

We Need “Bility”

BY DAVID BRICKNER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When you hear the word “missionary” what image comes to mind? A white-skinned westerner wearing a pith helmet, surrounded by dark-skinned natives wearing loin cloths? Unfortunately, many Christians still imagine missionaries (and those to whom they minister) in terms of these outdated caricatures. And in the Jewish community, the word missionary evokes a decidedly sinister image. Rabbis and Jewish community leaders warn of the dangerous missionaries lurking on street corners to lure Jewish children away from home and family. Obviously, neither image is accurate. So how do we missionaries see ourselves?

We Jews for Jesus don’t shy away from the word missionary, but we like to describe our ministry as *apostolic*. That’s apostolic with a small “a.” The New Testament model of the apostolic band helps clarify what we mean when we say missionary: “As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them’” (Acts 13:2).

God set apart apostolic bands comprised of missionaries like Paul and Silas, Barnabas, John Mark and others to go and preach the good news. Their efforts were supported by local churches so that they could devote themselves to the task full time. That “set apartness” for full-time evangelism helps define the apostolic lifestyle of missionaries. At Jews for Jesus, we see missionaries as those who are willing to have “bility”: availability, vulnerability and mobility. This view is so important to us that we spell it out in our core values statement: “We commit to . . . An apostolic lifestyle of availability, vulnerability and mobility.”

Availability means being ready whenever an opportunity presents itself. That means missionaries make house calls—and it means there is no such thing as regular office hours for missionaries! We must be willing to rearrange our schedules to meet whatever opportunities arise; to care for a needy person, to share the gospel with an unbeliever, to visit someone in the hospital. Perhaps this is what Paul meant when he encouraged young Timothy to, “Be ready in season and out of season” (2 Timothy 4:2).

Vulnerability is very much akin to availability. Making ourselves available to people requires us to make ourselves vulnerable as well. This vulnerability might mean subjecting ourselves to a physical threat, as in the case of our outreach workers in the CIS. The fact that they openly identify as Jews for Jesus allows interested Jewish people to find them, but it also makes them targets of virulent anti-Semites.

Despite the physical vulnerability required to stand on the street corner handing out tracts, more often than not, our vulnerability is on the inside.

Missionaries must cultivate a heart to care for the lost and to give themselves that others might hear and be saved. Such caring subjects us to disappointment. Indeed, disappointment is inevitable. The more time we invest, the more we care for people, the deeper the potential for disappointment. When we make ourselves vulnerable, we risk the pain of rejection—not merely personal rejection, but rejection of our message and our Messiah. The old gospel hymn that tells us, “millions are waiting, dying to hear” doesn’t quite apply to Jewish evangelism. It is certainly true that millions are dying, but most are not waiting and most do not want to hear. We have a saying at Jews for Jesus: reach out to many to win a

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(Continued on page 2)

Continued from page 1

few. We must keep reaching out to many despite the rejection, because it's the only way to find the few who will receive the life-giving gospel. While we rejoice in the few, we still weep over the many. That is the vulnerability required of an apostolic lifestyle.

Finally there is mobility, which also overlaps with availability and vulnerability. Someone once approached Moishe Rosen at a Bible conference. She explained that God had called her to be a missionary to the Jews and she was seeking his advice. "Where do you live?" Moishe asked. "Cedar Rapids, Iowa," she answered. "Well," he replied, "You will have to leave Cedar Rapids." Moishe was right! It is true that everyone can witness wherever they happen to be. Nevertheless, those of us who commit to the life of a missionary must be willing to be mobile. In order to make ourselves available to go to the specific people God has called us to, we need to be where they live and work. We can't choose a place to live and then try to become a missionary there.

Most Jews live in and around major metropolitan areas; therefore Jews for Jesus is an urban ministry.

Many people who might have joined our staff chose not to because it meant relocating to a major metropolitan area that they either feared or disliked. One missionary couple left our staff when they began to plan a family because they didn't want to raise their children in a big city. These are choices that everyone has the right to make, but to live as a missionary means giving up those choices.

In addition to relocation, mobility means that missionaries need to be willing to be away from home when necessary. The Apostle Paul was a model of mobility. His three missionary journeys had him conducting more than eight years of his ministry away from home. That is a significant amount of travel time! Jews for Jesus currently has stations in nineteen cities, and only two full-time mobile evangelistic teams. But most of our missionaries are away from home on ministry business several weeks out of the year.

