

## CAMPAIGN, THEN AND NOW

by Moishe Rosen

Seven weeks after Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, a great event took place in Jerusalem. You might call it the first-ever Jews for Jesus Witnessing Campaign. The Holy Spirit came upon the first Jewish believers with such great power (Acts 2) that they went out into the streets to tell everyone they met about Y'shua, their wonderful Messiah and Savior. That day, God used Peter's sermon to convince many and, according to Acts 2:41, about three thousand were saved.

That was only the beginning! The important and operative passage in the entire account is the last phrase of verse 47: "And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved."

Only a few of the responders to Peter's message were permanent residents of Jerusalem. Most were pilgrims who had come from many different countries to celebrate Passover and Pentecost (the Feast of Weeks). Away from their home towns and their ordinary work, they lived in temporary lodgings and met daily in the Temple for fellowship and prayer. Their zeal and excitement about salvation in Y'shua was so apparent that thousands more saw them, heard their message and believed.

Eventually, those first pilgrim believers had to go home, but while they were in Jerusalem, they constituted a potent missionary force. This was the first all-out effort to tell others about Y'shua. Their determination and energies were so focused on that one task that they lived and acted as one. They held everything in common. They ate together. They worshiped together. They witnessed together.

We Jews for Jesus pattern our Summer Campaigns after that early church situation and have made our New York Summer Witnessing Campaign the model for all our other outreach efforts. It is an all-out, intense time when everyone's mind, heart and energies are focused together on just one thing: to get out a gospel witness.

For one concentrated month of outreach, the campaigners live and act as one. Unlike the early church, our campaigners don't need to "hold all things in common," or pool their finances, because the ministry provides for their food, shelter and other



needs such as cleaning and laundry. Yet in other respects, the campaigners do emulate the lifestyle of those early witnesses for Y'shua. For a month, they live in one building. They eat together. They worship together in daily chapel services, they pray together and they witness together on the streets.

Some wonder why we campaign for one month. We have tried both longer and shorter Campaigns. We have campaigned for as short a time as two weeks and for as long as ten weeks. Two weeks was too short. It did not afford enough time to make an impression. Ten weeks was far too long because after such a long time, the campaigners were getting dizzy, and not always with joy. When distributing tracts, campaigners can make eye contact at a distance, but as they get closer, they must focus elsewhere. When people pass closely on both sides, the campaigners' eyes don't get a chance to focus, and that often causes headaches.

One month of campaign is an exhausting experience. It affects not only the campaigners' eyes, but their feet, backs, arms, legs and emotions. One individual who had gone through Marine boot camp training remarked that he had found that experience substantially easier than the exhausting rigor required from each person on Summer Campaign.

Because the experience is so fatiguing, we take good care of our campaigners. No one on Campaign needs to worry about anything except handing out tracts, greeting people and telling them about Jesus. We house our campaigners in a comfortable hotel. Maids make their beds every day. A gourmet chef provides them with as

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much quality, high-protein food as they can eat (but they work so hard that very few gain weight). Volunteer stewards wash the campaigners' laundry and pack their tract bags. We have dentists, physicians and attorneys on standby for emergency situations, and we provide for the campaigners' spiritual needs as well.

Besides physical stamina, Campaign requires spiritual stamina. One important aspect of Campaign is the spiritual life of the campaigners. We have daily chapel services and a special Campaign chaplain. Every day the campaigners memorize a Bible verse. You never saw people more hungry to worship or more eager to get together and praise God than our campaigners!

New York isn't exactly Jerusalem, but in some respects it is similar to that Middle Eastern site of the "first-ever Jews for Jesus Campaign." New York City is the commercial, communications and cultural capital of the Western world. As there were visitors in Jerusalem on Pentecost, many people from every nation on earth visit New York City every summer. Some go there on business, and some go there on holiday. Whoever they are, and for whatever reason they have come, most of them can hear the gospel from our people in a language they understand. Whether it's French, Hebrew, Russian, Spanish, sign language for the hearing-impaired or a myriad of other languages, someone in our group can communicate in it.

That's because our campaigners are not only from the United States. Many of the multilingual campaigners come to New York from our overseas branches to learn the unique methodology of that first post-Pentecost "campaign." Afterward, these overseas campaigners take back what they have learned to their numerous places of origin, such as Israel, South Africa, Russia, Ukraine and Australia. Our overseas Campaign



sites have included, among others, London, Paris, Moscow, Odessa, Capetown and Johannesburg.

