

JEW for JESUS

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE CHRISTIAN WHO WANTS
TO KNOW MORE ABOUT JEWS AND EVANGELISM

The Power of Thanksgiving

by David Brickner, executive director

Thanksgiving can change your life. Really. I'm not talking about the holiday, though I know it's that time of year. I'm talking about being thankful and giving thanks. And if you're like me, you'll agree it's never too early or too late to celebrate "thanks giving." Moment by moment we can discover new reasons to be thankful.

Unfortunately, many just scratch the surface when it comes to giving thanks. Let's do more than that and take a look at the whys and wherefores of giving thanks as well as some practical expressions of giving thanks.

Why Give Thanks?

The most obvious reason is God's goodness. He deserves our thanks. "Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men!" (Psalm 107:31).

Another reason, almost as obvious as the first is that God wants us to give thanks: "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

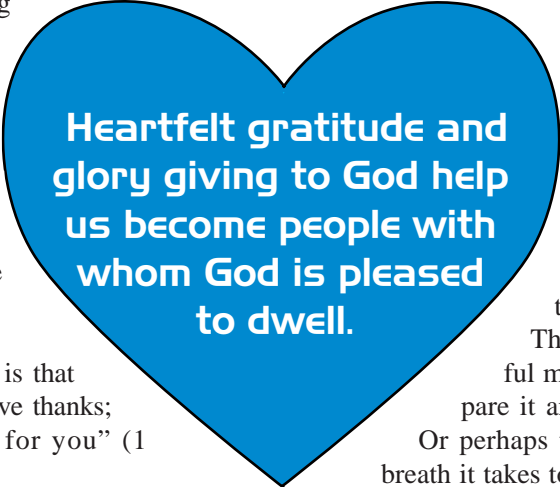
The fact that God deserves our thanks combined with the fact that it is His will for us to give thanks add up to a third reason for giving thanks—we owe it to God.

Does this challenge my premise that thanksgiving can change your life, since it sounds like giving thanks is just one more obligation? No way! While we tend to think that discharging a debt leaves us with less, not more, that is never the case when we give to God.

After all, everything in the universe belongs to God, so nothing "changes hands" when we give to Him. It's not as though we are providing Him with something He needs or didn't have before. Still, when we give thanks or anything else to God, we acknowledge what is due to Him, and that is very healthy.

It's healthy to say what God deserves and act accordingly toward Him. Yet our sin-diseased world exalts the "I deserve" concept. That self-centered, me-first attitude comes naturally to us all, and like many unhealthy attitudes, it is daily fed and reinforced by consumer-oriented enterprises and self-centered sales pitches.

Thankfulness and praise to God run contrary to the "I deserve" attitude that pervades our society. The opposite of self-indulgence is self-sacrifice. Real thanksgiving takes us out of our comfort zone and involves sacrifice: "Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name" (Hebrews 13:15). That sacrifice might be a bountiful meal and the time it takes to prepare it and clean up after it is enjoyed. Or perhaps the sacrifice is a song and the breath it takes to sing it, or money we give and the time it takes to earn it.



**Heartfelt gratitude and
glory giving to God help
us become people with
whom God is pleased
to dwell.**

In many people's minds, giving out of self-sacrifice is merely another "ism." Altruism. Once when I was handing out gospel tracts in front of the University of Chicago, somebody told me, "Altruism is dead." He went on to say that he had no obligations to anyone but himself. He would meet those "obligations" first, and whatever might be left over, he would be willing to give to others. I felt truly sorry for him and all he was missing.

But giving to others out of a thankful heart is not an "ism." Thanksgiving helps us see beyond the cloud of our own culture, past the limitations of our own vision, to the brightness of the One who is all true, all powerful, all giving and worthy of all praise.

When we focus on what God deserves and what we owe Him, our lives are much more satisfying. That's because God

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created us to enjoy Him and to reflect His glory. When we don't do those things, we fall short of our potential. When we do those things, we are fulfilled. The fact that the Creator of the Universe desires our thanks and our praise means that we are important to Him. That is a staggering reality.

