



December 2009
Newsletter



Motto: Bringing the Homeless into the Kingdom

Wow—What a year! God has been so good! I am sure we each have much praise to give Him for what He has done, what He is doing and what He will continue to do to.

I know that we are a scanning society but if you simply scan this newsletter, I believe you will miss a blessing. This newsletter is just a short overview of 2009 and what God is doing through RESCUE Israel.

My wife and I had the privilege on December 8 to attend the retirement dinner for Rev. Herb Pfiffner, CEO of Seattle's Union Gospel Mission. Herb is the 3rd CEO of the Mission over the past 77 years. He dedicated 21 years of his life to the Mission in Seattle.

Herb is also a good personal friend and mentor. When God put it on my heart to begin the Olympia Union Gospel Mission, Herb was the first person I contacted and with his help and the guiding hand of the Lord the Mission began on the streets of Olympia. Today, 14 years later it is a major ministry in the capital of the State of Washington, touching the lives of thousands each year. Much of our success in Olympia was due to Herb's influence. When we founded RESCUE Israel, Herb again was there to help and support.

Though the dinner was to honor Herb for his faithful service, Herb turned the honor to God and His faithfulness in bringing many into the Kingdom over these past 77 years. In honor of this, James spoke. James was homeless and on the streets of Seattle. Through Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, he came to faith in Yeshua, Jesus the Christ. God turned his life around and today he is a minister of the Good News of Jesus Christ in a local church. What a testimony—what a trophy of God's redeeming love and grace—This is the ministry of Rescue and the future of what God wants to do in Israel through the assignment He has given us. It is to Him we give praise to what He is doing and will continue to do, "bringing the Homeless into the Kingdom."

Seattle's Union Gospel Mission started on the streets of Seattle; the Olympia Union Gospel Mission started on the streets of Olympia and so too has RESCUE Israel/Ohel Avraham—starting on the streets of Tel Aviv. ***This newsletter is but a brief reflection of God's marvelous grace as seen in some of those we (you and I) have been able to minister to.***

I am writing this newsletter in such a way that you can take and clip out the testimonies and put them in a place where you can remember to pray for these men.

Some have wondered about the value of our street ministry in Tel Aviv. However, if you will recall over the past couple newsletters I have referred to a man in his 90's who 72 years ago came to faith through the Seattle Mission with just a bowl of soup. He wrote Herb Pfiffner last year and told his story—a story no one know about at the mission for 71 years.

Listen to the testimony of Denis who has been impacted by our street ministry feeding:

“This feeding program... gave me the chance to change my life.

I was addicted to drugs (heroin) for 12 years, yet I didn't see any way out. My goal was to find a heroin fix twice a day to feel normal. In addition, I'm seriously sick with two very dangerous diseases.

When I saw your team distributing food for free, I was very suspicious. I thought, ‘That's impossible—somebody gives without wanting to gain something.’ I couldn't comprehend this.

For me, I maintained neat clothes and hairstyle, but the others smelled bad and had dirty clothes. And yet your team could hug them and shake their hands. Your team talked with them like equals—like they were on the same level with them. We who live on the street can tell those who are faking it immediately. Your team loved us sincerely. I came to understand that God loves me and wants to give me a chance to change my life.

Now I'm in a recovery program near to Haifa with other drug and alcohol addicts. We pray and study the Bible together. Please pray that God will strengthen me.”

God is opening doors for us to develop our own recovery shelter. We are currently running a temporary shelter until all the legal requirements are met. Already we are making a difference.

Here is the testimony of Roman G.:

I have been a drug addict for years, living on the streets of Tel Aviv, without friends or money. I thought that I could solve my problems by myself and would not ask for help. I thought all I have to do is find a job, have a place to live and I would be a free man again – but I could never bring it about. Because of my addiction I was convinced in my own mind that nobody needed or wanted me.

I felt abandoned. I was dirty, hungry and experiencing the pain of withdrawal. I had no hope. I cried out to God, “Lord help me with at least small things.” Within an hour of my prayer I met people who told me about a recovery shelter. I met Gene who received me and now I am in the recovery program.

I praise God that I have changed. I have new found friends who care for me. I am learning that I am guilty before many whom I have caused much pain. I am learning the Word of God and I have hope that my life will be different. God has forgiven me of my sins and my desire is to be obedient to him.

