



7 planned Mercy Missions turned into 22!

January 2017

\$28,000 in Love Baskets
\$88,000 in gifts and donations
plus many extra cases filled with gifts!



Dear Lovers of Zion,



Mercy Mission 2016: A Huge Success!

Thank you for praying! Our Mercy Mission to Israel was an explosion of love, an overflowing fountain of mercy, and a mirror of God's gracious, generous giving. Before we left the USA, our faithful friend and Israeli bus driver, Hillel, was bold as a lion in negotiating with the company from whom we purchased the Love Baskets. He convinced the company to give us 6% more Love Baskets because of our "Avodat Kodesh" (ah-voe-DAHT KO-desh), our "Holy Work." When we arrived at Ben-Gurion Airport, the Love Baskets awaited us, each valuing approximately \$100 US dollars.

At the Fort Lauderdale airport we had checked ten, 50-pound bags of gifts for the people of Israel. Two of the bags contained brand-new clothing and accessories for the premature babies at B'nai Zion Hospital in Haifa, since premature clothing is virtually unavailable in Israel. The bags also contained handmade blankets, hats, sweaters, and booties for the preemies. Our *Jewish Jewels* partners outdid themselves this year, sending the most beautiful knitted items we have ever seen. Temple Aron HaKodesh and Greenhouse Church, Fort Lauderdale also blessed the preemies of Israel with darling outfits.

We were delightfully surprised—although we should have known—that before we even got on our tour bus at the airport, our guide, Hannah Ben Haim, said to Jamie, "My daughter-in-law works in the neonatal ward at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. She asked me if you might have any preemie clothing for her hospital. They are really in need." Any preemie clothing? Only 100 pounds of it! So, right there, on the sidewalk outside the airport, baby shower number two was birthed.

Mercy Mission #1

Our first "planned" mercy mission was at Bet Elazraki, the children's home and orphanage in Netanya. Anat, the administrator, told Jamie that she still had the seashell that Jamie gave her during our last Mercy Mission. Jamie painted 36 special shells for Mercy Mission 2016. The Israelis always receive them enthusiastically.



Anat was astounded at the "pop-up" cards made for the children by an inmate and friend of our ministry from Texas. She plans to distribute them to the children for birthdays and special occasions. These cards were amazing works of art, created with great love. Other inmates also made beautiful cards for new mothers, victims of terror, the IDF, and believers in Yeshua. Everyone LOVED the cards and the perfect Hebrew messages on them! Most of all, the Israelis were deeply moved that prisoners in the U.S. cared about them and sent messages of love and support across the ocean.

Jewish Jewels sponsored a party on Tuesday, November 8, at 4 PM for the orphans. This included a popcorn machine, cotton candy, special photo digital booths, and a live dance video game enjoyed by the children and our Mercy Mission group. A special treat was Elihana, our

longtime friend and gifted Messianic singer, who just happens to live near the Children's Home. Because of our mission, Elihana connected with the home and was asked to help the children with their musical training when she is free from her IDF duties. *Jewish Jewels* made a superb match!



Preparing for Mercy Mission #2

The Dan Panorama Hotel graciously provided us with a large room and many tables to prepare for our next Mercy Mission: a baby shower, "*Geshem B'rakhot*," at B'nai Zion Hospital in Haifa. We sorted and packed for almost three hours, unloading some of the duffel bags and suitcases brought by our Mercy Mission *mishpocha*. Something happened that has never happened before. Israelis, guests at the hotel, kept coming into the room, checking us out.

They asked, "What is this? Is this a sale? Can I buy any of this?" When we told them what we were doing, they were flabbergasted. Women who were accomplished knitters were examining the items sent by some of you. They were VERY IMPRESSED.



Ervin interacted with one man and gave him one of the 140 key rings that we distributed all over Israel with a promise from Deuteronomy 20:3-4. The Israelis love the key rings. The message touches their hearts, even if they are secular, which is the case with most Israelis.