So we should give thanks to God because He deserves it, because He wills it and because we owe it to Him. But it is also a blessing to us to give thanks, for it affirms our humanity.

Giving thanks puts us at peace with ourselves and one another. In Colossians chapter 3, the Apostle Paul tells the believers at Colosse about allowing peace to rule in their hearts. He connects that thought with being thankful: "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful" (v. 15).

He goes on to talk about teaching and admonishing one another. It's not the type of teaching where one explains how to do something, and it's not the aspect of admonishing where one points out another's shortcomings. It's all focused on talking and singing about who God is.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus **giving thanks** [emphasis added] to God the Father through Him." (vv. 16-17)

As I read those verses, I envision a community of people who have what the world is clamoring for: peace with themselves and meaningful relationships with others. Somehow, thankfulness plays a vital role in such a community.

And that leads to the most radical reason for us to give thanks to God. It is totally awesome, and though you've certainly heard it before, it's a hard truth to grasp: God *inhabits* the praises of His people. (Giving thanks is part of our praise to Him.) The second Book of Chronicles gives an amazing account of how God responds when His people unite to thank and praise Him upon the completion of the temple Solomon built:

Indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, saying: "For He is good, For His mercy endures forever," that the house, the

house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God. (5:13-14)

The power of thanksgiving is this: heartfelt gratitude and glory giving to God help us become people with whom God is pleased to dwell. Are you with me? Real thanksgiving is an invitation for the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts. It is also a channel through which His transforming power flows. Think of those things that cannot exist within a thankful heart.

Thanksgiving crowds out cynicism, self-pity and fear. Thanksgiving suffocates jealousy and backbiting. None of these can survive in a heart filled with gratitude.

Now think of those things that can only exist within a thankful heart. Humility. Trust. Preferring one another. Thankfulness also gives rise to wisdom. There is something within us that cannot truly give thanks to God for anything that is not good. If at any time we find ourselves enjoying something for which we cannot bring ourselves to thank God, we know that it is something we ought not to do or enjoy.

When Should We Give Thanks?

The easiest and most natural way to give thanks to God is in response to a situation. We thank God for the biopsy that comes back negative or the car accident that was narrowly averted. We thank God for the birth of a child or for the salvation of a loved one. It is right to respond to such circumstances with thanksgiving, but that only scratches the surface.

Thankfulness is a virtue that flows from an awareness of God's goodness. That virtue is more than a response to situations; it is a way of life. The answer to when we should give thanks is simple—always! But in order to do that, we cannot remain passive. We've got to take time to reflect, to be proactive in our awareness of God's goodness. We've got to pray for and pursue thankfulness with diligence. Sometimes a proactive approach to thanksgiving means turning a negative experience into one in which we can give thanks. Perhaps you've heard the story of the Y'shua (Jesus) campaign. In 1982 our headquarters staff arrived at the office to find a horrifying sight. Someone had used the name of Jesus to scrawl obscenities across the front of our building. Normal work ceased that day as we cleaned up the graffiti. But a new coat of paint was not enough. So we lifted up the name of Y'shua in prayer and thanksgiving. We did all we

could to “exalt His name together.” One staff member wrote a song with that very title. Our determination to give glory to God in the situation yielded several songs, a book and a gospel ad that we placed in the secular media. That gospel ad began a tradition that became one of our most effective means of outreach. The proactive approach to thanksgiving must really frustrate the devil, because it proves that what he intends for evil, God can use for good.

How Should We Give Thanks?

- Publicly: “Therefore I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the Gentiles, And sing praises to Your name” (Psalm 18:49).
- Of our own free will: “And when you offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the LORD, offer it of your own free will” (Leviticus 22:29).
- With purpose and good cheer: “So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7).

The last one, of course refers to giving our substance, not just our thanks. That’s because when we are really thankful, we do something about it.

