readers of this Bulletin are already familiar with at least the general outlines of the story of Ami Ortiz and how God spared his life from a terrorist bomb in March 2008 in the city of Ariel in Israel. A bomb disguised as a Purim gift basket reportedly left by self-confessed American Jewish terrorist Yakov "Jack" Teitel was intended to kill the Ortiz family. Teitel may also allegedly be guilty of numerous murders and bombings going back as far as 1997. He is still in custody and awaiting final adjudication in this case, while various crimes remain under investigation and legal proceedings continue. Teitel is so extreme that he does not even recognize the authority of the Israeli court over him and has already gone through at least four sets of lawyers!

When the bomb was placed back in 2008, most of the Ortiz family was not at home. Ami, the teenage son of Messianic Israeli family David and Leah Ortiz, had overslept that day. The Ortizes have been active in sharing the Good News of Yeshua in Ariel and elsewhere in the Samaria region over many years. Ami found the basket where it had been placed earlier outside the door and brought it into the family dining room to open it and see what Purim 'goodies' it contained (giving gift baskets like this during Purim is a common practice in Israel). What it contained was intended death and



*The Rami-Ami booklet*  
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destruction. The 'gift basket' exploded as Ami unwrapped it. Shrapnel filled the room, penetrating his young body all over.

## Incredible Survival

The fact that Ami survived even the first few minutes after the explosion is incredible. He came very close to the point of death. The miraculous story of how his life was spared can be found in Donna Dioro's online book, *Exposé: The Terror Bombing of Israeli Messianic Teen Ami Ortiz*, available online in PDF form at [www.israelprayer.com](http://www.israelprayer.com) (Donna, who runs [israelprayer.com](http://israelprayer.com), also provides regular updates on what is happening with believers and ministries throughout Israel in her "Arrows from Zion" briefings of online prayer points).

Since the bombing, Ami has had a very difficult period of recovery and rehabilitation, including 14 operations and more plastic surgeries planned ahead, but he has had an extraordinary recovery, is now in college, and

he has been able to return to his beloved sport of basketball.

The bombing shocked the Messianic community in Israel and many others around the world, since it appeared to show a calculated escalation of the violence being perpetrated against believers in some parts of Israel.

More on the Ortiz family story, including updates on Ami, their praises and prayer requests, as well as the legal proceedings involving Jack Teitel, can be found at: <http://amiortiz.com/home.cfm>. Please pray with them that justice will eventually be done in this case. As they state, there is still "much that lies in darkness" in what happened here. Although the mayor of Ariel did visit them soon after the bombing, many Israeli authorities - as opposed to average Israelis - have shown very little empathy toward them, while victims of other bombings in Israel are usually showered with official attention and concern. We must continue to shine a global spotlight on this incident.

David Ortiz attended his first LCJE meeting at the London High Leigh conference in August 2011, where we first met, and I had the joy and privilege of visiting with David and Leah in their home in Ariel in October 2011, learning more of the details involved in this case, as well as seeing first-hand where the bombing took place.

## ראמי ועאמי – ראמי ועמי



כיצד ניתן לסלוח ולהרפא?

ראמי הוא נוצרי פלסטיני ועמי הוא יהודי משיחי. בשל אמונתם, אחד מהם נרצח והשני נפגע קשות בניסיון לרצח. לפניך שני ספורים אמיתיים על כוח הריפוי של אהבת אלוהים ודברו באמצעות אמונה... שני סיפורים של ניצחון.

كيف من المستطاع أن تغفر وتعال شفاء؟

ראמי هو مسيحي فلسطيني وعامي يهودي مسيحي. بسبب إيمانهم، قتل واحد واصيب الآخر بجروح خطيرة في محاولة اغتيال. امامك قصتين حقيقتين عن قوة الشفاء من خلال محبة الله وكلمته من وخلال الايمان ... قصتين عن النصر.

תפهم עדוק – המאמין ואויבו

العداوة بين الاخوة – עוונות בין אחים

المسامحة – סליחה

الاضطهاد والامل – רדיפה ותקוה

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Back cover of the Rami-Ami booklet in Hebrew and Arabic

## **The Rami Ayyad Story**

The Ortiz family was targeted because of their faith in Yeshua and their proclamation of the Gospel.

In a similar way, Rami Ayyad, 26, young father of two with a pregnant wife, sought to share the Good News of eternal life among the people of Gaza.

In October 2007, Rami was the manager of the only Christian bookstore in Gaza, called The Teacher's Bookshop, run by the Palestinian Bible Society. The bookstore had been around since 1998. Rami also helped lead the Gaza Baptist Church's Awana program for Palestinian children in Gaza City.

