

# JEW<sup>S</sup> F<sup>OR</sup> JESUS

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ESTABLISHED 32 A.D., GIVE OR TAKE A YEAR

JUNE 2004

## Embarrassed *By David Brickner, Executive Director*

Many children undergo an interesting change around the time they enter middle school. Suddenly, they don't want to be seen with their parents. In previous years, if they forgot to bring their books or their lunch to school, Mom or Dad could walk right into their classroom and deliver the needed goods and the kids were even grateful. Not anymore. This good deed must now be performed on the sly. The parent has to wait in the hall, out of sight. The child will eventually make his way outside the classroom, furtively glance up and down the hallway to make sure no one is watching, then quickly grab the forgotten item and skulk back into class. Being in that position kind of made me want to yell after my child, "It's okay. They all have parents too."

While such behavior is understandable among children, it can be extremely painful when practiced by adults. Most families probably have a cousin or uncle they wish would not come to the wedding—that one family member who seems to cause a twinge of embarrassment whenever they turn up. But what if you happen to be that family member?

Many of us in Jews for Jesus became that person when we came to faith in Jesus. Sometimes we are not invited to extended family functions, or sometimes

we are invited with the condition that we keep quiet about our beliefs.

It may hurt when unbelieving family members are embarrassed by what we believe or the fact that we are missionaries, but it is understandable because they don't yet know Jesus or understand that telling about Him is a high calling. Thankfully, we have a spiritual family that does understand.

*People are embarrassed to be too closely associated with anyone or anything that endangers their acceptance into the status quo.*

So you can imagine how discouraging it is when members of our believing family in the Body of Christ become embarrassed to be seen with us. Recently a pastor and head elder reneged on their commitment to have Jews for Jesus in their church because they didn't want to jeopardize their relationship with Jewish community leaders. I can't tell you how many times this has happened, and it never gets

easier to hear about it. These are people who love the Lord and know that Jesus is the only way for people to be saved. They truly want to see Jewish men and women come to faith in Christ. But when we do, and when we speak out for Him among the Jewish people in their neighborhood, they become embarrassed by our presence.

This trend has been painfully obvious among those who are involved in "dialogue" and "reconciliation" movements. These groups work hard to forge better relationships between Christians and Jews, a commendable endeavor. But those relationships usually develop at the expense of those of us Jewish believers in Jesus. I had an opportunity to point this out in a recent book review for *Christianity Today*. I titled the review "Elephant in the Room" because that is what we Jews who believe in Jesus become in these situations. We are there, larger than life at times, but people are embarrassed to talk about us or include us in the conversation. When I asked one Christian leader why he didn't insist that we be included in a dialogue he was organizing he told me, "David, I love you guys, but Messianic Jews bring more heat than light to the discussion." One well known seminary sponsoring such a dialogue even chose to exclude one of their own professors because he was a Jewish Christian. How shameful. And let me tell you, it's getting worse.

*(continued from page 1)*

The real problem with this kind of embarrassment is that ultimately it can lead followers of Jesus to distance themselves from the Lord who bought them. According to a recently published article in *Charisma* magazine, well known Christian Pastor John Hagee, who has developed quite a close relationship with Jewish leaders, no longer teaches it is necessary for Christians to preach the gospel to their Jewish friends. This is a dangerous trend that is carving a wide swath through the whole Body of Christ.

People are embarrassed to be too closely associated with anyone or anything that endangers their acceptance into the status quo. The problem is, they don't realize and can't admit it. Instead, they tell themselves that they don't want to jeopardize their chances of influencing a person or group for the gospel. That sounds like a noble concern, but it is based on a false premise.

How are people influenced for the gospel, and whom does God use to accomplish His purposes? The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin and of truth, and God uses the foolish and simple to confound the wise. He took a bunch of fisherman and empowered them by His Holy Spirit to go and build His church. Therefore, we do not have to worry that someone else is going to interfere with our ability to influence someone for the Lord because the only influence we have on someone's heart is what the Holy Spirit empowers us to do.

