

Israel's Arab Christians Bring Hope to Syrian Refugees

We can't tell you the name of the organizer of this beautiful act of love originating from the Israeli Body of Messiah to the Syrian people. We can't show you many of their faces for fear of persecution or retaliation.

Although my name is on the bi-line, this story is from God's people among Israel's Arab Christians who have reached out to the Syrian refugees who have fled for their lives into Jordan.

Here is their story ...

The United Nations said recently that Syria's "hemorrhaging" of its people is the worst refugee crisis in modern history. Such a statement doesn't begin to describe the situation accurately. In our visit to Jordan early this year, we met so many Syrian refugees and displaced people for whom life has turned into one long nightmare. The U.N. and many NGO's are trying their best to ease the disaster but they can't begin to take care of 1,500,000 Syrians in the small and poor nation of Jordan.

Despite the dark tunnel the Syrians live in, we are shining a light with the gospel of Jesus Christ through the Jordanian churches. Our team of six Arab believers from Israel worked with several churches in Jordan and carried the Light of the gospel to every city and home we visited.

We met hundreds of Syrians in Jordan and heard so many sad and horrifying stories about their exodus from Syria to Jordan via the desert. They shared with us their fears and pain as they lost loved ones and family members whom they will never see again. To be honest, we couldn't hold back our tears as we heard their stories. We, in turn, shared with them the Only Hope for the world today—Yesua HaMasiach (Arabic for Yeshua

HaMashiach) of Nazareth.

The Body of Messiah in Israel—both Jews and Arabs—gave us \$34,000 to reach out to the Syrians in a practical way. Since all the goods we planned to give to the Syrians had to be purchased in Jordan, we went to Jordanian grocery stores and clothing stores and bought essentials that the U.N. and other organizations don't offer—such as milk for children, diapers, jackets, warm clothes, toys and candy for children.

Other items we purchased, also not provided by any other humanitarian aid organization, were hygienic kits and personal cleaning items such as soaps and shampoo. We also bought heaters and blankets, small cooking stoves, cooking pans, milk for older children and mattresses.

Our team visited the four cities of Mafraq, Irbid, Amman and Fuhais. We worked through the local churches that are doing an amazing job among the refugees. In one particular church, every Tuesday night more than 130 Syrian Muslim families meet and hear the Word of God. They receive free Bibles and other literature together with food packages.

The day we were at that particular church, we distributed more than 350 hygienic kits in addition to the food packages the church provided. For two hours we talked to Syrian refugees, serving them and sharing the Word of God with them. I have never seen a church full of Muslim women as in the picture. What a sight.

We also met by divine appointment a Syrian woman who is a well-known figure in Syria and a strong born-again believer. Of course we cannot show you her picture. We gave her \$3,000 to spend on the saints in Syria. We laid hands on her and prayed and prophesied that Yeshua is building His church in Syria.

We also found a way to transfer \$18,500 to seven churches

inside Syria—in the north.

We could see the joy in the eyes of anxious children as we ministered to them and gave them toys. We saw hunger for the truth as people started to question Islam. Endless opportunities are opening for Israel's Arab Christians to bring the gospel to the Syrian people.

The refugees were so thankful to us. They told us, "When we approached Muslim Imams, mosques and Islamic institutions thinking they would open their hearts to us as their brethren in Islam to help us, we were shocked that they never responded to our needs or offered any help. But when we approached the churches, they opened their hearts and their doors to us and gave us beyond their capacities. Thank you for loving us!"

This organization made a second trip last April. This time the Israeli team included six Arab pastors and four Messianic Jews, three of them pastors.

Here is their latest report ...

Two thousand years ago, a man named Saul was on his way to Damascus to terrify and kill those early followers of the Messiah. As you know, on the way he met Yeshua who changed his life and became his Lord and Master. He entered Damascus as a terrorist and left it as an Apostle. What a powerful story of salvation that made Saul, the terrorist, Paul, the Apostle.

Today in Syria there are so many people like Saul who need a personal encounter with the Messiah. The question Saul asked, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" is the same question we are asking the Lord today. What does He wants us to do in Jordan? Syria is our enemy, politically, but as the One Body of Messiah, we have an historic opportunity to share the love of the Messiah with them in a very practical way.

This spring trip to Jordan was divided into two parts. First, I took four Messianic Jewish believers to meet with key

Jordanian partners and pastors who are reaching out to the Syrians.

We had two busy days meeting lots of people and visiting Syrian families. The three Jewish pastors preached in three churches on Sunday. For me it was a great pleasure and honor to introduce my family in Israel to my family in Jordan and be a bridge between them. I believe the Church in Jordan and beyond in the Middle East should be introduced to the Messianic Body in Israel in order to enjoy the unity of the One New Man and to fulfill the Lord's Prayer that we be one.

I believe this might be the first group of Messianic pastors from Israel who ever came to preach in Jordanian churches.

During the second phase of the trip I had six Arab pastors and two Messianic Jewish brothers on the team. We travelled to different places carrying the message of God's love and hope. We were able to purchase more than 225 food bags, 200 baby formula canisters, 160 bags of diapers, 50 fans, plus other items such as toys and candy for children, hygienic items, kitchen utensils and more. In one city, we visited 20 more families known to Jordanian believers and carried the items to them, sitting with them and hearing their pain and agony. Most of the rented apartments of the Syrians had 10-15 residents each and sometimes more. We shared the message of hope in Christ and prayed for each family.

In addition to visiting many homes in the larger cities, we went in the north of Jordan where we prepared 100 food bags. The church invited 75 Syrian families to come. Ninety four families showed up! We gave out food bags, milk formula, diapers and more.

For three hours, we were giving out what we had—serving the people, hearing their stories and giving them love and hope in Christ.

Now we, the Maoz partners, have an opportunity to bless this team for their next trip, coming up in September.

It costs \$100 a month to feed a couple, and another \$100 per month for two children.

Let us give our Israeli Arab Christians together with Israeli Messianic Jews—all our brothers and sisters in Yeshua—the opportunity to spread the Good News up and down the land of Jordan, caring for the needy and preaching Hope Eternal.

*The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me;
Because the Lord hath anointed me
To bring good tidings unto the humble;
He hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the eyes to them that are bound;
To proclaim the year of the Lord's good pleasure
And the day of vengeance of our God;
To comfort all that mourn.
(Isaiah 61:1-2)*

Children are the number one victims of this devastating war in Syria. There are hundreds of thousands of Syrian children who are refugees in Jordan alone.

A new generation is emerging in Syria that is full of fear, killing images, sad stories and more. The U.N. predicts that the crisis in Syria will last for at least 10 more years. What kind of new generation will Syria have?

Please pray for all the Syrian children inside and outside Syria. Pray for God's Spirit to sweep across the Syrian nation. Thank you for your prayers for our future steps in establishing long-term partnerships and ministry presence in Jordan as Arab and Jewish believers from the Land of Israel.

Shira Sorko-Ram, along with her husband, Ari, is a co-founder of Maoz Israel Ministries. The couple has pioneered several

Messianic Jewish congregations in the Tel Aviv area and sponsored national conferences for the Israeli believers.

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