

Message in Tongues Confirms Calling for Jewish Vicar

A Jewish follower of Jesus was having second thoughts about being ordained into the Church of England ministry when he got the surprise of his life.

A message in tongues was given during a home meeting which Ralph Goldenberg immediately recognized as Sudanese Arabic.

Having grown up in Sudan with the ability to speak several languages, he knew exactly what it meant. And it could not have been a clearer confirmation of his calling.

“Allah be’hebak—Inta min al dam beta Ibrahiem—Al Angiel fi fomak” translates as: “God loves you. You are from the blood of Abraham. The gospel is in your mouth.”

The messenger, who hadn’t even realized he had spoken a real language and not an angelic one, subsequently interpreted what he had said, as instructed by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians , as: “You are to proclaim the gospel and bring my people to the kingdom.”

As recorded in his autobiography, *Find the Truth and Lock it in Your Heart*, that miraculous incident sparked the beginning of a very fruitful 20-year ministry for the Rev. Goldenberg, a former optometrist who has since been helping people to see spiritual truths.

Now 72 and retired, Ralph led churches in various parts of England, including the Jewish community of Edgware in north London, where he encountered opposition as well as interest.

At his first church, in his home town of Bournemouth, he witnessed the miraculous healing of a missionary to China who had come home for back surgery, which was cancelled after

prayer and anointing with oil.

The Holy Spirit, who had so empowered the first believers on the Day of Pentecost that they spoke in the languages of Jews from many nations who were staying in Jerusalem for the festival, also known as *Shavuot*, has clearly played an essential role in Ralph's ministry.

He recalls the time when, during a Pentecost Sunday service, "nearly everyone received the Holy Spirit, and children spontaneously started praying and prophesying over the adults." His final Pentecost service turned into an impromptu full immersion baptism and lasted four hours.

Ralph was among 40 grandchildren to a chief rabbi sent to lead the Jewish community in Sudan, and both his grandparents told him to "Find the truth and lock it in your heart"—hence the book's title.

So imagine his surprise when the vicar in charge of the church where he was married a golden 50 years ago, on July 29, 2017, told him to "search for the truth and follow wherever it leads you".

Ralph was sent to a Jewish school in Brighton, England—and seemed to meet Christians at every turn of his life from this point on. He had also, in fact, attended a Catholic school in Sudan.

He followed his father into optometry, meeting wife Helen at the City University in London where she was also an optometry student, and when he joined an optician's partnership, he too was a Christian.

Ralph and Helen had three lovely boys, a beautiful home and, in time, seemed to have everything, but they still felt empty inside.

They joined the Round Table, made friends with a Christian

couple and soon became connected with St Mary's, Ferndown.

"I am a Jew, but I want to know about Jesus," Ralph told the vicar. Helen meanwhile had already been persuaded that Jesus was knocking on the door of her life just, waiting to be invited in (Rev. 3:20), and Ralph was duly challenged to read the New Testament, which he found "mind-blowing".

But he needed to be sure that Jesus was divine. So he challenged God to send at least one person—perhaps even six—to say "Jesus is alive!"

He subsequently felt drawn to attend church with Helen and was blown away when a new song was introduced which repeated the line "Jesus is alive today" several times.

He never looked back, and it was 10 years later, while experiencing pre-ordination nerves, that he got the knockout confirmation of his calling in Arabic.

Ralph has certainly found the truth his grandparents encouraged him to seek and is currently part of the leadership of the Church's Ministry among Jewish people (CMJ), an international body dedicated to the spiritual rebirth of Israel. {eoa}

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