

JEW^S F^{OR} JESUS[®]

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

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Grace Notes of Thanksgiving *by David Brickner, Executive Director*

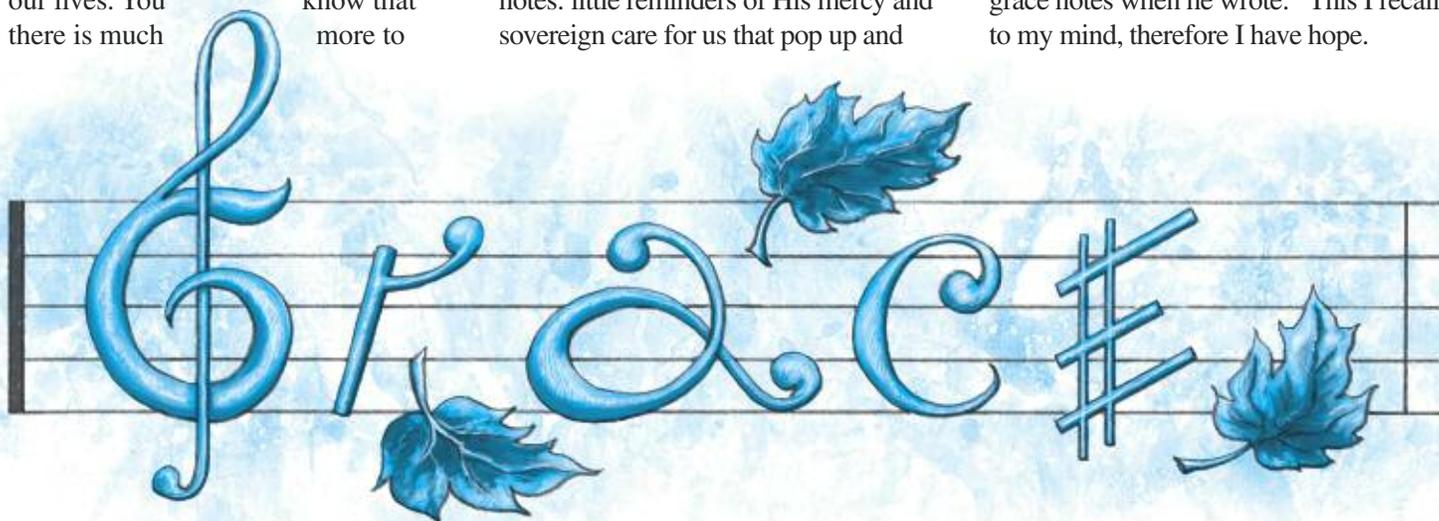
At times, life's pains and problems seem overwhelming—and the more so if those times coincide with holiday celebrations. When this happens it can be hard to feel much beyond the flood of sadness flowing out of the circumstances of our lives. You know that there is much more to

attention to execute them properly. As a trumpet player, I have long been aware of the importance of grace notes in music but more recently I've seen that, as in music, so it is in life.

God provides His children with grace notes: little reminders of His mercy and sovereign care for us that pop up and

They are the small blessings that appear to us as the smile of God, His tender hand on our shoulder, the gentle reminder of His presence if we tune our hearts to hear.

Perhaps Jeremiah was speaking of these grace notes when he wrote: "This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope.



your life than that current crisis or struggle—but sometimes it fills your field of vision so that it is hard to see anything else. I'm learning that it is precisely when this happens that I need to look for grace notes from God.

If you haven't heard or understood about grace notes, they are essentially musical ornamentation: a special series of notes to increase the interest and enhance the artfulness of a melodic line. Some grace notes are long and others are very short. Because they appear smaller than regular musical notations on the music staff and because they can pop up unexpectedly, it requires extra

intersect with the challenges of our daily lives. We know that the Scriptures are full of reminders of how God cares and keeps His promises to His children. For example, the Psalmist encourages, "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits" (Psalm 103:2). The Bible enumerates all those benefits, providing an anchor of hope to help us weather the fiercest storms.