Two women approached Jamie and asked if we would consider coming to a neonatal ward in Jerusalem (hospital number three!). Tamar had been a nurse working with preemies for 40 years. She told us Sharey Zedek also needed premie clothing. We told her that we would try to help if we had any items left.



B'nai Zion Hospital: Mercy Mission #2

Our Mercy Mission group—a little family by this time—gathered in the lobby of the hotel before leaving for the hospital at 9:30 AM on Wednesday, November 9, 2016. We had gift bags for 30 newborn boy babies, 30 newborn girl babies, 18 premature boys and 18 premature girls. That's 96 bags of gifts! They were given to new mothers, both in the meeting room, individual rooms, and in the premie ward. A few extra bags were left for future preemies.



One mother of twins told Jamie that she had gone to store after store searching for clothing that would fit her premature babies, to no avail. She was ecstatic to receive two gift bags, one for her boy and one for her girl. We were escorted into the premie section of the hospital and asked to pray for the babies there. The first was in withdrawal from the drugs taken by her mother. Twins had major digestive issues. Some of the tiny babies were struggling for their lives. A Russian Jewish immigrant started to cry as we prayed for her and her baby. Very tender and moving!





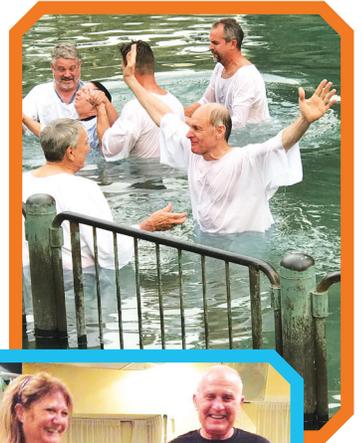
The Autism Center: Mercy Mission #3

At 4 PM on November 9, 2016, we were warmly greeted by our dear friend Tal, the founder of an amazing school for autistic children in Tiberias. Tal's son Adir remembered Neil and engaged him in outdoor games with some other boys at the school. Tal has expanded the school as his son and the other children have grown. As in previous years, we were in awe at the cutting edge educational facility that Tal and his wife, Tali, have built for the children. Please pray for this special couple. We have become like family. They especially adore our son Jonathan and invited the three of us to their home for dinner. Our entire group visited Tal's little supermarket, which is how he earns his living.

Love Baskets and generous donations were given to the Autism School, B'nai Zion Hospital, and Bet Elazraki (the Children's Home) by YOU, our *Jewish Jewels* family. Everywhere we went, gratitude overflowed. Two verses from the Bible kept coming to our minds: "*He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD, and He will pay back what he has given*" (Proverbs 19:17). "...*inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me*" (Matthew 25:40). Know this: We can never out-give God. Expect a blessing as you have richly blessed His People Israel!

Victims of Terror: Mercy Mission #4

Before our mission with the Organization of Victims of Terror from Afula, we had a *mikveh* (immersion) service at the Jordan River. Ted joyfully rededicated himself to the Lord, following Neil's teaching on the Jewish roots of immersion and its New Covenant significance.



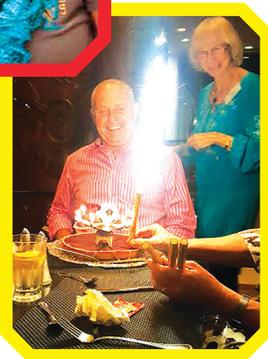
Our dear friends and fellow Messianic Jews, Michel and Yaffa, joined us for dinner at 6:30 PM on November 10, 2016, with six others who had lost sons or daughters in terrorist attacks. After dinner, they each told their heart-wrenching story of the terror attack that took the life of their loved one. One Russian immigrant couple lost a son who had immigrated before them. He was murdered just before they made *aliyah*. A mother whose son was killed while serving in the IDF was moved when we put scarves on all the mothers because we "happened" to put a purple scarf on her—the color of her son's army unit. Yaffa is amazingly joyful, shepherding the others, while she also lost her teenage daughter in a suicide bombing attack. Yeshua in her life, and in the life of her husband, Michel, has made all the difference. Hillel translated for Yaffa. It was hard to get a photo of her standing still. She is always dancing and praising Yeshua, *Ha Melech Yisrael!* We gave Love Baskets and a generous donation from YOU to the Organization of Victims of Terror.

