

JEW^S F[✪]R JESUS[®]

established 32 A.D. , give or take a year

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Outside the Camp *by David Brickner, Executive Director*

A pastor once told me that he appreciated the ministry of Jews for Jesus but could not invite us to speak in his pulpit. He had what he felt was a good relationship with the rabbi across the street, with an annual pulpit exchange. “I have an opportunity to be a witness through this pulpit exchange,” he explained. “By inviting Jews for Jesus, I would be forfeiting that opportunity.”

I carefully pointed out that his opportunity was only an opportunity if he could say something that would truly challenge his Jewish friends to consider Christ. Further, if anything he said or did ever resulted in a synagogue member coming to faith in Jesus, those pulpit exchanges would probably come to a screeching halt. Sadly, I don’t think that pastor was willing to give up the notion that friendship with the rabbi was somehow a prerequisite to evangelism and the fulfillment of his Christian duty.

Many Christians today seem to think that gaining the acceptance of unbelieving Jewish people is the way to gain a platform for the gospel. Unfortunately, things usually do not work out that way.

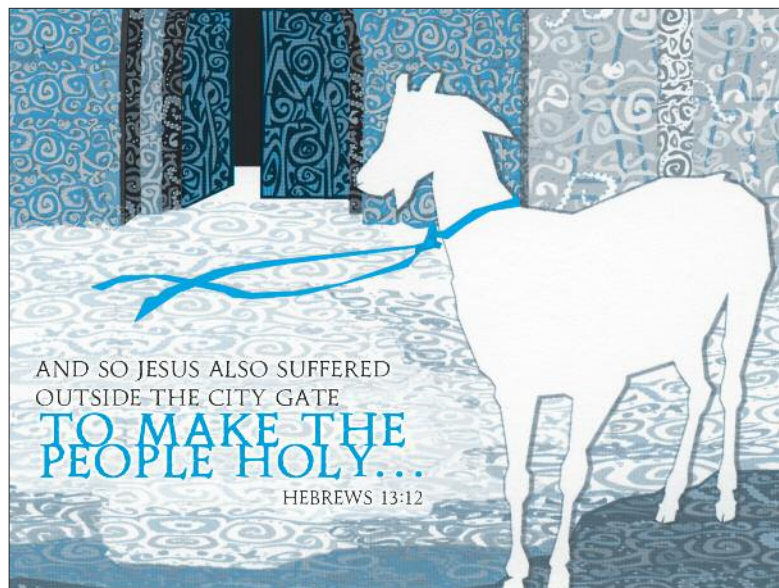
Some people speak about “earning the right” to witness. While it seems like a humble thing to say, many people fail to see how that statement contradicts Scripture. The Bible teaches that proclaiming the gospel is an obligation to be fulfilled, not a

right to be earned. The idea that people must accept us before they can accept Y’shua (Jesus) can actually become a subtle kind of pride that we fail to recognize in ourselves and our fellow believers.

We hear much about relational or “friendship” evangelism, but the Bible says “. . . Do you not know that friendship with the world is **enmity** (emphasis added) with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God” (James 4:4). I’m not saying we should treat unbelievers like enemies, nor should we be “unrelational,” unfriendly or rude! Nevertheless, when we make friendship with unbelievers our first priority, Jesus gets short shrift.

Few Christians intend to shunt Jesus off to the side. Most who never quite get around to giving a clear-cut gospel message don’t even realize they are sacrificing their gospel witness on the altar of human acceptance.

Once, when I was speaking at a church, a woman approached me after the service. She was pleased to inform me that her roommate and best friend



in college was Jewish, and that she had maintained their friendship over many years. When I asked if she ever talked to her friend about Jesus, she responded, “Oh no, I’d be too afraid of offending her.” I affirmed her desire to remain friends but suggested, “Perhaps what you fear even more than offending her is the possibility that she might reject you.” I’m afraid that woman took offense at my suggestion but I had to do what she was not willing to do: risk being rejected for the sake of an important truth—a truth more important than my being liked or accepted.

It is easy to allow ourselves to believe that our silence is out of respect for those who might disagree with us. It is easy to see our motivation as noble, especially when we see our ultimate intention as positioning ourselves to

be a better witness. But unfortunately, too often those intentions come to nothing, and we need to face the truth that sometimes our tact and our long-term intentions are merely masks that cover our natural fear of rejection and our reluctance to position ourselves where God really wants us: in a place of vulnerability.

