



# Caspari Center NEWS

June 2009



Equipping  
the next generation  
of Jewish believers  
in Jesus



## Education: A Key to Revival

By Alec Goldberg

One of the things my heart longs for is revival. A revival in which the name of Yeshua will be proclaimed all over Israel - in the streets, at schools and universities, and through media outlets. A revival that will cause existing congregations to grow explosively - and even cause many new ones to spring up. A move of God that will shake this nation; I mean, shake it *again*, as in the apostles' time.

Can we make it happen ourselves? Probably not any more than we can stir waves in an ocean. "The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going" (John 3:8). But does that mean we are to just sit and wait?

A farmer waits for the rain (James 5:7), and a sailor waits for the wind. However, when God does send the wind and the rain, both know what to do. One has his tools and barns ready, the other - his sailing boat and crew ready. If the farmer or sailor is a good one, he will be prepared.

God uses  
education  
to prepare  
His people.

A good disciple of Yeshua should likewise be prepared, and he should be able to discern the signs of his time (Matt 16:2). Looking at how the number of Israeli congregations has grown in just the last ten years and how Israelis are becoming more and more open to the gospel, I believe that the promised "latter rain" will come soon. But what about our tools and crew?

I am talking about workers for the coming harvest. Who are they? The apostle Paul writes about "preparing God's people for the works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Eph 4:12). I believe one of the most important ways God prepares His people is education.

While conventional wisdom says that ministry is the prerogative of professionals - pastors, evangelists, teachers, and so on - the Bible actually speaks here about them training God's people, i.e. ordinary believers, to do some of the evangelism, teaching, and counseling they love to do themselves!

Professionalism is very important. When we are in need of emergency surgery, for example, we seek help not from a first year medical student but rather from a specialist who knows what he or she is doing. Aren't our souls at least as valuable as our bodies?

Thankfully, not all of our spiritual or congregational needs are as critical as emergency surgery. Just as we need not run to a hospital every time we cut our finger or catch the flu, we need not secure the services of a seasoned clergy professional to guide us through all of our problems.

In Israel, as in many other nations, non-professionals successfully serve as house group and worship team leaders, children's and youth workers, and in many other capacities. Their secret, as I see it, is precisely in the reality described by Paul: someone more mature has invested time, knowledge, experience, and passion in them, and then trusted them enough to release them into their own "works of service."

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The best way we can prepare for the harvest, I believe, is to facilitate education and training for those in ministry. In other words, we are to focus on the next generation of believers and leaders. Clearly, some will need formal academic training and others will not. But all will need to be properly equipped before they are ready to be shot out into their orbit.

This deep desire to equip is at the heart of Caspari Center. Caspari's vision is to train and equip believers and leaders serving in Israeli congregations. We have been dedicated to this task for decades, and we are planning to stick with it. Our local programs are providing Messianic believers with practical teaching that enables them to sharpen the tools the Lord has put into their hands, to keep building up His temple of living stones.

Caspari's vision is broad enough to respond to many educational needs, both present and future. We have excellent contacts with local congregations, and we continue to work diligently to maintain and develop them. One of our high values is ensuring that our ministry addresses the actual needs of Israeli leaders, not merely our own idea of them. We desire to promote unity, not divisions. We aim to be a strong organization, with a dedicated and praying staff and many faithful partners and supporters.

Caspari Center has been given much. My hope and prayer is that we shall be good and faithful stewards of these talents. And it is possible. After all, it was Jesus Himself who said, "Everything is possible for him who believes" (Mark 9:23).

"Providing  
Messianic believers  
with practical teaching..."



## Love the Children and Teach Them to Pray

"The Love of God for Children" was the theme of Caspari Center's Shabbat school teacher training in early May. An eager group of 140 came together in Netanya for this event.

Among them was **Sveta**, a seasoned veteran who has been teaching children in the Body of Messiah in Israel for 20 years. But even with all her experience, Sveta looks forward to these meetings.

"I don't want to miss any of the Caspari seminars," she says, smiling. "Every time I come I get something new for my work with the kids!"

Sveta rejoices as she sees new teachers coming into the ministry, and she finds it encouraging to learn that more and more people are praying for the children in Israel. "Thanks to the Lord, and thanks to Caspari!" she says.

"Over the years," she goes on, "I've noticed that, no matter what their background is, kids have the same kinds of problems, the same need to be loved, and the same need to have a relationship with God." Sveta sees the congregation as a family, so she views children as family members.

While her education has given her practical tools for the work, Sveta sees that the most significant challenges teachers face are spiritual. "Children need attention, they want to be heard, they want to be prayed for," she says. "Genuine love opens their hearts for the Word of God - and children can tell immediately if there is a contradiction between my words and my deeds."

"I want to teach the kids to pray, to be independent, and to use their own judgment according to the Word of God. Kids should not follow me, but God."



**Lara** has worked as a Shabbat school teacher in her congregation for five years, and has participated in every Caspari seminar. She also enjoys using Caspari materials.

“Teachers in our congregation are very creative with older children,” she says, “and there is quite a lot of material available to be used with those groups. But we really need more material for smaller children, as well as training in teaching small children from one to three years old about God - so Shabbat school will be more than baby-sitting.” Lara has asked Caspari to explore ways to meet this need in future seminars.



Grateful for these seminars, Lara says, “It’s very important for teachers to have a chance to meet and get to know one another. At Shabbat school seminars, we really enjoy sharing our experiences and learning from the others.”

These seminars are successful and profitable because of the gifts and prayers of Caspari’s partners around the world.

