



for the Christian who wants to know more about Jews and evangelism

JEWES FOR JESUS®

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

Life from the Dead *by David Brickner, executive director*

Once a theologian was waxing eloquent about Christ's passion. He spoke of it as a mere story, a symbol of hope for renewal and rebirth. A young reporter from *Christianity Today* magazine challenged him with a simple question, "Sir, if you were a newspaper reporter standing outside of the tomb on the third day after

Christianity; we are talking about today's Christianity.

Yes, the world is changing. Cultures shift and change, and we must find new ways to engage people with the gospel. In fact, Jews for Jesus is intentionally learning about our changing culture even as you read this—we want to get a handle on the questions that younger people are asking. The next step will be finding the intersection between those questions and the answers God has provided. Questions may change, and the dynamics of how we interact with people of different generations and varying circumstances may change, but one thing does not change—and that is the gospel.

That power, that purpose, that message of hope is absent from the synagogues, even though the hope of resurrection is rooted in the Old Testament. (See pages 4 and 5.) In fact, any hope for a literal afterlife is considered irrelevant by the majority of Jewish people today. During my studies at Moody Bible Institute, I took part in door-to-door evangelism in an Orthodox Jewish neighborhood on the north side of Chicago. One day I called upon an older woman who happened to be married to a local rabbi. I asked, "Where do you suppose you will go when you die?" Without blinking an eye she replied, "Down the street to the cemetery."

My people, the Jewish people, are without God and without hope in this world. Yet the church, believers in Jesus who gather together around the cross and the *(Continued on page 2)*



When we talk about the cross and the tomb . . . we are talking about today's Christianity.

Christ's crucifixion, what would you report to your newspaper?" The theologian cleared his throat and answered, "Young man, did you say you were a reporter from *Christianity Today* or *Christianity* yesterday?"

Thank God, the cross and empty tomb are not merely symbols! They are historical realities. When we talk about the cross and the tomb we are not reminiscing about yesterday's

The Person, power and purpose that raised the Lord Jesus from the dead is alive and vibrant and at work in the church right now. Yes, worldliness and weaknesses afflict us, and dogma and disagreements sometimes conflict us. Yet, as the bride of our crucified and risen Messiah, we beam a message to a desperate world. There is hope. There are answers. God provided a way for us to have a relationship with Him.

In this edition

March 2016

- Relevant Resurrection reflections..... 1
- Prayer prompts, cartoon and Holy Land tour announcement..... 3
- Resurrection chart..... 4
- Bits from the branches in Budapest, Sydney and Los Angeles..... 6
- Holiday outreach..... 8

(Continued from page 1) empty tomb, have a message of hope and life. Through proclaiming our hope, we can be agents of God's transforming power when it comes to the destiny of thousands of Jewish people who don't yet know Him.

I'm so thankful to God for this transformation in my life and that of my family. My father's family were traditional Jews, strongly affiliated with the Jewish community. One day a Christian couple told them about Jesus. When no one in the family responded, this couple prayed every day for my father and his family—for seven years!

Despite an apparent lack of results, after those seven years my father, his brother and my grandparents became believers—all within a period of weeks. My grandfather's body was ravaged with cancer when he came to faith, and he died soon after. At the funeral my great-grandmother mourned the loss of her son as she cried out in Yiddish, "O my Nathan, he's in the ground, he's in the ground. O my Nathan, he's in the ground." My grief-stricken grandmother, who was only weeks old in her new faith, was able to put her arm around her mother-in-law and whisper, "No, Mamma, Nathan is not in the ground. He's in heaven with the Lord." That, my dear friends, is the difference Christ makes—all the difference in the world.

We hear testimonies of many Jewish believers in Jesus and, time after time, one of the steps in their path to faith

is the bright light of a testimony from a friend or coworker who is not Jewish. It is true that you need to be culturally sensitive when witnessing to a Jewish person, but the truth has a way of cutting through cultural barriers.

For example, the cross has been a symbol of persecution to the Jewish people for centuries because of the atrocities committed in the name of the Crucified One. Some Jewish people have gone so far as to say, "I could never bring myself to walk into a building with a cross in front of it. That would be like spitting on the grave of my ancestors." And yet, God has moved in the hearts of many Jewish people to the point where they have accepted a friend's invitation to church, and it's been a step along the way to salvation. What people say may differ from what they do, once the power of prayer is at work in their lives.