We need to be honest about our own hesitation to witness, and we need to be realistic about this matter of offending others. God wants us to be loving and humble when we tell others about Him. Yet even the most inoffensive manner cannot guarantee that people will not take offense at what we have to say. Ultimately, people decide the basis on which they will or will not be offended, and sometimes taking offense is their best defense against the gospel.

There is much talk about the virtues of our pluralistic society. From a worldly perspective, tolerance is the greatest good. But today's society has twisted the meaning of tolerance, making it practically synonymous with relativism. True tolerance is treating people decently regardless of how they may differ from you. The false tolerance demanded by today's society requires that you accept all beliefs as equally true, or if you can't do that, you keep quiet about it. The suggestion that someone else's religious belief might not be true is wrongly labeled as intolerance. If someone believed she could take a street that only runs east and west to go north, would it be intolerant for someone else in the car to suggest a turn? No. Yet, when it comes to

spiritual matters, the world insists on a degree of relativism that would spell disaster were we to apply it to the physical realm.

The Christian belief that Jesus is the only way of salvation is perceived as intolerance, even bigotry by the world's standards. So the pressure is on us to compromise our strong stance and conviction in order to gain some acceptance, in order to avoid being marginalized by the unbelieving world. Yes, we live in a pluralistic society, but pluralism means that everyone has a right to express his or her own opinion. It doesn't mean that everyone's or no one's opinion is true.

Whenever we proclaim that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, the inference is that all other ways are false, and therefore those who trust anyone or anything other than Jesus for salvation are mistaken. You don't have to tell people they are wrong; the message itself pronounces them wrong. This will always be viewed as intolerance by those who don't believe. And those who are considered intolerant can expect to be rejected. That is why the idea that we must be accepted by those whom we wish to evangelize doesn't work.

Many Jews have risked alienation from family and friends to follow Jesus. We have been ostracized by the wider Jewish community because we have embraced the One who was despised and rejected of men. But we have discovered that He is worth it! "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept

My word, they will keep yours also" (John 15:20).

Perhaps you see why we are so disheartened by Christians who seek acceptance within the Jewish community at the expense of a forthright testimony. It's as though the very people who should stand with us and encourage us that we are right to suffer rejection for Christ's sake are telling us just the opposite by their actions. They want to stand apart from us to avoid being rejected by association and sadly, many don't want to stand up for the gospel for the same reason. More and more organizations represent themselves as gospel ministries to the Jewish people and receive funding from evangelical Christians—yet they are busily building friendships, not proclaiming the gospel. Are they true friends of my Jewish people? Not if they don't make sure they've heard God's plan of salvation. They have gained acceptance at the expense of Christ and at the expense of people who are perishing without Christ.

As a Jew for Jesus, I know that I will be treated as He was treated—accepted by those who accept Him and rejected by those who do not. While it is natural to desire acceptance, there is a sweet fellowship in risking rejection for Y'shua's sake. He understands rejection firsthand and His comfort comes from experience.

The author of Hebrews was writing to a group of first-century Jewish believers in Jesus who stood at a crossroads. They had suffered rejection and persecution to the point where they were tempted to turn their backs on the

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**WE EXIST TO MAKE THE MESSIAHSHIP OF JESUS
AN UNAVOIDABLE ISSUE TO OUR JEWISH PEOPLE WORLDWIDE.**

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**A WEALTH OF WITNESSING TOOLS AWAITS YOU
at www.jewsforjesus.org—for absolutely no charge!**

Journeys of Faith videos, animated tracts, Jewish holiday greeting cards, e-testimony books, apologetics articles and more!

Come to our home page and check out the far left heading “answers.” You’ll get a drop down menu offering all kinds of information pertinent to seekers, whether Jewish or not.

Then go almost all the way to the right on that same bar and you’ll see “resources.” Another drop down menu will offer you all kinds of goodies, including videos, flash (animated) broadsides and more.

You can also go to “publications” and

look through our *ISSUES* articles (for Jewish seekers) where you’ll see everything from the testimony of a Jewish chef to studies in Messianic prophecies. It’s easy to download and send these articles to a friend.

Also under “publications,” take a look at our Newsletter archives. You can search for the words “glad you asked” to get all kinds of insight into witnessing and other matters pertaining to Jewish people believing in Jesus.

Go to our website to open up a treasure trove of gems to help you in your witness—you’ll be glad you did!