In fact, with this newsletter, you may have received notice that one of our Jews for Jesus missionaries will be in your area presenting Christ in the Passover. We have staff all over the world traveling and ministering as they deliver this dynamic evangelistic message. If we are coming to a church near you, I hope you will be able to attend a presentation. You might even bring a Jewish friend, or any friend for that matter, who needs to hear about Jesus. Our three week Passover tours don't exactly stack up to Paul's missionary journeys, but we often meet people whom God has prepared to receive the gospel message—

people we would not otherwise meet had we stayed home. God continues to bless us when we reach into areas where we don't have established branches, and that is one reason why we continue to travel.

But mobility is much more than a travel schedule or a major move; it's a mindset. This brings us back to availability. All of our staff are ready to go should an urgent need or opportunity arise. If there is a sudden outpouring of the Holy Spirit in a particular place and Jewish people become open to the gospel, that is where we want to be. All our missionaries keep current passports.

Speaking of passports, next month our mobile evangelistic team, the Liberated Wailing Wall, will wrap up a 20 month tour with overseas ministry in England, South Africa and Australia. I can't help reflecting back fifteen years, to the time when my wife Patti and I went overseas with the Liberated Wailing Wall. Like our current team, we also traveled to England, South Africa and Australia as well as to Israel. Back then we had no Jews for Jesus branches in any of those countries. Now we have branches in each and every one of those countries! Why? God's grace, and the "bility" that propels us forward to do more and be more for Him.

If we are to continue making the Messiahship of Jesus an unavoidable issue to our Jewish people worldwide, we need "bility"—availability, vulnerability and mobility. Please pray that God will grant us the courage and grace to maintain that apostolic commitment in all we do.

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

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Subway Studies

by Tovya Rose

I was in the Times Square subway station handing out our gospel pamphlets when I noticed two girls standing about a hundred feet away. They seemed to be hiding behind a kiosk, trying to be inconspicuous while intently watching us in the Jews for Jesus T-shirts. I was curious, so I walked in their

general direction, casually handing out my tracts. I noticed that they were discussing one of our broadsides.

Soon they came to introduce themselves to me. Amanda and Ann were college students on a class project to study “subway life.” They had agreed that I was an interesting “life form.” I agreed to help with their assignment, which was to observe and interview people. They asked me about Jews for Jesus, what we believe and why we hand out pamphlets in the subway. I explained that we were there to reach people with the message that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah. That’s when Ann pointed to Amanda and said, “She’s Jewish!”

So I made a suggestion.

Instead of explaining what I do and how I talk to people, why not demonstrate? That sounded good to them, so I spoke to Amanda while Ann took notes. It turns out Amanda had Christian friends who had taken her to church. She had also been reading a Bible they gave her and was beginning to think that Jesus might possibly be the answer to her questions about life’s meaning. She was excited when I offered to send her more information about being Jewish and believing in Jesus, and she gladly gave me her address and phone number to hear more. Then she turned to her friend and exclaimed, “That was fun!”

So many Amandas are out there seeking answers. They are not just college students, but students of life. Standing out in public to hand out pamphlets is not the easiest thing to do. But we will keep on doing it, making ourselves available and waiting for God to do the rest.

Foreground Photos

- a. A team “descends” into the subway station.
- b. Trainee Gary Leese arranges to send more information to passers by.
- c. Volunteer Leah Snyder engages another passer by in conversation.
- d. Staff member Susan Stoller (right) and volunteer Susannah Schwarcz riding the subway home after passing out tracts.
- e. “Underground evangelism” reaches millions of people on the surface.

Background Photo:

This is the inside of a subway car in which you can see our evangelistic ads: top right is a Scripture card, center right is one of our “Be more Jewish, Believe in Jesus” posters.



a.



b.



c.



d.



e.

IRRESISTIBLE CALL

The Irresistible Call

I was born and raised as a Conservative Jew in a Chicago suburb. I attended Hebrew School and learned about Jewish traditions, liturgy and of course, the Hebrew language. Yet I don't remember the rabbis talking about God as if He could be known personally. And while I learned to read and pronounce the Scripture in Hebrew, its meaning was rarely explained. My real interest was math and accounting. I saw religion as a short-term liability, something I had to do twice a week until my bar mitzvah at age 13.