## **Kidnapped by Militants**

Rami was kidnapped by presumed Islamic militants on Saturday, October 6, 2007, as he was closing the bookshop. He had received death threats many times before, and the bookshop storefront had already been bombed in April of that year. There had also been other bombings of the shop in 2006, and in one earlier incident a communiqué was found demanding that the bookstore be closed.

The kidnapers allowed Ayyad to phone several people, including his wife Pauline and mother Arisa. He told them at that time that he might be able to return. One can only speculate on what the 'price' was for his safe return, but it was likely either the renunciation of his faith or leaving Gaza.

The next day at 6:25 a.m., Ayyad's lifeless body was found near the bookshop. He had been shot and stabbed multiple times.

The Hamas authorities in Gaza issued a statement condemning the murder and were said to have launched an investigation.

## **A Terrible Shock**

At the time, the murder came as a terrible shock to the small Gazan Christian community of less than 5,000 people, which generally has had peaceful relations with the overwhelming Muslim majority in Gaza. The Bible Society ministry had received strong public support from local Gazans after the previous attacks because of its humanitarian efforts in the community.

According to a phone interview by Christianity Today of a Christian worker in Gaza right after the murder, it was stated then that Rami's death was the first time in memory that a believer had died for the faith in Gaza (<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2007/octoberweb-only/141-12.0.html>)

After Rami's death, Pauline later left Gaza with their now three young children.

Please pray for her and her fatherless children, as well as for the Ortiz family, as both of these families continue to deal with the aftermaths of these terrible attacks.

## **The Rami-Ami Booklet Emerges**

The Bible Society in Israel, the Palestinian Bible Society, and the Arab-Israeli Bible Society all came together to produce this incredible booklet that now shares the stories of these two believers persecuted because of hatred for the Gospel, whether that hatred

emerged from people in Israel or in Gaza. But out of these terrible stories of destruction, and in Rami's case, martyrdom, there is hope - that hope which is the essence of our faith. We have hope in eternal life and in eternal justice and faith in a God Who can bring healing and strength even in what seems to be the worst of circumstances.

The General Director of the Bible Society in Israel, Victor Kalisher, in writing about how this booklet came together as a cooperative effort between the Bible societies, has commented about the "shared desire to bring forth the healing power of God's Word to our peoples."

That healing power is needed now more than ever. Pray that the Rami-Ami booklet will touch many hearts among Hebrew-speaking Israelis as well as among Arabic-speaking Palestinians and Arabs and that all will come to see that their only hope is in the One Who came to save sinners and give His life as a ransom for many.

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More information about the Rami-Ami booklet can be obtained from The Bible Society in Israel. The address is:

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Website:  
www.biblesocietyinisrael.com  
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# Yossi Bikas - Young Fighter for Yeshua

By Jim Melnick, International Coordinator, LCJE

## 'Desert Flowers' of the Negev, Ministry to Addicts

Since 1995, Dov and Olga Bikas have had an amazing ministry (called "Operation Desert Flowers") in five towns in the Negev region of Israel, planting Russian-speaking congregations and home groups in places like Beer Sheva and Arad. Dov is a pastor with a great heart of compassion, and in recent years he has also launched an outreach to drug addicts and prostitutes in Tel Aviv - a great number of whom are Russian immigrants. Dov sees enormous possibilities in this ministry among addicts who have come to faith and who are so thankful for what God has done for them. He believes it could be "one of the most effective and fruit-bearing activities in today's Israel," because those who have been forgiven much, love much (for more on this ministry, see my article in *Mishkan*, Issue 69/2011, titled, "The Underside of Russian Jewish Ministry in Israel," 61-69, especially p. 64).

## Yossi is Born

Dov and Olga's son, Yossi, was born on Sept. 12, 1994. My pastor, Doug Kittredge, and I spent many hours in the Bikas home around this time during numerous trips to Israel. Doug picks up the story from there: "We met Dov and Olga soon after Yossi was born. We rejoiced at his birth, his boyish energy and enthusiasm. We grieved in 1998 when Dov told [us]



Dov, Olga and Yossi Bikas

of his muscular dystrophy... That diagnosis was hard to believe until he began having difficulty walking. Each year we visited, he became more limited physically. When Yossi could no longer walk and was first confined totally to a wheelchair, he was in excruciating pain. He cried out in his weakness and pain, 'Abba, Abba, Abba.' We, too, are in continual need, and by the Spirit of Adoption, can cry for our Father. We rejoiced to hear of Yossi's receiving the Savior and being baptized. God has used this young man to teach us so much for which we praise God. We rejoice that he is complete in the Savior."