In Jewish culture, even the poorest people find a way of giving, because there is always someone who is worse off. There is even a special receptacle for giving called a *pushka*, which is strategically placed in many Jewish homes and institutions. It might be affixed to a wall, or it might be a small, rectangular tin can with a slot on top. If you pick it up and shake it, you’ll hear the rattle of coins.

When Moishe Rosen moved out of the executive office, he left one thing behind for me: a *pushka* for the Jewish National Fund.* You see, he followed the custom that his parents had taught him: whenever he felt a need to say thanks to God, he would walk by and drop a coin in the *pushka*.

It is traditional for Jews to *show* thankfulness, not just speak of it. For example, if you want to thank a person, you might plant a tree in Israel or give a gift to a charity in that person’s honor. The idea is, even if the person doesn’t need anything, and even if what you give does not benefit him or her directly, you can still show appreciation by attributing what you give, what you sacrifice, to that person’s name.

I remember hearing Moishe preach on giving in a San Francisco congregation. He certainly got everyone’s attention when he said, “I believe God could be glorified by a different kind of giving. If I went to the bank, withdrew the money from my account, put it in a sack, walked out to the

middle of the Golden Gate Bridge and threw the money over the side, it would not be wasted if, as I did it, I could say with sincerity, ‘Jesus, because I love you so much, because I’m so thankful, I’m giving this money to you.’” I could hear people gasping. Moishe continued, “Before you think that that’s a terrible thing to do, consider the sacrificial system in ancient Israel.”

In an agrarian society, one not based on currency and coinage, people valued livestock and grain. God commanded the children of Israel to express their thanks by sacrificing their “currency” as burnt offerings. Does it make a difference if our earnings end up in flames or at the bottom of the San Francisco Bay? Not if the sole purpose is to give up something we value for the sake of giving thanks to God. We memorialize the thanksgiving event, and it becomes an episode in our lives from which other experiences flow. The heart attitude is what matters most.

The Lord who has cattle on a thousand hills does not need anything that you or I might give Him. We are the ones with a need; we need to know what it means to do without something, to deny ourselves out of thankfulness and love for our God.

And once we realize that, anything you or I might give to honor Him will be received as a sweet-smelling sacrifice. Whether it’s our time, our money or our opportunities, if in giving them, we lift up our hearts to God and say, “Lord, I give this because I love you, I appreciate you and I want to honor you,” and mean it—even though we can’t see the face of God, I’m convinced we’ll experience the warmth of His pleasure.

How much more joy do we have when we give to continue the work of the Lord and strengthen the message of the gospel as it goes out to those who so desperately need it! If you’d like to give to something that will honor God by helping others to know Him, I’d like to invite you to prayerfully consider getting involved in a project close to my heart and that of the rest of the Jews for Jesus staff. It begins with the bold statement: “The only hope for peace was born in the Middle East.” Do I have your interest for a few more minutes? Then please read the back page of this newsletter.

I hope you experience the power of thanksgiving during this and every season. Whether or not you can give to Jews for Jesus, I hope you find tangible ways to give thanks to God every day because He deserves it, because He desires it and because God dwells in the thankful hearts of His people. There is no greater thrill than His holy presence.



* A charity for the reforestation of Israel



Coming Home

You met her in August ("More Than Survivors"), and we praised the Lord for answered prayer in September—now Ruth tells a bit of her own story as a thanksgiving to God.

Let me start by telling you that I am one of the Holocaust survivors. There were 150,000 Jewish children in the Czech Republic, and only a hundred survived—I was one of the hundred. All my life, yes, even after the trauma of Auschwitz and Bergen Belsen, I had total confidence and belief in God.

But Jesus? As far as I was concerned, Jesus was just a "nice guy." Never in a million years would I have thought that He is our Messiah or that I could become such a strong believer in Y'shua (Jesus)—it is almost miraculous. And yet, since believing in Y'shua, I have gained a much deeper understanding of being Jewish—I am more of a Jew today than I ever was before. And I have the feeling that I have come home.