If we would realize that evangelism only works when it is powered by the Holy Spirit then we would not insist

that certain methods be used over others. The method is to be faithful and obedient to God's word and to clear our hearts of the clutter that would stand in the way of what He wants to do in and through us.

Too often people do not realize that they are shielding their own reputation, their own relationships and their own sense of acceptance when they disassociate from what they term "confrontational methods." The gospel is not to be presented for the purpose of distressing someone, but it is bound to cause distress in the one who

*To avoid confrontation is to avoid the truth of the gospel.*

understands it. This is not due to the method but the message itself. Our sin alienates us from God. If it were not so, we would not need a savior. Anyone who understands the message, no matter how lovingly it is presented, must feel confronted by the very personal problem to which Christ is the only solution. To avoid confrontation is to avoid the truth of the gospel.

It is natural for the world to avoid confrontation because everything in our society teaches us to seek as much

comfort and avoid as much pain as possible. I certainly prefer comfort to pain, don't you? But if we would follow Jesus, we must accept that there are situations in which we must set aside our comfort and endure pain. If we don't, we show that the world has influenced us more than we could ever hope to influence the world. Charles Colson recently commented on this trend: "Mainstream means getting along. To get there, all we have to do is abandon biblical responsibility."

Recently I was reading someone's application for our missionary staff. Most telling for me was a reference from this person's former employer. She said of this applicant, "In all the years he worked here, I never knew he was Jewish and I never knew he was a Christian." I could not in good conscience consider that application.

We must firmly resist the temptation to be embarrassed by our Lord or by our association with His people. We will constantly be pulled in that direction by our own human desire for acceptance. If we cannot acknowledge that tendency in ourselves, what hope do we have of rejecting it?

Jesus warned us, "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven." Let's not behave toward Jesus like a middle school child toward their parent. Let's openly acknowledge Him and all those who love Him. The more people see our love for Him, the more they will be able to love Him, too.

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



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## THE BYG\* PIC

\*Operation Behold Your God is our plan, God willing, to reach every city with a population of 25,000 or more Jewish people outside the land of Israel before 2006.

Last month we asked you to pray for Behold Your God Kharkov, led by Misha Vayshengolts, assisted by Dima Orlovsky. We told you some of their plans for the campaign but did not publicize the dates, due to heavy opposition.

Now we can tell you that by the time this newsletter reaches you, our Kharkov campaign will be wrapping up! Please pray for the campaign to end well and for good follow-up with those who have prayed to receive the Lord, as well as those who are seeking and just want further information.

Please also pray for our Behold Your God campaigns in general, that God will continue to raise up churches that will be excited to participate when we approach them concerning BYG in their city.



# Prayer Prompters

Please pray for:

- God to strengthen the church's conviction concerning the need for open proclamation to fulfill the Great Commission, and similarly for
- Christians not to be deceived into thinking that forthright proclamation and a testimony through a life lived well are somehow mutually exclusive
- our Kharkov staff and volunteers as they finish the last days of their Behold Your God campaign, and for good follow up (see this page)
- grace and strength for new Jewish believers "Steve" in Chicago (p. 6), as well as "Brenda" (New York) and Eduardo (Vancouver) (p. 8)
- salvation for Brenda's 10-year-old daughter (New York) and the Jewish man and his friend (Moscow) who seem interested but afraid to attend our meetings (p. 8)
- our upcoming New York City Summer Witnessing campaign next month, and especially for the training going on now; we have participants from England, Israel, France, Russia and Australia, and we are beginning a leadership track of training for those who have participated in past campaigns

