



February 2011

**THANK YOU ♥
FOR SENDING US
TO ISRAEL WITH
\$103,000. IN
LOVE BASKETS
AND DONATIONS!**

Dearly Beloved in Messiah,

Jewish Jewels 2010 Mercy Mission

This year's Mercy Mission to Israel was, perhaps, the most timely and powerful of all our previous outreaches. Not only was our group of 26 lovers of Israel and the Jewish people in the Land during the entire festival of Hanukkah, we were also present at a time when Israel desperately needed MERCY. God knew! He had YOU pray! Our Mercy Mission was divinely ordained!



The Mercy Mission began **before** we left Ben Gurion Airport. As our group gathered their luggage, Esther from the tour company, approached Jamie, and said, "You never sent that package for my grandchild that you promised your last time here!" Jamie assured Esther that the baby gifts had been sent back to Jerusalem through a third party. Apparently, they never got to Esther. So...in the middle of the airport, Jamie went through a suitcase, and produced a huge bag of gorgeous, new baby things for Esther's five poor Orthodox grandchildren. She departed delighted at 5:00 PM EST.

The Dan Carmel Hotel in Haifa was extremely gracious to us, and, as we arrived showed us a room set aside for our group, to sort and pack gifts for the simchas (celebrations) the following day. Thank you for praying for favor (Ps. 5:12). Prayers were answered, and our group had a great time assembling at least 60 bags with baby gifts, 20-30 bags for abused women, and 40+ bags for their children. The hotel staff kept peeking in, somewhat astonished, to see what we were doing. The Light of Yeshua was shining, even before the Festival of Lights (Hanukkah) officially began!



A Very Full First Day

At 5 PM EST on Wed, Dec. 1, 2010 we arrived at Bnai Zion Hospital in Haifa for our third baby shower. Dr. Rofe, the Director General, and his assistant Keren, warmly greeted us. We were thrilled to see a miracle answer to prayer from **last** year's Mercy Mission. Keren had been trying to conceive for many years, to no avail. Our group asked if we could pray for her. She agreed, and we laid hands on her right in the middle of the hospital entrance. This year: Keren was 8 months pregnant! She received a gift bag for her own baby.



The joy, delight, and air of expectancy in the maternity ward were palpable. Jamie showed the new mothers one of the baby blankets lovingly made by one of our Jewish Jewels partners. Thanks so

much to all of you who knit, crotcheted, and prayed for the babies in Israel. Your hand-made items REALLY touched the hearts of the Israeli mothers.

Love came down like welcome rain in the maternity ward from 5-7 PM EST that day. Babies were born while we were there.



Our friends Avi and Galya were surprised to see their

friend and his wife, who posed for a photo when we arrived, and gave birth before we left! Babies and gifts kept increasing. The final blessing—at about 7 PM EST—was totally unexpected. Jamie found out that Dr. Rofe had a painful back problem, and we were able to pray for him in the middle of the maternity ward. Please agree with us for a miracle healing for this very precious pre-believer. Love is drawing him!



We dashed off to the seaside town of Akko to have lunch with Messianic Rabbi Guy Cohen of Katzir Asher, Harvest of Asher Congregation. We had gifts and Love Baskets for Guy and his family, as well as for needy believers in their congregation. Lynn gave a Love Basket to the cook, who was first shocked, then overjoyed. Following lunch we visited the Katzir Asher facility and prayed over every chair in the congregation, for Yeshua's presence to be made real to all who enter. It was a sweet encounter, and a treat to be able to encourage and bless fellow Messianic Jews on the eve of Hanukkah. We sensed God's approval as we lived out Gal. 6:10: *"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith."*



We returned to our hotel to pick up the gifts for our next outreach. (What a blessing to have a flexible, ready-to-go, loving, uncomplaining group!) Off to a Hanukkah party that **YOU** sponsored for abused women and their children. There was entertainment, pizza, *sufganiyot* (doughnuts), soda, and gifts for each of the 34 children. Each mother received a cosmetic bonus bag, warm sleep-in socks, and more. Love Baskets were distributed. Jamie was given the privilege of lighting the first Hanukkah candle. The mothers looked sad, but the

gifts brought smiles to their children's faces, and, Lord willing, some measure of joy to their heart. We know one thing: They sensed YOUR LOVE. (Party 12 PM- 1AM EST)

Upon returning to our hotel for a late dinner, we realized that we still had 10 bags of beautiful baby gifts on the bus, and called Orit Kramer of the Haifa pro-life organization, "A Future and a Hope." Orit came to our hotel at about 3 AM EST and gratefully received the bags. At that moment, there were two women due to give birth within the month, with difficult circumstances who needed "practical support." **You** furnished it! This was the first of an additional 8 MERCY MISSIONS THAT GOD ADDED TO OUR 8 PLANNED MISSIONS!