The witness of salvation in Y'shua that began in Jerusalem at Pentecost continues to spread to the uttermost parts of the earth. We Jews for Jesus are grateful that God has allowed us a part in it. New York City was the site for our first Summer Witnessing Campaign in 1974 and has been our primary Campaign target ever since. Summer Campaign is a major undertaking, but it garners major results. Last summer in New York 27 campaigners handed out 1,144,626 tracts and 415 people prayed to give their lives to the Lord.

We are trusting the Lord that this year's Campaign will be at least as successful. Of course, we can't do any of this without the empowering of the Holy Spirit or without the friends that God provides to stand with us. We need friends like you in every town of this country and beyond to be support "campaigners" for our massive outreach in New York this summer. In order to stand with us, you don't need to be there physically, but you can do several things that will help:

- We need to hear from you that you are standing by us.
- We need your prayers for courage to commit ourselves fully to this difficult task.
- We need your prayers for the hearts and minds that God is preparing to receive the message we will bring.
- We need your financial support to help provide this Campaign with tracts, equipment, lodging and food on the table.

**Won't you pray about our Summer Witnessing Campaign and about your part in it? ✨**



### A Missionary Candidate Learns An Important Lesson

All Jews for Jesus missionaries have weekly goals to help us use our time wisely and to keep us accountable to God and to our supporters. **New York** missionary candidate Lev Leigh (from South Africa) learned an important lesson about ministry early in his training. He said, “The end of the week was drawing near, and I was prepared to meet my goals but unprepared to meet Muriel [not her real name]. I dropped by to visit her and to my surprise discovered a woman who was ill, anxious, worried and pain wracked. I had been so caught up in making my visits that I forgot for a moment that behind our goals are souls! All I could do was hold Muriel’s hand and pray. I shall approach my ministry goals differently from now on.”

### It Can and Does Happen

**Chicago** missionary Jenifer Hall dropped in on Edith, another Jewish person who had received one of our Letters of Witness and a copy of *ISSUES* (our evangelistic publication for Jewish people). While Jenifer remained in the hall, Edith cracked open the door of her apartment about four inches to say that she was an Orthodox Jew and would “never change.” Yet, after a few more sentences, Jenifer found herself inside Edith’s apartment—actually in her kitchen—looking down at a copy of *ISSUES* Edith had just thrown into the trash. (She said she had read part of it and was offended.) They ended up talking for a half hour about God and Jesus. Even better, Edith invited Jenifer to come back (and we wouldn’t be surprised to learn that she retrieved that copy of *ISSUES* from the trash after Jenifer left). **Please pray for Edith.** She has faith in God and attributes her being alive to Him, but she doesn’t see her need for a Savior—yet.

### Dogs, Cats and an Inquiring Mind

**New York** missionary Annette Sofaer described a “most colorful” visit with a Jewish woman in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn. Formerly a large Jewish community, Williamsburg has become very run down, and the only Jews who still live there are Satmar Hasidim (the ultra-Orthodox sect portrayed in Chaim Potok’s book and film *The Chosen*). The woman lives in back of a factory, and Annette, accompanied by missionary-in-training Lev Leigh, had to go through two gates and up some exterior fire escape stairs to get to her apartment. A Rottweiler dog wearing a metal chain collar met Annette and Lev and followed them up the first flight. As Annette knocked on the metal door at the top of the stairs, another dog began barking from within, which excited the Rottweiler. When Annette and Lev finally got inside the right apartment without getting eaten by the Rottweiler, they found a white-haired, fifty-year-old woman in a wheelchair, surrounded by piles of

Jewish religious books and six cats. Though she was living in squalor, she exhibited great sharpness of mind. She understood the literature she had received from us and was quite open to discussing Jesus. Annette is looking forward to meeting with her again.

### Beyond the Branches— An Uplifting Note From Down Under

Bob and Patty Mendelsohn (**Washington, D.C.**) were sent to check out ministry possibilities in **Australia**. While they were there, Bob conducted a Jewish evangelism seminar at one church. Afterward, a young man approached Bob to say he had been thinking about converting to Judaism but during the seminar had decided against it. Instead, this eighteen-year-old named Trevor had prayed to accept Christ during Bob’s lecture. It happened as Bob was explaining how to lead a person in a prayer of faith, repentance and commitment!

