

# Caspari Center

www.caspari.com

Supporting Jewish Believers in Jesus through Education and Research

Winter 2008

## Caspari Center Celebrates 25 Years!

25 years ago, the Caspari Center was established in an apartment in Jerusalem. It was a small center with a great vision: "To help in the training and education of leaders for the Body of Christ in Israel, and through study and research to serve the Gospel in the encounter with Judaism and the Jewish People." The years have passed; our work and ministry have developed. We are still a small center, but a center that reaches out to many, and our vision remains the same. And

as we rejoice in seeing the Body of Christ grow, we are confronted with an increasing need for training and education among believers in Yeshua in Israel and worldwide.

Over the years, Caspari Center developed a system of distance learning to train new Messianic believers across Israel. There were only a small number of believers living in the newly created nation of Israel (founded in 1948). They had dreams

of bringing a thriving body of Jewish believers in Jesus back to the land where Yeshua lived and taught.

Caspari wrote and translated books that these leaders could use to grow and mature their faith and guide the growth of their congregations. Today there are nearly 7,000 believers worshipping in approximately 100 congregations.

Throughout these last 25 years, Caspari Center has responded to the

needs of the growing congregations in Israel.

Today we offer leadership training and Shabbat School

teachers seminars, maintain a unique library, sponsor tours and study trips, and author books relevant to believers' daily needs and the history of God's Jewish people.

Caspari Center has many plans for the next 25 years. Please stand with us in prayer and financial support to help us continue to do the work of God in Israel.

*"Caspari brings something new to Israel. They train local people in the local language to enable them to begin the work God is calling them to do ... Caspari equips people to minister in Israel to Israelis in ways that relate directly. Caspari Center has a necessary place."*

—Leadership Training Participant

# Caspari Center

## Knut Høyland Joins the Caspari Center Leadership Team



Knut Helge Høyland has accepted the position of acting International Director of Caspari Center. He and his wife, Hege, live in Jerusalem and will direct the ministry from there.

Knut brings exceptional abilities to his new role. As a fluent Hebrew speaker, seminary graduate, and experienced youth worker, Knut is well prepared for leading Caspari Center to support the next generation of emerging leaders in Israel. And with his background in NCMI (Caspari Center's founding organization), Knut is poised to continue building strong relationships with our international partners in Europe and America.

Steve Engstrom, former Caspari CEO, accepted the position of Israel Director of CMJ (Christ Church Ministries Jerusalem), effective January 1, 2008. We thank Steve for helping to further define and articulate the vision of Caspari Center. May God give him favor in his

new position. As we look to the future, we see many areas where CMJ and Caspari can partner in the work of the Kingdom in Israel.

We thank God for a financially stable budget in 2008. We continue our Sabbath School teacher training, leadership training, and parenting resource development. As we continue to expand support development in America, I pray that you will continue to stand with Caspari Center to help the growing Body of Messiah in Israel.

*Kathi Graham*  
North American Director

## Raising Children in the Fear of the Lord

For years Caspari Center has helped Messianic congregations and families grow and remain strong in their faith.

In August our latest family-centered book, *Raising Children in the Fear of the Lord*, was released. The book consists of articles by local pastors, people in children's ministry, and parents from the local Body of Messiah. Articles deal with different issues related to raising children and teaching them in the faith in both families and congregations in the Israeli environment.

Published in three languages – Hebrew, English, and Russian – in one volume, this book speaks the heart-language and mother tongues of the majority of Messianic believers in Israel. 2,000 copies were printed and distributed free through the local congregations.

As the Messianic congregations grow, so do the challenges for raising and educating the next generation. Caspari's primary strategic goal is to support congregations and families in helping their children to remain strong in their faith in Yeshua the Messiah and resilient against the pressures of secular culture.

In 2001, a Messianic children's songbook was published. A teacher's manual was translated and published in 2005, and in 2006 Caspari published an activity book for children, *The Parables of Jesus*, developed by Caspari's graphic designer Heidi Tohmola. In 2008 year we hope to develop the second in this series of activity books, *Simon Peter*.



*"[The book] is written by Israelis for the unique needs of believers in Israel. Raising our children is the most important job God gives to us and this book is proving to be a valuable help."*

## The Importance of Shabbat School

What is it like being a child in Israel?

- You live in a country in which everyone believes that a Jew cannot believe in Jesus, and that if you do you bring shame to your family and your heritage.
- You are probably the only believer in Jesus in your school of nearly 1,000.
- Your teachers teach that Jesus may be a good person, but He is not the Son of God who gave His life for you.
- The other students do not know how to react to you because you are different, so they either make fun of you or ignore you. Therefore you learn not to speak of your faith near them.
- Your parents probably came to faith as adults, after you were born, so both you and they are learning Bible stories, prayers, psalms, and songs for the first time.
- Having meal-time prayers or devotions are new to you both at home.
- Your grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins don't understand or know how to treat you, even if they maintain communication with you and your parents.
- If your parents are immigrants (nearly 50% of the Israeli believers are native Russian speakers), they do not understand the Hebrew language you speak. Neither do they understand the new Israeli culture you are living in; it is very different from their native land, and this causes tension and conflict.



