



Oasis

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Three years ago Harvest of Asher Congregation was officially launched in Napoleon's Park under the shadow of the old tel covering ancient Akko. I was there that day, a brand new immigrant taking in the wonder of seeing a new congregation born in the land of promise. I assumed the location was selected for its picturesque setting. The truth is we met in the park because at the time, the new congregation did not have a meeting space.

Members of the nascent congregation had asked pastor, Guy Cohen: "Where is the building where we will meet?" Guy heard the Holy Spirit answer, *"Tell them, you are the living stones. Buildings are not important; the community of believers is being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God through Yeshua the Messiah."* I Pe 2:5

Guy had settled on meeting in small groups in different homes, but God had other plans. Just after that initial dedication in the park, God spoke to a couple ready to move back to the US. He told them, stay in Israel, move to Akko and rent a large enough home to hold meetings in the living room. They approached Guy with this offer and Harvest of Asher now had a place to meet.

The congregation was grateful for this meeting place but a private home has some limitations. Guy continued to look for a spot in the city where they could also meet during the week for intercession and informal get-togethers. He searched for a suitable place to lease but could not find anything appropriate. The Holy Spirit spoke to Guy again, *"Don't seek to lease a facility, buy one."*

Harvest of Asher TAKING ROOT AND BEARING FRUIT

By Marty Shoub



New building - pre-renovations



Guy at the dedication

Guy was shocked by this faith challenge – why would God ask this fledgling congregation to pursue such a mammoth undertaking? Guy thought to himself that he could not approach others outside the congregation for assistance; they had to exercise their own faith for the money. Harvest of Asher started their own pushkie campaign and enlisted the congregation's children to participate in their efforts. (Pushkie is the Yiddish term for collection box and is a time honored Jewish fund raiser technique. See Oasis, November 2007.) On the day Guy opened the Pushkie cans the congregation prayed together, "Lord, here is our offering for purchasing a building, if this is truly your will, please do something to confirm your word to us." That same evening Guy received three phone calls from ministries in the US and Korea. Independently of one another, these three ministries responded to God's call and pledged a total of \$100,000 towards the purchase of a building.

In November 2007 I wrote an article highlighting our Haifa congregation's (Shavei Tsion) new facility. Shavei Tsion battled for over three years, and three broken lease agreements before they finally were able to obtain a long term lease on a suitable facility. For Messianic congregations in Israel, obtaining property is truly a touchstone of spiritual warfare. Haifa is a cosmopolitan city where Jews, Christians, Muslims and Baha'i all contribute to the fabric of the city, and for Israeli standards, live together with remarkable toleration. Even in this unique situation, the warfare to establish Shavei Tsion was intense!

Akko is a very different city: smaller, older, and more conservative with a long

Continued on page 6



Tali lighting the Shabbat candles



Folks gathered in the new sanctuary



Eitan blessing the bread



Guy with Canadian guest, Mrs. Lorrie White

history of battles and warfare. Here too, Jews, Christians and Muslims live together but with far less integration. Akko is and always has been contested ground. Considering this mix, Guy and Harvest of Asher have had remarkable favor in the city – mention Guy’s name at a local tourist trinket store and you receive a 50% discount! During the Second Lebanon War, Guy and the congregation were instrumental in distributing aid throughout the city. Despite his Messianic credentials, this native born son has earned the respect of his fellow citizens.

It is no coincidence that the purchase of property and the dedication of this new facility stirred the powers in opposition to Messiah’s Kingdom to challenge this favor. On Passover eve, (the busiest night on the synagogue calendar, with the exception of Yom Kippur), a two page article was distributed throughout all the city synagogues warning residents to be wary of Guy Cohen, a dangerous Christian missionary set on converting the city’s children to Christianity. The article was full of preposterous lies; among other things, claiming Guy had convinced

the mayor to close down a local Yeshiva and that Guy had amassed millions of dollars in foreign donations. In the days that followed many of the local tradesmen working on the final preparations for the facility’s dedication quit. They explained that they had been forbidden by their rabbis to have anything to do with Harvest of Asher.

Despite these setbacks, the dedication ceremony was on track and on time. Guests from the US, Korea, Denmark, Norway, England, Canada and representatives from Israeli Messianic and Arab Christian congregations were in attendance. What just a short time ago, had been a cavernous commercial space above a Hyundai garage was transformed into a beautiful meeting space. Guy’s message reminded us that, indeed, what we saw around us was a great miracle. But the greater miracle is the living stones of the Harvest of Asher Congregation.