### A Progress and Praise Report

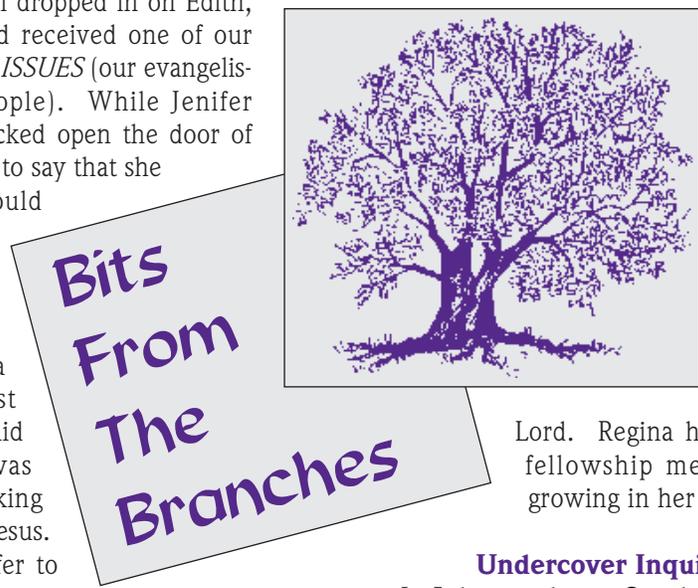
While **The Liberated Walling Wall** was ministering in the Washington, D.C., area last August, a Jewish woman named Regina came to one of their presentations. When team leader Jonathan Bernd gave the invitation, Regina committed her life to the

Lord. Regina has continued to attend the D.C. fellowship meetings and shows evidence of growing in her faith.

### Undercover Inquirer Takes a Bolder Step

In **Johannesburg, South Africa**, Jackie, a Jewish woman, left a message on the office answering machine to say she wanted to know more about Jews believing in Jesus. She asked for information in a plain, unmarked brown envelope because she didn’t want her family to know. Missionary Laura Barron sent Jackie an explanatory letter with an added paragraph about getting together to talk face to face. Three months later, Jackie phoned the office to say she was ready to meet Laura. She said, “I have a million questions, and I know I need answers. I can’t stop thinking about these issues.”

When Laura met with her, Jackie admitted that she now believed that Jesus is the Messiah. She knew what following through with a commitment would cost but agreed with Laura that she must follow the truth at all costs. (She has three children in Jewish day school and her husband is quite observant.) Jackie prayed with Laura to give her life to Y’shua. She said she felt elated and “disloyal” at the same time. Laura reports that Jackie has an incredible hunger for the Word and has been reading our Jews for Jesus literature avidly. Please pray for Jackie’s growth and for her testimony to her family.



## A Training Lesson— It Pays to Ask!

by Karol Joseph, Chief of Station,  
Toronto, Canada

Preparing for our annual Summer Witnessing Campaigns is no easy task. After we've identified those Jewish believers God has raised up for the outreach and helped them raise their missionary support, there's still the matter of training them—getting them ready for the streets.

For three years I have had the privilege of training new campaigners for two weeks at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, Illinois. Each year, I am fascinated to watch as they arrive. Most are eager, yet apprehensive. They've already heard that the training and Campaign will push them to do more for God than most of them have ever dreamed they could. They wonder if they will be able to do it, and they pray that God will carry them through the difficult weeks ahead.

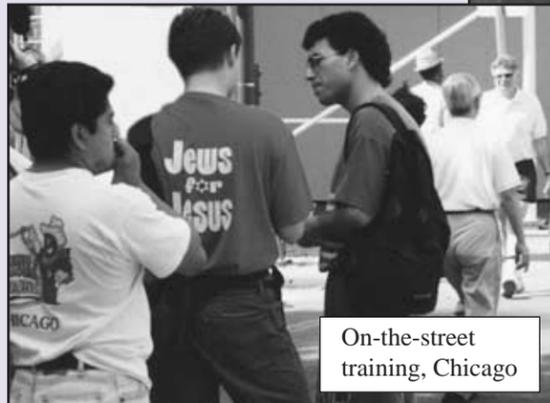
As trainer, I have the unmistakable joy of knowing that despite their fears, in only two weeks most of these rookie campaigners will leave Moody as changed people. They will be transformed into capable evangelists, confident in their newly found ability to proclaim the gospel and defend their faith to the Jews and Gentiles they will meet on the streets.