But how did I get to it? Well, in my building is a man, one of our doormen, a very intelligent person who is a Christian. I always enjoyed talking to him. One day as we were talking I said, "You are so nice to me. I always thought that behind every Christian there is an anti-Semite." This man challenged some very basic

ideas I'd had and made me so curious that I actually went one Sunday to a church service all the way out on Long Island.

It was a small church. The minister was very nice and toward the end of the service he said, "A young Jewish man from South Africa, who was once involved with the Lubavitcher community is now a Jew for Jesus. He is going to come here and tell us about the Passover seder."



Pastor Thaddeus Noto baptizing Ruth in New York.

I thought to myself, no matter how difficult it is for me to come out here (because I have to take the subway, then somebody has to pick me up), I simply have to meet that young man. Well then there was a tremendous snowstorm and the meeting had to be canceled. I called that minister and asked him where I could get in touch with this young man. He said at the Jews for Jesus office, and he gave me the telephone number.

So I called. Lev Leigh (the young man who had been scheduled to speak) came to my house the following day. He was

A Different Homecoming

The 20 months that I trained with Jews for Jesus in New York City was the greatest learning experience of my life. I praise the Lord for bringing me back to South Africa where I know He wants me serving Him. I have returned as a changed person. I left South Africa as a relatively new believer. I have come back as a missionary equipped to reach out to the people of my country and my community. I give thanks to the Lord for having provided me with the most golden opportunity to serve Him, and I am thankful to all those who gave both of their time and substance that I might better serve the Messiah!

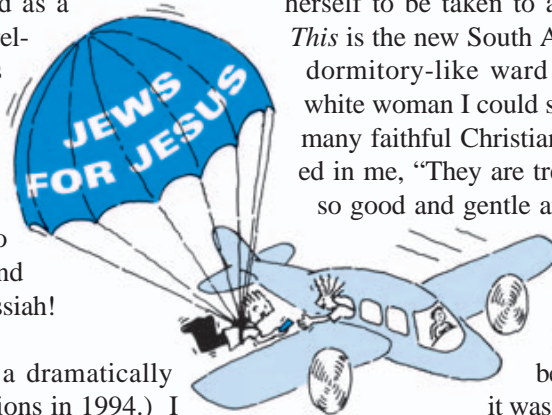
Upon arrival home, I found myself in a dramatically changed land. (I left right after the elections in 1994.) I knew something was going right as I tried to settle into the hustle and bustle of the South African way of life and was able to arrange my first two visits without much effort.

Samuel H. had received a "Letter of Witness"* and had it on his desk when I came in. He also had a New Testament. When I asked if he had been reading it, he replied, "For many

years." He told me that he had been having "Christian feelings" for quite some time but hadn't done anything about it yet. As you can see, Samuel was part of the field that is "white unto harvest." I prayed with him right away to begin a new life in Jesus—my first visit in South Africa!!!!

Then I went to see Maisie L. in hospital. She could not afford a pricey private clinic and with some trepidation had allowed herself to be taken to a black hospital near where she lives. *This is the new South Africa!* I went to visit Maisie in a huge dormitory-like ward with many beds. She was the only white woman I could see. God had placed her in the midst of many faithful Christians who staff that hospital. She confided in me, "They are treating me like a queen here. They are so good and gentle and kind. Day after day the nurses and their friends come around and sing [gospel] to me, and then they hold my hands and pray! It's wonderful!" I explained that these faithful women believed in our Jewish Messiah and that it was time for Maisie to accept Him too. She also prayed to repent and follow Jesus. My second visit in SA! I drove home praising God, as you can imagine.

I should also add that I am extremely happy to announce that Jenifer Hall (missionary in Chicago for one more month) and I are engaged to be married. Jenifer and I served on two Summer Witnessing Campaigns together and have known



wonderful as he spoke to me about Jesus, but I am not easily persuaded about anything, and somehow seeing a Jew who believed in Jesus hit a raw nerve. Still, when Lev invited me to come to the Friday evening services, I accepted. There I saw David Brickner and recognized him from my first encounter with Jews for Jesus [as you may have read in the August newsletter]. It had been a year or so before, during a Summer Campaign. From my office I'd seen David giving out pamphlets at 34th Street. I approached him, and I said, "Aren't you ashamed of yourself?!" Neither of us would have guessed at the time that I would one day come to hear for myself what he believed.