Tiberias Congregation: Mercy Mission #5

Our Shabbat Mercy Mission was to the largest Messianic school in the north of Israel, Peniel

Education Center. We wanted to bless the children of Messianic believers in the Land, according to Galatians 6:10, "...let us do good to all especially to those who are of the household of faith."

Four members of the Peniel congregation joined us for Shabbat dinner at our hotel at 6:30 PM on Friday, November 11, 2016. Following dinner, the director of the school, Benjamin, gave an excellent presentation about Messianic Judaism in Israel and the history of the Peniel Congregation and school. Celeste and Elisheva led us in worship as we entered the Shabbat. The evening was both uplifting and informative. We learned that there are approximately 30,000 Messianic Jews in Israel, and about 200 messianic congregations, plus many home groups. The Peniel Congregation in Tiberias has 500 people, including 200 children. Sixty percent of the congregation is under age 30. Impressive.



Dead Sea: Mercy Mission #6

We had no Mercy Mission planned while at the Dead Sea—but God did! While our group ascended Masada, a few of us remained behind with key rings, scarves, seashells, and Love Baskets—just in case! Jamie had blessed the workers at the **Ahava** store at Masada on our last Mercy Mission. One single mother who had received a Love Basket recognized her and came to hug Jamie. Another worker remembered getting a scarf and key ring. There were no shoppers in the store when Jamie shared about the Lord with them and adorned them all with the lovely curly scarves made by Candace, one of our *Jewish Jewels* partners, and her sister. Their love and sacrificial giving blessed women all over Israel. As our group was leaving, another worker at Masada rushed

up to our guide, Hannah, and said, "Isn't there a scarf for me?" It reminded us of Esau's comment to his father Isaac in Genesis 27:36, "*Have you not reserved a blessing for me?*" Jamie ran to the bus for another scarf. The worker was overjoyed.

No trip to the Dead Sea area is complete without the traditional mud bath. Jamie and Jean had fun applying the mud before their float in the Dead Sea. That evening at our hotel, we celebrated our bus driver Hillel's birthday with a surprise party, including sparklers that sent out flames a foot high!



Alternate Mercy Mission #7

Our next Mercy Mission was scheduled to be with the IDF, the Israel Defense Forces. As we left our hotel at the Dead Sea, we received a call informing us that the mission had been canceled because the soldiers had all been called up. While we were disappointed, we knew that the Lord had a plan. We ascended to Jerusalem, stopped at the Mount of Olives, and then visited the excellent model of the city to orient ourselves for our last few days in the Land. Hannah mentioned that the Russian immigrant cashier at the gift shop was very needy, so we gave her a Love Basket. She tearfully received your gift. Before leaving, we felt led to return to the gift shop and give her a second Love Basket. Then





the tears really flowed. There were more hugs and a photo. Thank you, Jewish Jewels partners, for making it possible for us to touch and bless people like precious Irena. There were many more—all over Israel.

The Lord's plan for Sunday's mission was a second baby shower—at the hospital in Jerusalem that our guide had told us about when we first arrived. The nurses had desperately prayed for hats for their premature babies. We "just so happened" to be loaded with handmade preemie hats! One of our partners actually sent us 100 beautiful hats for preemies.