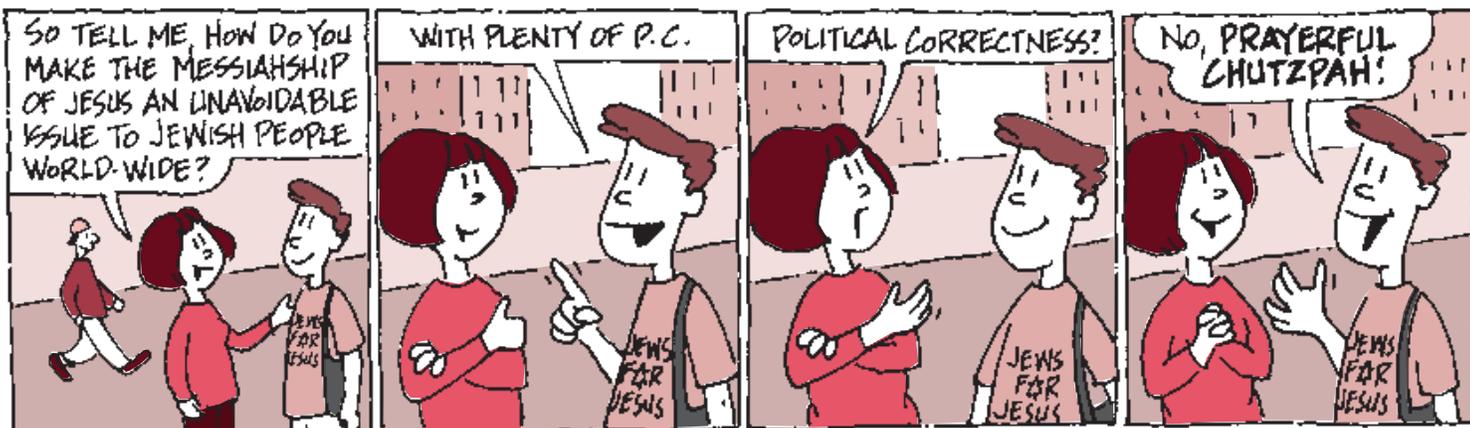
## Test your yiddishkeit

What is *chutzpah*?

(the "ch" is pronounced more like "kh" and the "u" is pronounced like the "ou" in could)

- the foot of a dog named Chutz
- the father of a dog named Chutz
- an upfront boldness, what some people would refer to as "nerve"

If you answered C, you may now move on to the cartoon:



# BUILD AND BE BUILT

“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” (Ephesians 4:11-12)

The Apostle Paul taught the Ephesians that building up the church is a matter of teamwork. In chapter four of his letter to the church he mentions several players on the team, and it is clear that God has bound missionaries and local churches together as partners to labor together for His Kingdom’s sake. Of course, it goes without saying that God is the Captain of the team.

Since being in Washington, D.C., I’ve seen this partnership at work between our Jews for Jesus branch and a particular local church, McLean Bible Church. It’s been a fantastic outworking of the scriptural model. This church and our ministry have been able to help each other build up the Body of Christ.

Within my first seven months in the D.C. area, McLean Bible Church referred four non-believing Jewish people to us so that our missionaries

could begin to visit with them and present the gospel in a uniquely Jewish manner. One of those four has already received the Lord and we continue to minister to the others. I love the trust this church has placed in our ministry, demonstrated in the way they refer Jewish visitors to us. This is the single most helpful thing they can do to enable us to evangelize our people.

The church has lent a helping hand to our work in other ways as well. They have allowed us to use their equipment to print our gospel tracts. They’ve publicized some of our outreach events with inserts in their Sunday worship bulletins. They have even included a couple of us as part of their missionary family that they support financially.

What a blessing this church has been for the cause of Jewish evangelism in the Washington, D.C. area! We need more churches like that here, as well as in all the cities where we have missionaries. Such partnerships go a long, blessed way!

But it’s not a one-way street. In turn, we try to bless this church, doing our part to build up the Body. More often than not, we refer those whom McLean sends us back to them. They

send people to us for evangelism and we send them back for discipleship and service. We also try to be a resource to the church. I’ve received several e-mails that the pastor’s secretary has forwarded from members who have questions related to Jewish culture and holidays. I’ve been happy to respond so that people in the church have a better appreciation for Jewish people and are better equipped to witness to their Jewish friends. By handling some of his e-mail, I also feel that I’m helping to lighten the pastor’s load and I’m using our unique ministry knowledge base for the sake of the church.