It's important to go regularly to the Bible to strengthen our faith and to receive instruction as we wait on God to act. But I would like to invite us to think of the grace notes of God as His multiplied mercies that come to us in the circumstances of our daily lives.

Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:21-23). God's "new mercies" can be seen in the midst of daily life as situations that reveal His kindness. I think of grace notes as refreshing reminders of God's favor and mercy. As in music, they may be small or fleeting signs, easily overlooked—or they may be more sustained. Either way, they add beauty and ornamentation to my life; another reason to remember and give thanks to God.

As we approach this season of Thanksgiving, it can be easy to focus

(continued from page 1)

on all the challenges confronting us. Many might be tempted to give in to discouragement and despair as our country—indeed the entire world—is embroiled in all manner of troubles and trials. The economy has been nothing but a giant roller coaster that has left many people in need, some quite desperate. Our military is caught up in seemingly intractable conflicts and seemingly endless wars leading only to uncertainty. Our politicians appear completely incapable of governing successfully or with real integrity, and corruption is often the norm among our leaders. Likewise, many popular church leaders seem to be toying with ideas that call into question the clear teaching of God's Word.

Yes, life's circumstances could leave us far from thankful this Thanksgiving. That is why I believe we need to look extra hard for the grace notes of God in our lives. It takes a certain amount of discipline, attentiveness and prayer, but when God shows us His mercies, it becomes an occasion to remember long after the moment is gone.

It might be good to make our own list of grace notes that God has arranged for our lives. This list can be for private reflection, or possibly something to share with loved ones around the Thanksgiving holiday. However you choose to use your list, I know that the spiritual discipline of looking for these grace notes will make us all more grateful and graceful servants of God. We may find that our grace notes as shared with others will turn into a symphony of praise to our God. If you would care to share, I would love to hear some of your recollections of

God's grace notes from this past year. Here are a few of mine:

This past year has been the hardest of my entire life. Yet, in the midst of great sorrow God has blessed me with the joy of seeing my son Isaac marry a wonderful, godly Jewish believer in Jesus named Shaina. Together they are serving the Lord with Jews for Jesus while attending Biola University. My daughter Ilana also loves Jesus, attends Biola University and serves the Lord with our Jews for Jesus children's ministry. My children are a wonderful ornament of God's grace in my life: His smile of favor that continues in the midst of a storm.

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For Jews for Jesus, the fact that our founder, Moishe Rosen, went home to be with the Lord a year and a half ago has been an incalculable loss—a sorrow deeply felt, especially by his immediate family. Yet it was a joy to see God's hand at work as the gospel was powerfully proclaimed in the many news reports that covered his death around the world. In that same vein, this year God provided a wonderful publisher, Thomas Nelson, to bring the story of Moishe's life to print so that it will continue to be a witness as well as an encouragement to many. What an answer to prayer and a sign of God's continuing favor

resting on the life and ministry of his servant Moishe in perpetuity.

One of our greatest challenges in Jews for Jesus has been to raise up the next generation of missionaries to the Jews. This concern has grown more urgent as our founding leadership continues to age. None of us likes to think of ourselves as getting old, but the years do add the pains of wear and tear on our bodies. Various conditions and illnesses have visited many of us this year, deepening my concern not only for my friends and colleagues, but also for the future of this ministry that I love. We have urgently prayed over this and little by little we've seen answers, but this year God's provision has been remarkable.

Young people have been joining us in larger numbers than at any time in recent memory. This year I had the privilege of encouraging four young men in leading our summer witnessing campaign in New York City, a campaign that was carried out by more than 20 young Jewish believers—who were all in their 20s. In fact, if I add up the young people coming alongside our staff to take part in our ministry just this year (including new staff, interns, volunteers) it numbers more than 50. Hallelujah!