PRAYER PROMPTERS

Please pray for:



increased willingness within the body of Christ to risk rejection for the sake of offering God’s gift of salvation to Jewish people (p. 1-2)



God’s blessing on Kata and Simon during this intense time of missionary training (p. 4-5)



God to continue helping us bring along the next generation of Jews for Jesus



wisdom and spiritual maturing for relatively new Israeli believer Helena (p. 8)



salvation for Teresa in Germany and for Dror and his brother in Los Angeles (p. 8)

(continued from page 2)

Lord. They needed to be encouraged and challenged to endure and be faithful. They needed to hear, “. . . Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach” (Hebrews 13:12-13).

That call is as real today as it was in the first century—and it speaks to all

Christians, not only to those of us who are Jewish. Yet many believers are trying to point to Christ, who is outside the camp, without having to leave the camp (be rejected) themselves. We must not be ashamed to beckon to unbelievers—friends and family, neighbors and business associates—from outside the camp, inviting them to forsake the world for the priceless gift of salvation.

If we belong to Jesus, we must bear His reproach. We can choose to bear it as a burden or as a badge of honor. Pray with us that more Christians will be ready to risk the rejection of Jewish people here and now in order to forge friendships that will last an eternity. And thank you for being among those who are willing to stand with us and bear the reproach of Christ as a badge of honor. |*|

MEET OUR MISSIONARY TRAINEES!

Simon Lissak and Kata Tar have just begun their second full month of missionary training at our center in New York City. They are learning the missionary craft, as well as learning the ropes of life in Manhattan. Your prayers during this exciting and challenging time would mean so much—and what better way to ask you to pray than to introduce them to you!

Simon

My father and his family escaped from Poland during World War II and on reaching the UK he and the remaining family intentionally assimilated. He would not even complete the religious section of the UK census for fear of persecution. Being the son of a Polish Jew was very important to me but I was not brought up in a religious household.



The Lissaks: Simon, Maxim, Felix (bottom left) and Jacob (bottom right)

Up until 2005, God had no place in my life. Christianity made no sense to me. I did not own and had never read the Bible. I thought of myself as a good person and lived a normal happy life. I had gotten married, purchased a new home, had my own business and a young son, Felix. I felt no need for God.

My wife and I often talked about how lucky we were while at the same time acknowledging that despite all we had we were not even a fraction as joyful as Felix was about life—and we began to wonder why! There was a gap—something missing—and we began to wonder what it could be.

I never expected to find the answer in Jesus. I hadn't read the Bible since a couple of rather dull Religious Education lessons at secondary school; I did not own a Bible and I did not pray. Yet through several "coincidences," including a loaned book, a "chance" meeting on a train, an "unplanned" lunchtime trip to a West End church and pressure to get my son into a local church school, I was drawn to Jesus. I believed the gospel yet I wrestled with the challenge of giving up control of my life and trusting that God had a plan for it. It seemed impossible; nevertheless I prayed for God to help me do just that.

The following day, a family emergency occurred and my 22-month-old son had to be rushed to the hospital. I prayed everything I could think to pray for the situation and then an extreme calm came over me. I realized that regardless of the outcome, my faith in God was real and His love would help me no matter what happened in my life. Even before that crisis passed, I saw that God had given me the trust I could not muster on my own. The huge "gap" in my life was gone.

Looking back, I see how my salvation was God's work of grace. He was not put off by my numerous objections . . .

rejections and rebellions . . . He just kept on until there was no escape! What amazed me was that almost immediately after coming to faith I started to "feel more Jewish." I told my pastor about that but it didn't seem to make much sense to him. I don't think I really fully knew who I was in Christ until I came to my first Jews for Jesus meeting and met other Jews who believed in Jesus. Then a lot fell into place for me.

Jews for Jesus has an "Existential Crisis" broadside tract that could have been my conversion story! I am pleased that I am now handing out those tracts, and hoping that another "me" might take one and meet Jesus!



Kata

My Jewish grandmother actually became a Christian and raised my

mom as a Protestant. But after the war my mother got a Marxist education—and so did I. I was therefore raised as an atheist, which was quite normal in my home country, Hungary. I was convinced that these ideologies were true and right.

However, in my university years, I was faced with the harsh realities of Socialism. I was disappointed, disillusioned and lost my "faith" in Communism. Still, I remained a materialist (one who does not believe in things that cannot be apprehended through the five senses).

