



Light of Messiah Ministries

.....proclaiming Jesus, the Jewish Messiah!

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Losing Loved Ones

Over the years we have been fortunate in our ministry. We have not had to experience the death of many close to us. And yet as the writer of Ecclesiastes says, there is a time and season for all things. Unfortunately we have had a season of death in our ministry and have recently had to experience the untimely death of several people. Death is not easy to write about. It is an event that we will all experience, and yet it is a subject that is usually avoided in discussions. In fact we all began to die as soon as we were born. **Our life between birth and death is a mere vapor of time during which we have the opportunity to either live for God in faith, obedience, and love, or live apart from Him in denial of His sovereignty and existence.** Every person who recently passed away into eternity had a different story to tell. All of these people were very close to our ministry and passed away within a few weeks of each other. Let me tell you about them.

Marvin

Marvin was a Jewish Chicago police officer. He was a man who was hardened through the many difficult experiences of public service. Yet, Marvin was a man who had a soft heart and a lovely wife, Barbara, who through the years shared her life and love for the Lord with him.

When I first met Marvin he had many questions about faith. His biggest question, as it is with most Jewish people was, "How can I be Jewish and believe in Jesus at the same time?"

Marvin and I met several times. I



Kaddish is the Hebrew prayer said when a loved one dies.

always answered his questions about Jesus and explained to him how he could accept Jesus and not deny his Jewish heritage. The church he attended with Barbara embraced Marvin and showed him the love of his Messiah.

During one visit many years ago we were sitting at his kitchen table and I asked Marvin if he was ready to accept Jesus as his Savior. The time was right, his heart was ready, and Marvin prayed to accept the Lord.

Marvin passed away last month. He was weak and tired, his body worn down by the effects of Parkinson's. But his "going home" service was quite a celebration! Jesus was lifted up and Marvin's brother was there. I know the service was a testimony to many. I had the opportunity to share about the Marvin I knew, the hard Chicago Jewish cop, with a big soft heart for Jesus.

Barbara writes,

"Many thanks for sharing Marvin's salvation story at the celebration of his

life. Many have been touched by him and the messages that were shared. Thank you again for your kindness to our family."

We were blessed by Marvin and privileged to be a part of his life. We will all miss him.

Lexi

As many of you will remember, several months ago, you rejoiced with us in the new birth of Lexi, a precious Jewish woman Casey met with in the hospital, who was battling a terminal illness.

On August 3rd, Lexi went to meet her beloved Jesus face to face as she was safely delivered into heaven. Casey had had the privilege of meeting with her several times before she passed away. Lexi had discovered a love of scripture and deeply enjoyed hearing them read to her.

Casey attended Lexi's memorial service, and was touched to witness the bold message of Jesus that was proclaimed, before her family and friends, both Jewish and Gentile, believers and non-believers. Lexi's service was one of sadness, brightened by the blessed promise that we will see her again one day in Glory. The gospel was presented with compassion and dignity.

At the memorial service, Casey was able to meet with Lexi's family members, and especially with her mother and brother, both Jewish, and not yet believers. Since then, they have expressed an interest in further contact with our ministry. Even now, Casey is in contact with Lexi's mother, through her sister Heidi, also a Jewish believer. Following is a beautiful letter of testimony written

by Heidi about her sister.

“...After 49 years of prayer by her mother’s sister, Ada, 16 years of prayer myself and my family, a new Bible from our son Ancel given to her about five years ago, and many years of prayer by other Christian friends, Lexi told me something a few wonths ago that gave me the surprise of my life. Although she had always been unwilling to hear anything from me about my faith or the Bible in the past, she had come to believe that the Jewish Messiah had come, she had “accepted Him”, Yeshua (Jesus) and believed the Good News of the Holy Scriptures. After a couple of weeks she became very interested in hearing me read from the Bible to her, and it was a dear, sweet, wonderful joy to see her eagerness to hear as I read to her from the Scriptures. I will never forget the beautiful glowing smile on her face as we spent these last few times together.”

Melissa

A few months ago, we received a phone call from Melissa, wanting help for her friend who had just had a baby and was in financial trouble. She prayed with Casey to receive the Lord that day. They started meeting once a week for discipleship.

On a Tuesday, about 7 or 8 weeks later, Casey got another phone call from Melissa. She had just had surgery on her ankle. She sounded fine. They talked for a while, and made plans to talk again later in the week. Only that was never to be. A few days later, Casey got a phone call from a mutual friend, Steve, who told her that Melissa had passed away that Tuesday night. It was sudden, and deeply upsetting. Steve and Casey both tried to reach out to Melissa’s mother and father, both Jewish. They would never return our phone calls.

A sudden death like this impresses on us the brevity of life and the need to be available for those in need. We praise God that Melissa came to know her Messiah before her unexpected death at a young age.



A candle (Yahrzeit) is kindled in memory of the loss of a loved one.

Bea

When Bert started began working with Light of Messiah, Derek had already been meeting with Bea, a wonderful Jewish lady, who was partially paralyzed due to a stroke and lived in an assisted living center. Bea had a son who was a Jewish believer. He encouraged us to visit with his mom. Over the years Bert developed a close relationship with Bea as they celebrated monthly Sabbath meals and visits every other week. They spent a great deal of time talking about the Jewish Messiah, working through Bible studies, praying and just talking about life. This past year Bert and his family celebrated her 75th birthday with her. She was so excited. She was thrilled that they remembered and brought her cake and a gift.

About a year ago a new Jewish resident came to the facility. Bea introduced Bert to Naomi at the lunch table. “This is my friend, Bert. He is trying to convince me to believe in Jesus.” Naomi replied, “That’s nice.” There was no pretense with Bea. One knew what she thought all the time.

How to Contact Us

Light of Messiah Ministries
P.O. Box 501179
Atlanta, GA 31150
Phone: 770-642-4706
Fax: 770-642-0319
E-mail: lightofmessiah@yahoo.com
www.lightofmessiah.org

Imagine Bert’s surprise when, after being gone on ministry outreach events for a few weeks, Bert returned to visit Bea and was told that she had died. Bert was informed that she had another stroke and decided to give up on life. The stroke took away her ability to talk and eat. The doctors wanted to give her a feeding tube, however she refused it and subsequently passed away. The last time they spoke, she told him that she was considering Jesus as the Messiah, but she never professed a faith in Him.

Sometimes ministry is hard – we don’t know what the fruit of our labor will be. People die and we may never know, this side of heaven, where they will spend eternity. Our prayer is that Bea responded in her heart to the message she heard and is now with her Messiah rejoicing amongst the angels.

The memory of those who have passed away will always be in our minds. They are people who we were close to because we had a part in their lives. Though they are no longer with us physically, all of their lives helped us to grow and be better people.

Thank You!

We are here to be involved in the lives of others, to share the love of Jesus, to encourage people in their spiritual journeys, and even to hold people’s hands as they pass into eternity. We regularly witness new spiritual life through decisions for Jesus. And we sadly watch people pass away not knowing if their heart was right with God. But, we’re here.

Thank you for making our important ministry possible. Your prayers and financial support enable us to be there for those who need us. Thank you and blessings...

For the staff,

Murray Tilles
 Light of Messiah Ministries