Fire on Mt. Carmel

By about 10 AM the next morning (5PM EST), Thursday, Dec. 2, we were on the top of Mt. Carmel, overlooking the Valley of Megiddo, contemplating the scenario of Armageddon (*Har Megiddo* in Hebrew). We descended to the area where there is a statue of the prophet Elijah, and decided to pray for rain at the site. We put up an umbrella as we prayed in faith for God to send desperately needed rain to Israel. Winter had not arrived yet, and the unreasonably warm weather (80's), while great for our Mercy Mission group, was dangerous for Israel's forests and water supply. We noticed a black cloud in the distance, but had no idea that a tragic fire had just begun.

In fact, we were seeing the start of the largest fire in the history of Israel. Almost 5,000,000 trees were destroyed in the 7,400 acres affected by the fire, while 17,000 people were displaced from their homes, and 43 people were killed. This all happened on the first day of Hanukkah, an eight day holiday of lighting candles with joy. There was little joy in Israel the following day, as funerals were held in Haifa for the victims of the forest fire. The tragedy resulted in extra doors of ministry opening up for our group.



We asked intercessors to pray for "God's special plan for this first day of Hanukkah." He answered. It included a mix-up with the I.D.F. which resulted in an extra Mercy Mission (financially) to bless soldiers even though we could not be with them in person. Thus, our visit to the Ellis Farm was moved from Sunday to Thursday, so off we went to this dairy owned and operated by Messianic Jews, where we were warmly greeted and treated to delicious goat cheese samples. **You** blessed our brother and sister in Messiah with 5 goats for Hanukkah! They need to increase the size of their herd, in order for their business to really prosper. Tal and Adi have been faithful to Yeshua for many years. We rejoiced to be able to give them and their staff Love Baskets as well.

We ended our day's activities (a change in schedule again!), with a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. God's timing was perfect, and the stop at the gift shop afterwards provided an opportunity for Jamie to share seashell messages from God with two pre-believing Israeli ladies (11 PM EST). Over 100 seashells were given away during the Mercy Mission. Israelis of all religious persuasions love the shells. We continue to see Jamie's shells hanging on the walls of gift shops throughout Jerusalem.



Blessed are the Merciful...

Friday morning began with worship and sharing from the Sermon on the Mount on the Mt. of Beatitudes. Jamie had mentioned to Neil on the bus that it would be wonderful if we could get Love Baskets to Mt. Carmel for the families who had been evacuated from their homes due to the forest fire. As we sat having lunch by the Sea, we received a phone call from our friend Eitan, who works with emergency crews, asking if we had any "Love Baskets" that we might send with him to Mt. Carmel! He was en route from Jerusalem to Haifa, and could stop at Tiberias and get the \$4,000 in Love Baskets. Of course, we said yes! An hour later, (8 PM EST), Eitan picked up the Love Baskets, refused to stop even to eat the delicious "St. Peter's fish" and told us: "You are here at exactly the time when Israel needs MERCY. Thank you so much!" Again, Israel received YOUR LOVE!



At Korazin that day, we saw *"the seat of Moses"* mentioned in Matthew 23:1-5. As Neil sat in the seat and spoke about authority, both righteous and unrighteous, a couple of pre-believing Japanese tourists who asked to join our group, hung on his every word. (This happened at Capernaum as well.) Perhaps Matt. 7:29 became real to them: *"For He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."*

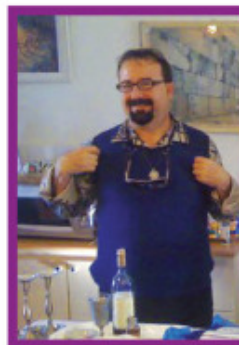


Friday evening, the third night of Hanukkah, we had an opportunity to bless local Messianic believers from Tiberias. We were joined for dinner and a service by our dear friends Dov and Shoshi and Carolyn and Richard Hyde of the congregation in Poriya. Carolyn and Richard ministered to us in word and song. It "just so happened" to be Carolyn's birthday, so of course, we gave her gifts! **You** also blessed local Messianic believers that night with more than \$2,000 in Love Baskets. We brought joy to a nation in mourning: *"... To comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them BEAUTY FOR ASHES, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that THEY MAY BE CALLED TREES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS"* (Is. 61:3). May these trees sprout forth from the ashes on Mt. Carmel!