The phrase, “Do not despise small beginnings” is popular and has been accompanied by many commentaries. This phrase comes from **Zechariah 4:10**.

All we have to do is look to the path that has led many on to success. It is most likely that first, modest step forward that has led over time to a harvest, whether in personal, spiritual, financial, or business efforts.

Each of us could testify to God's grace in our lives and of those "first steps...first beginnings" which have brought us to where we are today—things like:

- A business venture begun with a paltry investment that succeeded far beyond your expectations.
- A book, picked up in a time of discouragement, that inspired you and gave you the perspective to pursue your dream.
- A reconciled relationship, now going strong, which began with a simple request for forgiveness.

Blaine Smith from Nehemiah Notes writes in reflection to the above statements: "With the eyes of hindsight, we look back to such starting efforts with awe and gratitude. We realize there was greatness in that moment of small beginnings that we didn't begin to appreciate at the time. We may shudder, too, to think of how close we came to not taking that one initial step which opened such important doors."

Think of where the small beginnings of RESCUE Israel/Ohel Avraham have led as you hear from Michael R:

Before I came to know God as my redeemer, my life was a mess. I had filled it with all kinds of sin: alcohol, adultery and speaking evil of others along with many others.

I heard of the recovery shelter and I was allowed to come into the program. There, I started reading the Bible and praying. I asked God to forgive me of my sins and he did. My life is turned around, I am feeling so much better and my health is improving.

I have found peace in my heart and I find joy in working and being useful. It is on my heart to help people. I have a new foundation for my life in Christ and He gives me a sense of purpose and hope. I have had the great joy of being baptized in the name of Yeshua HaMashiah (Jesus the Christ)

I want to serve God with my life and with my music. My desire is to learn the Word of God and to live according to His word like with Ephesians 6:17 "And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

I am grateful for Gene and the recovery shelter.

God in His faithfulness; your faithful support in prayer and finances; the commitment of staff (Gene) and volunteers, and board members has given us opportunities to speak into the lives of the homeless, the drug addicted and the prostitute, the Good News of the Gospel of our Messiah.

As we anticipate the coming of 2010, we don't know what is going to happen in our world, in our economy, in our society or in our personal lives. What we do know is that God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is still in control, working out His sovereign will and purpose regarding the Kingdom He is building and in this, we press forward in the call God has given us.

Yeshua, Jesus the Christ tells us in Matthew 25: ³⁴*Then shall the King say unto them on his right*

hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ³⁵for I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; ³⁶naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

God cares deeply about the “least, the lost and the last” of our world.

Listen to the testimony of Alexander, 34:

My whole life has been one of searching for pleasures and sin. When I was 27 I became an alcoholic. My life became a living hell and I was continuously drunk. I was arrested and placed in jail. After I got out of jail, there was no change and I continued to drink and live in sin.

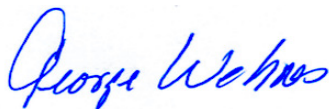
I got involved in adultery and my wife left me. It was not long after that I was arrested again and put in jail and there I realized there was no hope and no help. Then I thought about God and what I had heard that that He has never forsaken us. I prayed, crying out to God, asking Him to forgive me and the sins in my life. God forgave me and I felt a peace and a calm.

When I was released, I asked Gene and Sasha (one of the men helping Gene in the street ministry) and they told me about the recovery shelter. They allowed me to come live there. God is performing miracles and I am in reconciliation with my wife and I want to restore our family. I am free from alcohol and cigarettes. I give praise to our Savior Yeshua. I want to devote my life to serve Him.

Thank you for standing with us in this work of Rescue that God has given to us to do, “Bringing the Homeless into the Kingdom”. We are a team. It takes all of us working together and together God is using us to see lives transformed and brought into His Kingdom.

The Vision before us: make our temporary shelter permanent and to expand it’s capabilities. This will include facilities, staff and of course much prayer and finances to support the work.

The food we provide on the street is the door that brings people in and gives us the chance to build a relationship with them. The facility is a place where the weary can find rest and shelter. The staff (Gene currently) is called of God to minister to the homeless, addicted and poor on a daily basis. Your finances help make all this possible. Your prayers help fight the spiritual battle and together lives are changed forever—changed to the Glory of our God and Messiah.



George Wehnes
Fellow Servant with you in the work of Rescue in Israel

P.S. Please consider a generous gift or additional gift before years end to help take us into the New Year ready to do what God has called us to do.