

US Pioneer Ken Crowell Dies, Leaves Legacy in Israel

It took pioneers decades to build the land of Israel both physically and spiritually. Ken and Margie Crowell were two of those pioneers, helping to build the Israeli economy physically while building a Christian witness.

Ken passed away on Jan. 25, after a long battle with Myelofibrosis, a bone marrow disorder that disrupts normal production of blood cells. Still, his legacy lives on.

Before Ken's death, the couple shared their story with CBN News.

They shared that they had been fresh out of Bible school when they moved to Israel with their two children in 1969.

"We both received the call at the same time, and I went home one day and told Margie, 'I think that God is calling us to go to Israel.' And she said, 'Well, I think he is calling us, too,'" Crowell told CBN News.

"I look back at it as a great adventure with the Lord, that he supplied every need," Margie said.

Ken, an engineer by profession, worked for Motorola here for three years. Then he opened a company making antennas and brought it to Israel. It had three purposes.

"One—come back to an area where there are no, or little Christian witness and to be a strong witness," Ken told CBN News.

"Number two was to give employment in the land, and we are seeing that exceed what we had thought," he said. "The third one was to bless the nation of Israel."

The couple didn't have much money when they started Galtronics, so Ken asked to use Margie's oven to cure the antennas.

"She said I could try it and it gave off a black smoke and a terrible smell," he recalled. "And she came over to me and she said, 'I've got news. Either you have cookies or you've got antennas, but you can't have both.' So I chose the cookies."

But the company grew anyway, planted near Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee rather than Tel Aviv or Jerusalem.

"It was Ken and I in an office with a few papers on our desk and those [were] great years," said Margie, who besides being wife and mother was Ken's secretary for 22 years. "Ken had a great faith in what the Lord could do practically with work."

They started with 35 people and now have up to 1,000 employees.

"I don't know how many thousands of people have been touched by that, and this was God's plan all the way," Ken said.

And they've been able to bless Israel and even received the prestigious Kaplan Award in industry for employing many new immigrants during the waves of immigration from Russia in the 1990s.

The name Galtronics comes from Psalm 37 in Hebrew: "Commit they way to the Lord (or 'Gol al Adonai') trust in Him and He shall bring it to pass."

Asked what he learned through all his experiences, Ken said, "I would say seek the Lord to know what He wants you to do as an emphatic, to know exactly what you ought to do and then Gol al Adonai, roll it over on Him and do it as you are led."

One statement put out after his death said he had had an impact on the lives of hundreds of thousands if not millions of people worldwide.

Ken Crowell is survived by his wife Margie, their three children, his brother, 10 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He was 79.