“...we really need more material for smaller children!”

## A Dozen Years of Shabbat School Teacher Training in Israel

About 12 years ago, Caspari Center launched a training program for children’s workers serving in Israel’s Messianic congregations. The majority of them are volunteers; most lack the education and training they need to adequately teach the growing number of children in their classes. Each seminar includes lectures, workshops, demonstrations, and exhibitions of curricula and teaching aids. To date, this is continues to be the only forum of its kind in the country.

From 1997 until 2003, Caspari offered this full-day seminar on a yearly basis. However, an increasing demand called for two annual seminars, so during the past five years Shabbat school teachers have gathered twice a year at the Beit Asaf Messianic Congregation’s facilities in Netanya, a coastal city north of Tel Aviv.

This year, for the first time, Caspari is adding a third seminar to accommodate teachers in the southern part of Israel. Scheduled for October, it will be held in Beer Sheva, located in the middle of the Negev Desert.

## MEDIA REVIEW

**Caspari center publishes a weekly review of material published in the Israeli press documenting attitudes toward Messianic Jews, the Mission, and the Christian faith. To receive the Media Review free of charge by email, send a request to [subscriptions@caspari.com](mailto:subscriptions@caspari.com) or sign up on our website: [http://www.caspari.com/media\\_review/](http://www.caspari.com/media_review/).**



**The following is an excerpt from the May 1st *Jerusalem Post* article “Jesus’ Zionists.” In the article, Messianic Jews are interviewed about their religious motivation for serving in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).**

*“Like Orthodox religious Zionists who see their military service as a mitzvah, Messianic Jews also see it in religious terms. In fact, several Messianic Jews said they respected religious Zionists for their selfless service to the state, and felt they had many things in common with them - except, of course, for the belief in Jesus ... Messianic Jews see no contradiction between Jesus’ pacifist teachings, such as the Sermon on the Mount, in which the faithful are taught to turn the other cheek to their enemies, and Messianic Jews serve in the IDF.*

*Michael, who is an officer in the Givati Brigade, believes that Jesus’ teachings make military service more of a challenge. ‘As believers, we are obligated to love and respect our enemies. But we are also citizens of Israel, which obligates us to serve in the IDF. Every believer has to ask if he is doing what is right and good. The most difficult test is when we are involved in policing the Palestinian population at checkpoints or during patrols inside Palestinian villages. I personally see it as an opportunity to behave in a compassionate, ethical way, and serve as a witness for Jesus’ teachings. There are about 200 or 300 of us spread out throughout the IDF having a positive impact, serving as examples. We believe this state of affairs will not last forever, however. Eventually, there will be a time of peace ushered in by the prince of peace. In that day, everyone will recognize that Jesus is the messiah.’”*

## Visit Israel . . . Change Your Life Forever

"We've studied and taught the Scriptures for years," said one traveler, "but this trip opened a whole new dimension. My faith has been invigorated, and seeing our Messianic brothers and sisters sharing their faith in a land where believers are 1 in 1,000 challenges me to share my faith boldly!"

*"Why didn't I go earlier in my life?"*

This reaction is typical of the 42 pilgrims who traveled from Minneapolis to Israel this past February for a ten-day Caspari tour coordinated by Kathi Graham, Director of Church Development. Led by a licensed Israeli tour guide committed to Christ, this tour offered an inside perspective of how God is moving in the Land.

Over the years, Chris Dodge, pastor of St. Michael Lutheran Church in Bloomington, Minnesota, has hosted trips to Israel, Greece, Turkey, and Egypt. But, he says, "This Caspari tour was by far the best of them all!"

*"This trip gave me compassion for the Messianic believers and their struggles."*

Pastor Chris and his wife, Jan, attended a trip reunion meeting recently and he noted the significant impact this experience had on the group. "There were frequent mentions of how memorable it was to meet with Jewish followers of Christ as well as Palestinian believers. And walking through the very spots where our Savior walked was very impactful," he says.

Without doubt, God is working mightily in Israel. Caspari Center is privileged to come alongside pastors and lay leaders who serve in many of the 120 Messianic congregations throughout the Land - and we always enjoy opportunities to introduce North American believers to them.



*Pastor Chris and Jan Dodge on the Sea of Galilee during a recent Caspari tour of Israel*

Caspari Center's trips to Israel are designed to meet the needs and desires of church and family groups of 20 to 40 people. While some groups desire a trip emphasizing sightseeing, others want trips focusing on service, prayer, or Bible study. Caspari Center is in a unique position to help groups realize their goals.

The bottom line is this: A visit to few places on Earth will deepen your faith more or help you understand the Bible better. We invite you to contact Kathi Graham at 630-668-3328 to receive sample itineraries and explore this unique opportunity.

***If you would like to know more about the Caspari Center and its activities, write to [caspari@caspari.com](mailto:caspari@caspari.com) or visit our website, [www.caspari.com](http://www.caspari.com).***

***You can support our work by prayer, volunteering, or financial gifts to help with individual projects or the general work of the center.***

## Prayer Requests

Please pray for ...

***-Parents and Shabbat school teachers in the Body of Messiah, who are raising the next generation.***

***-Give thanks with us for the successful Shabbat school seminar, and pray for the preparations for the coming seminars in the fall.***

***-Good cooperation and mutual trust as we seek to reach out to new congregations and individuals.***

***-The planning of a new semester of the Hearts to Serve leadership course and recruitment of participants.***

***-Our staff as they travel abroad for work and holidays.***

***-New long term volunteers for the office in Jerusalem.***