My disappointment caused me to begin searching. I took part in a seance and [though I now know this is a dangerous practice that is strictly forbidden in the Bible] it convinced me beyond a doubt that a spiritual

dimension exists. So I thought I would do some exploring and choose whatever "god" suited me. Jesus was not among the candidates. It did not bother Him; He knew what would be.

When I graduated, I could not seem to settle down and had three jobs within my first year and a half out of school. During the time of this "Great Depression" I wanted another taste of something spiritual, and I decided to visit an old friend in the country. By then she and her fiancé had gotten saved. They shared their testimony with me and though I envied the radical change in them, I thought I was too rational for such a thing as Christianity.

Then a thought occurred to me, which I now recognize was from the Holy Spirit: "You are looking for the same thing they have. Why do you try to understand with your mind that which you can only know with your heart? Just listen!" So I did. That night, as my friends prayed for me, I experienced God's presence and I spoke to Him for the first time in my life. I apologized for having not believed in Him and told Him I wanted to know Him. From that point on, I knew that God existed and that He loved me.

My friends gave me literature to help me understand why I needed Jesus. The Holy Spirit helped me understand my self-centeredness and sin, and that I needed Jesus to be on the throne of my heart. He became the King of my life.

Before applying for missionary staff, both Simon and Kata volunteered extensively with Jews for Jesus.

Simon joined our London staff every Thursday, doing street evangelism, and just before beginning training, he was part of our 2010 New York City

Summer Witnessing Campaign. Kata took part in our 2009 Summer Campaign in London. The following are a few of their experiences.

Kata: In London I had the privilege to talk to a nice Orthodox lady, who expressed her sorrow for me having been, as she believed, brainwashed. Though I know her motive in talking with me was simply to "win me back," it was still an opportunity to witness, and I know God can use it.

Next I encountered a middle-aged Orthodox man. He angrily questioned my Jewishness and



announced that I would never be able to move to Israel. God kept me in His peace and meekness. To each of his accusations I had an answer from the Bible. Finally I spoke to him about Daniel 9:26. This

indicates that the Messiah must have already come according to the timetable and events prophesied. He had no reply, until finally he lifted his cell phone saying: "If you don't leave in five seconds, I'll phone the police." I rejoiced, because I knew the Holy Spirit had cornered him. He had no answer, so he could only make a threat. I pray for him to find out the saving truth about our Messiah.

Simon: While handing out broadsides at Lincoln Center in New York, I bumped into Gloria, a retired Jewish lady who was fascinated by my T-shirt and eager to talk to me

about being Jewish and believing in Jesus. She had been reading the Bible recently, and had employed a handyman who was telling her about Jesus every time he came to work at her house. She was impressed enough by the witness that she asked one of her Orthodox relatives "Why don't Jewish people believe in Jesus?" She was surprised when he reacted angrily.

It turns out that she had met another Jew for Jesus a while back, but had lost contact. Since I was able to get her recent contact information, I pray that as our New York branch connects with Gloria, she will come to faith in her Messiah.

Please pray for Kata and for the Lissak family who made the move "across the pond" in mid-August.



SNEAK PREVIEW

Excerpted from the
Moishe Rosen biography

This month's excerpt from the yet-to-be published Moishe Rosen biography gives a glimpse into what happened after his wife Ceil came to faith in Jesus . . .

[Moishe] hoped the rabbi would not think badly of his wife. "Ceil is an intelligent person," he said. "I just need you to give me the intellectual reasons that will convince her she made a mistake."

Rabbi Bryks welcomed Moishe into his office warmly, and . . . began to explain how Christians had gotten the Hebrew Scriptures all wrong. "The Christians say our prophets predicted that a virgin would conceive and that Jesus fulfilled that prophesy. But the verse is only talking about an *almah*, or young woman giving birth. The Hebrew word for 'virgin' is *betulah*."

This sounded promising, but Moishe wanted to be certain, so he asked, "Is *almah* ever used to mean 'virgin'?" To his dismay, the rabbi replied, "Yes. Sometimes."

Each time the rabbi explained that the Christians misunderstood the Hebrew prophecies, it was the same. There was more than one possible meaning.

Finally Moishe shook his head and said, "Rabbi Bryks, these arguments will not convince Ceil, and frankly, they don't

even convince me. There must be better reasons why we don't believe."

The rabbi paused for a moment. Then he said, "Well, think on this. It takes two to tango."

Moishe wasn't sure what dancing had to do with it so he simply replied, "Huh?" The rabbi went on to explain that when it came to the virgin birth, it simply was not possible.