On his final journey back to Jerusalem the apostle Paul stopped overnight in Akko (Ptolemais) and **“greeted the brethren”** there (Acts 21:7). Two thousand years ago there were Messianic Jews in Akko. Over the ensuing centuries the city has been associated with the crusaders’ beachhead in Israel. To many Jews in Akko, a follower of Yeshua is one more “crusader” seeking to establish Christianity by force or subterfuge.

Guy Cohen is a native Israeli, born and raised in Akko. He is the grandson of a rabbi and a descendant of Aaron the High Priest. If apple pie is American, Guy Cohen is Jewish. If ever there were grounds for Messianic Judaism, Akko’s history cries out for an authentic Jewish

Messianic faith! God is using Harvest of Asher to demonstrate that Yeshua is not the head of crusader armies but the King of Israel. He is restoring “the brethren” back to this city where many years ago they welcomed that famous Jewish emissary on his way to Jerusalem. Paul was also misunderstood by the people of Israel but he was not deterred. So too, Guy is unwavering in his commitment to the heavenly vision. Guy: *“I believe we need to turn to our brothers with love and aid for the poor. If we demonstrate grace and allow people to ask questions they will eventually accept us for who we are.”*



Congregational leaders standing to support the congregation

Please pray for this vital work in Israel. The congregation still requires finances to complete the renovations and get the elevator running. Guy has a vision to establish 24/7 prayer, a messianic yeshiva and to reach out to the surrounding area – he reminded me that they are Harvest of *Asher*, not just Harvest of *Akko*. (Akko is situated in the tribal territory of Asher.) Your intercession is vital to the protection and fruition of this work of God: Just as in Paul’s day, a great and effective door has opened for Guy and Harvest of Asher, and there are many adversaries. (I Co 16:9) ✡



Don Finto giving his blessing



Ready to feast

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Our Vision:

Tents of Mercy - to participate in today’s historic exodus by assisting Israel’s returning exiles.

No spectators in the Kingdom - to be a worshiping, sharing community based in homes, equipping each one for service.

Come back Yeshua - to welcome Yeshua home to Israel, by restoring the Jewish roots of New Covenant faith.

Happenings at

The spring holidays begin with Purim and roll through Passover to Shavuot. Holidays mean celebration, music, food and praise to our God. Holidays are also great opportunities to share God's goodness with friends and neighbors.

This year our annual Purim Shpiel was produced and directed by our Shavei Tsion congregation. The former Soviet Union filled in as the backdrop for the play. The evil Hamanov's plot to destroy the Jews is foiled by brave Esther and Mordachai. The King, (played by our very own maestro Leonid Gelbet) finally catches on and of course there is the happily ever after ending!

Our national youth group, Ha Katzir (the Harvest) gathers together for worship and praise on each of the major feast days. This last Passover, Ha Katzir gathered at Tents of Mercy with Judah and Jen Morrison leading worship.

Passover also saw Leon Mazin organize Seders for Russian speaking Holocaust survivors in Haifa, Nazareth and Kiryat Yam. A total of over 300 seniors were treated to a Passover celebration. Some of the seniors got into the act themselves and serenaded us with old songs in Russian and Yiddish.



1. Everyone wants to be a cowboy
2. Purim Shpiel - Esther revealing Haman to the king
3. Purim Shpiel - The beautiful Esther and the less dignified king
4. Purim Shpiel - The evil Haman and his bodyguard
5. Rocker youth leader, Reuven
6. Purim Shpiel - Mordechai interceding
7. Wild West Moshe and Katye

Tents of Mercy

8



9



8. Ha Katzir Passover worship night

9. Ha Katzir Passover worship night - Andrey leading in prayer

10. Ha Katzir Passover worship night - Judah and company leading worship

11. Passover Seder - A proud veteran

12. Passover Seder - Leon and Eitan blessing the wine

13. Passover Seder - A senior serenading us with old favorites

14. Passover Seder at Tents of Mercy

15. Passover Seder - Eitan thanking a gentleman who sang in Yiddish for us

16. Passover Seder - Leon receiving a Certificate of Appreciation



10

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16



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