I recall the experience of one campaigner in training last summer. After four full days of classroom instruction and role-playing, the students were ready to go out on the streets for the first time. I went along to instruct a small group. David was the first to try to distribute tracts while the rest of us observed. He had been out witnessing on the streets many times before, but this time was the first time he had ever approached anyone and asked directly, as he was now trained

to do, "Who do you think Jesus is?" After the man David approached responded to this question, David continued with what we call "the proposal." This is a statement of the gospel and of God's offer to be that person's Savior followed by "Have you ever asked Jesus to be your Savior? If not, is there any reason why you shouldn't do that right now?"

David was a bit surprised at what happened next. The man he approached was quite affable and agreed that he needed Jesus. Then, right there on a busy Chicago street corner, the man repeated with David a short prayer of repentance and commitment!<sup>1</sup>

David's surprise was not unusual. Most of us are a bit shocked the first time we see God's Holy Spirit open someone's eyes right before us. We know in our heads that God has prepared people to receive the gospel and be saved. Yet somehow, we don't really expect that God will



On-the-street  
training, Chicago

use **us** to lead a stranger to Him on a busy city street. David learned that day what most of us at Jews for Jesus have already learned: It's not us, it's God's Spirit, and it always pays to ask!

<sup>1</sup> *We always follow up such decisions to verify them, give instruction and see that the new believers are baptized and planted in congregations where they can grow in faith.*

## Six Campaigns and Still Going

by Mitch Forman, Missionary,  
New York City

Almost my whole life as a Christian has been centered on coming to New York for Summer Witnessing Campaigns. It's one of the things I love doing most. I don't think I would be so strong in my walk today if it were not for Campaign. Even though last summer was my sixth time on Campaign, it



Karol Joseph,  
classroom training



Mitch Forman,  
NY campaign

was my first time as a campaigner instead of chef or steward. I was amazed at the huge difference between being a campaigner and being Campaign chef or chief steward. Being chief steward was physically demanding, but being a campaigner and going out on the streets was much harder spiritually. I have experienced both, and I have become strengthened in all situations.

One thing that I kept seeing as a campaigner was how the Holy Spirit had set up so many divine appointments.

The first happened in a subway. We were switching trains to go out to Brighton Beach. As we were waiting, a man came over to me and said, "Hey, I gave someone my name last week, and I haven't received any materials yet. When will they come?" I told him that it could take a few weeks and he should be patient. He started to walk away but came back and said, "Look, I'm struggling and I can't take all the sin in my life anymore. I need help." I asked him if he was on drugs. He told me that he had been on and off drugs for years and that the problem was ruining his marriage. I told him that Jesus had come to help him and that he needed to get rid of the sin, but he couldn't do it himself. He needed Y'shua to do it for him. He said, "I have tried it all myself, and I know I can't do it. Please tell me what I must do." I prayed with him on the subway platform to give his life to Y'shua, and I told him to go to an outreach in Times Square that helps drug addicts. His name was Israel. He was really hurting, and I was at the right stop at the right time. I don't know if Israel's decision was real, but I do know that when it came time for him to look into his own heart, he realized how weak he was and that he couldn't stand before God by himself.

I remember another divine appointment with a Jewish woman in Washington Square Park. I had been witnessing in the park on a Saturday afternoon. It wasn't all that good, so I decided to move over to the West Village. I had been at the Village for half an hour, when something inside me nudged me to go back into the park. I felt that maybe God had some ministry there for me if I went back in.

As I walked around the benches, I stopped and asked two elderly women if they knew who Jesus was. One lady, a

Gentile, told me that she had been witnessing to the other woman, Ilaina, all morning. Ilaina knew that she didn't have peace. I knew that this was my invitation to sit down, and I did. I explained the gospel to Ilaina. She knew that it was what she needed in her life, but she wasn't sure she was ready. I asked her if she would ever be more ready than now. She conceded that she probably would not.

"Well, why not trust God and see what He can do to give you peace?" I asked. We prayed together for Y'shua to wash away her sin and to come into her life. After praying, she started to cry because she knew that this was what she had always needed to do. I said, "Now that you have found the true peace, try praising God and make Him the Lord of your life." Ilaina said she was looking

forward to meeting with one of our missionaries to study the Bible.

With a glad heart I tell these two stories. Having made myself available to share the good news with others, I feel that God preordained that I would be in those two places specifically for those two people to hear the gospel. I still find it amazing that God wants people to come to Him and that in a few cases, He chooses me to be the vehicle that draws them to Him forever. I love watching the evidence of the Holy Spirit entering a person's heart. I don't think anything in the whole world is as beautiful as seeing someone open his or her heart to Y'shua and pass from death to life. It will be great to see all those we have touched through the years when we all worship our Lord together one day in heaven.