One of the slogans of the early pioneer movement of settlers to modern Israel was “Build and be Built.” In coming to build the Land, the settlers in turn were built strong in body and soul. This slogan fits with our work as believers. As the local church and Jews for Jesus work together, we are building a strong Body of Messiah and we, in turn, are being built strong in Him.

—Stephen Katz  
Chief of Station  
Washington, D.C.



# GOD’S APPOINTMENTS



I was fighting disappointment, having realized my Christ in the Passover presentation was not to be for the entire congregation, but only for the children in the confirmation class. I

like teaching children, but I also wanted to win the friendship of some of the adults in the congregation for our ministry. Little did I know of the appointment that God had waiting for me.

Right away the pastor told me that one of the church members would be bringing some of the Passover items. He told me

her husband was Jewish and not a believer. The wife and daughter attended the church and the daughter was in the confirmation class. To my delight, the husband, Mr. Goldberg, came to the presentation also, and immediately engaged me in conversation. By the time I started the Passover program, I felt like I had already talked my heart out.

# PROSELYTISM OR EVANGELISM?

Here in France, “Proselytism” is a popular word with an unpopular connotation. I am often asked if we “proselytize”—and no compliment is intended in the question. It is ironic that this term is now used to describe attempts by Christians to convert Jews and implicitly to do so in an unethical way.

A proselyte at the time of Jesus was a Gentile who converted to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—a Gentile who became a Jew by adopting the God of the Jews! Ruth, King David’s great-grandmother, is perhaps the most famous proselyte.

A proselyte was much prized in Jewish thinking—to such an extent that the Talmud (Jewish oral tradition, which has been recorded and is considered on par with the Torah by religious Jews) declares, “God dispersed Israel among the Nations to the sole end that proselytes should multiply among them.” One of the jewels of religious Jewish literature, the *Targum Onkelos*, was written by the proselyte Onkelos. Yet, today many rabbis and even certain Christians proudly renounce proselytism and roundly denounce those who practice it. A mild-mannered missionary friend of ours in

Germany was recently forced to resign from the Council of Christians and Jews on the grounds that he was involved in proselytism.

Actually, Jews for Jesus is not involved in proselytism. We are not looking to turn Gentiles into Jews—nor Jews into Gentiles! Nor do we offer any inducement for Jews (or Gentiles) to turn to Jesus. After all, Jesus’ promises of peace, joy, forgiveness, His indwelling Spirit and eternal life are all the inducement we need!

Some people use the word “proselytism” to damn evangelism. But evangelism simply means announcing the Good News of God’s salvation plan. And every disciple of Jesus has received the commission to do so.

Some Christians say that their way of giving the Good News to Jewish people is to show the love of Christ without talking about the message of Christ. But how can you separate the demonstration of the love of Christ from the proclamation of the gospel of Christ? As if Christian love exists without prayerful attempts to explain the gospel—as if the gospel could be explained without Love! The gospel is itself the supreme demonstration of God’s love for the Jewish people!

I remember Ethel, a Jewish friend attending her first Bible study in our home. As she read the words: “I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd gives His life for His sheep. . . . My Father loves Me because I lay down My life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.” (John 10:11,17,18), she gasped. Then she exclaimed, “For two thousand years we’ve been accused of killing Jesus, and here He tells us that He sacrificed His life for us!”

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing comes by the Word of God. If there is no Word of God behind our love, how will people know the truth of the gospel? How will they know what Jesus did, and why?

What better way of showing our love for the Jewish people than by sharing with them the Good News that Jesus the Jew, Son of God, gave His life that every Jew might come to know God’s salvation?

—Stephen Pacht  
Chief of Station  
Juifs pour Jésus  
Paris, France



Mr. Goldberg sat right in the front row and listened attentively. Divine wisdom had brought him to this class of children that night, because I was able to depart from the regular Passover “script” and give a very simple, clear presentation. As I allowed the children to interact and interrupt with questions, there was no way Mr. Goldberg could

miss the symbolism and significance of the presentation.