At approximately 5 PM on November 13, 2016, Neil presented the head nurse at Hadassah Hospital with Love Baskets for needy mothers. Jamie and the group ministered to mothers who had babies in the preemie unit. One mother and father asked us to pray because the operation on their baby's esophagus was not successful. The mothers were both overjoyed and overwhelmed when they saw the beautiful, tiny clothing for their babies. We received a call the next day telling us that the babies in the preemie unit had all been dressed with the clothing we brought. When the day shift came in, everyone said it was like a fashion show. The staff kept coming in to see the babies who finally had clothes to wear because you clothed them! Yeshua says to you, "*I was naked and you clothed Me...*" (Matt. 25:36).



Holocaust Survivors: Mercy Mission #8

Following our visit to the **Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial**, we treated about 50 Holocaust survivors and family members to lunch, musical entertainment, gifts, and Love Baskets. We wrapped every woman with a scarf, and were very moved to actually touch people who had lived through the horrors that we had just learned about.



Jerusalem Pro-Life: Mercy Mission #9

Another "unplanned mission" occurred on Monday, November 14, 2016. We had so much newborn to six-month-old baby clothing, plus handmade blankets, etc., that we were able to bless Be'ad Chaim, the Jerusalem pro-life ministry, with two 50-pound bags of gifts! Sandi Shoshani, director of Be'ad Chaim, was delighted to receive the gifts as well as Love Baskets for needy mothers and a donation to the ministry. Our group prayed for Be'ad Chaim, since abortion is a very real problem in Israel. According to the Middle Eastern mentality, adoption is unthinkable, but abortion is acceptable. Sandi's ministry has a program to provide everything a baby needs for the first year of its life. The cost to sponsor a baby is \$1,500. If you are interested, you can contact Sandi at www.beadchaim.com.



IDF: Mercy Mission #10

The Lord had a surprise for us as we entered Zion Gate at about one o'clock on Tuesday, November 15, 2016. A group of almost 20 soldiers of the elite Givati Brigade was being instructed just inside the gate. It was the IDF mission that we missed! Our group gave the soldiers Love Baskets, key rings, and cards from inmates. They were overwhelmed. We all began to sing "*Am Yisrael Chai*" (The People of Israel Live) and dance in the street. Such joy!





Following our encounter with the soldiers, Martha spoke with an Orthodox mother of nine who was reluctant to take a key ring. She said to Martha, "You are a Christian? And you love the Jews? Christians hated us and killed us. I never heard of Christians who love us." Rebecca finally agreed to accept our gift, but insisted on giving the Love Basket to someone more needy.

Hospital Number Three: Mercy Mission #11

Tuesday, November 15, 2016, at 6:30 PM, Tamar, the Israeli woman who had been a nurse with the preemies of Sharey Tzedek Hospital in Jerusalem, came to our hotel to see us. We had a big bag of preemie clothing for her hospital, but were unable to go with her to deliver the gifts because we had another mission that night at dinner. (The missions kept increasing.) Tamar hugged us, invited us to her home, and was simply overwhelmed with the love of God. She also eagerly received our prayers.



Lone Soldiers: Mercy Mission #12

That night at dinner we hosted some Israeli friends who have three children in the IDF and two more at home. One of the soldiers was home due to an injury sustained while teaching one of his recruits. Ron was very moved by the cards made by inmates in the US. "You mean they care about us?" He mentioned that there are "lone soldiers" in his unit who are very needy, having no family in the country. We were able to give him gifts and Love Baskets for the soldiers, without having to travel to their base. God knew!



Messianic Congregations: Mercy Mission #13

As we boarded the bus for our last day of touring Jerusalem, we were greeted by Pastor Avraham Ben Hod of Congregation Maale Adumim in Jerusalem. He was there representing Sar El Tours, but the Lord wanted us to bless his Messianic congregation. We gave him Love Baskets for the needy among his flock. He thanked us profusely and prayed for us. We also asked our guide, Hannah, to help us by delivering Love Baskets to three more Messianic Congregations: one in Tel Aviv, one in Acco, and one in the Negev. Abba wanted to make sure that our brothers and sisters in the Land were blessed!