What a huge blessing we find in the evidence of God's favor even when facing our own frailties and limitations. These grace notes add so much to my appreciation of what the Lord is doing in Jews for Jesus and in my own life. I trust God will help you recall His many grace notes in your life this year, so that you will have many more reasons to celebrate a blessed Thanksgiving. ✨



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



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We're thanking God for what He's provided in 2011, including:

New outposts in Geneva, Switzerland and Budapest, Hungary

A completed tour by Blue Mosaic, a new Jews for Jesus music team

Purchase of the Moishe Rosen Center in Israel*

Two new communities of young Jewish believers in Jesus: one group of people seeking to use their artistic gifts for evangelism on the East Coast* and a group of students seeking to share their faith with other students on the West Coast

The book deal with Thomas Nelson for Moishe's biography

The *Flowers of the Son* documentary has won awards and is drawing attention to the importance of evangelism in Israel.

Lots of new staff! (see pages 4-6)

As we give thanks to God, we also want to thank you, because it's through your friendship, prayers and support that we are seeing His hand of blessing. Thank you for standing with us to help make the Messiahship of Jesus an unavoidable issue to our Jewish people worldwide!

*See Prayer Prompters



PRAYER PROMPTERS

Please pray for:



all of our staff to be aware of God's grace notes in their lives and throughout our ministry



all our new trainees to come through with flying colors, and lots of grace and blessings for the spouses and children (of those who have them) during this intense time (p. 4-6)



God's blessing on our facility in Israel, and that nothing will interfere with its use for God's glory



editing and production of Moishe's biography to make it just what God wants it to be for His use



God's continued help in raising up the next generation of evangelists



just the right team members for our 2012 traveling music team



God's blessings on Jeremiah Zaretsky and Aaron Trank as they oversee the above mentioned communities of Jewish believers on both coasts



Peter Nasser as he plans our next BYG Israel campaign



salvation for Joyce in Chicago, God's grace and continued growth for David in Israel, continued grace and strength for Gerry in LA, comfort for his believing family at this phase of his life, and a testimony to those who don't yet believe (p. 8)



Thank God for . . .

THE NEXT GENERATION OF JEWS FOR JESUS!

And thanks to you for praying for God's provision. We've got a great bunch of young people who are preparing for missionary service with us and we hope you will keep them in prayer.

Most of our trainees are in New York City. . . . Maybe you've seen the commercial ad that shows people turning up their noses at salsa that's made in Manhattan, but we can assure you, it's a great place for training missionaries! This year's class includes:

Iain and Rebekah Smith

Iain was born and raised in England. He grew up in a Christian home and learned about the Bible from a young age, but never thought of these lessons as more than stories. Iain began attending a small group from church at age fourteen, and while he came to understand the gospel better, he was not convinced that it was true. He had stopped attending church for a while when he agreed to go to a Christian conference in 2003. He was challenged by a testimony he heard there and responded by surrendering his life to Jesus.

Iain has a B.S. in physics from Bristol University. While studying there, he met his wife-to-be, Rebekah Harvey, a Jewish believer in Jesus. Through Rebekah, Iain developed an interest in Jewish people, and since then his concern to share the gospel with them has become very personal and deeply seated. In fact, Iain participated in our Light to the Nations campaign in Germany in June 2010 (as did Rebekah). In his spare time, Iain enjoys basketball and photography.

Rebekah was raised in a Messianic Jewish home, both her parents being Jewish believers in Jesus. She has

been a believer since age three—also the year that her parents joined the staff of Jews for Jesus. Rebekah participated in our Halutzim program at age sixteen, boldly sharing her faith on the streets of New York City. However, in her later teens she struggled with her faith. During the last term of her first year at university, she heard a sermon about Peter getting out of the boat to walk on water with Jesus—and realized that God was calling her to live for Him with her whole heart. That summer she had an internship at our San Francisco headquarters, which reinforced her choice to leave behind whatever might be hindering her walk with God.

Rebekah has a B.A. in theology and religious studies from Bristol University. She enjoys reading, writing and making clothing (she was a costume designer at university).

Jeremy Saadoun

Jeremy is from a Tunisian Jewish background (both his parents are Jewish). While he grew up knowing the importance of his heritage and traditions, he knew nothing about God—nor did he feel that he needed to. Then he met his wife-to-be, Ibtissame, an Arab Christian. When Ibtissame told Jeremy about Jesus, he was touched by her testimony, her love for the Jewish people, and the courage it had taken for her to convert to Christianity from Islam. He accepted her invitation to a Messianic Jewish congregation and that is where he came to faith in Jesus. He has been



Top: Iain Smith
Middle: Jeremy Saadoun
Bottom: Chantale Onona



Top: Rebekah Smith
Middle: Elliot Marks
Bottom: Sarah Ascher

a believer since October 2004. Before coming on staff with us, he was a businessman who particularly enjoyed opportunities to compete in achieving company goals.