Greg and Denise Savitt with their two children, Dylan and Judah

At age 16, I met a cute girl who kept inviting me to youth functions at her church. It wasn't that I intended to believe in Jesus; I never really prayed and I refused to sing the name "Jesus." Still, as I was exposed to the gospel, I found myself growing curious. One evening I decided to experiment. "What if I just pretend to believe in Jesus," I thought. As I listened to the gospel, I allowed myself to think of it as true, almost like a game. But even though I was pretending (or so I thought), something very real began to happen. Suddenly, my heart started to feel warm and I began to experience a strange new peace and joy. Uh-oh!

It might be difficult to imagine how feelings of peace and joy could frighten a person, but I was really scared. I felt my whole identity as a Jew was in jeopardy. I could barely eat or sleep for a week. How could this happen? I kept telling myself, "I am Jewish and Jesus is for Christians!" (At that time, I equated the term Christian with non-Jew.) In desperation, I decided to talk to a Jewish authority, Rabbi Rosen, who had officiated at my bar mitzvah. He quickly explained away my feelings of joy by pronouncing that it would be illogical for one man to die for the sins of others. He also told me, "Christians proselytize because deep down they doubt their own faith, and the more converts they have, the more they convince themselves." At 16, that made perfect sense to me. Without further analysis, I believed my rabbi, and stopped going to church.

Two years later, I entered the University of Illinois and lived at the Jewish fraternity house Zeta Beta Tau. I was far from thinking about God. Some Christians witnessed to me; someone from Jews for Jesus even called me, but

I hung up on him. In fact, I hung up on all Christian witness.

Upon graduating magna cum laude with a degree from the number one accounting school in the country, I went to work for Ernst & Young, at the time, the largest accounting firm in the world. I had plenty of friends, money and good times, yet I knew I was missing something. I couldn't figure it out. Then I met Denise.

Denise was not born again, but she occasionally went to church to appease her parents. We fell in love, and I even went to church a couple of times to show her parents I cared about God too. A funny thing happened. That warm and peaceful feeling returned, and this time Rabbi Rosen was not there to explain it away.

I started going to church every week. I even made an appointment with the pastor, asking him well over 30 questions I had about this Jesus. Yet I couldn't seem to take the step and accept Him as my Savior. "I am Jewish and Jews don't believe in Jesus," I told the pastor.

My spiritual progress seemed to be at a standstill. Then the Jews for Jesus mobile evangelistic team, the Liberated Wailing Wall, came to Denise's church. As I listened to their music, testimonies and drama, I couldn't believe these intelligent, articulate and normal people were all Jewish, and at the same time, believed in Jesus. (I had always assumed Jews for Jesus were a group of religious fanatics.) That night I answered the Holy Spirit's irresistible call and accepted Jesus as my personal Savior and Lord. To my surprise, so did Denise!

I felt as if my income statement went from being "in the red," to showing unlimited fixed assets in Jesus! I left my secure and stable job as a CPA to be one of those "religious fanatics" I used to ridicule. Instead of cranking out numbers, now I have opportunities to see faith multiplied as I preach, teach and disciple Jewish people to follow the promised Messiah of Israel, Jesus. I used to reconcile financial statements; now I help people become reconciled to God through Y'shua Hamashiach, Jesus the Messiah!

—Greg Savitt, missionary
Florida

Apostleship: a biblical perspective

“Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name, among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ . . .” (Romans 1:5, 6).

The word “apostle” comes from the Greek word “ἀπόστολο” which means delegate, ambassador of the gospel, commissioner of Christ. These three elements of the definition overlap, much as availability, vulnerability and mobility do (please see David Brickner’s lead article). But there are nuances, illustrated by Scripture, that bring the definition of apostle into sharper focus. For example:

A delegate is a person authorized or sent to act for or represent another:

He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me (Matthew 10:40).

An ambassador is the highest diplomatic representative that one sovereign power or state sends to another; an ambassador is an official herald, messenger or agent with a special mission:

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:20).