Moishe later recalled, "What Rabbi Bryks didn't know was that in that one statement, he completely undermined the case—not only for Christianity—but for Judaism. . . ." For Moishe, the rabbi's reasoning created more problems than it solved, because if God could not manage this one miracle, how did he manage to create the world, or part the Red Sea,

For Moishe, the rabbi's reasoning created more problems than it solved.

or do any of the other miraculous things the Bible claimed? And if God couldn't perform miracles . . . then the Bible must be wrong. And if the Bible was not true, then being Jewish meant no more or less than being Italian or Greek or African or Mexican and why should it matter whether or not Jews believed in Jesus?

Moishe felt he had been cut adrift. Nevertheless, in a last ditch effort, he started reading atheist writers. He then tried out their arguments on Ceil, but to no avail. . . .

For weeks, Ceil prayed for her husband. She'd pray silently while washing the dishes, tears sometimes mingling with the soapy water. She had given up discussing her new beliefs with Moishe. She felt she had done her best to explain her faith, and

did not want to provoke him any further. She didn't realize that there was a new softness, a new sweetness in her demeanor that continued to speak to him of Jesus, even when her words did not.

As for the tracts that Ceil often left around the house, Moishe recalled, "Some of them were serious, and talked about Messianic prophecy from the Jewish Bible. I could not ridicule our own Scriptures, so I ignored those pamphlets or threw them away. But if I found a pamphlet that I could ridicule, I would read it out loud in a sarcastic tone of voice so that Ceil would know that I was making fun of it."

Ceil stopped leaving so many pamphlets around the house. But one day she deliberately left a little booklet about heaven lying on a table.

It was a Saturday night when Moishe picked up that little booklet. . . . Seeing the hyper-literalist interpretation of heaven—where people would enter through pearly gates and actually walk on streets of literal gold—he almost laughed out loud. He thought to himself "Heaven's not like this at all—uh oh!" The "uh oh" was the shock of realization. . . . Until that moment, he didn't have any notion that heaven even existed.

At that point Moishe began to unpack his thinking, and was surprised to find faith. He not only believed in heaven; he believed in the Bible. He believed . . . exactly what he'd fought so hard to *disbelieve!* . . . And, he reminded himself of his mother's maxim: *The man who lies to himself is the biggest liar in the world.* He had chosen to look away from Jesus for as long as he could. But once he caught a glimpse, he could not deny what he saw.

Ceil recalled, "That night, Moishe turned to me in bed and said, 'I believe all this stuff that you believe about Jesus. What do I do now?'" ✨

What Do You Say When . . .

QUESTION: I have a Jewish friend who says that her religion is “being spiritual and believing in God as she understands Him.” She says her views are very open and that she dislikes the intolerance and narrow-mindedness of people who preach their own ideas about God and what He expects. What do I say, and how can I be a witness?

ANSWER: We meet many people, both Jewish and Gentile, who feel as your friend does. Her views sound similar to someone who recently read a personal essay on *National Public Radio*.

“I do not want to be a God-fearing man,” the slightly southern sounding man announced. He went on to use words like “sledgehammer” and “intimidation” as he recalled how he’d been dis-fellowshipped from church as a teen after having premarital sex with his girlfriend. He’d been offered the choice either to announce to the congregation that the behavior was a sin, repent and be forgiven, or leave the church. He made his choice, and has since gone on to discover “God as I understand Him.”

This man explained, “I talk to God as I understand Him every day, and though He does not answer, I know that He is there. I am not afraid of Him. He does not condemn me. He fills me with peace and joy. And so, rather than the God I was told I *should* believe in, I chose the God I *could* believe in.”

While this man came from a “Christianized” background, some Jewish people have left synagogues, particularly the more orthodox ones, for similar reasons. After all, the God whom many people don’t understand and choose not to believe in—the God who actually wants to have a say about our personal lives—revealed Himself in the Hebrew Scriptures long before what we now know as the New Testament was given.

You can let your friend know you agree that people should not claim their beliefs are correct simply to exalt their own opinions. But you can also point out that God promised in the Jewish Scriptures, “And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13). This shows that God wants to be known for who He is, not merely our best guess at who He might be.

The catch is the “all your heart” part. It implies that to find God, we must be willing to give up our own prejudices and pastimes, should they turn out to be untrue or offensive to God.