The Saadouns have been involved with our Paris branch, where Joshua Turnil had regular discipleship ministry with Jeremy as a new Jewish believer. In addition to helping with our Paris branch, Jeremy participated on one of our Behold Your God Israel campaigns.

Jeremy enjoys playing guitar and singing. He and Ibtissame have two daughters, Shirel and Lilia.

Elliot Marks

Elliot was born and raised in London. He grew up with a strong Jewish identity and began to think toward making *aliyah* (moving to Israel) as a young adult. While on a kibbutz there one summer, he met Aliza—a Jewish believer in Jesus and daughter of former staff members Loren and Martha Jacobs. Through her, Elli heard the gospel and met various staff members of Jews for Jesus. Aliza asked Elliot to read the book *A Severe Mercy*, by Sheldon Vanauken, and in January 2009, while reading this book he became a believer. Months later, he and Aliza married. They have a daughter, Lilly.

As soon as he became a believer Elli wanted to share his faith with others, and within a month of coming to faith he prayed with his brother to receive the Lord. Elliot participated on one of our Behold Your God Israel campaigns, and has been on two of our New York City summer witnessing campaigns. In fact, this year he was one of the four people who each led campaign for a week under the mentorship of David Brickner.

Elli has a B.A. in philosophy from Manchester Metropolitan University and has also completed three semesters at Moody Theological Seminary in Michigan. Before moving to the United

States to court Aliza, he was a social worker at a Jewish school, caring for children with a wide range of mental and physical disabilities. He's also worked as a youth counselor and youth leader for a Jewish camp in Israel. What's more . . . Elliot plays the drums!

Chantale Onona

Born and raised in Switzerland, Chantale has been a believer since 2007. Her father is a Sephardic Jew from Morocco, who lives in Israel. He and Chantale's mother (a Swiss Christian) divorced when Chantale was only a year old. Though she began going to church at an early age, it was years before she came to understand the gospel in a personal way, and when she did, she gladly received Jesus.

A friend introduced Chantale to Joshua Turnil, leader of our Paris branch. Joshua not only understood the delicate situation she found herself in with regard to her father (who said he would have nothing to do with her should she continue talking about Jesus), but also understood her desire to bridge the gap between Jewish people and the gospel.

When Joshua invited Chantale to spend ten days doing missionary work in Paris, she took the opportunity. Then, with Stephen Pacht opening a work in Switzerland (see October newsletter), Chantale was able to involve herself with Jewish evangelism closer to home. She speaks German fluently and participated on our Light of the World campaigns in Berlin and Frankfurt last summer. Prior to coming on staff with us, Chantale was a student. She enjoys singing and leading worship.

Sarah Ascher

Born in St. Louis and raised in a Messianic home, Sarah grew up hearing about Jesus. At eighteen, she had a faith crisis and realized she had to decide for herself whether she

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believed what her parents had taught her. She read about Buddhism, Hinduism and Mormonism, and even read parts of the Koran. She visited a Hindu temple and talked to friends about their beliefs. She also watched several people she had grown up with go through similar crises. Most of

our Brooklyn work) and Joshua Turnil* (who has temporarily relocated with his family to New York). Joshua's involvement is a real blessing, especially for the Saadouns and Chantale, who will be able to receive training in French.

Meanwhile, we also have two new staff training in Israel!

Avigail Avnery

Avigail's father is Israeli and her mother is Finnish (converted to Judaism). She was born in Israel; however, her parents divorced when she was young. Avigail has lived most of her life in Finland, though she has made regular trips to Israel to visit family.

witnessing campaign before joining our staff. Her Hebrew language skills are stronger than her English, so she is training in Israel.

Avigail enjoys athletics, especially swimming, skiing and cycling. While in school, she also enjoyed acting.