Shabbat Shalom

We were blessed to be a blessing on Sat. Dec. 4 as we traveled to the city of Afula in northern Israel to attend a Messianic Shabbat service led by Ariel and his wife Talia with a small group of believers who fellowship at their kibbutz. After the service they treated us to a delightful luncheon at which our dear friend Michel recounted the story of his salvation on July 25,



2006, at our home. Michel stopped celebrating his birthday after his daughter was killed in a terrorist attack on that date. He now boldly proclaims that YESHUA GAVE HIM A NEW BIRTHDAY!



After Shabbat, about 4 AM EST, Neil, Jamie and Jonathan, our 25 year old son, went to visit Tal, a pre-believing friend at a local hotel in Tiberias. Our visit was a very moving Holy Spirit encounter. Tal was very glad to see us, and told us that since our last visit when he saw us giving out Love Baskets to poor Israelis, he was provoked to do something as well. He and some friends decided to continue our "mitzvah," and have been giving 10% of their income to the poor in their local area. Tal proudly showed us the key ring with the attached blessing that

we gave him almost two years ago. It was on the cash register of his gift shop. He had another duplicate in his wallet! Tal prays the blessing twice a day. (We gave him a new key ring with a new prayer. We handed out 500 of them all over Israel).

Tal had given Jamie a necklace two years ago as a gift with a dove inside a Star of David (three pieces, silver and gold tone). We have not seen it anywhere else in Israel. He is blessing us with a quantity of them at a great price. Order yours this month and please pray for Tal and his family, especially his two year old son Adir, as you wear it.





Hillel's Mission

While we use a different guide each year, we use the same bus driver: Hillel Polak. Not only is he a phenomenal bus driver, but he is part of the Mercy Mission Team. He negotiates the conversion of your money into coupons for the Love Baskets and manages to get us at least 15% above what you send by convincing the issuing company of the specialness of our Mercy Missions.

So...Hillel, still a pre-believer, asked if he could plan a mission. It was a great one! We were privileged to visit an IDF base where they train dogs for search and rescue, and other security missions. Dogs from this special Canine Unit were sent to Mt. Carmel, Haiti, and all over the world. We saw a live demonstration of a dog on

an obstacle course, and another apprehending a terrorist. Fascinating! You gave a donation of Love Baskets to help needy "lone soldiers" on this base. Hillel was very pleased that we were blessed by "his mission." Keep praying for him. He's a gem!

We ascended to Jerusalem, contemplating the "Aliyah Psalms" mentioned in December's letter. The Kotel, or Western Wall, our first stop, was very crowded with lots of soldiers in the plaza. We enjoyed handing out Hanukkah cards that let the IDF know that we love them, and are praying for them. They were especially touched by the cards handmade by prisoners in the US.



As we finished praying at the Kotel, a call came that children were waiting for us at the Bible Lands Museum. We were shocked; that mission was supposed to be on Wednesday. Our contact had the wrong day! The children were already there, and had been transported from S'derot, the city that is constantly bombarded with Kassam rockets from Gaza. **You** were giving the children a day away from the horrors of terrorism. What could we do? Our "instant in season" group voted to go as quickly as possible to join the children. What about their gifts? They were all in suitcases under the bus! We had not arrived at our hotel in Jerusalem to unpack them! Oh, well, **YOU WERE PRAYING** (10PM EST 12/5).



God is Good! Our personal duffle bag, loaded with 50 pounds of children's gifts, was at the front of the luggage compartment. We unloaded it at the Museum, and some of our group made up gift bags for the 25 children and teens from S'derot. The kids had a great day, making crafts from clay, visiting the Museum, enjoying refreshments, and a special Hanukkah candle lighting ceremony with a school in Chicago via the Internet! Love Baskets were also sent to needy families in S'derot.



The Rain Came!