Please, never be afraid or ashamed to invite Jewish friends to your church. They may decline, and you should not feel hurt if they do. Just remember, your pastor and your friends at church have much to offer your unbelieving friends—give them the chance to do so.

Perhaps one of our Jews for Jesus missionaries is going to be at your church or a church in your area presenting "Christ in the Passover." Was there a "Christ in the Passover" itinerary that came with this newsletter? If so, that means we will be in a church near you. Don't miss

the opportunity to invite a Jewish friend! One of the most common things we hear from Christians who have attended our presentations is, "You know, I just wasn't sure if I should invite my Jewish friend. Now I really wish I had!" Please don't be among those to regret a missed opportunity. The worst that can happen (your friend refuses) is far outweighed by the best that can happen. And the best that can happen is summed up by that empty tomb.

There is an empty tomb in Israel's future. The Lord asked of the prophet Ezekiel, "Can these bones live?"* I have abiding confidence that they will. The future of the Jewish people is bright with promise because God has declared the end from the beginning.

God promised a revival—no, a resurrection—that will once again shake the world. "For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?" (Romans 11:15). Life from the dead! That is our hope. That is what God has declared for the future.

David Brickner is also an author, public speaker and avid hiker. Find out more about David, his writings, speaking schedule and possible availability to speak at your church at jewsforjesus.org/david-brickner.

**For an interesting perspective on Ezekiel 37, see an expanded version of this month's chart on resurrection, which is available as an onlinextra.*

We exist to make the messiahship of Jesus an unavoidable issue to our Jewish people worldwide.

Jews for Jesus international headquarters: 60 Haight Street, San Francisco, CA 94102-5895; phone: (415) 864-2600; email: jfj@jewsforjesus.org; web: jewsforjesus.org; also working in: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Russia, South Africa, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom; editor: Ruth Rosen; art director: Paige Saunders; design and illustration: David Yapp; ISSN 0740-5901 Volume 7:5776, March 2016; ©2016 JEWS F:R JESUS.

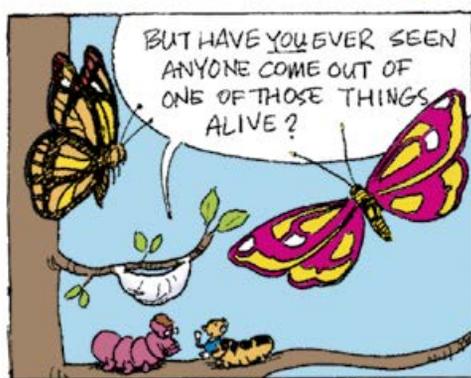


Remember:

Onlinextras like "Hello Israel" and "So what?" now reside with our *RealTime* publication:
RealTime at j4j.co/201603rt
Subscribe to *RealTime* at j4j.co/subemail.

For your convenience:

If you'd like to help Jews for Jesus with a gift and prefer using the Internet, we have a link for you: j4j.co/nl1603



TOUR THE HOLY LAND

This tour is hosted by Lon Solomon; Lon is Jewish and has believed in Jesus for 46 years. He's also pastored McLean Bible Church for 36 years, and has served as a valued member of the Jews for Jesus board of directors for 30 years. This will be his 42nd tour of Israel!

Dates of Pastor Lon's tour:

Oct 24-Nov 1, 2016 (Israel only) and
Oct 24-Nov 4, 2016 (extensions to
Mt. Sinai and Petra).

The cost includes all five-star deluxe hotels and two meals a day. In addition to the usual activities, you will meet our Jews for Jesus staff in Israel and hear devotions by Lon at every site visited.

For a brochure and full details, write to:

HLP Tours
8116 Arlington Blvd., #302
Falls Church, VA 22042-1002
or call 703-280-1114

Be sure to inquire about early deposit discounts!

You can also see videos and download a brochure at mcleanbible.org/visit-holy-land-pastor-lon.

prayer prompters

Please pray for:



safety and fruitful ministry for all our missionaries who are presenting "Christ in the Passover" at churches across the country this month



many Christian friends to invite Jewish friends to the above-mentioned presentations



Jewish people to respond with interest to our Purim outreaches



preparations for showing our evangelistic "Multitudes" art show in Israel this spring



preparations for our upcoming Behold Your God Israel campaign



grace and strength for new Jewish believers Klára in Budapest, Don in Sydney, and David in Los Angeles



wisdom and God's guidance as we continue investing in the next generation of Jews for Jesus

This month's banner photo shows Stephen Pacht, leader of our work in Geneva, witnessing to a young man during one of our Paris campaigns. Photo by Sabine Teboul.