Yulia Mitnitsky

Born and raised in Moscow, Yulia always knew she was Jewish, though her parents did not believe in God and did not encourage her to explore her Jewish identity. Still, she grew up believing in God and lived by a certain set of principles and standards that set her apart as a teenager. When she was fifteen years old, Yulia's parents sent her to an English camp in Slovakia, with Russian teenagers and American teachers, to practice speaking English. This camp was arranged by an international Christian youth organization (Student Venture), so her parents felt she would be in a wholesome environment. At that camp she learned about Jesus and, in August 2003, received Him as her Savior.

Yulia has the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in financial management from a Russian academy of economics, yet she lost her desire to be a businesswoman, preferring to minister to children through camps and Bible clubs. Prior to joining our ministry she served as a counselor in Christian camps in Bulgaria and Poland. Yulia has also been on two New York City witnessing campaigns; in fact, she met her husband, Vlad, through our ministry. Since he has already been through training and is part of our Tel Aviv branch, she is training in Israel.

*While the Turnils are in the U.S., Stephen Pacht (who pioneered the Paris branch and now lives with his family in Geneva; see October newsletter), will be making frequent trips back to Paris to keep the ministry there percolating.



Above: Abigail Avnery
Right: Yulia Mitnitsky



them simply rejected the faith of their parents as blindly as they had once accepted it. Sarah's quest lasted for nine months and she was persuaded that Jesus was truly her Messiah and Savior.

Sarah has studied herbology and is certified in that field. Prior to joining our staff she was a house monitor at a shelter for pregnant women and their children. She has already served on five of our witnessing campaigns in New York City, as well as a Behold Your God Israel campaign in Tel Aviv. Sarah loves street evangelism and caring for children.

As our outreach overseas continues to grow, we are recruiting more and more staff who do not speak English as their first language. This year's trainers are Karol Joseph (who directs

Avigail became a believer in 2004, after reaching a point in life where her need for God became very clear to her. Through reading testimony books, she saw how Jesus changes lives; she called a prayer line she'd found through an ad and prayed to receive the Lord over the phone. Soon Avigail was sharing her faith with others and a few years ago, she felt God was calling her specifically to reach her Jewish people. She left Finland (where she was a registered nurse) and moved to Israel, where she has served with us as an intern. Avigail participated on two BYG Israel campaigns and also a NYC



MOISHE'S MUSINGS on Thanksgiving

Excerpts from Moishe Rosen's lead article in the Jews for Jesus Newsletter, November 1987

Only a person who eats regularly and well learns to be picky about food. Those who don't eat as regularly are never indifferent to food. They are usually thankful in direct proportion to their deprivation and hunger. People who are blessed with plenty are sometimes substantially less thankful.

Indifference to God is a killer disease, and those who are afflicted are unaware of their perilous condition. [The inability] to perceive God's love [is] . . . a living death. The Bible defines it that way, too. It tells us that those who cannot perceive God's love and salvation are dead in their trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 2:13). That's why we at Jews for Jesus feel so compelled to get out the message of God's love and salvation in Y'shua.

The world is spiritually starving and most people don't even know it. They think that the diet God offers them is too bland. They don't want God; they want excitement. They want to overdose on quail, when what they need to sustain life is manna. And the manna, properly presented, need not be bland. Colossians 4:16 admonishes us as God's servants to season the salvation message with salt. With His help we can certainly do that.

Much is said and written these days, especially at holiday time, about alleviating physical hunger in the world, and this is noble and right. How much more impelling should be our concern to bring Jesus, the Bread of Life, to a world that is dying of spiritual malnutrition?

I want you to enjoy your holiday, so don't get too worried or too upset. I just want to remind you that it's important to be thankful and loving. It's also good to

act upon your thankfulness because God has given you so much. I hope that God is sending you all the manna you need and just enough quail for your daily ration as you traverse the wilderness of your earthly pilgrimage. I hope you truly appreciate His provision. I trust you are not indifferent to it.