God answered prayer. The first rain of the season fell as we ascended the Mt. of Olives, visited the Garden of Gethsemane, and contemplated the Eastern or Golden Gate—also known as the Shar HaRachamim, the Mercy Gate. A rainy afternoon was a good time to visit Yad Vashem, the memorial to the Holocaust. David Katz of Sarel Tours met us at lunch in the cafeteria, and told us that our Mercy Mission group is probably the "most unique tour of any coming to Israel." We would have to agree. God also seems to increase the blessing each year! Thank you for making it all possible.

Monday evening at 6:00PM (1 AM EST) our good friends Chuck and Karen Cohen come to join us for dinner at our hotel. We were able to bless them with gifts for them and their grandchildren. They also agreed to take a suitcase load of gifts to Ner Yaacov, a home for Holocaust survivors in Jerusalem. We sent warm blankets, scarves and other goodies for the precious Israelis living there. Another Mercy Mission by proxy!

At 7:00PM that night, Jamie met with two Ultra-Orthodox (Haredi) women in our hotel lobby. To make a very long story short, it was a miracle that these ladies were willing to make contact with us, since they are separate from even the other Ultra-Orthodox, similar to the Amish in our country. Jamie connected with them from the Bat Mitzvah celebration in March. We were able to bless their Girls School with really nice supplies, and toiletry gifts for all the girls, plus baby gifts and more! Jamie is probably the first non-Jew they have ever allowed into their closed circle. Please pray for Shulamit and associates to **see God!**

More gifts had to be packed, so a few of our Mercy Mission members came to our room to put the gifts together (4AM EST). At about midnight each night Neil, Jamie and Jonathan posted our day's events on the Jewish Jewels Facebook page. Long days!



A Twice (at least) Blessed Day!

Tuesday is considered a day which is twice-blessed, (see Gen. 1:9-11), therefore many weddings take place on Tuesdays in Israel. In our case, it was Holy Spirit appointments. Our time in the "Upper Room" was a special moment. We ended up being the only tour group in the room. As we worshipped, the Holy Spirit descended on us. We prayed for our Mercy Mission team as well as our tour guide who needed a healing (approx. 5 PM EST). As we left the Upper Room, Jamie saw Effie, who she sensed needed a seashell message and a Love Basket (6 PM EST).



At 3:00PM that day (10 PM EST) **YOU** hosted a Hanukkah Party for about 30 children who had or were going through chemotherapy treatment for cancer. The party, coordinated by our friend, Eitan, was held in a bowling alley. What a simcha! The party included a "drumming session" in which the children, and our Mercy Mission group, had their own bongo drum, and were taught various rhythms.



This drew the group together. Then, there was pizza, veggies, chips, doughnuts and gift bags for each child **FROM YOU**. Our son Jonathan mingled freely with all the young boys, especially with a boy named Jonathan. **YOU** brought great joy to these children and their parents.



Two additional missions evolved from the party. First, Eitan invited three of the fire fighters from the Mt. Carmel fire to join the party with their wives and children, since they had missed most of Hanukkah due to the fire. One of the men gave Neil his own shirt—the one he had worn on Mt. Carmel. Love Baskets were given to the firemen, and other needy families, including some single



mothers who seemed very sad. Jamie was talking with one of them, and mentioned that we had 200 Beanie Babies left, and would really like to distribute them to children in a hospital. Guess what? The woman worked at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. She assured us that she could open the door for us (about 11PM EST 12/7).

Our group returned to the hotel, but Neil and Jamie had two more divine appointments that evening. Rabbi Yishayahu and his family were waiting for us to arrive to light their Hanukkah menorah. We got to their home at about 6 PM (1 AM EST), and enjoyed a sweet time of fellowship and gift-giving for their eight children. The three year old calls Jamie by her new Hebrew name: *Matanah* (gift). ☺



We dashed in a taxi from the rabbi's house back to the hotel since Micaela and Eliya (bride and groom from Mercy Mission 2009) were scheduled to meet us in the hotel lobby. They brought their adorable baby girl Ayela with them, and we blessed them with gifts and three Love Baskets. Sadly, Eliya's parents still reject this special couple, since she was a poor orphan when they married. Eliya is studying to be a scribe. Micaela is overjoyed to be a wife and mother (9 PM Israel).



Back at the Kotel

Wednesday morning found us at the excavations of the Southern Steps of the ancient temple in Jerusalem. While at the "Place of the Trumpeting," shofars sounded in the distance at the Kotel. We knew we were on God's timetable! (6 PM EST). We walked under the Western Wall to the site of the Holy of Holies, and saw the largest single cut stone in the world: 40 feet long, 10-12 feet deep, weighing 680 tons.

