

The Art of Telling Jews About Jesus

At a time when the world's attention is turned to Israel with the Shemitah and the High Holy Days, Susan Perlman says Jews for Jesus is involved in many innovative campaigns to "proclaim the message of life to Jewish people."

As Jews celebrate Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur and the end of the biblical Shemitah, Perlman says the San Francisco-based Messianic Jewish ministry is spreading the gospel to Jews worldwide in new and unique ways.

"Oftentimes when people think of Jews for Jesus, you think of us as kind of these commandos out on the streets who are handing out our literature and facing a lot of opposition," Perlman, the co-founder and associate executive director of Jews for Jesus, said during a presentation at Charisma Media in Lake Mary, Florida. "That is true. We do a lot of street evangelism, but we also have other means of sharing the gospel."

While North America remains a difficult place to share Yeshua with Jewish people, Perlman said some of their "greatest responses" have been in places like Budapest, Moscow and Paris.

"Some of the innovations we're involved in now are beginning to see some fruit," Perlman said.

One of these is called Multitudes. For this ministry, Jews for Jesus commissioned 20 original paintings illustrating the book of Matthew. The paintings were shown recently at art shows in San Francisco, Washington, D.C. and New York City.

"It's biblical art—Hebrew calligraphy—that tells the story of Matthew," Perlman said. "We are getting a lot of Jewish people

coming to these art shows. We had 500 people at our first night in Chelsea (in New York City). Actually, the curator at this gallery was astounded. She said, 'We've never had that many people come on one night to see any of the art shows.'"

Another innovative ministry is known as Massah, the Hebrew word for "journey." Each summer, Jews for Jesus offers an opportunity for Jewish believers ages 19-26 to join the team at the Moishe Rosen Center in Tel Aviv, Israel, to engage in Bible study, prayer, worship, Hebrew classes and fellowship. The center is located in a section of Tel Aviv that is the "hip, trendy place to be" with many art galleries and coffee houses.

At the center, participants brainstorm new ways to reach Israelis, employing music, art and the written Word. They travel throughout Israel, led by experienced tour guides, and share the gospel. The center also has a ministry to soldiers who go there on weekends for Bible studies.

"These are young Jewish believers who are really alienated when they are in the military," Perlman said. "They get some real encouragement and confidence to share their faith when they go back out on the frontlines."

Massah participants also travel to various places throughout the world to share the gospel with Israeli soldiers and others on backpacking trips.

"When young Israeli people finish their military service, they are really kind of burned out and they want to get some R & R so they travel outside the country," Perlman said. "They go to locations like South America, New Zealand, Thailand, Nepal and India and hike. Israeli groups cater to them by having coffee houses on the trails and hostels where they stay.

"We get the opportunity to talk to Israelis in a much less structured and stressful situation where many are spiritually open. They give us their Facebook information and we do

follow-up visits with them later.”

As she looks back over four decades of a ministry that has reached out to both Jews and Gentiles, Perlman said she’s especially proud of the work young Jewish people are doing today. Today, Jews for Jesus has branches in 14 countries with hundreds of employees and volunteers.

“It’s our 20-somethings who are leading the way,” Perlman said. “The head of our work in Israel is 34 years old. I really feel that’s a positive sign for the future. They just see the urgency of the task and want to go for it.”

Perlman’s visit to Charisma Media came amid the Jewish harvest festivals and the end of the seven-year biblical cycle known as the Shemitah. The Shemitah has drawn worldwide interest since the release of *The Mystery of the Shemitah*, a *New York Times* best-selling book by Rabbi Jonathan Cahn.

“I’m hopeful for the Lord’s return,” Perlman said. “I’m hopeful that there are signs today that are indicative of that happening, but I also know that the Lord’s time schedule and ours are not always in sync.”

Yet Perlman says there is much work to do to fulfill Jesus’ instructions to take the gospel throughout the world. Of the globe’s 15 million Jews, Perlman said she believes less than 1 percent believe in Jesus.

“There is an immense amount of work to do,” Perlman said. “So I don’t want the Lord to come one moment sooner than He’s going to come because I want more opportunities to make Him known. I think of my own family members, none of whom are believers yet. I think of vast numbers of Jews—if they knew what we know about Jesus—they would be running to Him.

“We need to have a mobilized prayer force out there praying for Jewish people to have their hearts ready and prepared for God, and then we need Christians—whether it’s those of us

professionally in the work of Jewish evangelism, or everyday Christians—faithfully proclaiming who God is to the Jewish people.”

For more information or to support Jewish evangelism go to .