## Crusade or Campaign?

Some Christian organizations like to describe their evangelistic efforts as "crusades," but we Jews for Jesus can't use that word. Its origin is obscure enough that most Christians have forgotten, but those early crusades were a religious war against Turks **and Jews**. The Turks were well able to defend themselves, and eventually, after five crusades, they prevailed. The Jews, however, were comparatively helpless and, as a result, suffered many atrocities at the hands of so-called Christians.

When Christians hear the word *crusade*, they think of a noble endeavor, while Jews who hear the same word think of atrocities committed against innocent people. That's one reason we Jews for Jesus call our major witnessing endeavors Campaigns instead of crusades.

*Campaign* means an all-out effort with singular focus. Campaign has political significance for those who are seeking office. Campaign also has military significance. In that context, it means to make an advance, risking battle and casualties, in order to achieve an objective. Campaign also has a business significance. It is used in an advertising sense, to make a product or idea known through repeated mention, slogans and image raising. The purpose of an advertising campaign is not merely to inform, but to get people to buy a product or accept an idea.

In a sense, a Jews for Jesus Campaign is like all of these. It constitutes an "all-out effort" to make the kingship of Christ known and to invite people to make Him the King and Lord of their lives. We accomplish that by raising high the image of Christ and inviting people to consider Him.



**P**entecost Sunday falls on June 4 this year. Though various Christian denominations commemorate Pentecost, many forget that it was a Jewish holiday before the Church was established. The name Pentecost comes from the Greek word for fifty, but the Jewish name is Shavuot (meaning weeks or sevens).

Traditional Jews of Jesus' time celebrated Pentecost (or Shavuot) on the fiftieth day after the waving of the firstfruits. (Firstfruits coincided with the Feast of Unleavened Bread.) The firstfruits wave offering consisted of a sheaf of barley, the first crop of the spring growing season. This early growing season ended seven weeks later with the cutting of the wheat harvest, and for that crop, a different kind of offering was decreed. We find the Old Testament commandment for Shavuot, the Feast of Weeks, and its required offering in Leviticus 23:15-17:

And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.

Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the Lord.

You shall bring from your habitations two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the Lord.

Even in early times, a diversity of opinions existed about the date of Shavuot. There were two major schools of thought on the interpretation of the Leviticus 23 text. The Sadducees interpreted "Sabbath" in verse 15 to mean the literal seventh day of the week, so that the barley sheaf was to be offered on the first

Sunday of Passover or the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Then Shavuot would always fall on the seventh Sunday after Passover. The Pharisees, however, interpreted "Sabbath" not literally as Saturday, but figuratively, as the day of rest to be observed on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. That would be the fifteenth of the Jewish month Nisan, regardless of what day of the week it was. Based on this interpretation, the barley offering would be made on the sixteenth of Nisan, and Shavuot would come seven weeks later, on the sixth day of the month Sivan, on whatever day of the week it might fall. As long as the Temple stood and the Sadducees were in charge, their view prevailed. Today, however, the date of Shavuot is based on the generally accepted interpretation of the Pharisees.

Along with variations in date, diversities also arose in the understanding of the holiday's purpose. Though Shavuot was originally a time of thanksgiving for the wheat harvest, it became more than just a harvest festival to the Jewish people. The Book of Jubilees (of Second Temple times) indicates that Shavuot was also celebrated as an annual memorial of God's promise to Noah never again to destroy the world by flood.

More widely accepted today is the idea, based on rabbinic calculations, that Shavuot was when God gave the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai, and the holiday has become a time for commemorating that occasion. To celebrate the Giving of the Law, the Ten Commandments are read in the synagogue on the first day of the week-long festival, and plants and flowers reminiscent of the slopes of Mount Sinai decorate the sanctuary. To honor the original harvest aspect of the holiday, the liturgy also includes the Book of Ruth because of its setting of summer harvest time in Israel.

For believers in Y'shua, Shavuot becomes an archetype of what happened seven

weeks after the crucifixion and resurrection of Y'shua. Because of the great power displayed in the upper room at Pentecost, some regard this day as celebrating the advent of the Holy Spirit. Yet that was not quite the case. We read in John 20:21, 22 that the risen Christ breathed on each of the disciples and filled them with the Holy Spirit weeks before Pentecost!