Our group had a free afternoon to explore Jerusalem, and the three of us (Neil, Jamie and Jonathan) had another divine appointment to keep. It was the 8th and final night of Hanukkah. At 4:30PM (Israel) Eitan's wife Judi picked us up at our hotel to take us to Hadassah Hospital. For the next two hours we had a very moving experience going from room to room in the Children's Unit, distributing at least 100 Beanie Babies, seashells and Love Baskets to suffering children and their families. We began in the Pediatric Cancer Ward, escorted by our nurse friend from the Bowling Party.



Jamie read a blessing in Hebrew that was given to each of our Mercy Mission group, so that they could say something to Israelis in their own language. The father with his baby in his arms, received the words with much gratitude—as did everyone that we blessed with these words:

<i>Anachnu Ohavim Otchem Ve'mitpalelim Al Yisrael.</i>	(We love you and pray for Israel.)
<i>Anachnu Mitpalelim leh'ness Gadol Leh Yisrael.</i>	(We pray for a big miracle for Israel.)
<i>Yisrael tamid titkayem.</i>	(Israel will always sustain-be.)

But God had **more** in store for us! At 11:00PM (Israel), as we were in our hotel room, waiting for Jonathan to return from meeting with one of our pre-believing Israeli friends, we received a call from

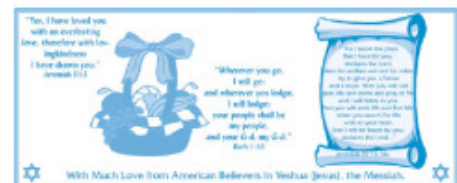
Jonathan telling us that this friend had just poured out his heart to him, and seemed ready to receive the Lord. So...the "Nicodemus" came to us by night, and we ministered to him that the hole in his heart could be filled by the Messiah Yeshua—and **only** by Him. He prayed with us that evening, and we were able to give him a Hebrew/English New Testament before we left the country. We are not at liberty to give his name yet, but please pray for wisdom in guiding his growth. (P.S. That night Jonathan dreamed that he caught the biggest bass he had ever caught! Yes.)

Final Day, plus Four!

On the last day of the Feast of Dedication, following a visit to the Israel Museum, and an overlook of Bethlehem, we arrived at the Garden Tomb (10 PM EST). We shared the Lord's Supper, celebrated Yeshua's resurrection, and re-dedicated ourselves to Him, and married couples to one another. We enjoyed a Farewell Dinner at Yad Hashmona, and accompanied our group to the airport. Hanukkah was over, but the Mercy Mission continued. Neil, Jamie and Jonathan stayed on for four extra days, during which many divine appointments and additional missions emerged:



- Moshe, the taxi driver from the airport, welcomed the message of the Gospel.
- We sent 10 huge bags of baby gifts to the Jerusalem Pro-Life ministry, Be'ad Chaim.
- We returned to the Rabbi's home. **YOU** repaired his roof, and gave Love Baskets for poor Hasidic Jews.
- We sent a dufflebag full of gifts for Ethiopian immigrants, as well as \$1,000 in Love Baskets.
- The Talmud teacher, his wife and son came to visit us at our hotel. Neil shared the Gospel.
- We attended a Bible study at the home of Lance Lambert with the Cohens.
- We enjoyed sweet fellowship with Michael Cohen and family, and dear friends Lesly and Jeff.
- Final Love Baskets were given to needy believers in Maale Adumim via Aharon our guide, needy believers in Jerusalem via David Katz and needy believers in Holon via Hillel.
- A final donation and supplies blessed Makor Ha Tikvah Messianic Day School in Jerusalem.
- Our final witness was to Israelis in the Turkish Hammam in the hotel—5 people in one hour!
- A final baby bag was delivered in cold, rainy weather to Esther at the scarf shop.
- Final toiletry gift bags were left at Succat Hallel for women believers. Someone said: "Jamie!" It was an old acquaintance from the U.S., on her way to bless Lebanese Christians. **YOU** sent Love Baskets. She blew God a kiss!



With love and many thanks from us and the Israelis like this little boy whose lives were touched by the love of God through YOU our Jewish Jewels family.

Neil & Jamie