Afterwards, the Goldbergs stayed to talk to me for awhile and Mr. Goldberg gave me his business card for future contact. What an unusual blessing the evening turned out to be. I was reminded once again to never be disappointed with

anything small when it’s from the Lord. You never know how He’ll add His increase to it.

—Melissa Moskowitz  
*Melissa directs our children’s camp in the Midwest and also edits our Havurah publication for Jewish believers in Jesus.*

# Principles of Spiritual Agriculture

Some plant, some water and some reap.

When I speak in churches, people often ask how effective our ministry is. Are we seeing many Jewish people come to faith? My response is always the same: "I wish I could tell you that the number of Jewish people coming to faith is a direct result of our hard work." That's not to say that we don't work hard, but we are keenly aware that when a Jewish person or anyone else comes to faith, it is truly the work of the Holy Spirit. I go on to explain that our responsibility is proclamation. Now it is true that in working with a gospel-resistant people group like the Jewish people, we spend much of the time trying to get their attention long enough to proclaim our message. But in the end, it is the work of the Holy Spirit that brings them to faith.

My experience as a missionary over the last 30 years is that 60-70% of the Jewish people that I pray with to receive the Lord are people whom I have never met before the day we pray. This means that 60-70% of the Jewish people that I have prayed with to receive the Lord have heard the gospel before they met me, and

have been struggling with its message. More often than not, they've heard the message from a Christian who is willing to risk rejection in order to make the gospel real to their Jewish friend.

In these cases, people come to me with an understanding of the gospel and a need to see how believing in Jesus is not a betrayal of the Jewish people, but the fulfillment of our destiny. They also have a need to talk to someone who has faced the rejection they know is coming should they take that step of faith in Jesus. My experience with telling my Jewish mother of my faith enables me to help other Jewish people face their family and friends.

Recently, our office received a call from a local Christian bookstore. The store owner passed on the name of a Christian whose Jewish husband is suffering from diabetes. The owner had mentioned our ministry to this woman and she asked the bookstore to pass on her husband's name to us, to see if we'd be willing to meet with him.

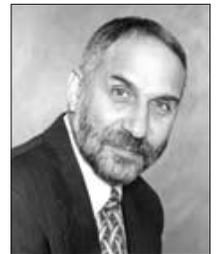
Sometimes Christians who want us to visit their loved ones are a bit overly

optimistic about how the gospel will be received. But in this case, the optimism was warranted. When I arrived, I found Steve lying in bed. He was in physical and spiritual pain, declaring his guilt concerning how he had lived his life. After reading Scripture, I explained the basis of God's forgiveness. Steve's response indicated that much work had already been done and that his heart was ready to receive Christ. So we prayed and Steve became a child of God that day.

I continue to meet with Steve and continue to thank God for His faithfulness in preparing the way. I am also thankful for the store owner who referred Steve's wife to us, and for her desire to have us come minister to her husband.

Some sow and others water . . . and when we harvest where we know others have sown and watered, we can only give glory to God.

—Jhan Moskowicz  
Chief of Station  
Chicago



# Provoking to Jealousy

“We feel the best way to reach Jewish people is to provoke them to jealousy as the Scripture says.”

Recently, we find more and more people quoting this verse as they explain why they would rather not take part in a Jews for Jesus outreach coming to their town.

These people often misunderstand the Scripture to mean that they need not be the first to mention the gospel in conversation with Jewish friends. Rather, when their friends see the peace and joy that they have, they will desire that for themselves and open their hearts to ask how they can receive it. And in fact, we praise God that sometimes this does happen. Many Jewish believers note this type of experience as a wonderful step along their way to faith. However, this does not mean that the Jewish friend has been provoked to jealousy as described in the verse. The Scripture is not talking about Jewish people being jealous of another person's joy, or their peace.