HOPES, HINTS, AND BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF GOD'S POWER OVER DEATH

by Rich Robinson

God's power over death is as real as His power over life, as we see in both the Old and New Testaments. Following are small samplings of Scriptures dealing with hopes, hints, and the fulfillment of God's power over death that we have through Jesus. For an expanded chart with far more Scriptures and applications, go to j4j.co/201603rt.

HOPES AND HINTS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

HOPES AND HINTS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

FULFILLMENT — HOPE REALIZED

SCRIPTURE	COMMENTS	TAKE AWAY
Genesis 22:1–13: Note especially verse 5: "And Abraham said to his young men, 'Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you.'"	God promised Abraham a multitude of descendants through Isaac (Genesis 17:19), but as chapter 22 opens, God asks him to cut off the obvious means of fulfilling that promise! Yet on the way to sacrificing Isaac, Abraham notes that he and his son will return. How? Hebrews 11:17–19 affirms that Abraham believed God could raise his son from the dead. That faith was clearly justified when God resurrected His own son, Jesus.	We can trust God even when circumstances seem directly opposite to what He has promised us.
Psalms 16:10–11: "For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. ¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore."	The New Testament indicates that David was not speaking of himself, but of the coming Messiah (see Acts 2:22–39 and Acts 13:30–37). Yet David had confidence in life beyond the grave for himself as well, because he had confidence in God and God's promised Redeemer. Note David's responses to this hope in Psalm 16: he is "glad," he "rejoices" (v. 9), and has "pleasures forevermore" (v.11).	If David had such confidence in life beyond the grave because of the promise of God's Redeemer who was yet to come, how much more can we have confidence, now that He has come and we know Him!
Isaiah 53:10–12: "... When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days . . . By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. . . . Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors."	This is part of the passage Isaiah 52:13–53:12 concerning the Suffering Servant, ultimately fulfilled in Jesus. These verses point to the Servant's resurrection, inasmuch as He is promised descendants and a long life following the description of His being put to death as an offering for sin. Yet compared to the clear revelation of the New Testament, it is like looking through a darkened glass. The resurrection of Jesus, reported in each of the gospels, is the crowning reality to which Isaiah points.	Isaiah 53 is the well-known passage that shows us the life and work of the coming Messiah. It is one of the best passages to share with a Jewish person who is willing to talk to you about Jesus.
Matthew 22:23–33, especially vv. 31, 32 " ³¹ But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, ³² I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."	The Sadducees, who do not believe in the resurrection, test Jesus by posing an unlikely scenario concerning the afterlife. Jesus points out the fallacy in their scenario. He also cites the Old Testament's frequent reference to the "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," to underscore the reality of life beyond death, since God is not the God of the dead but of the living.	The Sadducees' question indicated that they thought prosaically about the afterlife. Compare 1 Corinthians 2:9, "As it is written: 'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.'" Our hope of the resurrection transcends anything we can imagine!
John 11, especially vv. 14, 15: " ¹⁴ Then Jesus said to them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵ And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him.'" And vv. 43, 44: " ⁴³ Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth!' ⁴⁴ And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth."	This miracle differs from previous examples of resuscitations, inasmuch as the body had obviously begun to decompose. Not only is life restored from the grave, but the corrupting effects of death are reversed.	From other passages in John's Gospel, we learn that for Christians, eternal life starts <i>now</i> , as a quality of life with God, and will also bring us beyond death itself. It is comforting to know that when we are born again, the stench of death caused by our sins is washed away.
Matthew 28, esp. v. 6: "He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." (See also Mark 16:6, 9, 14; Luke 24: 6, 34, 46; and John 2:22; 20:5–9; 21:14.)	Jesus' resurrection is never depicted itself; we are shown the aftermath: the empty tomb and Jesus' appearances to His disciples. The angels were at the tomb to greet the two Marys, and send them on to tell the others; we also see that the first person He appeared to was Mary Magdalene.	At last we see the empty tomb, which was so long hinted at in Scriptures and spoken of directly by Jesus! The words "He is risen" are not metaphors or maybes, but the reality on which we can be assured that we are indeed redeemed!
1 Corinthians 15, esp. vv. 20, 23: "But now Christ is risen from the dead, <i>and</i> has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. . . . But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those <i>who are</i> Christ's at His coming . . ." 54 "So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' 55 "'O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?'"	Because the promise of resurrection was fulfilled in Jesus, Paul can teach with certainty about the hope of resurrection for those who trust in Him. As the "firstfruits" of a crop was a promise of more to come, so Jesus' resurrection is a promise from God that we who believe in Him will also be raised from the dead. The entire chapter is a stunning statement of the hope we have, and begins to pull back the curtain just a bit to hint at what is in store on the other side of the resurrection for all believers. So we see fulfillment, as well as further hints and hopes.	As believers, we need not fear death! This chapter is full of comfort for believers in Jesus who are drawing near to the end of their own lives, or are missing a believing loved one who has already gone on to be with the Lord. Resurrection and Jewish people today Among religious Jews, there is a faith in life after death ¹ . However, if you want to know what most contemporary Jewish people believe about the hope of the resurrection, the answer is, "very little." Like many in today's society, modern Jews often believe that we only live on through our accomplishments, our children, and in the memories of others. What does this mean for our witness to Jewish people? Jewish people are no different from others, inasmuch as the hope of eternity with a God that they do not know here and now is not especially relevant. Helping people see that God is real, and that knowing Him is life-changing and life-giving, is a good start. Explaining the gospel as His desire to be in relationship with us, and His provision for us to enter into that relationship, follow.