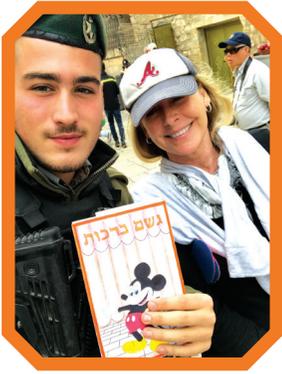
Ethiopian Immigrants: Mercy Mission #14

Our final Mercy Mission as a group was also unplanned. Our guide, Hannah, reminded us that we had blessed the Ethiopian immigrants on our last Mercy Mission, and asked if we would like to do that again. Of course we agreed. We "just so happened" to have a big bag of winter accessories—scarves, hats, gloves, socks, etc.—to bring to them. (It seemed as if things kept multiplying!) Jonathan connected with a young man who is in danger of being deported from the country because of his faith in Yeshua. His aunt actually asked Jamie if she would take him home with us. (We thought she was joking, but she was not.) It was tempting. He was very sweet!



Orva bought a beautiful tapestry from an artist, and Sonia loved on one of the ladies who labored for three days, making the special treats that we were served. It meant a lot that we came to the Ethiopians, since they are the most needy of the immigrants and suffer because they are "different."





Jerusalem Police: Mercy Mission #15

This Mercy Mission involved a few of us who interacted with the Border Police in the Old City. The policemen were excited to receive Love Baskets, key rings, and cards from prisoners. The commander, Jonathan, was especially touched. He sent us a thank-you e-mail after we returned to Florida.



Hillel's Mission, Holon: Mercy Mission #16

Our precious bus driver, Hillel, is not only the best bus driver ever, but also a sweet, compassionate man. He asked us for Love Baskets to deliver to the needy in his hometown of Holon. We gave him 20 Love Baskets, which we know he will give to the poorest of the poor. Hillel has not yet received Yeshua as his Messiah. We love him dearly. Please keep him in your prayers.



Messianic Dental Clinic: Mercy Mission #17

After the group left for the USA, we still had missions to accomplish. Our dear friend Lesly drove us all over Jerusalem as we continued to bless Israel. A dental clinic established by Messianic Jews was our first stop. We were very impressed with the clinic and thrilled that our group had brought at least 100 tubes of toothpaste and 100 toothbrushes that we were able to give them. YOU also gave a donation to help equip the clinic for orthodontics. We know that God will bless this outreach to the needy who can't afford dental care. Holocaust survivors are treated free. Private paying patients help to subsidize the clinic. The entire staff are believers, Jews and Arabs.



Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary: Mercy Mission #18

Baslea Schlink, one of Jamie's favorite authors, founded this group of Protestant women whose life mission is to love a Jewish Jesus, teach the Church about Him, and minister comfort to the Jewish people, especially Holocaust survivors. We visited three of these precious women at their retreat in Ein Kerem and "just so happened" to have three woolen blankets/scarves as gifts for them. They were delighted, since winter is coming. We prayed with and encouraged the sisters as they prepared their new place of ministry. What a joy!

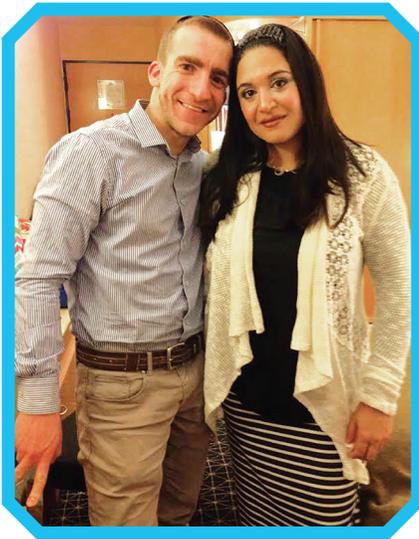
More Holocaust Survivors: Mercy Mission #19