The event of Pentecost was the "birthday" of the Church—the welding together of Spirit-filled disciples into one organism—the living body of Christ. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit moved upon each of the disciples to bring about the united testimony of the Church. Just as the Giving of the Law at Sinai formed the constitution of the spiritual commonwealth of Israel, so the visible manifestation of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples signaled the constitution of the spiritual community of faith in Christ. In the first case, Israel was brought together by the Law (rules of constitution); in the latter, believers in Christ were bonded together not by rules, but by the Holy Spirit within them.

The entire spring religious season of Israel, from Passover to Pentecost, speaks of God's plan to harvest a holy people for Himself. First, Y'shua died as the perfect, sinless sacrifice. Then, He arose and became the firstfruits from the dead as described by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:20. Seven weeks after the resurrection, the dynamic manifestation of the Holy Spirit among the early Jewish believers became the catalyst for many to put their faith in God's Messiah. The Jewish pilgrims at Jerusalem who heard and received the good news of salvation joyfully brought it back to their native lands. There, it was received by Gentiles as well as by other Jews, and the Church became established abroad.

Thus, the inclusion of the Gentiles completed the symbolism of the wave

# A LONG JOURNEY

## Slave or Servant

by Ron Levin

offering, where the High Priest offered two loaves of fine wheat flour baked with leaven. Centuries before it came to pass, the two loaves of the wave offering symbolized the Body of Messiah made up of both Jewish and Gentile believers. Though the loaves were made of fine wheat flour, they contained leaven, a symbol of sin. That speaks of the fact that the Church, though refined (cleansed by the blood of Y'shua's sacrifice), still retains the human sin nature until that day when she will be presented as the Bride of Christ, without spot or wrinkle.

Today, Pentecost should speak to us of the sowing of gospel seed and the harvest or ingathering of saved souls—redeemed people to become part of the Body of Christ. God wants such a harvest from every kindred tribe and nation.

Some wrongly think that the chief purpose of the Church is to provide a place for people to worship and enjoy God. This view of only one function of the Body as its prime purpose generates an “upper room” mentality that has us huddled together, waiting for God to act. Surely there are times when we ought to wait on the Lord for His empowerment, but He wants an active, dynamic Church to bring His message of salvation to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). He doesn't want us to remain in seclusion waiting for miracles. He wants us to go out among those who do not know Christ to tell them, in the power of the Holy Spirit, of God's salvation.

The test of Pentecost is not what happened in the upper room but what happened on the streets afterward. “The Lord added to the Church daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47b). As we celebrate the birthday of the Church, we would do well to contemplate the fact that our primary purpose is to proclaim the gospel. As we, God's people, remain faithful to this task, the harvest will grow.

My father, Meyer Levin, was born at the turn of the century in a small Russian village. Not long after, to avoid the pogroms, my grandparents took little Meyer and his brothers and made their way across Europe and eventually to Philadelphia. Meyer married his high school sweetheart, Minerva, and spent the following years working and parenting and surviving the Great Depression. In 1940 a job opening brought Dad and us to Williamston, a sleepy little town on the edge of the Great Dismal Swamp in eastern North Carolina. Overnight we segued from a brick row house within walking distance of a kosher deli to a 1,000-square foot clapboard dwelling on a dirt road, featuring two wood stoves and a resident mouse. We had an accent people laughed at, a name no one got right and a religion everyone got wrong.

Growing up Jewish in Williamston was a trial by taunts. My older brother and I ran a daily gauntlet in the schoolyard, taking our requisite lumps in a tribal ritual that only children understand. At home, mother fought to keep tradition alive by lighting Shabbas candles. Twice a year in late September, we'd pile in the car and drive 50 miles to Rocky Mount where we would celebrate Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah in a hot stuffy room on the top floor of a Masonic temple. The services were conducted almost entirely in Hebrew. The reading of the Torah approached the speed of light, and I always came away confused. I yearned for a God whom I could get close to, put my arms around and cry with in the deep-sea darkness of my childhood. Instead, I kept getting a being of fierce and frightening mien who was a stickler for details and largely unapproachable. *God Will Punish You* was written large in our daily lives. By contrast, we saw Jesus Saves on peeling billboards, its message a mystery to us and the butt of frequent bad jokes.