Maybe your friend needs to hear you suggest that her “God as I understand Him” is really a lower-case god who has no actual power other than what she chooses to impart from her own understanding or preference. The real, all-powerful God whom we don’t always understand says His ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:9). He is holy as well as merciful, righteous as well as compassionate. God doesn’t expect us to be perfect. But He can’t forgive us if we think we’ve done nothing wrong, and we can’t understand what’s right or wrong if we treat God as the divine re-enforcer of our own choices.

Why not ask your friend if she would want to know God as He understands Himself, if that were possible? Prayer is a great place to start and she might allow you to lead her in a simple one: “God help me to understand who You are, not just who I want You to be.” After that prayer, maybe she would be willing to check out the Bible, and we often suggest the Gospel of John as a good starting place. If she does become a seeker, we have some helpful resources on our website (see p. 7) and if you contact us, we might even have a missionary in your area who could meet with you and your friend.

IT REALLY HAPPENED



* GENTILE IS A WORD THAT SIMPLY MEANS "NOT JEWISH." THE HEBREW TERM USED IN THE BIBLE IS GOYIM, WHICH MEANS "NATIONS."

Israel

Yarden Nasser reports: “In our previous Galilee campaign, Helena had seen our newspaper ad, ordered our *Y’shua* book and surrendered her life to Him. After a short time, however, she went astray because of pressure from friends and family. She was reluctant to get back to fellowship with other believers, fearing that people would judge her. She is very young, she loves Y’shua and relates to him personally, but was not rooted in the Scriptures, so I challenged her to study them.

“My husband Peter and I remained in touch, inviting Helena to our home for Shabbat dinners and seeing her occasionally when we were in the area visiting family. She became dear to us. She wrote to me a few months ago and shared that she was struggling. I continued to keep in touch and pray for her.

“I recently called Helena to see how she was. ‘You wouldn’t believe what happened—God saved me from death!’ she exclaimed. She had been sitting on a bus and decided to get up and stand in the aisle. Minutes later, a deadly crash occurred. The seats where she had been sitting were crushed and five people who had been sitting in those seats were killed. Helena had a concussion, but was otherwise unharmed.

“Thanks be to God that Helena recognizes it was the Lord who saved her life. Please pray that she will respond with greater trust in Him, and that the Lord will continue to use me to impart His wisdom and stability to her life.”

Germany

Avi Snyder reports: “While handing out broadside tracts in Essen, I spotted a woman sitting on a railing beside a pool in the midst of a path for pedestrians. She rocked a baby stroller with one hand and absent-mindedly stroked the surface of the pool of water with the other. I walked over to her and offered her a tract. ‘May I ask you a question?’ I said. She looked up silently, waiting for me to say more. ‘Do you have an opinion about Jesus?’ I asked. ‘Who do you think He is?’

“‘Sometimes I think He’s real,’ she replied. ‘Sometimes I don’t. Mostly I don’t know.’

“‘Well,’ I said, ‘I know He’s real. I know He’s the Messiah of my people and the Saviour of the world who died for all of our sins and then rose from the dead.’ I went on to explain the gospel to her in a few simple sentences, and then asked, ‘Do you think that what I’ve told you might be true?’

“She shrugged sadly. ‘You just can’t know.’

“‘I think you can,’ I said. ‘We just have to ask.’

“‘I asked,’ she said, ‘long ago. He never answered.’

“Softly, but boldly, I offered, ‘Yes, He has. I think He sent me to answer you.’

“Teresa gave me her name and address so that I could send her more information. And as we talked further, I discovered that she’s already in touch with a Christian couple from a strong church in Essen—a church that has helped us much. It’s clear that the Lord is pursuing Teresa, even if she feels that He’s been slow to answer. Please pray that she’ll give her heart to Him in His perfect timing.

Los Angeles

Cyril Gordon reports:

“While handing out broadsides at Venice Beach, I met Gerry, a Jewish believer in Jesus. He sent

me over to talk to Dror, an Israeli vendor who has been opening his heart to the Lord. Dror informed me that he only started reading the Bible recently because Gerry agreed to teach him how to snowboard—if he would attempt to read the Bible. Dror has been amazed (and so have I) by what God has been showing him about Jesus in just three months of reading the Bible, and now his brother is reading as well. At this point, Dror believes that Jesus is Messiah and Son of God, but has problems seeing him as God in the flesh. Please pray for the Lord to give Dror a divine revelation of the person of Jesus. His brother is also willing to get together with me. I’d like to involve Ofer, one of our Israeli staff, if possible. Ofer just moved to Southern California to study.”