A commissioner is a person who has been officially authorized to take charge or oversee matters for the person or government that employs him or her:

We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed

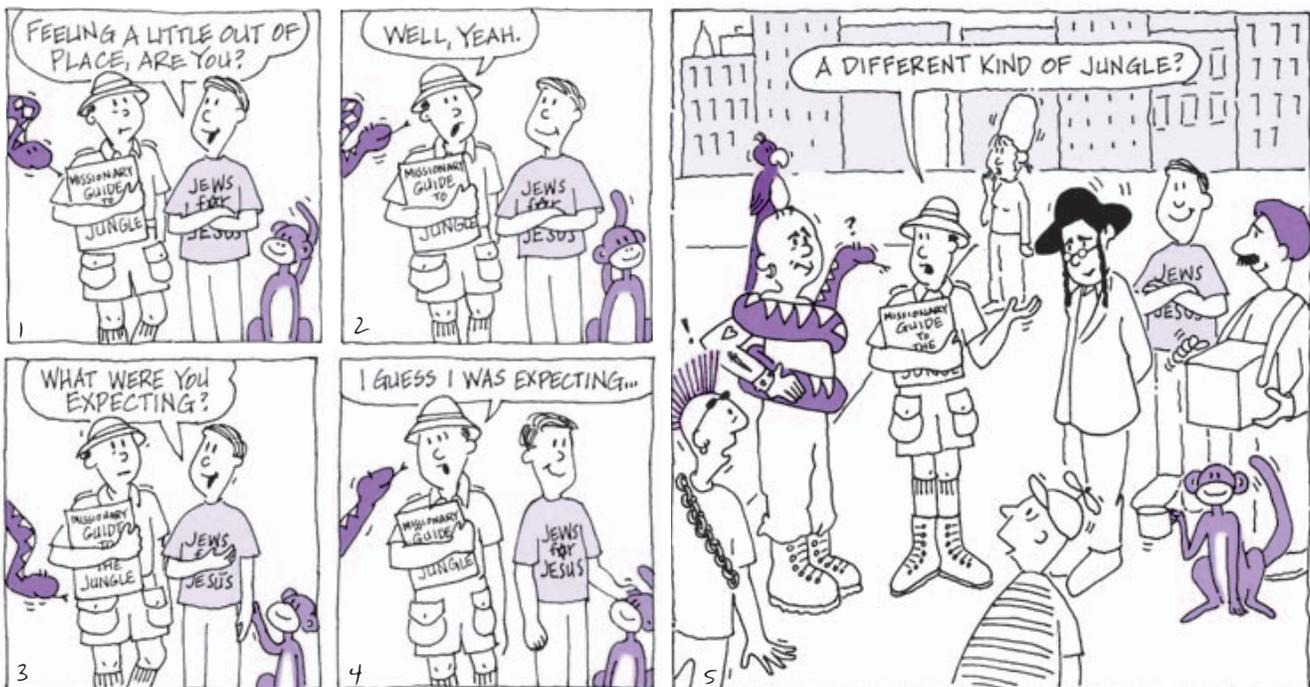
us—a sphere which especially includes you. For we are not overextending ourselves (as though our authority did not extend to you), for it was to you that we came with the gospel of Christ . . . (2 Corinthians 10:13, 14).

The Scriptures actually refer to Jesus as the ultimate apostle:

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house. For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house (Hebrews 3:1-3).

Jesus was the perfect example of availability, vulnerability and mobility for us; He needed each of those qualities to be obedient to the task for which His father sent Him. If God has set us apart as ministers of the gospel, if He has appointed us for the task of making the Messiahship of Jesus an unavoidable issue to our Jewish people worldwide, we must follow His example and that means making ourselves available, vulnerable and ready to be mobile should the need arise. God grant that we may be so!

Please note: We do not see ourselves as filling the *office* of Apostle. We are using biblical examples as a model for an *apostolic lifestyle*.



Prayer Prompters

Please pray for:

- our Jews for Jesus staff to be so filled with trust for God that we are able to maintain and even intensify our core values of availability, vulnerability and mobility (p. 1)
- safety and divine appointments for our missionaries who will be touring for two and three weeks, ministering in those areas where we don't have established branches (p. 2)
- the "old" Liberated Wailing Wall as they finish their tour by ministering overseas; that God will work out all the details, minimize things that could go wrong and maximize opportunities to further the gospel abroad (p. 2)
- the new Liberated Wailing Wall team to be unified by God's Spirit, to adjust quickly and efficiently to life on the road and to know the thrill of seeing God at work through their ministry
- salvation for Amanda (p. 3)
- perseverance for our missionaries as they continue handing out tracts on the streets, college campuses and in subway stations (p. 3)
- Greg Savitt, one of our newer missionaries, that God will bless his ministry in Fort Lauderdale (p. 4)
- grace and strength for new Jewish believers Renee in Fort Lauderdale, Yalli in Paris, Joram and Sammy in Mexico City, Mark in Los Angeles and Elvira in Dnepropetrovsk (p. 8)
- salvation for Charlotte in New York (p. 8)
- grace and strength for a new Egyptian believer whom one of our trainees prayed with in Maryland (p. 8)
- more opportunities to witness in London as a result of our gospel billboard and the controversy surrounding it (p. 8)