With the passing of time, the town came to accept and respect my mother and father: Mom for her industry, energy and organizational skills, and my father because he was eminently likable, if not lovable. To paraphrase Sara Lee, “Nobody didn't like Meyer Levin.”

After high school came college at UNC, then ten years of knocking about in a pinball machine of my own making: as grad student, nightclub entertainer, peach grower, and finally a married man and father of a beautiful daughter who made it into the world solely through God's grace, though I would have scoffed at the notion. Those days I knew as much about God as a hog does about Sunday. And Jesus? Strictly persona non grata in my hologram.

In the late '60's I birthed an ad agency in Greenville, South Carolina, and buried a marriage. Cause of death? Terminal entropy. Through the actions of a longtime friend—angel, to be exact—I wound up in California where my daughter Gretchen came to join me. There miracles befell me—micro-variants of loaves and fishes. Each time I prayed—always at the pleading of my Christian friends—actions and events took place that profoundly blessed me and astounded all who observed. Did God get my attention through these? Hardly. It was “Don't call me, I'll call you.”

After three years, I realized that rearing a teenage daughter in the neon thicket of southern California was the toughest gig in town. At that moment a phone call came from the friend who had brought me west. A new job offer returned us to Greenville, where I hung out my shingle as a “marketeer,” a new hybrid of business strategist. A seminar called “Boot Camp for Marketeers” became a hit with Fortune 500 companies. But with fame and money came a collapse.

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One August night in the summer of 1992 I found myself on the outskirts of hell facing the searing truth of my spiritual bankruptcy. There loomed a larger question: Why continue the farce? A Colt .45 lay conveniently at hand. I managed to grab the phone and connect with Reuben Marlowe, a United Methodist minister and my daughter's father-in-law. I said, "Reuben, I'm walking on the edge of the world." Hearing my pain, he gently urged me to open my Bible and read Romans 7 and 8. I found the passage, and as I began to read, the words of someone named Paul struck sparks on a soul made of flint.

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

Clearly, this man had occupied the same cell I did. I was a prisoner of promises made to myself that I could not keep. I knew what was right but kept doing wrong. I realized that another Jew had struggled with this, that I was no longer alone. I read further and learned that "the law" could not save me. Bottom line? I could be a slave to sin or a

servant to Christ. I read the entire book through twice, fell asleep, then awoke and leaped out of bed.

I called Reuben and the words came rushing out: "I want to be baptized." A week later it was done, yet even before that it was clear to me and others that my life had undergone a sea [of] change. The destructive behavior patterns and

**I read further and learned that "the law" could not save me. Bottom line? I could be a slave to sin or a servant to Christ.**

hollow values that had been my idols had been sloughed off with no conscious effort on my part. It was as though a sign had been hung on me: "Under New Management."

With Father, Son and Holy Spirit in control, seminary at Candler came next. Now here am I, pastor of a congregation in a 150-year-old United Methodist country church in a crossroads community called Between, Georgia, where I chant the *Shemah* to faces radiant with

awe and love. People here may fracture a subject and verb agreement, but they never break a handshake deal. From day one they have embraced me, much as the people of Martin County embraced my father a half century before. I hope that my family and others come to understand and accept my conversion not as a renunciation but rather as an affirmation of life and love. The bad news is that in America, in the world, a foul moat of anti-Semitism still separates Christians and Jews. This was never the intent nor creation of Jesus, but the work of hucksters whose twisted agendas called for putting their grisly spin on scripture.

I, Ron Levin, third son of a Russian immigrant Jew, take great joy in bringing the Good News. Yeshua died for all, not just some of us, and I am not making a pitch: I am passing on a promise.

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*Ron Levin is pastor of New Hope United Methodist Church in Monroe, Georgia, and the author of the recently published book, A Long Journey Home.*

## Wanted: One Armadillo

**Wanted:** One life-size armadillo to be used as a prop at our Jews for Jesus Ingatherings. Events Coordinator Dave Garrett's current mascot, Tex, is loved by young and old, but he has two broken legs and a broken tail. Poor Tex needs to retire. Dave says that armadillos can be purchased south of the border rather inexpensively, but he doesn't know when he would ever get there to buy one. Dave also needs new ideas for games, activities and crafts for Camp Gilgal, our messianic children's camp.

Please **do not** go out and shoot an armadillo, but if you have one stashed in your attic, garage or basement, or if you know some good kids' games and activities, please contact Dave Garrett at our headquarters address in San Francisco, or call him at (415) 864-2600.