I enjoyed the Friday evening services and I kept on coming. In fact, I enjoyed the services more than the synagogue services. Always in the synagogue I felt something was missing, and somehow that something seemed to be present with these Jews who believed in Y'shua. Still, I had my doubts and was swaying back and forth [about belief in Jesus]. Yet slowly but surely I came to believe, and finally to be certain. I wanted to have my baptism before Lev left New York for South Africa because he had such a part in my becoming a believer and before David left for San Francisco because he also has been so wonderful. So I was baptized, and I see no contradiction between being Jewish and my belief in Jesus. As I said, it feels like "coming home." I hope someday my daughter will also find what I have found in Y'shua.

—Ruth H.



Lev Leigh and Jenifer Hall

each other for over a year. We thank the Lord for bringing us together, and we look forward to working as a team within the larger Jews for Jesus team. We hope that together we will bring glory to God.

—Lev Leigh, missionary
Johannesburg

**We have a Letter of Witness program that enables us to witness to your Jewish friends. If you send us their names and addresses, one of our missionaries will send his or her testimony to that person, along with an offer of a free subscription to ISSUES, our bi-monthly publication for seekers. Where geography permits, we follow up on these letters with personal contact. If you would like us to send your Jewish friends(s) a Letter of Witness, send their name, address, and phone number. We need your name and address as well, though we will not mention it to your Jewish friend unless you want us to.*

We're Thankful

אנחנו מודים

Nous sommes reconnaissants
à Dieu pour

Estamos Agradecidos

Wir preisen den Herrn!

Lyn Bond, missionary in **Dallas, Texas**, is thankful for our Co-Laborer Mike Falls and for God's faithfulness (not in that order!). Mike introduced Lyn to Elfreide, an elderly Jewish woman, last fall. Lyn and Elfreide studied the Bible together regularly for nearly a year. Elfreide seemed drawn to Jesus, but she struggled, knowing that belief in Him would go against Jewish tradition. Lyn asked what kept her from turning to Jesus, and Elfreide replied, "Loyalty to God." So they talked about Jesus' claim to be God. On the next visit, when Lyn asked Elfreide if she was ready to trust Jesus, the reply was yes. Please pray for Elfreide's continued spiritual growth.

Victoria Lannon, who has been a part-time outreach worker to the Jewish community in **Washington, D.C.**, is thankful for the opportunity to serve full time now. She has been praying that the Lord would bring her more Russian Jews to witness to, and He has been answering that prayer. One of the people she's recently met is Tanya, who lives in the same apartment complex. They met by the pool. Tanya is from Moscow and began to believe in Jesus there. She said that she and her husband had just been praying to meet Jewish believers in Jesus because they didn't want to lose their Jewish heritage, but they wanted to grow as Christians. Both Victoria and Tanya are thankful that God brought them together as answers to one another's prayers.

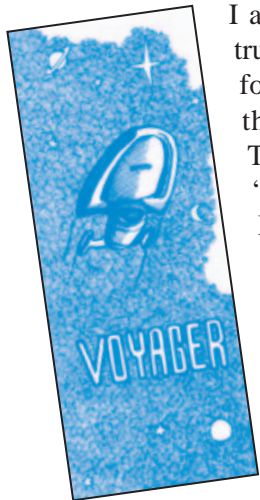
Stan Meyer, missionary in **Los Angeles**, is thankful that Stephan L. contacted our office last April. A Christian friend in North Carolina had encouraged him to read the Scriptures and he called us to learn more. He began meeting with Stan on his lunch breaks from the Eyecare Center, where he is the financial accountant.

They'd been studying the Bible together for four months when Stan asked Stephan if he understood that Jesus is God and that He came and died for our sins. Stephan replied that he understood Christianity on an intellectual level. Stan invited him to bring that understanding to a soul level and Stephan accepted, asking Jesus to be Lord of his life.