It really happened:

A friend in Chico, California told us about a local eatery called the Oy Veh* Cafe—a Jewish deli of sorts. It seems they used to have a controversial item on the menu: the "Jews for Cheeses" omelet! Apparently, enough customers complained to persuade management to remove the item from the menu. (P.S. We also have had an occasional piece of mail addressed to us as "Jews for Cheeses.")

**Oy veh (pronounced oy vay) is a common, almost stereotypical Jewish exclamation. For example, let's say one has difficulty getting out of a chair after supper. A proper commentary would be, "Oy veh, I knew I shouldn't have eaten the whole thing."*



Please note your newsletter insert:

Our Millennium Fever broadside highlights the uncertainty people feel about the turn of the century. Pray, as the tension builds, that God will use this as a real opportunity to tell of the security we can have in Jesus, no matter what circumstances befall.

More Yiddish stuff:

On March 1 or 2 it's appropriate to wish Jewish friends a *gut yontif* (pronounced *goot yawn tiff*) which means good or happy holiday. Jewish people will be celebrating the festival of Purim (pronounced *poor im*), which commemorates the events recorded in the book of Esther.

Wanted: Chef for Summer Campaign

If you have the professional culinary talents to plan and cook meals for a team of 35 hard-working, gospel-preaching people you may be just the person to serve God in a very unique way this summer. This is a five-week salaried position. For more information, call the Minister-at-Large office at (415) 864-2600 or e-mail them at mal60@aol.com.

Jewish Evangelism—Then and Now

Methods and Materials of the Previous Generation

Part six in a series, condensed from a paper presented to the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism

by Jews for Jesus Founder, Moishe Rosen

OUTDOOR GOSPEL MEETINGS

At the turn of the century, the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago used to hitch up a gospel wagon and bring it down to Maxwell Street, a predominantly Jewish area. The wagon's flatbed held musicians as well as a speaker at a lectern. Eventually they replaced the wagon with a truck.

In the sixties, outdoor gospel meetings were already on the wane, but one could still draw a crowd almost anywhere on the west side of New York City. All we needed to do was notify the police of the intended time and have a sturdy platform, like a soapbox, to stand on. (By the way, soapboxes were not used to ship soap but to manufacture it. The components of fat drippings and lye were poured into 1-inch thick zinc-lined wooden boxes to harden before it was cut into bars.) I recall that New York City police also required us to display an American flag to show that we were not anarchists.

The anti-missionaries also had outdoor meetings, usually not far from where we conducted our gospel meetings. We stood in front of the Chase Manhattan Bank at West 73rd and Broadway, and the "Anti-shmad League" (shmad being a derogatory term they used to refer to Jews who believe in Jesus) conducted meetings on Saturday nights at West 74th and Broadway. They had a much fancier portable pulpit, with all kinds of placards, one of which said, "Don't trust the tricky missionaries." I guess that we *were* just a little tricky, because Daniel Fuchs wrote a tract titled, "Don't trust the tricky missionaries." The message inside was, "Don't trust the missionaries; don't trust your rabbis; don't trust any clergyman; put your trust in God." It was a very well-written tract, and from time to time on Saturday nights we handed out these tracts where the Anti-shmad League was speaking. In most cities, foot traffic declined, and so did the outdoor meetings.

MAILED LITERATURE

Another form of outreach was referred to as "the postal witness." I previously mentioned David Cooper's messianic series of books that were sent free to all rabbis and Jewish doctors. Small missions in particular would build lists of Jewish names and periodically send out tracts or

pamphlets. At one time, there were also at least a half dozen periodicals designed to reach Jewish people. Perhaps the best known periodical was *The Shepherd of Israel* published monthly by the American Board of Missions to the Jews. Written half in Yiddish and half in English, it usually featured a testimony or spoke to an issue such as the Trinity, messianic prophecy, etc. *The Mediator* was a larger periodical, edited by Henry and Marie Einspruch and published bi-monthly by the Lederer Foundation. It contained superb articles. At the same time, several missions combined to produce *HaOr* (The Light). Al (Avi) Brickner was the editor, and the publication was known for high scholarship and excellent writing. Elias Newman in Pittsburgh published another periodical, sponsored by a Lutheran mission.