This sounds like a pretty grim picture. But the Kingdom of God in Israel is growing!

The question Israeli congregations are asking is how to keep children strong and growing in their faith. If the children are lost, there will be few if any churches 15 years from now. Their answer: Shabbat School.

In America, most churches have some type of Sunday School program. It is a good support system for the biblical education most children receive through their families or extended families.

In Israel, Shabbat School plays a different role: in addition to preparing the weekly lessons, teachers are family counselors, helping parents understand the challenges faced by their children, who are learning a different culture than they experience at home. More and more congregations are seeing that teens need to have classes of their own rather than be the baby-sitters for younger children. This increases the number of skilled and trained teachers needed.

Caspari Center is part of the solution:

- We provide a neutral ground where all Israeli congregational teachers can obtain skills training, help in lesson development, child development education, and important connections in a country where Jewish believers in Jesus are a small minority of the country – only 1 in 1,000.
- To date, Caspari has trained teachers from over 65 congregations.
- 25 years ago there were only a handful of children in Shabbat Schools nationwide, now there are over 125 teachers attending semi-annual seminars. This is extraordinary growth!

## Missionaries of the Mind

Most Jews and many Christians think that Jews cannot believe in Jesus, and that Jews who do are "ex-Jews." These perceptions are likely based on centuries of tragic history between Jews and Christians, and, in some cases, sheer ignorance of the facts. Regardless, the task of supporting Jews who believe in Jesus requires diligent scholarship.

Caspari Center is uniquely poised to positively affect the way people think about Jews and the Gospel. As researchers and scholars, we are in essence "missionaries of the mind."

The three-volume History of Jewish Believers in Jesus is one of our most strategically important projects. The goal of the research is to accurately portray the journey of Jewish believers in Jesus from antiquity to today. This narrative challenges widely-held misconceptions among both Jews and Christians, gives Jewish believers in Jesus access to their own history, and makes a significant contribution to Jewish ministry.

*Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries* (Volume I), published by Hendrickson Publishers, was released in July 2007 and is currently in its third printing. Edited by our internationally known academic directors, Dr. Reidar Hvalvik and Dr. Oskar Skarsaune, this volume challenges the commonly held misperception that Jewish believers in Jesus faded away in the early stages of church history.

Drs. Skarsaune and Hvalvik have begun researching and writing Volume II, *A History of Jewish Believers in Jesus: Middle Ages and Enlightenment* (working title), arguably the most critical of the three volumes since it provides documented proof to refute the widely held belief that the Messianic movement was virtually extinguished during this period, when Jewish converts were considered religious apostates and national traitors, deviants, conflicted souls, or opportunists.

Caspari Center has identified a highly qualified researcher who possesses essential expertise in Semitic languages. His addition to the team at this time would greatly facilitate the completion of this significant academic project.

\$125,000 is needed to complete Volume II. Your gift may provide a Jewish non-believer the information he needs to understand that the Gospel is not anti-Jewish, but rather that Yeshua is the Messiah who came to bring salvation to those who believe.

### Israel

36 Jaffa Road, PO Box 46  
Jerusalem 91000, Israel  
Phone: (+972) 2.623.3926  
FAX: (+972) 2.625.1933  
Caspari@caspari.com

### North America

PO Box 147  
Wheaton, IL 60189, USA  
Phone: (+1) 630.668.3328  
FAX: (+1) 630.668.6473  
CaspariUSA@caspari.com

### Web Site

[www.caspari.com](http://www.caspari.com)

### Online Store

[www.caspari.com/store](http://www.caspari.com/store)

### Donations

[www.caspari.com/donate](http://www.caspari.com/donate)

## Please pray with us for

- ✧ Wisdom and joy for Knut as he begins his new role with Caspari Center.
- ✧ A positive response to the visa appeal for Caspari volunteers in Israel.
- ✧ The person of God's choice to fill the Administrative Assistant position in Israel.
- ✧ People willing to support the work and ministry of Caspari Center.

## Celebrate Passover!

Your family, small group, or congregation can experience the drama of Passover. Caspari Center's exclusive CD kit gives you everything you need to understand, prepare, and enjoy a full Passover meal and liturgy.

Our educational Passover celebration uses an English translation of the most common Orthodox Jewish liturgies. The explanations and footnotes will help you understand what the meal is all about, what parts of the liturgy may go back to the time of Jesus, and how Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples fits in to this celebration.

Also included are recipes and instructions for preparing the table and Seder plate.

*Only \$25 - contact our North America office to order your copy today!*