Thankfulness is the recognition of grace. It is the acknowledgment that someone has given us something that was not due us. Whether the gift is of material value or merely a kindness, it shows that the giver knows who we are and what has meaning and value to us.

I remember the first real gift I ever gave. It was a birthday present for my mother that I had bought with my own money—a potato peeler that cost me a big 15¢. At the time, that was a lot for a nine-year-old who earned pennies for doing errands. The realization that I had done this all by myself made my mother smile. Years later I learned that flowers or a handkerchief or something more personal and less suggestive of kitchen drudgery might have been more appropriate, but my mother had been totally appreciative. She had been thrilled to have a son who wanted to do something nice for her on her birthday.

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I think the heart of the Almighty is truly touched by our small tokens of love. He could create mountains of gold for His treasuries, but the widow's mite means more to Him than mountains of gold, because it comes from a needy heart that says, "I love you, Lord. I trust You to take care of me. So, here . . . take this." I think that's what Thanksgiving is all about. It involves acknowledging God's goodness and care by taking the occasion to say, "Father, I love you; I trust you. Here, take all that I have, and again—thanks!"

Chicago

Lyn Bond reports, “Why would I remember a wrong number from three years ago? Because the caller, who was trying to reach a nurse, left her number asking for a call back so she’d know whether she had the correct number. I called her back, told her I wasn’t a nurse but a minister, and offered to pray for her. It turned out that Joyce was Jewish, and she allowed me to send her some information. In fact, I wrote about this incident in the November 2008 ‘Bits from the Branches.’ I asked prayer for Joyce, who read the material and agreed to have lunch—but since she was out of town, it would have to wait till she returned.

“Over time, I continued to call and remind her about that lunch together, but she always had a good reason why now was not the time for us to get together. She continued to say that she really wanted to get together and she had some questions for me. These phone calls continued until just recently when we *finally* met for lunch.

“The restaurant was noisy, so Joyce invited me to continue the conversation at her home. What an answer to prayer as she asked me to tell her again what I believe about Jesus and why. We parted company with a plan to meet again in a month; that would give her time to read the additional information I left with her. Please pray for more opportunities to minister to Joyce, and that she will come to know Jesus.”

Israel

Oded Cohen reports, “We first received David’s* contact info during our Behold Your God campaign in 2009. From the very first meeting, he was quite curious and open. I usually visit David with Vlad, another of our Israeli staff members. Each time we’d show David a Scripture, he’d say, ‘Wow! I never saw that before.’ He has always had a certain excitement to

wherever he goes—he’d been praying it daily!

“I explained that it is good to repent of specific sins daily, but Y’shua is now his Messiah and Lord and it’s not necessary to continue to pray that prayer. David understood, but said he likes to pray the prayer regularly anyway. He is a well-established, well-educated professional who is influential in his field, and has already shared his faith with some of his friends.

“Please pray for David to grow in his faith and become all God is calling him to be.”

Los Angeles

Cyril Gordon reports, “Recently I had the privilege of ministering to the father of someone who used to be on staff with Jews for Jesus. His name is Gerry and he’s presently in a critical care facility. I understand that in the past he was very hostile to the gospel, but he has recently given his life to Jesus. When I arrived at the hospital, there lay before me a man who had been a very successful oral surgeon, but now was

bedridden with several tubes connecting him to various machines. But with all the suffering he’s gone through in the last several months, I could see that joy and glimmer in his tear-filled eyes when I told him that I, too, was a Jew who believed in Jesus. After some sweet fellowship that included reading the Beatitudes and Psalm 23 with him, Gerry reconfirmed his faith in Jesus as I led him in a prayer. I plan to visit him again soon. Please pray for the salvation of the rest of his family and for the Lord Jesus to be with Gerry in a special way at this time.”



BRANCHES

know more—a good sign that people are walking the path toward faith and salvation in our Lord Jesus.

“During our last visit before leaving for our Passover tours, we left him a few books to read and encouraged him to re-read the Scriptures that we had shared with him. When we got together after a time of not seeing each other, it was a joy to learn that David not only read most of the books we gave him, but he had come to believe that Jesus is his Savior and Messiah! He had also copied the sinner’s prayer so he could take it