In fact, the Bible does not present the concept of provoking the Jewish people to jealousy as a means of evangelism for Christians to employ. The original context for provoking Israel to jealousy is found in Deuteronomy, where the Lord expresses His jealousy over Israel because of her idolatry. It is He who declares that in return *He* will provoke her to jealousy by taking other nations into a relationship that she, Israel, was meant to have.

Yet, many Christian friends who do not wish to risk relationships they have worked so hard to build with Jewish friends invoke this Scripture as though it is a kinder, gentler way of evangelism, somehow in tension with,

or contrary to, proclaiming the gospel to Jewish people directly.

If Christian friends truly desire to live out this verse, they will be very clear about what they have and how they got it: a relationship with God through the Jewish Messiah, Jesus. This is indeed provocative to a Jewish person. Unfortunately, many who quote this verse do not want to provoke anyone to anything. They wish to avoid any kind of provocation and they see this Scripture as an alternative to risking a relationship.

Many who talk about provoking to jealousy also talk about “earning the right to speak into a person's life.”

*Many who quote this verse do not want to provoke anyone to anything.*

This concept is found nowhere in Scripture. If I am presenting myself as the way of salvation, then it would make sense to earn the right to present the message of me. But the message is not me; it is Y'shua, Jesus. Jesus does not need to “earn the right” to speak into a person's life—He did that at Creation and again at Calvary. Those of us who know and love Him have not only the right but the responsibility to tell others what He has done.

I think that most Christian friends who use catch-phrases to show that they should not “confront” people with the gospel honestly believe that somehow avoiding risk to the relationship with their Jewish friends will increase their chance of influencing them for the gospel. This is based on a false premise. Only the Holy Spirit has that kind of influence. The gift of faith is supernatural and it is given by supernatural means. That

is why there are many methods and many ways of sharing the gospel that work. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit is pleased to work in many ways.

What bothers me most is not that people who are protecting their relationships with Jewish friends choose not to work alongside Jews for Jesus. What bothers me more is the sick feeling that people expect their friendship to lead a person to salvation, even though they are often unwilling to say or do the things that will make that person's need for Christ clear. What really bothers me is that some people seem to like Jewish people enough to want a relationship with them, but don't seem

to love them enough to risk that relationship—which cannot save—in order to invite the person into the only relationship that can.

When you love, you concern yourself with the well being of the beloved. When you love, you also recognize that you are not the key to another person's well being.

So if you know someone who feels that provoking the Jewish people to jealousy is the way to win them to Christ, maybe you would pass on this article. To those who want to provoke my people to jealousy I say great, bring it on! But if you are going to truly provoke someone to jealousy, expect a few sparks to fly. That's what happens when people get jealous. Are you willing to risk it?

—Ruth Rosen  
editor

## New York

Karol Joseph reports, “Brenda (not her real name) had been thinking about Jesus for some time, and with all the controversy about *The Passion of the Christ* she called two days before the movie opened. She had so many questions that we talked for over an hour. I spoke about the prophets’ predictions concerning the coming of the Messiah, and it all rang true to her. She kept coming back to the question of where her father (who has passed away) is now. Clearly this issue was the biggest barrier to Brenda.

“We agreed to talk again after she’d seen the movie. Having seen it, Brenda seemed even more convinced of the truth of the gospel. She had even been talking to people at work about it, which had not gone over well—she works in a Jewish organization!

“Still, the question of her father’s fate disturbed Brenda. We prayed together, and I pointed out that her father would want her to know the truth about Jesus. She prayed with me, receiving Jesus to be her Savior. Please pray for Brenda. She knows that her new beliefs may cost her job as well as the relationships she enjoys with her family and friends. Please also pray for her ten-year-old daughter, as she begins to learn about Jesus for herself.”

## Toronto (sort of)

Marcello Araujo reports on Toronto’s cross-country missionary work: “I was in Vancouver two years ago for a missions conference and I happened to meet a Jewish man (not a believer)

named Eduardo. We have remained in touch by e-mail and phone. As the months went by, I could see that Eduardo was counting the cost of following Jesus. Praise the Lord, he came to faith in Messiah!”