1. See Louis Jacobs, *Jewish Resurrection of the Dead*, see j4j.co/jrez.

bits from the BRANCHES

From **Budapest, Bogi Kozma** reports, “Klára* gave her contact information to Jews for Jesus years ago; she was curious enough to meet for one visit, but not ready to continue hearing more about Jesus. Last summer I was calling to invite



Photo ©Jews for Jesus

Bogi (left) and Klára

active as well as inactive contacts to branch events, and Klára was among them. Though she was busy during the events, she agreed on a personal visit in a café.

“She spoke a half an hour about her life, then was ready to let me start to share. By my third sentence she interrupted: ‘I would like to ask you something—and please, don’t even start to tell me that Jesus has died for my sins, because I don’t want to hear about it!’ What else I could talk about now (except maybe my new recipe for a birthday cake)? I listened to her once again so I could

get to her real questions. By the end of our first meeting we covered the difference between God’s viewpoint and human viewpoints, the nature of sin, the reason for the distance between God and us—and yes, we were talking about why Jesus had to die on the cross! I learned that she was familiar with the New Testament, as her paternal grandmother was not Jewish.

“We continued to meet for interesting and meaningful conversations about God. Klára had real questions and a desire for real answers. She was asking, seeking and knocking—and God was opening the door. After a few meetings, Klára was hospitalized. She was glad

for me to visit her, and at the end of our time I asked, ‘Is there anything preventing you from receiving Jesus as your Savior and walking with Him? I would like you to think about this question till our next meeting!’

“When I returned for our next visit, Klára had so many questions, including, ‘What should I do to pray for God’s forgiveness?’ ‘How can the death of Jesus be enough to cover everyone’s sins?’ ‘If receiving Jesus means that I need to follow Him in my whole life, is it worth it?’ ‘What is heaven like? Won’t it be boring?’ I just kept on answering. When she

ran out of her questions, I asked if she wanted to pray to receive Jesus and begin a new life here on earth, as well as be with God for eternity. She said she wanted to do so, but because of her roommate she would pray later, on her own. As I was leaving, she hugged me saying, ‘I’m already starting to miss you—I can’t wait for our next talk!’

“After she was released from the hospital she was enthusiastic for the next visit. I asked if she had prayed as we had discussed, and it became apparent that she still did not quite understand what it means to have God’s forgiveness and a real relationship with Him through Jesus. We talked about the loving relationship between a parent and child, which she could relate to, as she is very close to her daughter. We talked about how she responds when her daughter comes to her, asking for forgiveness. ‘Klára, God is longing for you to ask His forgiveness! He is longing for you! Do you want to belong to Him?’ ‘Yes, I do. Bogi, how can I express to you how much I want this?’ ‘So are you ready now to tell it to God Himself?’ ‘Yes. Could you help me?’

“So at last I led Klára in prayer and she received Jesus in her heart. Now we are to meet again and read about our Father—as two loving sisters.”

Bogi Kozma is a missionary with Christian Witness to Israel, working in partnership with our Jews for Jesus team in Budapest, Hungary. How true are the words, “Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor” (Ecclesiastes 4:9)!