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We're Thankful That They're Thankful

We are thankful for every opportunity to count in someone's life. Sometimes we sow, water and reap the gospel seed. Sometimes we reap where others have sown, and sometimes we sow, not knowing who will reap. We thought you might like to hear from a few of the people whose lives you've touched by helping us to have a part in their lives.



I actually thought Jesus was probably true, but because I'm a Jew, I looked for every reason why He could not be the answer to my spiritual search. Then I found a tract that said "Voyager" on the ground in Manhattan. I picked it up and discovered it was from Jews for Jesus. I brought the tract back to the office and put it on my cork board.

My partner at that time was also Jewish. He told me that Jews for Jesus was a cult, but I left the tract on my board anyway. A couple of days later I saw one of the missionaries on the street and gave my name to be contacted. That's when Glenn called me and arranged a meeting.

I thank the Lord for Glenn, who worked hard to teach me the foundations of the truth I had been searching for. It took a year, but I finally received the Lord into my life.

I had the opportunity to volunteer in the 1996 Summer Witnessing Campaign, and I'm thankful for that too. I love the Lord so much, and it's a blessing to be with so many other people who love Him like I do and understand how much I want to talk about Him and praise Him.

—Michael W.

I'm totally thankful to God for taking me out of darkness into light and for giving me a brand-new life. I'm thankful for a Gentile friend in a twelve-step program who gave me a Bible. After reading the Gospels—specifically about the prodigal son—I knew that Jesus was for me. I got on my knees and asked God to forgive me like the father forgave his runaway son.

About a year later, Mitch Forman contacted me through a mutual friend. I had a pretty good understanding of my faith, but I was not settled into a church and I had a lot to learn.

Mitch called me about once a month, but I always brushed him off because I thought Jews for Jesus were fanatics. Finally, he called on the perfect night at the perfect time, and I agreed to meet with him. That was January of '95. We've been meeting ever since, doing personal Bible study, getting into theology and discussing issues of character and wisdom. I'm thankful for the insights I've received and thankful that Mitch didn't give up on me after the first few phone calls.

After avoiding the ministry for so long, I really value my friends at Jews for Jesus. I enjoy the Jewishness of the weekly Bible study and the services on Friday nights—especially since I now am going to a predominantly Gentile church on Sunday. I appreciate the balance, and I also appreciate the opportunity to serve. I volunteer with the New York branch pretty regularly, and it's fun having an avenue to grow and have fellowship with the people I've connected with there.

—Mike R.

I believed in Jesus intellectually for quite some time, yet I never asked for God's forgiveness or salvation. My Christian friends told me what it was like to have God in their lives, but I didn't quite make the connection that

this was available to me. I knew there was something more that I wanted, something beyond my intellectual belief—but I was not sure how to get there. I was familiar with Jews for

Jesus because my wife, who is a Christian, had been on their mailing list for some time. I thought perhaps they could help me, so I did a search for Jews for Jesus on the Internet. Their page popped up on the Web, and I read several sections where it invited inquiries. Then I sent in my name and my e-mail address and said that yes, I would be willing to talk with someone.

Well, Rob Wertheim lives not too far from me and he met with me on November 21, 1995. He answered my questions, we prayed together and I was born again! Prior to that, I never really believed that I could actually be indwelt by the Holy Spirit and have eternal life. But when I prayed that day, I knew it was true, and I'm just a transformed person. How can you describe a blessing like that? How can you describe the gift of eternal life? The next thing I knew, Rob was inviting me to hand out tracts as part of the Rose Bowl outreach. What a faith stretcher! I'm really glad I did it though because it wasn't just a faith stretcher, it was also faith strengthener.

