

To Pakistan, With Love

When Pakistan experienced the worst monsoon flooding in 80 years this summer, humanitarian groups—both Christian and non—rushed to send aid. Among them was a small Jerusalem-based Messianic ministry called Keren HaShlichut, which went into the predominantly Muslim nation in September to distribute food and supplies among the more than 20 million people affected by the flooding.

It was an unusual mix—Jewish believers in Jesus going into a nation many consider an enemy of Israel. But Keren HaShlichut founder Gavriel Gefen says his organization is committed to showing Christ's love by serving other nations—even Muslim ones. "I've endeavored to bring the believing community in Israel to a place of seeking to bless and to serve the nations rather than only always seeking those in the nations that would bless and serve us," he says.

Aiding Pakistan has been a dangerous endeavor for believers in Jesus. In late August, members of the Pakistani Taliban killed three foreign Christian aid workers assisting with relief efforts. And Open Doors USA, which advocates for the persecuted church, says Pakistani Christians are being denied food, tents and other aid by Muslim extremists.

Despite the danger of entering Muslim nations, many Messianic missionaries have been well-received, says Gefen, who has ministered among 500 tribal groups in 80 nations. He says Muslims have been open to hearing the gospel—especially from Jewish believers.

"One of the unique things that a Jewish believer in Jesus can say to a Muslim is that we were both wrong about who Jesus was or is; He's much more than a prophet," Gefen says. "For them to hear that from a Jewish Israeli is something that very often stops them in their tracks and causes them to even more

deeply consider what you've said because it's coming from somebody who's perceived to have been an enemy and whose people, as much as they have, have always rejected Jesus."