Somehow we still had a suitcase full of winter accessories—hats, scarves, gloves, socks, and more—perfect for elderly survivors. We went to the home of Inge Buhs, who has been ministering to victims of the Shoah for over 30 years. She was thrilled with the gifts— *matanot* (mah-tah-NOHT) in Hebrew, and said that she wanted to save them for Hanukkah gifts. We left a number of Love Baskets as well, and gave Inge a donation to cover the January rent of the home that hosts the survivors—a huge answer to prayer.

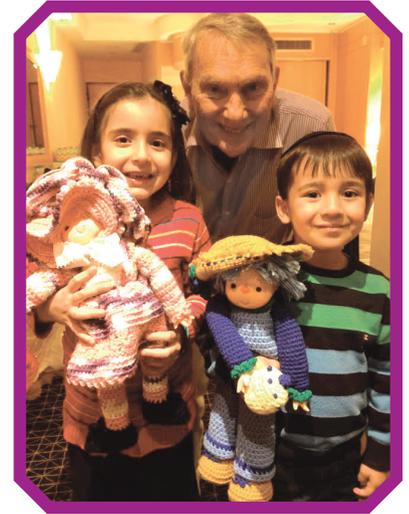


Ultra-Orthodox Family: Mercy Mission #20

Remember the wedding that we sponsored for an Israeli orphan in 2008? Micaela and Eliya now have three children. This beautiful couple joined us for dinner at our hotel and came up to our room



to receive the suitcase of gifts that we had brought for them. The children call us "safta" and "saba"—Grandma and Grandpa—since their parents have told them that we are their grandparents from across the sea! Please pray for the seven-year-old girl (autistic), the five-year-old boy (undiagnosed as yet), and the one year old (not speaking much). We are believing for miracles for these beautiful children. A donation from you was given to help pay for their special schooling.



Rabbi and Family: Mercy Mission #21

We couldn't leave the country without visiting the Ultra-Orthodox rabbi, his wife, and eight of their eleven children, who made the match between Micaela and Eliya. We gave them Love Baskets to buy things for the children. After a sweet time of fellowship, we prayed a blessing over the Shalom family.



Eitan and Family: Mercy Mission #22

We spent Shabbat with this secular Israeli family who also have become *mishpocha*. After a beautiful brunch together, we gave them a donation to help with the needs of IDF soldiers. Eitan made a comment about our Mercy Mission that sums up how the

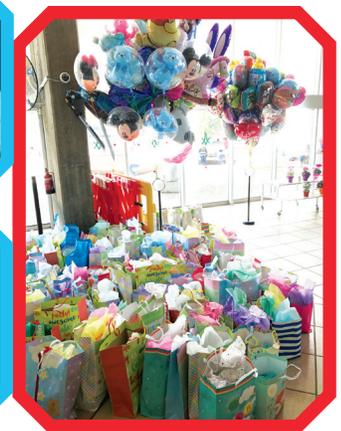
Israelis see what we do: "Most people here run from a terror attack. I run toward it, since I am a First Responder. Most tourists run from hospitals, the poor, and the needy. They would rather stay by the pool, see the sights, or explore the city. But you run toward the need, spending your time blessing the people of Israel. What impresses me is not your gifts, but your heart." That says it all. Love—God's love—made an eternal difference in the lives of countless Israelis during Mercy Mission 2016. Thank you—*todah raba*—Jewish Jewels' family for sending us as your representatives.



May the Lord multiply your blessings in 2017 as He multiplied your gifts in Israel!

Love in Yeshua,

Neil & Jamie



P.S. As many of you may have seen on the news, Israel was attacked by terrorists right after we left the country, setting at least 70 arson fires throughout the Land. Please consider purchasing a tree to be planted to help overcome this devastation (Isaiah 35:1-2).