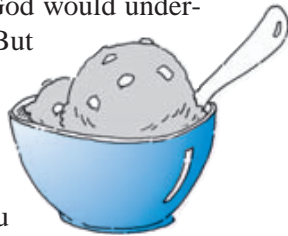
*It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
And to sing praises to Your Name, O Most High*
Psalm 92:1



When I met with the whole *mishpochah* (family) for Thanksgiving, I must have been shining like a lightbulb. Everyone wondered what was going on—why I had this expression of joy all over me. The truth is, I'd never had so much to be thankful for in my life. And now, a year later, I'm still thankful, beyond words, for the eternal life God has given to me, and for His presence to guide me every day.

—Steve G.

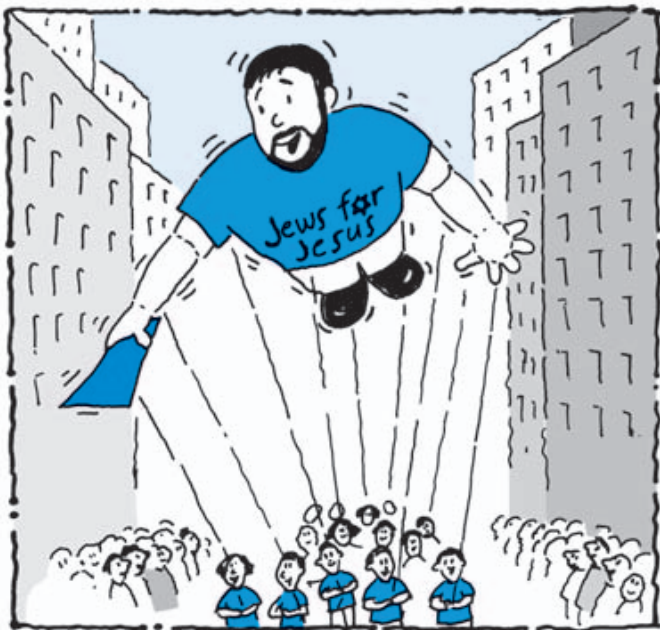
I'm thankful for the way that God gives me little signs, funny little things that let me know He answers prayer. For example, I'm diabetic and we had an ice cream party at work. I was worried, but prayed about it, and went in. They had bought sugar-free, fat-free ice cream for me. I took a little bit but then I looked at the rocky road and I thought, "Ohhh." I told myself, "God would understand one scoop of rocky road." But as soon as I put the spoon into the rocky road, the fire alarm went off! We all had to rush out of the building, and when we came back, someone said, "Well did you want any [rocky road]?"



I answered, "No, if God took the time to set off a fire alarm to keep me from having it, I don't think I should eat any." I'm thankful for these little signs, but most of all, I'm thankful that I can keep going even in hard times. I know that I'm not alone.

—Wanda H.

Wanda had been attracted to Jesus for quite some time before coming in contact with Jews for Jesus; Peter Rice (chief of station in Washington, D.C.) studied the Bible with her and helped her make a faith commitment to the Lord about a year and a half ago.



Without Jesus, we'd just be hot air!

(We're Thankful continued from page 5)

Tuvya Zaretsky, chief of station in **Los Angeles**, is thankful to God for Steve Babkow, who was once on our staff and is now serving the Lord as the pastor of a Messianic congregation in Palm Springs, California. Steve has continued to make evangelism a focus of his ministry. On Saturday, August 10, Tuvya was the guest speaker at Steve's congregation. A Jewish woman named Linda made a decision to follow the Messiah Y'shua at that service.

Our missionary in **Israel** is thankful to God and to those of you who responded to our request for help to purchase a van. He says, "Having a van sure makes life different! I've been following up contacts sent in from New York City and London, where many Israelis go for a holiday and end up seeing our missionaries on the streets. I'm thankful that I can follow up on so many more people in person. When I dropped in on Michal in Kiriat Haim near Haifa, she said all she expected was literature in the mail, not a real person bringing her the literature!"

"Another contact, Anita (referred to me from London), was so pleased that Marcos (a local volunteer) and I dropped in to see her. She was bursting with spiritual ideas that she wanted to discuss. Her brother also wanted to talk about the Lord. So Marcos talked with Anita while I spoke with her brother, Me'or. They both want us to come back.