## Little Boy to Young Man

As a young boy growing up, Yossi made the most of his situation, which became more difficult year by year. He had a Facebook ministry that touched many, as he sought to encourage others around the world, especially with birthday greetings. His young life was a witness to his fellow Israeli schoolmates. He also loved to collect things like postcards and sheep-related knick-knacks!

Finally, as friend Christine Fulcrow has related, there was *that smile*. He had a "wonderful presence and...oh, that smile."

Yossi's parents provided loving care every day and also brought in special caregivers to help them through difficult times. I reprint below their moving account of Yossi's Homegoing.

*Jim Melnick*

## From Dov and Olga's Nov. 1, 2012 email letter:

Dear praying friends, Thank you all for your letters, condolences and prayers. Your care is very touching and precious for us. In this letter we would like to share with you a little about our present situation, plans and needs.

When Yossi was one year old we were told that he had muscular dystrophy. The doctor...said that children with this disease lived only up to 21 years or even less. Two years ago when Yossi's heart's function started to deteriorate, we were told he had no more than one year to live. So we tried to prepare ourselves for his passing.

When this day came, it did not catch us by surprise (though of course it is impossible to fully prepare yourself for something like that). When Yossi was still with us, we tried not to think about the future and lived for the day, but we did make some arrangements. For example, we decided not to bury Yossi in a Jewish cemetery with rabbis and their ceremonies. I have seen many of these ceremonies and there is not much honor for the dead in them.



**Yossi Bikas**



**Yossi's burial in the Messianic cemetery in Haifa**

The atmosphere is depressing and everything is done in a rush." That is why two years ago we ordered a place in a Christian (Messianic) cemetery in Haifa, and this decision proved to be the right one. The funeral was very peaceful, full of meaning and hope. There were worship teams (Yossi liked music very much), praising the Lord. Close family friends delivered two very touching short sermons. Many non-believers attended the funeral, including our relatives and teachers from Yossi's school – and they all admitted the ceremony was very special and differed from anything they had seen before.

Interestingly, the Messianic cemetery is situated between the British War Cemetery and a Jewish military one. We find this fact symbolic. Judy Pex wrote in her letter, announcing Yossi's funeral: "After a heroic life of 18 years in which he brought joy to many people and glory to God, Yossi Bikas has been relieved of his suffering and has entered

God's peace." He was a fighter indeed.

When we lost Yossi, Olga and I understood that sinking into a depression or deep mourning would not do good to anyone. Here in Israel, on Memorial Day, the TV always shows parents of fallen soldiers, and many of them never stop grieving for their lost children and never return to normal life.

Olga and I decided this should not be our case, and we put a goal before ourselves to overcome the stress, get restored and return to normal life and ministry as soon as possible. We started reading the Bible and praying together more often, going for long walks together, and always reminding ourselves about eternity in Heaven. We also decided to take a kind of time out for a while, dealing with urgent matters only. It is possible to do that, since the ministry is organized in such a way it can run for some time without my direct intervention. We need these days to get

restored physically and emotionally. Since we are going to have more free time from now on, we will think how we should use it properly for the ministry.

One of the decisions we have already made regarding the ministry is that Olga will join me (as a part-time job) for one year at least. It will be good for her since we will be together all the time. And it will be good for the ministry as well, since Olga will help me work more efficiently, especially when we minister to women. Her new salary will also fill the hole in our budget to some extent (this hole was created after we stopped receiving Yossi's pension). Please keep praying for us as we adjust to the new circumstances.

You all are a blessing to us,  
Yours in Him,  
Dov and Olga

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Editor's note: Dov and Olga can be reached at this email address: [dovbikas@gmail.com](mailto:dovbikas@gmail.com)

Visit the LCJE website [www.lcje.net](http://www.lcje.net)

## Mishkan

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## UPCOMING LCJE MEETINGS

### **LCJE North America**

March 4-6, 2013, in Boca Raton, Florida  
March 3-5, 2014, in Chicago  
Contact Gary Hedrick  
[garyh@cjfm.org](mailto:garyh@cjfm.org)

### **LCJE Europe**

April 28 - May 1, 2014  
Kiev, Ukraine  
Contact: Jean-Paul Rempp  
[jpnremppbn@wanadoo.fr](mailto:jpnremppbn@wanadoo.fr)

### **LCJE CEO Conference**

27-31 May 2013  
St. Chrischona, Basel, Switzerland  
Contact Kai Kjær-Hansen  
[lcje-kai@post4.tele.dk](mailto:lcje-kai@post4.tele.dk)

### **LCJE 10th International Conference**

2015 - Jerusalem, Israel  
Dates - To be determined  
Contact: Jim Melnick  
[lcje.int@gmail.com](mailto:lcje.int@gmail.com)

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