From **Sydney, Mark Landrum** reports, “I met Don* shortly after

praying for more Jewish people with whom I could share Messiah. We met right in front of our bookshop. Don was soft-spoken, but indicated a real openness to Jesus. I was so glad for this immediate answer to prayer!



Photo ©Jews for Jesus/Paige Saunders

Mark

“Don was born in Berlin and experienced Kristallnacht as a young boy. His father was a doctor, and the family lived above his practice on a major street. Seeing the riot coming up the street, Don’s father quickly removed the required notice (that this was a Jewish practice) from the front of the building, and so did not have the premises destroyed.

“After this narrow escape, and seeing the destruction all around them, they realized they had to leave Germany immediately. They barely made it past the border of China and Russia. Don studied English and Russian in Harbin, China. Later the family moved to Israel, where Don met his wife. He worked hard and earned another degree, this time in Hebrew. Later they migrated to Australia.

“Since my first visit with Don, we have met numerous times to talk about being Jewish and believing in Jesus. We continue to read and discuss relevant Bible passages. I remember well explaining how Yeshua suffered for our sins. Don replied, ‘That doesn’t seem fair.’ I replied that it wasn’t fair to Yeshua, but it is our only hope, the only way our sins could be forgiven and for us to be right with God.

“I was delighted that recently Don prayed with me to receive Yeshua as his Messiah. Please pray for him as we continue to meet, that he grows strong in Yeshua, and in his knowledge of the Bible.”

From **Los Angeles, Cyril Gordon** reports an answer to prayer, “Praise God! Thanks to all who prayed for David,* one of the people mentioned in the ‘Beach Reach’ article in our January newsletter. If you didn’t see the article, David is a young Jewish lawyer I met during our Jews for Jesus Venice Beach outreach last year. David’s father was Jewish and he was raised primarily by his Gentile Catholic mom. He was out of touch with his Jewish heritage and unfamiliar with the Bible. His Christian girlfriend saw our book table on the boardwalk and was eager for him to meet us.

“I started meeting with David to study the Bible, and I encouraged him to visit a local Messianic congregation and attend Jews for Jesus public events as often as possible. He loved attending our monthly Jewish Men’s BBQ Fellowship and would also attend our Jews for Jesus special holiday events. His biggest hurdles to

receiving the gospel were the deity of Jesus, and a general skepticism of anything supernatural.

“The Lord helped David overcome these doubts by the power of the Holy Spirit. One day, after a powerful sermon at the Messianic congregation (he’d been attending faithfully for months), a Jewish believer felt the Lord was leading him to ask David if he was ready to receive God’s gift of salvation. As David was considering this, another brother in the Lord came over and told David that he felt the Lord wanted him to ask if he was ready to surrender his life to the Lord.

“David said, ‘Yes’ and prayed then and there to receive the Lord. He then texted me the good news and I gave praises to the Lord. Many of the



Photo ©Jews for Jesus/Cody Miklis

Cyril

Jews for Jesus staff and constituency have been praying for David’s salvation for many months, as well as many of you, our newsletter readers. David seems eager to grow in his faith. Please pray for that to continue as I begin to disciple him.”

*not their real names.

HOLIDAY OUTREACH!

Purim is the Jewish festival that commemorates the events in the Book of Esther. It is a light-hearted holiday when many dress up as biblical characters, whether heroes (Queen Esther and Mordecai), the villain (Haman) or someone in between (King Ahasuerus). The entire book of Esther is read as people cheer for the heroes, and boo the villain and try to drown out his name



Some stopped to take photos . . . and most likely posted them on their social media pages

with noisemakers called groggers. Purim treats include three-cornered pastries called hamantashen (Haman's hats). This year Purim falls on March 25th, and many of our branches will be having special holiday outreaches.



Jewish passerby stops to chat with Giselle

Last year our New York branch had a great time, as you can tell, giving away hot chocolate, Purim treats, gospel-themed postcards titled, "Who's Your Hero," and inviting people to post their Purim thoughts on an interactive board. It was great to see so many people, many of whom were Jewish, stop to interact. Hope you'll enjoy these photos and be inspired to pray for our teams this Purim.

Sorry we don't have enough space to show you the postcard, but you'll find it with our onlinextras on this month's *RealTime*."



Amer responds to an Orthodox Jewish man



Liz offers free hamantaschen and groggers