"Following up on a contact from local sources brought me to a little village in the mountains near Haifa. When I got there I asked for the Mizrachi family—and was informed that many families in that village are named Mizrachi! So I mentioned the first name of the person I was to visit, and someone directed me to her house. Her father said she wasn't home, but he invited me in. We sat down together, and I shared the gospel with him for about 20 minutes. Finally he said that another woman in the village had the same name as his daughter. So because of a little confusion, I got an extra opportunity to witness."

Renée Abend says: "I became a believer in Y'shua through the ministry of Jews for Jesus in 1982 here in **New York City**. Since then, I had always wanted to be able to work for the ministry. In 1994 God opened the door for me to take an administrative position in our New York office. My husband, who is not a believer, was only tolerant at first. Over the last two years, he has grown accepting of my position and even supportive. I have more freedom to join with our staff and constituency for such things as our Friday night chapel, and my husband has even joined me for special events with the staff and volunteers. I am thankful for the Lord's continued work in Richard's life and for the opportunities to tell him more about Jesus."

The only hope for peace was born in the Middle East.

Dear Friend in Christ,

It is our prayer, at this thanksgiving season, that your heart and home be filled with the blessings of thankfulness to God. We at Jews for Jesus are certainly thankful to God for you, and even more important, our hearts resonate along with the Apostle Paul in proclaiming, “Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!”

Think about it. God has blessed each of us. We can trust Him to meet all of our needs because He’s promised to do so. Maybe you are looking for a way to show your thanks to Him. I am asking each of our staff and board members to consider what they might do to show their thanks, and I’m inviting you to thank and honor the Lord with us.

Here’s the idea: one of the bold things that Jews for Jesus does is publish full-page gospel statements as paid advertising in the secular media. Over the years, we have effectively put the gospel before more than one hundred million readers of major newspapers and magazines throughout the United States and abroad. Literally tens of thousands of individuals have read and responded to these catchy and thought-provoking statements, particularly over the Advent season.

This year I think we can capture the attention of people all across this land with this arresting statement:

“The only hope for peace was born in the Middle East.”

Think about it and dream with me. Is any message more important? Of all the advent themes, the promise of “peace on earth” touches people’s deepest desires. In a time when there is so much turbulence and uncertainty, especially in the Middle East, our message of hope is a lifeline that lifts the heart and can save the soul. We can get this message out to as many people as we have the resources to reach. For example, an ad in *Parade* magazine nationwide reaches more than thirty million people. An ad in the *Chicago Tribune* reaches 684,366 people and an ad in *TIME* magazine reaches four million! But that ad in *Parade* magazine costs about \$98,000, and that’s after negotiating the price. The *Chicago Tribune* runs about \$23,000 and *TIME* runs about \$107,000 (that’s before any kind of discount). And we’d like to place that statement in many, many more publications and even on billboards!

But to make it happen, I need your help. Enclosed is the mock-up of one of the advertisements we wish to place on billboards and in newspapers all over the United States. How can you help? Every dollar you give at this time is a step toward placing one more ad. What better way can there be for us to give thanks to God for His indescribable gift?

Now do you see the *power* of thanksgiving? As you join us in giving thanks to God through a special gift this month, we will amplify your thanks as we publicly proclaim the good news that two thousand years ago a child was born in the Middle East, in the town of Bethlehem. That child was born to die so that we could have the hope of peace with God. Such an indescribable gift demands unending, unspeakable thanks. Thanks that will stimulate us to surrender our lives into His hands. Thanks that will propel us to go and tell and give so that all might hear of the indescribable gift that God is offering—the person of Jesus, who alone brings peace.

Will you stand with us to make His name known in this way? Will you prayerfully consider honoring Him with your thanksgiving offering to proclaim the peace on earth that only the Prince of Peace, Jesus our Messiah can bring? Please use the enclosed card and envelope and join us as we say “thanks” to God.

Yours in the Shalom of God,



David Brickner

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