One anomaly of the 1950s and 1960s was known as "the parish approach." I mentioned previously that the Christian Reform Church (CRC) had a mission station in Chicago called Nathaniel Institute. The facilities of Nathaniel Institute were sold, and a CRC clergyman named Alfred Huijen was employed. He wrote a book titled *The Parish Approach* in which he advocated that we do away with mission stations altogether and train the churches to do missionary work to reach the Jews. Huijen's ministry was

to go about training churches, but the problem was that those who advocated this approach were not showing the churches how to witness by example. Much of what they knew was secondhand. The Zion Society for Israel, which had operated several very effective mission stations, withdrew from those stations, and through a man named C.M. Hanson, advocated the parish approach. The Zion Society, with all of its resources, was absorbed into one of the many mergers of the Lutheran Church. The Presbyterian Church also had a fling with the parish approach. In theory, the parish approach was a good idea, but it turned out to be unrealistic. Basically, Jewish evangelism is too intimidating to all but the most stalwart of Christian witnesses. That is not to say there aren't some effective witnesses to Jewish people within the churches. There are simply nowhere near enough to replace the work being done by Jewish missions.



Ceil Rosen standing on a soapbox for the first and last time, giving her testimony on the streets of New York City in the 1950s.

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Missionary David Rothstein reports from **Fort Lauderdale**, “I had been meeting with Renee for quite some time. She even asked God to reveal His truth to her and was growing impatient waiting for Him to show her something. Finally, Renee asked me how we could worship Jesus since God wants us to worship Him alone. I pointed out from the Gospel of John that Jesus *is* God. Suddenly the light seemed to go on. Renee said, ‘Oh, now I get it!’ and prayed to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior.”

From **New York**, missionary Kina Forman reports, “Charlotte K. wrote to request some of our gospel tracts. When Maren (our office manager) sent the tracts, she wanted to include Charlotte on our mailing list, but wasn’t sure whether she was a believer. I would have assumed she was a believer based on her request, but Maren’s question prompted me to call and ask. Charlotte turned out to be a Jewish woman who wanted our tracts to help her learn more about Jesus! She has agreed to meet with me to study the Bible. I praise God for Maren’s discernment!”

Paris branch leader Stephen Pacht reports, “Yalli R. is a 28-year-old Israeli whom (trainee) Kate met while handing out tracts in New York several months ago. Yalli (who travels quite a bit) has now accepted the Lord here in Paris!”

London branch leader Jonathan Bernd reports, “Reaction to our billboard ad [pictured on this page] has been hot! The local council forced the billboard owner to remove the ad, claiming it was illegal. Two local newspapers, both of which have largely Jewish readership, have reported the controversy. We’re thankful for the media coverage and pray it will make the messiahship of Jesus even more unavoidable than the actual billboard would have.”

Elena Parker, our co-laborer* in **Mexico**, sent this wonderful news: “Two young Jewish men came over to learn about their Messiah and both prayed, accepting Jesus as their Messiah. I was moved as they clasped their New Testaments—one in Hebrew and one in Spanish.

Pray for Joram and Sammy to grow in their new faith!”
**Co-laborers in Messiah are specially trained Jews for Jesus volunteers. Elena is in full-time ministry in addition to what she does for us.*

Los Angeles branch leader Tuvya Zaretsky reports, “Yeshiva-educated Mark R. is from an Orthodox family in Brooklyn. His Christian girlfriend has been nudging him to investigate Y’shua. Mark has cancer and may not have



much time left on this earth, but he prayed with me to receive Jesus! Praise God! Death won’t be able to hold him since he embraced eternal life in Y’shua.”

Trainee Moshe Shuai reports, “While in **Maryland**, I prayed with a young woman from Egypt to receive God’s gracious gift of salvation. What a privilege it was for me, as an Israeli, to lead an Arab to the Lord of all peoples.”

Outreach worker Sergey Koulakov reports, “While looking for an apartment for the Jews for Jesus office in **Dnepropetrovsk**, I met a landlady, Elvira D. who turned out to be Jewish and open to the gospel. We studied the Bible and she prayed to receive Y’shua. Please pray that Elvira will grow in her faith and continue to meet with me for discipleship.”