## Kiev

Leonid Krouter reports, “God showed His authority as I was doing a morning sortie (tract-passing expedition) inside the subway station. A police officer approached me, and told me to leave. I explained to him that I had a legal right to be there. But he didn’t want to

From Natasha Krouter

“We did something new in our branch: we had our first fellowship meeting of missionary wives. We shared our experiences and talked about how we are bringing up our children. Then we saw a video by Bruce Wilkerson on the subject of fellowship between husbands and wives. It was wonderful!”

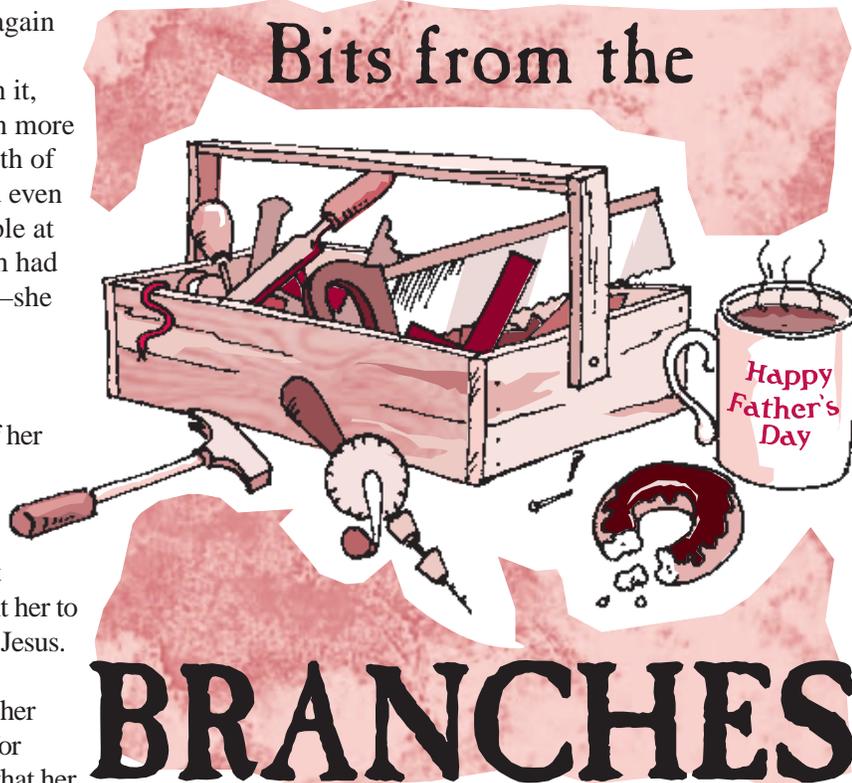
## Moscow

Maxim Ammosov reports, “While on a sortie on Thursday, I noticed a man who had stopped to read a broadside.

When he finished reading it he

asked me about my background. I told him I am Jewish and he replied, “So am I. Why are you wasting time trying to combine diametrically opposite things: Jewish people and Jesus?” I began explaining to him that Jesus was Jewish, the first apostles were Jewish, and the first Christians were also Jewish. He evidently hadn’t thought about that before and it surprised him. However, he concluded our energetic conversation by saying, ‘I don’t want to listen to this,’ and then he left. To my great joy, he returned fifteen minutes later to take another broadside and an invitation to our Shabbat

meeting, though he would not tell me his name. To my even greater joy, he came to the next Shabbat meeting, and not alone, but with a friend. Unfortunately, they would not come past the door, but stayed there asking questions about our beliefs for a long time. Maybe next time they will come in and hear the message. Please pray for the salvation of this Jewish man and his friend.”



listen to me (like most of the Ukrainian police). So I began telling him the gospel. He kept interrupting and saying that he wouldn’t allow me to hand out pamphlets there. But when I continued and asked if he wanted to receive Jesus, he stepped aside and said he was on duty. He turned suddenly and walked away. I continued to hand out tracts and he didn’t approach me again.”